

City of Visalia Agenda Item Transmittal

Meeting Date: September 6, 2011

Agenda Item Number (Assigned by City Clerk): 6g

Agenda Item Wording: Authorize and approve Historic Recognition Program under the auspices of the City's Historic Preservation Advisory Committee.

Deadline for Action: None

Submitting Department: Administration and Community Development

Contact Name and Phone Number: Andrew Chamberlain at 713-4003 and Nancy Loliva at 713-4535

Department Recommendation: Authorize and approve Historic Recognition Program under the auspices of the City's Historic Preservation Advisory Committee.

Summary/background: The Historic Recognition Program (HRP) would allow interested building owners an opportunity to be considered for a plaque to identify the building and its local historical significance to the community. The City's historic buildings are a symbol of the rich history of the land, people and events, and the building markers would identify these structures as a visible, important link to our past.

The purpose of the HRP is to draw attention to the historic character of Visalia by identifying historic structures with plaques. Benefits to the participating buildings owners and the community include the development and enhancement of community pride and charm, and providing an; education of the community about Visalia history. The program would also provide additional identifying markers for historic walking tours and a link to the past for visitors to the City.

The program laid out in Exhibit "A" provides the process for nomination and consideration of structures. The Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC) will review 'qualified' structures nominated by either the owner of the building or members of the community with the owner's permission, and will determine the recipients by majority vote. Factors to be considered for buildings receiving a plaque are as follows: age; style; site of significant historical events; condition – including appearance, additions and alterations to the structure; proper documentation on building history; and other relevant information.

In order for a structure to qualify for an interpretive marker, it must be at least 75 years old, it must be researched for its authenticity, and at a minimum, the date of construction must be

For action by:

- City Council
- Redev. Agency Bd.
- Cap. Impr. Corp.
- VPFA

For placement on which agenda:

- Work Session
- Closed Session

Regular Session:

- Consent Calendar
- Regular Item
- Public Hearing

Est. Time (Min.):_ _

Review: LBC82511

Dept. Head _____
(Initials & date required)

Finance _____
City Atty _____
(Initials & date required or N/A)

City Mgr _____
(Initials Required)

If report is being re-routed after revisions leave date of initials if no significant change has affected Finance or City Attorney Review.

reasonably determined. The research and documentation must be conducted by qualified historical research personnel approved by the City of Visalia Historic Preservation Advisory Committee, and submitted with the application. Once mounted, all plaques become the property and responsibility of the building owner. The structure does not need to be within the City of Visalia Historic District or on the Local Register of Historic Structures.

Individuals and/or organizations can nominate a building for the program, but only the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee and the building owner can authorize a plaque for a building through this program. An application and property owner authorization form is required to be submitted for all nominated structures. The HRP program in Exhibit "A" is subject to change by an action of HPAC as circumstances may deem appropriate to administer the program as intended. Participation in HRP is voluntary, with the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee making the final determination for the awarding of plaques. This program does not preclude a property owner from installing their own plaque or historic marker, which is not associated with this program, on their building.

This program is based upon independent funding through grants, donations or other means. The program may be suspended during times when adequate funding is not available. The estimated cost of each plaque, with installation, is \$750, and funding is currently available through a grant from Kaweah Collectors in the amount of \$10,500. The Kaweah Collectors is willing to provide the full funding from the grant to the Historic Recognition Program.

Prior Council/Board Actions: NA

Committee/Commission Review and Actions: At their July 13 meeting, the members of the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee approved the Historic Recognition Program Plan.

Alternatives: NA

Attachments: Exhibit "A" – Historic Recognition Program Plan.

Recommended Motion (and Alternative Motions if expected): I move to authorize and approve Historic Recognition Program under the auspices of the City's Historic Preservation Advisory Committee.

Environmental Assessment Status

CEQA Review: NA

NEPA Review: NA

Tracking Information: *(Staff must list/include appropriate review, assessment, appointment and contract dates and other information that needs to be followed up on at a future date)*

Copies of this report have been provided to: Historic Preservation Advisory Committee

City of Visalia

Historic Recognition Program

I. Summary of HRP

The Historic Recognition Program (HRP) allows interested building owners an opportunity to be considered for a plaque to identify the building and its local historical significance to the community.

II. Program background

Founded in 1852, Visalia is the oldest town in the Valley between Los Angeles almost to Stockton. Visalia sprang up out of the middle of an oak forest and the earliest settlers built a log fort for security. Soon they abandoned the fortification and began building a community.

As one of the earliest inland communities, Visalia played a vital role in the growth and development of the Southern San Joaquin Valley and as a result became an important town in California history. The town's historic buildings are a reminder of the rich history of the land, people and events. The plaque would identify these structures as a visible, important link to our past.

III. Purpose of HRP

The purpose of HRP is to draw attention to the historic character of Visalia by identifying historic structures with plaques. Benefits include:

- Development and enhancement of community pride and charm;
- Education of the community about Visalia history.

IV. Plaque process

- The HPAC Committee will review 'qualified' structures nominated by either the owner of the building or members of the community.
- By majority vote, the committee will determine the recipient of the plaque.
- Factors to be considered for buildings receiving a plaque are as follows:
 - Age;
 - Style;
 - Site of significant historical events;
 - Condition – including appearance, additions and alterations to the home;
 - Proper documentation on building history;
 - Other relevant information.
- Members of the HPAC committee may choose one or more buildings at a time to receive plaques.

V. Requirements for a structure to qualify for an interpretive marker are

EXHIBIT "A"

- The building must be at least **75** years old.
- The building must be researched for its authenticity, and at a minimum, the date of construction must be reasonably determined.
- Research must be conducted by qualified historical research personnel approved by the City of Visalia Historic Preservation Advisory Committee (HPAC) and proper documentation must be provided to HPAC before a plaque can be placed on a building.
- The building's exterior must be restored or properly maintained in accordance with its historical style and character.
- In the event that a building has been moved from its original site, it must retain a sense of its historic architectural style and integrity.
- The owner of the building must authorize the placement of the plaque on the building and assumes ownership of the plaque.

VI. Uniformity and standardization of markers

- The plaques used in the HRP should be of the same size, design and material composition, unless an alternative is approved by the HPAC.
- Mounting on commercial buildings - The plaque should be mounted between 5 and 6 feet above the ground level surface, in a conspicuous place, and the location must be agreed to by building owner.
- Mounting on residential buildings – The plaque should be mounted in front of the residence, preferably not attached to the building. It should be located in an area readable from the sidewalk or other public right-of-way. Mounting should be done in accordance with approved method described by HPAC.

VII. Responsibility for the HRP plaques

- Once mounted, all plaques become the property of the building owner.

VIII. Nomination of buildings for HRP

- Individuals and/or organizations can nominate a building for the program, but only HPAC and the building owner can authorize a plaque for a building *through this program*.
- Prior to HPAC consideration of a nomination, an “Application and Property Owner Authorization” form is required.
- The signed agreement and confirmed site research meeting the intent of the requirements in Section V shall be considered a “qualified nomination.”
- Qualified nominations continue to be valid unless there has been a change of ownership of the structure, *of if alterations to the building have occurred since the nomination was determined to be ‘Qualified’*.

EXHIBIT “A”

IX. Application to participate in HRP

- Requests for consideration must be accompanied by a “Historic Recognition Program - Application and Property Owner Authorization” form. Participation in HRP is voluntary, with the Historic Preservation Advisory Committee making the final determination for the awarding of plaques.
- X. These guidelines are subject to change by HPAC. There may be occasions which call for deviation from the guidelines, wherein HPAC will be the final determining body for consistency with the purpose and intent of the guidelines and requirements.
- XI. The HRP program guidelines and requirements are in no way intended to limit the ability of a property owner to independently mount a historical plaque or marker on their building.
- XII. This program is based upon independent funding through grants, donations or other means. The program may be suspended during times when adequate funding is not available.
- XIII. Participation in this program does not confer any special “historic” status to a property or building.