

# Staff Report and Recommendations

## Agenda of April 27, 2026, Item 6a

### County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency

800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009-1740 • (805) 654-2478 • [rma.venturacounty.gov/divisions/planning/](http://rma.venturacounty.gov/divisions/planning/)

#### I. **REQUEST:**

Adopt proposed resolutions to approve historic preservation awards recognizing the work of six different organizations. The awards are to be presented at a public hearing in May to coincide with National Historic Preservation Month.

#### II. **BACKGROUND:**

The Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board (CHB) identified the continuation of a Preservation Award Program as a priority for 2026. Beginning in 2024, the CHB has issued historic preservation awards to acknowledge the dedicated efforts of individuals, advocates, property owners, community organizations, and volunteers who are instrumental in the field of historic preservation. The awards, which are listed on the CHB website, are intended to promote quality historic preservation and historic programming work occurring in the community and to engage more widely with the stakeholders involved.

At their February 9, 2026, hearing, the CHB established an ad hoc committee to develop a Preservation Award Program for 2026. The ad hoc committee met in March of this year to define the program parameters, establish eligibility categories and criteria, and identify worthy award recipients for the full CHB's consideration. Members of the public may also submit nominations throughout the year at the following link: <https://rma.venturacounty.gov/divisions/planning/historic-preservation-awards/>. This year's ad hoc committee continued the following historic preservation award categories:

- Excellence in Rehabilitation
- Excellence in Restoration
- Excellence in Preservation
- Excellence in Reconstruction
- Excellence in Grassroots Organizing and Community Development
- Excellence in Organizations Supporting History or Historic Preservation
- Excellence in Individuals Supporting Historic Preservation
- Excellence in the Promotion and Implementation of Historical Programming

#### III. **PROPOSED HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARD RECIPIENTS:**

This year the Preservation Award Program ad hoc committee identified the following six organizations as worthy of special recognition in 2026. Each proposed recipient is noted below, along with the intended award category and a description of the historic property and/or work they are associated with. Awards would be formally presented in a Cultural Heritage Board hearing in May 2026.

### 1. Plein Air Ventura County Painters for Excellence in Grassroots Organizing and Community Development for the *Treasures of Ventura County Art Show*

- Plein Air Ventura County is honored for its remarkable grassroots initiative celebrating the historic landmarks and cultural resources that define Ventura County’s identity. Through an ambitious 2025–2026 effort, this local collective of artists created more than 100 plein air paintings, each capturing a historic site directly from life and preserving its distinct light, character, and sense of place. Their work brings public attention to the county’s irreplaceable heritage while fostering community engagement through art, education, and shared stewardship.
- In partnership with the Ventura County Arts and Culture Division, the Ventura County Arts Council, and the Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board, Plein Air Ventura County will help present the *Treasures of Ventura County Art Show* during National Historic Preservation Month in May 2026. The exhibition at the Ventura County Government Center’s Hall of Administration will showcase these artworks throughout publicly accessible hallways, inviting residents and visitors to experience Ventura County’s historic resources through the eyes of local artists and strengthening countywide appreciation for preservation. Figure 1 shows Plein Air Ventura County’s promotional flyer for the Art Show, including several of the artworks that will be on display.

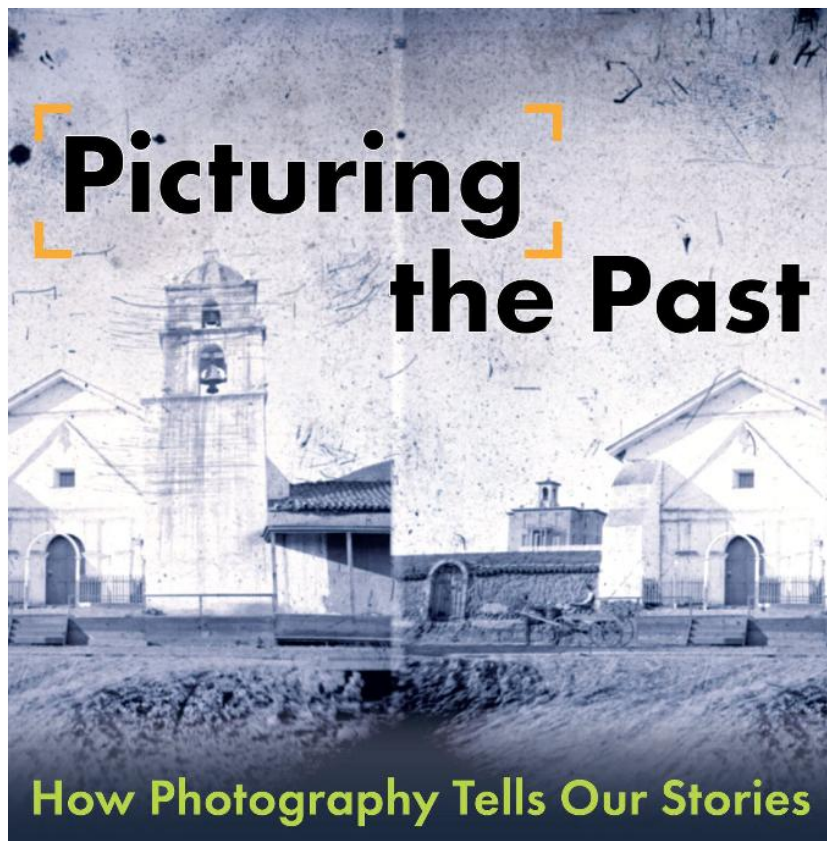
Figure 1 – Art Show Promotional Flyer



## 2. Museum of Ventura County for Excellence in Organizations Supporting History or Historic Preservation

- The Museum of Ventura County is recognized for its longstanding dedication to preserving, interpreting, and sharing the rich and diverse history of Ventura County. Through exhibitions, educational programming, archival stewardship, and community partnerships, the Museum serves as a cultural cornerstone that maintains public access to the stories, artifacts, and traditions that define the region's heritage. This mission is supported through its main campus and the Albinger Archaeological Museum in downtown Ventura as well as its Agriculture Museum in Santa Paula. The Museum's Research Library further strengthens this work with more than 100,000 historic photographs, thousands of rare documents, maps, oral histories, and an extensive collection of manuscripts that safeguard the county's collective memory. Its ongoing commitment to inclusivity and public engagement ensures that local history remains meaningful, relevant, and accessible to all generations. Figure 2 shows the promotional image for a recent exhibit at the Museum of Ventura County.

**Figure 2 – Promotional Image for Museum of Ventura County Exhibit**



*Credit: Museum of Ventura County*

**3. Santa Susana Railroad Depot and Museum for Excellence in Organizations Supporting History or Historic Preservation**

- The Santa Susana Railroad Depot and Museum is recognized for preserving one of Ventura County’s most iconic transportation landmarks and sharing the region’s rail history with the public. Housed in the restored 1903 Southern Pacific Depot, now a designated Ventura County landmark, the museum features original station agent living quarters, a historic telegraph office, freight and passenger rooms, railroad artifacts, operational signal equipment, and an extensive model railroad display created by the Rancho Simi Foundation. Through exhibitions, tours, and community events, the museum provides an immersive and engaging window into the role railroads played in shaping Ventura County’s growth and identity. Figure 3 shows the Santa Susana Railroad Depot and Museum.

**Figure 3 – Santa Susana Railroad Depot and Museum**



*Credit: [www.venturacountymuseums.org](http://www.venturacountymuseums.org)*

**4. Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing for Excellence in Organizations Supporting History or Historic Preservation**

- The Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing is honored for its commitment to preserving aviation history and honoring those who built, maintained, and flew historic aircraft. Located at the Camarillo Airport, the museum features restoration and exhibition hangars that house both airworthy and static WWII aircraft, including a PBJ-1J Mitchell, Supermarine Spitfire Mk XIVe, Mitsubishi A6M3 Zero, Grumman F6F Hellcat, Fairchild PT-19, and other rare examples of wartime aviation. Through public programs, educational tours, historical artifacts, flight demonstrations, and volunteer engagement, the Wing brings twentieth-century aviation and military history to life for audiences of all ages. Figure 4 shows a portion of the Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing’s collection.

**Figure 4 – Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing**



*Credit: Visit Camarillo*

**5. City of Port Hueneme Historical Museum for Excellence in Organizations Supporting History or Historic Preservation**

- The City of Port Hueneme Historical Museum is recognized for its dedication to documenting and sharing the unique history of Port Hueneme

and its surrounding communities. Located in the city’s historic 1925 former Bank of Hueneme building designed by architect Myron Hunt, the museum preserves Chumash artifacts, Bard family materials, early city and harbor memorabilia, maritime objects, veterans displays, and an eclectic array of community-donated items. Through thoughtful curation, storytelling, and public engagement, the museum provides an accessible and engaging resource that ensures Port Hueneme’s history is preserved and celebrated for future generations. Figure 5 shows the City of Port Hueneme Historical Museum in its historic location.

**Figure 5 – City of Port Hueneme Historical Museum**



*Credit: Every Museum of Greater Los Angeles*

## **6. Rancho Camulos Museum for Excellence in the Promotion and Implementation of Historical Programming**

- Rancho Camulos Museum is recognized for its outstanding promotion and implementation of historical programming that brings the heritage of Ventura County to life through education, interpretation, and community outreach. As a National Historic Landmark and one of the most authentic surviving Spanish and Mexican land grant ranchos in California, Rancho Camulos preserves original nineteenth century buildings, period gardens, and significant cultural landscapes on its historic property near Piru. The

museum offers guided tours, school field trips, living history events, cultural celebrations, hands-on demonstrations, and programs that highlight the site’s agricultural, Californio, and early American periods. Its dedication to sharing the diverse stories of the families and communities who lived and worked at Rancho Camulos, combined with active volunteer engagement and thoughtful interpretation, ensures that this landmark remains a vital educational resource and a vibrant link to Ventura County’s earliest history. Figure 6 shows some of the educational programming for students at the Rancho Camulos Museum.

**Figure 6 – School Field Trip at Rancho Camulos Museum**



*Credit: www.ranhocamulos.org*

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

No public comment regarding this item has been received to date.

**V. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:**

Staff recommends the CHB take the following actions:

1. **CONDUCT** public hearing, **RECEIVE** oral and written testimony, and **CONSIDER** the Planning Division staff report and all exhibits and attachments hereto;

2. **ADOPT** CHB Resolution No. 2026-1 (Exhibit 1) approving an award for the Plein Air Ventura County Painters for Excellence in Grassroots Organizing and Community Development for the *Treasures of Ventura County Art Show*;
3. **ADOPT** CHB Resolution No. 2026-2 (Exhibit 2) approving an award for the Museum of Ventura County for Excellence in Organizations Supporting History or Historic Preservation;
4. **ADOPT** CHB Resolution No. 2026-3 (Exhibit 3) approving an award for the Santa Susana Railroad Depot and Museum for Excellence in Organizations Supporting History or Historic Preservation;
5. **ADOPT** CHB Resolution No. 2026-4 (Exhibit 4) approving an award for the Commemorative Air Force Southern California Wing for Excellence in Organizations Supporting History or Historic Preservation;
6. **ADOPT** CHB Resolution No. 2026-5 (Exhibit 5) approving an award for the City of Port Hueneme Historical Museum for Excellence in Organizations Supporting History or Historic Preservation; and
7. **ADOPT** CHB Resolution No. 2026-6 (Exhibit 6) approving an award for the Rancho Camulos Museum for Excellence in the Promotion and Implementation of Historical Programming.

Prepared by:



Dillan Murray, Senior Planner  
Ventura County Planning Division  
(805) 654-5042

Reviewed by:



Winston Wright, Manager  
Ordinances & Implementation Section  
(805) 654-2468

Exhibits:

- Exhibit 1: Proposed CHB Resolution No. 2026-1
- Exhibit 2: Proposed CHB Resolution No. 2026-2
- Exhibit 3: Proposed CHB Resolution No. 2026-3
- Exhibit 4: Proposed CHB Resolution No. 2026-4
- Exhibit 5: Proposed CHB Resolution No. 2026-5
- Exhibit 6: Proposed CHB Resolution No. 2026-6