



**HISTORICAL
COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT
MAY 13, 2025**

Prepared by: Amy Wolfson, City Planner

DATA SUMMARY

Application Number: 25BLD-0233
Subject: Plan Revision to replace windows on a Priority 2 structure
Location/APNs: 514 West Main St / APN 008-300-040
Applicant: Sacramento Window and Door, LLC . on behalf of Cheryl Noack
Zoning/General Plan: Single Family (R-1)/Urban Low Density (ULD)
Entitlement: Plan Revision – DRC Review
Environmental Status: Categorical Exemption

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Historical Commission recommend that the Development Review Committee approve the proposed exterior modification to the shingled siding as may be modified at the public meeting, and which includes the following actions:
 - a. Determine the project Categorical Exempt pursuant to Section 15301, Class 1, of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Guidelines, as detailed in the Staff Report;
 - b. Adopt Findings of Fact for approval of the Window Replacement Plan Revision as presented in the Staff Report; and,
 - c. Approve the Window Replacement in accordance with the Conditions of Approval, as presented in this Staff Report.

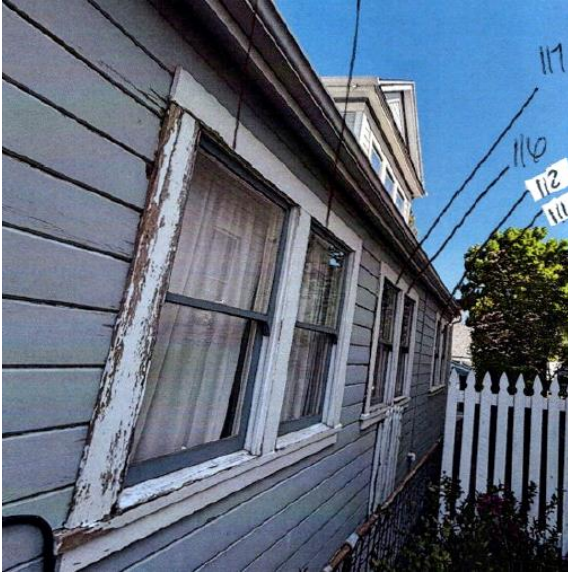
BACKGROUND:

The existing structure is a 2,109 square feet residence and was built in 1880, according to the Nevada County Assessor's Office records, and is a Priority 2 structure in the city's historical inventory. Priority 2 structures are significant in contributing to the historic character of the area and have retained good integrity.

The assessment for the historical inventory recorded that the property "consists of a two-story, wood-frame Queen Anne style residence that fronts W. Main Street and is concealed in a dense growth of trees. The home has a hipped and gable roof clad with asphalt shingles, horizontal shiplap exterior siding, a two-story bay window, a Victorian front entry door and to the right a fixed stained glass window. The home lacks the ornamentation associated with

similar homes in Grass Valley. The right side of the house appears to have a shed-roof addition and a new rooftop fireplace has a contemporary wood chase around it.”

Today, the façade of the building at 257 South Auburn Street is identical to the image recorded at the time of the historical inventory. However, the shingles are shake shingles rather than fish-scale shingles.



Existing windows at 514 West Main Street

PROJECT PROPOSAL:

The applicant proposes to replace 28 existing wood, double-hung windows with composite windows, nine of which will be replaced as casement-style windows. All new windows will be black. The applicant provided photographs of the windows to be replaced, two of which are shown above, and the remaining in the attachments.

Regulatory Authority: Pursuant to Section 17.52.040 of the Grass Valley Municipal Code (GVMC), one of the duties of the Grass Valley Historical Commission is to “provide interested property owners with advice and information on building design and materials that can maintain the historic character of a building.”

Section 17.52.070 of the GVMC establishes that minor projects to historic resources include “exterior modifications or alterations that maintain the historic integrity of the building and that comply with the Guidelines”, while major projects are defined as those that include “exterior modifications that alter the character defining features, such as its shape, elevation, massing, and scale and do not comply with the guidelines.” In this case, the proposed exterior modification is to alter some of the window function from double-hung style to casement-style windows.

Historic Design Guidelines: Section 6.4.2 of the Grass Valley Historic Design Review Guidelines provides guidance for alterations of windows and doors on historic homes, noting that these features “give scale to a home and provide visual interest to the composition of the

individual facades.” This section of the guidelines go on to make the following recommendations with respect to windows and the proposed window replacement:

- Preserve the functional and decorative features of original windows and doors. Windows and doors on the fronts of ancillary buildings should be preserved as well. Avoid creating an additional opening or removing existing ones on facades that are visible from the street.
- Repair frames and sash by patching, splicing or reinforcing. Avoid the removal of historic windows and sash. If replacement is necessary, replace with a similar design, to match the original. Avoid changing the position of historic openings.
- Maintain the historic subdivisions of window lights. Maintain original window and door proportions. Altering the original size and shape is inappropriate. Do not close down an original opening to accommodate a smaller window.

The design guidelines do not override municipal regulations but are intended to provide guidance to decision-makers in making decisions regarding additions, alterations, infill, and other similar types of changes to historically significant residential homes and business within the Grass Valley Historic Townsite.

GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING:

General Plan: The Grass Valley 2020 General Plan identifies the site as Urban Low Density (ULD). ULD is intended primarily for single family detached houses, although higher density single family patio homes or Town houses could be accommodated, if offset with sufficient open space to maintain the gross density within the indicated range. ULD is most compatible with the following Zoning districts: Single Family Residential (R-1) and Two-Family Residence (R-2) districts.

Zoning: The R-1 zone is applied to areas of the city that are appropriate for neighborhoods of single dwellings on standard urban lots, surrounding the more densely developed city core. The R-1 zone is consistent with and implements the urban low density (ULD) designation of the general plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION:

The proposed project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption pursuant to Section 15301, Class 1, of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Guidelines. A Class 1 Categorical Exemption consists of the operation, repair, maintenance, permitting, leasing, licensing, or minor alternation of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that existing at the time of the lead agency’s determination. The proposed window replacement will not result in expansion of use of the residential property.

FINDINGS:

1. The Grass Valley Community Development Department received a complete application for Plan Revision 25BLD-0233.
2. The Grass Valley Historical Commission reviewed Plan Revision application 25BLD-0233 at their regular meeting on May 13, 2025.
3. The Grass Valley Development Review Committee reviewed Plan Revision application 25BLD-0233 at their regular meeting on _____.
4. The Development Review Committee reviewed the project in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and concluded that the project qualifies for a Class 1, Categorical Exemption in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act and CEQA Guidelines.
5. This project is consistent with the City's General Plan and any specific plan.
6. The project, as conditioned and to the extent feasible, maintains the historic integrity of the structure and complies with the City of Grass Valley Community Design Guidelines and the Design Review Guidelines for the 1872 Historic Townsite.

B. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

1. The final design shall be consistent with Plan Revision application and plans provided by the applicant and approved by the Development Review Committee (25BLD-233). The project is approved subject to plans on file with the Community Development Department. The Community Development Director may approve minor changes as determined appropriate.
2. Prior to any work occurring, a building permit shall be obtained from the Community Development Department, Building Division.
3. The applicant agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the City of Grass Valley in any action or proceeding brought against the City of Grass Valley to void or annul this discretionary land use approval.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Vicinity Map
2. Aerial Map
3. Photos of Existing Windows
4. Floor Plan/Photo key
5. Proposed Window Brochure