



HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20250402-019

Date: 04/02/2025

Subject: FY 2025-26 Budget Recommendation

Motioned By: Commissioner Heimsath

Seconded By: Commissioner Eppright

Recommendation

FY 2025-26 Budget Recommendations

WHEREAS the City of Austin Historic Landmark Commission was established in 1974 to promote historic preservation activities in Austin and advise the Austin City Council on matters related to historic preservation; and

WHEREAS the purpose of the Historic Landmark Commission is to prepare and periodically revise an inventory of the structures and areas that may be eligible for designation as historic landmarks, most recently completed in 1984; prepare, review, and propose amendments to a citywide Historic Preservation Plan recently updated in 2024; and review requests to establish or remove a historic designation and make recommendations on the requests to the Land Use Commission; and

WHEREAS the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan outlines historic preservation policies for the City of Austin to preserve and interpret historic resources in Austin for residents and visitors, with goals including 1) the inventory and protection of historic buildings, structures, sites, places, and districts in neighborhoods throughout the city; and 2) the retention of the character of locally designated historic districts and National Register districts by ensuring development is compatible with the historic character of the districts; and

WHEREAS Strategic Direction 2023 includes the honoring and preservation of historical and ethnic heritage as an indicator category, with strategies that include protecting places that reflect Austin's diverse history and broadening support for and participation in preserving underrepresented histories and resources; and

WHEREAS the City Council adopted the Equity-Based Preservation Plan, a historic preservation plan, as an element of the City's comprehensive plan by ordinance on Dec. 2, 2024; and

WHEREAS the City Manager is directed to identify funding to implement the Plan, including but not limited to these near-term items:

- (1) Evaluation of historic preservation incentives and any changes needed to make them more effective, building on the exploration of TDR;
- (2) Ready access to professional archaeological and engineering expertise for City staff and the Historic Landmark Commission;
- (3) Two additional staff members for the Historic Preservation Office to assist with Plan implementation; and

(4) A cultural mapping program to identify significant places, businesses, and other resources, prioritizing communities that have historically been marginalized and neighborhoods where longtime residents face a high risk of displacement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Landmark Commission recommends that the Council allocate additional funds to the Housing & Planning Department for FY2025-26 to implement the Equity-Based Historic Preservation Plan; and allocate additional funding for permanent staffing in the Historic Preservation Office to manage and coordinate implementation of the preservation plan. These resources are essential to engage the community in the preservation planning process, set equitable priorities for historic preservation policy, and begin to better meet the City of Austin’s responsibilities to promote and preserve its intrinsic character and history.

Vote: 7-0

For: Heimsath, Eppright, Acton, Grogan, Koch, Alvarez, McWhorter

Against:

Abstain:

Absent: Larosche, Evans, Taniguchi

Attest: Sam Fahnestock, Staff Liaison, Historic Preservation Office, Planning Department


