



# HISTORIC RESOURCES

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This brochure provides an overview of the review and regulation of historic resources in the City of San Mateo, including the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Zoning Code, and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). It also describes the process for evaluating properties in the City for historic resource classification.

The following summary information regarding Historic Resources in the City of San Mateo includes references to the City of San Mateo Zoning Code – Historic Preservation Ordinance - Chapter 27.66. The entire Chapter can be found online at: [http://qcode.us/codes/sanmateo/view.php?topic=27-27\\_66&showAll=1&frames=off](http://qcode.us/codes/sanmateo/view.php?topic=27-27_66&showAll=1&frames=off)

## **Historic Preservation Background**

The establishment of the City's Downtown at B Street and Third Avenue as a result of the arrival of the railroad is one key to the development character and history of the City. The second key is the establishment of estates and country homes in San Mateo during the 1800's and then the subdivision of those estates in the early 1900's. As a result of this early start in suburbanization, San Mateo has many historically significant buildings, structures, and landmark sites. Individual buildings of distinction are important to San Mateo's economy and quality of life. These structures contribute to neighborhood identity and cultural diversity and they add to the overall character of the City. Interest in preservation of these structures among City residents has grown over the last few years.

San Mateo has a Historic Building Survey that identified roughly 200 historically significant

structures. Approximately 37 of these structures are individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Historic Building Survey was prepared in 1989, and is available online at: <http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/DocumentCenter/View/47850>

Because of the large number of structures, the Survey focused primarily on the oldest neighborhoods, most of which are located east of El Camino Real. Survey efforts were concentrated in the traditional downtown area, particularly along B Street and Third Avenue, and the neighborhoods of Central, East San Mateo, Hayward Park, San Mateo Heights, and North Central. Other areas west of El Camino Real and south of Hayward Park through 25th Avenue were visually surveyed only. One area of particular note not included in the Survey is the San Mateo Park residential neighborhood.

The City currently has two identified historic districts, the Downtown Historic District and the Glazenwood Historic District. The Downtown area is of particular importance and interest with respect to historic structures. Overall, the Downtown maintains a 1930's character. The residential neighborhood of Glazenwood is a unique early 1920's development of Spanish Colonial Revival homes. Other areas of the City contain buildings of exceptional architectural interest or reflect local historical periods.

In addition to the historic building survey work done in 1989, there have been other historic evaluations performed on structures in the City. These evaluations are prepared in conjunction with

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planning applications for alterations or demolition of existing structures over 45 years old. These evaluations have led to additional buildings being added to the City's inventory of historic structures.

Historic buildings and structures are shown on General Plan Figure C/OS 5, along with their respective ratings of potential significance. There are six buildings in the City that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (listed by official name of resource): Ernest Coxhead House on East Santa Inez; De Sabla Teahouse and Tea Garden on De Sabla Avenue; Hotel Saint Matthew on Second Avenue; National Bank of San Mateo on B Street; Vollers House on North Claremont Street; and the US Post Office on South Ellsworth Street.

### **Historic Preservation Ordinance**

The City's Historic Preservation Ordinance was adopted in 1995 based on the City's General Plan policies and Downtown Area Plan. The Ordinance applies to the following:

- All buildings in the City that are classified as individually eligible for the National Register. This includes 24 buildings in the City located outside of the Downtown; and,
- All buildings in the Downtown Area Plan area that are classified as individually eligible for the National Register and all contributor buildings within the Downtown Historic District.

A list of these buildings, which was adopted by the City Council, is included on pages 3 and 4. A map of the buildings and historical designations of properties in the City's Downtown Historic District is on page 5.

The City's Historic Preservation Ordinance stipulates the following:

*National Register - Individually Eligible Buildings.* A planning application for Site Plan and Architectural Review is required for an exterior facade modification, exterior alteration, or building addition. This includes any exterior building changes that are subject to a building permit, including replacement of doors, windows, exterior

materials, etc. Construction work that doesn't require a permit, such as standard exterior painting, would typically not require a planning application.

*Downtown Historic District - Contributor Buildings.* Most minor facade modifications, in accordance with Zoning Code Section [27.08.031](#), which conform to the adopted Downtown Retail Core and Downtown Historic District Design Guidelines, area exempt from the requirements for a Site Plan and Architectural Review planning application. However, a Site Plan and Architectural Review application may be required in cases involving facade modifications which may adversely affect the exterior architectural characteristics or historic or aesthetic value of the historic structure, its site or surroundings.

All planning applications involving a designated historic resource are required to be evaluated by an independent architectural historian hired directly by the City to review the project and determine that the project is in compliance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Structure. Additionally, all exterior modifications of individually eligible and contributor buildings and new buildings in the Downtown Retail Core subarea of the Downtown Area Plan (e.g., exterior building additions and alterations) will be evaluated by the architectural historian to ensure that the project also conforms with the Downtown Retail Core and the Downtown Historic District Design Guidelines.

The Ordinance also includes specific requirements related to the demolition of a building that is subject to the Ordinance. A planning application for a Historic Building Demolition Permit is required to be approved by the City Council, and specific findings made to approve the permit. Additionally, demolition of any historic resource is subject to additional review and the requirements of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

### **California Environmental Quality Act**

In addition to the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Guidelines for Implementing CEQA (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5) provide additional legal requirements for evaluation of

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historic properties for purposes of CEQA. CEQA applies to all discretionary projects, such as Planning Applications. It does not apply to building permits which are ministerial actions. CEQA is a state law requiring the evaluation of the potential impacts of proposed development projects on all aspects of the environment (including historic resources) by requiring agencies to prepare informational documents disclosing the environmental effects of a proposed project before it can be approved.

The classification of “historical resource” is applicable when the property meets the terms of the definitions in Section 21084.1 of the CEQA Statute and Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. “Historical Resources” under CEQA includes the following:

- Properties listed in or formally determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or listed in a local register of historic resources (which for the City of San Mateo, is the Historic Building Survey (1989) and the City’s General Plan Figure C/OS 5).
- Properties that are determined to be *eligible* for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources.

Determinations of historical significance require that several factors are considered including: the property's history (both construction and use); the history and context of the surrounding community; an association with important persons or uses; the number of resources associated with the property; the potential for the resources to be the work of a master architect, builder, craftsman, landscape gardener, or artist; the historical, architectural or landscape influences that have shaped the property’s design and its pattern of use; and alterations that have taken place, and lastly how these changes may have affected the property’s historical integrity. To be eligible for the California Register historic resources must possess both historic significance and retain historic integrity.

Under CEQA, evaluation of the potential for proposed projects to impact “historical resources” is

a two-step process: the first is to determine whether the property is an “historical resource” as defined in CEQA; and, if it is an “historical resource,” the second is to evaluate whether the action or project proposed by the sponsor would cause a “substantial adverse change” to the “historical resource.” The responses to these questions will have a bearing not only on the type of environmental documentation that will be necessary but also how the property will be analyzed.

Under CEQA, the City has a legal responsibility to make a determination as to whether a specific building is an “historical resource” if the building is subject to a planning application, unless no alterations are proposed to the structure. The City generally requires that an applicant or property pay for the full cost of a historic resource evaluation by an independent architectural historian hired directly by the City if there are substantial changes proposed to any structure that is over 45 years old.

### **List of Buildings in San Mateo that are Individually Eligible for the National Register**

#### Downtown Area

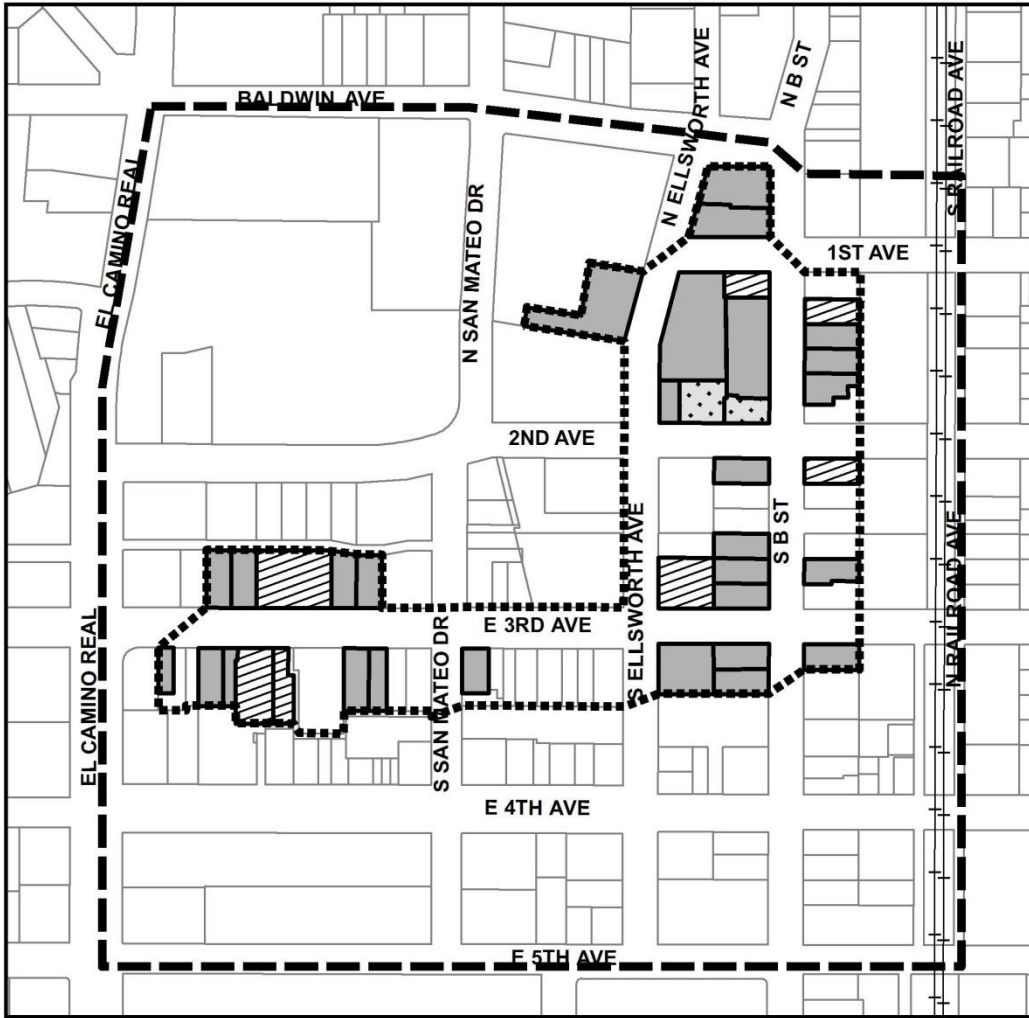
215-229 Second Ave  
36 E. Third Ave  
51 E. Third Ave  
205-221 E. Third Ave (220 E. Third Ave, URM Building)  
100 S. B. Street  
113 S. B. Street (URM Building)  
164 S. B. Street  
201 S. B. Street  
709 S. B. Street  
16 Baldwin Ave  
415 S. Claremont Street  
940 S. Claremont Street  
273 Railroad Ave

#### Outside the Downtown







353 N. Claremont Street  
5 N. Delaware Street  
12 N. Delaware Street

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40 N. Delaware Street  
501 N. Delaware Street  
506 N. Delaware Street  
2 S. Delaware Street  
45 S. Delaware Street  
150 N. El Camino Real  
212 S. El Camino Real  
2454 S. El Camino Real  
20 El Cerrito Ave  
100 N. Ellsworth Ave  
117 N. Ellsworth Ave  
202 N. Ellsworth Ave  
137 Elm Street  
245 Grand Ave  
510 S. Grant St  
510-512 S. Idaho St  
809 Lawrence Rd  
1312 Palm Ave  
1641 Palm Ave  
37 E. Santa Inez Ave  
225 Tilton Ave



**Legend**

-  Limits of Design Guideline Application
-  Historic District
-  (1) National Register - Individually Listed
-  (3/3D) National Register - Individually Eligible AND/OR as Contributor to District
-  (3D) National Register - Eligible as Contributor to District
-  Assessor Parcels