

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
APRIL 22, 2013
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
No case number
State Theater
719 Congress Avenue

PROPOSAL

Refurbish the existing neon sign with its historic colors.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

The applicant proposes to refurbish the existing neon sign at the State Theater to produce a fully functional and historically-accurate sign. Although the State Theater is not a city historic landmark, the applicant is seeking ACVB historic preservation grant funding for the proposal, and has agreed to seek the Commission's approval for the proposed project.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

The Commission's Standards for Review of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness include:

- Recognize all buildings, structures, and sites as products of their own time. Do not construct alterations which have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance.
- Repair, rather than replace deteriorated architectural features wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Base the repair or replacement of missing architectural features on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historical, physical, or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends approval of this application as proposed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the application as proposed.

HISTORICAL NEON REFURB



ION ART

407 RADAM LANE, A-100
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78745
O: 512.326.9333
F: 512.326.9302
WWW.IONART.COM

ADDRESS: 779 Congress Ave.
Austin, TX 78701

DESIGNER: K. Williams

DATE: 03-20-13

SCALE: NOT TO SCALE

NOTES:

SIGN AREA:

BLDG. HEIGHT:

LINEAR FEET:

FROM B.O.W.:

LANDSCAPE APPROVAL

DATE:

TERMINAL APPROVAL

DATE:

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JOB#



Roadhouse Relics
1720 S. First Street
Austin, TX 78704

To whom it may concern:

My name is Todd Sanders, and I am the owner and founder of Road House Relics. I have made the study of vintage neon signs my career, and I specialize in the recreation of vintage-inspired neon art and sculpture. I have been familiar with the State Theater sign since 1992 when I first moved to Austin. I have serviced the sign many times over the years, respecting and striving to maintain the original artistic integrity and design of the sign.

The purpose of this letter is to state that the image created by Ion Art reflects the coloring of the original neon sign: red, green, and blue, as depicted. I certify that the historic tradition of the sign is being maintained by the renovations proposed by Ion Art.

Any additional questions or concerns can be addressed to me at:

Todd Sanders
Road House Relics
512-442-6366
todd@roadhouserelics.com

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd Sanders". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "T" and "S".



February 26, 2013

Ms. Julie Hart
VP Finance & Operations
Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau
301 Congress, Suite 200
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: Heritage Grant 2013, State Theatre

Dear Ms. Hart,

As the parent organization of the Paramount and State Theatres, the Austin Theatre Alliance strives to preserve these two historical and architectural cornerstones of Austin's downtown arts district. Each year, more than 200,000 people visit the theatres to take in everything from music and comedy to film, dance, and drama. The theatres are an essential destination for tourists to the downtown area; indeed, approximately 30% of our audience members come from out of town.

The State Theatre in particular is a vintage movie house. Built in 1935 in the Art Deco style, it is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Since officially reopening the State in early 2011, we have staged a broad range of performing arts events, presented a host of standup comics, and screened important films, both old and new. The State provides a distinctive space for smaller acts and arts organizations and is one of the anchor venues for the SXSW Film Festival and the Austin Theatre Alliance's new Moontower Comedy Festival.

In order to continue staging first-rate performances that attract Central Texans and tourists, we need to protect and preserve the State Theatre as the historically remarkable architectural structure that it is. To this end, we respectfully request \$47,000 in funding from the Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau to restore the theatre's Congress Avenue State Blade neon sign to its original look and functionality. The newly rehabilitated sign will be visible all up and down Congress Avenue, enhancing the State's appearance while drawing attention to itself, the Paramount Theatre, and Austin's downtown vibrant arts district.

In a separate application, the Austin Theatre Alliance is requesting funding to restore the stone and brick façade of the Paramount Theatre. While we hope that both theatres will be considered for a Heritage Grant, the Paramount facade is our highest priority. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me, either by email at mjordan@austintheatre.org or by phone at 512-692-0519. We are grateful for your generous support of past restoration projects and look forward to our continued partnership in preserving Austin's landmarks for Central Texans and tourists alike.

Sincerely,

Maica Jordan
Executive Director of Development

PARAMOUNT
AUSTINTHEATRE.ORG

PO BOX 1566 AUSTIN, TEXAS 78767 512.472.2901 512.478.3603



GRANT APPLICATION

Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau
 Attn: Julie Hart, VP Finance & Operations
 301 Congress Avenue, Suite 200
 Austin, Texas 78701
 Phone: 512-583-7205 Email: jhart@austintexas.org

DATE: February 26, 2013

HISTORIC PROPERTY AND ADDRESS: The State Theatre, 719 Congress Avenue, Austin, TX 78701

APPLICANT'S NAME: Austin Theatre Alliance

APPLICANT'S ADDRESS: PO Box 1566 Austin, TX 78767

NAME AND ADDRESS OF OWNER, IF DIFFERENT FROM APPLICANT: NA

TAX I.D. NUMBER/TAX STATUS: 74-2975922

PERSON PRESENTING REQUEST/CONTACT PERSON: Jason Leubner

ADDRESS: PO Box 1566 Austin, TX 78767 TELEPHONE NO. 512-692-0520

E-MAIL: jleubner@austintheatre.org FAX NUMBER: 512-472-5824

PROJECT NAME: Rehabilitation of the State Theatre's Neon Sign

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT – PLEASE SUMMARIZE THE PROPOSED PROJECT. (IF DESIRED, APPLICANT MAY ALSO ATTACH AN ADDITIONAL SHEET MORE FULLY EXPLAINING THE PROJECT AND THE REASON FOR THE GRANT REQUEST)

Located in the downtown Congress Avenue corridor and built on the site of the old Avenue Hotel, the State Theatre was the first of its kind in Austin to show motion pictures. This classic Art Deco building opened on Christmas Day 1935 with "The Bride Comes Home," starring Claudette Colbert and Fred MacMurray. Since then, the State has undergone a series of restorations, most recently in 2007-2011, after a city water main burst and ruined the theatre's basement and stage in June 2006. Since reopening the theatre's doors to the public for the first time in over four years, the Austin Theatre Alliance, with generous support from ACVB, has continued to invest in major exterior preservation projects, including the replacement of the State's roof in 2012.

Now, we are turning our attention to a complete restoration of the State Theatre's Congress Avenue neon blade, which suffers from poor weather-proofing, water and animal infiltration, exposed transformers, non-functioning neon, and rust. The scope of the project includes major electrical work and involves removing the letters and panels from one side of the sign to gain easy access. The Austin Theatre Alliance will replace all the transformers, housing them on the State's roof and eve. We will run new high-voltage wire from the inside

of the sign to the new rooftop transformers and reroute the electrical circuits operating the sign to feed the transformers. All circuits will be labeled, diagrammed, and routed for easy access. Any damaged electrical components and porcelain housings will be repaired and all access panels remade to ensure that the sign is watertight and impervious to animals. In addition to the electrical work, the Austin Theatre Alliance will clean and polish the sign's existing porcelain surface and repaint any chipped areas. For the neon, we will replace all damaged cathode tubing and remake the blue neon. Finally, all of the screws on the exterior of the sign will be replaced with new stainless steel screws. Throughout, the company whose bid we have selected, Ion Art Inc., will consult with vintage sign historian and restoration expert Todd Sanders of Road House Relics, who will oversee and approve the restoration methods.

The restoration will ensure pedestrian and worker safety and protect the building while we carry out the work. The cost of the project includes scaffolding, which we will erect on both sides of the sign. To protect the State's roof, we will cover it with plywood and add stabilizers at ground level to support the weight of the scaffold and workers. The restoration methods used will comply with OSHA and City of Austin policies, and we will obtain the required permits from the City of Austin.

The newly rehabilitated sign will be visible all up and down Congress Avenue, enhancing the State's appearance and drawing attention to itself and its neighbor, the historic Paramount Theatre. An intimate and comfortable venue for film and live performances, the State increasingly brings in out-of-town visitors for year-round concerts and screenings, SXSW Film Festival events, and our Moontower standup comedy events.

PLEASE LIST HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS OF THE PROPERTY, AND IF LOCATED WITHIN A NATIONAL REGISTER OR LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT (PLEASE SPECIFY WHICH DISTRICT), AND IF THE PROPERTY IS CONTRIBUTING:

The State has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places since 1976. It is also located within the Congress Avenue National Register Historic District, to which the State is a contributing property. The State Theatre is a City and State Historic Landmark.

AMOUNT OF FUNDING REQUESTED: \$47,000

AMOUNT OF MATCH OR VALUE OF IN-KIND MATCH: \$47,000

The total cost of the proposed neon sign restoration project is \$53,625. Should the full funding of \$47,000 be awarded, the Austin Theatre Alliance's match for just the sign would be \$6,625. The State Theatre Neon Sign Rehabilitation project is scheduled to commence in July 2013.

The Paramount and State Theatres continually undertake both proactive and reactive facilities maintenance and restoration projects. Next year, the Austin Theatre Alliance will budget \$72,000 to preserve and protect the buildings and serve as matching funds for heritage grants. The State Theatre operates within a mechanical/HVAC infrastructure that is outdated and in need of replacement. The existing infrastructure consists of 8 major systems with 24 major components. We are scheduled to update the HVAC/Mechanical infrastructure in 2013-2014 by replacing 2 major systems at a total cost of \$42,225.

DO LIENS EXIST AGAINST THE HISTORIC PROPERTY? () YES (X) NO

IF YES, DESCRIBE THE LIENS AND AMOUNTS: NA



(OWNER OR AUTHORIZED AGENT, AND TENANT IF APPLICABLE)

Ion Art Inc.**Quotation & Purchase Contract**

407 Radam Lane A-100
Austin, TX 78745
Phone: 512-326-9333

| Sales Rep | Job # | Date |
|-----------------|-------|------------|
| Greg Keshishian | 1553 | 2013-02-26 |

| Bill To: | Job Location: |
|--|---|
| State Theatre 719 Congress Avenue Austin, TX 78701 | 719 Congress Avenue Austin, TX 78701 |

Job Details:

| Quantity | Description | Unit Cost | Cost |
|----------|---|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | <p>Ion Art proposes to refurbish the State Theatre sign and make extensive modifications to facilitate easy maintenance in the future.</p> <p>PLAN OF ACTION/SCOPE OF WORK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scaffolding will be professionally erected on both sides of the sign. - Plywood will be laid on the roof to protect the membrane. - Supports will be added (as needed) onto the side walk to support the additional weight of the scaffold and workers. - All the letters and panels will be removed from one side of the sign to gain access. - All of the transformers will be replaced and the new transformers will be housed on the roof and on the eve. - New high voltage wire will be run via non metallic conduit from the inside of the sign to the transformers. - Electrical circuits that operate the sign will be re routed to the roof to feed the new roof top transformers. - Any damaged electrical components and porcelain housings will be repaired. - All the access panels will be remade to ensure that the sign is relatively water tight and completely animal tight. - All of the porcelain sign surfaces will be polished/cleaned and any chipped areas will be painted. - All of the screws on the exterior of the sign will be replaced with new stainless steel screws. - All of the blue neon (excluding the multiple U-shaped ones on the Western surface of the sign) will be re-made. - Any other inoperable neon will be re-made. <p>Please be advised that Ion Art is licensed in the state of Texas as an Electrical Sign Contractor and that Greg Keshishian is licensed as a Master Sign Electrician.</p> <p>Furthermore, Ion Art has Workman's Compensation and is registered as a HUB (historically underutilized business)</p> <p>Ion Art will not interfere with the day to day operations of the Theatre and will take any and all precautions to safe guard the public and all property</p> <p>Ion Art will retain vintage sign historian and restoration expert Todd Sanders with Road House Relics to oversee and approve the restoration methods.</p> <p>Replacement of Neon \$11,500 Erection of scaffolding and rental \$5,650 General field labor \$16,400 General shop labor \$7,200 New transformers and related electrical hardware \$5,500 Other related materials \$2,500</p> | \$53,625.00 | \$53,625.00 |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | Outside consulting fee by Todd Sanders \$4,875 | | |
| | Total is \$53,625 plus tax if applicable. | | |

THIS AGREEMENT IS ACCEPTED AND APPROVED BY:

State Theatre

Ion Art Inc.

By: _____

By: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

| Contract Totals: | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Sub Total | \$53,625.00 |
| Total Tax | \$0.00 |
| Total Contract | \$53,625.00 |
| Deposit Balance | \$26,812.50 |
| Final Balance | \$26,812.50 |

Please make all checks payable to: Ion Art Inc. .

This proposal may be withdrawn if not accepted within 30 days. By signing, Customer accepts Company's proposal for the job and agrees to all of the terms of the purchase contract.