

Sturgill, Hunter

From: Amanda Bejarano [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 9:57 AM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Barton Springs Bridge

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External Email - Exercise Caution

To whom it may concern;

My family and I urge you to consider preserving history and nature of our beloved Barton Springs Bridge. Do not destroy the bridge.

Please consider doing repairs and maintenance on this beautiful historical bridge rather than destroying it.

Thank you!
The Bejarano Family

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Tanya Payne [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 4:59 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Please vote no on the destruction and replacement of the Barton Springs Bridge

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Dear Historic Preservation Commission,

Thank you for reviewing the Barton Springs Bridge destruction and replacement. This has been a project that has had me scratching my head for some time now. There is so much about this project that is confusing that I won't be able to get to them all, but here's a few for you.

- Barton Springs Rd was brought down to one lane each way. Speak very slowly to me as you explain why we will have a four lane bridge with a two lane road.
- We have gone to great lengths (the Pfluger pedestrian bridge, for example) to save other bridges that don't even serve as the entrance to a historic and important park. Why not this one?
- Destroying and replacing the bridge is really expensive - way more expensive than even predicted! Why on earth is the city looking to spend a huge amount of money here rather than on the priorities they becomone being left behind by prop Q?
- And don't forget all the environmental impact to that very sensitive area!

Please vote no on the Barton Springs Bridge destruction and replacement. Thank you for your service to Austin.

Sincerely,
Tanya Payne

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Drew Zerdecki [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 5:01 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Formal Opposition and Request for Postponement | Case HR 2025-145729
Attachments: 2025-01-27 ZNA Resolution Opposing the Replacement of the Barton Springs Bridge.pdf

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Dear Mr. Sturgill and Members of the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC):

My name is Drew Zerdecki, and I am the Vice President of Zoning for the Zilker Neighborhood Association (ZNA). Please accept this letter as our formal opposition to the building permit application for Case HR 2025-145729 regarding the replacement of the Barton Springs Bridge.

On January 27, 2025, the membership of the ZNA voted to oppose the demolition and replacement of the historic Zilker Park bridge. Attached is a copy of the resolution. The historic Zilker Park bridge, built in the 1920s and expanded in the 1940s, is a critical contributing feature of the National Register of Historic Places' Zilker Park Historic District. We urge the City Council to protect and preserve this bridge indefinitely and to reverse the decision to replace it with a standard highway-style bridge.

Since our 2025 resolution, new data has further solidified our opposition:

- **Escalating Costs:** The estimated cost for a replacement bridge has increased from approximately \$23 million originally cited by City consultants to \$54.5 million.
- **Funding Gap:** While the city has secured a \$32 million federal grant, the total project cost of \$54.5 million leaves a significant unfunded gap of approximately \$14.5 million. Moreover, as discussed below, the estimated project cost does not include necessary remediations to the surrounding landscape of the project.
- **Viable Alternatives:** Structural engineer Tom Kam, who has inspected the bridge, determined that the structure can be maintained and operated indefinitely. He noted that repairing the existing structure would be far less costly than the massive expense of removal and replacement. Additionally, a parallel bike/pedestrian bridge that would improve traffic flow at a fraction of the cost while avoiding damage to unique aquatic and historic resources
- **Environmental and Cultural Damage:** Demolition would directly disturb the State-protected Vara Daniel archeological site and cause substantial damage to Barton Creek and its riparian habitats.

We ask that action by the HLC be postponed to allow for proper public notice and awareness. The notice for this proposal was very short, and a postponement is necessary so that more residents can be informed and heard.

Furthermore, a postponement is required because the current plans fail to meet the City's own design standards regarding the fragile cliffs at the corner of Azie Morton and Barton Springs Road. According to the staff presentation for the project, the first design standard that must be met with respect to the proposed project is:

1. Vegetation, topography, and landscaping
 - 1.1 Do not grade, fill, or excavate unless it is to solve a drainage or flooding problem.
 - 1.2 Retain permanent landscape features that define the character of the property and the district. Protect them when constructing new buildings or additions.

The City has not even considered the potential for catastrophic damage to these cliffs, which are a defining landscape feature for the entire park. Instead, the staff report erroneously claims that *"no additional character-defining landscape features appear to be affected at this phase of the project."* Because the project risks the collapse of these cliffs into the creek, potentially taking the Umlauf Studio with them, the plans are in direct violation of the stated preservation standards.

Specific Requests

We specifically request that the HLC postpone action until the next meeting to allow for further public notice and input. Additionally, we ask the HLC to recommend that an updated cost/benefit analysis be conducted on the "save versus destroy" option. This analysis should include:

- Total out-of-pocket project dollars.
- Direct consideration of harm to Zilker Park and Barton Creek.
- Projected traffic delays and mobility impacts during a prolonged demolition and reconstruction period.

Please confirm receipt of this email and ensure that these comments are included in the official record for the public hearing on February 4, 2026.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Drew Zerdecki

Vice President of Zoning, Zilker Neighborhood Association

512.415.7727

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Mark May [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 6:46 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Oppose Barton Springs Rd bridge

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Hello Preservation Committee-

This is Mark May, I live in D5.

I am writing you today to oppose the destruction and replacement of the Barton Springs Rd Bridge. This is a project that is a waste of tax payer money, degrades the historical character of our City and will only encourage more automotive cut through traffic in Zilker Park.

I am also a daily cycling commuter and frequently use Barton Springs Rd and cross the present bridge regularly. I believe the present bike lanes are more than adequate, and there is a pedestrian bridge literally yards away as an alternative option.

Please choose one of the less expensive options to just repair the present bridge, save us taxpayers money and maintain the character of Austin important historical places.

I appreciate your service to the City!

Mark

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Alex Pankow [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 6:48 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Zilker Bridge

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External Email - Exercise Caution

Hello,

I have work tomorrow so I will not be able to attend the meeting. While I value Austin's past, our infrastructure is not ready for the next generation. We must invest in infrastructure improvements going forward. Please rebuild the bridge to modern standards.

Alex Pankow
2009 Meadowridge Dr, Austin, TX 78704

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Natasha Mulko Scheufele [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 7:31 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Barton Springs Bridge

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To whom it may concern concern:

Please consider repairing the Barton springs bridge. My family and I urge you to consider preserving history and nature. Do not destroy the bridge.

Thank you!
Natasha Scheufele

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Sophia DeLoretto-Chudy [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 7:49 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Can we please just stop with this already?

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The bridge doesn't need to be replaced. It's so expensive to replace it. We can repair and support it for a fraction of the cost. People in this city are already so pissed off about spending on construction in this city. I don't even want to go into the environmental damages because you already know this.

Please, let's move on.

Sophia DeLoretto-Chudy
Zilker Resident

--



Sophia DeLoretto-Chudy (*she/her/ella*)
Texas Voter Project
[REDACTED]

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Jim Karabaic [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 8:12 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Barton Springs Bridge

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To the Historic Landmark Commission,

As a long - time Austin resident who lives near the bridge, I frequently drive the roads near this iconic landmark.

I feel that it would be best to preserve the existing bridge, and to make minor upgrades as needed. The main concern that I have personally experienced is that when I am travelling north on Azie Morton road and reach its end point (and its intersection with Barton Springs Road), it is difficult to turn right because of a total 'lack of visibility' to the West. You cannot see oncoming traffic (to your left) when stopped at this light. I hope that any safety upgrades or cosmetic improvements to the bridge would include increasing the visibility at that intersection.

I would be in favor of only minimal upgrades - in order to save money and to prevent any damage to the creek ecosystem due to heavy construction.

Also, the last thing we need in this neighborhood is MORE big construction that will interfere with traffic flow.

I think the money would be much better spent at this time on 're - paving the lanes on South Lamar blvd, especially the right hand northbound lanes just south of Oltorf. These lanes are full of potholes and bumps and are becoming extremely bumpy and dangerous to drive over.

Thank you for the chance to give input, James K.

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Nina Heller [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 8:51 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Zilker Historical Bridge

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Dear Members of the Austin City Council,

I have been an Austin resident for 37 years, I live on Barton Springs Road, and I am a member of the Zilker Neighborhood Association. I am writing to urge you to reconsider the decision to demolish and replace the historic Zilker Park Bridge.

Built in the 1920s and expanded in the 1940s, the bridge is a contributing feature of the Zilker Park Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Replacing it with a standard highway-style bridge would permanently damage the historic and environmental character of one of Austin's most important public spaces.

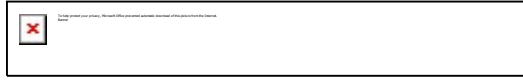
Since ZNA's 2025 resolution, new information makes the case for preservation even stronger. The estimated replacement cost has risen to \$54.5 million, leaving a significant funding gap even after federal grants. Structural engineer Tom Kam, who inspected the bridge, has confirmed it can be maintained and operated indefinitely at far less cost than demolition and replacement. In addition, removal would disturb the State-protected Vara Daniel archeological site and harm Barton Creek and its riparian habitat.

As someone who lives on Barton Springs and experiences this area daily, I believe as representatives of Austin, you can and should do better. Rehabilitation of the existing bridge, combined with a separate bike and pedestrian bridge, would improve safety and traffic flow while protecting our historic, environmental, and cultural resources.

I respectfully ask the City Council to prioritize long-term stewardship over short-term decisions and to preserve the Zilker Park Bridge for future generations.

Sincerely,
A 37-year Austin resident
Member, Zilker Neighborhood Association

NINA ROWAN HELLER



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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Barbara LAFOLLETTE [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 9:05 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Barton Springs Bridge

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To Whom It May Concern:

I believe it is fiscally irresponsible to replace the Zilker Bridge instead of simply repairing what exists. It can and should be repaired and retain the charm of what makes Austin a place people want to live, work and thrive. I do believe a parallel pedi/bike bridge and repairs to the existing bridge could be built for a fraction of the both monetary and environmental cost a new bridge would bring. Given how the council is having trouble living within their means, I think here is a great place to start doing just that. This is plain irresponsible governance.

Sincerely,

Barb LaFollette

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Worthy LaFollette [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 9:57 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Zilker Park Bridge - Demolition and Replacement Opposition

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Members of the Commission,

I urge you to oppose the proposed demolition and replacement of the historic Zilker Park Barton Springs Road bridge over Barton Creek.

The current plan would remove a contributing feature of the Zilker Park Historic District—an arched bridge first built in the 1920s and expanded in the 1940s to harmonize with the historic Lamar Boulevard bridge over the Colorado River. This would destroy a long-standing gateway experience for park visitors, paddlers, and trail users as they approach and pass under the structure.

The proposed larger, highway-style bridge would also expand transportation pavement into existing Zilker Parkland and directly disturb the State-protected Vara Daniel archaeological site. This would cause irreversible harm to Barton Creek and its riparian habitats, as well as to recognized cultural and archaeological resources.

In addition to these environmental and cultural impacts, the project raises serious fiscal and policy concerns.

The estimated cost of approximately \$54.5 million, offset by a \$32 million federal grant, leaves an unfunded shortfall of roughly \$14.5 million for local taxpayers. This is despite credible engineering evidence from structural engineer Tom Kam that the existing bridge can be maintained and operated affordably for the foreseeable future.

Recent experience with the Barton Springs Road Safety Pilot, which City staff deemed successful, shows that traffic conflicts can be addressed without demolishing the structure. Mr. Kam's proposal for a modest, parallel span bicycle and pedestrian bridge would expand multimodal capacity, protect trees and riparian habitat, and cost only a few million dollars rather than tens of millions.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask the Commission to reject the destruction of the historic bridge and instead support preservation combined with a sensitive parallel crossing alternative.

Sincerely,

Worthy LaFollette

Barton Hills Neighborhood Association Executive Committee

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Shirin Khosropour [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 3, 2026 10:09 PM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Repair and Save the Barton Springs Bridge

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Dear Landmark Commission members,

Please vote to repair and save the Barton Springs Bridge. There is no need to spend more money and cost more damage to the environment to build a new bridge.

Thank you,
Shirin Catterson Khosropour
2005 Rabb Glen St.
Austin, TX 78704

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Will Godwin [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 6:53 AM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Historic Preservation of Zilker Bridge

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Dear Commission and Staff,
I urge you to NOT PERMIT the destruction and demolition of this historic, functional, appropriate BRIDGE into Zilker Park.

The Bridge is a Bridge into the Future of Austin and its signature Zilker Park and Barton Springs Pool.

The road that the Zilker Bridge connects should NOT be a major traffic highway easing downtown access for an affluent and influential Westlake and west Austin. And, that road and bridge should NOT become a way to ease and encourage commercial uses of the Zilker Park.

It has become clear that the bridge is fundamentally sound and can serve long into the future. And, that the practical, financial considerations strongly favor the option of maintaining the current bridge.

The City seems bent on destruction and demolition (I-35 corridor, convention center, etc.) and Debt that has VERY dubious public benefit. There is no reason, other than commuter convenience and influential commercial interests, to destroy this Historic Landmark Bridge.

Please do NOT permit it!

Thank you,

Will Godwin
Austin, TX
District 5

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Tamara Scott [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 7:31 AM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Historic Barton Springs Bridge

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To Whom It May Concern:

This is yet another disappointing, destructive, and wholly unnecessary project that Austin officials have schemed up. Considering tariffs and overwhelming increase in cost, I encourage this city council to consider repairing this historic bridge. If this city council continues to spend and destroy like it's going out of style Austin will be left with no history and you will strip this city even further from what made it unique and drove people to move here to begin with.

In addition, let's also consider the impact such a project would have on the neighborhood and traffic. Demolishing this bridge is irresponsible at best and criminal at worst. The historic bridge is beautiful and instead you want to replace it with an eyesore.

I urge the City Council to protect and preserve this bridge indefinitely and to reverse the decision to replace it with a standard highway-style bridge.

New data has further solidified the opposition: Escalating Costs: The estimated cost for a replacement bridge has increased from \$40 million to \$54.5 million. Funding Gap: While the city has secured a \$32 million federal grant, the total project cost of \$54.5 million leaves a significant unfunded gap of approximately \$14.5 million.

Viable Alternatives: Structural engineer Tom Kam, who has inspected the bridge, determined that the structure can be maintained and operated indefinitely. He noted that repairing the existing structure would be far less costly than the massive expense of removal and replacement.

Environmental and Cultural Damage: Demolition would directly disturb the State-protected Vara Daniel archeological site and cause substantial damage to Barton Creek and its riparian habitats. The Zilker Neighborhood Association believes the City's current plan overlooks financially responsible and environmentally sustainable rehabilitation alternatives. I request that the Historic Landmark Commission deny this permit and prioritize the preservation of this historic Austin landmark. I would like to also advocate for a parallel bike/pedestrian bridge that would improve traffic flow at a fraction of the cost while avoiding damage to unique aquatic and historic resources.

Thanks for your consideration,
Tamara Scott

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: robbin [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 8:44 AM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Save the historic bridge!

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Dear Commission: Please do not destroy our historic Barton Springs bridge. Any demolition and construction would wreak significant havoc on Barton Springs Rd traffic, Barton Creek plants, animals and water quality, and the CoA budget. Please determine a less costly way to preserve and protect our beautiful landmark bridge. Don't let this be the EAST WING OF THE WHITE HOUSE!!!! Your can do better for Austin.

Sincerely,

Robbin Trusty

Austin resident, voting citizen and tax payer

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: Frederick Kopec [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 8:56 AM
To: Historic Preservation Office
Subject: Replace that DANGEROUS Barton Springs Bridge

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As someone who has lived in the Zilker neighborhood for 15 years, and has walked across and bicycled across the "historic" Barton Springs Bridge countless times, I can attest to the anxiety I have felt EACH time I crossed that bridge that I would be struck by a passing automobile, or fall off of the tall curb next to the narrow sidewalk into passing traffic. PLEASE replace this structure with something that can accommodate the never-going-to-be-diminished commuter automotive traffic AND provide safe pedestrian and bicycle passage to and from the park. PLEASE.

--

Frederick N. Kopec

Attorney at Law

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Sturgill, Hunter

From: W. Tucker [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 4, 2026 9:15 AM
To: Historic Preservation Office

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External Email - Exercise Caution

dear folks,

please say not to tearing down the historic zilker park bridge.

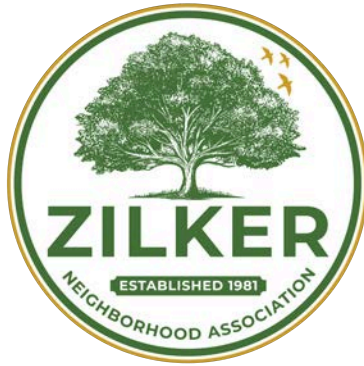
there is no need to spend the giant amount of money building a new bridge.
there is no need to take down a historic part of zilker - that in a less costly manner
can be taken care of.

be smart and do the right thing.

w. tucker

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Resolution of the Zilker Neighborhood Association Opposing the Replacement of the Barton Springs Bridge Adopted by membership January 27, 2025

Whereas, The Austin City Council and City staff are moving forward to demolish the historic Zilker Park Barton Springs Road bridge over Barton Creek and replace it with a larger, generic highway-style bridge at an estimated cost of \$40 million;

Whereas, Such demolition and reconstruction would cause substantial traffic problems, damage to Barton Creek, and replacement of Zilker parkland with expanded transportation pavement;

Whereas, The beautiful arched bridge over Barton Creek was built in the 1920s and expanded in the 1940s to its current configuration and was designed to match the beautiful archaic construction of the historic Lamar bridge over the Colorado River;

Whereas, The existing historic bridge is a contributing feature to the National Register of Historic Places' Zilker Park Historic District;

Whereas, The existing historic bridge provides a beautiful gateway to Zilker Park as well as a beautiful bridge for those people paddling under the bridge, hiking or walking under the bridge, and viewing the bridge from the existing bike/ped bridge over Barton Creek to the northeast;

Whereas, Demolition and reconstruction of the bridge with a larger highway-style bridge would directly disturb and damage archeological resources in the State-designated and protected Vara Daniel archeological site;

Whereas, The City improperly hid documents for months from public disclosure while it was seeking federal grant funding under a false claim of “national security information”;

Whereas, Structural engineer Tom Kam, who has built bridges for the City of Austin and many others, has reviewed the City’s technical documents and performed a visual inspection of the bridge that together establish that the bridge may be effectively and affordably maintained and operated indefinitely, in much the same way as historic bridges around the world that are many centuries old have been maintained and operated;

Whereas, The recent Barton Springs Road Safety Pilot, which City staff determined to be a success, has greatly alleviated conflicts between car traffic and pedestrians and bicycles; and

Whereas, Mr. Kam has proposed the concept of a simple, parallel span bridge to further increase bike and pedestrian crossing options over Barton Creek, in a way that would protect existing trees, Barton Creek, and riparian habitats and at a cost of a few million dollars rather than tens of millions of dollars; now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Zilker Neighborhood Association urges the Austin City Council to protect and preserve the historic Zilker Park Bridge indefinitely, to reverse its initial decision to demolish the existing historic bridge, and to pursue a parallel bike/ped bridge near the historic bridge that would avoid existing trees and harm to riparian habitats while improving bike/ped traffic flow in the Barton Springs Road corridor at a fraction of the cost of the current plan and with no or minimal damage to the recognized and unique riparian, aquatic, historic, and archeological resources that would otherwise be damaged or entirely lost to build an ugly, standard highway bridge.