

CITY OF SAN DIEGO
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: January 1, 2008

TO: Historical Resources Board, Stakeholders and Interested Parties

FROM: Garry Papers, Deputy Director of Urban Form, City Planning & Community Investment

SUBJECT: Purpose of the Design Assistance Subcommittee of the HRB

As the City's Historical Resources program continues to grow and attract interest from property owners, preservationists and the community at large, the demands on the program's volunteer Historical Resources Board (HRB) and staff have increased significantly. One example of this increased demand is the Design Assistance Subcommittee (DAS). Over the last few years, the agenda of the subcommittee has regularly required three-hour meetings, plus special meetings called several times a year to accommodate increased demand for design review services. One cause of this increased demand is the relatively recent practice of bringing properties before the Subcommittee which are **not** designated as historical resources.

San Diego Municipal Code Section 111.0206(d), which establishes the powers and duties of the Board, states that the Board has the duty to "*provide information and guidance, at the request of property owners or tenants, on the financial and physical aspects of the restoration, alteration, rehabilitation, landscaping, or maintenance of any **designated historical resource.***" The DAS has been tasked with fulfilling this duty of the Board. However, within the last few years, property owners and consultants representing non-designated properties have enlisted the services of DAS to review significant rehabilitation projects prior to designation. This type of review falls outside the scope established by the Municipal Code, and reduces the amount of staff and Board time for reviewing projects impacting designated resources.

Therefore, the DAS will no longer be reviewing projects involving properties which are not designated historical resources. Limited exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of staff and the DAS Chair. Examples of such exceptions would include proposed restoration or rehabilitation of potentially significant resources which are actively seeking to obtain historic designation. In order to qualify for this exception, the applicant must submit a historical resource research report consistent with the Board's adopted guidelines to staff for review. If staff determines that the property is eligible for designation based on the historical report, the project may be docketed for review by the DAS. The historical report and property will then be brought before the HRB for designation once the permit application is submitted and prior to permit approval. By limiting the projects reviewed by the DAS to those identified within the powers and duties of the Board, owners of historically designated properties will have full opportunity to receive the valuable design services of the Subcommittee.