

# *Historic Element*

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## *Introduction*

### *Background of Community*

- 2500 Portola Valley's early heritage is largely tied to the natural beauty and resources abundant in the valley floor and the redwood covered mountainsides. The earliest reported settlers of the area were the Ohlone Indians who lived lightly off the land, gathering seeds, berries and nuts, fishing and hunting the valleys and foothills for deer, rabbits, squirrels, duck and other game.
- 2501 Permanent settlement of the valley began in 1833, when Maximo Martinez and Jose Domingo Peralta received the first Mexican land grant in what is now San Mateo County for the Rancho el Corte de Madera. Redwood lumbering dominated the valley's activities for the rest of the century with the Town of Searsville, located near the present day Searsville Lake, springing up to support the logging industry.
- 2502 By the turn of the century, beauty and serenity became more significant lures, as wealthy San Franciscans assembled large estates in the area. Andrew Smith Hallidie donated land for the Village of Portola, a post office and the town's first school. The valley became a popular summer retreat and vacation spot and in the 1920s and 1930s many vacation cottages were built in the newly subdivided areas of Brookside Park, Woodside Highlands, and Los Trancos Woods. Subdivision of the Westridge, Alpine Hills, and Arrowhead Meadows areas took place in the 1940s and 1950s, rapidly expanding the population of the area and establishing the residential character that exists today.

2503 Structures and other remnants of early settlement in the area tend to be spread throughout the valley. There is no central historic area. Each of these resources is an important piece of the town's heritage and should be preserved for future generations.

*Purpose*

2504 The historic element identifies principal historic resources and sets objectives for their preservation, enhancement and maintenance. It guides Portola Valley and other city and county agencies in decisions which might directly or indirectly affect these resources. The historic element is a strong policy statement for the continued preservation of the town's historic environment.

*Scope*

2505 The historic element includes objectives, principles, standards and descriptions. A list of the town's historic resources is included in the descriptions section. Appendix 9, *Historic Resources Inventory*, describes in more detail each of the historic resources in the town. Appendix 10, *Implementation of the Historic Element*, outlines implementation strategies and programs for preserving the resources.

*Definitions*

2506 **Historic Resource:** A man-made or natural physical feature which is of value because it documents the history of the town and represents an architectural, cultural, archaeological, community or aesthetic value and is subject to the provisions of this element. More specifically, it shall possess one or more of the following attributes:

1. Yield or be likely to yield information that is important in pre-history or history.
2. Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the patterns of life in the town.
3. Be associated with lives and cultures significant with the town's past.
4. Embody the distinctive characteristics of the time, period or method of construction, especially if it is the last remaining such structure, represents the work of a master, and/or possesses high artistic value.
5. Possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling of its original nature.

2507 **Categories of Historic Resources:** Historic resources of the town are grouped into five categories. These categories are defined as follows:

1. *Structure:* Anything constructed or erected, the use of which requires permanent or temporary location on or in the ground, including, but without being limited to, buildings, bridges, fences, gates, gazebos, swimming pools, towers and walls.
2. *Site:* Any parcel or portion of a parcel.
3. *Trail:* A marked or unmarked track, course or path, which is or was followed with regularity.
4. *Road:* Any open way, paved or unpaved, for vehicles, persons and/or animals to travel, or on which they have traveled, with regularity.
5. *Natural feature:* Any tree, plant life, geographical or geological site or feature.

## ***Objectives***

2508 The objectives of the Town of Portola Valley in adopting this element of the general plan are:

1. To preserve, protect and enhance the historic resources of the planning area because they are unique and valuable assets for the planning area, San Mateo County, the Peninsula or the entire San Francisco Bay Area.
2. To build civic pride in Portola Valley's unique qualities by fostering citizen efforts to preserve and enhance historic resources.
3. To promote community awareness of local history and historic resources for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the people of the town.

## ***Principles***

2509 The following several principles are intended to guide the town and private parties in future actions.

1. Each resource in the element is classified according to whether it is to be preserved, denoted by a plaque, listed for further consideration or simply listed to provide a record of history.

2. While it is the intent to preserve identified resources for the benefit of the town, it is recognized that there will be circumstances where it will not be possible to achieve preservation. Such determinations cannot always be made in advance and therefore prudent decisions must be made when individual resources are before the town for action.
3. When evaluating the preservation of an historic resource, consideration should be given to preserving any immediate physical surroundings that contribute to the historic quality of the resource.

## *Standards*

2510 Under the description section of this element, each historic resource is noted as to whether it is to be preserved, identified with a plaque, listed for further consideration, or simply listed to provide a record of history. Each of these classifications are described below.

2511 *Historic Resource to be Preserved*

1. A historic resource noted for preservation shall have its exterior appearance retained to the maximum extent possible. This does not preclude:
  - a. Exterior alterations necessary to ensure safety which conform to the historic character of the resource.
  - b. Additions which conform to the historic character of the resource.
  - c. Additions or changes required to conform with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
2. Any additions or alterations pursuant to Section 2511.1. shall be accomplished in such a manner that they can be removed at a future time to reveal the historic resource as it appeared prior to such additions or alterations.
3. A historic resource which at some time has been partially or entirely destroyed may be reconstructed to its original design.
4. A historic resource noted as to be preserved shall not be removed unless one of the following conditions has been determined to exist; however, if one of the conditions is determined to exist, time shall be provided to allow the town to consider alternate ways in which to retain the resource.

- a. The resource is a potential safety hazard and alterations to provide safety and retain its historic character are unreasonable.
  - b. The resource has been so altered or modified that its historic significance no longer exists.
  - c. Retention of the historic resource is an unreasonable burden on a property owner.
5. It is intended that resources noted as to be preserved should at an appropriate time have a plaque installed in a location visible by the public unless otherwise indicated in the description section of this element.

2512 Historic Resource to be Noted with a Plaque

1. Plaques are intended to assist the public in identifying sites of former structures, trails, roads and natural features.
2. Plaques should be located where they can be read by the public without entering private property.

2513 Historic Resource Listed for Further Consideration

1. This category is intended for those resources where available data is not conclusive as to the appropriateness of preserving the resource.
2. It is intended that prior to any exterior modification to or removal of such resource, a determination shall be made as a part of an application before the town as to whether to reclassify the resource as to be preserved or reclassified to be added to the list to provide a record of history. Concurrent with such determination, this element shall be modified as appropriate.

2514 Historic Resource Listed to Provide a Record of History

1. These resources are included in the element to help complete the identification of historically significant resources in the town.
2. These resources are either located outside of the town limits, or are features which do not require identification with a plaque.

## **Description**

2515 Historic resources included in this element are listed below by type and shown on the map, “Sites for Historic Element - within city limits” which is a part of this element and can be found in a pocket at the end of this general plan. Detailed descriptions of these historic resources are included in Appendix 9, Historic Resources Inventory, dated December 1, 1989 and revised October 27, 1993. Also listed below are the historic resource numbers which correspond with the numbers on the historic resources map and in the inventory.

2516 For each resource a designation is assigned which indicates the how the resource should be treated. These designations, “Preserve,” “Plaque,” “List for further consideration,” and “List to provide a record,” are defined in Sections 2511- 2514.

2517 Structures

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location/Description/Comments</b>	<b>Map No.</b>	<b>Treatment</b>
Casa de Tableta (Alpine Beer Garden)	3915 Alpine Rd.	4	Preserve
Fitzhugh “Windmill”	380 Portola Rd. (see sites also, “Site of Corte Madera brewery and Nahmen House”)	14	Preserve
Freeman House	940 Los Trancos Rd., “Heptagon Ranch”	15 A	Preserve
Mariani Barn		15 B	Preserve
Allen-Woods House and grounds	800 Los Trancos Rd. (see natural features also)	19	List for further consideration
Fromhertz House	210 Portola Rd.	21	Preserve
Searsville District School Bell	Town of Portola Valley, 765 Portola Rd.	25	Preserve
Portola School District Primary School	Town of Portola Valley, 765 Portola Rd.	27	Preserve
Hallett Store	846 Portola Rd. (now office space)	28	Plaque
Our Lady of the Wayside	930 Portola Rd.	30	Preserve
Chilean Woodchopper's House	Jelich ranch, 683 Portola Rd.	31 A	List for further consideration
Jelich House	683 Portola Rd.	31 B	List to provide a record
Tank House	683 Portola Rd.	31 C	Preserve
Conolley-Melchor House	555 Portola Rd.	32	Preserve
Alpine Road Gate	4670 Alpine Rd. “Lauriston” -	33 A	Preserve

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location/Description/Comments</b>	<b>Map No.</b>	<b>Treatment</b>
	Willowbrook Farm"		
Terraces	4670 Alpine Rd. "Lauriston" - "Willowbrook Farm"	33 B	List to provide a record
Terraces	200 Willowbrook Dr. "Lauriston" - "Willowbrook Farm"	33 B	Preserve
Superintendent's house and office	451 Portola Rd. "Lauriston" - "Willowbrook Farm"	33 D	Preserve
"Villa Lauriston" Entry (gate and bridge)	5050 Alpine Rd.	34 A	Preserve
"Villa Lauriston" Main Residence	5050 Alpine Rd.	34 B	Preserve
"Villa Lauriston" Superintendent's House	5020 Alpine Rd.	34 C	Preserve
"Villa Lauriston" Stables	5030 Alpine Rd.	34 D	List to provide a record
"Villa Lauriston" Homestead Ruins		34 E	List to provide a record
Gov. James Rolph's Carriage House	Outside the town's jurisdiction, on the Home Ranch.	35	List to provide a record
Mangini Roadhouse	4139 Alpine Rd. (2nd Town Hall)	37	Preserve
Catoctin Estate	#3 Grove Court	42 A	Preserve
Catoctin Estate	#4 Grove Court	42 B	Preserve
Catoctin Estate, stonework in right-of-way		42 C	Preserve
Willowbrook Farm (bunkhouse and barn)	211 Willowbrook Drive	44	Plaque

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**Sites**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location/Description/Comments</b>	<b>Map No.</b>	<b>Treatment</b>
Site of Maximo Martinez House	~ 4170 Alpine Rd.	2	Plaque
Site of Martinez Adobe	99 Iroquois Trail.	3	Plaque
Site of Billar-Cooney house	Spring Ridge, near Skyline Blvd.	8 A	Plaque
Site of Orton house	Spring Ridge, near Skyline Blvd.	8 B	Plaque
Site of Bozzo "Spring Ranch" house	Spring Ridge, near Skyline Blvd.	8 C	Plaque
Site of Hamm "Mountain Home"	Spring Ridge, near Skyline Blvd.	8 D	Plaque
Site of Mastick Lumber Mill & Ox Barn	3 Wyndham Dr.	9 A	Plaque

## Historic Element

Name	Location/Description/Comments	Map No.	Treatment
Site of Second Lumber Mill, Morshead property		9 B	Plaque
Site of Smith Mill, Morshead property		9 C	Plaque
Site of Caldwell Mill, Morshead property		9 D	Plaque
Sites of St. Dennis Church and Cemetery	Outside the town's jurisdiction, between the north bank of San Francisquito Creek and the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center.	10	List to provide a record
Site of Dennis Martin's Second House	Outside the town's jurisdiction, on the southeast side of San Francisquito Creek.	11	List to provide a record
Site of Corte Madera Brewery and Nahmens House	380 Portola Rd. (see structures, "Fitzhugh Windmill")	14	Preserve
Site of Flax Mill	on the east side of the Conolley-Melchor Ln.	16	Plaque
Site of Hallidie Tramway	base of tramway is near 875 Portola Rd and extends up the western hillside through the Morshead property.	17	Plaque
Site of Village of Portola	near 875 Portola Rd, 4.7 ac of northeast corner of Morshead property.	22	Plaque
Site of 1893 school house	765 Portola Rd. (see natural features also, "One coast live oak")	26	Plaque
Site of Ormondale Ranch Buildings		43	Plaque
Site of Hallidie House		45	Plaque

### 2519 Trails

Name	Location/Description/Comments	Map No.	Treatment
Old Spanish Trail	Along crest of Coal Mine Ridge, through "Heptagon Ranch" and Portola Valley Ranch.	1	Preserve
Jones-Brown's Trail	Along Hamm's Gulch, mainly through MROSD property.	5	Preserve

### 2520 Roads



Name	Location/Description/Comments	Map No.	Treatment
Pescadero-La Honda Turnpike (Old La Honda Road)	The main portion is located in the Town of Woodside with a small portion in the northwestern corner of the town's boundary, along the Morshead property line.	12	List to provide a record
Alpine Road	From the Portola Rd. intersection up the western hillside to Page Mill Rd.	23	Preserve
Ormondale Ranch Road	Follows significant portions of present-day Alamos Rd. and Westridge Dr. to the ranch house, 99 Iroquois Trail. (see natural features also)	36	List to provide a record
Remnants of Menlo Park & Santa Cruz Turnpike (2 prominent sites)	One remnant is within the town's jurisdiction, along the south boundary of Ford Park (No. 13 B) and the beginning strip of Los Trancos Rd. Another remnant is near the Alpine Rd crossing of the San Francisquito Creek in the unincorporated area of San Mateo County.	13 A 13 B	List to provide a record
"Willowbrook Farm" Road	Begins at the 4600's Alpine Rd and extends through the Willowbrook subdivision and along Willowbrook Dr.	33 C	List to provide a record

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Natural Features

Name	Location/Description/Comments	Map No.	Treatment
Sieback Flat	Along the upper portion of Alpine Rd, outside the town's jurisdiction in San Mateo County.	6	List to provide a record
Spring Ridge	MROSD property, near Skyline Blvd.	7	List to provide a record
Two Sequoia sempervirens, "Triple Top" and "Flat Top"	Near upper part of Morshead property.	18	List to provide a record
Vegetation at Allen-Woods House	800 Los Trancos Rd. Hawthorns, osage oranges and olives. (see structures also)	19	List for further consideration
One Coast Live Oak	765 Portola Rd. Marking the site of 1893 school house. (see sites also)	26	List to provide a record
San Andreas Rift Zone (1906)	Extends along the valley floor through Portola Valley Ranch and the "Heptagon" Ranch.	29	Plaque
"Willowbrook Farm" Terraces	On the properties at 4660 Alpine Rd and 200 Willowbrook Dr.	33B	List to provide a record

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location/Description/Comments</b>	<b>Map No.</b>	<b>Treatment</b>
Ormondale Ranch Road Landscaping	Along side significant portions of present-day Alamos Rd and Westridge Dr., to the ranch house, 99 Iroquois Trail. (see roads also)	36	List to provide a record
Elderberry	On the property line between the Ladera Swim Club and Ford Park.	40	List to provide a record

2522 ***Historic Resources Map.*** The "Sites for Historic Element--within City Limits" map shows the locations of the historic resources in the town. The numbers shown on the map correspond with the historic resource numbers listed above and in Appendix 9, Historic Resources Inventory. The map is located in a pocket at the end of this general plan.

2523 ***Appendix 8, Historic Resources Inventory.*** Detailed descriptions of historic resources in the town's planning area are contained in Appendix 9, Historic Resources Inventory, prepared by Dorothy Regnery, December 1, 1989 and revised October 27, 1993.

2524 ***Appendix 9, Implementation.*** Implementation strategies and programs for implementing the objectives and principles of the historic element are outlined in Appendix 10, Implementation of the Historic Element. Ordinances and regulations which should be developed or amended and other implementation programs are included in this appendix.