

# GOAL 11

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT





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# HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT

The Historic Preservation Element is intended to protect and preserve the historic and cultural resources within the City of Fernandina Beach and to promote public awareness of the benefits of preserving such resources. This is the first time the City has had a Historic Preservation Element in the Comprehensive Plan. Consideration of the needs for future survey and study of cultural and historic resources in the community are a part of this element, as are policies that strengthen and support historic preservation practices that have been a part of Fernandina Beach since the 1970's. The Element goal is that the City shall ensure preservation and protection of historic, archaeological, paleontological, and cultural resources within Fernandina Beach.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT HIGHLIGHTS**

1. Continue to conduct historic, cultural, and archaeological resource surveys as needed, and update and develop ordinances, guidelines, and databases that seek to protect and preserve cultural and historic resources;
2. Ensure protection of archaeological resources;
3. Establish programs and policies that incentivize historic and cultural resource preservation;
4. Emphasize the City's role in being a good steward and leader in protection of historic resources;
5. Encourage maintenance and preservation of historic structures;
6. Include historic and cultural resources in post-disaster redevelopment planning;
7. Encourage compatible design and planning within and surrounding historic districts;
8. Increase community awareness of historic and cultural resource preservation;
9. Protect and revitalize non-designated historic structures and neighborhoods;
10. Promote historic preservation as a form of sustainable development;
11. Maintain and protect Bosque Bello Cemetery; and
12. Increase intergovernmental coordination regarding historic and cultural resource preservation.



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## **GOAL 11 | HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT**

THE CITY SHALL ENSURE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF HISTORIC, ARCHAEOLOGICAL, PALEONTOLOGICAL, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES WITHIN FERNANDINA BEACH.

### **OBJECTIVE 11.01. HISTORIC RESOURCES**

The City shall continue to promote the preservation of resources through commitment to conduct historic, cultural and archaeological resource surveys and the continued development of ordinances, guidelines, and databases.

#### **POLICY 11.01.01.**

The City shall encourage the protection, preservation and conservation of districts, sites, landmarks and/or structures within the City that are included on the National Register of Historic Places, or in a locally designated historic district, to ensure their protection from demolition, deterioration, reconstruction or alteration.

#### **POLICY 11.01.02.**

The City shall maintain an inventory of structures, sites and districts eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Where identified, the City shall contact owners of historic resources and properties eligible or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register to encourage nomination of such properties to the National Register.

#### **POLICY 11.01.03.**

The City shall implement a process for local historic district designation and evaluate areas potentially eligible for future local historic district designation.

#### **POLICY 11.01.04.**

The City will continue to evaluate the need for updated historic, cultural and archaeological resource surveys identifying these resources within Fernandina Beach. Where new or updated surveys are needed, the City will continue to pursue grant funding to assist in conducting the surveys.

#### **POLICY 11.01.05.**

The City shall conduct a survey of all City-owned and managed properties including lands, buildings, and features in order to compile an inventory of historic resources under City supervision.

#### **POLICY 11.01.06.**

The City shall continue implementation of the historic preservation ordinance and continually monitor the ordinance for needed modifications to best protect historic, cultural and archaeological resources within the City. The City will continue through its historic preservation ordinance to ensure projects affecting historic properties, districts or sites within the City are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

**POLICY 11.01.07.**

The City shall initiate amendments to the Land Development Code to remove any provisions that discourage the reuse and rehabilitation of historic properties.

**POLICY 11.01.08.**

The City shall continue delegating authority to City Commission-appointed review board(s) for decisions affecting the historic, cultural and archaeological resources of the City. The historic preservation ordinance shall continue to grant powers to the appropriate review board which may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Promulgating rules governing its operation in carrying out its responsibilities;
- b. Making recommendations to the City Commission for historic district or neighborhood conservation district designation;
- c. Working on design guidelines specific to designated historic or neighborhood conservation districts and making recommendations to the Planning Advisory Board and City Commission regarding those guidelines;
- d. Working on the historic preservation ordinance and making recommendations to the Planning Advisory Board and City Commission regarding the ordinance;
- e. Reviewing proposed physical alterations of designated properties or districts;
- f. Issuing certificates of appropriateness for proposed physical alterations deemed by the appropriate review board to comply with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation or any adopted design standards that are based on the Secretary's Standards;
- g. Hearing variances for properties within historic districts, neighborhood conservation districts, or the Community Redevelopment Area; and
- h. Conducting public outreach and educational opportunities regarding historic preservation and cultural resource protection.

**POLICY 11.01.09.**

The Downtown Historic District Guidelines, the Old Town Preservation and Development Guidelines, and the CRA Design Guidelines will be used in the City's Certificate of Appropriateness process and provide information to property owners, architects and contractors. The City will continue to evaluate the necessity of updates and revisions to the Design Guidelines, or the creation of new Guidelines as needed.

**POLICY 11.01.10.**

The City shall maintain updated information on historic properties, cultural resources and archaeological sites in the City's GIS mapping system.

**POLICY 11.01.11.**

The City shall ensure administrative processes and fees encourage and incentivize the reuse and rehabilitation of historic resources.

## **OBJECTIVE 11.02. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

The City shall make efforts to identify, preserve, and protect archaeological and paleontological resources within Fernandina Beach.

### **POLICY 11.02.01.**

The City shall, by December 2012, initiate a survey project to identify and model areas of potential archaeological and paleontological significance within Fernandina Beach. If feasible, the survey shall include submerged cultural resources. The City will pursue grant funding to assist in conducting the survey. Information from the survey shall be included and maintained in the City's GIS mapping system.

### **POLICY 11.02.02.**

Upon completion of the survey project, the City shall implement land development regulations addressing archaeological and paleontological protection. The City shall seek the input of the Florida Public Archaeology Network in drafting the regulations.

### **POLICY 11.02.03.**

The City shall be responsible for ensuring that any proposed development projects will not adversely impact a significant archaeological or paleontological site, and shall seek assistance from a professional archaeologist or consulting firm in assessing the potential impacts of development projects.

### **POLICY 11.02.04**

The City shall provide training for City employees regarding archaeological resources, areas of archaeological and paleontological significance with the City, and procedures for addressing identified resources.

## **OBJECTIVE 11.03. PROGRAMS AND POLICIES**

The City shall continue to develop programs and policies to protect and preserve the City's historic, cultural and archaeological resources.

### **POLICY 11.03.01.**

The City shall explore strategies for preservation of historic resources and properties, including, but not limited to:

- a. Incentives for maintenance, restoration and rehabilitation, and stabilization of historic, cultural or archaeological resources;
- b. Incentives for productive and adaptive reuse of historic structures;
- c. Incentives for private ownership and responsible stewardship of these resources;
- d. Opportunities for acquisition and/or conservation by governmental entities, private interests, or non-profit organizations; and
- e. Establishment of historic, archaeological, or neighborhood conservation districts.



**POLICY 11.03.02.**

The City shall encourage employing a full-time historic preservation planner in order to ensure proper preservation efforts for the City's historic, cultural and archaeological resources.

**POLICY 11.03.03.**

The City will foster inter-departmental cooperation regarding historic preservation and ensure coordination and training among City employees regarding preservation efforts.

**POLICY 11.03.04.**

The Building Official shall coordinate with appropriate review boards on updates to the Florida Building Code, or other applicable building codes, that may impact historic structures.

**POLICY 11.03.05.**

City Code Enforcement staff shall be trained on an as needed basis to identify and cite historic properties that are subject to demolition by neglect. Code Enforcement will continue to work with the City on inspections within the historic districts. The applicable review boards shall work together regarding Code cases of demolition by neglect within the historic districts.

**POLICY 11.03.06.**

Planning studies conducted by the City, including but not limited to studies on neighborhoods, housing, transportation, drainage, stormwater, utilities or disaster planning shall identify the presence of historic resources and the impact of any proposals on these resources.

**POLICY 11.03.07.**

Any project sponsored by or under the authority of the City, either financially or administratively, which involves a site modification, rehabilitation of historic buildings, or construction of new buildings within a designated historic district or the Community Redevelopment Area shall adhere to appropriate historic preservation standards for such activity, shall be subject to review by the applicable review board, and shall seek the assistance of design and build professionals specializing in historic preservation in the completion of the work.

**POLICY 11.03.08.**

The City shall continue the use of historic buildings for governmental purposes and shall consider the acquisition of historic buildings for adaptive reuse for municipal purpose when additional space is required. Any building fifty (50) or more years old considered for surplus by the City shall be submitted prior to sale for review by the applicable review board. Any such building determined to have historic or architectural significance, if considered surplus, shall be sold or otherwise conveyed by the City with protective covenants to ensure its preservation and proper rehabilitation.

**POLICY 11.03.09.**

The City shall activate the Historic Preservation Trust Fund during the annual budget process in order to provide for activities as authorized by Ordinance 2005-20.

**POLICY 11.03.10.**

The City shall pursue strategies and incentives for property owners that will lead to the preservation, as opposed to the demolition, of buildings located in designated historic districts, including but not limited to, utilizing the Historic Preservation Trust Fund to provide financial and educational opportunities for historic property owners.

**POLICY 11.03.11.**

The City recognizes the importance of structures constructed in the last fifty years, and encourages efforts to protect significant examples of these structures as illustrative of the community's recent heritage.

**POLICY 11.03.12.**

The City shall continue to implement ad valorem tax exemptions for historic properties as authorized by Florida Statutes.

**POLICY 11.03.13.**

The City shall continue to implement the heritage tree program, and initiate amendments to the program as needed in order to best protect the City's heritage trees.

**POLICY 11.03.14.**

The City shall continue to monitor and seek support from state and federal programs related to historic preservation, and shall pursue grant funding where feasible to complete projects in the City related to historic, cultural and archaeological resource protection.

**POLICY 11.03.15.**

The City shall promote historic, cultural and archaeological resource protection as an economic tool in the revitalization of the City and its neighborhoods, and support heritage tourism opportunities as a form of economic development. The City shall support the efforts of other local organizations to further heritage tourism opportunities.

**POLICY 11.03.16.**

The City shall maintain active Certified Local Government status and ensure all Certified Local Government requirements are met as defined by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

**POLICY 11.03.17.**

The City shall continue to maintain a regularly updated list of pre-qualified architectural and archaeological consultants and establish policies and procedures for use of the consultants.

**POLICY 11.03.18.**

The City shall encourage public-private partnerships in restoring and revitalizing the City's historic districts and historic non-designated neighborhoods.

**POLICY 11.03.19.**

The City shall encourage retention of essential public services, such as a post office, library and other government functions, in the historic downtown district, and encourage reuse of historic buildings for these functions where feasible.

**OBJECTIVE 11.04.  
HISTORIC STRUCTURES**

The City shall actively encourage maintenance and preservation of historic structures.

**POLICY 11.04.01.**

The City's historic preservation ordinance shall continue to include a demolition by neglect provision, and the City shall regularly evaluate such provision to ensure that it is effectively preventing or reducing demolition by neglect in the historic districts.

**POLICY 11.04.02.**

The City shall conduct, at a minimum, annual windshield surveys of historic district properties in conjunction with Code Enforcement staff to monitor and maintain properties for any risk due to demolition by neglect.

**POLICY 11.04.03.**

The City shall evaluate incentives and identify partners that may allow the City and its partners to assist historic property owners with maintenance and preservation of their properties.

**POLICY 11.04.04.**

The City shall utilize a portion of the dedicated funds from the Historic Preservation Trust Fund to provide for small grants to historic district property owners to assist in maintenance and preservation efforts.

**OBJECTIVE 11.05.  
POST-DISASTER STRATEGIES**

The City shall establish programs and policies regarding post-disaster strategies for historic and cultural resources within Fernandina Beach.

**POLICY 11.05.01.**

The City shall ensure that historic, cultural and archeological resource protection is addressed in any post-disaster redevelopment planning efforts within the City.

**POLICY 11.05.02.**

The City shall ensure that procedures for emergency actions regarding historic, cultural or archaeological resources following a disaster are included in any post-disaster redevelopment planning efforts within the City.

**POLICY 11.05.03.**

The City shall coordinate with Nassau County regarding post-disaster redevelopment planning and ensure the Nassau County Post-Disaster Redevelopment Plan incorporates historic, cultural and archaeological resource protection within the City.

**POLICY 11.05.04.**

The City shall provide information to property owners regarding disaster planning and protection of historic resources.

**POLICY 11.05.05.**

The City shall support incentive-based mitigation measures for historic structures or sites in order to improve community resilience.

**OBJECTIVE 11.06.****DESIGN AND PLANNING**

The City shall encourage compatible design and planning within and surrounding existing historic districts.

**POLICY 11.06.01.**

The City shall ensure that new and infill development adjacent to the Downtown and Old Town historic districts respects and complements the patterns, character, and scale of those historic districts.

**POLICY 11.06.02.**

The City shall evaluate the neighborhoods contiguous to the historic districts, and evaluate strategies for revitalization of existing structures in these neighborhoods in a manner that is consistent with their original development and also compatible with the adjacent historic districts.

**POLICY 11.06.03.**

The City shall utilize urban design and streetscape plans when seeking to revitalize neighborhoods, particularly for the historic districts, in order to accomplish the goals of preservation and sustainable development and to maintain the character of the neighborhood and quality of life.

**POLICY 11.06.04.**

Street, sidewalk, utility and other improvements undertaken by the City in designated historic districts shall be consistent, where practical, with the historic character of those districts.

**POLICY 11.06.05.**

The City shall encourage placement of underground utilities in historic areas to protect the aesthetic character of the historic resources. If significant archaeological resources are present, the resources should be documented by an archaeologist and the impact of the utilities shall be mitigated per archaeological standards.

**POLICY 11.06.06.**

The City shall strive to improve and develop parks and create pedestrian and bicycle pathways in designated historic districts.

**OBJECTIVE 11.07.****COMMUNITY AWARENESS**

The City shall seek to increase community awareness of historic, cultural and archaeological resource preservation.

**POLICY 11.07.01.**

The City shall promote historic preservation throughout the community by providing educational opportunities regarding historic, cultural and archaeological resources, including but not limited to, workshops, publications and media outreach.

**POLICY 11.07.02.**

The City shall provide for the interpretation of City-owned historic resources, including but not limited to, media outreach, interpretive kiosks or plaques, and staff outreach.

**POLICY 11.07.03.**

The City shall support and encourage local projects involving education of children regarding historic, cultural and archaeological resources.

**POLICY 11.07.04.**

The City shall support local projects involving walking or bicycling through historic areas.

**POLICY 11.07.05.**

The City shall continue a local preservation awards program to officially recognize excellence in local historic preservation activities, and shall partner with local preservation organizations to promote the awards program.

**POLICY 11.07.06.**

The City shall, with the cooperation of property owners, encourage community and cultural events to take place in the historic districts, historic neighborhoods and other areas to enhance awareness and appreciation of the cultural heritage in the City.

**POLICY 11.07.07.**

The City shall cooperate with local preservation organizations in identifying existing and potential local historic preservation issues and in addressing solutions to those issues. The City shall also cooperate with local preservation organizations in identifying opportunities for partnering to advance community awareness of historic, cultural, and archaeological resource preservation in the community.

**POLICY 11.07.08.**

The City shall coordinate with the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation and the Division of Historical Resources to bring training opportunities to Fernandina Beach regarding historic preservation for interested City employees, Board members, historic property owners, and members of the public.

**OBJECTIVE 11.08.**

**NON-DESIGNATED RESOURCES**

The City shall encourage protection and revitalization of non-designated historic structures and neighborhoods within Fernandina Beach.

**POLICY 11.08.01.**

The City shall encourage protection, preservation, and revitalization of historic non-designated structures and neighborhoods.

**POLICY 11.08.02.**

The City shall use the 2011 Reconnaissance-level Architectural Survey of the City Limits to identify non-designated historic structures and neighborhoods within the City, and shall evaluate strategies for encouraging revitalization of these structures and neighborhoods in a manner that is consistent with their original development.

**POLICY 11.08.03.**

The City shall review the existing Land Development Code for requirements that would prevent a potentially historic but non-designated structure or neighborhood from retaining the overall scale, massing, height, area, setbacks, and other elements that contribute to that neighborhood's character.

**POLICY 11.08.04.**

The City shall review and make specific recommendations to the City Commission regarding changes or modifications to the Land Development Code that will assist in protecting the character of these historic non-designated structures and neighborhoods.

**POLICY 11.08.05.**

The City shall involve residents of neighborhoods in any planning processes related to potential Land Development Code changes affecting their neighborhoods.

**POLICY 11.08.06.**

The City will identify areas of concentration of resources which appear to qualify as historic districts or neighborhoods worthy of protection due to historic or cultural development characteristics and evaluate designation of such neighborhoods as historic districts or neighborhood conservation districts. If areas are identified, land development regulations shall be established to preserve and protect these areas from the encroachment of incompatible land uses.

**POLICY 11.08.07.**

The City shall involve the community and residents of the identified neighborhoods in planning processes related to identification of their neighborhoods as eligible to be a historic or neighborhood conservation district. The City Commission shall use a public hearing process to establish any proposed historic district or neighborhood conservation district.

**POLICY 11.08.08.**

The City shall consider implementing incentives, including but not limited to, tax exemptions, expedited permitting, or reduced fees, for property owners to rehabilitate existing structures within these non-designated historic neighborhoods.

**POLICY 11.08.09.**

The City shall consider the use of tax increment financing or other taxing mechanisms as a method to promote the revitalization of non-designated historic neighborhoods.

**OBJECTIVE 11.09.**  
**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The City shall encourage historic preservation as a form of sustainable development, and recognize the interconnection between historic preservation and sustainable construction strategies.

**POLICY 11.09.01.**

The City shall encourage historic preservation as a sustainable building practice that encourages reuse of existing resources and helps reduce energy consumed and waste created as part of the demolition and building process.

**POLICY 11.09.02.**

The City shall review the Land Development Code for regulations that encourage teardowns of existing structures and make recommendations to the City Commission regarding changes or alterations to the Land Development Code that will assist in prevention of teardowns and retention of existing structures, including identifying incentives such as tax exemptions, expedited permitting, or reduced fees, to promote reuse of existing structures.

**POLICY 11.09.03.**

The City shall remain apprised of emerging technologies regarding sustainability, particularly regarding energy efficiency, and evaluate the need for changes or alterations to the design guidelines to accommodate use of these technologies on historic structures in a manner still in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

**POLICY 11.09.04.**

The City shall remain apprised of sustainable construction techniques and evaluate the need for changes or alterations to the design guidelines to accommodate use of these techniques on historic structures in a manner still in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

**OBJECTIVE 11.10.**  
**BOSQUE BELLO CEMETERY**

The City shall continue to maintain and protect historic Bosque Bello Cemetery.

**POLICY 11.10.01.**

The City shall continue to protect the Bosque Bello Cemetery as a historically and culturally significant part of the community's history.

**POLICY 11.10.02.**

The City shall have a cemetery master plan created providing for the long-term viability and care of Bosque Bello. Such plan shall include provisions for the maintenance and treatment of historic markers and walls and maintenance of landscaping and the tree canopy in the cemetery, assigning priority to those areas in most need of preservation or care.

**POLICY 11.10.03.**

The City shall document the markers and identify unmarked graves in the cemetery, through written and photographic documentation and maintain

records of this documentation. Where possible, the City shall utilize GPS devices to record and incorporate this information into the City's GIS mapping program.

**POLICY 11.10.04.**

The City shall seek the knowledge and assistance of professionals trained in historic cemetery preservation and maintenance, where feasible.

**POLICY 11.10.05.**

The City shall provide adequate staffing in order to properly maintain the cemetery and encourage staff education and training regarding cemetery preservation strategies and techniques.

**POLICY 11.10.06.**

The City shall seek assistance from volunteers in the City in efforts to document, maintain and preserve the cemetery.

**POLICY 11.10.07.**

The City shall seek state and federal grant funding to assist in proper documentation, maintenance and preservation of the cemetery.

**POLICY 11.10.08.**

The City shall evaluate Bosque Bello for possible inclusion in the National Register and shall seek assistance in preparing a National Register nomination.

**POLICY 11.10.09.**

City departments shall coordinate to ensure that the above responsibilities are shared.

**OBJECTIVE 11.11.**

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION**

The City shall seek to increase intergovernmental coordination regarding historic, cultural and archaeological resource preservation.

**POLICY 11.11.01.**

The City shall coordinate with Nassau County regarding historic, cultural and archaeological resources within City limits, and shall coordinate with Nassau County should the potential arise for County activities to impact these resources.

**POLICY 11.11.02.**

The City shall continue to coordinate with the Nassau County Property Appraiser regarding notification that certain properties within the City are within the boundaries of a historic district and regarding implementation of ad valorem tax exemptions for historic properties.

**POLICY 11.11.03.**

The City shall coordinate with the Nassau County School Board to designate eligible school buildings under the local ordinance or the National Register. The City shall assist the school board in identifying the buildings appearing to qualify as historic landmarks.



**POLICY 11.11.04.**

The City shall coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Officer, the State Division of Historic Resources, and the Florida State Parks System regarding historic, cultural and archaeological resources in the City.

**POLICY 11.11.05.**

Where possible, the City shall coordinate with state agencies whose activities may impact historic, cultural and archaeological resources in the area, including but not limited to the Department of Transportation, the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Emergency Management, and the St. Johns River Water Management District.

**POLICY 11.11.06.**

Where possible, the City shall coordinate with federal agencies whose activities may impact historic, cultural and archaeological resources in the area, including but not limited to the National Park Service, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the General Services Administration, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.



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