



Legislation Text

File #: 19-0191, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to request City Attorney to prepare an ordinance to designate a new historic district for 19 properties located on the 6000 block of Walnut Avenue, bounded by 61st Street to the north and 60th Street to the south, specifically addressed as 6001, 6002, 6012, 6017, 6018, 6023, 6024, 6029, 6030, 6037, 6038, 6043, 6044, 6049, 6050, 6055, 6056, 6067 and 6068 Walnut Avenue, as a Historical Landmark District. (District 9)

After several years of engagement with staff regarding interest in a historic landmark designation for the area, the Grant Neighborhood Association is formally nominating 19 properties located 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 property owners.

On September 23, 2018, the neighborhood hosted a community workshop that was attended by staff, with the residents and property owners to discuss the proposed landmark district. The workshop was an opportunity for staff to provide guidance to the community on the process for landmark district designation, how the City evaluates properties and the constraints, responsibility, special protections, and benefits the designation would have on affected property owners within the designation area.

On December 10, 2018, the Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) held a public hearing to consider the designation of the subject historical landmark district (Attachment A - CHC Staff Report). To recommend approval of the new historic district, findings need to be made in the affirmative for both a historic landmark and historic landmark district as outlined in Chapter 2.63 of the Long Beach Municipal Code, which contains four criteria for landmark designation. Criterion A - associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; Criterion B - associated with the lives of persons important to the City's past; Criterion C - embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction or represents the work of a master or possesses high artistic values; or, Criterion D - has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important in prehistory or history. The CHC made two of these findings in support of the landmark district designation: Criterion A - the grouping represents a significant and distinguishable entity that is significant within a historic context; and, Criterion B - a minimum of 60 percent of the properties within the boundaries of the proposed landmark district qualify as a contributing property. For landmark district designation, the district must meet both findings. After reviewing all materials and taking public testimony, the CHC made a recommendation to the City Council to designate the subject historical landmark district.

In evaluating historic significance, a Historic Context Statement was prepared to establish a historic timeline and framework for evaluating Grant Neighborhood's history. A Historic Resources Survey Report was prepared to evaluate the specific properties located along the 6000 block of Walnut Avenue for potential significance as a historic landmark district. Each property along the 6000 block of Walnut Avenue was evaluated to determine individual significance to the collection of residential properties on the block.

The 6000 block of Walnut Avenue was found to be eligible for landmark designation under Criterion A, as it represents a distinguishable part of Long Beach history and was determined to be significant as an intact cohesive automobile suburb whose cores were constructed between 1928 and 1930. The period of significance is between 1928-1956. The 6000 block of Walnut Avenue was determined to be eligible as a historic landmark district under Criterion A and B. The 19 properties were found to be unified through compatible architectural styles and scale, shared planning features, street trees, landscaping, and uniform setbacks. This cohesive collection of residential properties 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 the City center. A total of 89 percent of properties are contributing to the district, which exceeds the minimum requirement of 60 percent under Criterion B. Notably, this designation would expand the geographic diversity of landmark districts around the City and become the first landmark district in North Long Beach. This request is presently before City Council as part of a larger effort led by the Development Services Department to equitably expand the City's historic preservation program to include a broader range of this City's geographic, demographic, and cultural history.

This matter was reviewed by Assistant City Attorney Michael J. Mais on February 19, 2019 and by Budget Analysis Officer Julissa José-Murray on February 11, 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 is requested on March 5, 2019, to allow sufficient time for the City Attorney to draft the Ordinance.

There is no fiscal or local job impact associated with this recommendation.

Approve recommendation.

LINDA F. TATUM, FAICP
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER