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December 11, 2023

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness for Bartholomew-Robinson Buildign (1415 Lavaca Street)

Dear Chair Heimsath, Vice Chair Featherston, and Members of the Historic Landmark Commission,

[Preservation Austin](#) exists to empower Austinites to shape a more inclusive, resilient, and meaningful community culture through preservation. We write to you today in support of the Certificate of Appropriateness application for the Bartholomew-Robinson Building at 1415 Lavaca Street. Our support comes as follow up to [a letter](#) previously shared with this commission in 2020 in opposition to proposed work on the building at that time.

The owner's Certificate of Appropriateness application respects the historic integrity of this building, which predates our Capitol. The design will retain all of the building's exterior walls as well as even older stone walls and a fireplace within. Furthermore, its adaptive reuse by the State Bar of Texas will insure its continued use and care.

We appreciate that the needs of property owners change over time and understand that new buildings will be constructed adjacent to historic buildings in Austin's urban downtown. With respect to the remainder of this small site, the State Bar's architects have designed the adjacent 4-story conference and education center to be sensitive to and to respect the Bartholomew-Robinson Building. Preservation Austin recognizes that this portion of the site, which for many years has been used as a parking area, lost its historical integrity decades ago. It is noteworthy that this new building will help finance both the restoration of the Bartholomew-Robinson Building and provide a source of ongoing funding for its care and maintenance.

The Bartholomew-Robinson Building will continue to tell Austin's history under the State Bar of Texas's stewardship. We respectfully request your approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness as submitted.

Thank you for your service to the community.

Sincerely,

Melissa Barry, President