

City of Austin Historic Preservation Program

**Austin City Council
October 13, 2015**

City of Austin

Historic Preservation Program

- City Historic Landmarks
- Local Historic Districts
- Demolition and relocation permits
- Demolition by Neglect
- Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation

City Historic Landmarks

- At least 50 years old.
- Maintain historic appearance.
- Have significance in at least 2 of the following:
 - Architecture
 - Historical associations
 - Community value
 - Archeology
 - Landscape Feature



Architecture



Architecture



Architecture



Architecture



Historical Associations



Historical Associations



Historical Associations



Historical Associations and Community Value



Community Value



Community Value



Landscape Feature

City Historic Landmarks

- Designated by the City Council after recommendations from the Landmark Commission and Land Use Commission.
- Require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Landmark Commission for work to the exterior or to the site, except for routine maintenance and projects eligible for administrative approval.

City Historic Landmark Property Tax Exemptions

- **Owner-occupied Residential properties:**

Eligible for an annual property tax exemption currently valued at 100% of the value of the structure and 50% of the value of the land for the City and County, and 50% of the value of the structure and 25% of the value of the land for AISD.

- **Income-producing properties:**

Eligible for an annual property tax exemption of 50% of the value of the structure and 25% of the land for the City and County and 25% of the value of the structure and 12.5% of the value of the land for AISD.

City Historic Landmark Property Tax Exemptions

- Annual application and affidavit stating why the property is in need of tax relief to encourage its preservation, per Texas Tax Code.
- Pass annual inspection by Historic Preservation Office staff.

City Historic Landmark Property Tax Exemptions

- Cap on tax exemption for owner-occupied historic landmarks:
 - For landmarks designated between 12/1/2004 and 1/1/2012 or changed ownership between 11/30/2004 and 1/1/2012:
 - Cap of the greater of \$2,000 or 50% of the ad valorem tax that the City would otherwise levy on the property.
 - For landmarks designated after 12/31/2011 or prior designated landmarks that changed ownership after 12/31/2011:
 - Cap of \$2,500.
- No cap on the exemption for income-producing properties.

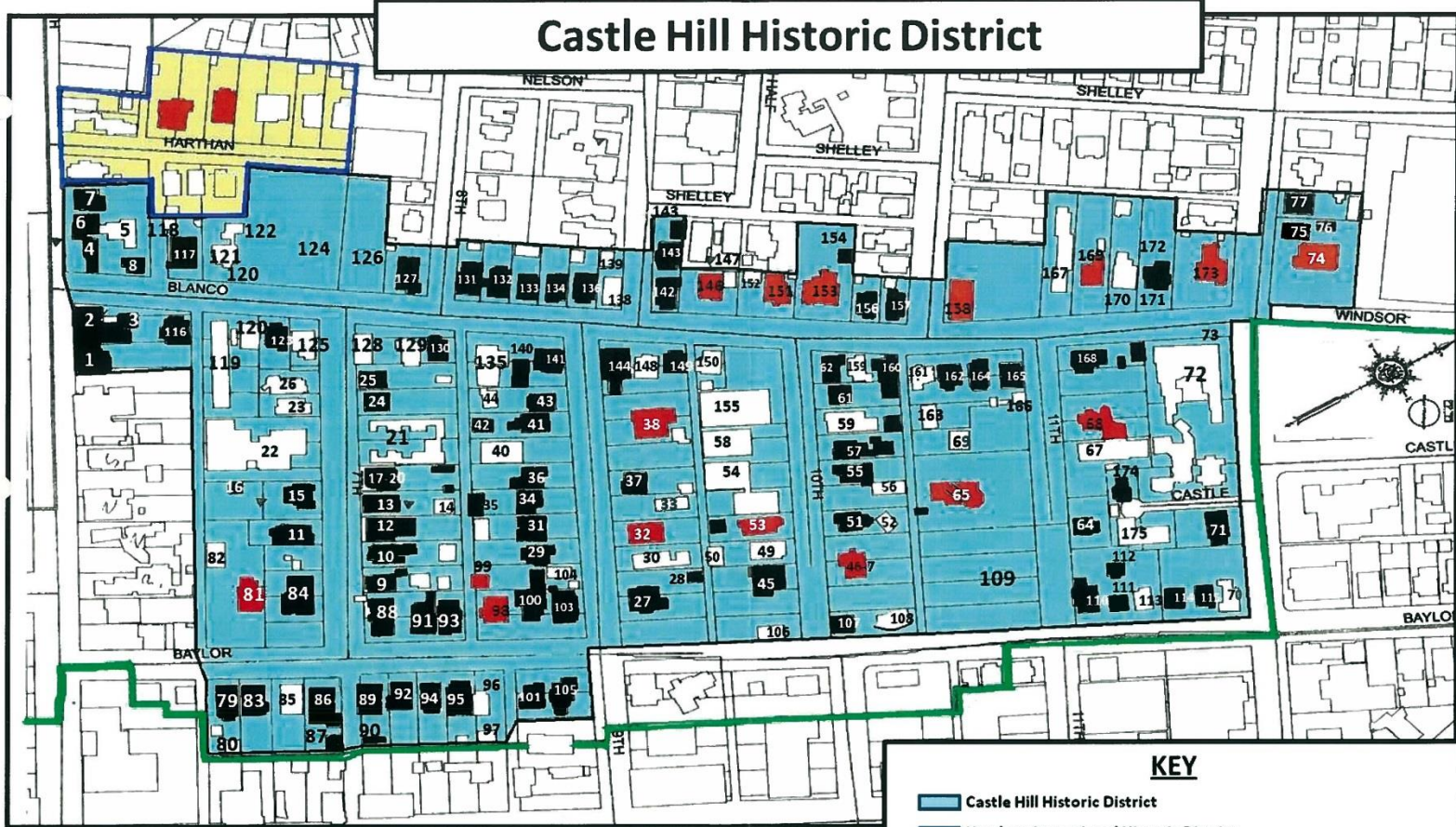
Local Historic Districts

- Collection of historically- and architecturally-united buildings and structures.
- Greater bar to demolish “contributing” structures.
- Design standards (Preservation Plan) for new construction and additions to existing contributing buildings.
- Tax incentives for rehabilitation of contributing buildings.
- 3 Local Historic Districts: Harthan Street, Castle Hill, Hyde Park.

Local Historic Districts

- At least 51% of the primary structures within the district must be contributing.
- Support of at least 51% of the property owners or the owners of 51% of the property within the district at the time it is accepted by the Historic Preservation Office.

Castle Hill Historic District



Note: Each property is labeled by number, which corresponds to the Map Key Number in Appendix C as well as the building surveys in Appendix D.



Castle Hill



Hyde Park

Local Historic Districts

- Certificate of Appropriateness for any work to exterior or site of contributing buildings.
- Historic Landmark Commission applies the Design Standards that are part of the Preservation Plan for each historic district.
- Administrative approvals are available for minor projects that comply with the Design Standards.

National Register Historic Districts

- Historic Landmark Commission reviews applications for building, demolition, and relocation permits.
- No design standards – only design guidelines – advisory.
- No protection for contributing structures other than designation as a landmark.
- 15 National Register Districts – over 4,000 structures.



Sixth Street



Old West Austin





Clarksville



West Line



Willow - Spence

Demolition and Relocation Permits

- Historic Preservation Office reviews:
 - All applications for relocation
 - All applications for total demolition of buildings over 40 years old.
 - Applications for partial demolition on buildings over 40 years old.
 - Close to 1,100 applications reviewed in 2014.

Demolition and Relocation Permits

- Historic Landmark Commission actions:
 - Release the permit
 - Initiate a historic zoning case
- If the HLC initiates a historic zoning case, the case returns to the Commission (generally the next month) for a recommendation.
- Recommendation for historic zoning over an owner's objection requires a 2/3 super-majority of the Commission.

Historic Landmark Commission Process

- Cases recommended by the HLC for historic zoning proceed to the Land Use Commission and to Council.
- Owner-opposition historic zoning cases at Council require a super-majority to change the zoning.

Demolition by Neglect



Demolition by Neglect

- Process to work with owners of historically-significant properties to encourage repair rather than demolition.
- Devise a plan for stabilizing and preserving the building with a timeline for completion.
- Owners may face fines if they fail to live up to their end of the agreement.

Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation

- 2015 study by University of Texas and Rutgers University shows:
 - Preservation activities in Texas generate more than **\$4.6 billion** of State gross domestic product and support more than **79,000 jobs**.
 - Net tax revenue for state and local governments in Texas was over **\$290 million**.
 - Private property owners invest almost **\$741 million** annually in rehabilitation of designated historic buildings.

Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation

- Historic landmark tax exemptions in Austin total approximately \$1.45 million (2014).
- .0017% of the city's general fund.

Historic Preservation Office

- Steve Sadowsky, Historic Preservation Officer
- Beth Johnson, Deputy Historic Preservation Officer
- Kalan Contreras, Historic Preservation Planner and Administrative Assistant