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## PUBLIC WORKSHOP SURVEY

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### **1. Historic Overlay District**

*The city does not currently have a local Historic District. Current policies only protect historic properties from demolition and/or significant remodels if the structures are eligible for the California State Register, a relatively high bar. Several older homes in the downtown area have been allowed to be demolished over the years as they have not met the state standard for requiring preservation. Many in the community feel that we should offer similar protections to historic structures in Pleasanton, the vast majority of which are in the downtown, by creating a local Historic District which would protect a greater number of older homes.*

#### **Questions:**

A. Do you support the creation of a local Historic District in Pleasanton?

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B. Do you have any comments or recommended changes on the boundaries of a potential local historic district as shown on the attached map?

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### **2. Context Statement**

*A local Historic Context Statement is a research document that relates a city's history to the built environment. It identifies various themes from various timeframes of a City's history and connects those themes to associated property types. If a building fits into one of these property types, and it retains its integrity from its historic era, the property is considered a historic resource. At the request of the Task Force, a Historic Context Statement has been prepared for the City of Pleasanton.*

<http://www.ci.pleasanton.ca.us/business/planning/DH/PublicWorkshop.html>

#### **Question:**

A. Do you have any comments on the Historic Context Statement document?

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One of the issues that has been the subject of much discussion at the Task Force Meetings has been the fact that the Context Statement identifies residential property types associated with the historical period as late as the mid 1950's. Some consider anything that is older

than 50 years to be historic. Community discussion in Pleasanton following the adoption of the Downtown specific Plan included a threshold of 100 years. Others believe that a building would have to be built before a specific date, such as the end of World War II (i.e. 1945).

**Question:**

B. Do you have any opinions on how old you believe a building has to be to be considered historic (please check one and provide comments if needed)?

- 50 year
- pre-1945
- other \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Define Demolition**

*Current State law and City policy prohibit the “demolition” of historic resources unless an Environmental Impact Report is prepared and the City decides that there are more benefits to the community to allow demolition of historic structure than preserving it. This process is expensive and time consuming. The development review process for projects that involve substantial renovation and remodeling is made more complex by the fact that the City currently does not have a definition of exactly what constitutes a demolition. For example, does the preservation of just one wall of a home in a renovation constitute a demolition? Two walls? A certain amount or percentage of linear feet? The Task Force has tentatively agreed on the following more flexible definition: “The removal of any physical element of a structure that, upon removal, would substantially diminish the historic significance of a structure.”*

**Question:**

A. Do you agree with this approach or do you have a different suggestion?

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**4. Expand City Design Review Authority**

*The city currently reviews the design of all new and additions to homes and non-residential buildings. This review involves evaluation of proposals relative to existing zoning regulation regarding, setbacks, height, and “floor area ratio” (a measurement of total square footage relative to the lot size). The review also involves evaluation of the proposed designs compatibility with surrounding properties. In some areas of town, including the Downtown, the City has adopted Design Guidelines, which call for certain styles of homes, particular site layout requirements, a more limited choice of building materials, etc. These guidelines are intended to maintain the traditional design and historic character of the downtown on both new buildings and modifications to existing structures. In addition to new structures and additions, Design Review applies to exterior changes to residential structures (excluding paint color and window replacement with the same type of window) that are proposed 10 feet or more above the ground. The thinking behind this requirement is that these types of changes are more visible to the public and adjacent neighbors than alterations in the lower ten feet. With historic structures, proposed changes on the first floor are often problematic.*

*The location, spacing, and size of window and door openings, as well as the type of windows and doors are often significant character defining features of historic homes. The design of porches and foundation treatments can also be important.*

*The Task Force is suggesting that Design Review authority be expanded to include the first floor of structures on certain homes. They have yet to agree on exactly which categories of homes this should apply, and are asking for your input on this issue.*

**Questions:**

A. Do you support this expansion of the City's Design Review authority to help maintain the historic character of the downtown area?

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B. Do you think it should apply only to homes considered to be historic? Or to all homes in a designated historic district?

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C. Do you think that such a review should be free of charge to the applicant?

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**5. Compatibility of New Construction in the Downtown Historic Neighborhoods**

*The Downtown Specific Plan and Design Guidelines contain several polices and guidelines requiring new construction in the downtown to be compatible with the historic character of the area.*

**Questions:**

A. Do you think the City has done an adequate job in implementing these requirements?

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B. Do you think the requirements need to be strengthened?

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C. Do you think the requirements are adequate but follow through by the City has been inadequate?

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**6. Mills Act Incentives for Historic Preservation**

*The Mills Act allows a City to enter into contracts with owners of historic resources. These contracts identify specific agreed upon preservation and restoration activities that an owner will complete over a period of time in exchange for a specified reduction in the city's share of the property's property tax.*

**Question:**

A. Do you support the concept of allowing tax breaks in exchange for an obligation to complete preservation projects on historic homes and historic commercial buildings?

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B. Do you think the City should explore additional funding of historic preservation efforts?

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Responders Name \_\_\_\_\_ Responders Address \_\_\_\_\_