

# CITY OF HIGH POINT

## AGENDA ITEM



**Title:** **Historic Marker Request** (Washington Street Historic District)

**From:** Lee Burnette, Planning & Development  
Director

**Meeting Date:** June 18, 2018

**Public Hearing:** No

**Advertising Date:** NA

**Advertised By:** NA

**Attachments:** A. Historic Preservation Commission Recommendation  
B. Staff Report

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### **PURPOSE:**

A request by the City Manager's Office to place a historic marker recognizing the Washington Street Historic District at the northwest corner of Washington Street and Fourth Street.

### **BACKGROUND:**

On January 16, 2016 City Council adopted a Historic Marker Policy that provides guidelines and criteria to facilitate the selection and placement of City of High Point Roadside Historic Markers. This policy was revised on June 6, 2016. The Historic Preservation Commission was designated by the Historic Marker Policy to review and evaluate all proposed roadside historic markers prior to consideration by City Council. This roadside historic marker request by the City Manager's Office for the Washington Street Historic District is the fourth request under the City's roadside historic marker policy.

### **BUDGET IMPACT:**

In accordance with the City Council adopted policy, the City does not budget annually for markers, but may fund or assist with the funding of markers. Funds for this marker have been allocated as part of the City's Washington Street streetscape project.

### **RECOMMENDATION / ACTION REQUESTED:**

On May 9, 2018, the Historic Preservation Commission recommended approval. Planning and Development staff requests Council approval of the marker request as proposed.

## **HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

### **City Manager's Office Historic Marker Request for Washington Street Historic District**

At its May 9, 2018 meeting, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed a request for a historic marker for the Washington Street Historic District. Six members of the Commission were present. Mr. David Fencl, Senior Planner, presented the request and recommended approval of the request as outlined in the staff report.

The Historic Preservation Commission determined that the proposed marker meets the minimum evaluation criteria of the Historic Marker Policy which includes the site or event being at least 50 years old, with no public or private markers currently recognizing the site or event within the city, and the location of the proposed marker is within the corporate limits. The Historic Preservation Commission also determined that the proposed marker will be consistent in appearance with several existing City markers (black with silver letters with the City seal positioned at the top in the arch) and recommended approval of the historic marker request, as recommended by staff, by a vote of 6-0.



**To:** Historic Preservation Commission Members

**From:** David Fencel, Senior Planner

**Meeting Date:** May 9, 2018

**Subject:** Washington Street Historic District Marker

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**PURPOSE:**

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is designated by the Historic Marker Policy to review all requests for historic markers to be located in public street rights-of-way. The HPC shall first determine whether the request meets the minimum evaluation criteria outlined in the policy, and if the request meets the minimum evaluation criteria, the HPC shall then evaluate the request based on relevant criteria as determined by the HPC.

The following criteria must be present and factually correct in order for the HPC to review any request for placement of a marker:

1. Any site or event requested to be recognized must be at least 50 years old and for any individual to be recognized with a marker, the individual's contribution that is the subject of the request must have occurred as least 50 years before the request.
2. There may not be any current markers, public or private, currently recognizing the site or event within the City of High Point.
3. The location requested to be recognized must be within the corporate limits of the City of High Point and within public view.

Requests for markers shall be evaluated based on relevant criteria as determined by the HPC, including the following:

1. Is each historical claim by the applicant presenting the request supported by documentation or other evidence of the claim's validity? Documentation should consist of primary sources that were created at the time of the event and may include tax records, deeds, newspaper articles, meeting minutes, photographs, etc. Secondary sources may be submitted to help provide context and justify the significance of the event, person, or location.
2. In an attempt to avoid repetition and promote diversity in the recognitions, is the requested site, event or individual closely related to a site, event or individual accomplishment that has already been recognized with a Marker?
3. Has the site, event, or individual contribution maintained its significance over time?
4. Is the site, event or individual recognized outside of High Point at state wide,

- national, or international levels?
5. Marker proposals will be rejected if the Commission cannot authenticate or verify the historical information to its satisfaction. The Commission shall make the deciding rule if there is conflicting evidence.

**STAFF ANALYSIS:**

According to the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form prepared by Heather Fearnbach in 2010, the Washington Street Historic District contains the most cohesive, intact collection of early to mid-twentieth century commercial, institutional, ecclesiastical, and residential buildings associated with High Point's African-American community. Originally called Jamestown Road, Washington Street once served as the primary connector between downtown and points east. Washington Street served as the heart of High Point's African-American community with educational and religious institutions, over 50 African-American businesses at its peak, and a number of residential buildings. In the period of Jim Crow laws and segregation, Washington Street was a symbol of black determination, perseverance and success to High Point's African-American community.

Following the April meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission, a meeting of the appointed working group was held on April 24<sup>th</sup>. After much discussion, a number of revisions to the marker text have been recommended by the working group. Draft text for the historic marker, as revised by the appointed working group, is attached.

Staff believes that this historic marker request meets the minimum evaluation criteria due to the period of Washington Street's significance being established more than 50 years ago, there are no other historic markers recognizing Washington Street and the marker's proposed location is within the City of High Point and within public view. Staff believes that this historic marker request also meets the relevant evaluation criteria based on the fact that Washington Street has already been entered into the National Register of Historic Places in 2010. This marker request also helps preserve, promote and bring awareness to the history of High Point's African American community.

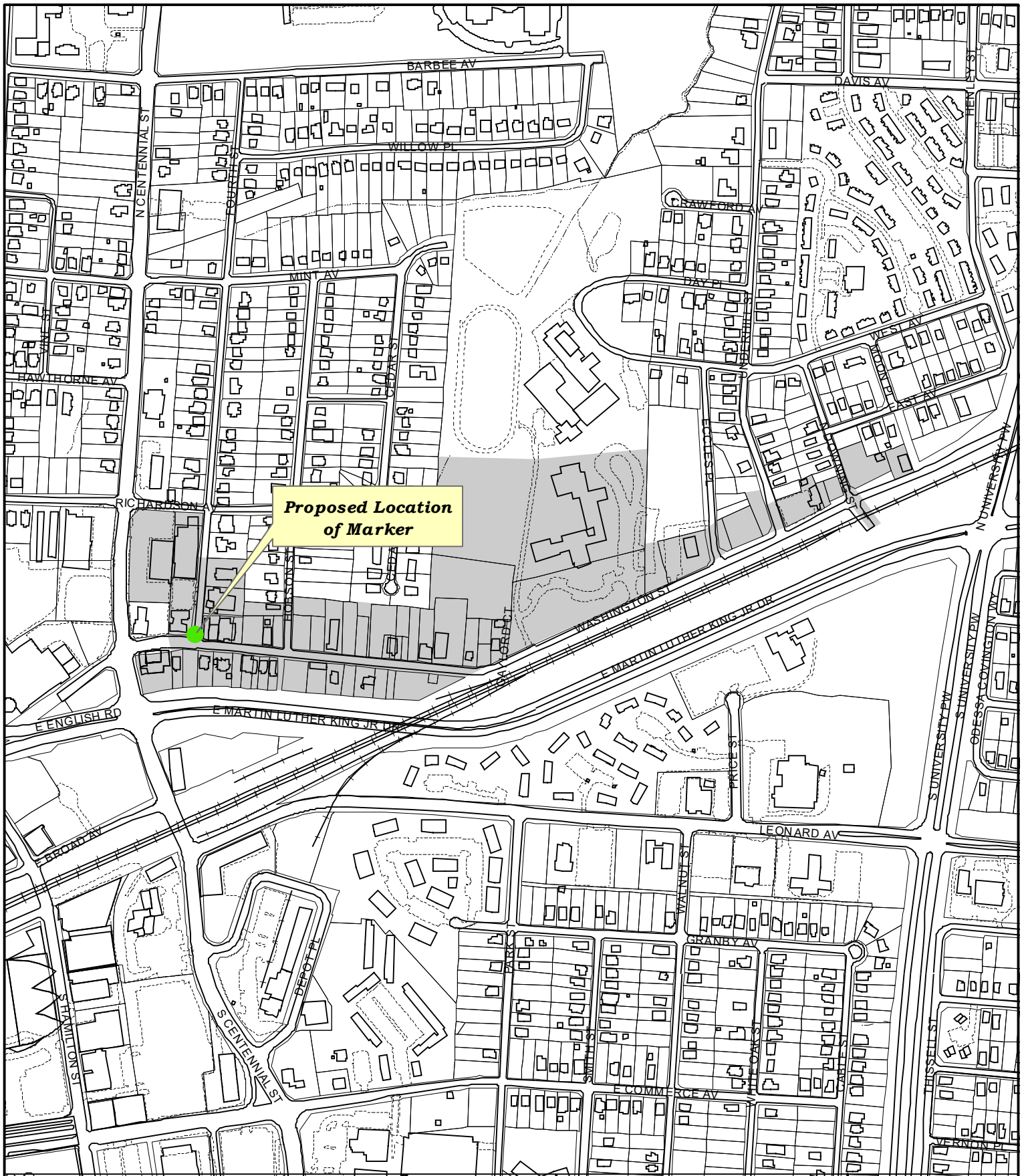
**RECOMMENDATION / ACTION REQUESTED:**

Staff recommends the Historic Preservation Commission recommend approval of the historic marker request for the Washington Street Historic District. This historic marker request meets both the minimum evaluation criteria and the relevant evaluation criteria of the Historic Marker Policy.

**Attachments:**      Text of Historic Marker as revised by the appointed working group  
Washington Street Historic District Marker Location Map  
Photo of Proposed Marker Location

# **WASHINGTON STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Washington Street was created and given its name in 1860. This cultural icon rose above discrimination, segregation, and racism to become a symbol of black determination, perseverance, and success. By 1960, the Washington Street district, covering nine magnificent blocks, consisted of over 50 businesses of all kinds as well as numerous churches, civic organizations, and educational institutions. In 2010, Washington Street was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.



# Proposed Historical Marker Location

 Washington Street  
National Register Historic District

Planning & Development  
Department

City of High Point



Scale: 1"=500'

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Certificate of Appropriateness\2018\MXD\MarkerLocation - WashingtonSt.mxd



# **Proposed Location - Washington Street Historic District Marker**

