



**Santa Barbara County  
Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission**

Ms. Joni Gray, Chair  
Board of Supervisors  
County of Santa Barbara  
105 East Anapamu Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

June 13, 2011

**RE: Historic Preservation Incentives**

Dear Chair Gray and Honorable Supervisors:

On March 14, 2011, the Santa Barbara County Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission (HLAC) received a presentation by Planning and Development Director, Dr. Glenn Russell, regarding historic preservation incentives. As outlined by Dr. Russell, HLAC supports in concept the creation of both financial and non-financial incentives for owners of historic properties to encourage their preservation.

HLAC has been investigating specific incentives to identify those that would most effectively encourage owners to preserve their historic properties by agreeing to designation by the County as a Landmark or Place of Historic Merit. They include:

- Expedited (fast-track) processing
- Reduced permit, plan check, etc. fees
- Code relief: zoning, parking, setbacks, floor area bonuses, use of historic building codes, etc.
- Community Development Grants / Historic Preservation Loans to low and moderate income owners of historic properties
- Design assistance/technical support
- Public acknowledgment (bronze plaque, website inclusion, GATV, etc.)
- Mills Act Property Tax Abatement Program

In particular, expedited processing (fast-tracking) of projects involving historical resources would be a highly attractive inducement to owners to designate their properties, could be easily managed, and would incur minimal cost to the County. HLAC strongly recommends that your board take appropriate action to implement this incentive at the earliest possible time.

One potential source of federal funding for a historic preservation incentive program would be the County's inclusion in the Certified Local Government Program. This program involves certification by the State Office of Historic Preservation and National Park Service. Santa Barbara County is one of only a few local governments in the State that has not been certified. Any local government is eligible to apply and Santa Barbara meets the requirements. HLAC requests that your board take the necessary steps to initiate the certification process.

In summary, HLAC supports reasonable incentives intended to build an effective and inviting preservation strategy within Santa Barbara County, thereby advancing the Commission's mission "*to promote the economic welfare and prosperity of the county by preserving and protecting...*" our precious historical resources.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John C. Woodward".

John C. Woodward  
Chair, Historic Landmarks Advisory Commission

cc: Dr. Glenn Russell