CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS
STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: November 20, 2012

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

From: Susan Healy Keene, AICP, Director of Community Development

Subject: Request from Vice Mayor Mirisch, Regarding Consideration of City Hall for Possible Inclusion onto Local Register of Historic Properties.

Attachments:
1. Department of Parks and Recreation – DPR Survey Form.
2. Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.
3. BHMC 10-3-3212 Nomination Criteria for Landmark Listing

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to a request by Vice Mayor Mirisch, information is provided regarding the potential eligibility of City Hall for possible inclusion onto the Local Register of Historic Properties.

SUMMARY

Inclusion of City Hall on the Local Register of Historic Properties would give City Council the occasion to recognize the importance of the original 1932 structure to the City's history without unreasonably constraining use of the building or the ability to make changes to the building, as necessary, to maintain efficient governmental functions.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Early in 1932, City administration moved into the newly completed City Hall which at the time was the crowning jewel of the young City just 18 years in existence. The eight-story Spanish Renaissance tower became a strong symbol of the growing City and epitomized the style and affluence that would become Beverly Hills.

In 1982, after five decades of wear and tear and the inability of the original building to accommodate growing City functions, City Hall needed an upgrade and the City embarked on an ambitious program to design and build a new Civic Center and to renovate City Hall. Architects were invited to participate in a design competition to design new public and

administrative facilities to incorporate Police, Fire Department Headquarters, expanded Library, Community Cultural Resources and parking. The winning Charles W. Moore design celebrated City Hall by making it the focal point of an ambitious Civic Center; providing new post-modern buildings that respected the original architecture without copying it.

DISCUSSION

A historic survey of City Hall was conducted in 2004 as an update to the earlier 1986 city survey, (see attached 2004 DPR survey form). The 2004 survey considered the effect of the extensive Charles W. Moore designed additions to the secondary façade of City Hall on the south and east elevations and determined that because the primary façade on the west elevation and west wing remained intact, in good condition and with a high degree of integrity, City Hall therefore remained individually eligible for National Register, California Register, and Local Register listing or designation under criteria related to events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City's history, associations with the lives of historic personages, and for architectural significance. The changes and additions made to City Hall over its long history have been completed in such a way that the cumulative effect has not compromised the integrity of the original building.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

Given the ongoing need of City Hall to adapt to the changing needs of a dynamic City, it is important to consider the effect of any future historic registry listings on the functional activities of the facility.

The Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation have purposefully been crafted to allow maximum flexibility for historic buildings to be adapted over time to meet changing needs in a way that allows ongoing functionality of historic buildings without unnecessarily destroying historic fabric. There are ten guiding Standards to be applied in the rehabilitation of historic properties such as City Hall. These are attached for reference in Attachment 2.

The SOI Standards for "rehabilitation" assume that at least some repair or alteration of a historic building will be needed over time in order to provide for efficient contemporary use; however, these repairs and alterations must not damage or destroy original materials, features or finishes that are important in defining the building's historic character. These Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility.

The effect therefore of any listing of City Hall onto any Historic Register of Historic Properties (federal and/or local) would not be to freeze the building in time with no opportunity for future adaptations, but rather to provide reasonable guidelines to inform any future alterations, additions and/or adaptations in a way that allows for change without destroying historic integrity.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Under California Law, any changes in or around City Hall are separately subject to a CEQA review for potential impact to cultural resources and this would not change if City Hall was to be designated as a Local Landmark. However, a CEQA exemption has been crafted to allow for specific exemptions for projects necessitating alterations and additions to historic buildings which are performed in accordance with the ten SOI Standards for Rehabilitation. As City Hall is

already listed on the State Record of Historic Resources as a Landmark Property the particular CEQA exemption for work performed in accordance with SOI Standards would be available relative to any City Hall project.

BHMC 10-3-3212 Nomination Criteria for Landmark Listing

Under BHMC 10-3-3212 there are certain criteria that must be met before a property can qualify for nomination to the Local Register. City Hall was designed by Master Architects Koerner & Gage and could, if Council so wished, be considered for nomination on the Local Register under criteria A1, A2, A3, A4, A6, B and C. These criteria are attached for reference.

Cultural Heritage Commission

At the Cultural Heritage Commission meeting of October 9, 2012 the Commission did ask that their support for a potential nomination of City Hall be passed on to City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT

There would be fiscal impact if the City Council directs staff to review designation of City Hall as a historic landmark. In addition to staff administration costs an amount of approximately $5000.00 would need to be appropriated from General Fund to the Professional and Consulting Services Account to cover the cost of a historic survey for the building. An appropriate design approach for any future alterations or additions to historic City Hall would be to comply with the SOI Standards for Rehabilitation and this would not necessarily add to construction costs but any work to City Hall would incur permit application fees for a capital improvement program.

RECOMMENDATION

Under the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Council could, if so desired, initiate proceedings to nominate City Hall as a Local Landmark and after receiving a recommendation from the Cultural and Heritage Commission, consider City Hall for inclusion onto the Local Register as a Landmark Property.

Staff requests direction from City Council regarding this matter

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Susan Healy Keene, AICP,
Director of Community Development
Approved By

Attachment 1
Department of Parks and Recreation
DPR Survey Form

State of California – The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code: 2S2

Page 1 of 1 **Resource Name or #** *Beverly Hills City Hall* ☐ Continuation ☑ Update

P2. Location: *450 North Crescent Dr.*

B10 Significance:

There were extensive additions to the secondary (south and east) elevations of City Hall between the 1985-1986 and 2004 survey evaluations. However, the primary (west) elevation and west wing remain intact, in good condition, with a high degree of integrity. There do not appear to have been major modifications since the 2004 survey. Therefore, the building remains individually eligible for National Register, California Register, and local listing or designation under criteria related to events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the City's history, associations with the lives of historic personages, and for architectural significance.

P5b Description/Date of Photo: *West and south elevations, looking northeast/March 7, 2007*

P8. Recorded by: *Jan Ostashay, Peter Moruzzi, PCR Services, One Venture, Suite 150, Irvine, CA 92618*

P9. Date Recorded: *Tuesday, June 01, 2004*

Attachment 2
Secretary of the interior
Standards for Rehabilitation

The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

3. Each property shall 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 architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

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

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

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

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

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

Attachment 3
BHMC 10-3-3212
Nomination Criteria for Landmark Listing

BHMC 10-3-3212 Nomination Criteria for Landmark Listing

A. The property meets at least two (2) of the following criteria:

1. Is identified with important events in the main currents of national, state, or local history, or directly exemplifies or manifests significant contributions to the broad social, political, cultural, economic, recreational, or architectural history of the nation, state, city, or community;

2. Is directly associated with the lives of significant persons important to national, state, city or local history;

3. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a style, type, period, or method of construction;

4. Represents a notable work of a person included on the city's list of master architects or possesses high artistic or aesthetic value;

5. Has yielded or has the potential to yield, information important in the prehistory or history of the nation, state, city, or community;

6. Is listed or has been formally determined eligible by the national park service for listing on the national register of historic places, or is listed or has been determined eligible by the state historical resources commission for listing on the California register of historical resources.

B. The property retains integrity from its period of significance. The proposed landmark retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and association. Integrity shall be judged with reference to the particular criteria specified in subsection A of this section. A proposed landmark's deferred maintenance, dilapidated condition, or illegal alterations shall not, on their own, be construed to equate to a loss of integrity.

C. The property has historic value. The proposed landmark is of significant architectural value to the community, beyond its simple market value, and its designation as a landmark is reasonable, appropriate, and necessary to promote, protect, and further the goals and purposes of this article. (Ord. 12-O-2617, eff. 2-24-2012)