

**Chapter 6:
INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

OBJECTIVE 5: INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

To provide and encourage informational and educational programs to enhance public and City staff appreciation of older properties and increase the level of technical knowledge.

A historic preservation program is most effective with broad community support and basic technical historic preservation knowledge among property owners, developers and City staff.

The following policy and its related actions seek to promote this support and knowledge through marker programs, publications and other informational activities, and by better coordination of historic preservation information by City staff.

POLICY 5.1: INFORMATION AND EDUCATION.

The City will sponsor, and encourages others to sponsor, research and education programs and other activities which disseminate information on older properties and areas in Oakland, increase public appreciation of these properties and areas, and promote their preservation.

For these informational activities to be effective, a cooperative, communitywide effort will often be necessary. For example, support and participation by such groups as the Association of Realtors, Oakland Heritage Alliance, the Chamber of Commerce, neighborhood business organizations, and the Apartment House Association can help ensure that preservation information reaches investment property owners and developers.

Similarly, participation by neighborhood organizations will assist dissemination of information to residents.

ACTION 5.1.1: MARKER PROGRAM.

Establish a plaque or marker program for significant older properties including but not necessarily limited to Landmarks and Preservation Districts.

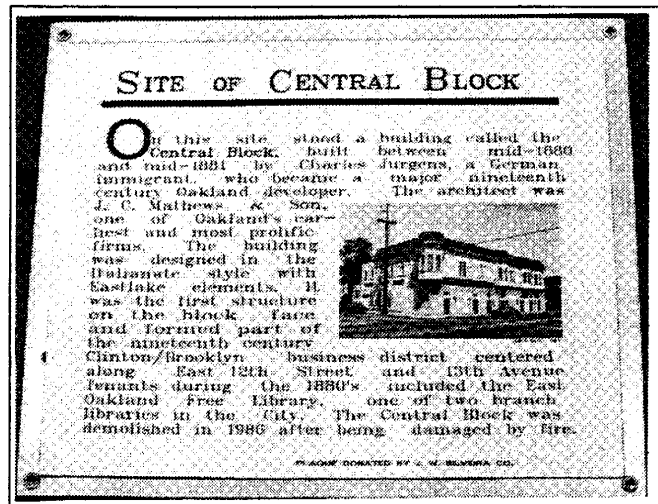
The markers would give basic information on the property, such as when it was built, who built it, and why it is significant. Markers made of material such as electrochemically etched aluminum alloy can easily and inexpensively include graphic information such as old photographs of the property or of persons or events related to the property.

Markers can greatly increase public awareness and appreciation of significant older properties by introducing these properties and their role in the history of the community to passersby who would normally not have this information. Markers can also support efforts to promote tourism or revitalize business districts. The very existence of markers shows that a community values its heritage and promotes a sense of stability, continuity, and civic pride.

Although Landmarks should have high priority for markers, markers should also eventually be installed within Preservation Districts and for the more important properties and areas identified by the Intensive Survey. Priority might also be given to markers located along walking tour or guidebook routes (see Action 5.1.6 discussion).

An attractive marker can usually be manufactured for less than \$100.00 plus design and installation costs and costs for any special features, such as pedestals. Funding for markers could be raised, at least in part, from private donors, including business and service organizations, with the donor's name included on the marker.

A prototypical plaque design has already been developed by the Landmarks Board, but may need refinement. The design should also be confirmed by the City Planning Commission and by City Council resolution and endorsed by any groups willing to help fund the program.



Marker for Site of Central Block, 1102 East 12th Street. Oakland Landmark No. 60. Installed in 1990 by the Landmarks Board and property owner as a prototype for a citywide Landmark plaque program.

ACTION 5.1.2: PRESENT LANDMARK CERTIFICATES AT CITY COUNCIL.

Enhance the publicity and prestige of Landmark designations by initiating a practice of presenting Landmark certificates to property owners at City Council meetings following designations.

The certificate program is described in the Technical Report, Chapter 4, Section F.2. Property owners are now asked to pick up the certificates from the City Planning Department.

ACTION 5.1.3: PRESERVATION DISTRICT CERTIFICATES.

Expand the existing Landmark certificate program by issuing certificates to properties contributing to Preservation Districts.

Certificates are presently not awarded to Preservation Districts.

ACTION 5.1.4: HERITAGE PROPERTY CERTIFICATES.

Amend the existing certificate of merit program by awarding the certificates to Heritage Properties and renaming them Heritage Property certificates.

As discussed in the Technical Report, Chapter 4, Section F.4, certificate of merit criteria are not well defined.

ACTION 5.1.5: DISSEMINATION OF HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY.

Improve community dissemination of Historical and Architectural Inventory results. Notify owners of Intensive Survey results for properties receiving existing or potential ratings of A, B or C or found to contribute or potentially contribute to an Area of Primary or Secondary Importance.

Most Oaklanders are not aware that the Inventory exists. Action 5.1.5 will also help integrate the Inventory with other community planning activities.

ACTION 5.1.6: WALKING TOURS AND GUIDEBOOKS.

Continue support and sponsorship of existing walking tour programs. Develop additional walking tours, guidebooks, and other publications based on the Intensive Survey and on other information sources.

Walking tours of historically or architecturally significant Oakland neighborhoods are already being conducted by the Oakland Tours Program, Oakland Heritage Alliance, the Art Deco Society and other groups (see Technical Report, Chapter 4, Section G.7). The City should continue its sponsorship of the Oakland Tours Program and consider developing additional tours in cooperation with other groups, especially as new areas are completed by the Intensive Survey. Guidebooks could supplement the tours.

Developing the walking tours and guidebooks in consultation with the Chamber of Commerce, the Oakland Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Oakland Association of Realtors, and other business organizations should be investigated. These groups may find them useful promotions and may help with funding.

ACTION 5.1.7: IMPROVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION INFORMATION AVAILABILITY WITHIN CITY DEPARTMENTS.

- (a) Improve the availability of historic preservation information to relevant City departments, including the Building Services Department, the Office of Community Development, the Code Compliance Division, the Office of Economic Development and Employment, the Office of Marketing and Public Information, the Office of Parks and Recreation, and the Office of General Services and to members of the public who work with these departments.
- (b) Consider a historic preservation coordinator . Consider incorporating Designated Historic Properties and the Historical and Architectural Inventory database into the proposed citywide land use database.

Projects involving significant older properties often involve design, construction or building code issues requiring the knowledge of historic preservation specialists. City staff members who work with projects and programs impacting these properties often have only limited historic preservation knowledge and are often unable to adequately advise developers and the public of historic preservation considerations.

A historic preservation coordinator or officer could improve the availability of historic preservation information to City departments and the public. The coordinator would provide information on such subjects as the Historical and Architectural Inventory, preservation regulations and assistance programs, building code issues related to historic preservation, and appropriate design techniques.

A citywide land-use database is now being investigated. The coordinator's functions would be facilitated by incorporating historic property designations and the Historical and Architectural Inventory database (Action 1.1.3) into the land-use database.

ACTION 5.1.8: DESIGN ASSISTANCE AND REFERRAL.

Develop and support design assistance and referral services for older properties which promote retention of Character-Defining Elements.

These services would expand the project-related development and design assistance provided under Action 3.6.2. into a more general and proactive informational program, that would not be limited just to project applicants.

ACTION 5.1.9: PRESERVATION TRADE FAIRS.

Sponsor preservation trade fairs.

The trade fairs would extend Action 5.1.8's design assistance programs into the broader community. The fairs could be held once a year, or on some other regular basis, and could invite preservation craftspeople, designers, and suppliers to display and demonstrate their products and services.

ACTION 5.1.10: REHABILITATION TRAINING AND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS.

Develop and support rehabilitation training and apprentice programs for older properties emphasizing techniques for retaining or restoring Character-Defining Elements.

Because historic preservation rehabilitation is labor intensive, it is well suited for addressing Oakland's unemployment. Similar programs exist in other cities, often in cooperation with local labor organizations.

The Oakland Unified School District and Peralta College District have offered courses on new construction. The City should encourage the Districts to also provide courses on building rehabilitation.

ACTION 5.1.11: OAKLAND HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE CURRICULUM IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Support the Oakland Unified School District's efforts to develop Oakland history, geography and architecture curriculum in the public schools.

The school district has been investigating establishment of such a curriculum. The City could support this effort through a City Council resolution or similar action formally endorsing the curriculum and by making materials from the Intensive Survey, the Oakland History Room of the Oakland Public Library, and walking tour and guidebook programs available to the District.

ACTION 5.1.12: CITY RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND ARCHIVES PROGRAM.

Establish a City records management and archives program.

The City has records and other documents needed to research older properties and to prepare applications for Landmark, National Register and other historic property designations. These records are now often difficult to use. They include: original building plans and permits; old photographs, maps, tax assessment rolls and block books; and contracts and other documents for the construction of City facilities. The records are now scattered among such departments as the City Clerk, the Oakland Museum, the Office of Public Works, the Code Compliance Section, the Library's Oakland History Room, the City Planning Department and the Fire Department. Some records are in disarray and virtually inaccessible, even to staff. Some are poorly stored and deteriorated due to combinations of age, moisture, extreme temperatures and frequent handling.

There is no complete listing or inventory of records, making it difficult for potential users to know they exist.

To help address these and other deficiencies, the City Clerk's Office is working with other City departments to develop a City records management and archives program. a Friends of the Archives Committee is being established to promote public participation in the program.

Structuring the program to accommodate unwanted records from other agencies should be considered for records important to the City of Oakland for historic property research or other purposes. The City Planning Department has already acquired old Alameda County tax assessment records relevant to Oakland to assist the Historical and Architectural Inventory.

ACTION 5.1.13: REHABILITATION PUBLICATIONS.

Continue, and update where necessary, existing City sponsored rehabilitation publications and encourage their distribution. Initiate new publications as appropriate.

Existing publications include the award-winning books Rehab Right and Retrofit Right. Rehab Right reviews maintenance and rehabilitation issues common to old houses and recommends cost-effective ways to address these issues consistent with historic architectural character. Retrofit Right identifies effective energy conservation measures which maintain the architectural integrity of old houses and discusses these according to architectural style.

The City should establish ways to periodically update both publications, as needed, and to make them available free or at reduced cost to at least low-income Oakland residents. Translations of both Rehab Right and Retrofit Right into Spanish and Chinese should be investigated. At one time, copies of Rehab Right had been distributed by the City's Office of Community Development to residential rehabilitation loan applicants. Resumption of this practice should be considered.

A version of Rehab Right for commercial buildings should be investigated. Also useful would be a free handout promoting building rehabilitation methods and listing sources of technical advice to property owners and developers.

ACTION 5.1.14: DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION BOOKSTORE.

Consider establishing a design and construction bookstore at the Office of Planning and Building's Central Permit Counter that would sell preservation-related publications.

The Office of Planning and Building is investigating such a bookstore at the Central Permit Counter. The store would sell copies of the Uniform Building Code, related codes, and other design and construction publications. Including preservation-related design and construction publications in the store's inventory should be considered. Examples include the State Historical Building Code, Rehab Right and Retrofit Right (see Action 5.1.13) and technical publications by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the California Preservation Foundation and the National Park Service's Technical Preservation Services Division.