

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Cynthia J. Kurtz, City Manager

DATE: January 8, 2001

**SUBJECT: CALTRANS FUNDING FOR REHABILITATION AND
RENOVATION OF PROPERTIES ALONG THE PROPOSED 710
ROUTE**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the City Council take a position in support of the appropriation of additional State funding for continued renovation of the historic Caltrans properties along the proposed 710-freeway route.

BACKGROUND

To date, Caltrans has rehabilitated 39 of 92 historic properties owned along the 710 route. In March 2000, Caltrans requested \$22 million in additional funding to rehabilitate the remaining 53 historic properties. In response to this request, the California Transportation Commission asked the department to develop alternatives for minimizing costs. The department identified two options, proposing to "mothball" the properties, leaving some or all of the properties vacant and boarded.

On January 17, 2001, the California Transportation Commission will hold a hearing on these proposed options. It is in the City's best interest support the appropriation of additional funds to maintain these properties in good repair and occupied until transportation issues are resolved.

Vacant buildings will result in a number of public nuisances that may severely impact the quality of life in adjacent neighborhoods. Boarded buildings typically attract criminal activity including vandalism, graffiti, loitering, and arson. In addition, vacant buildings

often create health hazards through the accumulation of trash and debris, illegal occupation of buildings, and the attraction of vermin.

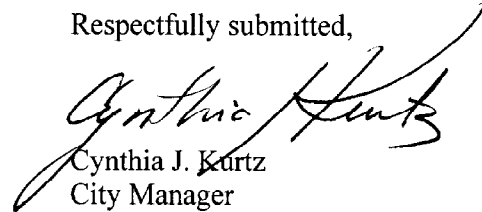
In addition, an audit by the California State Auditor dated December 2000, states that mothballing is not in the long-term best interest of historic buildings and should be used only when all other alternatives have been exhausted. The report lists several concerns with the proposals:

- risk of vandalism;
- inadequate ventilation which could result in unsafe humidity levels, causing the formation of mold, rot and insect infestation;
- no consultation with historical experts to ensure that all significant features will be stabilized and maintained;
- no approval from the State Office of Historic Preservation, as required; and,
- unclear cost estimates.

FISCAL IMPACT:

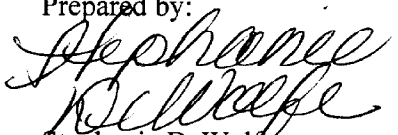
As vacant and boarded structures, these properties are likely to require the attention of the City's code enforcement unit, police department, health department and prosecutor's office to address associated nuisances and criminal activity. Cost to the City for increases in these services cannot be determined as this time.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia J. Kurtz
City Manager

Prepared by:



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