

# CHAPTER 16

## HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

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Juneau has a rich and unique history, dating back thousands of years to the ancestors of the Tlingit Indians who fished, hunted, trapped, and traded throughout the area. Long before the city was founded by Richard Harris and Joe Juneau, the Tlingit Aak'w Kwáan (Small Lake Tribe) arrived near Auke Bay from the Stikine River area, trading with early Russian, American, and English ships. With the discovery of gold and the city's founding in 1880, hundreds of miners, merchants, and laborers flocked to Juneau from all over the world, contributing to both the culture and architecture of the community, much of which still exists today.

Juneau possesses a wealth of historic resources, and it is in the best interest of the community to identify and preserve these artifacts, structures, and sites that contribute to the historic and cultural diversity of the community. Current (2006) documentation lists 479 buildings that were built before or during the first quarter of the last century. Countless numbers of additional sites and structures await documentation. These resources are part of the community's heritage, and their identification and preservation are paramount in maintaining the community's sense of place in the new millennium.

Over the past thirty years, the CBJ has been one of the most active communities in Alaska in its historic preservation efforts. As the State Capital, it is appropriate for the CBJ government to set an example to the rest of the state in responsible planning, urban design, and the preservation of its heritage and historic and cultural resources.

The existing policy regarding historic preservation, although a basic good start toward recognizing and protecting valuable historic resources, no longer provides the complete protections necessary given the dramatic rise of cruise ship tourism and the resulting pressure on historic resources from the heritage tourism trade. Although heritage tourism has been shown to be an economic asset, and has been identified in a recent local tourism survey as an area of interest and expansion, the CBJ government should update and adopt its draft version of the Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan, as well as continually evaluate its existing historic district design standards and update its design review process, in order to better integrate preservation activities into broader community and land use planning efforts. Both serve to foster heritage tourism in the community while helping to protect the fragile resources from the dynamic seasonal tourism market.

While the greatest density of historic resources is found in the Juneau Downtown Historic District, valuable historic artifacts, buildings, and sites are located throughout the borough. The general character of the community as a whole is enhanced by the very existence of these historic neighborhoods, cultural sites, and other resources. Owners of historic buildings should be educated, encouraged, and assisted in the preservation of these important features of the community. In addition, the CBJ government should be a role model to the local community by appropriately preserving and maintaining public historic buildings and facilities with care. Furthermore, the Juneau-Douglas City Museum should be promoted as an important community resource in the preservation, education, and exhibition of community heritage.

**POLICY 16.1. TO IDENTIFY, PRESERVE AND PROTECT JUNEAU'S DIVERSE HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, AND TO PROMOTE HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ACCURATELY REPRESENT JUNEAU'S UNIQUE HERITAGE THROUGH PUBLICATIONS, OUTREACH, AND HERITAGE TOURISM.**

**POLICY 16.2. TO IDENTIFY HISTORIC RESOURCES WITHIN THE CBJ AND TO TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO DOCUMENT AND PRESERVE THESE RESOURCES.**

### **Standard Operating Procedures**

- 16.2 - SOP1 Inventory historic resources within the identified historic neighborhoods, as well as other areas listed in the Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan.
- 16.2 - SOP2 Encourage and provide incentives to owners of significant historic properties to maintain them in their original character.
- 16.2 - SOP3 Create a local landmarks designation for identified historic resources with significance to local culture or heritage.
- 16.2 - SOP4 Identify appropriate regulatory measures to protect identified historic resources, including but not limited to demolition protection and the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness for exterior alterations to designated historic structures.
- 16.2 - SOP5 Develop additional local incentives for historic preservation, including tax incentives, low interest loans, and technical assistance.
- 16.2 - SOP6 Limit further degradation to existing historic districts by discouraging development that is inconsistent with historic district development standards.
- 16.2 - SOP7 Treat and maintain grave sites and other memorials with respect for applicable cultural traditions.

### **Implementing Action**

- 16.2 - IA1 Publish strengthened design guidelines that will assist historic building owners in planning alterations or new construction within historic neighborhoods and districts while preventing degradation of historic resources.
- 16.2 - IA2 Maintain, and amend as necessary, development standards that protect historic resources while allowing development that is consistent with the other Policies and supporting statements in this Plan, such as development of additional housing in the downtown area.

**POLICY 16.3. TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF JUNEAU'S ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES, AND TO EDUCATE, ENCOURAGE, AND ASSIST THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN PRESERVING HERITAGE AND RECOGNIZING THE VALUE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION.**

### **Standard Operating Procedure**

- 16.3 - SOP1 Support and enhance the Juneau-Douglas City Museum as a repository for heritage materials and information held in public trust.

### **Implementing Action**

- 16.3 - IA1 Update and adopt the draft *Historic Preservation Plan* as an element of the CBJ *Comprehensive Plan* that sets forth goals and objectives for organizing preservation activities and integrating preservation into broader community and land use planning efforts.

**POLICY 16.4. TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE UNIQUE CULTURE OF JUNEAU’S NATIVE PEOPLES, INCLUDING BUILDINGS, SITES, ARTIFACTS, TOTEMS, TRADITIONS, LIFESTYLES, LANGUAGES, AND HISTORIES.**

**Standard Operating Procedures**

- 16.4 - SOP1 Implement programs to educate local residents and visitors to the community about the CBJ’s indigenous peoples, through publications, museum outreach, interpretive exhibits, and other measures.
- 16.4 - SOP2 Work with local native groups to build partnerships to identify and preserve significant cultural resources and sites.

**POLICY 16.5. TO PROMOTE RESPONSIBLE HERITAGE TOURISM THAT ACCURATELY REPRESENTS JUNEAU’S UNIQUE HISTORY, WHILE PROTECTING THE RESOURCES FROM OVERUSE OR HARM.**

**Implementing Actions**

- 16.5 - IA1 Develop interpretive materials for placement throughout the community that inform locals and visitors about the CBJ’s history.
- 16.5 - IA2 Develop training workshops for seasonal tourism providers to encourage the accurate depiction of the CBJ’s unique history and diverse ethnic cultural heritage.
- 16.5 – IA3 Assess impacts of commercial tourism on cultural resources and historic sites; impose restrictions on access as needed to protect those resources.

