

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**DEMOLITION AND RELOCATION PERMITS**  
**MAY 24, 2021**  
**SP-2021-065153; GF-2021-068010**  
**FIRE STATION #3**  
**201 W. 30<sup>TH</sup> ST.**

## **PROPOSAL**

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Partially demolish a 1956 fire station and construct a new apparatus bay.

## **PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**

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- 1) Demolish and replace the apparatus bay due to structural inadequacy.
- 2) Perform structural repairs to the remainder of the building.

The weight of current fire trucks exceeds the design load of the suspended floor slab in the apparatus bay. Engineering studies have indicated that continuing to use the bay was overstressing the slab and, concerningly, that a misalignment of a truck could result in structural failure. As a result, the Austin Fire Department must currently park the vehicles outside. This structural issue has been deemed nonrepairable. Prior to a decision to replace the apparatus bay, the project team explored stabilization of the floor slab. A geotechnical report indicated that filling the cavity under the suspended slab with concrete would be inadvisable due to the shrink/swell potential of the soil paired moisture from the adjacent floodplain.

The new apparatus bay will use brick of a similar but slightly darker color than the original and will maintain a strong horizontal emphasis at the roofline. The height and operation of the vehicle doors will not match the historic configuration based on modern functional requirements; rather than paired overhead doors, a taller, single door will open to the side.

## **ARCHITECTURE**

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Fire Station #3 has a utilitarian, modern design. It consists of two flat-roofed, rectangular volumes: a taller apparatus bay with two large overhead doors, and a longer and lower wing. Clad in brick, the building has a simple horizontal metal band at the parapet as the only articulation. The entry is marked by a metal canopy at the corner of the wing and apparatus bay. Windows have been replaced with commercial aluminum units.

## **RESEARCH**

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Fire Station #3 at 201 W. 30<sup>th</sup> St. opened on February 1, 1957. Per the Austin Fire Department Historical Highlights timeline at [austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/AFD\\_History\\_Final.pdf](https://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/AFD_History_Final.pdf), “the new station cost an estimated \$66,000. Station 3 replaced the old fire hall at 3002 Guadalupe St. that was built in 1906 and housed North Austin Hose Co. No. 6.” The station was designed by architect Roy L. Thomas and built by the Austin Construction Company.

The fire station was identified as eligible for historic landmark designation on the basis of its architecture and historical associations in the *Historic Building Survey Report for North Central Austin: West Campus, North University, Heritage, Bryker Woods, and North Hyde Park*, HHM & Associates, Inc., January 2021, accessible at [austintexas.gov/page/historic-survey](https://austintexas.gov/page/historic-survey). The survey form connects the fire station with broader historical trends and refers to Section 5.1.5.6: Postwar Infrastructure and Public Expansion. In illustrating expanded infrastructure investments in response to population growth, the text specifically cites healthcare and transportation projects, including expansion of the Austin State Hospital and medical office buildings within the survey area.

Fire Station #3 was one of multiple midcentury fire stations built across the city after a lull in fire station construction during World War II and in response to subsequent population growth. The Austin Fire Department Historical Highlights lists the following fire stations constructed during this period:

|      |                  |                             |
|------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1949 | Fire Station #11 | 1605 Kinney Ave.            |
| 1949 | Fire Station #12 | 2109 Hancock Dr.            |
| 1952 | Fire Station #14 | 4305 Airport Blvd.          |
| 1953 | Fire Station #15 | 829 Airport Blvd.           |
| 1957 | Fire Station #3  | 201 W. 30 <sup>th</sup> St. |

|      |                  |                      |
|------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1957 | Fire Station #16 | 7000 Reese Ln.       |
| 1965 | Fire Station #18 | 6311 Berkman Dr.     |
| 1967 | Fire Station #19 | 5211 Balcones Dr.    |
| 1969 | Fire Station #5  | 1201 Webberville Rd. |
| 1972 | Fire Station #8  | 8989 Research Blvd.  |

Further analysis of the significance and integrity of these midcentury stations, as compared with Fire Station #3, has not been performed at this time.

Roy L. Thomas practiced architecture in Austin between 1911 and his death in 1968. By the 1930s, his practice shifted from primarily residential designs to civic and office buildings, and he worked as a fee architect for the Federal Housing Administration. He is best known for the design of two landmark buildings: the Stephen F. Austin Hotel (1924, C14H-1998-0006, 701 Congress Ave.) and the Herbert and Alice Bohn House (1938, C14H-2006-0021, 1301 W. 29<sup>th</sup> St.).

## STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

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The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and are used to evaluate projects at potential historic landmarks. The following standards apply to the proposed project:

*1) A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.*

Modern fire trucks are heavier than their midcentury counterparts. The floor slab at the apparatus bay is insufficient to support the trucks currently in use, and misalignment of a truck could result in structural failure. This has required the Austin Fire Department to park vehicles outside, which is not a desirable or sustainable situation. Replacement of the apparatus bay will allow the building to continue in service as a fully functioning fire station.

*2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

*5) Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

*6) Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards do not support wholesale replacement of a major portion of a historic building, regardless of the rationale or necessity.

*3) Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

*9) New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

The project approach is to treat the replacement apparatus bay as a compatible, modern addition to the building, rather than to reconstruct the portion of the building deemed beyond repair. By this metric, the project is successful. This approach allows the new construction to be a product of its time and avoids creating a false sense of historical development. The replacement apparatus bay has similar setback, massing, size, and materials to the existing apparatus bay. Its contemporary design is differentiated yet compatible with the historic building.

## STAFF COMMENTS

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### *Designation Criteria—Historic Landmark*

- 1) The building is more than 50 years old.
- 2) The building retains moderate integrity.
- 3) Properties must meet two criteria for landmark designation (LDC §25-2-352). Staff has evaluated the property and determined it appears to meet two criteria; however, further analysis of the significance and integrity of Fire Station #3 in comparison with other midcentury fire stations would be beneficial:

- a. *Architecture*. The building is a good example of a midcentury fire station, designed by architect Roy L. Thomas.
- b. *Historical association*. A recent historic resource survey recommends the fire station as eligible for its association with postwar infrastructure expansion.
- c. *Archaeology*. The property was not evaluated for its potential to yield significant data concerning the human history or prehistory of the region.
- d. *Community value*. The property does not possess a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, the neighborhood, or a particular demographic group.
- e. *Landscape feature*. The property is not a significant natural or designed landscape with artistic, aesthetic, cultural, or historical value to the city.

#### **COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

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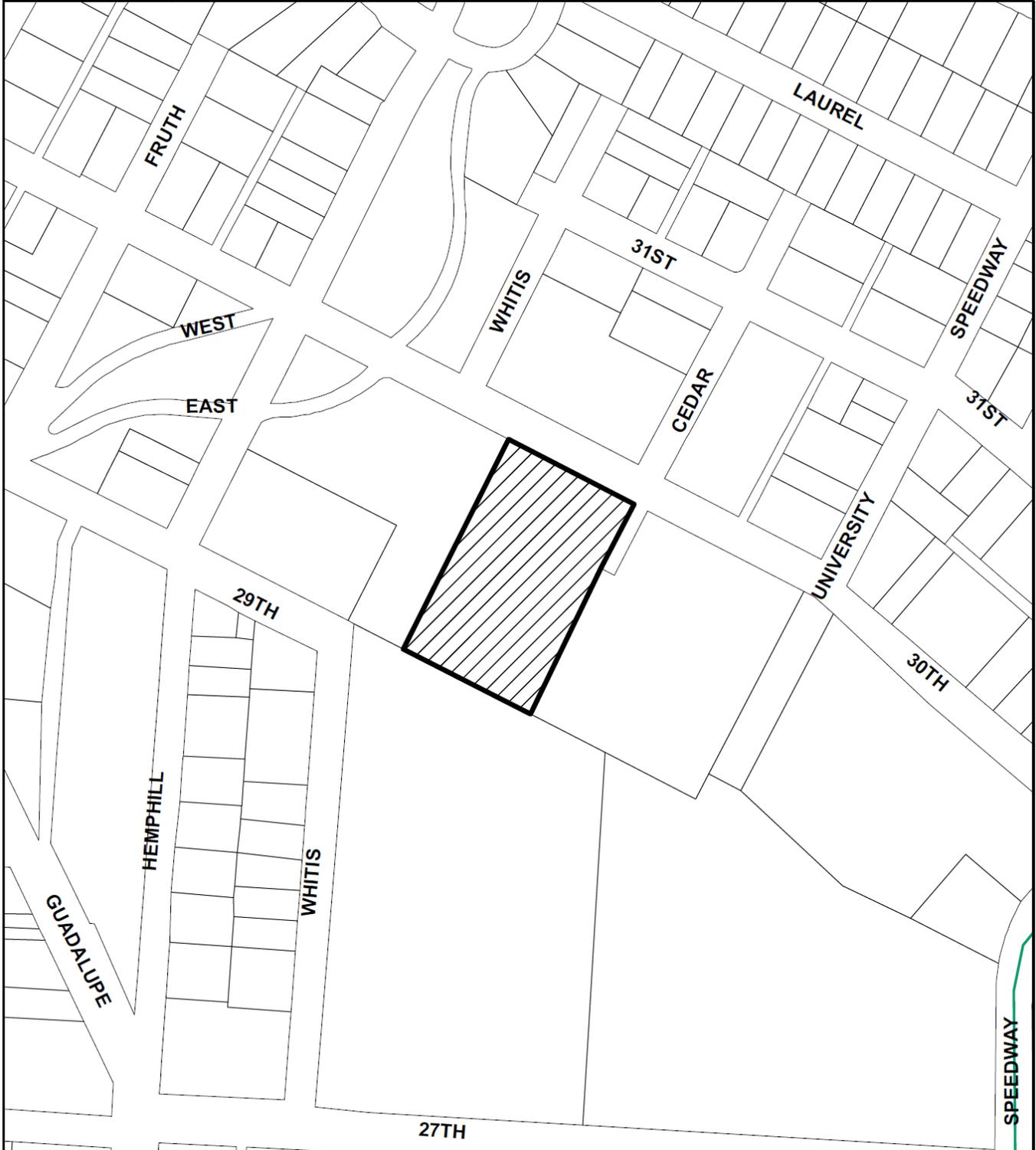
On April 12, 2021, members of the Architectural Review Committee meeting asked about alternatives to demolition and replacement of the apparatus bay. Committee members asked whether it would be possible to modify the existing apparatus bay to meet modern structural and functional requirements. A suggested alternative was to construct an addition rather than replacing the bay in place; the architect indicated there is not adequate developable land due to the width of the site and adjacent 100-year floodplain. While the committee found the design for new construction to be in keeping with the original character, they indicated it would be difficult to move forward with landmark designation after removing such a prominent and significant element of the building.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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Release the permit upon completion of a City of Austin Documentation Package.

LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

**NOTIFICATIONS**

CASE#: GF 21-068010  
LOCATION: 201 W 30TH STREET



1" = 208'

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

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PROPERTY INFORMATION

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*Photos*



*Historic image of Fire Station #3, Austin History Center*



*Source: Applicant, 2021*

## LEGAL NOTICES

### ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed proposals addressed to the City of Austin for the construction of a building and mechanical work for Fire Station Number 3 in the City of Austin, in accordance with the plans and specifications of Roy L. Thomas, Architect, will be received at the office of the Department of Public Works until 10:00 a.m., Friday, August 3, 1956, and then publicly opened and read. Any bid received after closing time will be returned unopened.

Copies of the plans and specifications and other proposal contract documents may be obtained from the office of Roy L. Thomas, Architect, at 2812 Hemphill Park, Austin, Texas, upon deposit as follows: General Plans — \$25.00, Mechanical Plans — \$15.00. Such deposits will be returned upon receipt of the plans and specifications in good condition within five (5) days of date of opening bids.

Each bid must be accompanied by a Cashier's check or a certified check payable to the order of the City of Austin, or an acceptable proposal bond, of an amount not less than five (5) per cent of the total bid as a guarantee that the bidder will enter into the contract and execute bond in the forms provided within ten (10) days after notice of award of contract to him.

A performance bond in an amount of one hundred per cent (100%) of the contract price will be required.

The City of Austin reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to waive informalities.

Attention is called to the fact that not less than the minimum wage rates fixed by the City of Austin, Austin, Texas, must be paid on this project. In general, these wage rates are as follows:

For skilled workers \$1.30 to \$3.50 per hour.

For semi-skilled workers 0.90 to \$1.30 per hour.

For unskilled workers 0.85 per hour.

Copies of the plans and specifications, instructions and other proposal contract documents for the work are on file in the office of the Director of Public Works of the City of Austin, and are open for public inspection.

THE CITY OF AUSTIN  
By: W. T. WILLIAMS JR.  
City Manager

**FROM DEATH**

**Mom Says  
5 Firemen  
Saved Son**

A grateful mother has credited firemen with saving the life of her 23-month-old son who choked on a piece of meat while eating.

Mrs. Eulin Ray Carter, 1707 Alegria, said her son, Stephan Ray Carter, had turned blue and was almost limp from lack of oxygen when firemen arrived at the scene and revived him with artificial respiration and a resuscitator.

Manning the resuscitator were District Chief Victor E. Tiemann and William N. Holden from Fire Station No. 3 at 201 West 30th Street. Captain Alvin Steussy, Russell K. Law and Raymond Culp from Engine Company 16 at Reese and Grover aided in the life-saving efforts.

*In an Emergency*

**Friends of Daddy's  
Lend Hand With Dog**

FONTANA, Calif. (UPI)—When Tia Trickett, 13, telephoned fire station No. 3, Wednesday and with some urgency asked to speak to her father, the dispatcher told her Kenneth Trickett was fighting a grass fire.

The dispatcher asked the girl if something was wrong.

"Mitzi is choking on a bone" Tia cried.

The dispatcher reassured the girl, sent a resuscitator crew to the Trickett home and alerted an ambulance to stand by if needed. Other firemen went to the brush fire and rushed Trickett home.

When the emergency unit reached the front of the Trickett

house, two specially trained firemen loaded with lifesaving equipment dashed inside.

Tia seemed somewhat surprised to see someone other than her father.

"Where is Mitzi?" asked one of the firemen.

"She's lying on the floor," Tia replied, leading the firemen to the family dog.

"I have never used this equipment on a dog before," said one of the firemen, "but I don't see why it wouldn't work."

Minutes later, with a bone between his fingers, the fireman announced to Tia and her sisters, Teri, 12, and Kim, 7, that Mitzi would be all right.

The Austin Statesman, 5/20/1960 and The Austin Statesman, 7/29/1965

Permits

City of Austin 201 West 30th St

64 10 4

Fruth Addn

Masonry Fire Station

64621 8-28-56 67377.00

Austin Construction Co 9

Building permit, 1956

