



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0978, **Version:** 2

Recommendation to declare ordinance amending the Long Beach Municipal Code by adding Section 16.52.2300 relating to the designation of the properties located on the 6000 block of Walnut Avenue as the Grant Neighborhood Historic Landmark District, read and adopted as read. (District 9)

After several years of engagement with the Department of Development Services Planning Bureau staff regarding interest in a historic landmark district designation for the area, the Grant Neighborhood Association is formally nominating properties on the 6000 block of Walnut Avenue, as a historic landmark district. The Grant Neighborhood Association submitted an application on June 18, 2018, which nominated the entire 6000 block of Walnut Avenue along with 18 letters of support from their respective property owners.

On September 23, 2018, the neighborhood hosted a community workshop for residents and property owners, to discuss the proposed landmark district. The workshop was an opportunity for City staff to share information with the community on the process for adopting a landmark district, how the City evaluates the eligibility of properties to qualify for a landmark district, and discuss with the community the responsibilities involved with the designation, including the special protections and benefits the designation would have on affected property owners within the district.

On December 10, 2018, the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) voted unanimously to recommend that the City Council approve the designation of a new historic district for the 19 properties on the 6000 block of Walnut Avenue, bounded by 61st Street to the north and 60th Street to the south, as a Historical Landmark District. On March 5, 2019, the City Council directed the City Attorney to prepare an Ordinance for the designation of the proposed landmark district.

Section 2.63.050 of the LBMC requires two findings be met for an area to qualify for designation as a historic landmark district: Finding A - the grouping of cultural resources represents a significant and distinguishable entity that is significant within a historic context and Finding B - a minimum of 60 percent of the properties within the boundaries of the proposed landmark district qualify as a contributing property.

In evaluating historic significance, a Historic Context Statement was prepared to establish a historic timeline and framework for evaluating Grant Neighborhood's history. In addition, a Historic Resources Survey Report was prepared to evaluate each of the properties in the proposed boundary area to determine if they individually retain historic integrity and contribute to the significance of the district. The 6000 block of Walnut Avenue was found to

be a distinguishable part of Long Beach history and was determined to be significant as an intact and cohesive automobile suburb, whose core was constructed between 1928 and 1930. The period of significance is between 1928-1956.

The 19 properties were found to be unified through compatible architectural styles and scale, shared planning features, street trees, landscaping, and uniform setbacks. The historic context statement indicates the Grant Neighborhood is a cohesive collection of residential properties that reflects Long Beach's booming economic growth in the 1920s and corresponding rapid residential expansion in the city periphery, in particular through North Long Beach, as the rise of the personal automobile made settlement feasible in areas far from central Long Beach. The predominant architectural style in the neighborhood is Spanish Colonial Revival-influenced, but English Revival/Storybook-influenced homes, as well as Ranch Style homes are also found in the district. As such, the district meets Criterion A because the properties as a grouping represent a significant and distinguishable entity that is significant within Long Beach's historic context as it is representative of the City's historic development patterns in the 1920s.

A total of 19 properties were analyzed and 17 were found to directly contribute to the significance of the district. That represents a total of 89 percent of properties that are contributing to the district. This exceeds the minimum requirement of 60 percent, as required by Criterion B.

Notably, this designation would expand the geographic diversity of landmark districts around Long Beach and become the first landmark district in North Long Beach. This request presently before City Council is part of a larger effort led by Development Services to equitably expand the City's historic preservation program to include a broader range of the City's geographic, demographic, and cultural history.

Staff analyzed the landmark district nomination and has determined that it meets the requirements for designation as a historic landmark district. Further, on December 10, 2018, the Cultural Heritage Commission recommended that the City Council designate as a historic landmark district the Grant Neighborhood on the basis that the nomination meets Criteria A and B for landmark district designation.

Staff recommends that the City Council receive the supporting documentation into the record, conclude the public hearing, and declare an Ordinance amending the LBMC by adding Section 16.52.2300 relating to the designation of Grant Neighborhood Historic District and adopt the Resolution establishing a historic resources designation for the 19 properties on the 6000 block of Walnut Avenue, cited above and shown on attached maps (Ordinance), as prescribed by Chapter 2.63 of the LBMC to be recorded pursuant of the authority Government Code Section 27288.2 and Public Resource Code Section 5029.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Erin Weesner-McKinley on September 20,

2019 and by Budget Analysis Officer Julissa José-Murray on September 17, 2019.

SUSTAINABILITY

Designation of a landmark district helps retain and restore existing buildings. Restoration work is often completed by reusing or reclaiming existing building materials, reducing construction waste as compared to new construction.

City Council action on this matter is not time sensitive.

This action does not have a direct fiscal impact. However, when a district is approved, the properties it encompasses become eligible for the City's Mills Act program. This program provides for potential reduction in property taxes. The fiscal impact of any such participation will be determined at the time the City Council approves any proposed Mills Act contracts. This recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of staff duties and is consistent with adopted City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

Approve recommendation.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LONG BEACH AMENDING THE LONG BEACH MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING SECTION 16.52.2300 RELATING TO THE DESIGNATION OF THE PROPERTIES LOCATED ON THE 6000 BLOCK OF WALNUT AVENUE AS THE GRANT NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORIC LANDMARK DISTRICT

LINDA F. TATUM, FAICP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

APPROVED:

THOMAS B. MODICA
ACTING CITY MANAGER