



**HISTORIC COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT  
DECEMBER 12, 2023**

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**Agenda Item:** 2  
**Prepared by:** Amy Wolfson, City Planner

**DATA SUMMARY:**

**Subject:** Discussion on Historic Building Walking Tour Platform  
**Location/APN:** Downtown Grass Valley  
**Applicant:** City of Grass Valley  
**Owners:** Various  
**Zoning/General Plan:** Various  
**Environmental Status:** Categorical Exemption

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Historical Commission direct staff develop a StoryMap site to showcase historic buildings, as selected by the Historical Commission, and make suggestions for features the site should incorporate.

**BACKGROUND:**

At the November 28, 2023 meeting, the Historical Commission held an impromptu discussion regarding a desire to develop an historic walking tour program for the historic downtown. They asked that the topic be formally agendaized at the next meeting. In accordance with Section 17.52.040 of the City’s Development Code, the City’s Historical Commission has a duty to:

“Consolidate information regarding cultural resources and promotion; participation in, or sponsorship of educational and interpretive programs that foster public awareness and appreciation of cultural resources.”

**WALKING TOUR ANALYSIS:**

Staff is currently working with ArcGIS personnel, with whom the city has an existing subscription, to determine the best way to use their platform, StoryMap, to accommodate the walking tour concept that is envisioned by the commission. The city already hosts an historic walking tour for Heritage Homes through StoryMap. This program could be expanded and additional features added to create the experience the commission is seeking. There are several examples of historic walking tours that use the StoryMap platform. Below are links to two such examples:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/517836d6ef0345e1a9353d4584192d76>

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8905297ac7ff4e47897b9f92c69f1724>

I encourage the commission to explore other StoryMap examples at their leisure and discover features that we could incorporate for both the Heritage Homes tour, the Historic Buildings tour, and perhaps a Landmarks tour or an Historic Artifacts tour.

Staff is also seeking direction for how to better highlight the City's StoryMap site to the public. For instance, the city could create a QR code that can be displayed at the walking tour sites, at the owner's discretion, which could also indicate the tour stop of each particular site.

Tour sites could display a window cling that is custom designed for the walking tour, or other method where a cling is not practical



### **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:**

The project is exempt from environmental review pursuant to Section 15061 (b) (3) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This exemption applies to activities covered by the “common sense” rule that CEQA applies only to projects, which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be certain that the project will not have an impact on the environment, the project is Statutorily Exempt from further environmental review.

### **GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING:**

**General Plan:** The Historical Commission is recommending buildings within the city's downtown historic district, which includes commercial and public general plan land use designations.

**Zoning:** Zoning designations are likely to be primarily Town Core (TC)