

**From:** [Rick Hardin](#)  
**To:** [Contreras, Kalan](#)  
**Cc:** [Rivera, Andrew](#); [Michael Levy](#); [Harden, Joi](#); [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: C14-H-2022-0073 - Westgate Tower - Planning Commission August 23, 2022  
**Date:** Thursday, August 18, 2022 9:32:33 AM

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Hello Ms. Contreras,

Thank you for this information and attachment listing “landmarks” by districts. This is most helpful.

I am hopeful that before the next scheduled hearing for Westgate Tower historic zoning designation before Planning Commission, that you or City staff will be able to independently confirm the maximum total tax exemption benefits available to Westgate Tower AND all of the individual condo owners were it to be zoned historic, and those exemptions hypothetically applied for and granted in year 2022.

I do not think that an applicant (in a position of conflict and inexperienced) should be relied upon for that calculation. If City staff has not performed this calculation itself, I will likely ask for a postponement until staff is able to independently verify the potential cost to the taxpayers in the participating taxing authorities.

You indicate below that the information requested in my **question #4**, you have requested from TCAD. Please let me know when that information is made available, I would request a copy of that information. I am certain the total financial cost of this program is relevant not just for Planning Commissioners, but for you and staff, City Council, and the public at large. It is newsworthy. Historic tax exemptions are sizeable sums of tax money diverted into this single program, millions annually and in perpetuity.

When the ordinances governing City historic landmarking were written, and subsequently revised, no one anticipated nor foresaw the prospect of granting historic tax exemptions to hundreds of condominium owners in exclusive restricted access high-rise towers. I believe this would surprise and shock many.

I would urge staff to examine this flaw and recommend that the ordinances be revisited and revised to **not allow individual condominium owners** to make application nor to receive historic tax exemptions for those individual condos. I can think of **no public benefit, none**, from this misuse and waste of tax money that could be better used for public health by Travis Central Health, or public education for ACC and AISD, or affordable housing or housing the homeless for Travis County and the City of Austin.

**This ordinance loophole could be easily eliminated by ordinance amendment through City staff initiative, City legal drafting, and City Council action approval, prior to a final zoning hearing for this application C14-H-2022-0073. There really is no harm to move forward thoughtfully here, for the benefit of the welfare of the Historic Program, the public trust in that program, and protection and beneficial use of our tax money.**

Respectfully,  
Richard Hardin

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**From:** Contreras, Kalan <Kalan.Contreras@austintexas.gov>

**Sent:** Thursday, August 18, 2022 8:52 AM

**To:** Rick Hardin <[REDACTED]>

**Cc:** Rivera, Andrew <Andrew.Rivera@austintexas.gov>; Michael Levy <[REDACTED]>

Harden, Joi <Joi.Harden@austintexas.gov>

**Subject:** RE: C14-H-2022-0073 - Westgate Tower - Planning Commission August 23, 2022

Hello, Mr. Hardin,

We have not yet heard back from TCAD, though I believe the property owner is working on providing those calculations. If possible, we will provide this information as backup material for posting on the Planning Commission site prior to the hearing.

**1.How many City designated Historic Landmarks are there today in the City of Austin? In Travis County?** There are a total of 660 landmarks, including each individually listed Moonlight Tower.

**2.How many City designated Historic Landmarks are there today outside the City of Austin in Travis County? If known please provide.** There are no buildings designated per City code outside the City of Austin limits. However, there is a designated steam locomotive that appears to have been moved to Williamson County at some point in the late '90s.

**3.Are there any City designated Historic Landmarks in the municipalities of Rollingwood, Westlake, or Manor (each municipality being situated within Travis County)? If known please provide.** See above.

**4.What is the total dollar amount of all historic tax exemptions for all City of Austin approved Historic Landmarks, which have been given to owners of City designated Historic Landmarks in calendar Year 2022? If known please provide. What are these total tax exemption amounts as broken down between each participating taxing entity (ACC, Travis Central Health, City of Austin, Travis County, AISD)? If known please provide.** We do not currently have access to total amounts, but have requested this information from TCAD. Taxing percentages are as follows:

Historic-Owner Occupied Exemptions		
Rebates	Land	Improvements
AISD	25%	50%
COA	50%	100%
TC	100%	100%
TC Health	100%	100%
ACC	0%	0%
Historic-Non-Owner Occupied Exemptions		
Rebates	Land	Improvements
AISD	12.5%	25%
COA	25%	50%
TC	25%	50%
TC Health	25%	50%

ACC	0%	0%
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**5. Does the City of Austin Historic Landmark Commission include any commissioners which were appointed specifically by ACC, Travis Central Health, Travis County, AISD, Rollingwood, Manor, or Westlake? If known please detail.** Historic Landmark Commissioners are appointed by City of Austin Councilmembers.

**6. Is there a map that City staff has prepared or possesses which depicts the location of all City designated Historic Landmarks to date? If so, are the City Council precincts shown on that map? If such a map graphic exists, can it be found online or emailed?** An interactive map showing historic properties is located on our website (<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/historic-preservation>). Please find the direct link here: <https://austin.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=5251cd8ad3534754ad9a3d6a222c68ec>. Council precincts are not currently included, but I am happy to look into adding them to the basemap. I have also attached a map showing counts of landmarks per district and can provide a similar map with location points if needed.

**Kalan Contreras**

MSPH | Senior Planner | Historic Preservation Office  
Planning and Zoning Department  
512.974.2727 | [kalan.contreras@austintexas.gov](mailto:kalan.contreras@austintexas.gov)

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**PER CITY ORDINANCE:** All individuals scheduling or accepting a meeting invitation with a City Official are requested to provide responses to the questions at the following link: <https://bit.ly/HPDLobbyingForm>

Please note that all information provided is subject to public disclosure. For more information please visit: [City of Austin Ordinance 2016-0922-005](#) | [City Clerk's website](#) | [City Clerk's FAQs](#)

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**From:** Rick Hardin [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 17, 2022 3:22 PM  
**To:** Contreras, Kalan <[Kalan.Contreras@austintexas.gov](mailto:Kalan.Contreras@austintexas.gov)>  
**Cc:** Rivera, Andrew <[Andrew.Rivera@austintexas.gov](mailto:Andrew.Rivera@austintexas.gov)>; Michael Levy [REDACTED]  
Harden, Joi <[Joi.Harden@austintexas.gov](mailto:Joi.Harden@austintexas.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: C14-H-2022-0073 - Westgate Tower - Planning Commission August 23, 2022

\*\*\* External Email - Exercise Caution \*\*\*

RE: Case C14-H-2022-0073 - Westgate Tower – Historic Tax Exemptions

Hello Ms. Contreras,

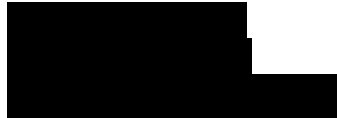
This email is to check back with you to determine whether you have received any information from TCAD as per your request(s) in order to be able to calculate the potential maximum financial impact if the Westgate Tower itself (grounds, building exterior and common areas), as well as each and every individual condominium owner, if every condo owner were to apply for, and receive historic landmark tax exemptions from each of the participating governmental entities, in year 2022 (or 2023 if that TCAD data is available). *If so could you share that information with me prior to the upcoming hearing?*

Separately, could you kindly provide answers to the following questions:

1. How many City designated Historic Landmarks are there today in the City of Austin? In Travis County? *If known please provide.*
2. How many City designated Historic Landmarks are there today outside the City of Austin in Travis County? *If known please provide.*
3. Are there any City designated Historic Landmarks in the municipalities of Rollingwood, Westlake, or Manor (each municipality being situated within Travis County)? *If known please provide.*
4. What is the total dollar amount of all historic tax exemptions for all City of Austin approved Historic Landmarks, which have been given to owners of City designated Historic Landmarks in calendar Year 2022? *If known please provide.* What are these total tax exemption amounts as broken down between each participating taxing entity (ACC, Travis Central Health, City of Austin, Travis County, AISD)? *If known please provide.*
5. Does the City of Austin Historic Landmark Commission include any commissioners which were appointed specifically by ACC, Travis Central Health, Travis County, AISD, Rollingwood, Manor, or Westlake? *If known please detail.*
6. Is there a map that City staff has prepared or possesses which depicts the location of all City designated Historic Landmarks to date? If so, are the City Council precincts shown on that map? *If such a map graphic exists, can it be found online or emailed?*

Respectfully,

Richard G. Hardin



**Mailing Address:**

P.O. Box 5628  
Austin, TX 78763-5628

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