



TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Reuben McKnight, Historic Preservation Officer, Planning and Development Services
Peter Huffman, Director, Planning and Development Services
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution – Designating 3334 North Gove Street, the Wells R. Sears House, as a City Landmark and placing said property on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places – September 15, 2020
DATE: August 26, 2020

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution designating the Wells R. Sears House, located at 3334 North Gove Street, as a City Landmark and placing said property on the Tacoma Register of Historic Places.

BACKGROUND:

The Wells R. Sears House was constructed between 1902 and 1904. It was one of the early homes in the neighborhood, and originally sat on a five-acre parcel, which also contained a poultry-breeding farm. The house stands in contrast to the surrounding buildings, most of which were built between World Wars I and II. The house retains many of its original features and recently went through a substantial rehabilitation. The nomination includes the principal structure and was researched and submitted by the owner.

The nomination for the Wells R. Sears House was received by the Historic Preservation Office in April 2020. On July 8, 2020, the Landmarks Preservation Commission scheduled the nomination for a public hearing on August 12, 2020. Following the hearing, the Commission voted unanimously to recommend designation of the Sears House to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places as an example of the American Foursquare by prominent architect George Bullard and as a significant neighborhood feature.

The nomination and designation process of properties to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places is described in TMC 13.07. Properties that are placed on the historic register are subject to design review for future alterations, thus protecting the historic character of the city. This recommendation for designation is based on the findings and recommendation of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. There are currently 181 properties listed individually on the Tacoma Register.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

This item was reviewed in two separate public meetings, including a public hearing, to gather community input. The property owner’s ability to alter the property will be affected.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Equity and Accessibility: (Mandatory)

Please state how this legislation will reduce racial and other inequities, disparities, or discrimination to under-represented communities. Please state what positive impacts on equity, equality, diversity or inclusion, if any, would result from enacting this legislation.



Identify which Tacoma 2025 strategic goals your legislation most relates to, and then identify the [Equity Index Score](#) for those goals in the geography your proposal will affect. Select the indicator(s) this legislation is most related to, then briefly explain how this legislation will impact the selected indicator(s) and/or improve the Equity Index Score. **Use the dropdowns below and refer to guide for more information.**

Economy/Workforce: *Equity Index Score:* High Opportunity

Increase positive public perception related to the Tacoma economy.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score:* High Opportunity

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Livability: *Equity Index Score:* High Opportunity

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).

Designation and protection of historic buildings within the City ensures that these buildings remain for future generations to experience. In addition, such properties contribute to a sense of unique place and encourage investment into the neighborhood. Land use is not governed by historic designations.

ALTERNATIVES:

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Please use table below.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
Not adding the building to the Tacoma Register of Historic Places		Future changes to the structure that negatively alter architectural character, including demolition, could take place without the review of the Commission. The property would not be eligible for financial and development incentives that encourage adaptive reuse.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

Additions to the historic register encourage financial investment in listed properties. These investment numbers are reported annually to the state and City Council.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Staff concurs with the recommendation of the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate the above property as a City Landmark, which will help to preserve this important structure for future generations.



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Map of property location and current photograph