



# Historic Resources

CHAPTER

# 5

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## 5.1 Downtown San Rafael: Historic Context

**The historical development of San Rafael’s Downtown forms a context from which the existing and potential historic resources can be evaluated and preserved. Downtown has evolved dramatically over several centuries, reinforcing San Rafael’s prominence as a cultural, civic, and economic center of Marin County**

### Introduction

The area that is now the City of San Rafael was once the site of several Coast Miwok villages, including the village of Nanaguani along San Rafael Canal, inhabited by the Aguasto<sup>1</sup> tribe. Originally planned as an asistencia (hospital) for Native Americans who became ill at Mission Dolores in present day San Francisco, San Rafael Arcángel gained full mission status in 1822<sup>2</sup>. The Mission was largely abandoned by 1840, and ruins of the buildings were removed in 1870<sup>3</sup>.

San Rafael grew gradually after California statehood in 1850, and was named seat of Marin County in 1851. Over the following decades San Rafael entered a period of accelerated growth. The streetscape of San Rafael’s commercial Downtown continued to develop along a typical pattern of regional growth from the late 1860s to the 1890s, when the advances in transportation technologies and expansion in services determined the location for housing and businesses. The North Pacific Coast Railroad (NPC) was established in 1871, warranting the construction of a new depot on Tamalpais Avenue

**Figure 5.1 (Left) Mission San Rafael Arcángel, circa 1949**

The buildings that stand today include reconstructions from 1919 and 1949. Image source: Marin History Museum.

**Figure 5.2 (Right) The original 1884 depot that was replaced with a new depot in 1929.**

Image source: Northwestern Pacific Railroad Depot, 1976 (Historical/ Architectural Survey Form, Charles Hall Page & Associates, Inc., 1976)



between Third and Fourth Streets in 1884. Although altered, the depot stands today in its original location and orientation to the active rail lines running north and south through San Rafael.

A faster and more reliable electric train service was ultimately introduced in 1903, encouraging a modest hospitality industry of summer and weekend visitors that included the opening of several hotels, saloons, and specialty shops<sup>4</sup>. By 1900, Fourth Street had developed into a premier shopping center, with numerous businesses opening on A and B Street in the blocks below Fourth Street. These early commercial corridors contained a mix of one-story single-business establishments and multistory mixed-use buildings. Commercial buildings aligned with turn-of-the century regional trends of Victorian-period residential architectural styles, including bay windows, narrow storefronts, and decorative architectural features<sup>5</sup>.

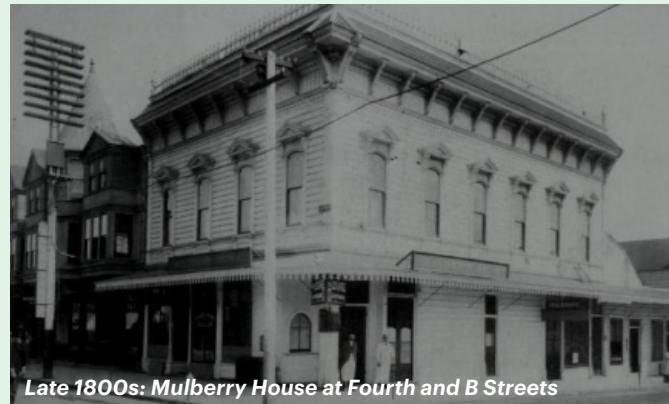
An influx of new residents came to San Rafael following the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire, triggering new residential development surrounding the Downtown core. The expansion of these neighborhoods created a foundation for the mixed residential and commercial

areas in what is now the West End Village, and eventually into the Gerstle Park residential neighborhood at the south. This era also saw an increase in civic development, including the Classical Revival-style San Rafael Improvement Club and the San Rafael Public Library at the corner of Fifth and E Streets<sup>6</sup>.

The opening of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1937 and the increasing popularity of the automobile created new connectivity between Marin County and San Francisco, effectively ending the rail transit era. The last commuter train departed from San Rafael in 1941, the same year a viaduct for US-101 was completed over San Rafael Canal<sup>7</sup>. This raised freeway alignment through the heart of San Rafael alongside the railroad tracks created a visual and physical barrier between east and central San Rafael. Though San Rafael was still a satellite of San Francisco, it had now entered a period of increasing prosperity with the town's first high rise building, the Albert Building, which was completed a few years earlier in 1930. San Rafael was also now home to several opera houses and theaters including El Camino Theater, Gordon's Opera House, and the Rafael Theatre.



Late 1800s: Building at Fourth and C Streets



Late 1800s: Mulberry House at Fourth and B Streets

**Figure 5.3 Historic photos tracing Downtown's evolution: 1800s**

Image source: Marin County History Museum.

During World War II the Bay Area became a major hub for wartime industry, bringing waves of migration to San Rafael. This stark increase in population necessitated a new type housing development, resulting in the construction of housing tracts and subdivisions outside of Downtown and into the eastern and northern portions of San Rafael. These events refocused Downtown development to provide locally oriented goods and services to many working families now residing in San Rafael. Even as the automobile became more ubiquitous, neighborhoods like the West End developed a “village” like character of small shops and residences. This period also saw the beginnings of larger auto-focused commercial developments, like those seen east of the freeway at Montecito Plaza<sup>8</sup>. Following WWII, housing started to increase, and the Sun Valley, Terra Linda, Glenwood, Peacock Gap and Marinwood neighborhoods were developed on former ranch lands from 1953 through the 1970’s.

In the years immediately after the war, Fourth Street fortified its place as the commercial and cultural center of Marin County. Downtown San Rafael continued to prosper, as department stores, restaurants, the County Courthouse, City Hall and even the first Kaiser Permanente clinic in town, combined with churches, nearby residences, and emerging postwar industries to define the modern city. The explosive growth occurring in San Rafael at the time can be seen in shifts of building materials, techniques, and styles, extant in the Wells Fargo Bank building at the south-west corner of Fourth and B Streets.

The built environment of Downtown has continued to evolve with the changing commercial and residential needs of San Rafael, facilitated by the formation of the San Rafael Redevelopment Agency which influenced street improvements, a building facade restoration program, and the development of parking structures and multifamily housing developments.

From the mid-twentieth century to the present, Downtown San Rafael continues to be centered on the Fourth and B Streets commercial corridors, which still display a great variety of period architecture from the 1860s through the mid-twentieth century embodied in its stores, banks and restaurants. Initially centered on the Mission and maritime routes to San Francisco, San Rafael became, in turn, a railroad depot, a regional wartime economic center, an auto-oriented county seat, and the commercial and cultural center of Marin County. The changing character of Downtown is embodied in its varied architectural forms which continue to demonstrate the course of San Rafael’s development.

Additional information may be found in Appendix V: Historic Resources - Additional Information.

#### Endnotes for Section 5.1:

1. Marin County History Museum, *Images of America: Early San Rafael*, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 9.
2. “History of San Rafael,” San Rafael Chamber, website. Accessed April 24, 2019. <http://srchamber.com/history-of-san-rafael/>; and, “History of Mission San Rafael Arcángel,” California Missions Foundation, website. Accessed April 24, 2019. <http://californiamissionsfoundation.org/mission-san-rafael/>.
3. California Missions Foundation. (2017, September 03). San Rafael Arcángel. Retrieved July 29, 2020, from <http://californiamissionsfoundation.org/mission->

[san-rafael/](http://californiamissionsfoundation.org/mission-)

4. Marin County History Museum, *Images of America: Early San Rafael*, 37.
5. City and County of San Francisco Planning Department, *Neighborhood Commercial Buildings: Historic Context Statement 1865-1965-Draft for Public Review*, February 17, 2016.
6. Marin County History Museum, *Images of America: Early San Rafael*, 47.
7. Marin County History Museum, *Images of America: Modern San Rafael: 1940-2000*, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2008), 14.
8. *Images of America: Modern San Rafael: 1940-2000*, 9.



**Figure 5.4** Historic photos tracing Downtown's evolution: early to mid-1900s

Image source: Marin County History Museum



## 5.2 Existing Historic Preservation Policies and Regulations

**The City of San Rafael has developed several policies to protect historic resources that are outlined in the Historic Preservation Ordinance adopted in 1978, and reflected in the General Plan.**

### Historic Preservation Ordinance and Policies

The General Plan and the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance outlines goals and policies for Historic Preservation.

Adopted in 1978, the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 2.18 of the San Rafael Municipal Code) establishes guidelines regarding remodeling or demolishing historic buildings listed as landmarks, and those within a historic district. The ordinance is implemented by the Design Review Board and Planning Commission, and the City Council has the authority to add or eliminate properties or districts to the Historical/Architectural Survey.

While comprehensive, the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance lacks several ordinance provisions that are recommended by the California Office of Historic Preservation, including:

- A provision for the creation of a local historic preservation commission and the responsibilities and powers given to that commission;
- Preservation incentives; and
- Definitions of key terms used in the ordinance.

### Key Issues

The following issues were identified as part of the Precise Plan effort:

- Prior to the Downtown Precise Plan, the City lacked a formal historic context statement which made it difficult to determine the historic significance of properties. Since the completion of the survey and subsequent evaluations, the City has developed an historic context statement which can be used for further or future study.
- Past surveys had also lacked clarity about the status of historic resources and had not been updated in the recommended five-year interval.
- Several resources were listed as requiring additional research, and listed structures' disposition was not maintained.
- The Historic Preservation Ordinance (dating to the mid-1970's) is not fully aligned with current procedures. The ordinance is also not aligned with current CEQA Guidelines defining historic resources.
- The Planning Commission's past review of historic projects has been hampered from a lack of formal training on the subject.

- The Historic Preservation Ordinance does not formally require the use of the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation (SISR) when evaluating projects, resulting in less predictable outcomes. Discretionary projects that comply with the SISR are often categorically exempt from CEQA.
- The Historic Preservation Ordinance lacks incentives for historic preservation.



**Figure 5.5 San Rafael Public Library**  
Image source: City of San Rafael

## 5.3 Survey and Inventory of Historic Resources

**This section discusses the updated survey of Downtown's historic resources and key findings.**

### 2019-2020 Survey and Inventory Update

In 1977 the City of San Rafael conducted a survey of older, architecturally significant buildings to determine the number and quality of historic structures within the City. Known as the Historical/Architectural Survey, the work was completed using the California Office of Historic Preservation standards and criteria. The survey was last updated in 1986 by Charles Hall Page and Associates and San Rafael City staff. The current San Rafael Historical/Architectural Survey includes approximately 305 buildings and sites, many of which are located within the Plan Area.

As part of the Precise Plan process, the consultant team completed a survey of properties that were not surveyed or evaluated in 1977/ 1986. This included properties that are now over 50 years old or were excluded from the 1977/ 1986 survey and inventory. While the preservation standards have not changed significantly from the time the previous surveys were conducted, the number of buildings up for consideration did increase, as the City has grown older. With volunteer assistance from members of San Rafael Heritage, a local advocacy group for the identification and protection of historic resources, survey field work was conducted for 572 properties, including:

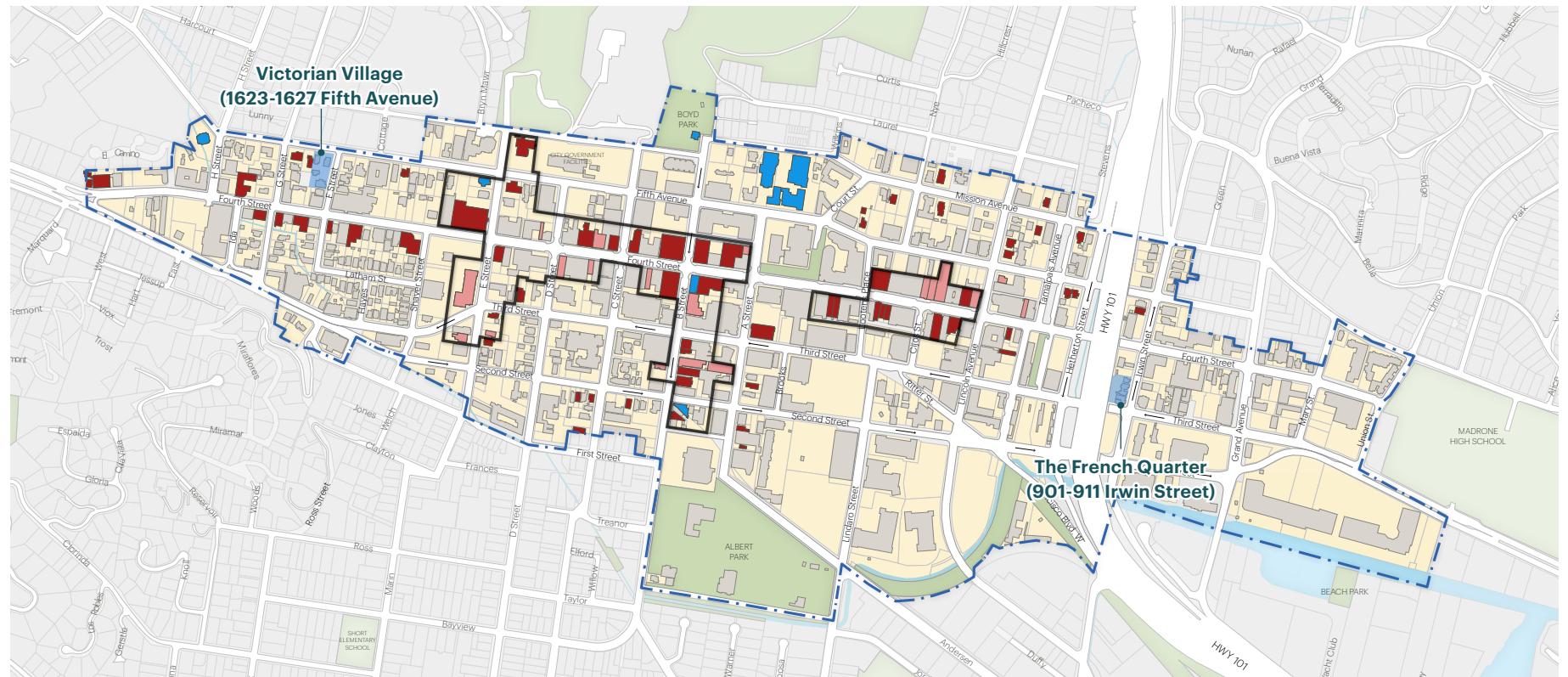
- 79 properties already listed in the San Rafael Historical/Architectural Survey (Survey), 41 of which were determined to need re-evaluation;

- 344 properties with listed construction dates of 1969 or earlier; and
- 149 properties without listed construction dates, for which additional research was required.

A field assessment was made for each property, documenting its apparent build date, condition and level of integrity. The survey focused on areas having a high probability of having potential resources, and a higher likelihood of seeing redevelopment in the near future. Based on the survey's findings, the City of San Rafael made determinations to further investigate 159 surveyed properties that demonstrated potential as historic landmarks or district contributors.

Of these, 90 properties were determined to be eligible historic resources, and two potentially eligible historic districts were identified. In addition to resources identified in the survey, there are six historic structures (a total of nine buildings) previously designated as individual historic landmarks and two previously designated historic districts within the Plan Area. Figure 5.6 shows the newly identified historic resources in the Plan Area and their status. More information on the surveyed resources is in Appendix V: Historic Resources - Additional Information.

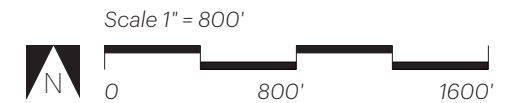




**Figure 5.6 Existing Downtown historic resources and newly identified resources (2019-2020 survey)**

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- Existing historic landmarks designated prior to 2019-20 survey [9]
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20 survey [2]
- Eligible as an individual resource in 2019-20 survey [71]
- Eligible as a contributing resource in 2019-20 survey [19]
- Potentially eligible historic districts [2]



# Downtown Sub-Areas: Existing Historic Character and Role in Downtown's Evolution

**This section analyzes each of the four Downtown sub-areas in terms of how existing historic resources influence neighborhood character, in order to guide recommendations for future development in each sub-area.**

## Downtown Gateway Sub-Area

The Downtown Gateway sub-area is bounded on the east by US-101 and on the west by Lootens and Lindaro Streets. The area runs north-south from the offices and residences on Mission Avenue, to the auto-oriented businesses along Second Street.

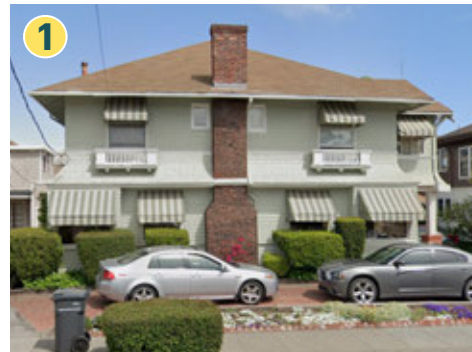
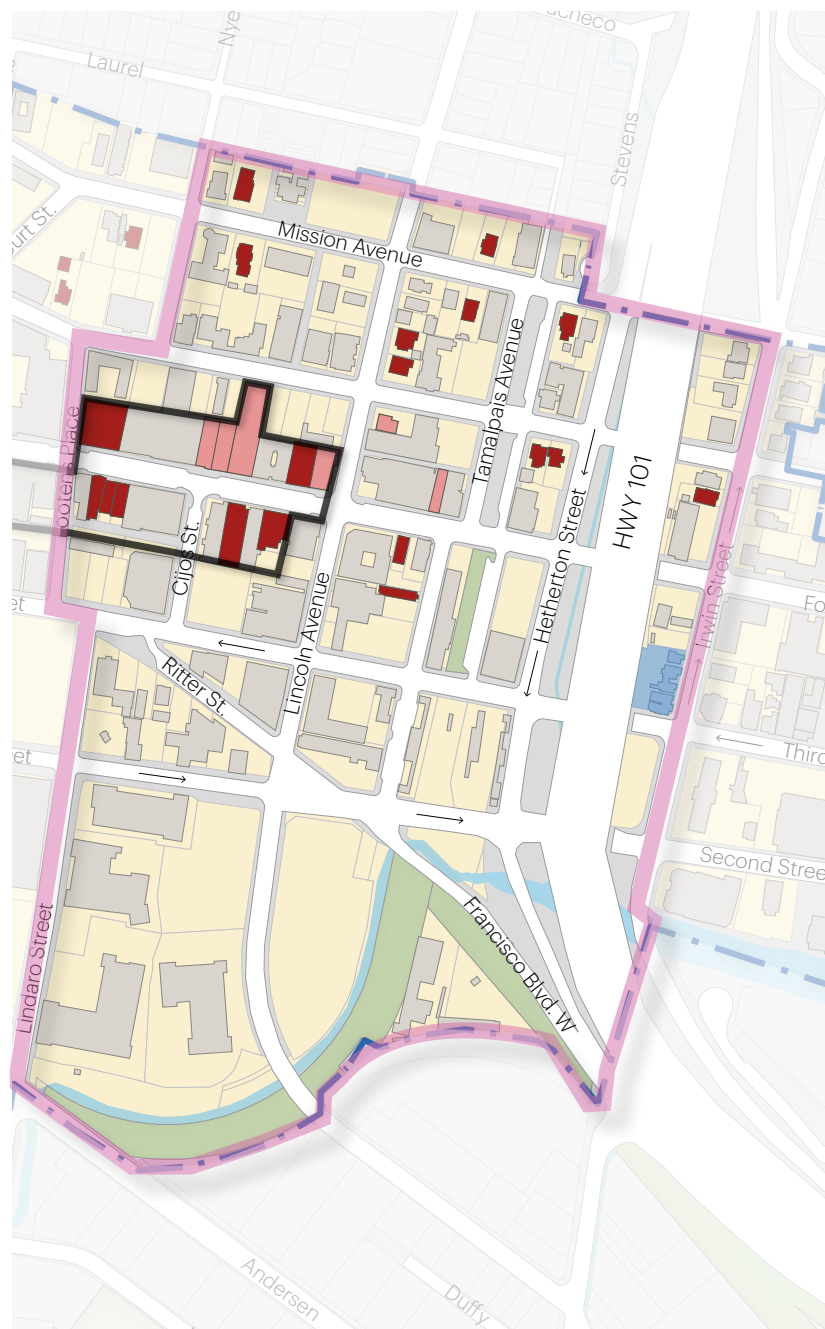
Centered on the former rail line to Petaluma, this area contains some of the oldest structures in San Rafael, developing almost simultaneously with the denser Downtown Core to its west. The high number of commercial storefronts mixed with wood and stucco residences further north give the area its transitional character, between the commercial buildings to the west and the residential neighborhoods north of Mission Avenue.

The south-east section of the sub-area is centered on the SMART Station itself, abutting the freeway. It consists mostly of one to two-story block-form structures with some three-story structures scattered along Fourth street. Newer construction is seen along the Third and Second Street couplet, which abuts the five and six-story developments just outside the area to the south. Lot sizes

in this area are generally larger than in the other, older parts of Downtown.

The northern section of this sub-area has residential house-form buildings on larger lots, set back from the street with ample setbacks between homes. Fourth Street bisects the neighborhood east to west, with house-form residential and office spaces to the north and mixed commercial block-form buildings with retail and services to the south.

The Downtown Gateway sub-area overlaps with the eastern portions of the potentially eligible East Downtown historic district. Figure 5.8 shows the existing and newly identified historic resources in this sub-area and their status.



**Figure 5.7** Examples of historic resources in the Downtown Gateway sub-area (right)

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- 1 1110 Lincoln Avenue
- 2 888 Fourth Street
- 3 907 Mission Avenue
- 4 634 Fifth Avenue



**Figure 5.8** Status of historic resources in the Downtown Gateway sub-area (left)

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- Downtown Gateway sub-area
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20 [1]
- Existing landmark buildings designated prior to 2019-20 [0]
- Eligible as an individual resource [21]
- Eligible as a contributing resource [4]
- Potentially eligible historic district

### Downtown Core Sub-Area

The Downtown Core is bounded on the north by Mission Avenue, in the south by First Street and extends from Lootens in the east to E Street on the west.

Centered on the intersection of Fourth and B Streets, this is the oldest and most heavily developed area within Downtown, with a mix of house and block-form structures on smaller lots, with commercial frontages and few setbacks between buildings. Stucco and brick storefronts predominate, with few front yards or family residences.

Moving west along Third and Fourth Streets, building heights shift to one- and two-story mid-century block-form buildings with storefronts. Parts of the Downtown Core were affected by the 1957 fire, where we now see mid-century block-form construction on larger lots.

The former Northwestern Pacific Railroad Station and tracks ran from Anderson Street onto what is now Second Street. While the tracks are now gone, they are reflected in the footprints of buildings along Second and B streets. This portion of the Downtown Core is less dense and is made up of mixed residential and commercial spaces with a number of single-family homes.

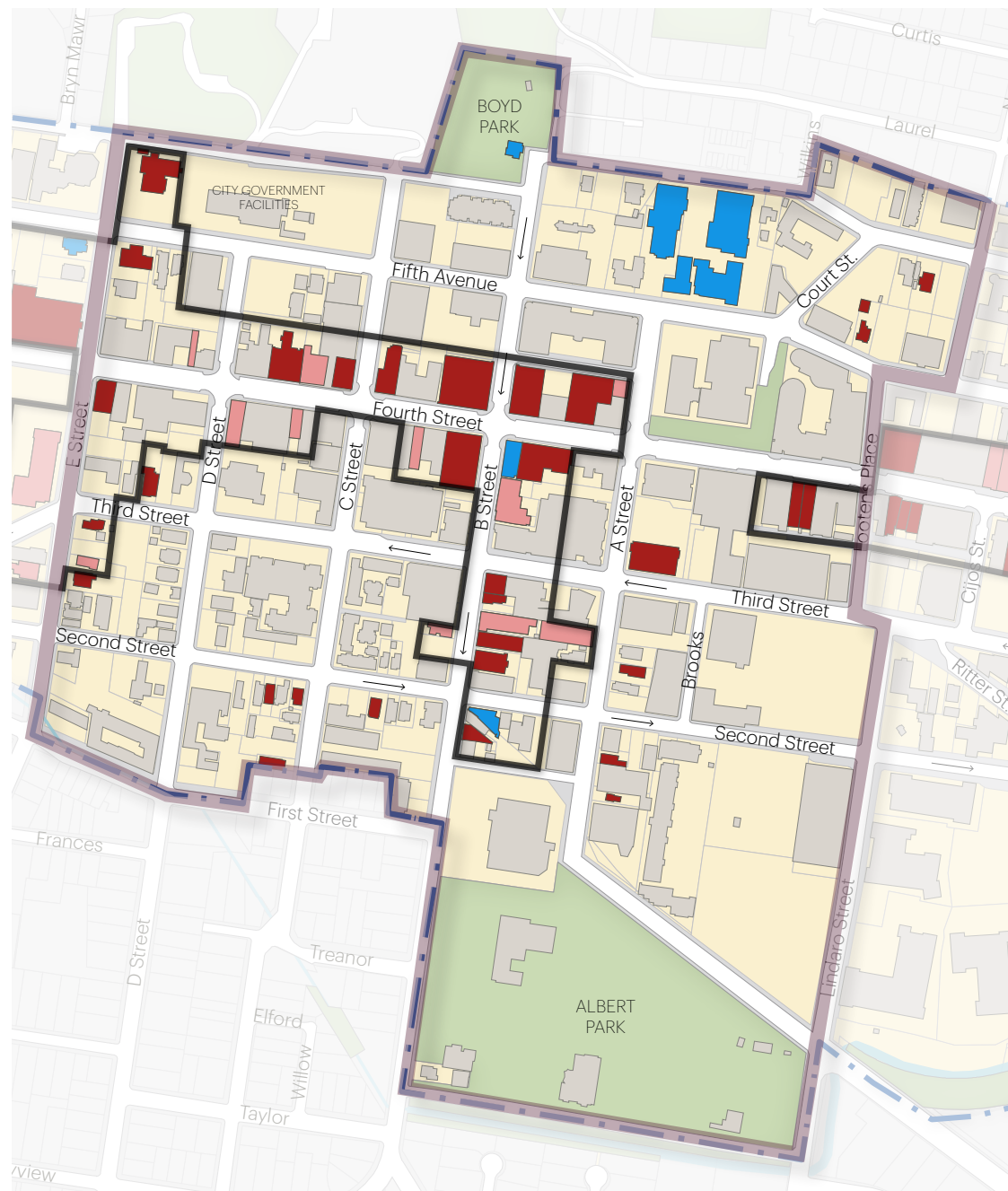
The Downtown Core overlaps with the central and southern portions of the potentially eligible West Downtown historic district as well as the western end of the potentially eligible East Downtown historic district. Figure 5.10 shows the existing and newly identified historic resources in this sub-area and their status.

**Figure 5.9 Examples of historic resources in the Downtown Core sub-area**

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- 1** 1307 Second Street
- 2** 1022 E Street
- 3** 1244 Fourth Street
- 4** 1118 Fourth Street





**Figure 5.10 Status of historic resources in the Downtown Core sub-area**

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- Downtown Core sub-area
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20 [0]
- Existing landmark buildings designated prior to 2019-20 [7]
- Eligible as an individual resource [35]
- Eligible as a contributing resource [13]
- Potentially eligible historic district

### West End Village Sub-Area

The West End Village extends along the north side of Fourth Street from E Street on the east to the intersection of Fourth Street and West End Avenue. In the south, the area’s border runs along Second Street, cutting north to exclude Latham and Hayes Streets.

The West End Village is characterized by 1950s-60s retail construction including original brick, tile, and stucco storefronts as well as single-family residences along G Street. Centered on Fourth Street, this western gateway to Downtown is defined by auto-oriented construction including many single-story mid-century, modern storefronts with designated parking.

The retail areas along Fourth Street are largely contiguous with portions of the Downtown Core to the west, dominated by one- and two-story block-form buildings but including some three-story construction mixed with smaller house-form buildings.

The West End Village overlaps with the western most portions of the potentially eligible West Downtown historic district. Figure 5.12 shows the existing and newly identified historic resources in this sub-area and their status.

### Montecito Commercial Sub-Area

The Montecito Commercial Area is bounded on the west by US-101 and on the east by Union Street. The area extends north to Fifth Avenue and is bordered by San Rafael Canal to the south.

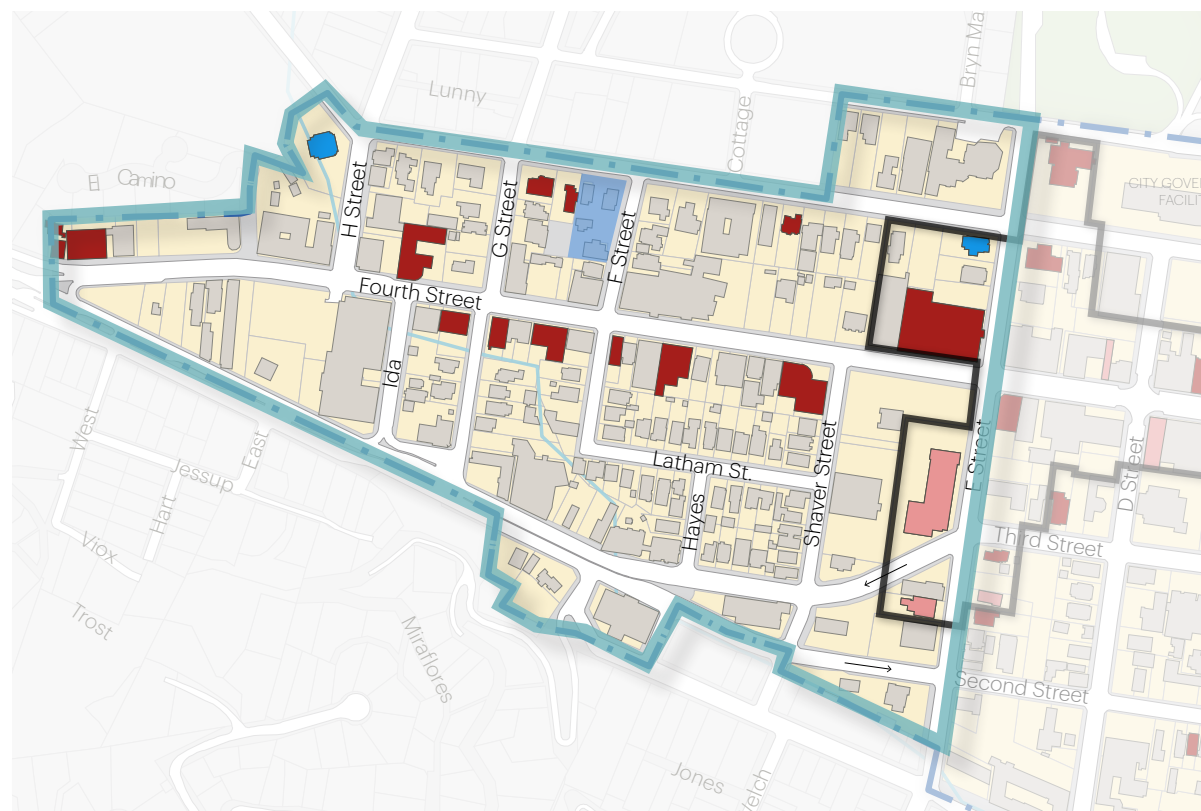
Because of its location east of the former railroad tracks and modern highway, the area is much less dense than the Downtown areas to the west. Most structures are built on large lots with large surface parking lots. The north end of the sub-area along Fifth Avenue begins to transition to the more residential neighborhoods to the north and east, containing smaller retail spaces, some restaurants, and some single-family residences. The eastern most portions are mixed-use and abut San Rafael Fire Station 52. Figure 5.13 shows the extents of the Montecito Commercial sub-area. The 2019-20 survey did not find any potential resources in this sub-area, and it does not overlap with any of the potentially eligible historic districts.

**Figure 5.11** Examples of existing historic structures in the West End Village

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- 1 1848 Fourth Street
- 2 1533 Fourth Street
- 3 1617 Fourth Street

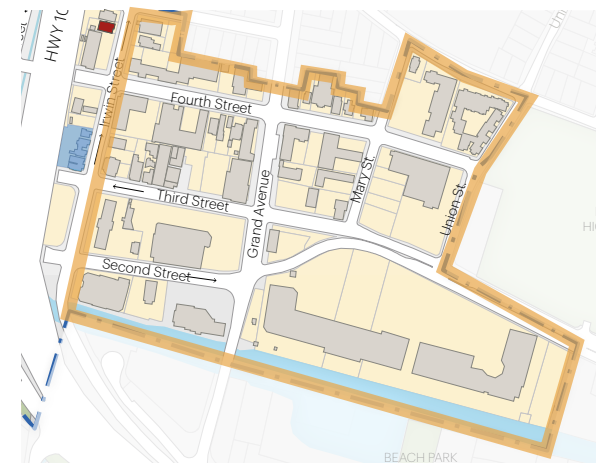




**Figure 5.12 Status of historic resources in the West End Village sub-area**

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- Downtown Core sub-area
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20 [1]
- Existing landmark buildings designated prior to 2019-20 [2]
- Eligible as an individual resource [15]
- Eligible as a contributing resource [2]
- Potentially eligible historic district



**Figure 5.13 Montecito Commercial: the survey revealed no potential historic resources in this sub-area**

Source: Garavaglia Architecture

- Montecito Commercial sub-area
- Existing historic districts designated prior to 2019-20 [0]
- Existing landmark buildings designated prior to 2019-20 [0]
- Eligible as an individual resource [0]
- Eligible as a contributing resource [0]
- Potentially eligible historic district [none]

## 5.4 Potentially Eligible Historic Districts

### **The 2019-20 survey of Downtown's historic resources identified two areas that meet state and federal eligibility criteria as historic districts.**

Historic districts are defined as a group of structures assembled around unifying historical significance with a defined boundary of contributing structures. Per guidelines established by the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and National Park Service (NPS), a designated historic district can be considered a historic resource for CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) analysis. All properties within a historic district are subject to some level of review depending on the type of project, the building in question, and its location within the district. As a result of the 2019-20 survey, two areas were identified that meet CEQA criteria as eligible historic districts for the Plan Area. These are shown in Figure 5.6 and described below.

#### **West Downtown Historic District**

##### **Description**

The West Downtown historic district cuts across the West End Village and Downtown Core sub-areas. It runs along Fourth Street from Shaver Street to A Street and along B Street from First Street to Mission Avenue. This potentially eligible historic district is characterized by heavy foot traffic and a high density of retail and dining businesses, and is centered on the intersection of B and Fourth Streets, an area of major historic significance, and home to the Marin County Courthouse till as late as 1971.

The area now contains many banking institutions, retail shops and restaurants along B Street. This is the most built-up portion of the historic district with several multistory structures on Fourth Street. Along Fourth Street east of B Street, there is a nearly continuous zone of one to two-story commercial structures. The Fourth Street corridor is dominated by pedestrian traffic with most east-west auto traffic directed along the one-way couplet on Second and Third Streets, just south of the district.

The southern portion of this district extends down B Street to the Former Northwestern Pacific Railroad tracks, the footprint of which can still be seen at the intersection of B and Second Streets. The eastern end of the district runs north along E Street to the intersection of Fifth Avenue, including the San Rafael Public Library. This potentially eligible historic district is an area of mixed-use retail, financial, commercial, and dining structures that embodies the development of Downtown San Rafael over the last century and more.

##### **Character-Defining Features**

- Predominantly block-form buildings;
- Ground floor retail with occupied upper floors;
- Full lot coverage, creating a continuous street wall;
- Ground floors generally taller than upper stories;



- Recessed entryways;
- Transoms and awnings;
- Street-fronting fenestration, with a high number of bay windows and corner turrets; and
- Limited landscaping.

## East Downtown Historic District

### Description

The East Downtown historic district covers portions of the Downtown Gateway and Downtown Core sub-areas. It runs along Fourth Street, from Court Street to Lincoln Avenue, and extending south to Commercial Place, a small alley parallel to Fourth, and north to the south side of Fifth Avenue. It encompasses a smaller area characterized by heavy foot traffic and a high density of retail and dining businesses.

This potentially eligible district covers both sides of the 800 block of Fourth Street, being the eastern end of the nearly contiguous Fourth Street corridor. It is broadly similar in character to the larger West Downtown historic district, containing a mix of one and two-story commercial block-form buildings with one larger three story building on the south-west corner of Fourth Street and Lincoln Avenue. It also contains several house-form structures

featuring wooden facades and bay windows above commercial storefronts.

Similar to the rest of Fourth Street, this potentially eligible historic district is pedestrian-oriented with auto traffic directed south along the Second and Third Street couplet. Traffic becomes heavier near Lincoln Avenue and beyond in the proximity of US-101 and the SMART station, giving it a transitional character that can be seen in the larger lots and transit-oriented businesses bordering the district.

### Character-Defining Features

- Predominantly block-form buildings;
- Ground floor retail, with limited upper floor occupancy;
- Full-lot coverage, creating a continuous street wall;
- Recessed entryways;
- Stucco, wood panel, and brick storefronts;
- Awnings, canopies, some transoms;
- Street-fronting fenestration, with a high number of bay windows;
- Rounded parapets, cornices; and
- Limited landscaping.



**Figure 5.14** *Examples of historic resources in the potentially eligible historic districts*

- 1** 881 Fourth Street
- 2** 925 Fourth Street

## 5.5 Recommendations for Historic Preservation Ordinance

**This section outlines recommendations and additions to San Rafael's Historic Preservation Ordinance, in accordance with the guidelines provided by the California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP).**

The California Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) serves as the governing body for federal and state mandated historic preservation programs. OHP oversees incentive programs for historic preservation, and provides tools and guidelines for local municipalities to further the identification and protection of historic resources. It does not have direct purview over local preservation ordinances, but provides guidelines based on proven effective processes and procedures for California cities with goals to protect historic resources.

The Historic Preservation Ordinance of the San Rafael Municipal Code (Chapter 2.18) follows a majority of the OHP recommended guidelines, but is lacking in a few provisions. The Precise Plan recommends the following improvements to the ordinance.

### ■ Project Review

The OHP recommends the establishment of a Historic Preservation Commission, outside of the Planning Commission. However, this may not be feasible in all cases. In San Rafael, the powers and duties over historic resources are currently assigned to the Planning Commission, but does not include provisions for proper education or training on historic resources. The Precise

Plan recommends that the City pursue one of the following, as feasible:

- A full Historic Preservation Commission as recommended by OHP; or
- An advisory committee made up of a Design Review Board member, a Planning Commission member and an Architectural Historian who has up-to-date training on current preservation standards; or
- An on-call professionally qualified Architectural Historian familiar with CEQA compliance, for additional analysis required for projects related to historic resources.

### ■ Incentives

Incentives should be included in the Historic Preservation Ordinance that encourage stewardship of historic resources, including recognition. Possible incentives include:

- Use of the California Historical Building Code (CHBC);
- National Trust Preservation Funds;
- Government agency grants and loans such as revolving loans, Community Development Block (CDBG) grants, and HUD programs;

- Historic Rehabilitation Financing Program;
- Preservation easements;
- Permit fee waivers: reduction or elimination of building plan check or permit fees where feasible;
- Tax credits such as Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits, Mills Act credits, certified district, seismic, ADA, etc.;
- Setback reductions for additions to existing historic resources to minimize impacts to the resource; and
- Official recognition of landmark properties, historic districts, and merit properties.

#### ■ Historic Designation Process

To simplify and streamline the designation and identification of historic resources for the purposes of CEQA, the criteria outlined in the Ordinance to designate landmarks and historic districts could better align with those of the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), which are:

- **Criterion 1:** Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history or the cultural heritage of California or the United States;
- **Criterion 2:** Associated with the lives of persons important to local, California or national history;
- **Criterion 3:** Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values;
- **Criterion 4:** Has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

#### ■ Historic Districts

Designation of larger historic districts should include the determination of “contributing” versus “non-contributing” properties. Properties that are contributing would fall within the period(s) of significance identified for the District, and present character-defining features unique to the property and district.

The Precise Plan effort requires that all affected properties in the Plan Area older than 50 years be evaluated for their potential eligibility as historic resources. The identification of the two new potential historic districts only establishes their eligibility and are not designations. If some of the associated incentives are desired; or the City/ residents/ property owners determine that it is in the best interest of long range planning, these eligible districts can be designated as either local or National Register Historic Districts, allowing the various incentives that are available to be utilized.

## 5.6 Procedures for Additions, Alterations and Demolition

**This section outlines the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation (SISR), that are the criteria used to determine if a rehabilitation project qualifies as a certified rehabilitation.**

### Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation (SISR)

The intent of the SISR is to assist the long-term preservation of a property's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features. The SISR pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy, and encompass the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. These standards also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment, as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. To comply with CEQA, a rehabilitation project must be determined by a qualified historian to be consistent with the historic character of the structure(s) and, where applicable, the district in which it is located. The following standards are to be applied comprehensively to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

- 1.** A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
- 2.** The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or

alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

- 3.** Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.
- 4.** Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
- 5.** Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
- 6.** Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
- 7.** Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used.

The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

**8.** Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

**9.** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

**10.** New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired<sup>1</sup>.

### Allowed Modifications

In the following pages are tables that provide guidance for modifications to historic resources in the Plan Area. Tables 5A and 5B provide guidance about the types of projects that may be undertaken on historic resources or on properties directly adjacent to historic resources, based on SISR and on the Downtown Form-Based Code standards detailed in Chapter Nine. Table 5C lists procedures to be followed for different project types related to historic resources in the Plan Area.

Please note that where compliance with a specific standard is required, a qualified historian must evaluate the project for its level of compliance with the applicable standard. Very basic compliance questions and repairs can be approved by staff without requiring the services

of a qualified historian. The potentially eligible historic districts are not discussed in Tables 5A and 5B. This is because, as historic resources in their own right, the SISR standards apply to all eligible historic districts. Demolition and relocation of entire historic districts are not compatible with the SISR nor generally feasible. Alterations, however are possible as long as they comply with the SISR, especially #2, #9, and #10. When applying the standards to a district, the district must be considered as a whole.

Demolition of a contributing resource should be considered as an alteration to the historic district and must be evaluated for its impact on the district as a whole. As contributing resources are removed from an historic district, additional cumulative impacts may also occur. While each individual alteration may not cause a significant overall impact, taken together they may begin to alter the defining characteristics of the historic district. It is therefore essential that the City monitor cumulative impacts to the eligible historic districts while allowing alterations to occur. A qualified historian must evaluate both the impact of each removed resource and consider the overall cumulative impact made by all alterations to the historic district over time.

Additionally all new construction within an historic district is considered adjacent to an historic resource, being within one; and is therefore subject to the standards defined in the Downtown Code. "In-district" project designs not relating to historical resources that do not follow the Code will need qualified historian evaluation. Finally, properties within the Plan Area that are not historic resources and are not adjacent to a resource are not bound by SISR standards and must follow the standards defined in the Downtown Code.

<sup>1</sup> U.S Department of the Interior. "Rehabilitation Standards and Guidelines-Technical Preservation Services, National Park Service." Accessed November 5, 2020. <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm>.

**Table 5A. Allowed Modifications to Downtown Historic Resources Based on Historic Status**

Built Form Type	Type of Modification	National Register/ State/ Local Landmark	Individually Eligible Resource	Contributing Resource to a Historic District
<b>House - Form Historic Resource</b>	<b>Demolition</b>	Not permitted	Not permitted	Permitted. Must avoid a cumulative or significant impact to the district, to be determined by a qualified historian.
	<b>Relocation</b>	Not permitted unless under threat of demolition in current location and with qualified historian’s approval.	Not permitted unless under threat of demolition in current location and with qualified historian’s recommendation.	Not permitted unless under threat of demolition in current location and with qualified historian’s recommendation.
	<b>Alterations</b>	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #2; and avoid altering defining features.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #2, and avoid altering defining features.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #2, and avoid altering defining features.
	<b>Additions</b>	Permitted up to 10 feet*, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards; and complying with SISR, especially SISR #9. <i>* Note that the height limit for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. In cases where additional height might be required, the recommendation of a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property may be used as an alternative.</i>	Permitted up to 10 feet*, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards; and complying with SISR, especially SISR #9. <i>* Note that the height limit for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. In cases where additional height might be required, the recommendation of a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property may be used as an alternative.</i>	Permitted up to 10 feet*, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards; and complying with SISR, especially SISR #9. <i>* Note that the height limit for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. In cases where additional height might be required, the recommendation of a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property may be used as an alternative.</i>
	<b>Repairs</b>	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #6: maintain Integrity and be compatible/ differentiated.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #6: maintain integrity and be compatible/ differentiated.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #6: maintain integrity and be compatible/ differentiated.
<b>Block - Form Historic Resource</b>	<b>Demolition</b>	Not permitted	Not permitted	Permitted. Must avoid a cumulative or significant impact to the district, determined by a qualified historian.
	<b>Relocation</b>	Not permitted unless under threat of demolition in current location and with qualified historian's recommendation.	Permitted only if under threat of demolition in current location.	Permitted only if under threat of demolition in current location.
	<b>Alterations</b>	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #2, and avoid altering defining features.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #2, and avoid altering defining features.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #2, and avoid altering defining features.

Table 5A. Allowed Modifications to Downtown Historic Resources Based on Historic Status (Continued)				
Built Form	Type of Modification	National Register/ State/ Local Landmark	Individually Eligible Resource	Contributing Resource to a Historic District
<b>Block - Form Historic Resource</b>	<b>Additions</b>	Permitted up to 20 feet*, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards; and complying with SISR, especially SISR #9. <i>* Note that the height limit for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. In cases where additional height might be required, the recommendation of a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property may be used as an alternative.</i>	Permitted up to 20 feet*, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards; and complying with SISR, especially SISR #9. <i>* Note that the height limit for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. In cases where additional height might be required, the recommendation of a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property may be used as an alternative.</i>	Permitted up to 20 feet*, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards; and complying with SISR, especially SISR #9. <i>* Note that the height limit for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. In cases where additional height might be required, the recommendation of a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property may be used as an alternative.</i>
	<b>Repairs</b>	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #6: maintain integrity and be compatible/ differentiated.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #6: maintain integrity and be compatible/ differentiated.	Permitted. Must comply with SISR, especially SISR #6: maintain integrity and be compatible/ differentiated.

Table 5B. Allowed Modifications to Downtown Non-Historic Structures (Non-Resources) Adjacent to Historic Resources		
Type of Modification	Non-Resource Adjacent to a House-Form Historic Resource (Landmark/ Individually Eligible/ Contributor to a Historic District)	Non-Resource Adjacent to a Block-Form Historic Resource (Landmark/ Individually Eligible/ Contributor to a Historic District)
<b>Demolition</b>	Permitted. Any demolition must avoid potential damage to the adjacent historic resource through vibration or otherwise.	Permitted. Any demolition must avoid potential damage to the adjacent historic resource through vibration or otherwise.
<b>New Construction or Additions</b>	Permitted. Any new construction must avoid potential damage to the historic resource. New construction/ additions allowed up to 10 feet above the height of the adjacent historic resource*, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards. <i>* Note that the height limit for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. In cases where additional height might be required, the recommendation of a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property may be used as an alternative.</i>	Permitted. Any new construction must avoid potential damage to the historic resource. New construction/ additions allowed up to 20 feet above the height of the adjacent historic resource*, following Downtown Form-Based Code standards including Supplemental Standards. <i>* Note that the height limit for additions is recommended based on industry best practices. In cases where additional height might be required, the recommendation of a qualified architectural historian based on analysis of the property may be used as an alternative.</i>
<b>Alterations</b>	Permitted. Must comply with Downtown Form-Based Code including Supplemental Standards.	Permitted. Must comply with Downtown Form-Based Code including Supplemental Standards.
<b>Repairs</b>	Permitted.	Permitted.

**Table 5C. Procedural options for different categories of projects in the Plan Area**

