

## IMPACT STATEMENT

**Legislation title:** Direct City bureaus to prioritize reuse of artifacts from the Eric Ladd and other cast-iron artifact collections in the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District (Resolution).

**Contact name:** Nicholas Starin, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

**Contact phone:** 503-823-5837

**Presenter name:** Nicholas Starin

**Purpose of proposed legislation and background information:**

This resolution directs City bureaus to make reasonable efforts to integrate historic cast-iron facades and artifacts from the Eric Ladd or other cast-iron artifact collections in projects involving development or renovation of City-owned or controlled buildings, structures and sites within the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District. Private development projects within the historic district that include financial participation by City bureaus would also be required to comply with this policy. The policy does not require the use of cast iron in development projects.

The Skidmore/Old Town Historic District was designated as a National Historic Landmark by the United States Secretary of the Interior in 1977, one of only two such National Historic Landmark districts in Oregon. One of the most significant historic resources in the city of Portland and the state of Oregon, the district's architectural character is defined by its collection of nineteenth century cast-iron fronted commercial buildings.

The Eric Ladd cast iron collection is owned by the Portland Development Commission, which has completed an extensive inventory of the collection. Other artifacts are owned by the Architectural Heritage Center. These cast iron building elements were salvaged by historic preservationists from nineteenth century buildings that were demolished in the mid-twentieth century.

The resolution supports Comprehensive Plan objective 12.3 F, which calls for to the preservation of artifacts from historically significant structures and the reintroduction of these artifacts into the City's streetscape and building interiors. It also supports Central City Plan policy 11, action item HP1, which calls for salvage, storage and reuse of historical artifacts. The resolution also supports the revised Skidmore/Old Town Historic District Design Guidelines, also under consideration by the City Council, which calls for integrating the design of new buildings with the cast iron character of the district and provides for integrating cast iron artifacts in modern buildings.

**Financial and budgetary impacts:**

The resolution could result in some financial impacts to the City. When City bureaus undertake or participate in development projects in the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District, they will need to make a good faith effort to explore the use of cast iron artifacts in project designs. This could add costs to project feasibility studies and design. However, these costs are not expected to be a major element in overall project budgets. The policy does not require the use of cast iron artifacts in development projects. However, should cast iron artifacts be used in a development,

there could be some additional costs associated with preparing and installing the artifacts in a structure.

**Community impacts and community involvement:**

The citizens of Portland will benefit from this policy because it encourages the use and exposure of irreplaceable historic artifacts that are currently in storage and not accessible to the public. Development projects that integrate cast iron artifacts in their design will reinforce the historic and architectural character of the district and enhance its unique sense of place.

The resolution was crafted as part of the project to develop improved design guidelines for the district (also under City Council review). The project included an extensive public involvement and outreach component, including a Community Working Group, open houses, meetings with community organizations, public agencies and individuals, project web sites, mailings and notices, and numerous briefings, work sessions and public hearings with the Historic Landmarks Commissions. The resolution was unanimously recommended for adoption by the Historic Landmarks Commission.

The Old Town/Chinatown Community Association, Restore Oregon, and the Architectural Heritage Center support the resolution and are expected to testify at City Council. There is no known community opposition.

**Budgetary Impact Worksheet**

**Does this action change appropriations?**

YES: Please complete the information below.

NO: Skip this section

Fund	Fund Center	Commitment Item	Functional Area	Funded Program	Grant	Sponsored Program	Amount



**City of Portland**  
Historic Landmarks Commission

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April 5, 2016

37207

Mayor Charlie Hales and Portland City Council  
City Hall  
1220 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Portland, OR 97204

Dear Mayor Hales and City Commissioners,

The Skidmore/Old Town Historic District is where the City of Portland began. It is truly one of the most special places in the city, featuring signature works of architecture, intimate open spaces around the Skidmore Fountain, and unique streets not found anywhere else in the city. In order to acknowledge, celebrate, and protect its robust collection of buildings with intricate cast iron facades, the district was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1975 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1977 in recognition of its national historic significance. It is one of only two such nationally-designated historic districts in the Oregon.

**Skidmore/Old Town Historic District Design Guidelines**

The Historic Landmarks Commission is pleased to forward you the *Skidmore/Old Town Historic District Design Guidelines*. These new design guidelines will ensure that future historic renovations and new construction in the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District will preserve and enhance the historic character of the district.

The guidelines powerfully fulfill two missions: First, they lay out clear directions regarding design, scale, materials, texture, proportions, etc., which will best guide applicants. The ambiguity of the guidelines these replace is gone. Second, these guidelines will serve as a strong economic development tool by establishing a high standard of congruent historic design. The Skidmore/Old Town Historic District can become a key cultural attraction in the region, showcasing its one-of-a-kind collection of cast-iron fronted buildings and tell the story of our great city. Portland will be able to boast an Old Town to rival those of San Francisco, Charleston, Savannah, and Boston.

**Cast Iron Resolution**

The Commission fully supports the work of William J. Hawkins III, FAIA and the goal of reintroducing cast iron building façade elements into the historic district as a part of restoration projects, new construction, or other interpretive works accessible to the public. As a means to this goal, the commission urges your support of the resolution to direct City bureaus to prioritize reuse of artifacts from the Eric Ladd and other cast iron artifact collections in the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District. This is critical because the cast iron is the reason that this district obtained national recognition and landmark protection.

A great deal of thought and effort by City staff, members of the public, and the Historic Landmarks Commission has gone into the design guidelines and accompanying cast iron resolution—dating back to 2007. We ask City Council to adopt the guidelines and resolution without major revision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirk Ranzetta".

Kirk Ranzetta,  
Chair, Portland Historic Landmarks Commission

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Solimano".

Paul Solimano  
Vice Chair, Portland Historic Landmarks Commission