

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

June 28, 2022

FROM

MELISSA RUSSO, Director, Museum

SUBJECT

Change the Name of the John Rains House to the María Merced Williams and John Rains House

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Authorize the San Bernardino County Museum to change the name of the John Rains House to the María Merced Williams and John Rains House.

(Presenter: Melissa Russo, Director, 798-8608)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Promote the Countywide Vision.

Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of this item will not result in the use of Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). There is a nominal one-time cost associated with the fabrication to update the existing sign and brochure printing, estimated to be less than \$5,000. These costs will be paid out of the 2022-23 Museum operations budget allocated for historic sites.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

San Bernardino County Museum (Museum) requests permission to officially rename one of the Museum's historic sites, currently named "John Rains House" located in Rancho Cucamonga. Historic sites are buildings and locations that represent a significant event, persons, or architectural style in the development of a region or have significance nationally. The John Rains House is significant in all of these areas. It was built on Rancho Cucamonga, which lay along the route of the Old Spanish Trail from Cajon Pass and the road from the Pueblo of Los Angeles and Mission San Gabriel to San Bernardino. Merced's lineage was significant as a descendant of the Lugo family; she was the daughter of Chino rancho owner Isaac Williams and granddaughter of Don Antonio Maria Lugo. The house, built with funds from Merced and her family, was constructed of bricks from local red clay, and was constructed with a unique, innovative cooling system appropriate to the area. The couple's vineyard is reportedly the oldest established in the state. The site was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973 by San Bernardino County Museum staff after its acquisition by the county.

It is recommended the name be changed to "María Merced Williams and John Rains House" as the original means and funding to purchase the property in the 1860s came from Maria Merced and her family, and John Rains ascent in social and political circles is partially attributed to Merced's lineage and influence

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As one of the earliest rancheros in the region, the site provides residents and tourists with the opportunity to learn more about the early history of Rancho Cucamonga and by extension, San Bernardino County. Merced, as she was known, is an essential figure in the well-known story that traditionally has centered on John Rains' life and mysterious murder. San Bernardino County Museum is committed to diversity, inclusion, and equity in all of our storytelling about the men and women that shaped county history, and therefore seeks to elevate the story of Maria Merced Williams through this action.

Once approved, Museum staff will submit the name change to the National Register of Historic Places (No. 75-428 - 1973), a designation managed by the United States (U.S.) Department of the Interior - National Park Service, Office of Historic Preservation (OHP). This request is in compliance with, and meets the requirements of, County Policy 12-16 SP1: Naming of Facilities and Functions.

PROCUREMENT

N/A

REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Katherine Hardy, Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on June 16, 2022; Finance (Elias Duenas, Finance Analyst, 387-4052) on June 16, 2022; and County Finance and Administration (Valerie Clay, Deputy Executive Officer, 387-5423) on June 16, 2022.

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Record of Action of the Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County

APPROVED (CONSENT CALENDAR)

Moved: Janice Rutherford Seconded: Col. Paul Cook (Ret.)
Ayes: Col. Paul Cook (Ret.), Janice Rutherford, Dawn Rowe, Joe Baca, Jr.
Absent: Curt Hagman

Lynna Monell, CLERK OF THE BOARD

BY 
DATED: June 28, 2022



cc: File - Museum
KS 06/29/2022