



CITY OF POMONA

COUNCIL REPORT

July 15, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Linda Lowry, City Manager

Submitted By: Anita D. Gutierrez, AICP, Development Services Director

SUBJECT: Recommendation from Historic Preservation Commission to amend the Historic Preservation Ordinance

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Division recommends City Council review this memorandum and direct staff on whether or not to prepare a code amendment to Section .5809-13 (Historic Preservation) of the Pomona Zoning Code to change the criteria year for structures requiring a certificate of appropriateness prior to demolition, from “Pre-1945” to “50 years or older.”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Historic Preservation Commission has recommended the City Council consider a code amendment to the Historic Preservation Ordinance to change the criteria year for structures requiring a certificate of appropriateness prior to demolition, from “Pre-1945” to “50 years or older.” Currently, prior to the demolition of any primary structure built before 1945, a Major Certificate of Appropriateness (Major COA) must first be filed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission to determine its historical significance. The impact of this change would increase the number of parcels regulated by the ordinance from 14% to approximately 61% of all parcels in the City of Pomona. This is not a staff recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed code amendment would make additional properties subject to a Major COA and therefore additional permit fees would be expected to be taken in. Currently, a Major COA is \$533.33 and an Environmental Assessment fee is \$532.33, resulting in a total permit fee of \$1065.66 per demolition. On the high end we receive 10 Major COA’s for pre-1945 demolition a year. It could be reasonably expected to see an increase of ten (10) permits per year with the proposed code amendment, which would result in approximately \$10,656.00 in additional revenue annually. Existing staffing levels could accommodate the increase in permits, however depending on the number of demolition permits filed and time it takes to process them, additional staff resources may be required in the future.

DISCUSSION:

At its regularly scheduled meeting on June 5, 2019, the Historic Preservation Commission voted on 7-0-0 vote to recommend to the City Council to consider changing the criteria year for structures requiring a certificate of appropriateness prior to demolition, from “Pre-1945” to “50 years or older.”

Staff has prepared a parcel analysis to assess the impact of such a code amendment. Currently, there are a total of 33,425 parcels in the City of Pomona, based on data provided by the Los Angeles County Assessor’s Office. Of these, 4,736 parcels (14%) include a primary structure built prior to 1945 (Attachment No. 1). These parcels, therefore, are currently required to submit a Major COA prior to any proposed demolition.

The Planning Division receives, on average, five to ten Major COA applications related to demolition of pre-1945 structures annually. The typical application can be processed from initial application through approval at public hearing in approximately 60 to 90 days. However, an application may take longer for review and approval if the historical significance of the primary structure is unclear or requires additional surveying, lengthening the review process to an off-calendar hearing date, as has been the case with several structures before the Commission this year.

Proposed Code Amendment: “50 Years or Older”

The Building and Safety Division receives, on average, 25 to 30 demolition permits annually. Under current code, approximately one-quarter to one-third of these demolition permits must first be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission. The proposed code amendment would change the defining year for demolition from “pre-1945” to “50 years or older from the date of application.” This action would trigger three impacts:

Firstly, there are 15,727 parcels in the City of Pomona with a primary structure built between 1945 and 1968 (the current defining year of 50 years or older). Adding this to the existing pre-1945 stock would bring the total number of parcels requiring Historic Preservation Commission review prior to permit issuance to 20,463 parcels, or 61% of all parcels in the City of Pomona (Attachment No. 2).

Secondly, as the proposed amendment would shift the threshold from a fixed year to a scaled range of 50 years or older, it can be expected that with each additional year that passes, additional parcels would be subject to Historic Preservation Commission review for demolition (e.g. By 2022, parcels with a primary structure built between 1968 and 1972 would require HPC review).

Thirdly, there would be a significant increase in the number of entitlement applications for new residential and commercial development that would first require a Historic Preservation Commission approval for demolition. This would add at least a 60 to 90 day timeline to a proposed housing or commercial entitlement, which currently, on average, has a 3 to 6 month turnaround to public hearing. Moreover, the number of building permit applications subject to

Historic Preservation Commission review would rise from an existing 25-33%, to the majority of all building demolition permits. This would also add at least a 60 to 90 day timeline to a proposed residential or commercial plan check, which currently has a 30-day turnaround time.

Prepared by:

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Development Services Director

Attachment No. 1 - Properties built pre-1945

Attachment No. 2 - Properties built pre-1968