

EMLK Neighborhood Plan Contact Team
Re: 1811 Airport rezoning
Case C14-2026-0002

May 10, 2026

Hello Planning Commissioners,

The EMLK NPCT offers the following letter of recommendation regarding the potential rezoning of 1811 Airport Blvd. The immediate neighbors have met repeatedly among themselves in the MLK Neighborhood meetings and conveyed their input to the EMLK NPCT.

EMLK Contact Team met multiple times with the agent during the spring of 2026 and supports the immediate neighbors' concerns with the rezoning, and are against rezoning the property.

Neighbor concerns that have not been sufficiently addressed:

- **Building a 90ft building so close to a single family neighborhood will result in a tremendous decline of quality of life** due to this property already being on a 20 ft elevation and therefore will cast immense shadows and decrease privacy on these streets, 14 ½ St, 16th St, 17th St, 18th St, Tillery St, and Loreto Dr. This is an historic neighborhood where homes in the area were frequented with jam sessions by the likes of Ray Charles, Janis Joplin, and Willie Nelson, to name a few, which for many decades was also underserved. The neighborhood was the first suburb (primarily Black at the time) to be built east of East Austin (Austin American Statesman newspaper coverage of the neighborhood was recently published a few months ago). The increased and unabated overbuilding in this historic primary single family community will result in the destruction of it. It will result in the running off of the residents, another Clarksville. There has been no consideration of the historic or cultural preservation needed in this area.
- **The affordability calculation across the city means that even “affordable” units will not be attainable for residents in this area** - the average income in this zipcode is lower than the targeted MFI percentages. Trading additional height which hurts existing residents, to get a benefit which is not realized, is not a deal that makes sense.
- The traffic backup at MLK is currently very bad, during rush hour and also during all hours of the day. **Neighbors struggle to get into their neighborhood currently and there is no clear plan to avoid even more traffic backups** with another development of hundreds of apartments.
- **Infrastructure in this neighborhood is already stressed and likely to get worse with hundreds more housing units**. Electricity outages have occurred multiple times already during 2026, water pressure is low, and foundations are shifting significantly.
- **District 1 leads almost all other Districts for the most DB90 projects and the most new development overall** in the last decade. The comparison of East and West Austin's development shows the same trends the city has always perpetuated - disproportionate density which takes advantage of the historically Black & brown neighborhoods - and this rezoning follows the same pattern.

- **The interactions between the owner’s agent and the neighbors illustrates a severe breakdown in our communication as a City.** In this case as with many others in our area, it feels that every party is aligned against existing neighbors.
 - The owner’s agents are only incentivized to pursue a single zoning type, with no ability to update their plan other than very narrow scope adjustments. They attend multiple meetings but do not have a site plan, and cannot adjust their plans in any significant way based on neighbor input; therefore neighbors are frustrated at each step.
 - Planning Commissioners, even when they are in-district neighbors themselves, also feel unable to suggest less intrusive projects beyond the proposed zoning category or truly “plan” beyond the boundaries of the individual address. Planning Commissioners who work professionally in the land development industry appear to have a conflict of interest to many neighbors, as well.
 - Raising concerns such as drainage, environmental issues, traffic at a major intersection for everyday and emergency preparedness, or nearby developments which have been approved but not built yet, are repeatedly stated as not valid because they will be handled “at another phase”. However, there is no accountability that that future phase will account for the concern.
 - And yet, zoning (and neighborhood plan change) is the only phase when neighbor input is even considered in a structured, public way.

For the reasons above, we request that this application be denied.

Thank you,
Angela B Garza, Dianna Dean, Nadia Barbot
Co-Chairs, [East MLK Neighborhood Plan](#) Contact Team