

**California State University, Fullerton  
Centers and Institutes Self-Study & Program Review**

**SOUTH CENTRAL COASTAL INFORMATION CENTER  
California Historical Resources Information System**

*Orange, Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Ventura Counties  
Est. 2000*

**For Year 2024 (Last Review 2018)**

**South Central Coastal Information Center  
College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Department of Anthropology, MH-477  
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## Mission and Goals

The mission of the South Central Coastal Information Center is to assist in the long-term stewardship of California's Historical Resources, both the physical properties and the documentary materials. The mission of the Information Centers of the California Historical Resources Information System is threefold. These three areas of effort are of equal importance and value to this mission.

1. Primary records management, both for the conservation of original information and the development and maintenance of working systems;
2. The dissemination of information concerning the full range of historical resource values, the provision of local expertise in the interpretation of that information, and professional advice and recommendations designed to assist in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and;
3. Through a variety of proactive educational efforts on both a formal and informal basis, the Information Centers work to broaden the appreciation and understanding of historical resource values as well as strengthen compliance with state and federal laws.

The Information Centers are committed to the fulfillment of this mission by providing quality service and products in accordance with local needs and directives from the California Office of Historic Preservation.

The South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) is a unique and valuable resource that exemplifies the University's Mission and Goals. The following represents goals and strategies from the University's Mission Statement that parallels our center's mission and core functions:

1. We provide opportunities for students and faculty from CSUF, as well as other colleges and universities around the country to use the center's extensive inventory of cultural resources data for use in their research. Our on-going digitization efforts ensure that the data can be uploaded to systems using the latest scholarly and creative technologies in order to seek answers from simple to complex research questions.
2. We are a distinctive resource with the sole responsibility for managing the archive of cultural resources data for a significant portion of Southern California which includes the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Ventura. As such, our connections and partnerships with the surrounding community are extensive and the center's activities are essential to the intellectual, cultural, and economic development of our region. Maintaining the cultural resources archive on its campus assures that Cal State Fullerton continues to expand its regional expertise and strengthen its relationships with public and private organizations throughout Southern California and beyond.
3. Students benefit from having this valuable resource right here on campus. Many of the students we have hired over the last 18 years take the essential skills they learned at the center and apply that industry-required knowledge in several professional fields including cultural resources, environmental, and land-use management; urban planning; and historic preservation. We continue to provide tours, presentations, and laboratory exercises that help prepare students to expand their academic skill-set and to better compete for professional opportunities that are open to them once they complete their studies.

Our mission and core functions are coordinated and integrated with a majority of the college and department's mission and goals. Hosted by the Department of Anthropology since 2000, the SCCIC enjoys a supportive and collaborative partnership with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and Auxiliary Services Corporation. The SCCIC also works collaboratively with several college departments and centers including Anthropology, History, and Geography.

1. Students are offered a unique opportunity to integrate their classroom experience with relevant community-based experience and professional practice. The SCCIC provides course-related opportunities for students to prepare to enter the local workforce and beyond. Students have an opportunity to interact with industry professionals who run the center as well as those who come to the SCCIC to do their professional research.
2. As an adjunct to their academic curriculum, students are immersed in the methods relevant in the collection, dissemination, and management of cultural resource data in the state of California. The experience is guided by the duties and responsibilities we have as partners in

the preservation of cultural resources, as mandated by state and federal laws. Much of the data at the SCCIC is considered “confidential”, and thus requires special handling and responsibility. This kind of research enhances the students’ awareness of themselves as consumers and producers of information who must act with ethical and academic integrity.

3. Students who are hired as staff researchers, participate in our internships or conduct research at our center are exposed to the best of current practice, theory and research and integrate professional studies with preparation in the arts and sciences. Furthermore, because the archival data has been collected over several decades, they are also exposed to the rich traditions and the evolution in thought, expression, ideologies, belief systems and epistemologies that have shaped the archive over time.
4. Working or doing research at the Information Center provides a real-world experience that helps students to develop the habit of intellectual inquiry, prepare for challenging professions, strengthen relationships to their communities and contribute productively to society.
5. We are the keepers of a unique portion of our collective cultural history. As the only official repository of cultural resource information in the state of California for the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Ventura, our office is a “distinctive resource” that interacts with a diverse population of individuals, private organizations and public agencies. We are researchers, colleagues, and active members of our campus, regional, and professional communities.

## Activities

We continue to actively digitize the archive in our extensive service area of resource and report locations in GIS, scan paper records and reports into pdf format for more efficient retrieval; and populate the corresponding databases that allow for querying and archival management in a more robust and secure environment. One of our under-reported roles is that of emergency responder for fires, floods, oil spills and any other disasters that can occur within our service area. We partner with agencies such as FEMA, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife that require cultural resources data from our inventory as part of their disaster response.

The primary means of disseminating information to our clients is through the fee-for-service records search process. The SCCIC staff conducts research on behalf of our clients or qualified clients with a valid access and use agreement can come to center and their own research. Faculty and students are not charged for research time and staff are available to assist them. The SCCIC staff also provides an invaluable and free public service by fielding daily questions and concerns that people have regarding cultural resources and historic preservation in their local communities.

As part of the center’s on-going public outreach activities, the SCCIC Director participates in several different on-campus and off-campus activities. Several times per year, the SCCIC hosts Information Center educational tours for professors and students of Anthropology and History from CSUF, CSULB, and Cal Poly, Pomona. These tours are mutually beneficial for the center and the students, as they can result in internship and employment opportunities either with the Information Center or various regional firms and agencies. Many professors and students continue to use the Information Center’s data for their professional, educational, and academic research.

## Organizational Structure and Governance

Pursuant to federal and state law, the California State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC) directs the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to maintain an inventory of historical resources in California. The SHPO meets this responsibility via the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS), which is administered by the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) under SHPO authority. The SHPO is the state official, appointed by the governor, to carry out the functions ascribed to the SHPO by the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) is one of 9 regional information centers under contract (administered by Auxiliary Services Corporation) to fulfill part of the SHPOs functions within the state of California.

Responsibility for the day-to-day operations of an Information Center, including the implementation of the contract terms between the host institution and the OHP, is the role of the Information Center Director. The SCCIC Director reports to Dr. Jessica Stern, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Information Center Director has the responsibility to see that all procedures set forth by the Auxiliary Services Corporation are followed.

Our contractual duties include responsibility for the acquisition, integration, maintenance, and dissemination of Archeological Site Records, Historic Property Records, USGS Maps, Historic Property Directories, Archeological and Historic Reports, and a Professional Consultants web list for the state. The SCCIC also provides information and recommendations regarding such resources on a fee-for-service basis. Clients of the SCCIC include but are not limited to: members of the general public, tribal representatives, researchers, students, developers, engineers, law firms, real estate firms, architects, architectural historians, historic architects, archaeologists, historians, environmental scientists, city and county planners and state and federal agencies.

The Information Center Directors and the CHRIS Director engage in weekly conference calls to discuss the activities of the CHRIS. Sub-committees are frequently formed, as needed, to develop policies or procedures that are then presented back to the group on the weekly calls. An annual meeting of the Information Center Directors, the CHRIS Director, the SHPO, OHP staff, and various other guests takes place in Sacramento.

The SHPO, OHP, and the SHRC oversees the fee structure and the implementation of the Rules of Operation Manual for the Information Centers of the CHRIS. The fee structure is the primary way that the CHRIS supports itself meets its contractual obligations and maintains its fiscal viability. The manual specifies types of CHRIS information and rules of operation for the CHRIS and its constituent Information Centers with respect to access to information, processing of historical resources records and reports, records searches, listing of historical resources consultants, service fees, client hours, and restrictions on activities of Information Center personnel as related to the CHRIS. The CHRIS IC Manual reflects several years of consultation between Information Center Directors, the OHP, and the SHRC Information Center Procedural Advisory Committee conducted in an ongoing effort to refine the CHRIS and its role in the protection and preservation of historical resources, addressing growing demands upon the CHRIS, management responsibilities of government agencies, and the broad array of concerns inherent to Native American communities, archaeologists, historians, architectural historians, land-use planners, commercial developers and the public.

Changes to the rules of operations, standardization efforts, methods of data dissemination, and the fee structure are under constant review and discussion by the SHPO, SHRC, OHP and the CHRIS centers. As such, the cumulative impacts of these changes, reviews, and consultations to each of the centers add additional challenges to an already enormous workload that each center supports.

## **Resources and Sustainability**

The SCCIC average annual program income from fee-for-service requests for the last three years (2021-2023) is \$609,364. In 2018, our average annual income was \$555,828.

Additionally, the SCCIC receives an annual grant of approximately \$1,000 as part of our contract with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). SHPOs receive and administer matching grants from the National Park Service to support their duties and responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act. A portion of these funds is distributed to the Information Centers in order to assist the SHPO to fulfill his or her duties and responsibilities.

In the last three years, SCCIC clients have conducted 1,931 hours of in-house research, averaging 643 hours per year. The average represents a reduction from previous years and is due to the campus closure during the pandemic when all research was instead conducted by SCCIC staff on behalf of our

clients. Alternatively, SCCIC staff conducted 3,696 hours of research for an annual average of 1,232 hours. The previous average in 2018 was 960 hours per year.

The current SCCIC staff consists of three full-time and benefitted employees and two part-time students. Two employees of the SCCIC received their M.A. degrees from the CSUF Department of Anthropology. One is a graduate of CSU Long Beach. We are currently under-staffed at this time but lack additional space.

For the past 24 years, the SCCIC has been located in McCarthy Hall, Room 477. The space was assigned by Dr. Thomas Klammer, Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences in 2000. Space is provided by the host as per the original agreement when the center moved from UCLA to Cal State Fullerton in 2000. Information Technology services are provided by the college. All other operational fees are covered by the center's funding.

The fiscal sustainability of the SCCIC remains strong (see the SCCIC financial statement). Since 2000, when the center moved from UCLA to CSUF, consistent funding, careful planning, and conservative spending of SCCIC funds has ensured that the center continues to be self-sustaining. Even during times of economic downturn and pandemics, the SCCIC program income remained consistent and program activities remained active.

Another factor that contributes to the SCCIC's consistent income is the large geographical area that the SCCIC serves. As the official archive for cultural resource information for Orange, Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Ventura counties, the SCCIC provides a unique public service within a wide geographical niche of steady growth and re-development. As a result, lead agencies and others with responsibilities under the California Environmental Quality Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and local government requirements consistently use the SCCIC on a project-by-project basis as a condition for permits or funding.

In addition to our fee-for-service income, the center's "sustainability" can be directly tied the physical space that it currently occupies. More about the SCCIC need for space will be discussed in the "Planning and Strategic Outlook" section of this report.

## **Highlights and Accomplishments**

The 2020 pandemic affected client in-person access to the center for approximately 2 years, but the SCCIC staff continued to provide essential research services for all our clients and their projects throughout the campus closure. To encourage and promote economic stability, federal, state and local projects were green-lighted and therefore our research services remained in high-demand throughout the entire pandemic. The SCCIC, with the support of the university and Auxiliary Services, assisted hundreds of people (and projects) to remain in compliance with legal requirements and provided them with the research support necessary to keep projects moving forward while protecting cultural resources.

Day to day activities at the center have largely normalized since we returned to campus and the pandemic was officially declared to be over in May of 2023. Many of our clients adjusted to having us do their research for them and have chosen to continue to have information center staff provide excellent research services for them instead of coming to campus to do their own research.

The California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) of 2001 requires all agencies, museums, and higher education institutions, that receive state funding and have possession or control over collections of California Native American human remains and associated funerary objects to inventory those remains and objects for repatriation to the appropriate California Indian tribes. Because our office manages information that may be related to archaeological sites from which human remains or cultural artifacts were recovered, the SCCIC has donated extensive hours of research time and material

support to the Chancellor of the California State University and to the repatriation coordinators throughout the CSU system who are tasked with compliance to various requirements related to NAGPRA.

## Planning and Strategic Outlook

The nature and formality of the Information Center's plans and strategies are guided by our relationship to the Office of Historic Preservation, and also by our relationship to the University. The Director of the SCCIC has the responsibility of balancing the goals, and expectations of all three parties. Given the consistent nature of the center's workload, the viability of the center is very good. Furthermore, the SCCIC maintains adequate funds on account to cover all necessary operating expenses for the current contract period and beyond.

The SCCIC's strategic planning process is guided by three main goals: consistently meeting our contractual obligations with the Office of Historic Preservation; maintaining a positive and mutually beneficial relationship with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the CSUF Auxiliary Services Corporation; and, continuing to serve the needs of the public with regard to the preservation of our collective cultural heritage. We currently have the staff, the budget, the space, and the skills necessary to accomplish these goals. We continue to digitize the San Bernardino archive as well as newly recorded resources and reports from the three other counties we manage while processing client requests and host in-house clients who conduct their own research at the SCCIC.

In order to continue to meet the terms of our contract and to support the needs of our clients in a timely and expeditious manner, we need to maintain a staff of at least 4 full-time employees or the equivalent. At minimum, we also need to maintain enough workspace to accommodate up to four clients per day. Thus, we require enough space to accommodate up to eight people (or more) and all the associated materials necessary for our research activities. Our report and resource archive is currently housed in 50+ file cabinets and will remain in place until we become fully-digital.

Potential changes in space allocation or even relocation would have a significant impact on the center. Maintaining adequate and well-configured space is critical to our ability to remain self-sustaining. Additionally, a prolonged disruption to the Center's operating hours would not be well tolerated by users of the center and could affect their ability to compete for contracts or funding. Careful planning would be necessary to minimize disruptions to our clients and maintain good will with the community. Therefore, to minimize any potential negative impacts to the center's viability, the Director of the SCCIC respectfully requests to be a part of any discussions with regard to use of space that may affect the center.

This concludes our report. We thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Stacy St. James