

December 12, 2025

City of Austin Planning Commission
City of Austin, City Hall Council Chamber
301 W Second Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Support for Block 16 & 18 Rezone on E. 11th Street

Dear Austin Planning Chair & Commissioners,

I am writing in support of the Block 16 & 18 development project.

As Board President of the Texas Music Museum, located in the Marvin Griffin Building at 1009 E. 11th Street, I want to express our full support for the proposed affordable housing project across the street on Block 16 and the Arts and Music Cultural Center on block 18. The Texas Music Museum has been operating for 42 years, researching, archiving, collecting, and presenting detailed exhibits and programs that preserve and honor the legacy of amazing African American musicians from East Austin. Our mission is deeply rooted in preserving East Austin's history and culture through community-centered projects that help reduce displacement and gentrification.

We are hopeful that this project will bring more housing options for our community, including many East Austin musicians who would likely qualify for affordable units. We also support the inclusion of housing for Huston-Tillotson University students. The Texas Music Museum works closely with Huston-Tillotson, hiring archival interns and docents from this important institution who provide exceptional museum tours for visitors from all over the world , across Texas and the US. We would be pleased to see affordable housing on E 11th St. that further strengthens this anchor of the African American Cultural Heritage District Corridor.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting equitable development in East Austin.

Sincerely,
Clay Shorkey, PhD
Board President, Texas Music Museum
1009 E 11th St., Austin, Texas

December 16, 2025
City of Austin Planning Commission
City Hall Council Chamber
301 W. Second Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Support for Block 16 Rezone on E. 11th Street

Dear Planning Chair and Commissioners,

I'm writing as a long-time East Austin resident who understands both the history of this neighborhood and the zoning changes being proposed for Block 16. I want to express my strong support for this rezoning because I truly believe it gives us a real opportunity to welcome more neighbors, bring back legacy families, and continue the cultural story that has shaped this part of the city for generations.

Why This Zoning Change Matters

The tiered height step backs make sense for this area—they respect the character of Juniper Street while still allowing us to add the kind of housing we've been needing for years. It's a thoughtful update that balances compatibility with the flexibility required to build more homes, especially affordable ones. As someone who watches zoning decisions closely, this feels like a smart, community-minded change.

Affordable Homes for the People Who Built This Community

Everyone in East Austin knows how much housing costs have pushed people out. Seeing a plan that can bring 100–130 new units, many affordable to families earning 80% AMI and below, gives me real hope. Multi-bedroom units, especially, mean long-time residents who had to leave might finally have a pathway back. That's the kind of growth that helps repair displacement, not worsen it.

Protecting and Uplifting Our Cultural Heritage

This block sits in the heart of the African American Cultural Heritage District, a place where so much of East Austin's history is still alive in our music, our food, our businesses, and the stories passed down through generations. This project follows through on the vision the community has held for decades: a mixed-use, culturally rooted space that supports local businesses, celebrates our heritage, and keeps this district thriving.

A Chance to Grow Without Losing Who We Are

For many of us who know the history here, both the beauty and the pain, this project represents a chance to grow in a way that honors our community instead of erasing it. Approving this rezoning would help create a future where new neighbors and returning legacy residents can live side by side, strengthening the diversity that has always made East Austin special.

I hope you'll support the rezoning for Block 16. It's an important step toward building housing we desperately need while staying true to the roots of this neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Barbara Spears-Corbett
OLCAA, Inc.
Robertson Hill