

CHAPTER 4.1 COMMUNITY HERITAGE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT

Vision: *Retention of the community's heritage and atmosphere through identification, preservation and ongoing support of important traditions, celebrations, buildings, and other characteristics unique to Payson City.*

Guiding Principles

- *Recognize historic and cultural resources as an essential part of the City's Heritage.*
- *Create financial incentives to encourage historic preservation.*
- *Use historic preservation and community heritage to foster tourism and economic development.*
- *Identify an effective preservation program to ensure that the City's historic and cultural resources are protected for future generations.*
- *Increase community pride and awareness of heritage and historic preservation.*
- *Maintain a connection with the traditional agricultural base of the city through appropriate protection and preservation.*

Introduction

A sense of place; small town atmosphere; hometown community; rural lifestyle; Americana: In Payson these phrases are more than just worn out clichés, they are the very essence of the city. Residents, business owners and even visitors constantly express the need to maintain and preserve the characteristics that make Payson a unique community.

This element is not a history lesson, but rather it is a component of the General Plan intended to guide *future* development. To many, the key to Payson's future is gaining an understanding of its past and taking active steps to recognize and support the cultural activities and development patterns that allow the community to retain the desirable lifestyle found in the city. From the early beginnings of a settlement in the early 1850's to a progressive and modern community, some characteristics have remained unchanged. This element celebrates those attributes and identifies strategies to implement them into all future development projects.

Preserving heritage is more comprehensive than protecting old buildings from demolition. Heritage includes engrained traditions, celebrations and lifestyles. Events such as summer band concerts in Memorial Park, the annual Onion Days Celebration, Scottish Festival and Salmon Supper are augmented by some of the best examples of late 19th and early 20th century architecture found in southern Utah County at the Peteetneet Museum and Cultural Arts Center and throughout Historic Downtown Payson.

For a community that has been an ancient Indian settlement, an old western fort, a pioneer community, a bedroom community for other employment centers and is now becoming a self-sufficient, well-rounded city, the importance of heritage and history cannot be



overlooked. In a recent community survey, preserving the heritage of the community was considered very important to the residents of Payson. Many dedicated residents volunteer hundreds of hours serving on historic preservation boards, keeping our history alive through storytelling and serving in museums and at community events. This service has not gone unrewarded. Payson City has been named a *Preserve America Community*, a nationally recognized preservation program.

Guiding Principle A

Recognize Historic and Cultural Resources as an Essential Part of the City's Heritage



An effective preservation program begins with the simple realization of how important these characteristics are to the local economy, the quality of life and as a guide for future growth. In Payson it is almost impossible to separate the history of the community from the current lifestyle and physical appearance in the city. The largest gathering location in the community is also an irreplaceable historic asset – Memorial Park. Perhaps the most recognizable building in the city is the historic Peteetneet school, now the Peteetneet Museum and Cultural Arts Center. The center intersection of the addressing system of the community (Main Street and Utah Avenue) is located in the heart of Historic Downtown Payson district. With these and other cultural and historic elements, Payson City is fortunate to have the very fabric of the community based in heritage and architectural history. In an effort to recognize the historic and cultural resources in the city, the following items will be considered in conjunction with future growth and development:

- *An inventory of local historic and cultural resources will be prepared and maintained. Criteria for inclusion on the inventory will be determined by the City Council in consultation with the Historic Preservation Board of Payson City. A process should be identified that allows any resident of the community to petition the City Council to include a specific asset on the inventory.*
- *Appropriate regulations will be prepared to ensure that the integrity of local historic resources is preserved. For instance, a historically significant residence should be maintained for residential purposes (or more formal preservation such as a museum) rather than be converted to a use that could alter the desirable condition of the resource.*
- *The creation of a historic zoning district will allow areas of heritage or historic significance to be preserved. In some instances, such as the downtown area, the integrity of the historic asset extends beyond a small number of parcels or buildings which can only be protected through the imposition of appropriate zoning regulations.*

Guiding Principle B

Create Financial Incentives to Encourage Historic Preservation

Many of the most desirable cultural or historic assets in the City are located on private property. In order to preserve these elements, economic realities must be considered. Obviously, the city does not have the financial resources to obtain each of these properties, but the city can consider creative financial incentives to encourage owners to maintain the properties in a preservationist manner. Some, but certainly not all, of the financial incentives that can be considered include:

- *Support of financial incentive and tax relief programs that promote historic preservation and protection of cultural resources such as the Main Street Program and the Certified Local Government Program.*
- *Allowing necessary flexibility that allows property owners to maintain properties in a manner that preserves and protects culturally or historically significant properties. Many of these structures and properties no longer satisfy current zoning regulations and improvements may require upgrades that could impact the authenticity of the property or structure.*
- *Support fund raising intended to purchase, preserve or protect historic or cultural elements of the city.*

Guiding Principle C

Use Historic Preservation and Community Heritage to Foster Tourism and Economic Development

Payson is a unique community with a rich heritage and many remarkable structures. Located in the center of a state known for tourism, Payson has a rare opportunity to utilize its heritage and history to improve the economic condition of the city. Americans share a passion for history as evidenced by some of the more visited destinations having a direct link to history (i.e. The Liberty Bell, the monuments on the Washington D.C. mall, Gettysburg and other Civil War sites, early American cave dwellings, etc.) Payson can benefit financially from its history by:

- *Promoting educational workshops, placing exhibits, and organizing programs and events which celebrate the city's heritage and history. Include local schools, preservation committees, Native American Tribes, history departments from institutions of higher learning, and other groups in the preparation of the promotional materials.*
- *Encouraging walking tours, tours of homes on the National Registry, commercial building tours, signs, public art, and visitor attractions which showcase the city's history and culture.*
- *Center celebrations such as Onion Days, the Scottish Festival, the Salmon Supper, Memorial Park Band Concerts and other events on the unique culture and history of Payson City.*

Guiding Principle D

Identify an Effective Preservation Program to Ensure that the City's Historic and Cultural Resources are Protected for Future Generations

Without a solid plan to preserve culture and history, it will not happen. Furthermore, without the creation of a program focused on the future, generations to come may not recognize the importance of retaining these critical resources. Some of the strategies that could be included in a preservation program include:

- *Development and support for an active historic preservation program that brings economic and social benefits to the community.*
- *Development of partnerships to achieve preservation goals with existing groups such as the People Preserving Petetneet, the local, state and national Historical Society, the Payson City Historic Preservation Board and other groups seeking to preserve the history and culture of the community. Work to develop consistent and harmonious goals to ensure that everyone is working to accomplish the same tasks, without redundancy or mixed messages to property owners or the public.*

One of the human rights that isn't officially guaranteed in this country is an agreement that the places you grow up caring about will be there for you when you're ready to start a family of your own.

» *Robert Yaro*

Guiding Principle E

Increase Community Pride and Awareness of Heritage and Historic Preservation

A healthy community includes people with differing points of view, opinions, political ideals, ethnic backgrounds, religious viewpoints and other diversities. However, community diversity and varying viewpoints can generate instability, debate and factions that can divide the fabric of the community. A common knowledge of what makes a community unique and desirable can be a force for cohesiveness and camaraderie. Historic and cultural preservation can be used to unite the community by:

- *Engaging all residents in the identification of historic resources through surveys, forums, and other educational mediums. The City should use resources such as the City website, utility bills, media and other opportunities to disseminate information about the heritage and historic assets of the community.*
- *Education and outreach should be expanded to include public and private schools, religious organizations, service clubs and organizations, and any group attempting to preserve the heritage of the city.*



Guiding Principle F

Maintain a Connection with the Traditional Agricultural Base of the City through Appropriate Protection and Preservation

Although often overlooked, agriculture has played an important role in the history of Payson City. A historic element cannot be properly prepared without the inclusion of agricultural preservation. In the last decade, a lot of productive agricultural land in and around Payson has been transformed into non-



agricultural uses. Still known for highly productive fruit orchards and other agricultural operations, it is not too late to protect and preserve some of the remaining farmland. In order to encourage agricultural preservation, the City can:

- *Support existing local, state and regional agricultural preservation programs and regulations. Utah County and Payson City both have effective regulations to preserve agriculture provided the political will is in place to implement the provisions of regulations.*
- *Explore more aggressive preservation methods such as transfer or purchase of development rights and land trusts to protect prime lands from urban encroachment in perpetuity.*