



City of Arts & Innovation

# News Release

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## **National Trust for Historic Preservation Names Trujillo Adobe One of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places**

*Momentum towards preserving Trujillo Adobe grows!*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The National Trust for Historic Preservation, the only non-profit organization with a national mission to preserve places that are central to the heritage of the United States, has issued a call to action in naming Riverside's historic Trujillo Adobe as one of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. Since 1988, the National Trust has used its list of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in the United States to raise awareness about the threats facing some of the nation's greatest treasures. The list, which has identified more than 300 sites to date, has been successful in galvanizing preservation efforts—resulting in less than five percent of these sites being forever lost.

Of the eleven sites selected for 2021, Riverside's own Trujillo Adobe has been recognized as a site of critical significance and needing preservation. The Adobe is one of only two sites in California selected in this year's group of eleven. The 2020 group included Riverside's Harada House, which makes a rare occurrence of one city being selected for national preservation efforts two years in a row.

The Trujillo Adobe was constructed prior to the founding of the City of Riverside in approximately 1862 by the Trujillo family. Today it is considered the oldest surviving structure in Riverside. The Adobe was situated on the Old Spanish Trail, a commercial route first established by Native Americans and used by settlers and Spaniards as a trading route that spread from what is now California to Colorado, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona.

The Adobe chronicles extraordinary accounts of migration and settlement in the area now recognized as Inland Southern California—these are stories of heroism, ingenuity, compromise, and loss all coming together to depict the story of American westward expansion. Lorenzo Trujillo led many expeditions as a scout across the Old Spanish Trail, enabling immigrants to settle in the region. Lorenzo Trujillo's home became the beating heart of a community known as La Placita de los Trujillos.

“The Trujillo Adobe represents a multilayered history illuminating important connections between Mexico, Spain, and the native peoples of southern California. The adobe helps tell the full story of the settlement of this area and reminds us that our shared history has always included a vibrant interaction and exchange between cultures.” stated the National Trust’s Chief Preservation Officer, Katherine Malone France. “We need to preserve and reactivate places like the Trujillo Adobe that highlight the full richness and complexity of our past in ways that bring us together to honor each other’s contributions and find a way forward together.”

Today this historic site is deteriorated and fragile, protected only by a wooden structure which itself is in need of repair. The Trujillo Adobe is owned by Riverside County, which is supportive of efforts to preserve and reactivate the site, as is the City of Riverside.

Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson stated, “Preservation is more than just salvaging a structure. It's about capturing the stories, the histories and experiences that the structure evokes.” She continued. “Preserving the story of the Trujillo Adobe is a way we send a message to the future about the history of the land we all call home. This sentiment is embodied in the Adobe’s physical structure—the location that we are called to protect and care for today.”

Local advocates hope to transform the Adobe into a cultural and educational site to recognize and take pride in the significance of early Latinx culture in the region. The long-term vision is for the Adobe to be part of an educational and heritage tourism destination, bolstered by similar plans incorporated in the City’s Northside Specific Plan.

The Spanish Town Heritage Foundation is now opening the Trujillo Adobe on the second Saturdays of each month for tours, children's activities, and storytelling and has monthly cleanup and beautification days to enhance the grounds of this historic site. Information on ways to get involved and the current preservation efforts at the Adobe can be found at <http://savetrujilloadobe.com/> or on Facebook at Spanish Town Heritage Foundation.

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