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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
BOARD AGENDA MEMO

MEETING DATE: September 9, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Tine Mathiasen, Chief Deputy Clerk of the Board

SUBJECT: Resolution designating the Grass Valley Walsh Sawmill and City Brewery Site, located at 309 Mill Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945 (APN 008-410-007), as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 25-08

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the attached Resolution.

FUNDING: N/A

BACKGROUND: On March 21, 2025, the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission (NCHLC) voted unanimously to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to designate the Grass Valley Walsh Sawmill and City Brewery Site, located at 309 Mill Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945 (APN 008-410-007), as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 25-08. Specifically on February 15, 2025, the City Planner of the City of Grass Valley, Amy Wolfson, applied to the NCHLC requesting the Walsh Sawmill and City Brewery Site be considered and designated as a county historical landmark.

As outlined in the attached supporting documents, in 1849, James Walsh of New York, along with partners Wheeler and Holt, established the first sawmill in Grass Valley next to Wolf Creek on Mill Street. This enterprise provided essential lumber for the region's mining operations and became the town's earliest business venture. The site later evolved into the City Brewery, and both Mill Street and Walsh Street were named in recognition of this pioneering effort. Walsh went on to serve the community as Justice of the Peace in 1850, Nevada County's first state senator in 1851, and Chairman of the Board of Supervisors in 1855. From 1851 to 1859, he also managed the Gold Hill quartz mine before relocating to San Francisco, where he lived until his death in 1894.

In 1854, Thomas Hodge, born in England in 1838, arrived in Grass Valley with his father, Samuel Hodge, intending to pursue mining. Instead, they purchased the City Brewery, originally located at Church and Mine Streets, and rebuilt it at the Mill Street site after a fire destroyed the original building. Thomas assumed leadership of the business and, in 1871, partnered with Henry Scadden under the name Thomas Hodge

& Co. The brewery thrived for many years, with four to six wagons regularly delivering supplies to mining camps within a 30-mile radius. Hodge, a dedicated civic-minded resident, lived for 55 years in Grass Valley, residing in a distinctive Cornish-style stone house at 303 Mill Street, which still stands today.

Two significant enterprises once operated on this site, both vital to the mining industry and instrumental in shaping the early development of Grass Valley. Walsh and Hodge were not only pioneering businessmen but also important contributors to the civic and governmental growth of the city and county.

With this information, there is no doubt that the Walsh Sawmill and City Brewery Site should be designated as a Nevada County Historical Landmark. Therefore, the Nevada County Historical Landmarks Commission recommends the Board of Supervisors adopt the attached Resolution designating the Grass Valley Walsh Sawmill and City Brewery Site, located at 309 Mill Street, Grass Valley, CA 95945 (APN 008-410-007), as Nevada County Historical Landmark NEV 25-08.

Initiated: Carissa Cyr, Senior Management Analyst
Submittal Date: August 22, 2025