
HISTORIC RESOURCES ELEMENT

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Although Elk Grove is home to a federally recognized historic district in Old Town, little has been done either in Old Town or outside the boundaries of the Old Town Special Planning Area to provide additional protection to historic resources. This Element summarizes the historic resources that exist in Elk Grove and lay out recommended policies to help provide additional protections for these resources, potentially including City review of alterations to historic buildings.



The former Odd Fellows Hall in Old Town is part of the federally registered historic district.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

On March 1, 1988, Old Town Elk Grove became nationally recognized as the Elk Grove Historic District (see the Background Report) on the National Register of Historic Places.

Outside of Old Town Elk Grove, there are four sites listed as California Historical Landmarks. Three of these sites are within the Elk Grove city limits, while the other one is located just outside city limits within the Planning Area.

- Grave of Elitha Cumi Donner Wilder – Elk Grove Masonic Cemetery, Row C, Lot 2 – Donner party survivor (City)
- Site of first County free library branch in California – 9125 Elk Grove Blvd. (City)
- Murphy’s Ranch (monument) – near the SW corner of Grant Line Road and Highway 99 – the site of the beginning of the United States’ conquests of California
- Grave of Alexander Hamilton Willard – Franklin Cemetery – perhaps the last survivor of the exploring party that accompanied Lewis and Clark (Planning Area)

For additional, detailed information on historic resources in Elk Grove—including the federal historic district and other structures not within the district—please consult the Background Report.

OLD TOWN SPECIAL PLANNING AREA

In 1985, Sacramento County adopted the Elk Grove Old Town Special Planning Area (SPA) Ordinance, to serve as the guiding policy document for the historic area. (The boundaries of the Old Town SPA are shown in the Background Report.) The intent of the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors was,

“... to permit rehabilitation of existing structure which will be compatible with the present conditions with minimal disruption to the lifestyle of residents and to consider and include new construction where appropriate. This Ordinance will implement the goals...regarding the retention and enhancement of a viable commercial center in Elk Grove and the preservation of the early California cultural aspect of the town. It is important that construction of new buildings or structures not alter the cultural and/or historical value of this section of the town.” [Old Town SPA, excerpt]

This Element of the General Plan will maintain some of these original intentions. It also

Historic Resources Element

provides out a policy framework to further preserve and protect the historic resources and establish policies for community education and involvement in historic preservation efforts for the Old Town area.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

In addition to historic resources, Elk Grove and the planning area contain a variety of archaeological resources dating to the pre-historic eras. Detailed information on these resources is contained in the Background Report.

The following are the goals of the City of Elk Grove related to the preservation and enhancement of the city's historical and archaeological resources:

Guiding Goal 1: A High Quality of Life for All Residents

Focused Goal 1-8: Creation and maintenance of a strong, positive community image for Elk Grove

Focused Goal 1-9: A pattern of land use which enhances the community character of Elk Grove, provides employment and shopping opportunities to serve residents and the region, provides for use of transit, and protects Elk Grove's unique historical and natural features

Guiding Goal 2: Diversified Economic Base

Focused Goal 2-4: Creation of Elk Grove as a desired place to locate major employment-generating uses

Guiding Goal 3: Protection of the Natural Environment

Focused Goal 3-1: Development which recognizes environmental constraints and is designed and operated to minimize impacts on the environment

Guiding Goal 4: Preservation and Enhancement of Elk Grove's Unique Historic and Natural Features

Focused Goal 4-1: Preservation and enhancement of Elk Grove's historic structures and districts

Focused Goal 4-3: Preservation of the large oak and other tree species which are an important part of the City's historic and aesthetic character

Guiding Goal 5: Preservation of the Rural Character of Elk Grove

Focused Goal 5-2: Maintenance of those features that provide the character of Elk Grove's rural areas, including: large oak and other trees, small local roadways, animal keeping and raising, equestrians, agriculture, and limited commercial opportunities

The following policies and action items implement these goals:

HISTORIC RESOURCE POLICIES

HR-1 Encourage the preservation and enhancement of existing historical and archaeological resources in the City.

HR-1-Action 1 Develop and update a comprehensive Historic Resource inventory using the National Register, the California Register, California Historical Landmarks, California Points of Historical Interest, and any other structures or properties the City Council determines to have historic value.

The Inventory should contain a map that shows the location of all of the structures with a historically significant designation, and a list of all of the historically significant structures within Elk Grove.

HR-1-Action 2 Establish a Historic Preservation Committee to provide input regarding the City's historic preservation regulations.

This Committee could include members of the public experienced in and knowledgeable about historic resources in general and in the city.

HR-1-Action 3 Create partnerships with private organizations that focus on historic resource preservation, such as the Elk Grove Historical Society.

HR-1-Action 4 Adopt a Historic Preservation Ordinance establishing guidelines and processes for the preservation and enhancement of historic structures.

HR-1-Action 5 Provide information to the public on historic preservation efforts and financial incentive programs. This may include:

- Establish an informational kiosk in Old Town for the public to view about the City's historic resources.
- Establish a history museum in Old Town.
- Create a historic preservation page on the City of Elk Grove's website with links to federal and state historic preservation programs and financial incentive programs.
- Create pamphlets that outline and discuss the City of Elk Grove's historic preservation program.
- Keeping handouts and applications on federal and state incentive programs at the public counter at City Hall.

HR-2 The City supports the goals and objectives for the *Comprehensive Statewide Historic Preservation Plan for California 2000-2005*.

HR-3 Encourage restoration, renovation, and/or rehabilitation of all historic structures.

HR-3-Action 1 Provide financial incentives to residents as encouragement for rehabilitation and restoration of private property.

Historic Resources Element

HR-3-Action 2 Participate in the Mills Act Tax Abatement Program as an economic incentive for private property owners to actively participate in the restoration of their properties.

HR-3-Action 3 Use grants and funds available to the City for historic preservation, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the California Heritage Fund (provided by the Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000).

HR-4 Support use of federal financial incentive programs to encourage preservation of historic structures.

HR-4-Action 1 Provide information on applying for the Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive.

HR-4-Action 2 Make available information on how to claim income and estate tax deductions for charitable contributions of partial interest in historic property, per The Tax Reform Act of 1986.

HR-5 Maintain and improve the aesthetic quality and architectural diversity of the Old Town historical district.

HR-5-Action 1 Implement the Elk Grove Old Town Special Planning Area (SPA) Ordinance.

HR-5-Action 2 Within two (2) years of the adoption of this General Plan, update the Old Town SPA. This update should include:

- A re-examination of the SPA boundaries to include all properties in the federal historic district and other areas as appropriate to provide a cohesive planning area.
- Incorporate the design guidelines of the “Old Town Design Comprehensive Plan” prepared by the County of Sacramento.
- A review of land use policy, permitted uses, and development standards and review.

HR-5-Action 3 Consider the creation of a historic overlay zone for use in the Old Town area or other parts of Elk Grove containing historic structures.

HR-5-Action 4 Use The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (1995) as a guideline for the preservation of historic buildings.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL POLICIES

HR-6 Protect and preserve prehistoric and historic archaeological resources throughout the City.

HR-6-Action 1 In areas identified in the Background Report as having a significant potential for containing archaeological or paleontological artifacts, require completion of a detailed on-site study as part of the environmental review process. Implement all recommended mitigation measures.

HR-6-Action 2 Impose the following conditions on all discretionary projects in areas which do not have a significant potential for containing archaeological or paleontological resources:

- “The Planning Division shall be notified immediately if any prehistoric, archaeological, or paleontologic artifact is uncovered during construction. All construction must stop and an archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards in prehistoric or historical archaeology shall be retained to evaluate the finds and recommend appropriate action.”
- “All construction must stop if any human remains are uncovered, and the County Coroner must be notified according to Section 7050.5 of California’s Health and Safety Code. If the remains are determined to be Native American, the procedures outlined in CEQA Section 15064.5 (d) and (e) shall be followed. “