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Planning Commission Staff Report

Meeting Date: October 6, 2026
Prepared By: Carole Kendrick, Development Services Director

PROJECT INFORMATION SUMMARY

Case File: Historic Design Review (HDR) 26-03
2951 Bedford Avenue / APN 002-041-006

Request: Consideration of a Historic Design Review application within the Bedford Avenue Historic District Zone for modifications to an existing multiple-family residence, including: (1) window treatments including shutters and trim, (2) repainting the structure with the existing color, and (3) installing cast iron fencing. The project also includes a request to find it categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301.

Summary Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the requests, subject to the conditions of approval in Attachment A.

Applicant:	Richard Van Horn
Property Owner:	Mark Hegarty
Address:	2951 Bedford Avenue
APN:	002-041-006
Lot Area:	0.74 acres
General Plan:	High Density Residential, HDR
Zoning:	R-2 - Multiple Family Residential 8 DU/AC
Existing Use:	Multiple-family Residential
Environmental Document:	Categorically Exempt per §15301 of the CEQA Guidelines

Decision Making Authority: The Planning Commission is authorized under Zoning Ordinance Sections 10-4-9(H) (Site Plan Review) and 10-4-10 (Historical Buildings in the City) to review and approve, approve with conditions, or disapprove applications for projects located in any of the City's historical districts.

SITE INFORMATION

The site is an irregularly shaped parcel of approximately 0.74 acres. Per El Dorado County Assessor's records, the onsite multi-family residence was constructed approximately 130 years ago. It encompasses approximately 3,107 square feet of living area in a five-unit building. The two-story

structure features horizontal lap siding and a covered front porch. The property has historical associations with the site formerly known as "The Christmas House."

A paved driveway provides access from Bedford Avenue. The structure is oriented toward Bedford Avenue. The structure is located within the City's Bedford Avenue Historic District (see Attachment E). It was not surveyed as part of the City's Historic Resources Survey in 2018. It is not listed on the State Register of Historic Resources or the National Register of Historic Places.

BACKGROUND

Building permit history for the residence is limited. City records include:

- March 13, 2018 – Permit No. 19184 (Electrical): Upgrade electrical service to 300 amps with three (3) 100-amp meter/main panels and install conduit over exposed Romex wiring at the meters location (Able Electric; valuation $6,590). Finaled August 7, 2018. Smoke and carbon monoxide alarm self-certification was submitted by the then-owner.
- May 1, 2023 – Permit No. 22579 (Reroof): Remove single layer of existing shingles and replace with 28 squares of Owens Corning composition roofing (Mountain Roofing Systems; valuation $36,238). Finaled August 1, 2023.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes the following upgrades:

1. Paint: The house was repainted white as the applicant abandoned their project to repaint the home in a light blue color as mentioned in the application.

2. Window Treatments: Include the following treatments.
    - The addition of 14.5" x 80" louvered vinyl shutters in black
    - 1" x 35" x 7-1/4" polyurethane crosshead moulding with trim in grey
    - 1-1/13/32" x 2" PVC Rams Crown moulding in grey.

3. Fencing: 1870 hand forged cast iron fencing with fleur de lis post caps have been partially installed

Most of the proposed items have already been completed except for the fencing. The property has assigned a new applicant to the project that is working with staff on resolving the issues of installing improvements without Planning Commission approval.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

The following section provides an overview of relevant City of Placerville General Plan Goals, Zoning Ordinance(s), and Development Guide. Staff responses are provided below each italicized Goal, Ordinance, and Guideline.

General Plan Consistency:

Part II – Section II: Housing

Goal F: To preserve the existing housing stock.

4. *The City will continue to preserve historic structures within the City by encouraging re-use of viable buildings within historic buildings.*

The project is consistent with Goal F, Policy 4 in that the project would maintain the existing multiple-family residential use.

Part II – Section VII: Community Design

Goal C: To protect and enhance to the visual quality and neighborhood integrity of residential areas.

2. *New construction shall be architecturally compatible with the surrounding and/or adjacent neighborhoods. This policy shall be strictly enforced in designated Historic Neighborhoods.*
6. *The City shall encourage proper maintenance or homes, buildings, and yards to provide the best possible visual quality in each neighborhood.*

   The subject multiple family dwelling is not listed as a historic resource. However, any exterior work visible from the right-of-way within a Historic District is evaluated for overall consistency with Zoning Ordinance 10-4-10 (Historic Buildings in the City). The project includes wrought iron fencing and shutters at 2951 Bedford Avenue.

   The project as proposed does not diminish the historic integrity of the District and continues the multiple-family residential use of the property.

Zoning Classification and Regulation Consistency:

Section 10-4-9: Site Plan Review

Under subsections (C) 6 and (H), exterior alterations of a building located in a Historic District and visible from the street require Planning Commission review and approval prior to undertaking such activity. Further analysis is provided below.

Section 10-4-10: Historical Buildings in the City

Under subsection (B) Historical Criteria, the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (SOI Standards and Guidelines) is the criteria to be used by the Commission in reviewing a Site Plan Review within a City Historic District. Per Subsection (F) Construction and Repairs, alterations to the exterior appearance of buildings within Historic Districts, where the alteration architecture is visible from the street, must conform to the historical criteria under Subsection (B). Per Subsection (H), no construction permit may be issued for an alteration to a building within a Historic District until the plans have been approved by the Planning Commission.

As previously mentioned, the structure is not included in the City's Historic Resources Inventory. However, Staff has evaluated this Site Plan Review request with respect to the compatibility with the SOI Standards and Guidelines per Section 10-4-10(B) and (F). This analysis is provided below.

1. *A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal changes to its distinctive materials, spaces, and spatial relationships*.

   The multiple-family residential use is unchanged.

2. *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and special relationships that characterize a property will be avoided*.

   The project does not remove any remaining distinctive historic features.

3. *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

   The project does not introduce conjectural historic features.

4. *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved*.

   The Bedford Avenue Historic District contains a mix of architectural styles. The subject multi-family dwelling, constructed approximately 130 years ago, is a non-contributing structure within the Bedford Avenue Historic District. The project does not involve changes to elements that have acquired historical significance.

5. *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

   The project does not impact any remaining distinctive historic materials or features of the subject property.

6. *Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

   The proposed improvements consist of cosmetic exterior treatments (paint, shutters, and fencing) that do not remove or alter distinctive historic materials. The shutters and cast iron fencing reference documented historic features associated with the property's earlier appearance as "The Christmas House," as supported by the applicant's research and archival photographs.

7. *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used*.

   The project did not include chemical/physical treatments that would damage historic materials.

8. *Archaeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

   There are no known archaeological resources associated with the site.

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

   The proposed replacements are differentiated from the historic fabric while remaining compatible in scale, proportion, and massing.

10. *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment will be unimpaired.*

    The proposed modifications will not negatively affect the property or surrounding properties.

Placerville Development Guide Consistency:

Section IV. Architectural Design Guidelines

C. *Design Factors*

3. *Façade Treatments and Exterior Elements*
   a. *Building facades adjacent to the right-of-way must demonstrate a pedestrian orientation, with a well-defined entry, windows, decorative elements, and appropriate ornamentation regardless of zoning classifications.*
   b. *Historic elements and details of existing buildings should be retained wherever possible, rather than removing or replacing them. If it is impossible to retain such a feature, it should be duplicated in terms of location, size, materials and method of construction.*
   f. *All sides of buildings which are visible from any public right-of-way will incorporate façade treatments, finishes and features which reflect the quality of the overall design.*

   The project maintains a pedestrian-oriented façade with a well-defined entry and consistent window rhythm. Window treatment materials duplicate the existing size, location, horizontal emphasis, and appearance. All publicly visible sides will incorporate compatible, high-quality finishes that reflect the overall design quality of the multiple family residence and the historic district.

4. *Materials and Finishes*
   b. *Materials and finishes should be compatible with those used in surrounding architecture of historic value. Renovations or rehabilitations of historic buildings that introduce new materials most often destroy the integrity of their historic character, and this approach is discouraged.*

The proposed shutters, window trim, paint colors, and cast iron fencing are visually compatible with the character of surrounding historic homes on Bedford Avenue. The improvements reference documented historic features of the site while remaining reversible and compatible in scale, proportion, and detailing.

Environmental Review: The City has reviewed this request and has determined that it is categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15301 (Existing Facilities), in that it involves minor alterations to an existing structure that is not listed on City, State, or Federal historic resources inventories, and that would not result in an expansion of the multiple-family residential use.

RECOMMENDED PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission take the following action:

I. Make the following findings in support of the HDR 26-03 request:

1. The request is exempt from environmental review, in that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities), in that it involves minor alterations to an existing structure that is not listed on City, State, or Federal historic resources inventories, and that would not result in an expansion of the multiple-family residential use.
2. The project site, 2951 Bedford Avenue (APN 002-041-006), contains a multiple-family residential dwelling constructed in 1992 that is located within the Bedford Avenue Historic District and could be classified as a non-contributor per the City's historic survey.
3. The project request is consistent with Placerville General Plan Housing Element Goal F, Policy 4 in that the project preserves existing housing stock and improves the condition of an existing multi-family structure within the Bedford Avenue Historic District.
4. The project request is consistent with Placerville General Plan Community Design Element Goal C in that the visual qualities of the proposed exterior alterations are compatible with the visual attributes of neighboring structures within the Historic District and will improve the overall appearance and maintenance of the property.
5. The project request is consistent with the purpose, intent, and criteria of Zoning Ordinance §10-4-9 (Site Plan Review) and §10-4-10 (Historical Buildings in the City), including the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, as the proposed work does not remove distinctive historic features and utilizes materials and detailing that are compatible with the historic character of the district.
6. The project request is consistent with the City of Placerville Development Guide Architectural Design Guidelines, particularly Section IV, C.3 (Façade Treatments and Exterior Elements) and C.4 (Materials and Finishes), in that the building façade

maintains a pedestrian orientation, historic elements are retained where possible, and all visible sides incorporate compatible façade treatments and finishes.

II. Conditionally approve HDR 26-03 located at 2951 Bedford Avenue based on the project information and findings included in the Staff Report, and subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval included in Attachment A of the Staff Report dated October 6, 2026.

ATTACHMENT

A. Draft Conditions of Approval
B. Applicant Package
C. General Plan Land Use Designation Map & Zoning Map
D. Bedford Avenue Historic District Map
E. Aerial Photograph