



City of Colusa, California

STAFF REPORT

DATE: March 17, 2026
TO: Mayor and Members of Council
FROM: Sadie Ash, Grant Writer

AGENDA ITEM: Presentation of DPRAT (Design Preservation Rapid Assistant Team)

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the City Council take the following action:

1. Receive the presentation of the D-PRAT Idea Book by the APA Urban Design and Preservation Division team; and
2. Provide direction to staff regarding next steps for consideration or implementation of recommendations contained in the Idea Book.

Summary: The American Planning Association (APA) Urban Design and Preservation Division deployed a Design-Preservation Rapid Assistance Team (D-PRAT) to the City of Colusa as part of its pro-bono technical assistance program. Following an on-site workshop, the D-PRAT team has completed the Colusa Idea Book — a forward-looking document that presents actionable strategies to promote economic vitality, activate the historic downtown and riverfront, improve mobility, and enhance overall quality of life for Colusa residents. This staff report transmits the Idea Book for City Council review and provides background context on the D-PRAT program and engagement process.

Background: The Design-Preservation Rapid Assistance Team (D-PRAT) is a pro-bono program administered by the APA Urban Design and Preservation Division. The program provides free planning, urban design, and historic preservation expertise to under-resourced communities and local governments facing specific design or planning challenges. The D-PRAT program was recognized with the 2023 American Planning Association Division Achievement Award for Contribution to the Planning Profession.

The City of Colusa was selected as a D-PRAT host community. A multidisciplinary team of volunteer planning professionals — including urban designers, preservation specialists, landscape architects, and transportation planners from across the country — participated in an on-site workshop to collaborate with the community on a shared vision for the future of Colusa's public realm and downtown core. During the workshop, team members focused on several key areas including adaptive reuse of historic buildings within the downtown core;

evaluation of underutilized historic structures; exploration of facade improvement incentives; identification of potential downtown development tools; and opportunities for public art programming. The engagement centered on activating Colusa's historic Main Street and the Sacramento River waterfront as anchors for community revitalization.

BUDGET IMPACT:

The D-PRAT Idea Book was prepared at no cost to the City of Colusa. The program is fully pro-bono, funded and administered by the APA Urban Design and Preservation Division. There is no fiscal impact associated with the receipt of this report. Future implementation of any recommendations contained in the Idea Book will be subject to separate staff analysis, budget appropriation, and Council direction.