

Support the Santa Monica Conservancy

Help us continue our track record of success! There are lots of ways you can help to ensure the Conservancy continues to be a major force in shaping Santa Monica's future.

Become a Member

Join our community to enjoy special benefits, support our work and add to the effectiveness of the Conservancy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
www.smconservancy.org >
[Support Us > Individual Memberships](#)

Make a Donation

Send the Santa Monica Conservancy a Birthday Gift! Our generous donors provide more than 70% of our organization's annual support.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
www.smconservancy.org >
[Support Us > Donate](#)

Become a Sponsor

The Conservancy Sponsorship Program invites you to support historic preservation in Santa Monica while gaining valuable exposure for your company.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
www.smconservancy.org >
[Support Us > 20th Anniversary Business Sponsorships](#)

Volunteer

Volunteering is a unique opportunity to make an impact on historic preservation and meet others in the community who share your interest in local history and preservation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
www.smconservancy.org >
[Support Us > Volunteer](#)

Visit Us

Come and visit us at the Preservation Resource Center at 2520 2nd Street in Santa Monica. Free virtual and in-person tours are offered each month.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
www.smconservancy.org >
[Support Us > Preservation Resource Center](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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CONSERVANCY PROGRAMS ARE SUPPORTED IN PART BY A GRANT FROM THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA.

How it all began...

Santa Monica was founded on July 10, 1875. Five days later an auctioneer stood at the end of Wilshire Boulevard to begin selling off lots in the new city. He called out "At one o'clock we will sell at public outcry to the highest bidder, the Pacific Ocean, draped with a western sky of scarlet and gold; we will sell a bay filled with white-winged ships; we will sell a southern horizon, rimmed with a choice collection of purple mountains,..." The boom began. While the founders hoped to develop a port in Santa Monica, the City's fame revolved around its beautiful beaches and benign climate. Santa Monica's ocean views, piers and seaside amusements drew visitors and permanent residents in the early decades of the 20th century. The historic pier, the Loeff Hippodrome, and the pergola in Palisades Park are tangible reminders of those roots.

Today, many people still move to Santa Monica to enjoy the ocean and the beach, to breathe the fresh air and to live in a dynamic place. In 2002 when the Santa Monica Conservancy was founded, many of Santa Monica's historic resources had been lost to unthinking demolition and insensitive remodeling, threatening our connection to the past in our commercial and residential neighborhoods. Through a concerted advocacy effort, the Santa Monica Conservancy has raised awareness of these fragile resources, and in collaboration with the Landmarks Commission, has greatly strengthened City laws and policies that afford historic resources greater protection and consideration in City planning decisions.

www.smconservancy.org

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THE SANTA MONICA CONSERVANCY'S TOP TWENTY ACHIEVEMENTS 2002-2022



The Santa Monica Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is the only local, grassroots organization solely focused on historic preservation in Santa Monica. We have accomplished much since our founding in 2002. Join us in celebrating our 20th Anniversary by exploring our Top Twenty Achievements!



VISIT www.smconservancy.org > About Us
FOR THE FULL STORY OF EACH ACHIEVEMENT.



1 PRESERVATION RESOURCE CENTER:
In 2002, the fledgling Conservancy worked with a community coalition to save the last remaining intact shotgun house in Santa Monica. The Conservancy then won a contract from the City to rehabilitate and adaptively reuse the house as a Preservation Resource Center. Since opening in 2016, the little house has welcomed nearly 7,000 visitors.



2 LANDMARKING OF HISTORIC SITES:
Two thirds of the City's landmarks have been nominated and/or designated since the Conservancy was formed. Examples include the Embassy Hotel Apartments, Strick/Niemeyer House, Zephyr Surf Shop/Dogtown, and the Santa Monica Doctor's Building.



3 ARCHITECTURAL TOURS:
The Conservancy has created a dozen deeply researched and thoughtfully organized architectural tours since 2002. These events offer participants a direct experience of the City's historic resources for a better understanding of their value.



4 PRESERVATION AWARDS:
The Conservancy established the Preservation Awards program in 2004 to recognize outstanding successes in historic preservation in Santa Monica. Each year, the Awards honor individuals, property owners and their project teams, thereby educating the public about contributions to historic preservation in the community.



5 PASQUAL MARQUEZ FAMILY CEMETERY:
In partnership with La Señora Research Institute and nearby Santa Monica Canyon residents, the Conservancy helped to protect and celebrate the Pasqual Marquez Family Cemetery.



6 ADAPTIVE REUSE:
The Conservancy has often promoted adaptive reuse as a way to preserve historic properties and attain sustainable development goals. Successful projects include the former Sears Building, now multipurpose commercial space; the Santa Monica Professional Building, now part of the new Proper Hotel; and the Associated Telephone Building, now restaurants and offices.



7 DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR:
Since 2007, over 7,000 people have enjoyed the Conservancy's signature Downtown Walking Tour, which is supported by the City and Santa Monica Travel & Tourism. The tour begins at the Rapp Saloon, built in 1875, and traverses the City's central core to explore subsequent stages of development.



8 ANNENBERG COMMUNITY BEACH HOUSE:
In 2006, the Conservancy recruited a broad community coalition to support conversion of the Marion Davies Beach Estate to the Annenberg Community Beach House. The Conservancy has held a contract to provide the site's popular docent-led interpretive program since 2009.



9 PRESERVATION CONFERENCE:
The California Preservation Foundation selected the Conservancy to host its annual state conference in 2011. The event offered educational programs and tours centered on Santa Monica's historic heritage to a statewide audience including many local residents who were exposed to the Conservancy's work for the first time.



10 THE CIVIC AUDITORIUM:
In its work to protect publicly owned landmarks, the Conservancy created a "Save the Civic" coalition and participated in the City's Civic Auditorium Working Group formed in 2013 to develop a plan for the revitalization and reuse of this iconic landmark.



11 PRESERVATION FUNDING:
Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been raised to support historic preservation since 2012, thanks to the Conservancy's efforts to convince City Hall that preservation is a community benefit and thus eligible for funds set aside in certain types of development agreements.



12 PRESERVING THE MILLS ACT:
In 2014, the Conservancy advocated successfully against changes that would have limited the use of Mills Act contracts to provide property tax reductions for historic properties with approved rehabilitation and maintenance plans.



13 IMPROVING PRESERVATION POLICY:
The Conservancy advocated successfully for protections and benefits for historic properties in the 2015 Zoning Code Update.



14 HISTORIC DISTRICTS:
Three of the five existing Historic Districts in Santa Monica have been formed with Conservancy support, including the San Vicente Boulevard Courtyard Apartments Historic District (2015), the 11th Street Bungalow Historic District (2019), and the Fourth Street Corner District (2019).



15 PASSPORT TO SUCCESS: LIFE AT THE BEACH FIELD TRIP SERIES:
In 2017, the Conservancy developed this program with historian Alison Rose Jefferson to provide outings in Santa Monica to children from across the county that focus on the historical experiences of communities of color, environmental education and beach fun.



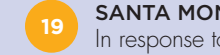
16 SANTA MONICA NIKKEI HALL:
In 2018, the Conservancy supported landmark designation of the Nikkei Kai (Social Hall), the City's first landmark representing the cultural history of the Japanese community in Santa Monica as well as its adaptive reuse as part of a new housing complex.



17 BAY SREET BEACH:
An example of its work to protect multicultural sites, the Conservancy contributed research and support in 2019 to the National Register of Historic Places listing for Bay Street Beach, one of the few African American leisure sites in Southern California during the Jim Crow era.



18 PRESERVATION NEXT:
Preservation Next aims to foster the next generation of preservationists by celebrating the architectural heritage of Santa Monica through a younger lens, promoting a wider understanding and appreciation of the cultural, social, economic, and environmental benefits of historic preservation.



19 SANTA MONICA MOSAIC SERIES:
In response to Covid and a national call for social justice in 2020, the Conservancy debuted the Santa Monica Mosaic virtual series celebrating the diverse cultures that shape our city and dedicated to developing an inclusive context for future preservation. Mosaic grew out of the in-person Summer Speaker Series exploring various aspects of Santa Monica's history.



20 THE CITY HALL MURALS:
The Conservancy successfully opposed a May 2021 City Council proposal to obscure the locally designated WPA-era Stanton Macdonald-Wright Murals at Santa Monica City Hall from view.