



City of Oregon City

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Staff Report

File Number: 19-090

Agenda Date: 2/1/2019

Status: Agenda Ready

To: City Commission

Agenda #: 8c.

From:

File Type: Report

SUBJECT:

Ermatinger House (Goal 3)

RECOMMENDED ACTION (Motion):

Staff will provide an update on the efforts to identify strategic partnerships for the operations of the Ermatinger House and support a discussion by the City Commission on the proposed goal.

BACKGROUND:

Goal 3: Enhance the Livability of the Community

Ermatinger House

** Work to identify strategic partnerships and agreements with volunteer groups, non-profits and/or other organizations to increase the hours of operation of the Ermatinger House.*

Built c. 1843, the Ermatinger House is one of the oldest surviving structures in Oregon. In addition to its architectural rarity, the house is significant as the home of the Hudson's Bay Company Chief Trader Francis Ermatinger, a close colleague of John McLoughlin and Treasurer of the Oregon's Provisional Government. As such, the house is a direct link to Oregon's pre-statehood period, the HBC's presence in the Oregon Territory, and the founding of Oregon City. The house is also known for hosting the Lovejoy-Pettygrove coin flip in 1845 which named the city of Portland.

After a comprehensive multi-year renovation, the Ermatinger House hosted a well-received grand opening reception in July 2018. The house museum is now open regularly to the community with an assigned 0.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) Recreation Programmer and public hours on Fridays and Saturdays. The renovation was completed to meet National Park Service (NPS) standards, with the intent to pursue an eventual transfer of the house to NPS operations, similarly to the McLoughlin House.

Community Services staff are utilizing the strategic plan as a guiding operational document and closely collaborating with a group of engaged citizens known as "Friends of the Ermatinger House" to strengthen the interpretive offerings at the house. The friends group recently achieved 501(c)3 status and are working with Community Services staff on a strategic plan for the non-profit to support the work of the house museum. Staff are dedicated to continuing to identify strategic partnerships and agreements with volunteer groups, non-profits and/or other

organizations to increase the hours of operation of the Ermatinger House and the depth of experience for visitors to this tourism asset.