

# Cultural Heritage and Preservation

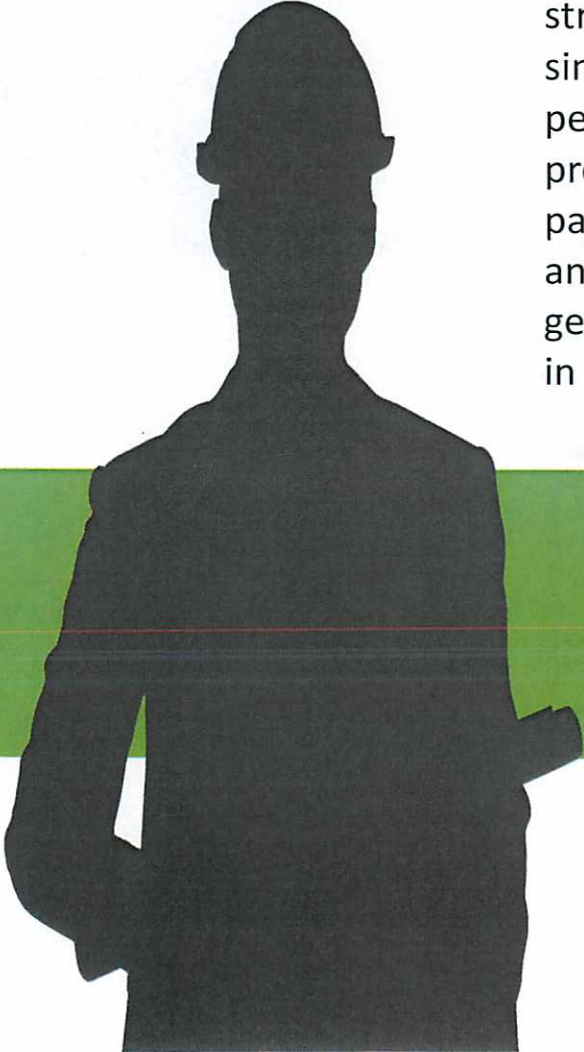




# Our Purpose (Municipal Code 2.63.1010)

---

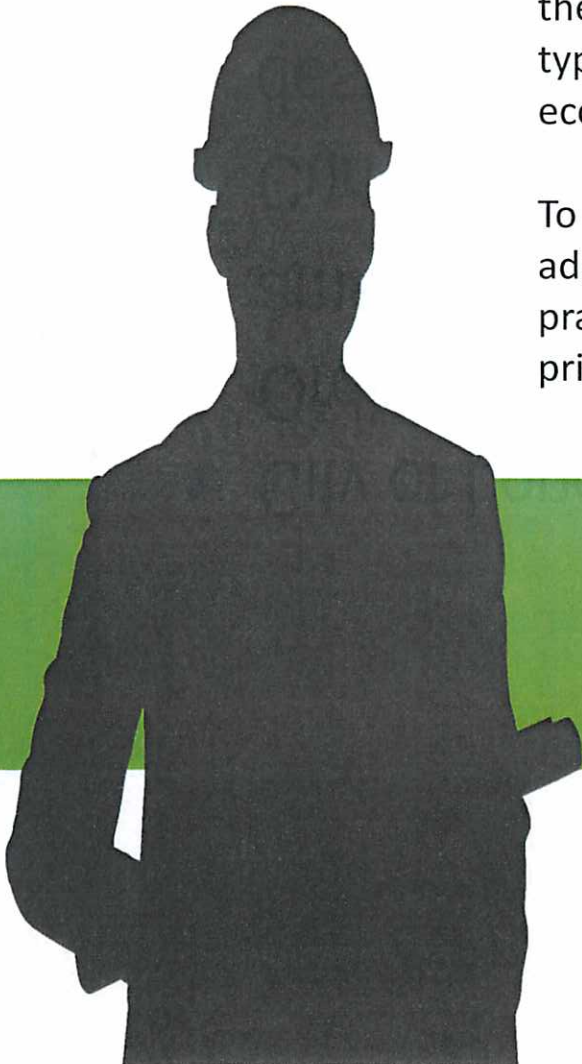
To protect, enhance and perpetuate districts, buildings, structures, natural features, works of art, signs and other similar objects that are reminders of past eras, events and persons important in local, State or national history, or that provide significant examples of architectural styles of the past, or that are unique and irreplaceable assets to the City and its neighborhoods, or that provide for this and future generations significant examples of the physical surroundings in which past generations lived;



To develop and maintain appropriate settings and environments for cultural resources;

To increase the economic and financial benefits to the City and its inhabitants by promoting the City's tourist trade and thereby stimulating local business and industry;

# Our Purpose (Municipal Code 2.63.1010)



To enhance the visual character of the City through the preservation and rehabilitation of varied building types and styles that reflect the City's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history;

To encourage the rehabilitation, restoration and adaptive reuse of cultural resources using the best practices in the field of historic preservation principles;

To promote public understanding and appreciation of the unique architectural and cultural heritage of the City through educational programs; and

To strengthen civic pride in the beauty and notable accomplishments of the City's past, and thereby encourage community involvement in the City's future.





## Background

- City of Long Beach adopted Cultural Heritage Ordinance in 1997 (1998, 2001, 2002, 2009 amendments).
- Currently, 130 individual properties are designated as Landmarks, and 17 areas are designated Landmark Districts.
- Designation program generally inactive since 2006 until resumption in 2015



## Background

- Approximately 400 staff level and 40 CHC level Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications are processed each year
- Staff attends an annual State of Historic Districts meeting.
- Staff meets with Long Beach Heritage, neighborhood associations and other historic stakeholders on a regular basis





## Benefits of Historic Districts

- Creates a sense of place and community
- Protects the community from out-of-scale and out-of-style improvements
- Enhances neighborhood character and cohesion
- Allows a community to market itself
- Builds identity and resale value over time



## Concerns with Historic Districts

- Additional City review and permits for homeowners to do work on their home
- Historically accurate improvements, particularly windows, are more costly than contemporary building materials
- Second-story additions become difficult to impossible on most properties
- While benefits accrue over-time, some owners experience increased costs immediately
- Unique outcomes and challenges in disadvantaged communities



# 2015-2017 Accomplishments

This is a sampling of what we accomplished over the last year  
What else should be on the list? What will make next year's list?



## COAs

Issued over 900 staff-level and dozens of commission-level certificates of approval



## Direct Communication

Annual letter to all historic property owners



## Real Incentives

Successful re-launch of the Mills Act, expansion of Adaptive Reuse, Federal Tax Credit



## City Staffing

Growth in staff resources and expertise at the staff and management level



## Consistency

Written procedures and enforcement of the CHC ordinance and Secretary's standards



## Enforcement

Improved response-times, new Saturday staff and hundreds of cases each month



## Improved Ordinance

Easier Landmarking process, clear procedures, consistent criteria and enhanced enforcement options



## Outreach

Quarterly historic districts meetings, individual outreach meetings and improved communication



## New Landmarks

For the first time in a decade: new city-owned landmarks and new privately owned structures under permanent protections



# Priorities For Today and Tomorrow

## Complete Design Guidelines

Property owners, staff, commissioners and the public need clear rules and expectations



## Expand Mills Act

Incentives are an absolute necessity for protecting and rehabilitating our structures



## Improved Customer Service

Improved permitting experience leads to improved compliance and better preservation outcomes



## Stable Funding

The Navy settlement endowment will not last forever. General Fund revenues are unpredictable and limited. The need for planning and rehabilitation of City structures however is extensive



## Regulatory Documents

The historic context statement and general plan element require periodic updating

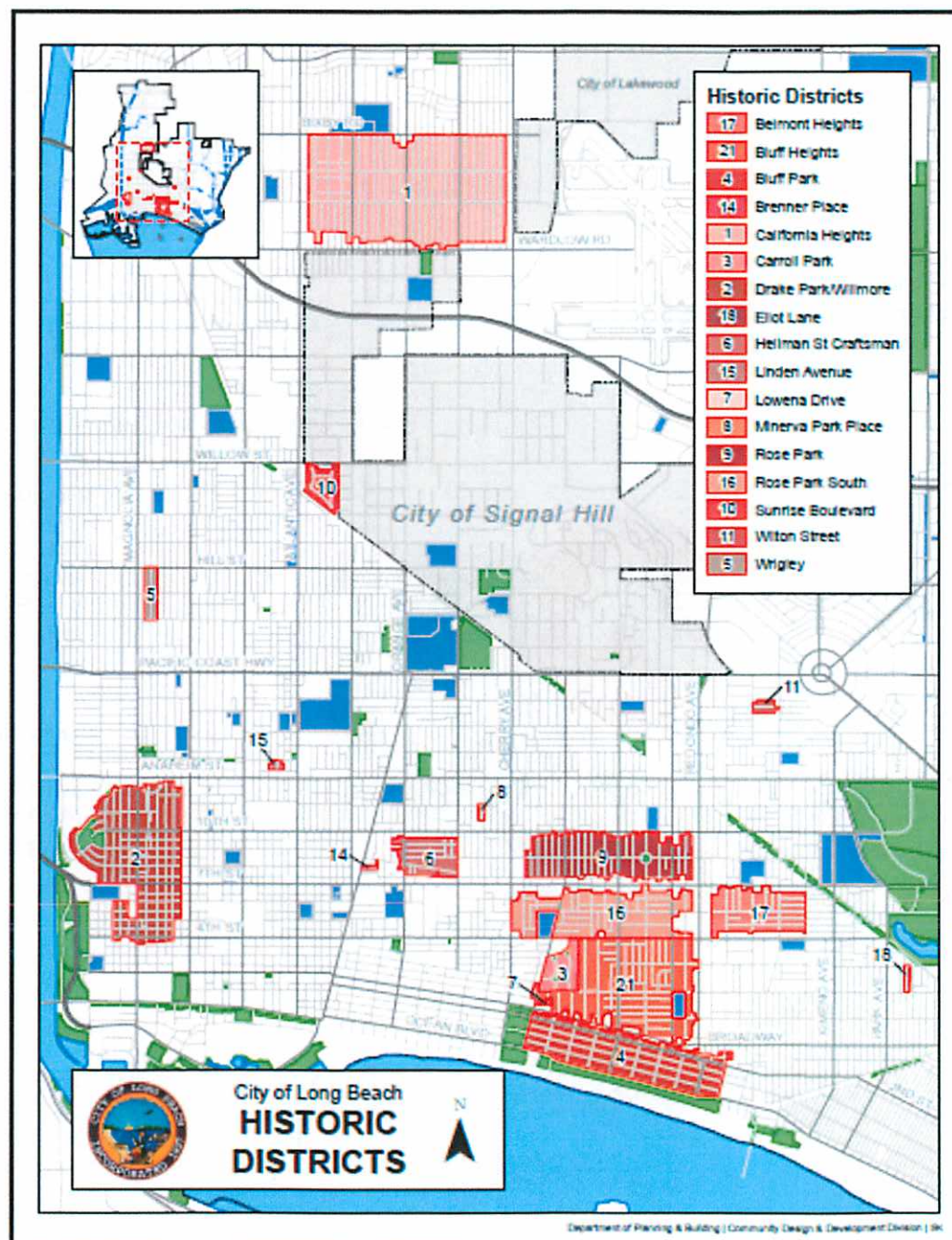


## Updated Surveys

Landmark districts need boundary and contributor list updates. A citywide survey of mid-century moderns structures is also needed



> With so many needs, what takes priority?





# Real Incentives for Historic Preservation

- Up to 40% reduction in property taxes through the Mills Act
- Parking and other code relief for adaptive reuse projects
- Access to federal historic tax credits and historic building code for adaptive reuse and other commercial development
- Relief from Title 24 energy rules for certain remodels and repairs
- Recognition in local awards and tourism promotion



## Mills Act Overview

- A Mills Act contract provides property tax abatement in exchange for rehabilitation and maintenance of historic structures.
- Long Beach's Mills Act program was enacted in 1993.
- The program was dormant between 2006 and 2014.
- During 2014 both the CHC and City Council acted to resume accepting new Mills Act applications.
- In 2015, a total of nine contracts were awarded.
- In 2016, 24 applications were received.
- In 2017, 26 applications were received.





# Indexed Valuation Limits

Property Type	Existing Valuation Limit	2017 Limit with CPI Adjustment
Single Family Residential (1 dwelling unit)	\$1,000,000	\$1,020,000
Duplex or Triplex Residential (2 or 3 dwelling units)	\$600,000.00 per dwelling unit.	\$612,000 per dwelling unit
Multifamily Residential or Mixed Residential/Commercial (4 or more dwelling units)	No valuation limit.	No valuation limit
Non-Residential (Commercial, Industrial, or Institutional)	\$2,500,000	\$2,550,000





# Increase the Number of Contracts

Property Type	Contracts Allowed Per Year (2017 Guidelines)	2015 Applications Received	2016 Applications Received	2017 Applications Received
Single Family Residential (1 dwelling unit)	12	4	15	18
Duplex or Triplex Residential (2 or 3 dwelling units)	3	0	3	4
Multifamily Residential or Mixed Residential/Commercial (4 or more dwelling units)	4	4	5	3
Non-Residential (Commercial, Industrial, or Institutional)	1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>

Cultural  
Heritage  
Commission





# Tips for Historic Neighborhoods

- Know your neighbors, organize gatherings, discussions and support each other
  - This should include speaking to new and potential homeowners
  - This should include speaking to everyone, including imperfect owners and those who do not support preservation
- Participate in the upcoming design guidelines drafting and support each other in pursuing Mills Act contracts



# Code Enforcement

- Code Enforcement is a complaint based system
  - Report violations immediately at [lbcode.org](http://lbcode.org)
  - Keep records, take photos or video is possible
- Within historic districts, follow-up with planning staff the next business day by call (562) 570-6194
- You have a right to know the status of a complaint or violation
- Some violations take years to resolve but they are resolved in the vast majority of instances
- A violation is a problem but also an opportunity to educate and to address issues on a problem property





# Code Enforcement

- Owners are reminded annually by the City of their historic status
  - If they hear it from neighbors and associations however the message is more compelling
- Code enforcement is not the mechanism for resolving personal behavior or civil disputes between neighbors
- Properties under recent permits and especially under Mills Act contracts have additional mechanisms for enforcement



# Thank You

Christopher Koontz, Advance Planning Officer

City of Long Beach

(562) 570-6288

[Christopher.Koontz@longbeach.gov](mailto:Christopher.Koontz@longbeach.gov)

Cultural  
Heritage  
Commission