

**MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE**

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 2010-02**

**A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING CONTINUED OPERATION OF THE OSCAR ANDERSON HOUSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM.**

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WHEREAS, the Anchorage Assembly ordained the Anchorage Historic Preservation Commission with the responsibility to recommend maintenance programs for municipally owned historic properties and educational and interpretive programs to increase public awareness of the value of historic preservation; and

WHEREAS, Downtown Anchorage's historic structures have been identified as essential assets for future growth, vitality, and revitalization – by preserving the community's heritage in ways that attract visitors, locals, and investors to the area; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Downtown Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2007, identifies the **Oscar Anderson House** as a National Historic Register site and one of 20 significant historic properties in Downtown that have increasingly become a major focal point of attraction for residents and out-of-state visitors; and

WHEREAS, the Oscar Anderson House dates from the founding of Anchorage in 1915, and is reputed to be the first private residence completed following the townsite auction; and

WHEREAS, the Oscar Anderson House is Anchorage's only historical house museum, and exhibits the living conditions of a first-generation pioneer family; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality acquired and restored Oscar Anderson House with community support from 1978-1982; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality has since that time fulfilled its obligation to preserve the structure by funding both physical maintenance and active ongoing caring use; and

WHEREAS, the Oscar Anderson House **Museum** has operated each summer visitor season and Christmas holiday since 1982, and has provided a popular elementary school program; and

WHEREAS, funding for the museum's educational and interpretative programs has declined significantly; and

WHEREAS, it is understood that continued active occupation by people and uses compatible with historic preservation is necessary for the survival of a heritage structure; and

WHEREAS, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Oscar Anderson House will coincide with Anchorage's Centennial in 2015.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Anchorage Historic Preservation Commission that:


A. The Commission makes the following findings of fact:

1. In 2005 the Municipality and the Anchorage Downtown Partnership commissioned a Downtown Market Study to determine the best approach for attracting future visitors and residents to Downtown Anchorage, and found a firm basis for supporting heritage properties and cultural programs in Downtown as important economic development assets.
2. It has been estimated for the Commission that in recent years a part-time museum position, operating five days per week at six hours daily from June 1 through Labor Day, has cost approximately \$17,000 annually, while admission fees have yielded approximately \$2,000 in yearly income.
3. Loss of the museum program and its employee and volunteers would be detrimental to the building, and make it more difficult to maintain its identity or reopen a similar caliber program.

B. The Commission recommends that:

1. The Oscar Anderson House Museum summer program be continued so that it may operate in 2011 through 2015;
2. The Municipality fund a part-time position to operate the museum five days per week, six hours per day, from June 1 through Labor Day, plus four days during the Christmas season, 2011 to 2015; and
3. A long-term strategy for the survival of the Oscar Anderson House Museum program be identified with the assistance of the Historic Preservation Commission.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Historic Preservation Commission this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of November 2010.

  
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Jerry T. Weaver, Jr.  
Secretary

  
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Julie Jessen  
Chair