



Corona Heritage Park

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100% volunteer 501(c)(3)
non-profit organization
#33-0836283

December 19, 2022

Dear Joanne,

I am finally getting back to you on your request of the Heritage Foundation's reasons for fee waivers for our upcoming Victoria Hotel/Hotel Del Rey project. You are probably one of a few that have any memory of how this project started, and may or may not know how it began. Here is a little history.

Early in the eighties, Van Dale developers came to the City with their project to develop the Foothill Ranch properties. They proposed that the City take the existing ranch headquarters as mitigation for a heritage park. At that time a recession in the economy had started, and while the Corona Historic Preservation Society was lobbying the City to accept this property for a heritage park, the City decided to put it on the "back burner." Fast forward to the early nineties. Van Dale returned to the Council, again requesting the headquarters property for mitigated park fees, and the City did a Feasibility Study. Again the CHPS lobbied for the City to accept.

Shortly after the study, the Victoria Hotel had become a problem for the Bank of America and the City. CHPS opposed the demolition of this last commercial building of its era. In the end the City and BofA paid CHPS to dismantle the building to be stored for future placement at a heritage park.

Van Dale was nearing completion of their project and told the city they needed a decision on accepting the property for a heritage park. CHPS lobbied again for the City to accept this property for this purpose. The City then asked if CHPS would take the property with the understanding that we could prove the community wanted a heritage park. So, CHPS started a recreation of the historic Lemon Festival held on the front lawn of the City Hall for ten years. After several years of the Festival, at the request of the City, we formed the Corona Heritage Foundation and the City deeded the property to the Foundation in 1998.

In this agreement the City would receive the property back if for any reason we fail to be able to operate Corona Heritage Park and Museum. In essence we created a partnership. Also the City Library has an agreement with the Museum to house our two dimensional collections if we want or need, and we house the City's third dimensional collections.

The Corona Heritage Foundation has continued to operate the Heritage Park and Museum since 2000. The collections are now valued at over \$240,000. We have been able to put over \$3.3 million back into the property with our payroll remaining at zero. We would like to continue the partnership created many years ago between the City and the Heritage Foundation to rebuild the Hotel Del Rey to help support the Heritage Park and provide a much needed venue for cultural events.

The time has come for the Foundation to rebuild the Hotel Del Rey at the Heritage Park. The significance of the building to Corona History has a long list. In re-building the Hotel Del Rey, it will complete the park as a revenue source to continue the preservation and maintenance of the property.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Marla Jo Benson, President
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