EQUITY-BASED PRESERVATION PLAN

Learning from Our Past to Shape a Future for Everyone

2024

Austin, Texas

Preservation Plan Working Group
Historic Landmark Commission

CITY OF AUSTIN FOUNDED 1839 | PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Vision for Historic Preservation

Historic preservation in Austin actively engages communities in protecting and sharing important places and stories. Preservation uses the past to create a shared sense of belonging and to shape an equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and economically vital future for all.

These images represent community heritage to Austinites: Lunar New Year celebrations, Mayfield Park, the landmarked Mary Baylor House in Clarksville, a Mexican American celebration at the Capitol, Barton Hills homes, Huston-Tillotson University.

Preservation Plan Working Group

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The Preservation Plan Working Group included 26 community members who developed this draft plan in phase 1.

Land Acknowledgment

Land acknowledgments are a practice to recognize Indigenous Peoples as original stewards of the land who still have an enduring relationship with their traditional territories. We include this acknowledgment in the Equity-Based Preservation Plan as an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory we reside on and a way of honoring the Indigenous Peoples who have lived and worked on the land known as Austin, Texas.

Land acknowledgments do not exist in the past tense or historical context. Colonialism is a current and ongoing process, and we need to be mindful that we are participating in it by living on colonized land. To ensure meaningful recognition and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, more work needs to happen as part of the implementation of this plan.

We acknowledge, with respect, that the land known as Texas has been home to many groups for more than 16,000 years. These include the Tonkawa, the Mescalero Apache, the Lipan Apache, the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo (Tigua people), the Texas Band of Yaqui Indians, the Coahuiltecan, the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, the Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas, the Carrizo & Comecrudo Tribe of Texas, the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, the Caddo Nation, the Comanche Nation, the Kiowa Tribe, the Wichita & Affiliated Tribes (including the Waco, Keechi, & Tawakoni), the Chickasaw Nation, the Cheyenne & Arapaho Tribes, the Shawnee Tribe, the Delaware Nation, and all other American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas. Not all Indigenous peoples listed claim Texas as ancestral lands, as many were forcibly relocated from their ancestral homelands.

It is important to understand the long history that has brought us to reside on the land and to seek to acknowledge our place within that history, as people who are not members of these tribes. The state of Texas is a product of violence carried out by Anglo, Spanish, and Mexican colonial powers. Ruling powers committed multiple genocides on the Indigenous groups of Central Texas as they were hunted, detained, converted, and colonized in successive waves. Many were also assimilated, including most peoples labeled Coahuiltecan and many Lipan Apache, with no treaties or recognition. As a result of these colonial practices, including cultural erasure through lack of documentation and forced assimilation, incomplete information about Indigenous groups exists.

At its best, historic preservation seeks to recognize and honor the complex layers of multiple stories and to support community stewardship of place. However, the field has often excluded, ignored, or dismissed non-white people and narratives in what it celebrates and whom it serves. It has emphasized the high-style architecture of the ruling classes to the exclusion of many additional people and groups who add meaning. This plan strives to tell the full story of Austin and all its peoples and to distribute preservation's benefits equitably. We aim to work with community members, including Indigenous Peoples, in a collaborative way to implement the plan.

Language and Identity

The Equity-Based Preservation Plan recognizes the importance of identity and tries to be specific, both in language and acknowledging the complexity of communities' histories. For example, before many Mexican Americans were "Mexican Americans," they were Indigenous people who took on Spanish-sounding names. The Tonkawa were particularly friendly to the colonizers, and their descendants are still in Austin and Central Texas. The Ndé Kónitsąąíí Gokíyaa (Lipan Apaches) and Tonkawa tribes were more nomadic but stewarded the lands in Austin as they moved through the area.

Tribal websites are hyperlinked above. TXDOT's tribal histories project, produced in collaboration with the tribes, is an additional resource for many of the Indigenous groups.

Much of the text for the land acknowledgment is drawn from the City of Austin Climate Equity Plan adopted in 2021.

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Executive Summary

Much has changed in Austin since 1981, when the last historic preservation plan was adopted. The city's population has nearly tripled, a historic district ordinance was passed, and affordable housing and density have become pressing issues. Displacement pressures threaten long-standing residents, especially in East Austin neighborhoods historically home to communities of color. Meanwhile, buildings that were new then are nearing historic age themselves.

The preservation field has also transformed in the last 40 years. Equity, sustainability, and cultural heritage are leading factors guiding planning and conversations around historic preservation. Preservation now recognizes the critical role of vernacular buildings in telling the stories of racially and culturally diverse communities.

This inclusive, equity-based, and community-oriented historic preservation plan will help the City Council, Historic Landmark Commission, and Historic Preservation Office, as well as other City departments and partners, respond to 21st-century challenges with improved policies, programs, and tools. These include transparent and accessible historic review processes, inclusive community outreach, and incentives that meet both historic preservation and equity goals.

Major shifts in the historic preservation field include valuing cultural heritage and the homes and businesses of ordinary people.

Facing page: Community members share places that matter to them on a bulletin board and an art sheet developed by Creative Action.

What's in the Plan

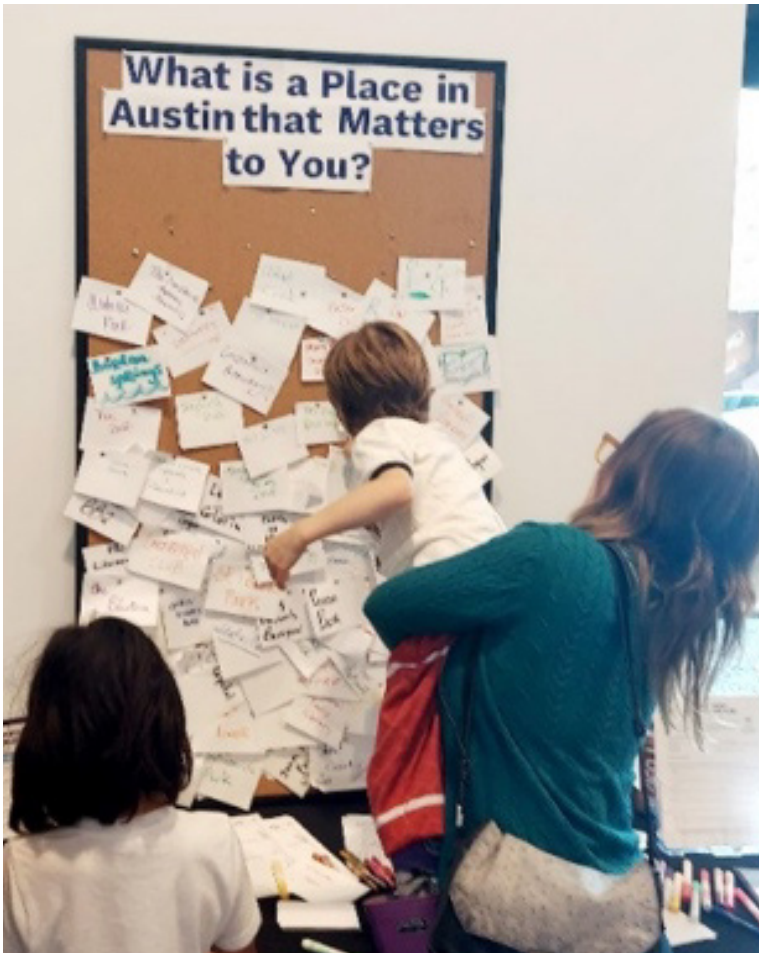
The Equity-Based Preservation Plan begins with essential background on how preservation supports housing, small businesses and the local economy, unique local culture, and the environment—in short, why preservation matters. Then it presents a timeline of public policies and actions that testify to community resilience, as well as the deep, sometimes troubling roots of Austin's landscape.

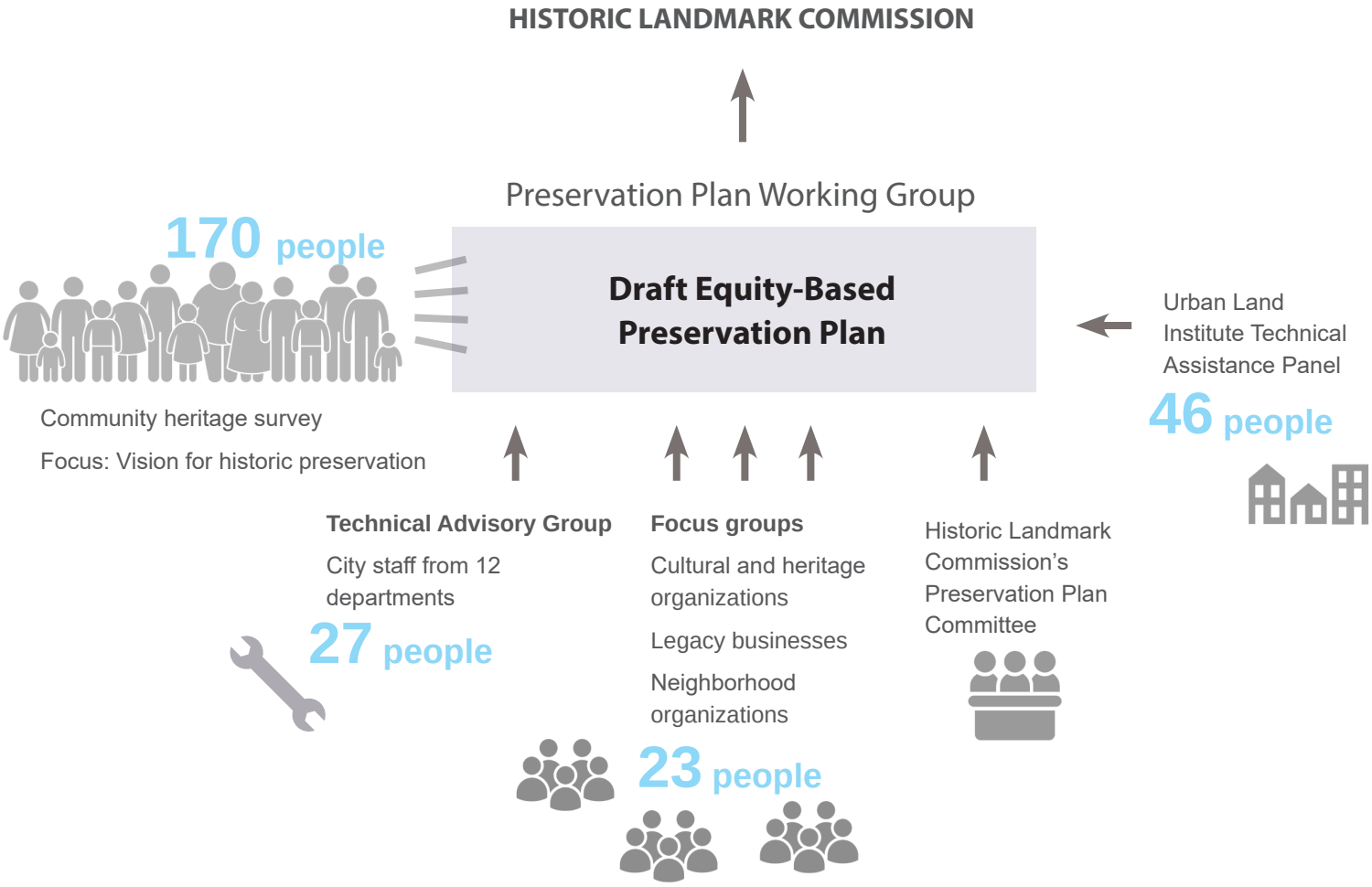
The plan lays out 14 goals and 107 recommendations to achieve the vision. The goals are grouped under three themes: *what we preserve*, *who preserves*, and *how we preserve*.

- *What we preserve* urges us to think broadly about what is preserved and how preservation connects with other community priorities. It includes goals and recommendations to recognize Austin's rich and complex history, to better recognize and protect cultural heritage like legacy businesses and murals, and to use preservation tools to support displacement prevention and environmental sustainability.
- *Who preserves* focuses on inviting more people to participate in the diverse work of preserving community heritage and supporting them in that work. It seeks to help people access knowledge, resources, and decision-making power; to streamline and better explain historic review and designation processes; and to engage new partners and audiences.
- *How we preserve* examines how to be more strategic and effective in historic preservation processes and incentives. It recommends updating designation criteria to reflect modern standards, being strategic with review, and improving enforcement processes to protect historic resources. It also proposes an expanded suite of incentives to support the stewards of Austin's historic places—mostly private property owners.

Vision for historic preservation

Historic preservation in Austin actively engages communities in protecting and sharing important places and stories. Preservation uses the past to create a shared sense of belonging and to shape an equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and economically vital future for all.





Community-Based Process

The draft of this plan was developed over 12 months by the Preservation Plan Working Group appointed by the Historic Landmark Commission. Research into national good practices informed lively working group conversations. The working group also got advice and feedback from three community focus groups, a technical advisory group from 12 City departments, and a community heritage survey. In total, more than 300 people helped shape the draft plan.

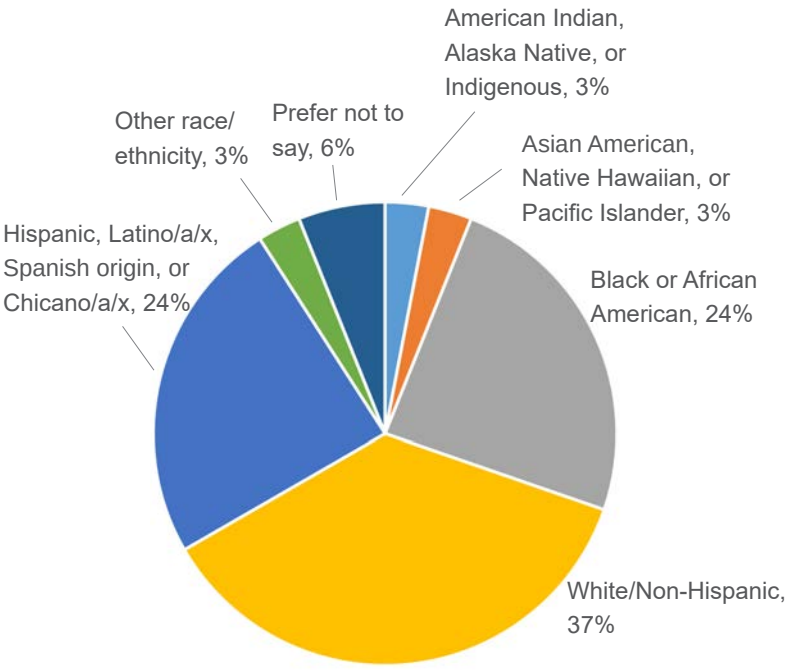
Preservation Plan Working Group

The working group was selected from 148 applicants. Members were able to opt into compensation to recognize their time and expertise. The group included a range of perspectives. Some people had extensive experience with historic preservation; others brought broad expertise from allied fields and deep roots in local communities.

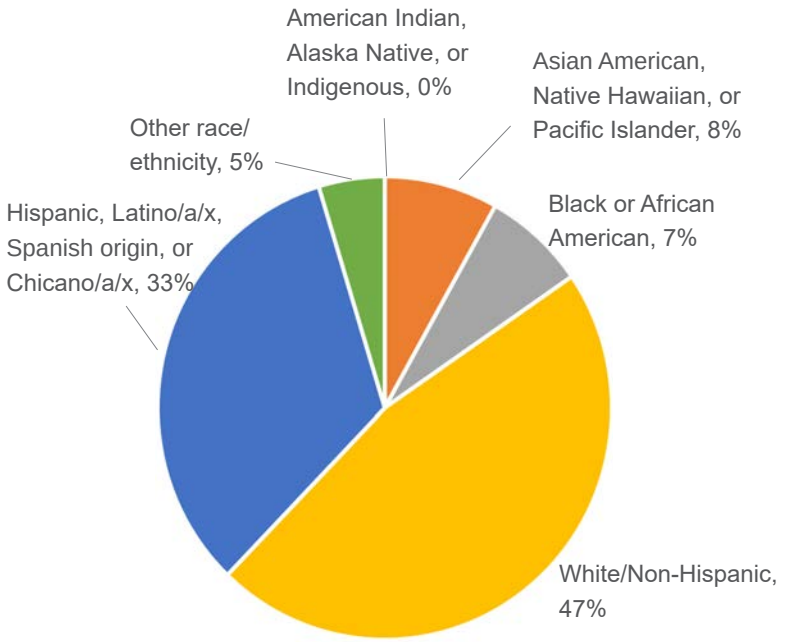
Working group members who developed and revised the plan live in 20 ZIP codes across Austin and reflect the city's racial and ethnic diversity. Together, they contributed nearly 1,400 hours to create the plan, shape engagement, and finalize the plan based on public feedback.

ULI Technical Advisory Panel

The City and Preservation Austin co-sponsored an Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Advisory Panel in summer 2022. The panel explored programs, policies, and tools to safeguard older and historic housing, support affordability, and prevent displacement. Six local and national experts in historic preservation, architecture, and community development interviewed more than 40 local stakeholders over two days. The resulting report reinforced many of the recommendations in the preservation plan.



WORKING GROUP



AUSTIN

After the Preservation Plan Working Group developed the draft Equity-Based Preservation Plan, working group members guided community engagement, then revised and finalized the plan based on public feedback.

Community Feedback on the Draft Plan

More than 2,500 people were engaged around the draft plan from February through May 2024. City staff and consultants were joined by five community-based organizations receiving mini-grants and nine paid community ambassadors. Together, the team sought to reach as many people as possible, particularly those from historically marginalized communities and people who could be impacted directly by the plan's recommendations.

Public engagement included 192 opportunities that spanned a wide variety of outreach types, weekday and weekend events, and locations and audiences. Community partnerships were integral to successful outreach and engagement. In addition to the activities listed below, ambassadors and mini-grant organizations initiated community and school partnerships, organized large events and smaller focus groups, and spoke with people one-on-one.

Community outreach

49 presentations to boards and commissions, community groups, and professional stakeholder organizations

45 pop-ups at community events around Austin

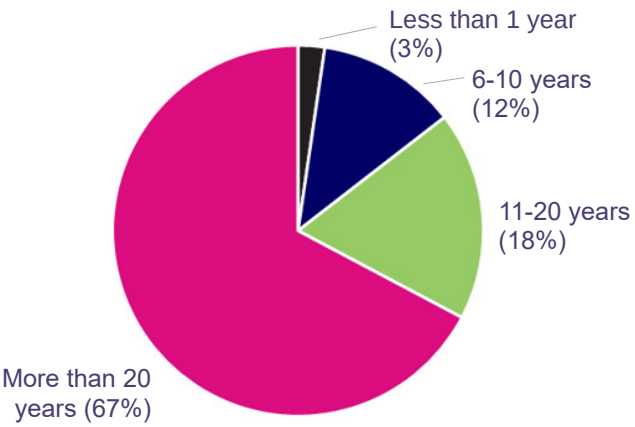
29 small-group and 1-on-1 conversations

Participants came from across Austin and reflected the city's racial and ethnic diversity. People with disabilities and LGBTQIA+ communities also were strongly represented.

Community feedback was mixed. A common perspective was that Austin has lost too many important buildings, businesses, and residents for effective preservation. Some people, particularly from the Black community, expressed distrust of the City of Austin. Many community members felt that preservation is important but didn't know how to learn more or where to begin. Finally, people expressed concerns about whether the plan would be implemented, citing politics, logistics, and limited resources.

Most people interacted with the plan through a short community survey, online or on paper. The survey

Many longtime residents



condensed the plan's goals into seven categories and asked people to rate their importance.

People expressed strong support for the plan's goals, rating all goals at least 73% out of 100%. When asked to choose their top priority—which goal the City should start working on first—"Ensure longtime residents and businesses can afford to stay in their current spaces" was by far the most popular response, with support from 51% of respondents. "Help older neighborhoods and commercial districts maintain their unique look and feel as Austin grows" came next with 20% of respondents.

See Appendix for more information.

Plan Revisions

The plan was revised and finalized in summer 2024 by the Preservation Plan Working Group and Preservation Plan Committee of the Historic Landmark Commission. Public feedback was a central consideration.

Comments and changes

- 270+ community and stakeholder comments
- 140 actionable changes suggested
- 50 recommendations revised for clarity and completeness (of 107 in the final plan)
- 14 goals affirmed
- 8 new recommendations added

Racially and ethnically diverse participation

	COMMUNITY SURVEY RESPONDENTS	AUSTIN
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	3.7%	0%
Asian American, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander	6.4%	8.1%
Black or African American	22%	7.3%
Hispanic, Latino/a/x, Spanish origin, or Chicano/a/x	19.4%	33.1%
Middle Eastern, Arab, or North African	.8%	No Census equivalent
White, non-Hispanic	36.9%	46.8%
Other race/ethnicity	2.1%	4.7%
Prefer not to say	8.7%	No Census equivalent

People from across Austin

64 ZIP codes in the city

2/3 of ZIP codes (41) had more than 5 responses to the community survey

Left to right: Pop-up tabling at a Carver Museum event, community kickoff at Huston-Tillotson University, events organized by mini-grant organizations TAP-ATX and Anderson Community Development Corporation.

Criteria for Success

Early in the planning process, the Preservation Plan Working Group defined ten criteria for success. These criteria were used as a reference when developing draft recommendations and, later, finalizing the plan.

Vision

Does the plan offer a clear vision for historic preservation that can be used by stakeholders to communicate and collaborate? Do all recommendations support that vision?

Process

Has the process of developing the preservation plan been welcoming and accessible to community members with a range of viewpoints, regardless of previous preservation experience?

Education

Does the plan educate readers about the benefits of historic preservation and how preservation relates to key topics such as property rights, displacement, economic opportunities, and affordability? Does it equip community members, policymakers, and City staff to take action?

Expansion

Does the plan recognize historically marginalized people, places, and stories? Does it expand what is considered historically significant?

Effectiveness

Are the plan's recommendations for policies, programs, and incentives grounded in good practices from around the U.S. and the world? Are they likely to result in the recognition, preservation, and/or interpretation of more historic resources?

Practicality

Does the plan balance big-picture thinking with specific, actionable, measurable recommendations that recognize legal constraints? Does the plan include a realistic strategy for regular updates?

Accessibility

Does the plan recommend ways to make historic preservation processes more accessible to community members, especially those who aren't familiar with the processes? Is the plan itself easy to understand?

Equity

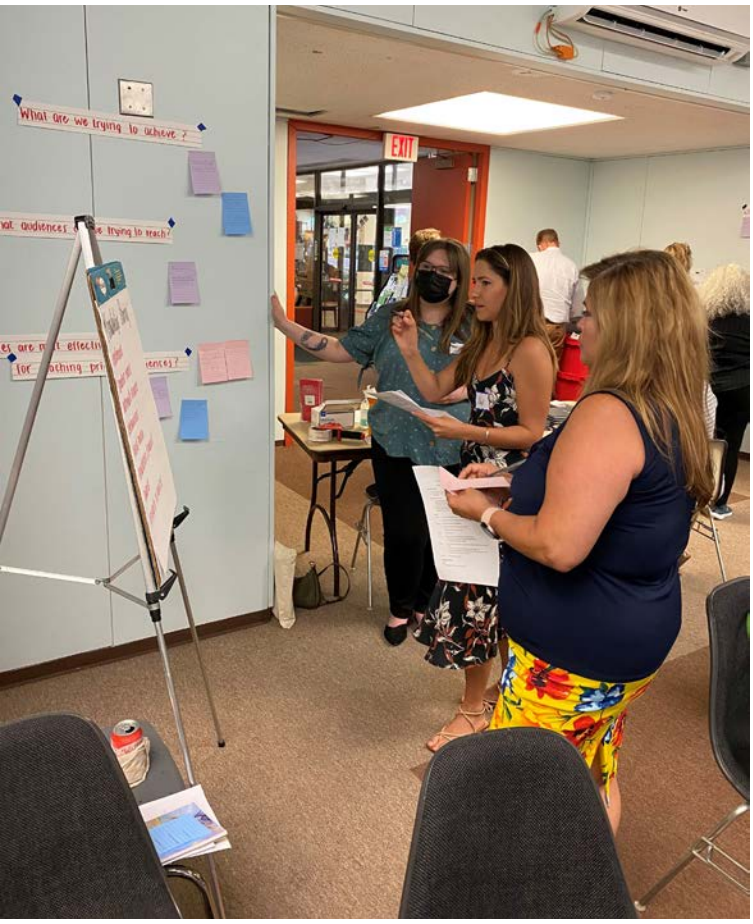
Are the expected benefits of the plan's recommendations equitably distributed? Are negative impacts minimized, particularly for communities that have historically been disadvantaged by public policies?

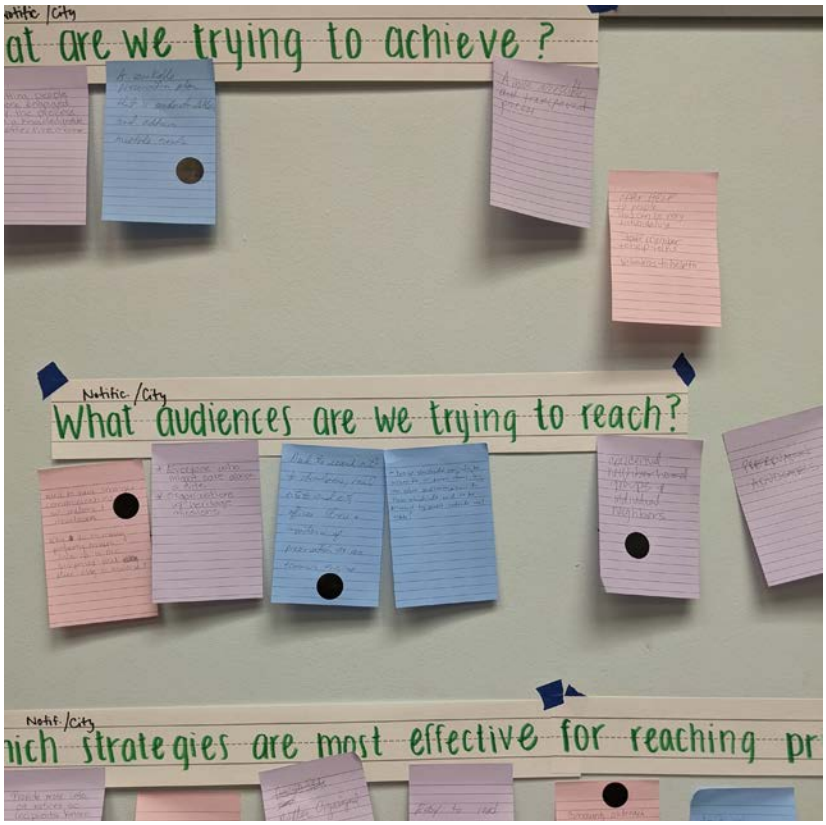
Connection

Does the plan support affordability (as with tax incentives), economic opportunities, and environmental sustainability, particularly for historically marginalized communities?

Support

Is the plan supported by working group members, policymakers, City departments, allied organizations, and community members?





Working group members defined criteria for success, then developed recommendations to achieve them.

Important Terms

What do we mean by equity?

Equity means striving to ensure all members of the Austin community, regardless of background or identity, positively benefit from the plan. The planning process seeks to advance racial equity and elevate equitable outcomes for all people as they relate to historic preservation and community heritage. Including people from historically marginalized groups as essential members of the Preservation Plan Working Group helped to elevate voices from groups that have historically been harmed by public policies.

The City of Austin defines racial equity as a process and a condition where race and ethnicity can no longer predict quality of life outcomes in our community.

What do we mean by historically marginalized groups?

Historically marginalized groups are people who have historically been left out of, misrepresented by, or ignored by City processes and outcomes, either intentionally or unintentionally. They include people of color, low-income households, people with disabilities, renters, women, and LGBTQ+ people.

What do we mean by older and historic buildings?

Older buildings: Buildings constructed 50+ years ago.

Historic buildings: Buildings designated as significant at the local, state, and/or federal levels. This plan focuses on locally designated historic landmarks and historic districts, since they have different zoning (H or HD) and so can be regulated by the City of Austin.

Supporting Other Goals

This plan intersects with many other City plans, as well as stakeholder and community initiatives around Austin. On the City side, related plans can reinforce and coordinate cross-departmental goals, policies, and programs.

Related plans, policies, and programs	Year completed or adopted
Art in Public Places	n/a
Austin Climate Equity Plan	2021
Austin Resource Recovery Comprehensive Plan	2023
Austin Strategic Direction 2023	2023
Chapter 380 Policy	2018
Community Archives Program	n/a
Cultural Asset Mapping Project (CAMP)	2018
Cultural Tourism Plan	2015
Economic and Cultural District Framework Policy	2024 (anticipated)
Historic Cemeteries Vision Plan	2015
Imagine Austin	2012
Nothing About Us Without Us - Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool & Report	2022
Our Parks, Our Future Long Range Plan	2019
Our Resilient Heritage: Texas Statewide Historic Preservation Plan	2023
Outreach & Exhibits Program (Austin Public Library)	n/a
Strategic Housing Blueprint	2017
Thriving in Place - Supporting Austin's Cultural Vitality Through Place-Based Economic Development	2018

Funding Acknowledgment

This project is funded in part through a Certified Local Government Grant from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, a grant program administered by the Texas Historical Commission.

Who Does Historic Preservation in Austin?

Community

Community members

Residents, memory-keepers, advocates for local heritage

Property owners

Business owners

Stewards of buildings and culture

Advocacy organizations

Preservation Austin

Neighborhood organizations

Preservation Texas

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Preservation Action

Other organizations

Cultural organizations

Heritage organizations

Museums

"Friends of" groups

Heritage trails

Government

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Maintains National Register of Historic Places

Provides guidance on Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

gives authority to

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Runs Certified Local Government program

Facilitates National Register listing

empowers

CITY OF AUSTIN

City Departments

Historic Preservation Office: manages historic designation process, reviews minor changes to historic properties, runs incentive programs, administers historic resource surveys, staffs Historic Landmark Commission

Parks and Recreation Department: maintains City-owned historic properties, administers heritage tourism grants

Travis County Historical Commission

Identifies, researches, and recognizes historic sites and buildings

Historic Landmark Commission

Recommends historic zoning to City Council

Reviews major changes to historic properties

Reviews heritage grant applications and tax exemption applications

Makes policy recommendations to City Council

Why Preservation Matters

Historic preservation recognizes and safeguards our history—and can play an important role in shaping the future. Regardless of designation status, older buildings are more sustainable, support affordable housing, and help small businesses and arts organizations to start and grow. And they foster a sense of place by preserving the character and culture of a particular street or neighborhood.

Older buildings house people affordably.

- In Austin, older buildings include more than 64,000 residential units. Many of these are priced below market rate due to building age and/or longtime property owners.
- Areas with historic districts have more than twice the proportion of rental housing units affordable to Austinites earning 60% or 80% of the city's median income.[1]
- Affordable units in older and historic neighborhoods promote economic diversity.[2]

Older buildings enable density and walkability.

- Older buildings on smaller lots allow increased density at a human scale. Areas including historic districts average 80% greater population density and 2½ times the housing density than other areas.[3]
- Historic districts and other older neighborhoods have significantly higher WalkScore, Transit Score, and Bike Score ratings than newer areas.[4,5]

Older buildings support small local businesses.

- Non-chain businesses are more likely to thrive in areas with older buildings of a diverse range of sizes, supporting a resilient, adaptable local economy.[6]
- Areas mostly constructed before 1945 have more than twice the density of jobs in small businesses and more than 60% greater density of jobs in new businesses, compared to areas mostly constructed after 1970. Pre-war areas also have twice the density of women- and minority-owned businesses than post-1970 areas.[7]

Preservation supports cultural vitality.

- Older buildings are a better fit for arts and cultural organizations. About 4% of Austin's land area has a majority of buildings built before 1945—and contains 20% of our arts and cultural facilities.[8]
- Even excluding downtown, areas containing National Register districts average more than twice as many cultural assets as other areas.[9]
- Areas identified as potential historic districts in East Austin make up less than 1% of the city's land area, but contain more than 7% of cultural assets.[10]

Older buildings conserve natural resources.

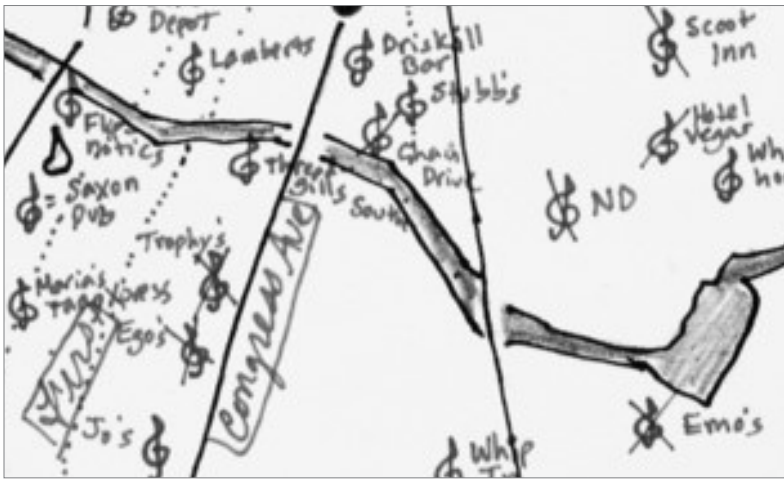
- It can take 10-80 years for a new "energy efficient" building to recoup the embodied energy lost when an older building is demolished.[11]
- Rehabilitating older buildings reduces landfill waste. In 2020, Austin generated 423,000 tons of construction and demolition debris, much of which went to landfills.[12]

4% of Austin contains a majority of buildings constructed before 1945

2x Those areas contain twice the density of jobs in small businesses

2x Those areas contain twice the density of women- and minority-owned businesses

20% of arts and cultural facilities are located in those areas



Older buildings are a good fit for the things that keep Austin special: small businesses, women- and minority-owned businesses, and cultural assets.

Preservation strengthens and stabilizes property values.

- Property values in historic districts support homeownership. For example, property value increases in San Antonio's historic districts outperform the local market, but historic districts have a lower price per square foot.[13]
- During times of economic downtown, housing prices in local historic districts are more likely to be stable.[14]

Preservation saves money.

- Keeping older windows and installing energy-efficient screens and weatherstripping offers a greater return on investment—and comparable energy savings—to installing new "energy-efficient" windows, which have shorter useful lives than historic windows.[15]
- Phased rehabilitation allows property owners to complete projects according to their budgets and schedules.

$1M spent on a historic rehabilitation project in Texas creates:[22]

20 jobs

$1.1M in income

$79k in state and local taxes

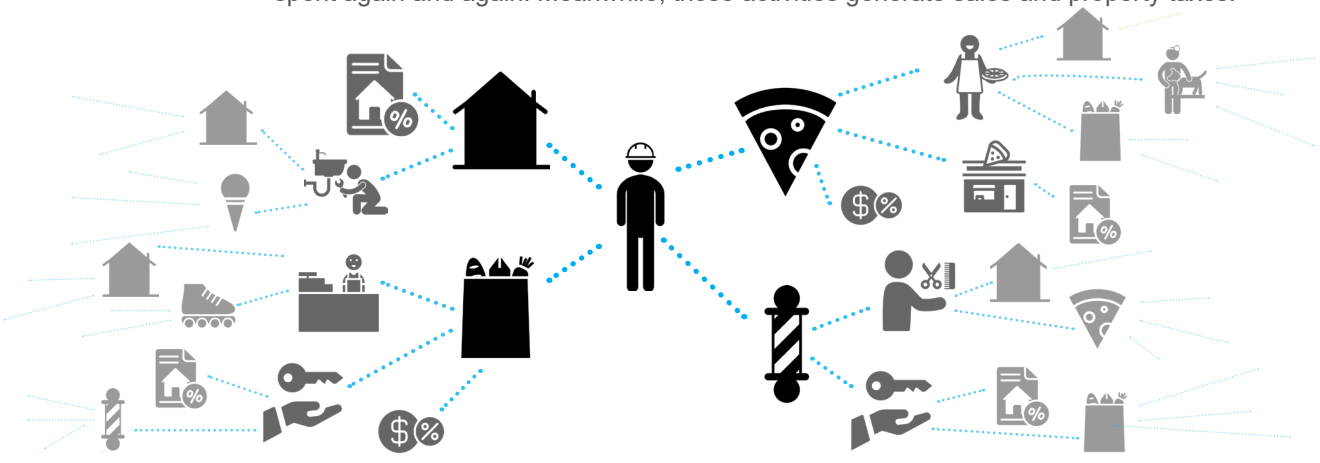
Preservation creates local jobs.

- $0.60 to $0.70 of every dollar spent on historic preservation goes to jobs. New construction spends $0.50 of every dollar on jobs, with the remaining $0.50 spent on materials—money typically sent to big-box stores and corporate offices outside the local economy.
- On average, San Antonio gains 1,860 jobs every year from construction in historic districts.[16]
- In 2013, more than 79,000 jobs in Texas were created by preservation activities, supporting local tourism, retail, construction, and manufacturing.[17] Heritage tourists in Texas directly support nearly 20,000 jobs.[18]

Preservation contributes to the local economy.

- Preservation tax incentives generate $4-5 in local private investment for every dollar spent at the federal level.[19]
- Rehabilitation of historic buildings spurs the investment of around $772 million per year in Texas's economy.[20]
- Heritage tourists in Texas spend $2.3 billion annually, generating approximately $216 million in state and local taxes.[21]

75% of economic benefits from preservation projects stay local, due to locally purchased materials and craftsmen's wages.[23] Local dollars go to rent, groceries, goods, and services—and are spent again and again. Meanwhile, those activities generate sales and property taxes.



Equity in Austin

Austin's long history of systemic racism led to disparities in housing, transportation, health, education, and economic outcomes. Many of the racial inequities that exist today are a direct result of past and current laws, ordinances, and city planning.

Beginning with the 1928 City Plan, the advent of formal planning injected deep-rooted racism into municipal documents. As Austin grew, these plans and policies ensured that white property owners profited and communities of color continued to struggle to meet basic needs.

After the 1928 City Plan and other factors segregated the city, City leaders made targeted decisions around land use and urban renewal that lowered property values and decimated communities in East Austin.

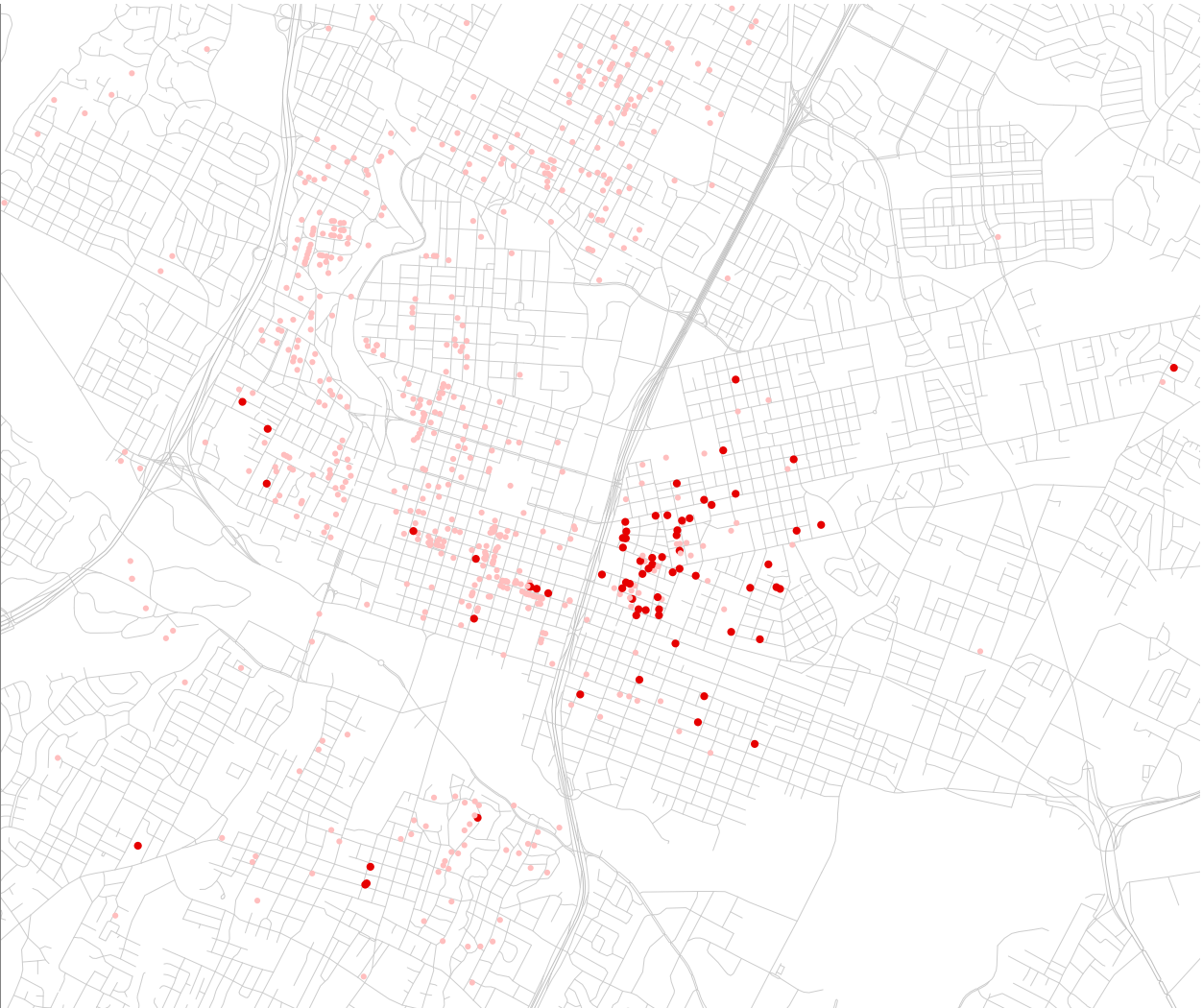
Austin's City Council established the Historic Landmark Commission in 1974. Until relatively recently, the Commission prioritized preservation of architecturally grand buildings and the homes of wealthy citizens, typically white men.

Note: The terms in the following timeline refer to historical policies; some include language we no longer use.

Austin's historic landmarks are concentrated in historically white West Austin. Most of those are associated with the stories of wealthy white people.

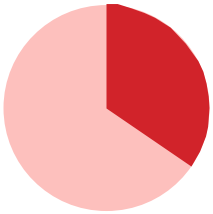
Historic landmark with known associations with community of color

Other historic landmarks



16%

Locally designated historic resources with known connections to communities of color



31%

Recently designated historic resources with known connections to communities of color (2023-24)

Equity in Austin

Root Causes of Current-Day Inequities

GENOCIDE AND COLONIZATION OF NATIVE AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

White and Mexican settlers committed multiple genocides on the native people of Central Texas. Natives were hunted, detained, converted, and colonized by successive waves of white, Mexican, and other occupations. Amongst the violence, settlers racialized Natives in a way that slated them for extermination and denied them the most basic notion of human agency. Ethnic cleansing as a strategy, sometimes explicit—sometimes implicit—was thoroughly employed.

ISOLATION OF MEXICAN AMERICANS, SEIZURE OF PROPERTY, AND LYNCHING

Following the Mexican-American War, those of Mexican descent were isolated within the Republic of Texas and later the State of Texas. Only white men were allowed to vote and have representation in government. Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexican citizens in Texas were allowed to retain Mexican citizenship or become U.S. citizens. Those who held property and personal wealth after the Mexican-American War often lost it due to questionable land sales and lawsuits. White Texans were almost as likely to lynch Mexican American men as they were to lynch African Americans.

1848

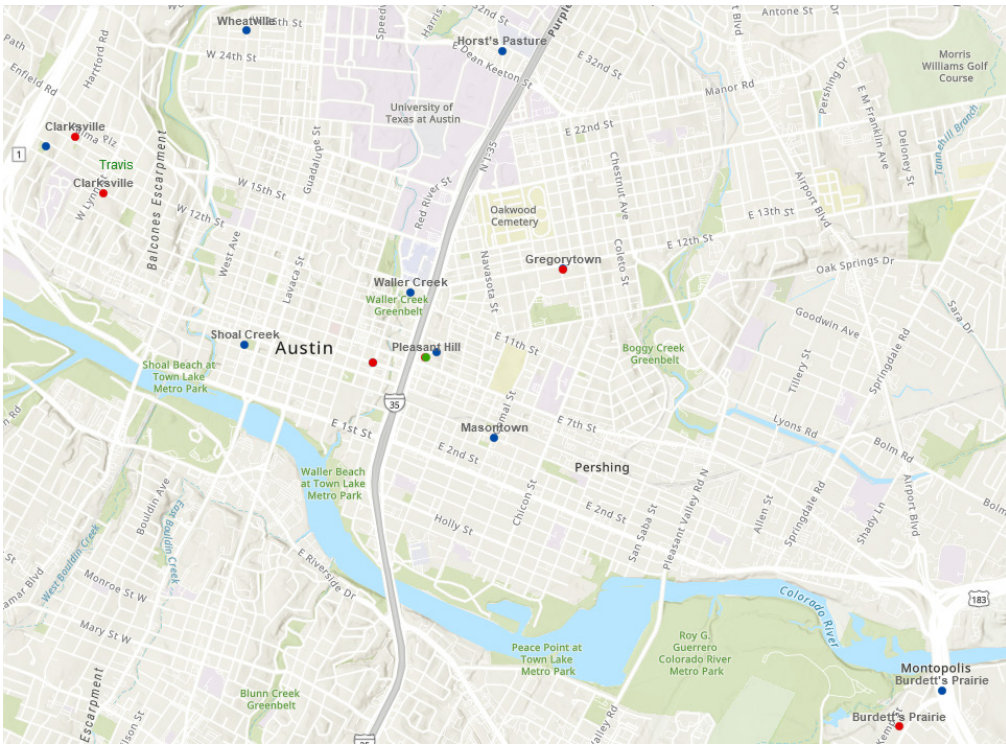
ENSLAVEMENT AND COLONIZATION OF AFRICAN PEOPLE

Exploitation of the labor of enslaved African people was part of Texas's original colonization under Spanish rule. Despite being outlawed under Mexican rule following independence from Spain, Stephen F. Austin and many white settlers actively worked to guarantee their right to hold slaves. Slavery was legal in the Republic of Texas and free Black people were banished. The enslavement of Black people continued when Texas joined the United States and, later, the Confederate States of America. Even after the Emancipation Proclamation legally ended slavery, white plantation owners refused to release their enslaved workers until Federal troops announced the end of slavery on June 19, 1865. Discrimination and violence by white people against Black people continued for many decades in the Jim Crow South.

> *"No Peon [Mexican American] remains in the city, who is not vouched for by respectable citizens. It should be the duty of every citizen to aid in preserving the present state of things."*
>
> - State Gazette

DISPLACEMENT OF FREEDOM COLONIES

Communities such as Clarksville, Wheatville, Kincheonville, Masontown, and Gregorytown were established by formerly enslaved people after the Civil War and interspersed throughout the city and its outskirts. To enforce racial segregation and the relocation of Black families to East Austin, the City denied them the public services enjoyed by surrounding neighborhoods such as paved streets, sidewalks, street lighting, sewers, and flood control measures. Clarksville's streets were not paved until the 1970s. Meanwhile, racist local policies and discriminatory banking practices made it difficult for residents to maintain or improve their homes.



1854

VIGILANTE TARGETING AND REMOVAL OF MEXICAN AMERICANS

Many white Austinites saw Mexican Americans as a transient class that instilled "false notions of freedom" in enslaved people, even though Mexican Americans as a group were long-established in the area. A vigilante committee led by the mayor and other prominent citizens worked to forcibly remove all Mexican Americans from Travis County unless vouched for by whites. They drove out about twenty families. The few Mexican Americans who remained in Travis County—only 20 people in 1860—were given a curfew. The local Mexican American population remained low throughout the Civil War, although records indicate that Mexican Americans fought on both sides of the war. Most Mexican Americans did not return to Travis County until the mid-1870s.

1875

CHINESE WOMEN BANNED FROM IMMIGRATING

The Page Act prohibited Chinese women from immigrating to the U.S., based on widespread anti-Asian prejudice, particularly against Asian women. This limited the growth of Asian American families, since many states prevented people from marrying outside their race.

Timeline text from the *Nothing About Us Without Us: Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool* report except isolation of Mexican Americans, vigilante targeting, and the Page Act.

Equity in Austin

Root Causes of Current-Day Inequities

"There has been considerable talk in Austin, as well as other cities, in regard to the race segregation problem. This problem cannot be solved legally under any zoning law known to us at present. In our studies in Austin, we have found that the negroes are present in small numbers, in practically all sections of the city, excepting the area just east of East Avenue and south of the City Cemetery... It is our recommendation that the nearest approach to the solution of the race segregation problem will be the recommendation of this district as a negro district…"

- 1928 City Plan

1882

IMMIGRATION FROM CHINA PROHIBITED

The Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited nearly all immigration to the U.S. from China and prevented Chinese immigrants from becoming U.S. citizens. Existing immigrants, nearly all men who had come to the United States to work, were not allowed to bring their families to join them. Initially set for 10 years, the Exclusion Act was extended in 1892 and made permanent in 1902. As the first major American immigration law to target a specific ethnicity or nationality, the Exclusion Act served as the basis for later race-based immigration policies.

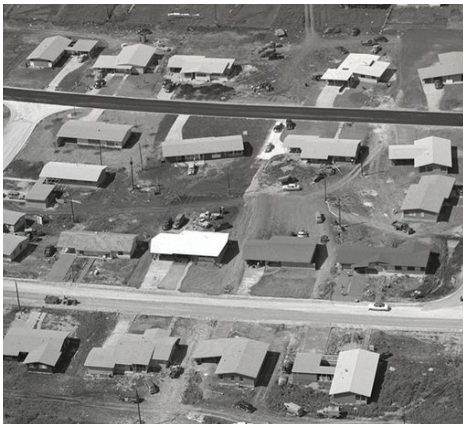
1923-24

RESTRICTIVE IMMIGRATION LAWS

A series of discriminatory federal laws impacted immigrants "to preserve the ideal of U.S. homogeneity." The Immigration Act of 1924 banned immigration from other Asian countries and set a quota of 165,000 immigrants from the rest of the world: a tremendous reduction. By setting percentage quotas for countries based on the 1890 census, the law heavily favored immigrants from Northern and Western Europe.

CHINESE IMMIGRANTS DENIED CITIZENSHIP AND PROHIBITED FROM OWNING PROPERTY

Chinese immigrants already in the country were prohibited from gaining U.S. citizenship and denied the right to own property. Spouses of these immigrants could be stripped of their U.S. citizenship and its benefits.



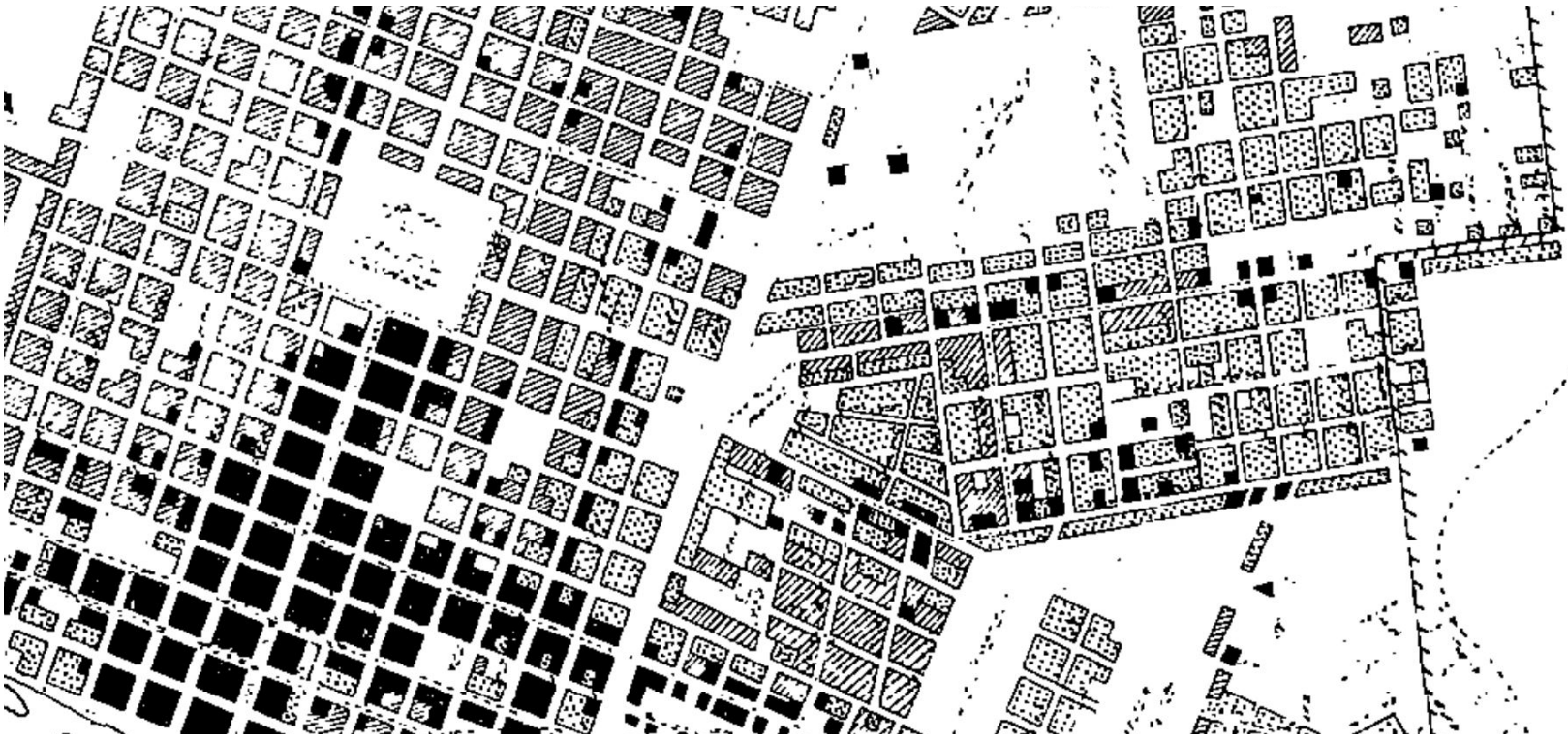
THE 1928 CITY PLAN FOR AUSTIN AND CREATION OF A SEGREGATED "NEGRO DISTRICT"

Through early 20th century zoning and planning policy, the City established a "Negro District" designed to keep Black people separated from whites. City Planners were aware of the fact that they could not legally zone neighborhoods across racial lines, but they recommended the creation of a "Negro District" because the largest Black population was already located in East Austin. This district was the only part of the city where Black people could access schools, public utilities, and other public services. However, the City underfunded public services in the district, and private developers refused to provide utilities as an alternative option for residents, as was common in white neighborhoods. Streets in some parts of the district were not paved until the 1960s and 1970s. The district was also the area with the fewest zoning restrictions. Black families forced to move to East Austin were dispossessed of land in the rest of the city that is worth more than $290 million today.[24]

MINIMUM LOT SIZE ESTABLISHED

The City of Austin began requiring lots to be at least 3,000 square feet. It followed cities across the country that set minimum lot sizes to exclude lower- and moderate-income families, many of whom were people of color and/or had large families that city leaders worried might strain local school districts. Austin expanded its minimum lot size to 5,750 square feet in 1946.

1928 **1930**



This map in the 1928 plan outlines "business property" (solid), "white residential property" (diagonal lines), and "miscellaneous residential property" (dots).

1928 City Plan text from the *Nothing About Us Without Us: Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool* report except cost of dispossession.

Equity in Austin

Root Causes of Current-Day Inequities

REMOVAL OF MEXICAN AMERICANS

Parts of Austin's old First Ward and settlements along Shoal Creek were predominantly Mexican and Mexican American. The increased land value resulting from stabilization of the Colorado River and the rise of "downtown" Austin's business district forced Mexican American residents, businesses, and churches like Our Lady of Guadalupe to move east.

1930s

RACIALLY RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS AND SEGREGATED PUBLIC HOUSING

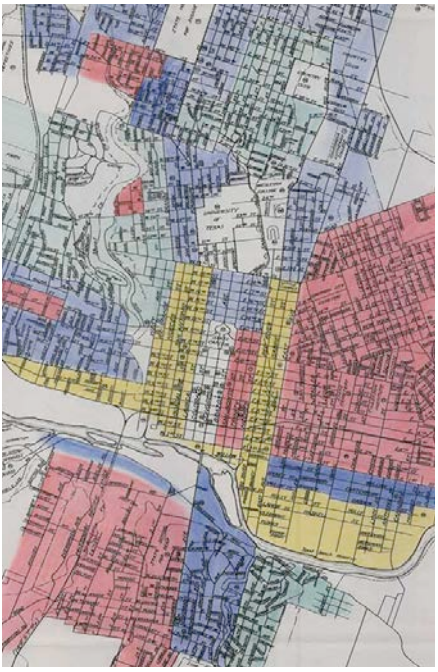
A form of tri-racial segregation that used "caucasian only" or "white only" in private deeds and covenants emerged. This marked a shift from the previously used language of "no people of African descent" and was a direct response to the increased numbers of people from Mexico or of "Mexican descent." This tri-racial system prohibited both Black and Latinx people from buying or renting homes in many neighborhoods outside of East Austin. These deed restrictions were often required by the Federal Housing Administration to even secure financing for the construction of housing.

In the late 1930s, the City Council voted to build racially segregated public housing, the first federal public housing projects in the U.S.: Santa Rita Courts (for Mexican Americans), Rosewood Courts (for African Americans), and Chalmers Courts (for whites). All were located in East Austin.

PROPOSED RACIAL RESTRICTIONS ON LAND OWNERSHIP

The Texas Senate proposed a bill to prevent non-U.S. citizens from owning property in Texas. The bill was targeted at Japanese, Chinese, and Hindu residents—at the time, the only people who could not become U.S. citizens. The bill did not pass.

1935--> 1937



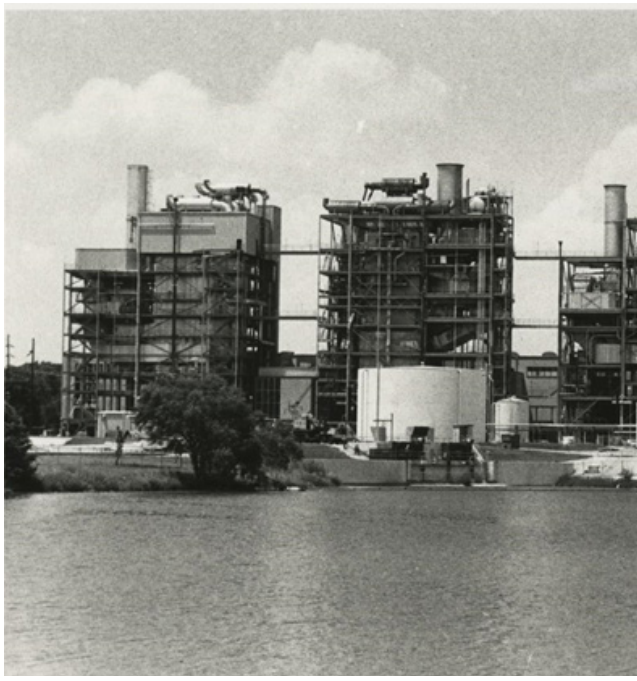
REDLINING

The segregation and concentration of people and industrial uses in Austin was further perpetuated by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), established in 1933 by Congress to refinance mortgages in default and prevent foreclosures. In 1935 the corporation created residential security maps for 239 cities to guide government-backed mortgages and other loans. The maps graded areas considered "Best" for lending as Type A. These areas were primarily wealthy suburbs on the outskirts of town. "Still Desirable" neighborhoods were given a Type B grade, and older neighborhoods were given a Type C grade and considered "Declining." Type D neighborhoods were labeled "Hazardous" and regarded as most risky for loans. Austin's Type D areas closely followed the boundaries of the "Negro District." It meant that families seeking to purchase property in the area—most often Black families—could not access loans with favorable terms. Families that did purchase property had to go through white intermediary buyers or purchase small houses and add on later as they saved more money. Redlining also limited Black property owners in maintaining, repairing, and adding to their buildings; as only personal funds were available; and contributed to the later perception of these neighborhoods as "slums." Black homeowners lost an estimated $57 million in land value due to suppressed values.[25] The map also called out a "Mexican District."

Timeline text from the *Nothing About Us Without Us: Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool* report except land ownership bill and cost of redlining

Equity in Austin

Root Causes of Current-Day Inequities



1949

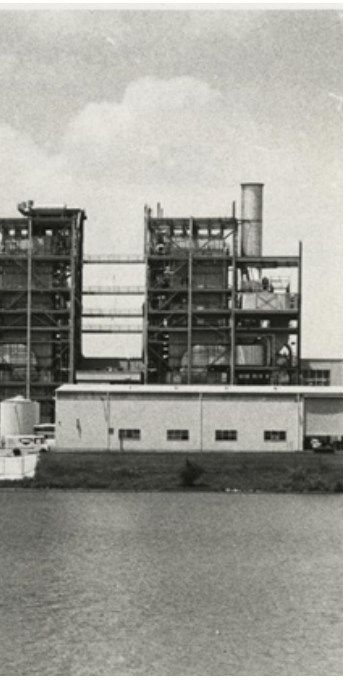
RACIALLY RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS UPHELD AS LEGAL

The 1949 Supreme Court decision in Shelley v. Kraemer confirmed that racially restrictive covenants did not violate the 14th Amendment, but they could not be judicially enforced. Still, developers and neighborhoods continued to create racially restrictive covenants to exclude non-whites from buying or renting houses in segregated neighborhoods.

1950s

INTERPRETATION OF HISTORIC PLACES FOCUSED ON STORIES OF WHITE PEOPLE

Restoration efforts were undertaken at the French Legation and Neill-Cochran House in Austin. While both museums now address the histories of enslaved people and broader communities that grew up around the sites, African Americans, Mexican Americans, and other communities of color were largely ignored in early interpretation.



INDUSTRIAL ZONING IN EAST AUSTIN

The Austin Master Plan (1956) and Industrial Development Plan (1957) designated large swaths of Austin as an industrial zone. These plans directed polluting industries to locate in primarily communities of color and resulted in hazardous living conditions, lowered property values, and the construction of toxic properties like the Tank Farm and Holly Street Power Plant. Lower property values meant that nearby property owners lost wealth, made it difficult to get loans to maintain and expand their buildings, and laid the groundwork for predatory buying practices in later years.

URBAN RENEWAL OR "URBAN REMOVAL"

This federally funded program subsidized the acquisition and clearing of sites for redevelopment by tearing down "slums" and "blighted" areas. Less than 1% of funding went to assisting residents with relocation. Austin's urban renewal efforts focused primarily on areas with majority Black and Latinx populations such as Brackenridge (1969), University East (1968), Kealing (1966), and Blackshear (1969). The projects displaced people of color from large areas and turned formerly residential land into parks and schools without providing adequate opportunities for displaced households to return. The program therefore became known by many people of color as "urban removal."

1957 **1958** **1960s**

CONSTRUCTION OF I-35

On August 21, 1958, City Council approved the land acquisition to expand East Avenue into I-35, seizing property from predominantly Black and Mexican American households. While racial segregation in Austin predated the construction of I-35, the new highway physically divided the city when it was completed in the early 1960s. Mexican American children attending segregated Palm School had to walk over the freeway. I-35 continues to harm surrounding communities' health.

Timeline text from the *Nothing About Us Without Us: Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool* report, except racially restrictive covenants and interpretation.

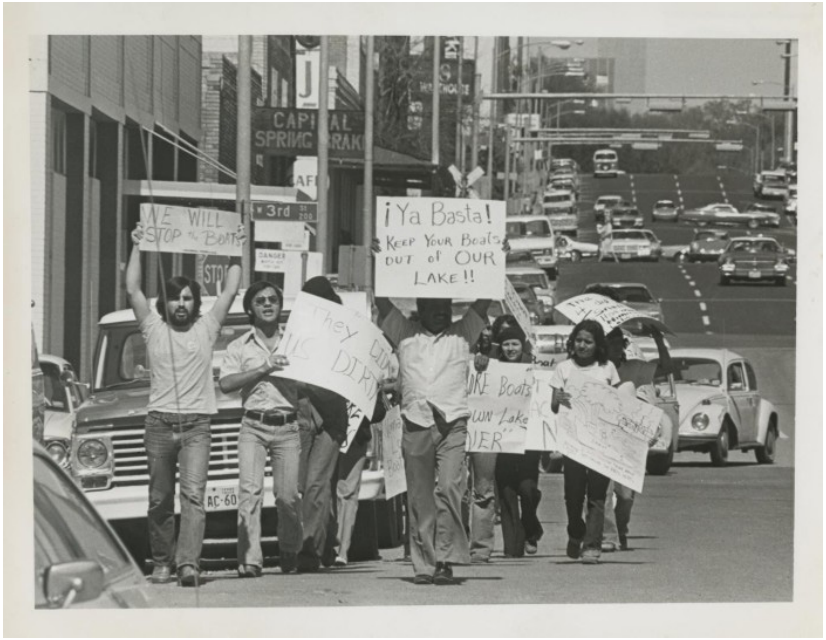
Equity in Austin

Root Causes of Current-Day Inequities

AUSTIN AQUA FESTIVAL AT FESTIVAL BEACH

Organized by the Chamber of Commerce, Aqua Fest drew enormous summer crowds. The annual festival included water events on Town Lake (now Lady Bird Lake), a rodeo, parades, and concerts. Noisy speedboat races and pollution particularly impacted Hispanic communities near the lake in East Austin. The Brown Berets, a Chicano social justice organization, led many protests of the festival. The drag boat races were stopped and the festival was moved west to Auditorium Shores in 1980.

1962-79



1966

NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT

The National Historic Preservation Act was one of multiple laws meant to consider the impacts of government action and give local communities a voice in decision-making, in response to interstate highways and urban renewal. The basis of modern historic preservation practice in the U.S., the far-reaching Act established the National Register of Historic Places. Biases in National Register designation criteria and their use have emphasized more elaborate and unchanged sites over modest, modified, or lost resources, resulting in inadequate recognition of places significant to communities of color at the national level and in the many municipalities like Austin that modeled their own designation criteria on the National Register.

CLOSURE OF L. C. ANDERSON HIGH SCHOOL AND BUSING

Beginning in 1889, L. C. Anderson High School witnessed decades of changes in Black public education. AISD constructed a new school in 1953 in an attempt to forestall integration, finally providing Black students with decent resources and providing a community gathering place. AISD closed Anderson in 1971 after white students refused to enroll there as part of federally ordered desegregation. African American students were bused to historically white schools in West Austin.

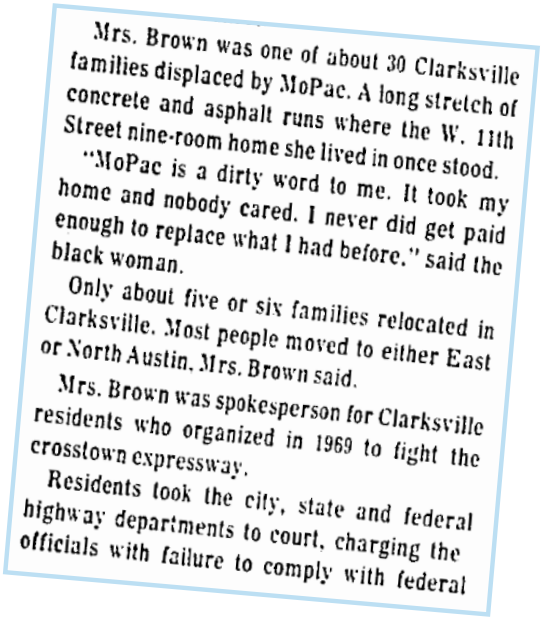
EXCLUSIVE EARLY PRESERVATION ORDINANCE AND ADVOCACY

The City of Austin passed the Historic Landmark Preservation Ordinance. The ordinance established the Historic Landmark Commission and a process for designating historic landmarks: exemplary or unique buildings linked to prominent community members. Early efforts focused almost exclusively on buildings built by white people in the 19th century. The 1981 Austin Historic Preservation Plan sought to guide and expand the new program, but it was not updated to reflect Austin's growth—or the preservation field's embrace of greater racial and cultural diversity and vernacular buildings and neighborhoods.

1971

CONSTRUCTION OF MOPAC

In 1971, the construction of the MoPac Expressway destroyed nearly one third of the homes in the historic Clarksville Freedom Colony. This displaced thirty Black families. When the Crosstown Expressway project threatened to wipe out the other half of the neighborhood, Clarksville residents took the City to court, got the neighborhood removed from the freeway plans, and won federal historic designation for the neighborhood.



Mrs. Brown was one of about 30 Clarksville families displaced by MoPac. A long stretch of concrete and asphalt runs where the W. 11th Street nine-room home she lived in once stood.

"MoPac is a dirty word to me. It took my home and nobody cared. I never did get paid enough to replace what I had before," said the black woman.

Only about five or six families relocated in Clarksville. Most people moved to either East or North Austin, Mrs. Brown said.

Mrs. Brown was spokesperson for Clarksville residents who organized in 1969 to fight the crosstown expressway.

Residents took the city, state and federal highway departments to court, charging the officials with failure to comply with federal

1974

MoPac text from the *Nothing About Us Without Us: Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool* report.

Equity in Austin

Root Causes of Current-Day Inequities

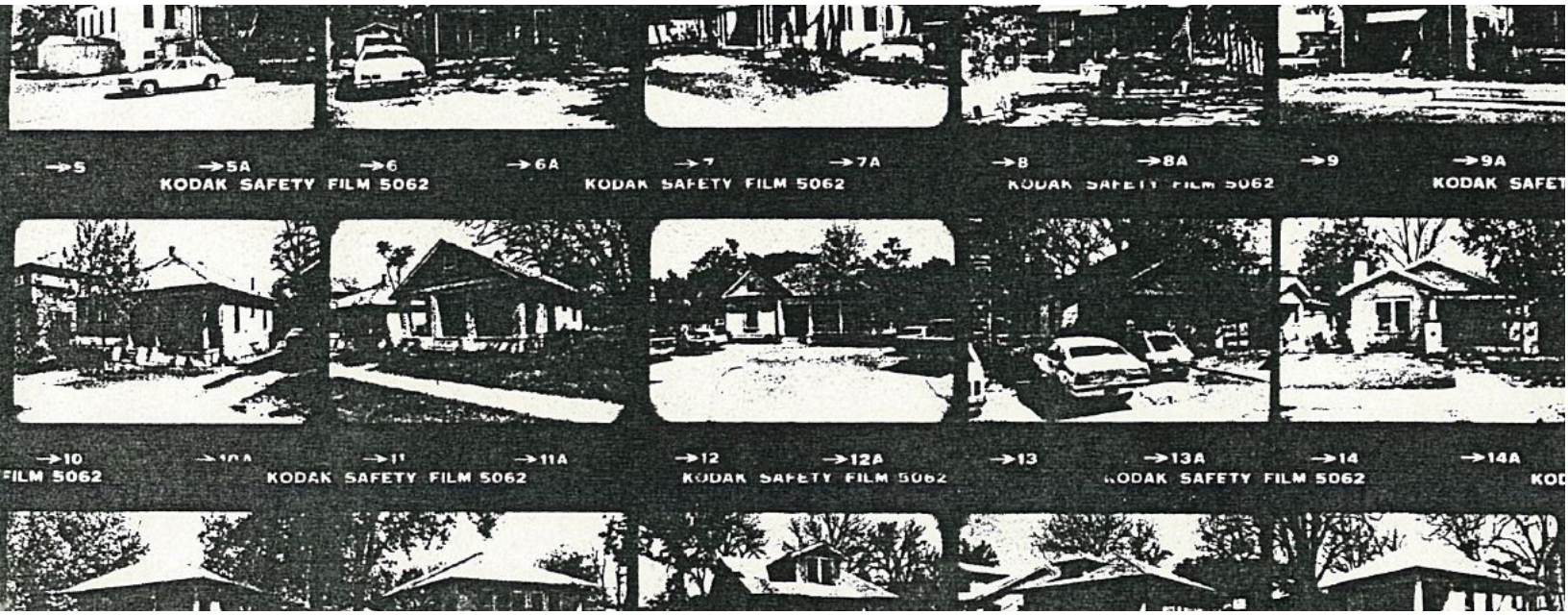
1984 HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY

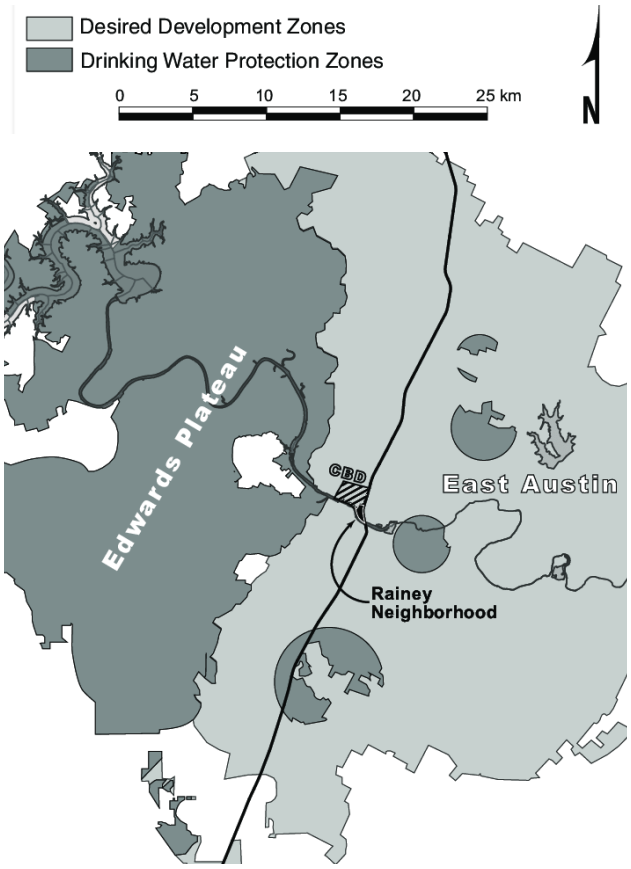
The first large-scale survey in Austin focused only on architecture, rating larger, high-style buildings as higher priority for more research. This approach reflected preservation philosophy at the time, which ignored the value of smaller houses in working-class neighborhoods. As a result, local preservation efforts benefitted wealthier, historically white neighborhoods over communities of color.

15% Average percentage of properties that the survey recommended for further research in other areas, excluding downtown and UT

4% Percentage of properties recommended for further research in East Austin

1984





ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ORDINANCES DIRECTING INTENSIVE DEVELOPMENT TO EAST AUSTIN

In the early 1990s, primarily white West Austin homeowners successfully advocated for stricter development control ordinances like the Drinking Water Protection Zone over the Edwards Aquifer. By the late 1990s, the City established the Desired Development Zone (DDZ) to steer development and redevelopment away from environmentally sensitive areas in West Austin to East Austin, which led to gentrification and displacement of Black and Latinx people. These plans are still actively referenced to direct development to East Austin.

1990s

1994

LATE RECOGNITION OF LGTBQ HISTORIC SITES

The first major national recognition of LGBTQ historic sites did not occur until the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising, when a volunteer organization published the first guide to lesbian and gay historic sites in the U.S. The Stonewall Inn was designated at the national level in 1999 and at the local level in 2015. Identifying historically significant LGBTQ sites remains a challenge. Most sites were secret or transient due to safety concerns, and homosexual acts were illegal until 2003.

Environmental policies text from the *Nothing About Us Without Us: Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool* report.

Equity in Austin

Root Causes of Current-Day Inequities

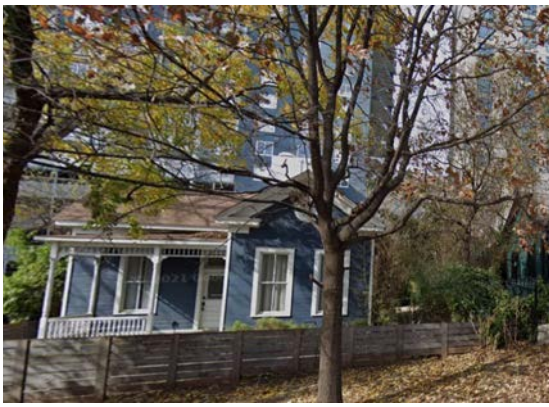
REZONING OF RAINEY STREET

Located near downtown, the Rainey Street neighborhood was occupied by Mexican American families beginning in 1935, after earlier white residents moved to the suburbs. Developers expressed interest, but the neighborhood association advocated for anti-displacement measures and more affordable housing in its 1980 Rainey Barrio Preservation Plan. The area was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985. Twenty years later, the City rezoned the Rainey neighborhood to Central Business District, which allowed virtually unlimited commercial and multi-family development, led to skyrocketing property taxes, and left families with no choice but to sell their longtime homes.

LATE HISTORIC DISTRICT LEGISLATION

In 2004, City Council passed an ordinance allowing historic districts to be designated in Austin. This was decades after peer cities adopted the tool and occurred over the protests of powerful citizens who believed that only landmark-worthy buildings should be preserved. Historic district designation looks at neighborhoods holistically, recognizing the value of community stories and older, typically smaller houses. However, the local designation process is lengthy and expensive for community members and lacked clear written guidance until recently. East Austin's first two historic districts were not designated until 2019 and 2020.

2004



CITY-SUPPORTED ZONING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

From the 1950s to today, City and business leaders have led a efforts to expand the city's economic base with the tech industry (a primarily white workforce). These activities have not brought equal prosperity to all communities. As the explosive local economy and cultural sheen draws 150 new residents per day and pushes up the cost of living, older houses and apartment buildings in East Austin's residential neighborhoods have been purchased by higher-income, often white, households and developers better able to compete in a hot real estate market. This has driven up property values and forced residents to sell homes that have been in their families for generations.

2016

LIMITED FOLLOW-UP TO EAST AUSTIN HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY

City Council funded a historic resource survey of East Austin following a spate of demolitions. Completed in 2016, the survey included narrative context, recommended historic landmarks, and potential historic districts. However, chronic staffing shortages resulted in limited follow-up outreach to help local property owners understand the benefits and processes of historic designation. Few properties and districts have been designated as a result of the survey.

REACTIVE HISTORIC REVIEW FOCUSED ON INDIVIDUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Instead of proactively partnering with community members to identify and preserve important historic and cultural resources, most municipal preservation activities in Austin are reactive. Code-dictated processes and staff shortages mean that staff spend most of their time reviewing demolitions. To prevent demolition, a property must be individually significant as a historic landmark—a threshold more likely to be reached by architecturally grand buildings associated with wealthier, typically white people.

Economic development text from the *Nothing About Us Without Us: Racial Equity Anti-Displacement Tool* report; Rainey Street rezoning text adapted from the Palm District Planning Initiative timeline.

Integrating Equity into the Plan

Grounded in historical perspectives, working group members and staff sought to center equity in both the process and the plan. Even policies that appear "race-neutral" can negatively impact communities of color due to decades of neglect, disinvestment, and racial and ethnic discrimination that restricted where people could live, denied them access to resources and public services, limited their ability to build wealth across generations, and ignored their voices in public processes.

For this plan, working group members used an equity evaluation framework to assess each recommendation. The framework filters the criteria for success (p. 8) through the lens of how recommendations may impact historically marginalized communities.

Equity evaluation framework

Does the recommendation…	**Yes/No**
1. Reinforce the plan's vision?	

If yes:

Does the recommendation…	**-1 No / harms**	**0 Neutral**	**+1 Yes / benefits**
2. Respect community-based knowledge, and is it based on community-identified needs and input?			
3. Increase equitable access to information about historic preservation and equip people to take action? Is it clear to people without previous preservation experience?			
4. Recognize and honor the cultures, historic assets, traditions, and stories of historically marginalized communities in meaningful ways?			
5. Ground its reasoning and expected outcomes in good practices around equity, including racially disaggregated data?			
6. Balance big-picture thinking with specific, actionable, measurable items that recognize and redress historical inequities, both isolated and systemic?			
7. Improve access to preservation policies, programs, tools, and incentives for communities of color and low-income communities?			
8. Avoid creating financial or other burdens for communities of color and low-income people? If yes, are there opportunities to mitigate these impacts? Does it place responsibility on institutions to address historical disparities in historic preservation policies, programs, and tools?			
9. Support affordability, economic opportunities, and environmental sustainability for everyone, and especially for communities of color? If not, are there opportunities to do so?			
10. Engage and empower historically marginalized communities to actively participate in implementation?			

Recommendations

The Preservation Plan Working Group developed amd revised 107 recommendations with intensive assistance from a 9-member Drafting Committee. The working group received targeted feedback from focus groups, the Technical Advisory Group of City staff, and the Preservation Plan Committee of the Historic Landmark Commission.

The recommendations provide a framework for improving historic preservation policies, programs, and tools in Austin—and strengthening our communities at the same time. Recommendations are grouped under 3 themes and 14 goals, with many recommendations supporting more than one goal.

Goals of the Equity-Based Preservation Plan

What we preserve

1. Tell Austin's full history
2. Recognize cultural heritage
3. Preserve archaeological resources
4. Stabilize communities
5. Support environmental sustainability

Who preserves

6. Make preservation more accessible
7. Support people doing the work
8. Engage new partners

How we preserve

9. Proactively identify important places
10. Follow good designation practices
11. Support stewardship of community assets
12. Be strategic with review
13. Protect historic resources
14. Implement the plan collaboratively

1 Tell Austin's Full History

Why is this important?

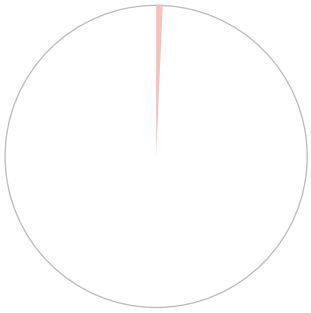
- Most early preservation advocates were white. They focused on preserving the large homes and prominent institutions of white, wealthy people.
- The historic preservation field has since expanded to value ordinary buildings and neighborhoods and to tell the stories of racially and culturally diverse communities. Today, we are still making up for lost time.

What's happening in Austin now?

We have a rich and complex history, but most of our designated historic buildings are associated with the people who wielded power—most often wealthy white men. Only 16% of Austin's historic landmarks and districts have known associations with communities of color.

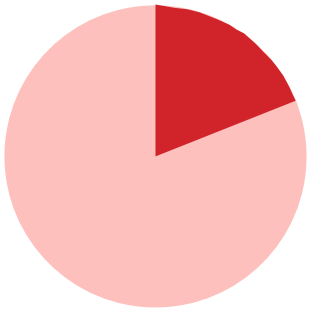
In recent years, City Council has designated more racially and culturally diverse historic resources. A 2016 survey identified many more potential landmarks and districts in East Austin. However, limited staff time means that only some follow-up can happen. Property owners who already know the benefits of historic zoning and can navigate complex, costly, and time-consuming processes are more likely to benefit from designation.

Various local stakeholders engage community members in sharing and celebrating stories that matter to them through oral histories, podcasts, and more. Meanwhile, other City departments are developing wayfinding and signage standards for streets and parks, which could inform publicly accessible storytelling and interpretation of historic places.



0.7%

Percentage of properties in Austin that are locally designated as historic



16%

Percentage of locally designated historic resources with known connections to the heritage of communities of color (0.115% of all properties in Austin)

How can we achieve this goal?

1. **Gather stories that tell Austin's diverse history across different cultures and languages.**

   Create opportunities to recognize, share, and celebrate local heritage and historic places. Collect stories through collaborative, coordinated, ongoing outreach and engagement. Prioritize outreach to those who have historically been marginalized in and by public processes and who are underrepresented in designated historic resources.

2. **Create 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.**

   With community members' consent, make results publicly accessible and readily available in multiple formats via multiple repositories, including online platforms. Integrate results into historic review processes to identify potentially significant properties.

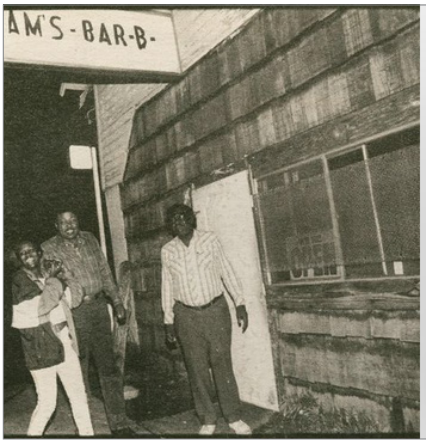
A thematic context statement tells the story of a community, group, or building type—a theme—and identifies places associated with that story.

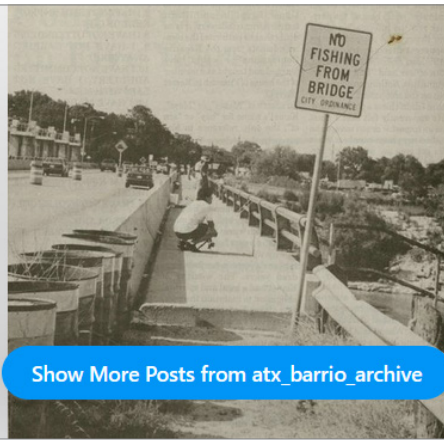
3. **Develop thematic context statements to understand how local communities, groups, and building types grew and changed, prioritizing themes associated with historically marginalized communities.**

   Engage community members broadly and deeply in development of the context statements, including longtime community members who have been displaced. Use non-traditional research methods to ensure all stories are heard and elevated.

4. **Tell the full stories of historic places in Austin through creative interpretation.**

   Use strategies and tools such as signage, maps and other online resources, speakers, podcasts, film series, and creative events and projects to share why older and historic places in Austin matter with a broad audience. Strive to tell the full stories of places and the city, including chapters that have been omitted or systematically erased, so that we may shape a more inclusive city and accurate story of Austin. Acknowledge the struggles and celebrate the triumphs and contributions of marginalized communities. Meaningfully involve communities in the interpretation of their specific histories, ensuring costs associated with interpretation don't fall on communities.





Austin is home to many initiatives that celebrate and collect stories from diverse communities. The plan recommends coordinating with City departments and community partners to expand these efforts and link them to preservation work.

5. **Research historic properties to identify and recognize untold stories, especially those associated with historically marginalized communities.**

   Recognize that older and historic places have many layers, and that stories associated with wealthier white people are more likely to have been recorded by early preservation efforts. Develop a plan to research additional stories associated with historic properties and, where they are found, amend historic nominations to reflect a more complex history.

6. **Document places that have been lost.**

   In conjunction with proactive preservation strategies, recognize the memories, stories, and values associated with places that no longer exist. Create a clear, publicly accessible way to document these places and share stories associated with them. Conduct focused outreach to African American and Mexican American communities with East Austin roots who have been impacted by disinvestment and demolition.

7. **Reach out to owners of potential historic landmarks and historic districts, particularly those associated with communities that have historically been marginalized.**

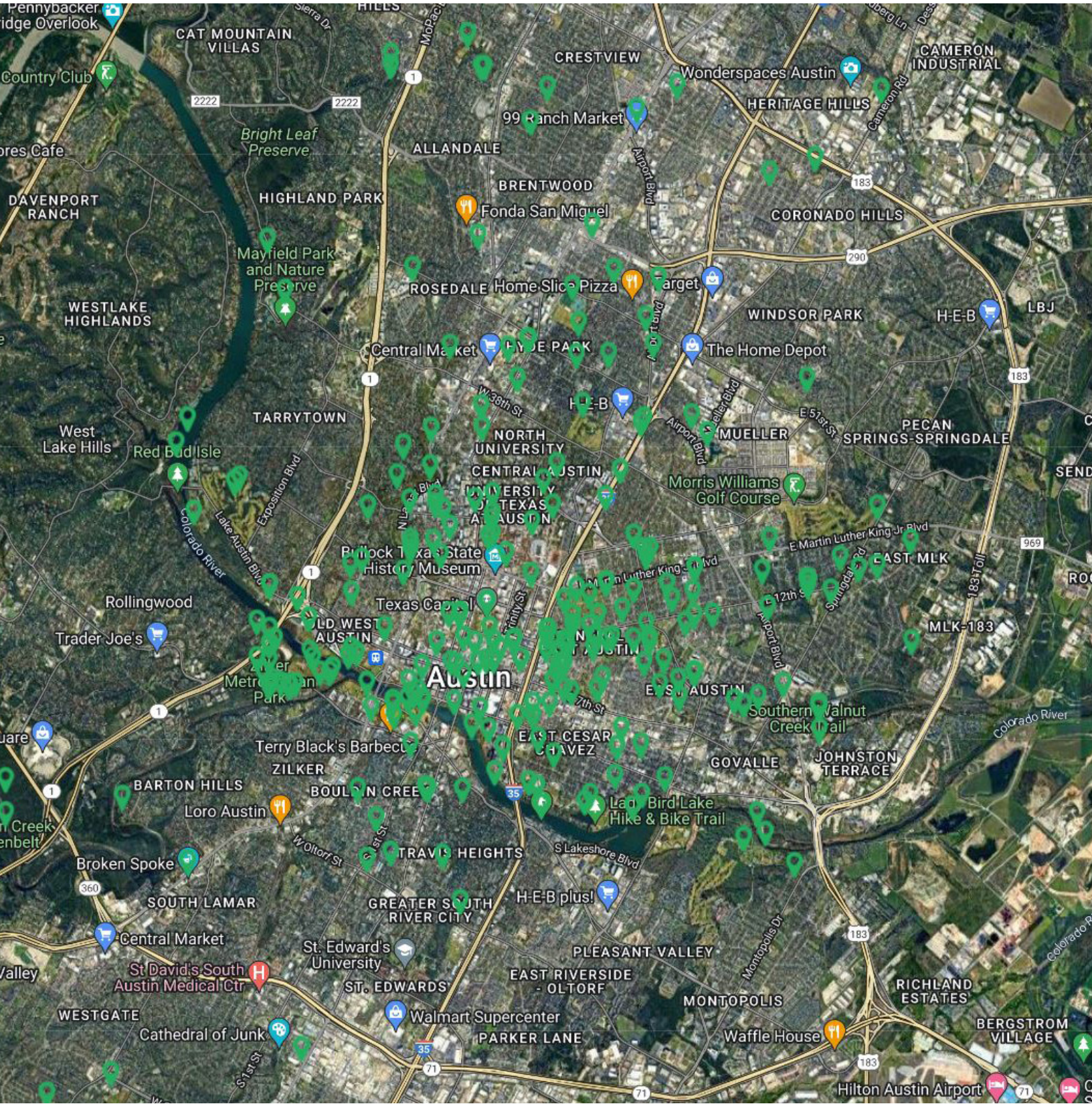
   Use survey data, context statements, and cultural mapping to assess and prioritize potential historic properties. Historic designation requires time, familiarity with complex City processes, and funds; communities of color and people with lower incomes have been functionally excluded from the process. Conduct proactive engagement in areas identified as potential historic districts and to potential historic landmarks, prioritizing areas occupied by historically marginalized communities, property owners in areas at high risk of displacement, and Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD) districts. Offer workshops for community members interested in compiling historic district or landmark applications.

8. **Designate more historic landmarks and districts that represent communities that have historically been marginalized to tell Austin's full story.**

15. LA PERLA BAR - 1512 E 6TH ST (1940S)

La Perla probablemente es el último bar tejano que queda sobre la calle East 6th, una ruta mexicano americana que se está transformando rápidamente y que antes estaba repleto de cantinas. El cartel emblemático del bar, un sombrero apoyado en el sol poniente, fue creado por el artista Joseph Henderson de East Austin. El bar tejano ha sido un lugar de encuentro para la comunidad desde que se abrió en la década de 1940. En las primeras décadas, músicos tocaban frecuentemente en La Perla y en las otras cantinas de la zona, como Manuel "Cowboy" Donley, que más tarde fue admitido al Tejano Hall of Fame. La música siempre ha sido una parte importante de la cultura de la calle East 6th, y las cantinas creaban un lugar para que los músicos tejanos prometedores puedan perfeccionar su arte. De manera similar, las cantinas sirvieron como lugar para que los líderes y políticos mexicano americanos se mantuvieran conectados con su comunidad.

Austin's historic preservation program currently does not share the stories of why places are important. The plan recommends collaborating with local organizations to support interpretation and meaningfully involve community members.



Places in Austin that matter to community members, collected in the community survey for the draft preservation plan in spring 2024. The plan recommends an ongoing, publicly available, community-sourced cultural mapping program to identify potentially significant sites.

2 Recognize Cultural Heritage

Why is this important?

- Cultural heritage includes the traditions, knowledge, stories, and skills that help define and connect communities, groups, and individuals. It is sometimes called living heritage.
- Legacy businesses, murals, and other types of cultural heritage add meaning and a sense of belonging to places. This is especially important in quickly changing cities like Austin.
- Traditional preservation tools may support cultural heritage, but not always. For example, surveys focused on architecture may not reflect the most important stories of a place and community.

What's happening in Austin now?

Cultural heritage is currently recognized in a few ways in Austin. Locally designated cultural districts include the African American Cultural Heritage District in East Austin (Six Square), the Mexican American Heritage Corridor on 5th Street, and the Red River Cultural District. During Covid-19, the City offered a legacy business grant program for 20+ year-old restaurants, arts, and entertainment businesses. The State of Texas also runs a cultural district program largely focused on economic benefits, with two districts in Austin.

Cultural heritage like legacy businesses and murals connect people to places, traditions, and each other.

How can we achieve this goal?

9. Strongly support iconic longstanding legacy businesses that contribute to Austin's unique character and heritage.

Economic Development Department activities like the Legacy Business Relief Grant offer a strong baseline. Ensure that legacy businesses benefit from existing and new programs by providing coordinated marketing/promotion, technical assistance, and streamlined regulation for a wide variety of legacy businesses; offering dedicated need-based funding and tax relief; and creating a "legacy business" points category for funding opportunities. Conduct focused outreach to businesses owned by people of color about opportunities and work with them and other stakeholders to identify gaps.

10. Create a way to designate exterior murals for historic or cultural significance, with incentives for property owners.

Consider a more recent age threshold and balance maintenance requirements against traditional concepts of material integrity. Allow a mural to be designated without the entire building being required to have significance. Conduct proactive identification, community engagement, and owner outreach to designate and conserve significant murals.

11. Consider how various district designations can support Austin's cultural heritage.

Building on current work in the Economic Development Department and existing cultural districts, explore models for district programs that aim to preserve cultural heritage, prevent displacement, and further local control for communities that have historically been disadvantaged by and underrepresented in City policies. Work closely with community stakeholders to determine how districts can be supported to meet multiple goals, including preservation of cultural heritage such as community traditions, languages, and traditional foodways.

12. Develop consistent definitions and criteria around intangible cultural heritage to inform and guide local programs and policies.

Clearly define legacy businesses and other cultural heritage.

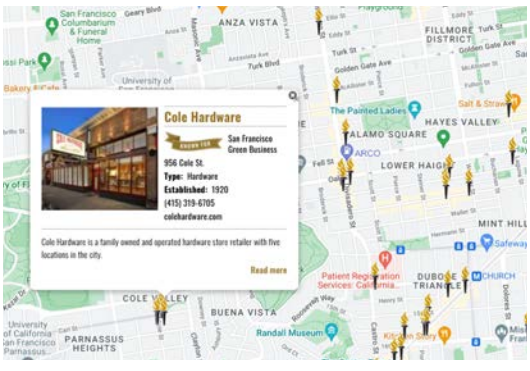
13. Develop an addendum for landscape management and update historic sign standards; add both to the City of Austin Historic Design Standards.

LEGACY BUSINESSES

San Francisco and San Antonio offer coordinated support for legacy businesses. Our work to define and support Austin's legacy businesses can learn from theirs.

Potential criteria for legacy business designation:

- Business age (typically 20-30 years)
- Independent and locally owned
- Contributes to neighborhood history
- Contributes to neighborhood or community identity
- Commits to maintain defining physical features or traditions



3 Preserve Archaeological Resources

Why is this important?

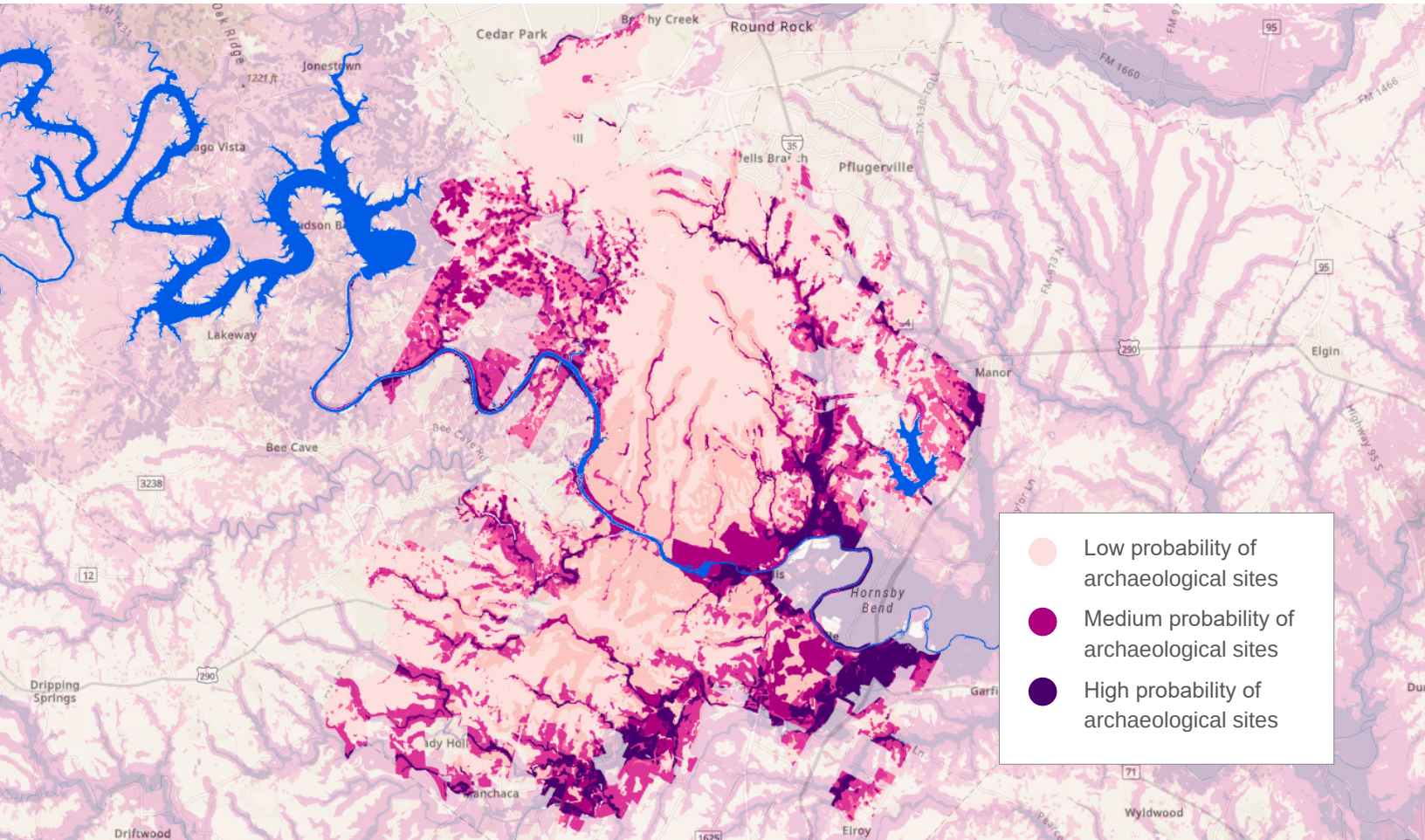
- Archaeological sites provide a unique window into local history. From Native American and Indigenous communities to more recent urban history, archaeology helps explain how a community has developed.
- In a 2016 review of 69 local governments, less than 1/3 had archaeologists on staff. The remainder relied on partnerships or reports developed for permit review.
- Both federal and state laws address archaeological resources. However, with the exception of cemeteries, neither covers private development.

What's happening in Austin now?

Archaeology is one of five criteria for potential historic landmarks. However, City staff do not have access to archaeological expertise to evaluate potentially significant properties or do proactive outreach and planning. Because of this, the archaeology criterion is rarely used.

Apart from protection of the few archaeological sites designated as historic landmarks, the Land Development Code has no predevelopment review process to assess archaeological potential or require data recovery if significant sites will be disturbed.

Most large sites with a high probability of archaeological sites are located on Austin's outskirts.



How can we achieve this goal?

14. Make professional archaeological expertise readily available to City staff.

Create a City Archaeologist position, have an archaeologist on retainer, or create a rotation list and budget for archaeological services to ensure professional expertise is available for oversight of or advisement on ground-disturbing work on public land, at historic properties with archaeological significance, and in other private development as appropriate. Develop criteria, liability guidelines, and a review process for staff and Commission review of grant-funded archaeological projects.

15. Ensure significant archaeological resources are adequately recognized in planning for City projects.

Comply with the Antiquities Code of Texas for ground-disturbing projects on public land. Require archaeological assessments prior to sale of City-owned land.

16. Explore incorporating archaeological review requirements into the predevelopment review process for large projects in areas with known or high probability for archaeological sites.

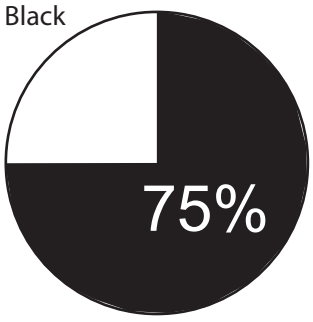
Archaeological resources are unrecoverable once lost. Evaluate the extent to which areas with known or likely archaeological sites are threatened by development. Consider code changes to require targeted review of private development, with thresholds based on archaeological potential and project size. Pair any additional oversight with robust outreach and education.

The Antiquities Code of Texas requires Texas Historical Commission staff to review activities on state and local public land that could disturb archaeological or historic sites.

4 Stabilize Communities

Why is this important?

- People add essential meaning to places. Longtime residents, seniors, and renters whose stories are interwoven with their homes are at increasing risk of displacement.
- Studies across the United States have shown that properties in historic districts appreciate faster than similar properties outside districts. In Austin's superheated market, though, historic district designation can be a near-term tool to stabilize property values.
- Older houses that are not designated as historic play an even bigger role in maintaining affordability and preventing displacement. Older houses provide relatively affordable housing without public subsidies. Fixing them up can be less expensive than building new housing units.
- Smaller units at the rear or added to an existing home add housing that can provide income for property owners, helping them stay in their homes, and create units that are more affordable than primary houses. These smaller units have long been a fixture in older neighborhoods, including Black and Brown communities.



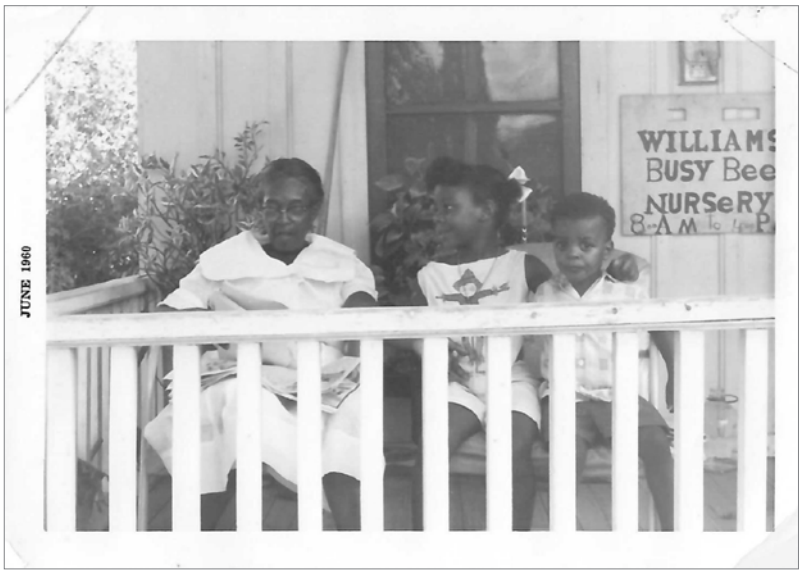
Most affordable rental housing in the U.S. is located in unsubsidized, privately owned buildings.[26]

What's happening in Austin now?

Local housing values have soared in recent years, creating an affordability crisis for low- and moderate-income households. City programs fund home repairs, accessibility improvements, weatherization, and energy efficiency projects for families in need, but their reach has been limited.

Both the Mayor's Anti-Displacement Task Force and the People's Plan recommended expanding the use of historic districts to preserve Austin's historically Black and Brown communities, prioritizing communities at high risk of displacement. In July 2022, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) convened a Technical Assistance Panel around safeguarding older and historic housing while supporting affordability and preventing displacement. The panel's recommendations align closely with this plan.

Johnny Limón outside his home (top); the Busy Bee Nursery on Tillotson Avenue, an important contributor to early education in East Austin.



How can we achieve this goal?

17. **Create and improve tools for retaining existing buildings when developing multiple units on a property.**

    Support the retention of older and historic buildings, provision of affordable housing, and displacement prevention. Tools could include an improved preservation bonus with increased flexibility for impervious cover and unit count.

18. **Incentivize more, smaller dwelling units to provide more affordable housing while stewarding neighborhood character**

    Educate homeowners about smaller units, also called ADUs (accessory dwelling units), alley flats, in-law units, and granny flats. Provide technical support and pre-approved plans that meet the Historic Design Standards. Help low- and moderate-income households finance unit construction and offset increased property taxes; also explore incentives for units that provide affordable rental housing to low-income households.

19. **Support the retention of older and historic commercial and multi-family properties.**

    Identify or develop effective tools for retaining older commercial and multi-family properties. This may include, but is not limited to, expanding the eligibility for site plan exemptions or expediting the site plan process.

20. **Streamline and expedite the development review process for projects that support the retention of older properties.**

    Incentivize retaining older buildings through process changes, particularly shorter development review timelines, using SMART Housing as a model. Identify process barriers and consider changes that could make retaining older buildings a more attractive option. Reduce relocation permit application fees to encourage a more environmentally friendly choice than demolition.

21. **Provide resources for heirs' property owners and low-income seniors.**

    Recognize the challenges faced by those inheriting heirs' property, as well as low-income seniors. Identify tools and convene partners to provide training and other resources (e.g., promotion of over 65 tax exemption, estate planning/wills, assistance with tax liens, and life estates).

This Hyde Park fourplex incorporates two units in a historic home and two in a rear addition. New units behind existing homes are more affordable than new buildings built on a scraped lot.[27]

"As we think about future housing policy, we need to be careful that we don't focus so much on increasing production of new housing—important as that is—that we lose sight of a vast resource of affordable housing hiding in plain sight that can be preserved for the long term for a modest fraction of the cost of building new."

- Paul Brophy and Carey Shea, Shelterforce[28]

22. Explore a legacy inheritance incentive to support low- and moderate-income descendants who want to stay in an inherited property.

To help meet community preservation and anti-displacement goals, explore what a potential legacy inheritance incentive could look like. Bring together affected families and experts to assess needs and effective solutions.

23. Educate historic property owners about resources that can help them remain in and improve their buildings.

Reach out to historic property owners about programs that help prevent displacement and make essential improvements. These include added smaller units, GO REPAIR! grants, Architectural Barrier Removal, Home Rehabilitation Loans, and Austin Energy incentives aimed at weatherizing properties and reducing energy use. Most, though not all, of these programs are income-restricted.

24. Educate historic property owners about resources that support affordable rental housing.

Reach out to owners and managers of historic rental properties about programs such as Rental Housing Development Assistance (RHDA), which funds maintenance and rehabilitation for affordable units. Target longtime property owners with lower debt service, leveraging the ability of older houses and long-term owners to provide affordable rental housing.

25. Direct some affordable housing funding towards historic properties.

Layer affordable housing resources, historic designation, and preservation incentives to achieve multiple public goals. Work with the Austin and Travis County housing finance corporations early in the resource allocation process to ensure that their funding does not negatively impact eligible or designated historic resources.

26. Support community land trusts as a way to provide accessible ownership opportunities, preserve affordability, retain older buildings, and prevent displacement.

27. Explore a tiered rehabilitation tax abatement for non-designated historic-age properties.

Develop a pilot incentive at the City level that meets affordability and sustainability goals by encouraging property owners to reinvest in older buildings, rather than replacing them with more expensive newer buildings. This could be structured similarly to the 10% federal rehabilitation tax credit (offered through 2017), a smaller credit available to older buildings without historic designation and reevaluated in 10-15 years.

28. Examine whether existing and proposed incentive programs could incorporate a preference policy benefiting households with ties to Austin to help prevent displacement from homes, neighborhoods, and the city and to help people return to Austin.

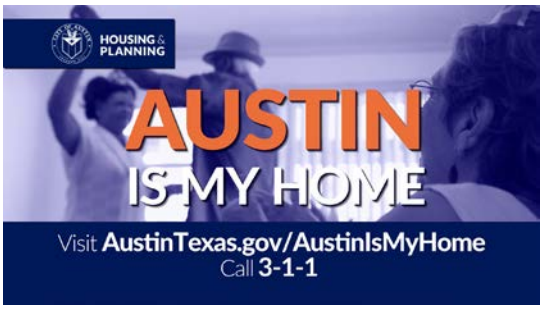
29. Research other governments' approaches to documenting historic inequities in relation to dispossession, property retention, and generational wealth-building among residents.

As described in this plan's equity timeline, many groups have been harmed by City and other governmental policies, including but not limited to Indigenous people, African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Asian Americans. Make recommendations to City Council for potential remediation or restitution that could be addressed through historic preservation tools or other City programs.

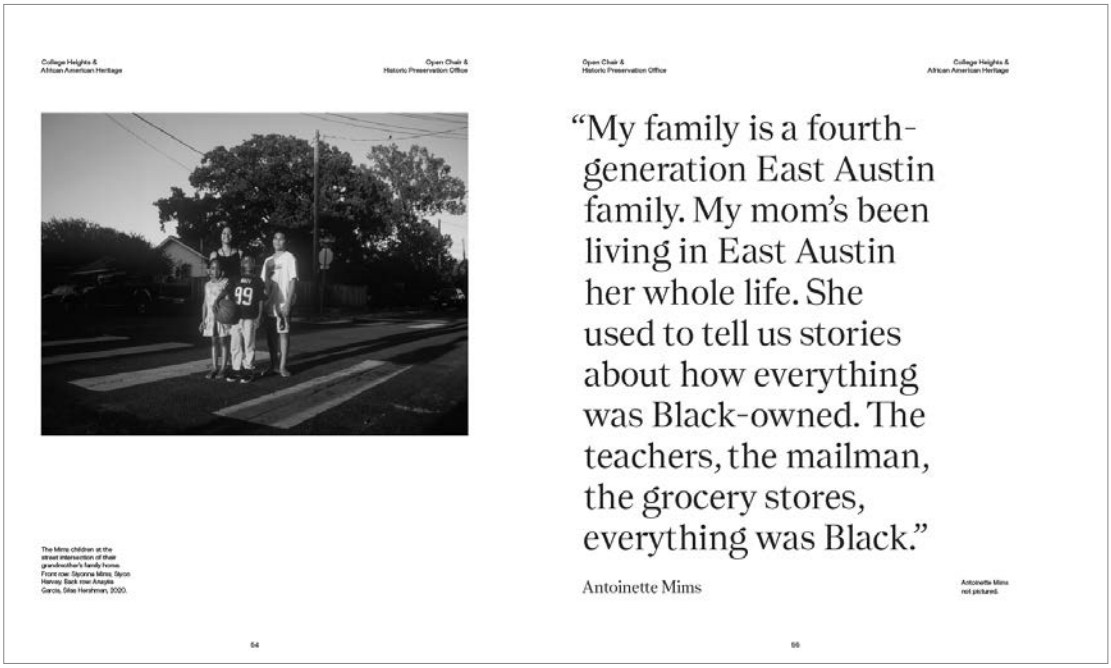
30. Advocate for an income-based property tax circuit breaker.

Recognize the value that longtime residents contribute to stable neighborhoods and vibrant communities. This incentive would need to be enabled at the state level, then adopted as a local tool. Work with affordable housing advocates and policy organizations to advocate for this anti-displacement measure for all low- and moderate-income property owners, and especially seniors.

The City offers many programs to support homeowners and renters. More outreach is needed to ensure people know about them.



Substantial resources, more coordination, and development review process changes are needed to prevent residents and businesses from being displaced.



College Heights & African American Heritage

Open Chair & Historic Preservation Office

The Mims children at the street intersection of their grandmother's family home. Front row: Siyonna Mims, Siyon Harvey. Back row: Anayla Garcia, Silas Hershman, 2020.

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Open Chair & Historic Preservation Office

College Heights & African American Heritage

"My family is a fourth-generation East Austin family. My mom's been living in East Austin her whole life. She used to tell us stories about how everything was Black-owned. The teachers, the mailman, the grocery stores, everything was Black."

Antoinette Mims

Antoinette Mims not pictured.

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"An essential part of preserving history is stabilizing the community—keeping families in their neighborhoods. How do you preserve historical places if the people who know about the history are gone?"

- Community member, as part of a focus group about the plan

Older home during demolition

5 Support Environmental Sustainability

Why is this important?

- The greenest building is typically one that's already built because of embodied energy and quality materials like old-growth wood.
- Preserving and rehabilitating older buildings reduces the amount of landfill waste.
- Reducing demolitions helps avoid negative public health impacts, preserve affordable housing, and create jobs.

What's happening in Austin now?

The City has set a goal of reducing the amount of trash sent to landfills by 90% by the year 2040. To help meet it, the Climate Equity Plan recommends reducing waste from construction and demolition projects. Currently, less than half of Austin's waste is diverted from landfills. When a commercial or multifamily building is demolished, at least 50% of construction debris must be reused or recycled. There are no requirements for single-family houses.

Sometimes property owners may want to relocate a building instead of demolish it. However, relocating buildings within Austin is currently difficult. Owners must obtain a permit to move the building off the property, and another to place it on the new lot in a way that meets setback constraints and tree regulations. This permitting process can be very lengthy—and costly. Because of this, most relocated houses end up outside Austin.

10-80 years required for a new "energy efficient" building to recoup the embodied carbon lost when an older building is demolished

423,000 tons of construction and demolition debris were generated in Austin in 2020

Embodied carbon is the sum of all the emissions used to produce any service or good—like a building.

Emissions are generated by...

- Extracting raw materials
- Tranporting raw materials
- Processing raw materials into building materials like framing, siding, and windows
- Transporting building materials to site
- Constructing the building
- Maintaining the building
- Operating the building

How can we achieve this goal?

31. Support energy efficiency improvements for older and historic properties.

Connect property owners and tenants with information and resources to make their buildings more energy efficient and better weatherized. Ensure benefits flow to low-income communities and communities of color.

32. Recognize the significant external costs associated with demolition by adopting policies and practices that incentivize alternatives.

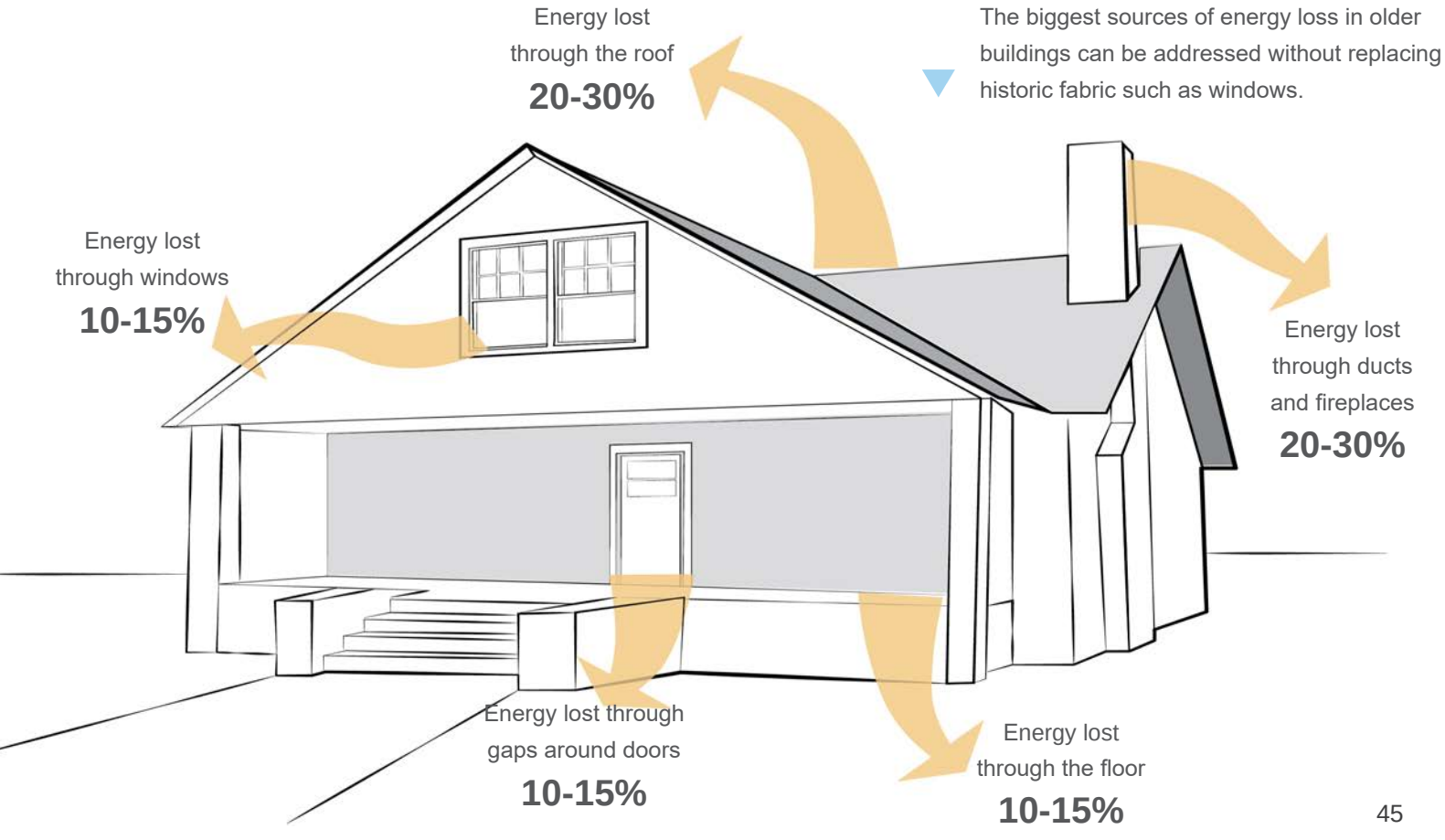
Evaluate and adopt policies and practices that incentivize alternatives to demolition. Increase review fees to offset reduced or eliminated fees for historic preservation efforts.

33. Make it easier to relocate buildings within Austin.

Following a Council resolution in fall 2023, work with other City departments and stakeholders to explore how to facilitate local relocation when preserving a building in place is not feasible. Encourage property owners to retain older buildings.

34. Encourage deconstruction and materials salvage when preservation in place and relocation are not feasible.

In line with Austin's goal of zero waste by the year 2040, provide education and outreach to regional construction and demolition professionals on the benefits of deconstruction, including health impacts, loss of cultural heritage, and increased landfill waste. Support workforce development to train professionals on deconstruction processes. Support the procurement of City-owned or -leased space to store salvaged material from deconstructed buildings, including historic-age quality building materials. If space can be obtained, explore potential policies to require deconstruction and salvage of materials from older buildings.



6 Make Preservation More Accessible

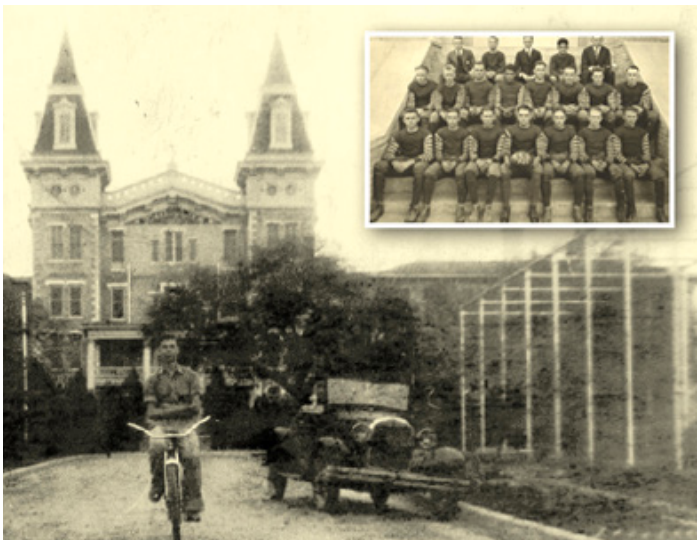
Why is this important?

- Preservation successes are created and sustained by community members, property owners, business owners, advocacy organizations, and allied groups. Engaging a diverse range of community members is essential.

What's happening in Austin now?

Most people find out about preservation projects through mailed notices of public hearings. The notices are not always easy to understand and arrive after a property owner has already made major decisions. The Historic Preservation Office also provides online information and limited outreach about historic preservation processes—one result of a relatively small staff tasked with time-consuming code requirements.

Other City departments do broader and deeper engagement around community heritage, including proactive outreach, education, and engagement activities where participants help make decisions and shape policies.



Many groups—like communities of color, low-income residents, and people with disabilities—have been excluded from City processes. These images show (from left) Volma Overton, Sr. at a City Council "Speak-In" in 1964, the Texas School for the Deaf, and people celebrating the renaming of Edward Rendon Sr. Park.

How can we achieve this goal?

35. Improve historic designation and historic review processes to be more clear, streamlined, and transparent.

Work with community members, including people with a range of experience levels navigating local historic processes, to improve processes for and communication around historic designation and historic review.

36. Help people access knowledge and resources and preserve community stories.

Offer classes, toolkits, and "train the trainer" events about historic preservation and designation, especially in older neighborhoods: what qualifies, how the process works, and how preservation benefits Austin. Consider an ongoing community ambassador program with paid participants who can facilitate storytelling events, collect oral histories, and provide preservation resources to neighbors, particularly in communities that have historically beem marginalized. Publicize opportunities to share archival material about community heritage with the Austin History Center and other repositories. Consider working across City divisions and/or departments on a community planner training.

37. Develop accessible materials about historic preservation, community heritage, incentives, archaeology, and City historic designation and review processes; provide online and hard copy versions.

Ensure that the Historic Preservation Office website, applications, and outreach materials are clear and accessible to people without formal preservation training. Provide resources in multiple languages and publicize the City's commitment to offer interpretation at community meetings.

38. Share preservation success stories while being upfront about potential costs and trade-offs.

Celebrate historic designation, especially for historic districts and commercial buildings. Use empirical research and quantitative analysis to demonstrate successful projects in built and cultural heritage. Use case studies on websites, handouts, presentations, videos, tours, etc. Present information about potential trade-offs while actively developing mitigation strategies. Acknowledge how historic inequities have led to fewer success stories in some communities to make the case for more equitable preservation policies and practices.

39. Make it easier to participate in public decision-making.

Identify and remove barriers to participation in public processes. Streamline and structure public meetings to make participation easier. Hold meetings in neighborhoods, on public transit lines, and at a variety of times outside of the typical Monday to Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. timeframe. Provide food and childcare. Offer online participation options, as well as other ways for those who are unfamiliar with public process and/or unavailable during meeting times to participate.

The Equity-Based Preservation Plan community ambassador program offers a model for paying community members to host storytelling events and connect neighbors with preservation resources.

7 Support People Doing the Work

Why is this important?

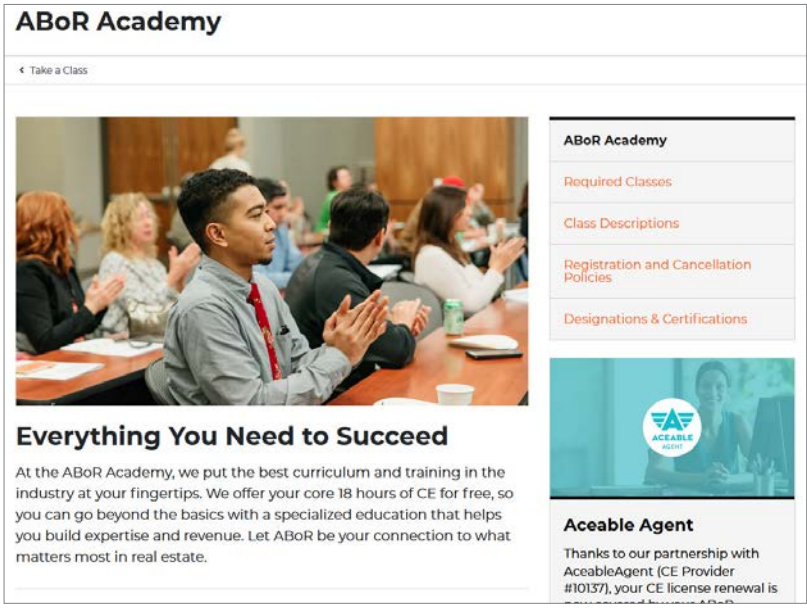
- Property owners and tenants play the most important role in maintaining older and historic buildings. Information and training, from good practices to DIY workshops, supports regular building upkeep and smart project planning.
- Designers, contractors, carpenters and other craftspeople, and real estate agents who work on and with older and historic buildings provide critical expertise for property owners. Providing them with clear materials at the right time helps owners to make informed decisions.
- The Historic Landmark Commission and Historic Preservation Office staff make key decisions about older and historic properties. Regular training and quality resources help them to be clear, consistent, and up to date on preservation good practices.

What's happening in Austin now?

City board and commission members are appointed by City Council and the mayor. They volunteer their time for public hearings and additional committee meetings. Childcare is not provided.

Newly appointed Historic Landmark Commission members receive a binder with background materials. In the recent past, Historic Landmark Commission trainings have been offered approximately every year.

Information about historic review processes is provided on the Historic Preservation Office website for property owners and others.



Austin's Historic Preservation Office organized a free hands-on wood window repair workshop in the Robertson/Stuart & Mair Historic District (top).

The Austin Board of Realtors (ABOR)'s ABOR Academy is a potential partner for sharing information about historic resources, tools, and processes.

How can we achieve this goal?

40. Provide regular building maintenance education and training for homeowners and tenants.

Share practical written, video, and social media resources for understanding, maintaining, and rehabilitating older buildings. Sponsor hands-on workshops to build maintenance and repair skills. Connect property owners and tenants to organizations that can assist them.

41. Proactively communicate about historic review processes and incentives with property owners, architects, developers, contractors, real estate agents, and land use consultants.

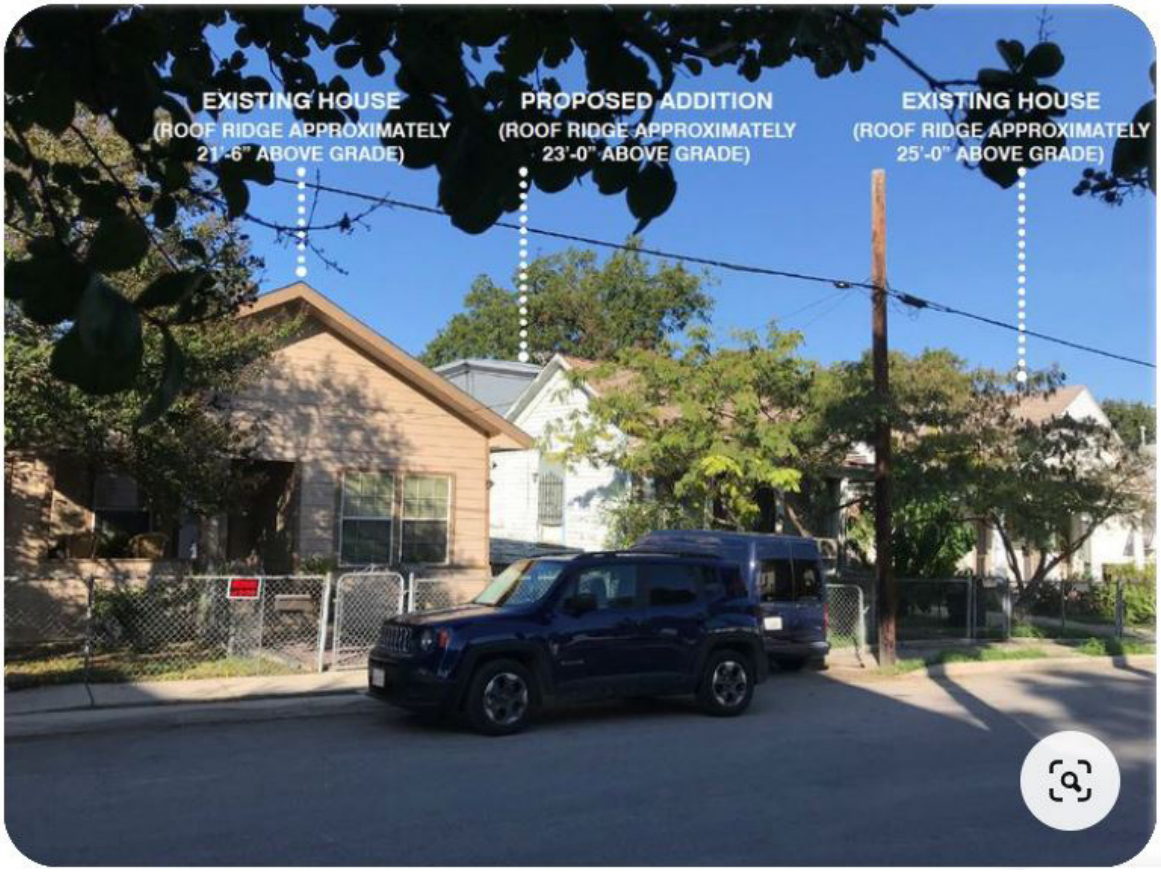
Provide information and regular training opportunities to historic property owners and professionals who act as intermediaries. Identify milestones in property sales and development decisions and determine when information is needed. This is particularly important for historic properties and properties that have been determined eligible for historic designation.

42. Create a preservation resource center.

Provide clear, accessible information, including examples of approved projects. This resource will help applicants and can give owners of prospective landmarks and in potential historic districts ideas about possible projects. Make information available online and as easily accessible hard copies (e.g., in branch libraries and City recreation centers).

43. Host historic preservation trade fairs.

Host periodic trade fairs to bring together historic property stewards and experts in preservation trades. Invite potential employers with job/apprenticeship opportunities to attend; conduct focused outreach to communities of color, teenagers, and young adults.



A preservation resource center can provide examples of approved projects to help property owners and designers understand what's possible.

44. Highlight craftspeople who work on historic buildings, through skills demonstrations, and by highlighting career pathways in preservation.

Through public events, workshops, and media, increase community awareness of local craftspeople, career pathways, and resources available for historic property stewardship.

45. Ensure that Historic Landmark Commission members and community ambassadors have access to regular training and helpful resources.

Orient new commissioners and community ambassadors and provide required annual trainings, including equity training. Update training materials periodically.

46. Provide regular training and professional development opportunities for Historic Preservation Office staff.

47. Make structural engineering expertise readily available to City staff.

Preservation staff are not able to assess the structural feasibility of properties proposed for demolition. Have a structural engineer on retainer and create a rotation list and budget for engineering services for properties that are eligible for landmark designation.

48. Institute fair compensation for City board and commission members.

The working group recommends this citywide policy change, which would reduce participation barriers for lower-income residents.

49. Provide free childcare for City board and commission members.

The working group recommends this citywide practice, which would reduce participation barriers for caregivers.

Historic Landmark Commission members spend many hours every month preparing for and attending commission and committee meetings. This unpaid time commitment limits who is able to participate.

Highlighting craftspeople who work on older buildings supports local businesses and job seekers in preservation and rehabilitation. It can also be a resource for property owners stewarding their buildings.

Many maintenance and repair projects can be completed by non-professionals with online resources and training.

8 Engage New Partners

Why is this important?

- Broadening preservation's reach and benefits to more people increases equitable preservation activity.
- Diverse organizations, community institutions, City departments, and City boards and commissions have overlapping interests in remembering and retaining local stories and places.
- To be effective, preservation initiatives must include this broad group of partners in creative collaborations.
- Effective outreach, education, and engagement involves creative partnerships. These partnerships invite people to share, celebrate, and preserve community stories and built heritage.

What's happening in Austin now?

Historically, preservation efforts have involved people who own property, are more likely to be white, and earn higher incomes than the average Austinite. This is the case in many or most places across the U.S.

In general, community members, neighborhood associations, and other stakeholders are engaged project by project, either by City staff or through their own initiative. Coordination between City departments generally happens on an ad hoc basis. Departments whose work regularly overlaps with preservation meet quarterly.

A history of broken promises and discrimination means that the City of Austin is not trusted by all community members. It is important to work with community partners to share information and resources and engage new groups.

Artists in Philadelphia organized Funeral for a Home, a research and oral history project in a long-disinvested neighborhood. The final event included a choir, speeches by neighbors, a parade, and a community meal.

How can we achieve this goal?

50. Define preservation audiences broadly, recognizing that places and stories are important to a broad range of people.

Develop strategies to reach a more diverse group, including but not limited to renters, businesses, communities that have historically been adversely impacted by public policies, groups that have been marginalized and underrepresented in public decision-making and historic resources, religious groups, schools, developers, real estate agents, young people, elders, longtime residents (including people displaced from Austin), the media, tourists, and policymakers. Use stakeholder input and other data to guide outreach and engagement strategies. Allocate funding for outreach and engagement.

51. Raise awareness of preservation's benefits among community members, decision-makers, and other stakeholders.

Proactively share why Austin's older and historic places matter, as well as the cultural, economic, environmental, and social benefits of preservation. Buildings and intangible cultural heritage create a shared sense of belonging, enhance quality of life, provide affordable housing options, boost local small businesses, support climate change readiness and the Zero Waste initiative, and further sound planning principles. Expand Austinites' definition of historic preservation beyond its traditional roles and help people understand how it benefits all generations, diverse communities, and the city as a whole.

52. Work with trusted partners in the community and other City departments to conduct public outreach and engagement.

Collaborate to identify shared priorities and goals, better understand community needs, engage community members, offer information, and invite meaningful participation. Recognize that historic marginalization of and harm to some communities by the City may make outreach and engagement difficult, but also essential. Hire community members as paid ambassadors to increase capacity and conduct effective outreach.

53. In outreach, meet people where they are.

Provide outreach and educational materials where people live and spend time: door hangers, flyers

Left to right: The Austin Asian American Film Festival champions Asian and Asian American stories via media arts; representatives of community organizations that received mini-grants to engage their networks about the Equity-Based Preservation Plan.

and handouts at community spaces and informal gathering spots, tabling at events, presentations at community meetings, easily accessible online, and more. Provide content and cross-postings for partner websites, newsletters, and social media. Integrate more information on historic properties into the City's Property Profile map and create resource packets for Austin History Center and other library patrons who may be interested in connecting historic research to local places.

54. Develop educational programming for youth.

Create a hyper-local history curriculum and STEM-related programming at the intersection of sustainability, resilience, and preservation. Consider a heritage- and preservation-focused summer camp.

55. Develop programs that connect the next generation of Austinites with legacy businesses, local heritage, and economic opportunities.

Explore potential job placement and mentorship programs (paid) with legacy businesses, expansion of ACC's Skilled Trades program to include preservation skills, internships with the Historic Preservation Office, and other initiatives.

> *"I feel like part of what we do is educating young people to grow up seeing these inequalities and injustices so that when they are older they can create impact. We are helping them to learn about these topics and learn that they can have a voice that can advocate for change."*
>
> *- Community member*

Community archivists at the Austin History Center are natural partners. Their work centers on safeguarding and celebrating family and community memories. They also organize events like panel discussions, storytelling programs, and family archiving workshops, often in response to community proposals.

Peer cities like San Antonio offer examples of clear, accessible outreach materials.

56. Develop education and outreach programs around archaeology.

Educate the public about significant archaeological sites and what they reveal about the prehistoric and historic communities that have called Austin home. Develop an archaeological training program for City departments that undertake infrastructure and construction work. Assist private developers in identifying and avoiding archaeological remains.

57. Train City staff to be ambassadors for historic preservation.

Work with related departments to identify overlaps with historic preservation and educate staff on benefits and incentives.

58. Recommend that Council appoint Commission members who reflect their districts' racial, ethnic, age, and income diversity.

Provide demographic information in the Historic Landmark Commission's annual report and to Council members when a vacancy opens. Support trainings for potential commissioners to create and sustain a strong pool of candidates who reflect Austin's diversity.

59. Update the recommendations for whom Council may appoint to the Historic Landmark Commission.

Recommend that at least six Commission members represent different allied professions or academic areas such as archaeology, architecture, landscape architecture, architectural history, historic preservation, history, anthropology, law, real estate, and structural engineering. Also recognize the value and necessity of including historic property owners and community members.

The Atlanta Preservation Center sponsors a weeklong summer camp focused on history, architecture, and culture.

Outreach for this plan included tabling at community celebrations, farmers' markets, youth events, libraries, and church get-togethers. The goal was to reach people who wouldn't otherwise know about the preservation plan.

9 Proactively Identify Important Places

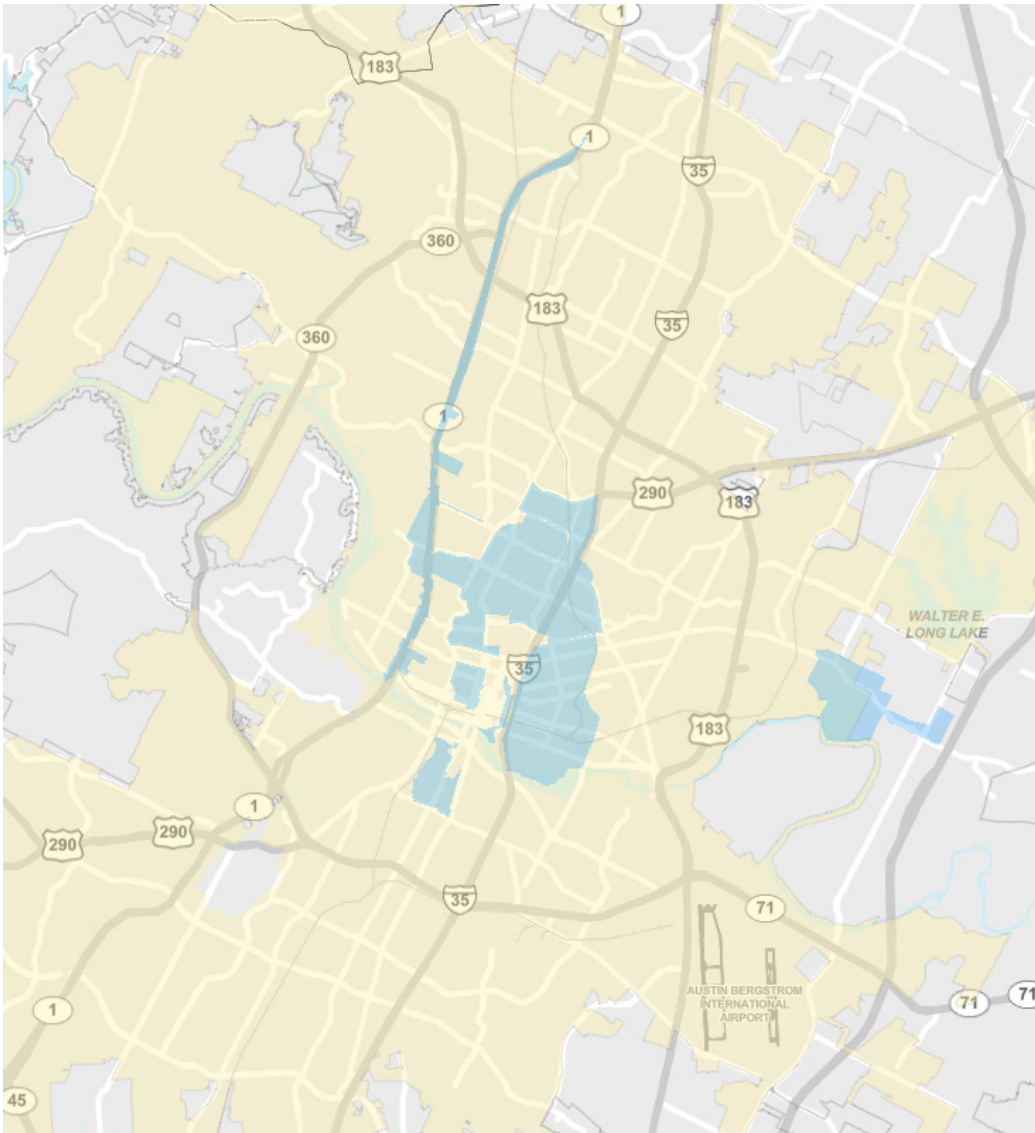
Why is this important?

- Historic resource surveys are a tool to identify potentially significant older buildings and areas. Surveys do not automatically lead to historic designation, but some cities use them to inform outreach and support proactive designation.
- Large-scale intensive surveys are time-consuming and expensive. Surveys that collect less information over a larger area—called "windshield surveys"—can help focus more detailed surveys.
- Not all important places are architecturally significant. Community-based approaches like cultural mapping can share important stories and places that might not be identified by a historic resource survey.
- Surveys help property owners and potential purchasers know ahead of time if properties are important. They also save staff time in assessing properties.

What's happening in Austin now?

Recent surveys have identified many potential historic landmarks and historic districts. Yet much of Austin has not been surveyed. In these areas, properties are evaluated for historic significance only after the owner has decided to demolish or substantially change their building.

The City's small preservation staff does not have dedicated time for follow-up engagement or mapping that could help community members better understand and use survey information.



Historic resource surveys completed since 2000 (blue), with the city limits shown in gold. Surveys can be initiated and funded by city, county, or state governments; or neighborhood or other community groups.

How can we achieve this goal?

60. Create and maintain a publicly accessible, regularly updated online map with survey recommendations and previous staff determinations of eligibility.

Use the Property Profile tool if possible. Notate the map with corrections submitted by community members on an ongoing basis. Include recent City-sponsored and community-funded surveys that have been reviewed by staff and the Historic Landmark Commission.

61. Use community engagement, historic resource surveys, thematic context statements, and other means to identify culturally significant properties.

Revise survey timelines and scopes of work to allow broader and deeper outreach, inclusion of oral histories, and community review of draft surveys. For neighborhoods that have experienced significant displacement, develop ways to reach longtime residents who no longer live in the area. Cross-reference community-sourced lists and obituaries and develop culturally focused context statements to identify significant people, groups, events, and associated properties.

62. Complete a citywide windshield survey.

Provide broad data to inform staff evaluations and prioritize areas for more intensive surveys. This could be phase 2 of the historic building scan (with review of data from phase 1 for accuracy) or a different model.

63. Survey older buildings and areas that have not yet been included in a historic resource survey.

Develop a prioritized plan for surveys using data from the East Austin Historic Resources Survey, historic building scan, building and demolition permits, Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD) districts, and areas vulnerable to gentrification and displacement; and allocate funding for surveys on an annual basis.

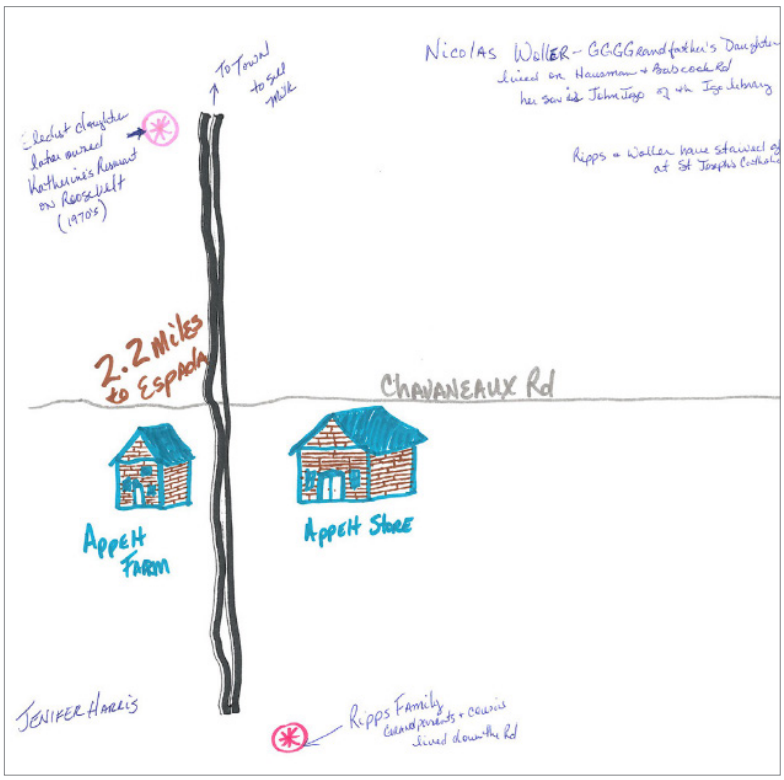
64. Identify potential heritage tourism sites and support existing sites.

Recognizing that heritage tourism is a powerful tool for economic development and community revitalization, actively support the ongoing identification and promotion of heritage tourism assets that represent the diverse history of Austin. Invest in ongoing historic resource surveys, maintenance and rehabilitation of public and privately owned assets, and strategies to document and promote the authentic history of Austin's places and people.

65. Update existing surveys every 10 years to include buildings that have reached the 45+ year-old threshold and evaluate changes to historic property eligibility.

Ensure that community members are invited to participate in updates and share knowledge.

66. Re-evaluate existing survey data to reflect any changes in designation criteria, integrity requirements, and/or age thresholds.



Cultural mapping is another way to identify places that matter.

10 Follow Good Designation Practices

Why is this important?

- Historic designation criteria determine what places qualify for protection. Designation criteria typically fall under four categories from the National Register of Historic Places: events, people, design/construction, and potential to yield information. Most cities break these up into more specific designation criteria.
- Historic places must also retain historic integrity, meaning that they can visually convey the reasons they are important. Because preservationists historically treated architecture as the most important element, "integrity" came to mean that a building had not changed physically.
- This focus on architectural integrity makes it harder to designate places historically occupied by African Americans, Mexican Americans, and other communities of color that banks denied loans for maintenance.

Austin's criteria make it hard to designate properties that are not architecturally significant. Peer cities require that a property meet fewer criteria or have more criteria, providing more nuance around why a property is important. For instance, a place may have ties to an important event *and* an important person, but those concepts are grouped in Austin's criteria.

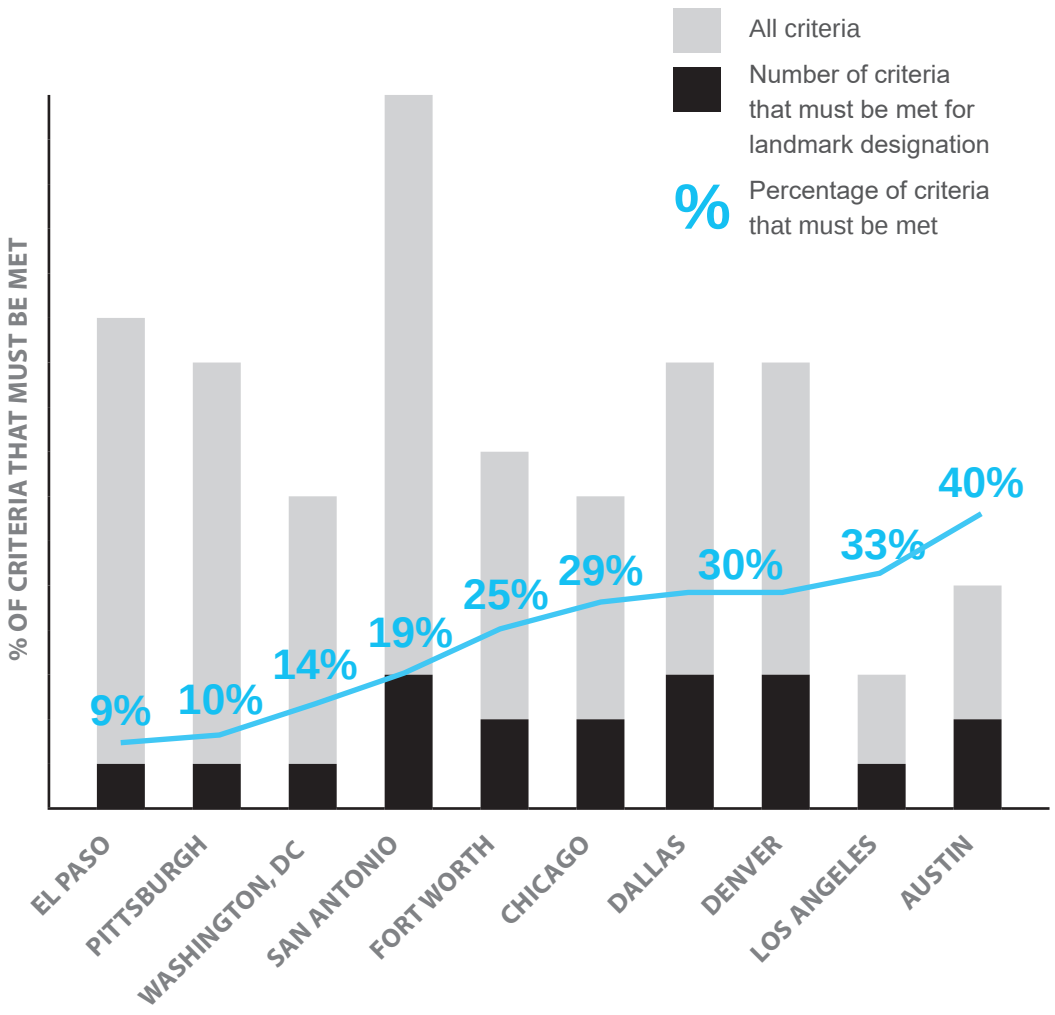
What's happening in Austin now?

Austin has five criteria for historic significance: far fewer than most peer cities. Historic landmarks must meet at least two criteria. Most other cities use the same designation criteria for both historic landmarks and districts. Here, potential districts are not required to meet historic significance criteria. In practice, though, our eight historic districts have important histories.

Historic districts can be geographically contiguous, recognizing the development of one area, or thematic, recognizing resources that speak to an important theme across multiple neighborhoods. Historic districts in Austin currently are required to be contiguous, with no "donut holes."

Historic preservation is a public goal established by various ordinances and plans, but property owners seeking historic designation are still required to pay high application fees compared to peer cities.

Historic significance criteria



How can we achieve this goal?

67. Recalibrate historic designation criteria.

Un-group concepts in current criteria; ensure all criteria are easy to understand. Consider adding criteria to more clearly recognize the diverse reasons that resources are significant, especially criteria that acknowledge cultural and community significance. Consider how many criteria a property should meet to be designated as historic.

68. Reframe integrity requirements for historic designation.

Recognize the value of association and feeling in recognizing historic properties, particularly those with cultural and community significance. De-emphasize integrity of materials and craftsmanship for properties that are significant for reasons other than architecture.

69. Establish a process for considering the significance of properties younger than 50 years old.

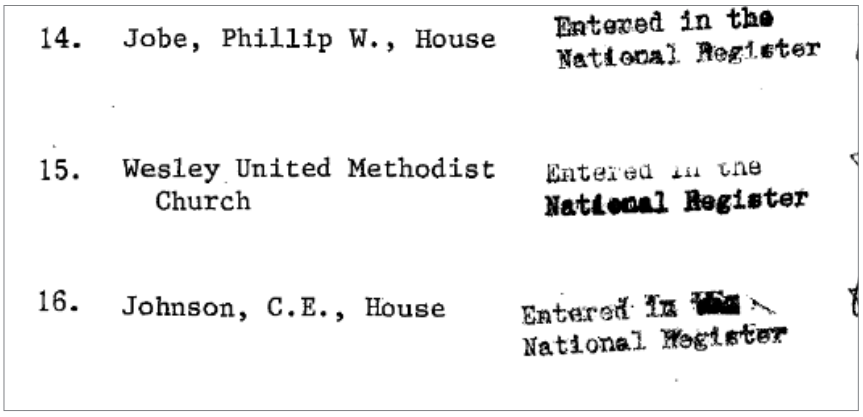
The requirement that historic properties be at least 50 years old can limit communities' ability to preserve places they value and result in the loss of living knowledge of what makes a place important. It also has implications for integrity when a place changes with ongoing use. Increase public education about what makes places "historic."

70. Enable non-contiguous historic districts and multiple property designations.

Recognize that many resources with significant community, cultural, and architectural themes are not concentrated in one geographic area. Clearly distinguish between the goals of contiguous and non-contiguous designation, and ensure that new provisions to implement non-contiguous historic districts and multiple property designations do not weaken the authority for creation of contiguous historic districts.

71. Partner with City departments to designate historically significant publicly owned property.

These workers' cottages in the Robertson/Stuart & Mair Historic District contribute to the district even though many exterior materials have been replaced. Those replacements help convey that the initial owners had few resources—and add the story of 1980s investments that kept the homes livable and standing.



14.	Jobe, Phillip W., House	Entered in the National Register
15.	Wesley United Methodist Church	Entered in the National Register
16.	Johnson, C.E., House	Entered in the National Register

Multiple property designations and non-contiguous historic districts recognize common themes across larger areas. The National Register of Historic Places offers a model, but Austin's code does not currently allow this type of designation.

72. Reduce cost barriers to historic landmark and historic district applications.

Recognizing preservation as a public good that the City seeks to encourage, remove a barrier to historic designation by eliminating fees for historic designation applications. Allocate departmental budget to cover associated City fees.

73. Create a new preservation tax abatement tied to designation of historic districts and historic landmarks.

Reinforce both displacement prevention and preservation goals by abating City property taxes for newly designated historic landmarks and historic districts. Grant the abatement for 10 years, with one 5-year extension if the property remains in the same ownership and additional 5-year extensions if the same owner or tenants meet income qualifications.

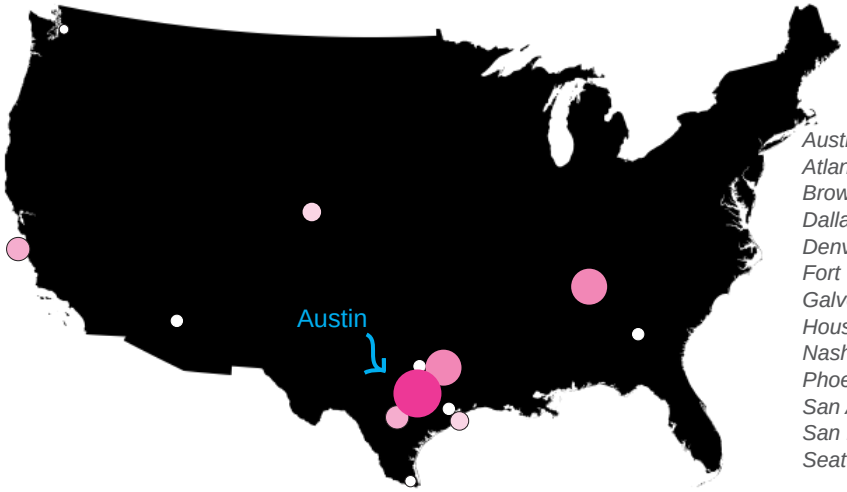
74. Use existing tools in code to create highest priority historic districts.

Under City code, the Historic Landmark Commission or City Council can initiate historic landmarks and historic districts. Supermajority approval is needed at the Commission and Council levels if 51% of property owners by number or land area have not submitted ballots in support of the district designation.

75. Require that potential historic districts meet at least one historic designation criterion for significance to be designated.

Functionally, the Historic Landmark Commission, City Council, and the community expect historic districts to have significance. However, this is not clearly stated, and the current expectation should be formalized in code for the sake of transparency. The expanded criteria for historic designation should apply.

Cost of historic designation



Austin
Atlanta
Brownsville
Dallas
Denver
Fort Worth
Galveston
Houston
Nashville
Phoenix
San Antonio
San Francisco
Seattle

HISTORIC DESIGNATION FEE

- $0
- $250
- $500
- $1,000-$1,400
- $2,100

100% Austin's designation fees are higher than all peer cities

2x-8x Austin's designation fees are between 2 and 8 times higher than peer cities in Texas

6 peer cities see preservation as a public good and do not charge fees

76. Allow properties in historic districts to be designated as historic landmarks based on architectural significance.

Historic landmarks confer different expectations, requirements, and benefits than contributing properties in historic districts. Recognizing that not everyone has equal access to historic designation information or processes, timing of historic district designation should not be a factor in determining whether a property can be designated as a historic landmark.

77. Explore interior designation of publicly accessible spaces, including incentives for property owners.

Publicly accessible spaces may include private uses that depend on public patronage, such as lobbies, restaurants, or theaters. Consider whether to allow designation of historically significant interiors without companion exterior designation of the building. Recommend requiring owner consent for designation.

78. Require supermajorities of Historic Landmark Commission and Council members to remove historic zoning.

Recognizing historic resources as lasting community assets, require a supermajority of votes at the commission and Council to remove historic zoning from a property or district.

79. Working with other jurisdictions, advocate to reverse state policies with disparate requirements for historic zoning.

Realign zoning requirements for historic landmarks and historic districts with other zoning types in state law. Reinstate the requirement for supermajority support at City Council for historic district valid petitions (when the owners of 20% or more of the land area object to the change), as for all other zoning types, rather than for a single owner's objection. For historic landmark zoning, remove the requirement for supermajority support at the Historic Landmark Commission or land use commission level, retaining it at City Council. Remove the prohibition on designation of religious-owned properties without owner consent, retaining the valid petition requirements common to all other zoning types.

State policies with disparate requirements for historic zoning

87(R) SB 1585 relates to requirements for historic landmark and historic district designation. SB 1585 built upon HB 2496, which passed in the 86th Session. The bill:

- Prohibits the inclusion of a property in a locally designated historic district unless (a) the owner of the property consents to the inclusion; or (b) the designation is approved by three-fourths vote of the city council and the zoning, planning, or historical commission; and
- Provided that property owned by a religious organization may be included in a local historic district only if the organization consents to the inclusion.

86(R) HB 2496 relates to the designation of a property as a historic landmark. The bill:

- Prohibits the designation of a property as a local historic landmark unless: (a) the owner of the property consents to the designation; or (b) the designation is approved by three-fourths vote of the city council and the zoning, planning, or historical commission, if any; and
- Allows a city to designate a property owned by a qualified religious organization as a local historic landmark only if the organization consents to the designation.

11 Support Stewardship of Community Assets

Why is this important?

- There are many ways to support stewards of older and historic properties in designating, maintaining, and improving their buildings. Unlike community assets owned by public agencies—parks, schools, libraries, and more—stewards of historic homes and businesses are usually private property owners.
- Preservation tools and incentives exist in many forms at all levels: local, state, and federal.
- Preservation tools can support other goals as well. For example, rehabilitating older buildings powerfully spurs local economic activity. Labor-intensive renovations mean that more money goes to craftspeople than materials. And the economic activity and tax revenue generated by historic renovations means that historic tax incentives help pay for themselves.

What's happening in Austin now?

Tax abatements are available for owners who rehabilitate contributing properties in historic districts. The program reduces the City property tax owed on the added value of a property, with duration depending on location and use. To date, the historic district tax abatement has been lightly used. Owners of historic landmarks receive an annual partial tax exemption from City, County, and AISD property taxes. Properties must meet City maintenance standards.

Every household's situation is different, but most of Austin's landmarks (72%) are located in areas with higher median household incomes than the city as a whole. Landmarks also have higher average and median assessed property values than historic districts and other parts of Austin.

Historic districts show how communities grew and changed. Historic landmarks each tell a story of a significant person, event, or community value.

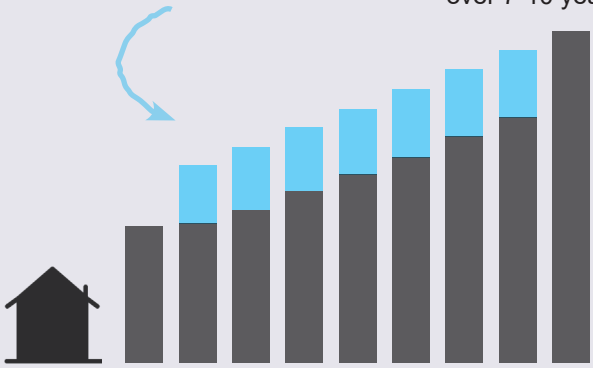
Who benefits from historic preservation in Austin?

HISTORIC DISTRICT TAX ABATEMENT

A 7- to 10-year tax abatement is available to property owners who spend a given percentage to maintain, repair, or rehabilitate a contributing property in a historic districts. The abatement can also be used to restore a historic-age noncontributing property to contributing status.

This tool only includes City taxes. It has been lightly used to date.

$290,577 average abatement on added property value over 7-10 years



Property owners doing maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation in historic districts

Contractors, carpenters, tradesmen, and other craftspeople working on the projects

Property owners must spend a percentage of their assessed building (improvement) value to get the abatement. Because local property values are so high, people generally have to be able to afford expensive projects to benefit.

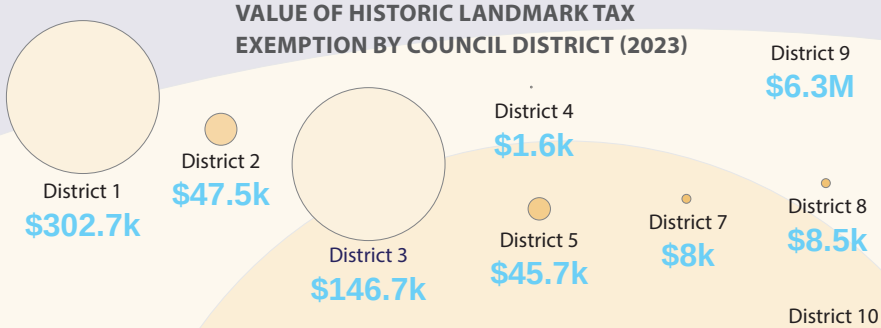
8 locally designated historic districts (5 in West Austin, 2 in East Austin, 1 in South Austin)

	MEDIAN MARKET VALUE (2021)	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (CENSUS TRACT, 2019-20)
Areas with historic districts	$826,403	$69,850
Austin	$555,000	$75,752

HISTORIC LANDMARK TAX EXEMPTION

Owners of historic landmarks in Austin receive an annual partial tax exemption from City, County, Austin Independent School District, and Travis Central Healthcare District property taxes. Homesteads designated and/or sold after 2004 receive a maximum annual exemption of $8,500. There is no limit for other homesteads and income-producing buildings.

VALUE OF HISTORIC LANDMARK TAX EXEMPTION BY COUNCIL DISTRICT (2023)



Property owners who maintain their buildings

Austin's landmarks are generally located in areas with higher assessed values than other parts of the city.

670 historic landmarks, the majority in areas historically subject to racial restrictions

	MEDIAN APPRAISED VALUE (2023)	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2022)
Historic landmarks: homesteads	$1.85M	72% of landmarks are in areas with higher household incomes than Austin
Historic landmarks: multi-family apartment	$2.65M	
Historic landmarks: income-producing	$2.75M	
Austin	$645,390	$84,292

How can we achieve this goal?

80. Make the rehabilitation tax abatement more effective via multi-pronged substantial improvements and expand it to historic landmarks.

Austin's historic tax incentive should encourage continued investment and have demonstrable benefits for all historic property owners. Improve the existing rehabilitation tax abatement by freezing the pre-rehabilitation property value for the duration of the abatement and lowering the cost threshold to allow smaller projects to receive the incentive. Allow applications at project completion if the work was previously approved and consider a look-back period for recently completed projects in new districts that meet the Historic Design Standards. Expand the abatement to other taxing entities, providing information about the economic impact of rehabilitation projects.

81. Actively explore how a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program could successfully support preservation of smaller-scale downtown buildings, commercial corridors, and historic districts in areas targeted for higher density.

Conduct market and equity analyses to assess the feasibility of this important tool in protecting historic properties while allowing increased height and density in other priority areas. Identify receiving areas appropriate for denser development without impacts to vulnerable neighborhoods. Implement the TDR program if analysis demonstrates that it would be effective.

82. Evaluate the benefits and equity aspects of the historic landmark tax exemption in comparison with the proposed abatement and Transfer of Development Rights programs.

During design of the designation abatement, rehabilitation abatement, and Transfer of Development Rights programs, complete a financial analysis to compare them to the existing landmark tax exemption for both residential and commercial properties. Ensure that designation and maintenance of significant properties continue to be incentivized through the new programs. Continue the existing landmark tax exemption for previously designated historic landmarks until sale or transfer of the property.

Rehabilitation tax abatement

PROPERTY TYPE	CURRENT MINIMUM EXPENDITURE
Homestead	25% pre-rehabilitation value of structure
Income-producing	40% pre-rehabilitation value of structure
Homestead in Revitalization Area (East Austin)	10% pre-rehabilitation value of structure
Income-producing in Revitalization Area (East Austin)	30% pre-rehabilitation value of structure

▲ Lowering the minimum expenditure for the tax abatement would enable property owners at more income levels to use it for maintenance, repairs, and rehabilitations. This would increase equity and spur more local economic activity.

▲ Transfers of Development Rights (TDRs) could be a transformative tool to protect smaller historic properties.

83. Make existing incentives available to income-producing and nonprofit-owned properties in locally designated historic districts.

Designate existing historic districts as certified local historic districts as defined by the National Park Service. This designation would allow income-generating properties to use federal historic tax credits to offset the costs of rehabilitation projects, and both income-generating and nonprofit-owned properties to use state historic tax credits. No additional requirements would be involved.

84. Raise awareness about the historic tax abatement programs and other preservation incentives.

Conduct targeted outreach to property owners in existing and potential historic districts about the abatement programs. Better integrate the rehabilitation abatement application with the historic review process. Promote the state historic tax credit program for income-producing and nonprofit-owned historic properties.

85. Create a clear, transparent, fair process for property owners to claim economic hardship.

Create an economic hardship provision in code. Provide financial and technical resources to historic property owners facing economic hardship in maintaining their properties. Leverage partnerships to help find new stewards if the owners wish to sell.

86. Reduce cost barriers associated with historic review processes for historic landmarks and districts.

Follow best practices in other cities and recognize preservation as a public good. Allocate departmental budget or a portion of demolition fees to subsidize part of or all historic review fees for designated properties. A tiered fee system based on project size may be considered.

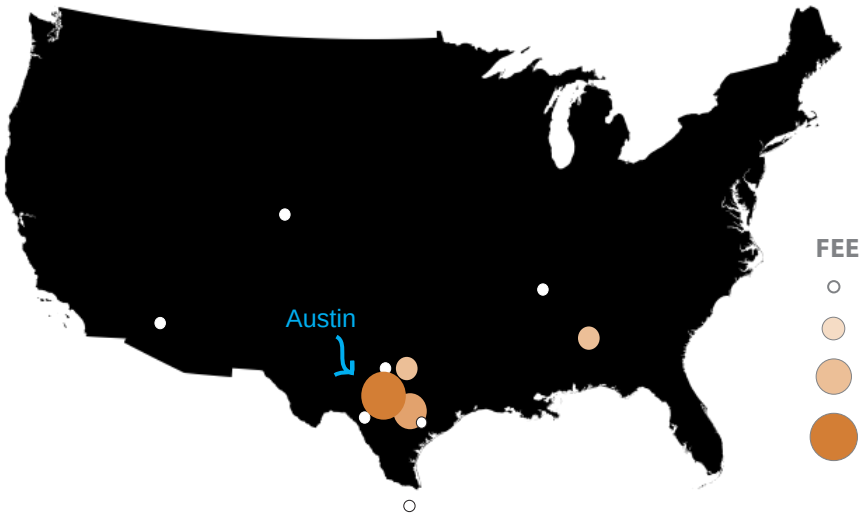
87. Recognize the importance of publicly and privately owned historic cemeteries.

Work with cemetery stewards and other community members to provide information and other resources as possible.

88. Advocate for a state homeowner rehabilitation tax credit.

Build on the success of the Texas Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program, which supports rehabilitations of income-producing and nonprofit-owned historic properties. Advocate for a state-level historic tax credit benefiting historically designated homestead properties.

Historic review fees



$1,020

Austin is the only city among its peers to charge an extra fee for Commission review

2x-8x

Austin's historic review fees are between 2 and 8 times higher than peer cities in Texas

7

peer cities see preservation as a public good and do not charge fees

Peer cities: Atlanta, Brownsville, Dallas, Denver, Fort Worth, Galveston, Houston, Nashville, Phoenix, San Antonio. Seattle and San Francisco charge fees based on project cost and are not included here.

12 Be Strategic with Review

Why is this important?

- Historic resources can be designated at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Local designation offers the strongest protection by requiring approval of exterior changes to historic buildings. Small changes can be approved administratively by City staff. The Historic Landmark Commission reviews larger and/or more visible changes.
- Properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service in cooperation with state governments. Because listing is honorary, very few cities review National Register properties.
- Design review is the process for managing change to historic properties—our built community heritage. At its best, design review is a collaborative effort between property owners, architects, City preservation staff, and the Historic Landmark Commission.

Local
660 historic landmarks
8 historic districts

National Register
173 individual
19 districts

State
201 resources

The City does not regulate individual National Register properties or State-designated resources.

What's happening in Austin now?

Austin differs from comparable cities in a few ways. Unlike most cities, we review all exterior changes to all properties more than 45 years old, creating a high-volume workload with limited results: just 0.06% of nearly 1,600 reviews resulted in landmark designation—for one property—in a recent year. Our preservation program also does not regulate noncontributing properties in historic districts except for stand-alone, ground-up new construction.

Finally, Austin stands nearly alone in requiring properties in National Register districts to go through a review process for proposed exterior changes, though property owners do not have to follow recommendations. The State of Texas has advised against requiring this type of local review, since no zoning change is involved in National Register listing.

Austin's historic preservation program has been underresourced in terms of staff for decades and still has limited capacity. A 2017 audit noted that Austin had one of the lowest staffing levels for historic preservation among comparable cities. Most staff time is spent on code-mandated permit review and case management. This leaves little opportunity for the proactive designation outreach, community engagement, educational activities, and inspections of approved projects that might lead to better preservation outcomes in the long run. The implementation of most recommendations in this plan is not feasible at current staffing levels.

Properties currently reviewed by Austin's Historic Preservation Office

PROPERTY TYPE	DESIGNATION LEVEL	IS COMPLIANCE REQUIRED?
Historic landmarks	Local (H zoning)	• Yes
Historic districts	Local (HD zoning)	• Contributing properties—yes • Stand-alone, ground-up new construction—yes • Noncontributing properties—no
National Register districts	Federal (no zoning change)	• No
45+ year-old buildings	None	• No. Applications for exterior changes, demolitions, and relocations trigger assessment of eligibility for historic landmark designation.

How can we achieve this goal?

89. Review changes to noncontributing properties in locally designated historic districts to ensure properties do not become less compatible.

Use more flexible standards and an expedited process to review changes to noncontributing properties. Focus on building scale and massing instead of material changes or minor alterations.

90. Review changes to privately owned properties in National Register districts only to assess historic landmark eligibility.

Follow Texas Historical Commission and National Park Service directives to treat National Register district properties like other 45-year-old buildings, reviewing them for landmark eligibility and not project guidance. Retain sign review. Encourage property owners in National Register districts to consult with staff and neighborhood associations on project compatibility and to create locally designated historic districts. Establish a staff-level advisory review process for City-owned properties listed in the National Register.

91. Retain a demolition or relocation delay of up to 180 days for contributing properties in National Register districts.

Include more applicant education and community outreach by City staff during the delay.

92. With regard to reviewing changes to and demolitions of buildings without local historic designation, assess ways to spend staff time strategically, engage and empower communities, and create more predictability for property owners and developers.

Consider what information and resources are needed to provide greater predictability in decision-making, including internal evaluation standards and additional up-to-date historic resource surveys. Seek to shift the balance of staff time spent on reactive reviews to proactive and creative outreach; education about preservation tools, incentives, and general benefits; and engagement that builds support for historic preservation, including but not limited to historic landmark and historic district applications.

Proposed changes to historic review

PROPERTY TYPE	PROPOSED CHANGES
Historic landmarks	• No changes proposed
Historic districts	• Regulate noncontributing properties using more flexible standards ★ Best practice in preservation
National Register districts	• Stop requiring review of changes ★ Best practice in preservation • Offer project consultations • Retain demolition/relocation delay of up to 180 days
45+ year-old buildings	• Allow more staff time for review • Ensure that applications referred to the Historic Landmark Commission meet landmark eligibility criteria

▲ Offering optional project consultations in National Register districts could free limited staff time for proactive outreach, survey follow-up, and more.

93. Allow more time for staff review of permit and historic review applications.

Current code allows five business days for staff to determine if a permit can be released administratively or must be referred to the Historic Landmark Commission. Additional time for research will likely increase the number of administratively released permits and help ensure that properties referred to the Commission meet the criteria for landmark designation. Additional time for staff consultation with property owners may yield preservation-oriented solutions without Commission involvement.

94. For properties without historic designation, ensure that demolition and partial demolition applications referred for Commission review are for properties that meet the criteria for historic landmark designation or other procedural criteria established by Council.

Allow staff to administratively approve changes to properties that are not eligible for landmark designation, including contributing properties in potential historic districts. The Commission will continue to review older buildings dedicated to civic uses, including ecclesiastical, educational, recreational, charitable, hospital, and other institutional or community uses, regardless of whether the building appears to meet landmark criteria, pursuant to Resolution 20160623-082.

95. Expand projects eligible for administrative approval.

Use the Historic Design Standards to identify areas of general consensus, as well as areas where more clarification in the standards is needed. Together, these measures will provide clearer guidance to property owners and reduce approval time for projects that meet the standards.

96. Develop a prerequisite review process to allow the Historic Landmark Commission to hear commercial demolition requests prior to site plan approval.

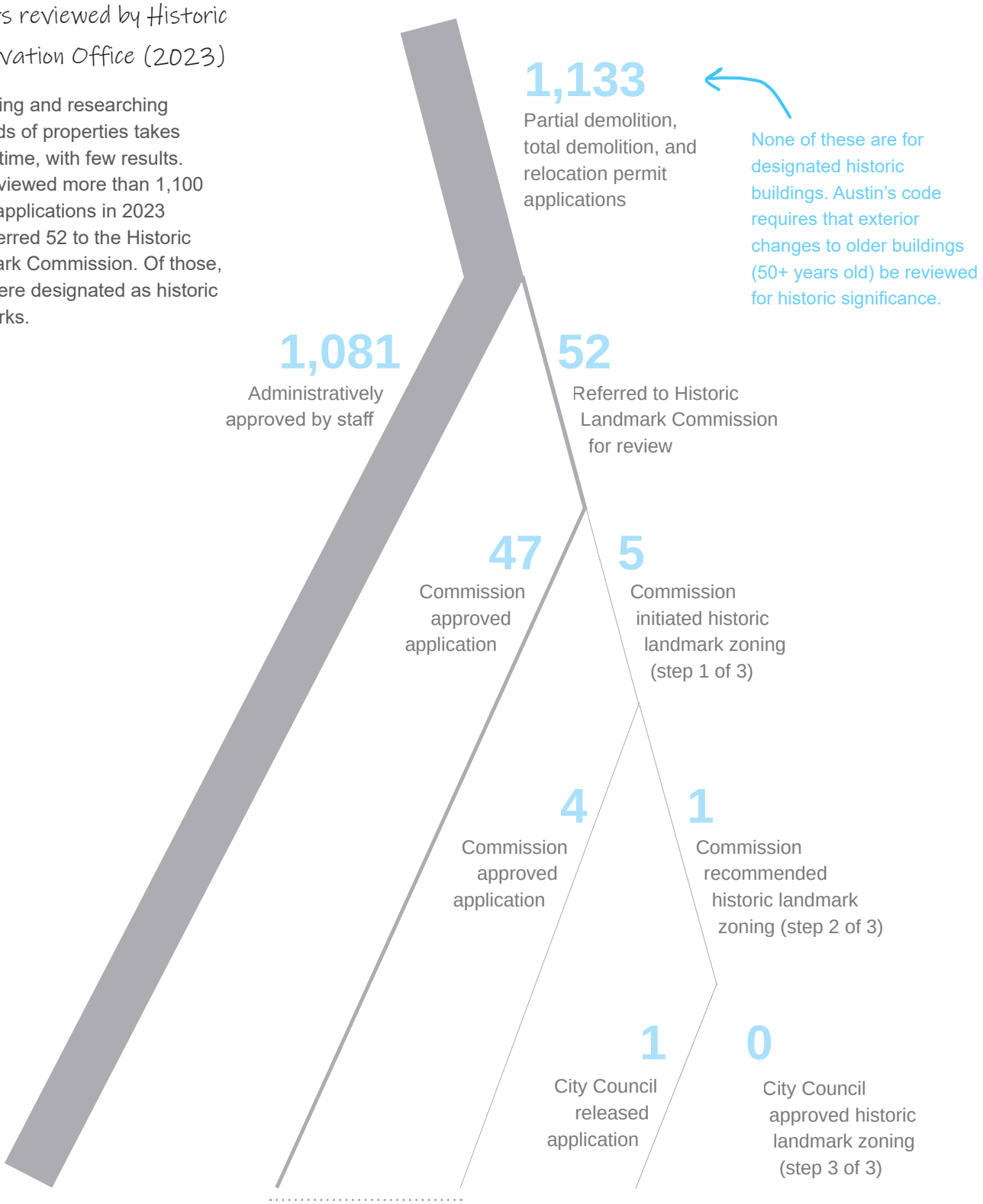
Commercial projects currently require an approved site plan or site plan exemption prior to submission of a demolition permit application. As the site plan approval process requires considerable investment of time and resources, early consultation affords the best opportunity to explore alternatives to demolition.

▼ Expanding projects eligible for administrative review will shorten review time and cut costs.

Proposed work	Administrative review	Commission review
Additions		
Construct a minimally visible one-story addition with an area less than 600 square feet	x	
Construct a minimally visible two-story rear addition to a two-story building	x	
Construct an addition that raises the height of the historic building (e.g., a third-story addition to a two-story building)		x
Construct a highly visible addition or an addition with an area greater than 600 square feet		x
Stand-Alone New Construction		
Construct a new house-scaled residential building		x
Construct an accessory building that is more than one story or 600 square feet		x
Construct a one-story accessory building	x	

Permits reviewed by Historic Preservation Office (2023)

Reviewing and researching hundreds of properties takes a lot of time, with few results. Staff reviewed more than 1,100 permit applications in 2023 and referred 52 to the Historic Landmark Commission. Of those, none were designated as historic landmarks.



13 Protect Historic Resources

Why is this important?

- As stewards of community assets, it's essential that historic property owners understand City processes for review and approval.
- Most property owners do the right thing, but additional checks help make sure everyone is following the rules. Inspections ensure that historic buildings are being maintained, flag unapproved work, and check eligibility for preservation incentives.
- Code violations include work that exceeds the scope of approved permits, work without approval, and demolition by neglect, when someone fails to take care of their property.

What's happening in Austin now?

City preservation staff inspect historic landmarks' conditions periodically. However, they do not have the capacity or code mandate to visit approved projects during or after construction. Other City inspectors typically do not check for details covered by historic review. This means that projects could depart from approved plans during construction.

Relatively low penalty fees are not an effective deterrent to code violations. When a violation does occur, historic preservation staff must involve the Development Services Department, the Building and Standards Commission, and/or the City Attorney. In past cases, it has been difficult to pursue enforcement and penalties.

CURRENT PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

- Civil offense /Class C misdemeanor
- Fines not to exceed $1,000 per day
- If a building is demolished as a public safety hazard after 2+ demolition by neglect notices, no permits will be considered on that property for 3 years from the date of demolition

Work without a permit

Work that exceeds approvals
Work beyond the scope of an approved permit

Demolition by neglect
Failure to maintain a resource

How can we achieve this goal?

97. Improve enforcement processes to be clearer and more accessible.

Improve and clarify enforcement processes. Proactively provide clear, easily accessible information about how demolition by neglect and permit violations are enforced and remedied.

98. Require historic approval to be visibly posted alongside building permits on active job sites at designated and pending historic properties.

Raise awareness of historic requirements for a project for contractors, subcontractors, and neighboring community members with visibly posted approval that includes a clear description of approved components. Update the posted signage with any major changes approved after the initial approval.

99. Inspect historic preservation work at strategic points during permitted projects.

Conduct inspections that focus on preservation-specific matters. Proactive inspections will help ensure that approved projects are successfully completed; reactive enforcement runs a high risk of historic materials being removed and destroyed without permission.

100. Develop a rapid response to violations to ensure minimal historic fabric is destroyed.

Once removed and destroyed, historic materials and craftsmanship cannot be replaced. Therefore, unpermitted work and work beyond approved scope should be halted as quickly as possible. Develop and implement swift responses to minimize lasting damage.

101. Augment penalty fees with non-financial penalties that more effectively deter violations. Clearly communicate potential penalties to property owners and contractors.

Consider substantial penalties such as prohibiting building permits for 3-5 years where unpermitted demolition of a historic building has occurred. Focus on building partnerships with property owners and contractors rather than exacting penalties.

102. Increase penalties for repeat violators.

Increase penalties for informed, intentional violators. In cases where property owners do not have resources to maintain their buildings, leverage the economic hardship provision and provide financial and technical resources to help avoid repeat violations.

103. Better enforce violations.

Ensure that enforcement processes are followed in a timely way. Simultaneously develop a non-punitive solutions process to build capacity and skills that will help avoid future violations.

Raising awareness of historic review requirements and inspecting projects in progress should contribute to more successful projects like this one, which received a historic tax abatement.

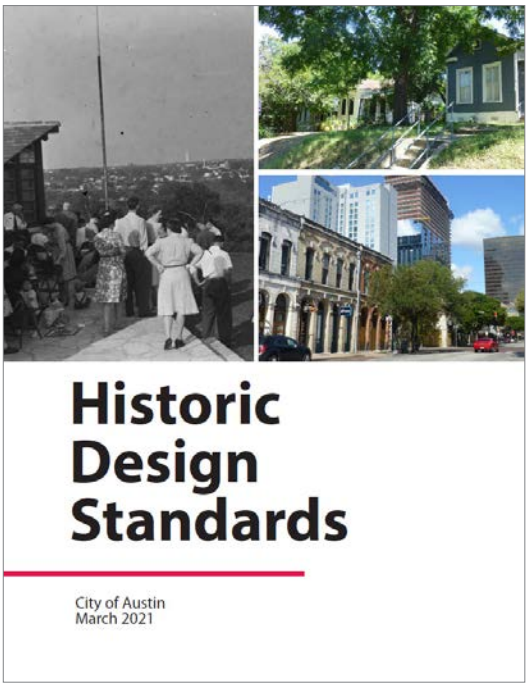
14 Implement the Plan Collaboratively

Why is this important?

- Many people care about built and cultural community heritage. Recognizing this, and working with a diverse group of stakeholders, will help to transform plan recommendations into reality.

What's happening in Austin now?

This plan was developed by a community working group with 26 members from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. In total, more than 300 people shaped the first draft of the plan. Through broad, inclusive community engagement, more than 2,600 people provided feedback on the plan's goals and recommendations. Meaningful engagement has positioned the plan to be implemented in cooperation with diverse stakeholders.



The Preservation Plan Working Group built on the Design Standards Working Group and the Heritage Grant Working Group. These were respectively created to 1) develop a single set of clear, consistent design standards for historic properties and 2) recommend substantive changes to the Heritage Grant program.

The Preservation Plan Working Group set the direction for the plan, developed draft recommendations and shaped community engagement. Finally, it revised and finalized the plan with the Historic Landmark Commission.

How can we achieve this goal?

104. Engage community members in process improvements, policy changes, and program development.

Meaningfully engage a racially, ethnically, geographically, economically, and professionally diverse array of community members in steps to implement the plan. Include people with varied experience levels with historic preservation and City processes. This engagement could include focus groups, working groups, transparent public processes, and regular communications with stakeholders and the public.

105. Work with other City departments and government agencies to align and coordinate processes and provide regular cross-training to staff.

Ensure staff across departments are familiar with each others' processes and resources, encouraging collaborative problem-solving. Explore naming a few staff in other departments as specialist points of contact with more in-depth preservation training.

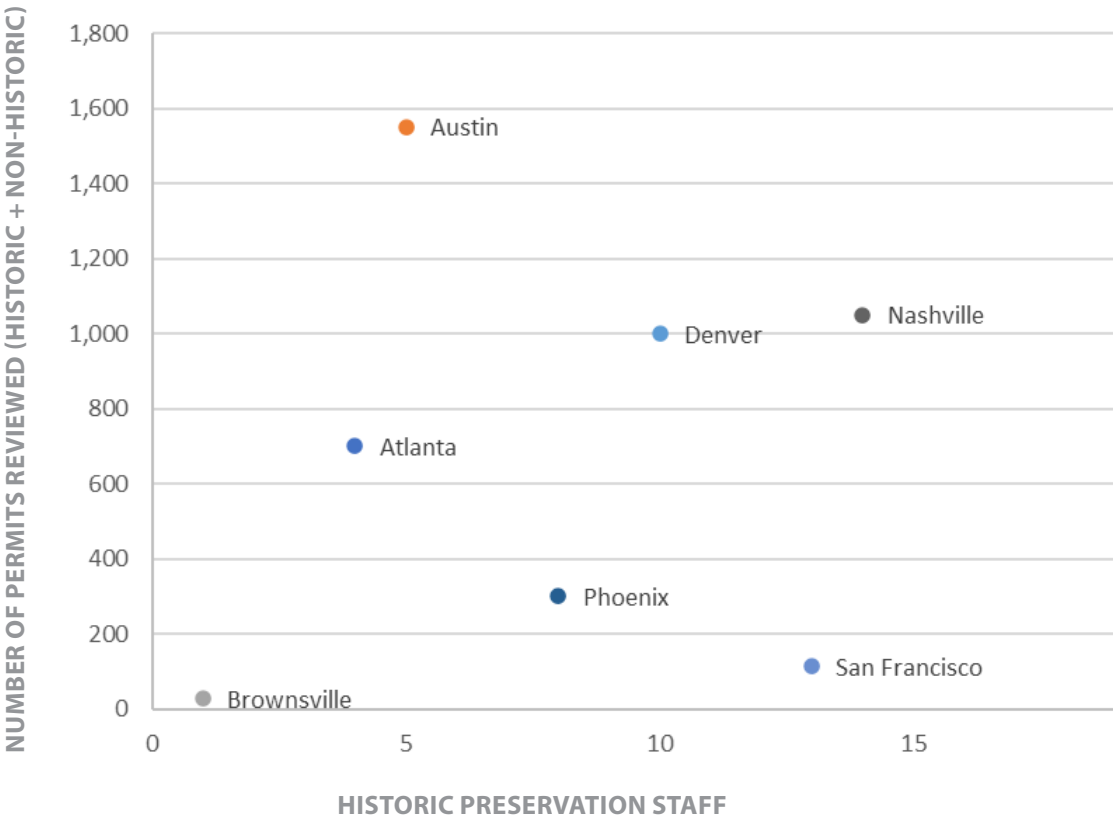
106. Create more staff positions in the Historic Preservation Office.

Look at cities with comparable workloads, as well as Austin's particular needs. Additional staff are needed to engage the community, identify gaps and priorities, proactively promote historic designation, and enforce requirements: all critical components of a successful preservation program. Particular to Austin, the city adopted a historic district program relatively late and has had a small staff for decades; proactive outreach is needed to catch up. To date, Austin's limited staff capacity has been consumed by reviewing filed applications. Prioritize recruitment of candidates with lived experience in Austin and as members of communities of color.

107. Provide annual reports on plan implementation and update the plan within ten years.

Provide an annual report on plan implementation progress. Include a community process to update priority actions and strategies as part of the Historic Landmark Commission's annual budget request.

Permit review responsibilities vs. number of staff



Austin's small historic preservation staff reviews a very high volume of permits compared to peer cities. This leaves little to no time for other activities like proactive outreach, community engagement, sharing why historic resources matter, or improving processes and tools—all key recommendations in this draft plan.

Appendix

Austin's award-winning Translating Community History project featured portraits and interviews with longtime East Austin residents interwoven with historic photos.

College Heights & African American Heritage

Open Chair & Historic Preservation Office

"I moved to Austin in 1997. I originally had a house out in the suburbs but I just didn't feel comfortable out there. I moved over here because I wanted to be in a neighborhood that was historically Black. I'm from Harlem, so I'm used to growing up around people that look like me and think like me and act like me. So I wanted to be more in that culture.

There was a lot of elderly people over here who'd been here for like 50 years. Either they rented or they owned their homes. Folks would walk the neighborhood a lot. There was a church on the corner where that giant mansion is now.

I liked it 'cause I could hear the church. I could hear people singing on Sunday morning. I could see all the old ladies going down to church with their hats on, all dressed up, and I could hear gospel singing coming out of the church.

Eventually the elderly people started dying off a little bit. It's been weird to watch every house turn over. It's weird to see people that look like us, that are comfortable with us, go. Now the neighbors, they don't know me. The most devastating thing was when I watched that church burn down. They did not go into the church to stop the fire. I'd never seen anything like [that] before. They already had an aging congregation. But that's the end of that history of our community. It also had a certain history in the culture.

That was the separation of how the culture started to happen.

The culture's changed so much. There used to be a Black barbecue where Franklin's is now. They were good also, but nobody was patronizing them so much. Where Hillside Farmacy is, there was a Black restaurant there called Gene's, there was Creole, and they had a pretty decent business. Across from there, there was a drive-through convenience thing where Quickie Pickie is.

Me working in technology has afforded me to stay here. Most of my friends can't stay here. I have roommates a lot and I try to support my friends who are artists who need a place to stay.

Doro Hernandez [is] my neighbor across the street. He told me he's a carpenter so I [said], 'Well, anytime I have some extra money, we can do some stuff together 'cause that way we keep it in the family.' That's how we started our relationship. We've pretty much been like family. I spend Thanksgiving with them; I spend Christmas with them. So for me it's like a community. I just try to patronize the folks that are around me, that way we keep the money in the family."

Open Chair & Historic Preservation Office

College Heights & African American Heritage

Katrina Simpson with her neighbor Doro Hernandez and his children, 2020.

Community Engagement Around the Draft Plan

The primary objectives were to raise awareness of the draft plan and gather feedback on the draft goals and recommendations. Public outreach and engagement were executed by the City of Austin, community engagement consultant CD&P, community ambassadors, and mini-grant partner organizations.

The engagement process was designed to be inclusive. It was a priority to reach and hear voices from all communities, particularly those who have been marginalized by the City of Austin and who are underrepresented in local historic landmarks and districts.

Public engagement included a wide variety of types, weekday and weekend events, and locations and audiences. Events ranged from large City-hosted events for the general public to pop-up tabling at community events around Austin. City of Austin staff facilitated formal board and commission briefings, as well as deep-dive discussions with professional and community organizations.

A wide variety of community events, presentations and more informal discussions were facilitated by community ambassadors and mini-grant partner organizations. This outreach often led to more one-on-one and small group conversations and reached many members of historically marginalized communities. partner organizations also did creative engagement at schools and orchestrated outreach partnerships with community organizations such as Meals on Wheels.

Recognizing that English is not the first language of many Austinites, the engagement team worked to ensure that all residents could stay informed and engaged throughout the process. The plan website was translated into four languages (Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Hindi, Vietnamese) with dozens of other languages available through machine translation. Online and printed materials were available in Spanish, with some in Traditional Chinese.

Engagement summary

- 2,500+ people engaged through plan outreach
- 2,083 community surveys completed (online and paper copies) with 3,317 comments
- 1,000+ people engaged at pop-ups by the engagement team
- 440+ people engaged by community ambassadors and mini-grant Partner Organizations at community meetings, in small-group conversations, and 1-on-1
- Nearly 350 people engaged at City-hosted events
- 316 community comments added to board "What is a Place in Austin that Matters to You?"
- 150+ people engaged at events hosted by community ambassadors and community organizations that received mini-grants
- 49 presentations by City staff to City boards and commissions, community groups, and professional stakeholder organizations, including deep dives

A rich variety of places matters to Austinites, including Republic Square (left) and this 1972 home in the St. John neighborhood.

Themes from community feedback

- Concerns about the loss of Austin's history and "old Austin"
- Understanding the importance of preservation but not knowing where to start
- Wanting to learn more about the preservation of homes, buildings, churches, schools, parks, and businesses, especially in East Austin
- Prioritizing helping longtime residents and businesses to stay in their current spaces
- Political, logistical, and resource concerns about whether the plan would be implemented

Lessons learned

- Pop-up tabling reached a higher number of community members than City-hosted events. However, the community events and deep dives offered more opportunities for in-depth discussions and feedback.
- The most successful methods to engage historically marginalized communities included outreach by trusted organizations and community members, such as the mini-grant Partner Organizations and community ambassadors. Outreach from these partners, as well as at cultural celebrations and events where people were already gathered, resulted in a higher number of survey responses and in-person engagements from historically marginalized communities.
- It is difficult to engage people quickly about the details of a long plan.
- It is more effective to ask the public about their priorities and goals than to ask for feedback on something they are unfamiliar with, as demonstrated by the short, accessible community survey.

Outreach partners

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

The mini-grant program sought to engage communities that have historically been marginalized: communities of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ communities, low-income families, and renters. After a competitive application process, five $5,000 mini-grants were awarded. Together, these organizations informed and engaged nearly 1,650 people around the draft plan through organization-hosted events, presentations at community meetings, informal small-group discussions, flyer distribution, and more.

Anderson Community Development Corporation was founded by former students of the historic Anderson High School of East Austin. Our organization and the community of former students actively engage throughout the year to support each other as well as the mission of ACDC. Our long-term empowerment initiatives advance support to marginalized populations. Historically, our programs have primarily served the Black and Latino populations, though we welcome all nationalities. We engage throughout the year by offering Education and Training Programs, Mentorship and Support Networks, Financial Assistance and Aid, and Health and Wellness programs.

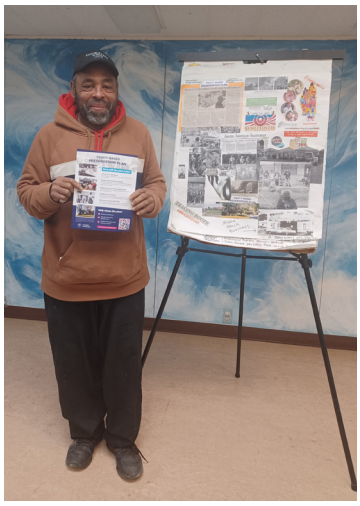
East Austin Conservancy works to preserve the people, history and culture of East Central Austin. Equity is at the core of what we do, especially with our focus on the legacy homeowners who live in this area of Austin due to the 1928 City Master Plan that institutionalized racial segregation with a division of the city from west to east. The EAC has been around for more than 10 years and has historically worked by word of mouth. This has allowed the organization to be a trusted name for the neighbors served. Recently, EAC has partnered with organizations to reach the larger community and hard-to-reach community members such as seniors.

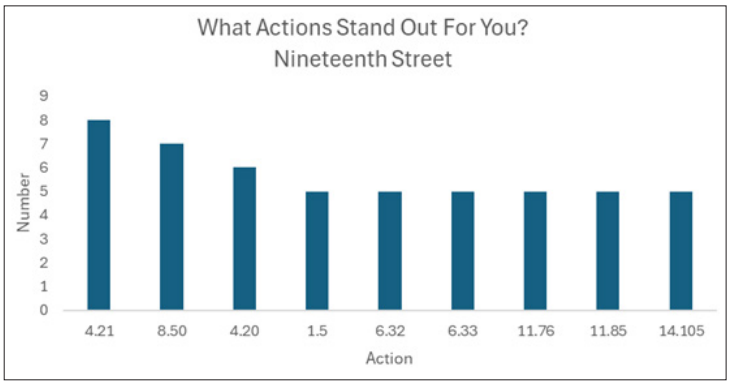
Creative Action provides opportunities for community-building, dialogue, education, and cultural preservation, especially in the East Austin area. Inclusion and equity are central to Creative Action's mission, values and intergenerational approach. We celebrate and amplify the history and culture of historically Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) through community-led public art projects that focus on placekeeping by empowering community members to tell their unique story. Driven by our core values, we create arts-based activations, from large-scale community murals to free community arts events that invite community members to dream big, create community, stand up against injustice, and spark joy.

Taiwanese American Professionals - Austin Chapter helps to develop community-oriented young professionals into leaders! Our work demonstrates that culturally specific groups do not just serve their named demographic, but are key linchpins in the greater communities they are embedded in. Our group has fostered young professional-aged leaders in the AAPI community since 2011 and is part of a national web of Taiwanese American civic leaders that gather and learn from each other 1-2 times a year. Our community talks often and passionately about how to persevere and preserve history so that it's not only told by those with more power, money, or authority.

Tomorrow's Promise Foundation (TPF) is committed to addressing the unique challenges faced by Black and Brown communities, with a particular focus on improving mental health outcomes for marginalized and at-risk youth. TPF recognizes the intersectionality of various systems that impact these communities, including incarceration, poverty, violence, and inequitable access to mental health support. TPF has a deep understanding of the cultural and heritage issues affecting Black and Brown communities and actively works toward breaking barriers and providing access to resources and opportunities for marginalized communities. By actively involving individuals with similar lived experiences as leaders and mentors, TPF promotes equity and representation in decision-making processes.

Mini-grant organizational representatives. Left to right: Darwin Brown and Bill Wallace, Tomorrow's Promise Foundation; Stephanie Chavez-Noell, Creative Action; Cheryl Anderson and Eva Lawler Esparza, Anderson Community Development Corporation; Catalina Berry, East Austin Conservancy; Hanna Huang and Melody Chang, TAP-ATX; and Cynthia Simons, Tomorrow's Promise Foundation.





Clockwise from top left: Collage created by ambassador Dianna Dean, participant from focus group facilitated by Ms. Dean, time capsules created by Maplewood Elementary students (Creative Action), Anderson Community Development Corporation members tabling at Corinth Missionary Baptist Church, TAP-ATX and The New Philanthropists “Pearls and Preservation” event

Anderson Community Development Corporation hosted four focus groups at historically Black churches in East Austin. In each focus group, CDC board members announced and shared the Equity-Based Preservation Plan with a video and a short speech, then facilitated an exercise where they went through each goal and actions using sticky notes. A pareto chart like the one above was created during discussion.

COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

Like the mini-grant program, the community ambassador program sought to engage people from historically marginalized communities. After a competitive application process, 12 community ambassadors were selected. Early attrition led to a cohort of nine ambassadors who raised awareness and collected feedback from more than 300 people throughout the engagement period. Ambassadors led events, presented at community meetings, held small-group and 1-on-1 conversations, distributed flyers, and more.

Sally Acevedo

Megan Barbour

Ashley Besic

John Cervantes Jr.

Dianna Dean

Daniel Llanes

Rocio Peña-Martinez

Ava Pendleton

Kiounis Williams

Community ambassadors. Left to right: Sally Acevedo, Dianna Dean, Megan Barbour, Daniel Llanes, Ashley Besic. Not pictured: John Cervantes Jr., Rocio Peña-Martinez, Ava Pendleton, Kiounis Williams

Timeline: Historic Preservation in Austin

1953

Heritage Society of Austin and Texas State Historical Survey Committee created (Preservation Austin and Texas Historical Commission precursors)

1965

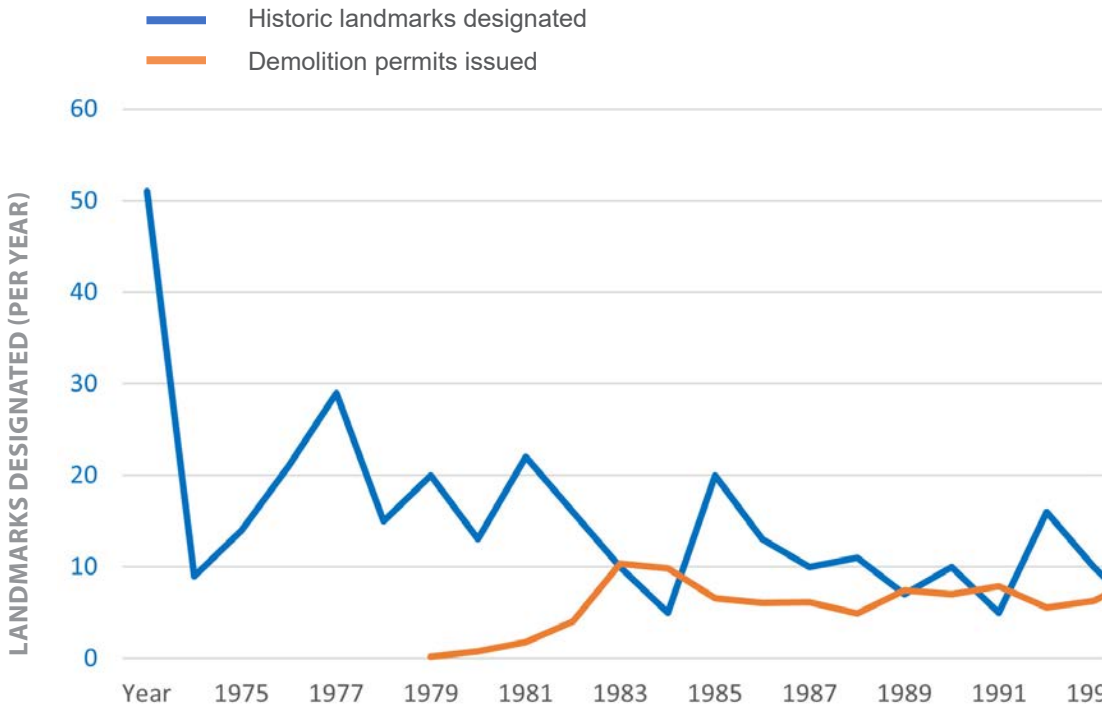
First Austin survey completed by Heritage Society and Planning Department

1966

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) passed

1969

Antiquities Code of Texas passed



1974

Austin's historic preservation ordinance passed

1980

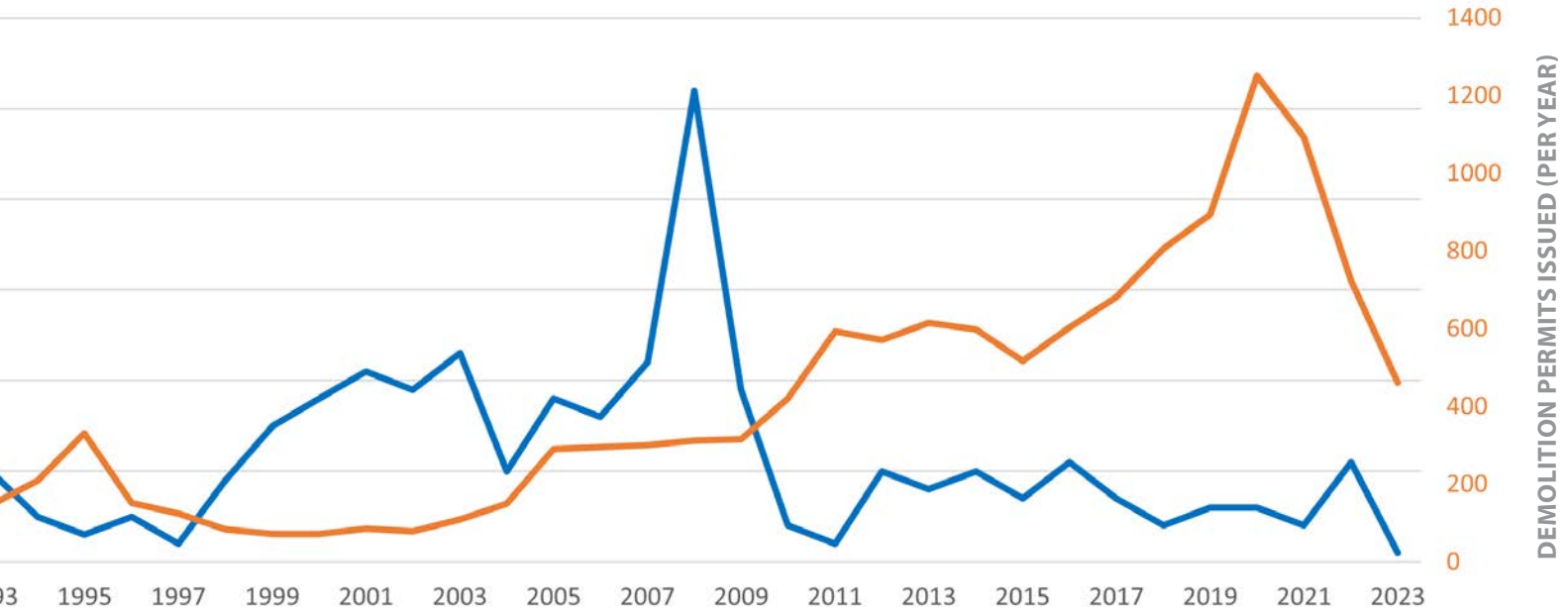
NHPA amendment creates Certified Local Government program

1981

Austin preservation plan adopted

1984

Austin's first large-scale historic resource survey completed



2004

Austin enables local historic districts to be designated

2010

City Council limits number of owner-initiated landmark designation hearings to three per month, or one per month in a National Register or locally designated historic district

2016

City Council approves largest East Austin survey to date

2019

HB 2496 enacted (see p. 61 for more information)

2020

SB 1585 passes; enacted in 2021 (see p. 61)

2021

Historic Landmark Commission creates Preservation Plan Working Group and initiates development of Equity-Based Preservation Plan

Historic Landmark Commission

The Historic Landmark Commission created the Preservation Plan Working Group and reviewed the plan.

Commissioners

Ben Heimsath, chair
Jaime Alvarez
Anissa Castillo *
Raymond Castillo
Tara Dudley
Roxanne Evans
Witt Featherston
Harmony Grogan
Kevin Koch
Carl Larosche
Kelly Little *
Terri Myers *
Trey McWhorter
JuanRaymon Rubio
Blake Tollett *
Beth Valenzuela *
Caroline Wright *

Preservation Plan Committee

The Commission's Preservation Plan Committee initiated the Equity-Based Preservation Plan and recommended Preservation Plan Working Group members. The committee met monthly to provide guidance on the planning process. In summer 2024, it collaborated with the working group to revise and finalize the plan.

Raymond Castillo, chair
Tara Dudley *
Roxanne Evans
Harmony Grogan *
Ben Heimsath
Carl Larosche *
Terri Myers *
Alex Papavasiliou *
Beth Valenzuela *

* Previous members

Community heritage includes places that have been lost. Below: Students boycotting the closure of L.C. Anderson High School in 1971. Right: Threadgill's sign.

Project Staff

Cara Bertron, project manager

Joi Harden

Kalan Contreras

Gregory Farrar

Alyssa Lane

Elizabeth Brummett *

Steve Sadowsky *

Andrew Rice *

Amber Allen *

Katie Enders *

Kimberly Collins *

with assistance from Miguel Lopez, Rachel Tepper, Madeline Shanafelt, and Sam Fahnestock

Larry Schooler, working group facilitator (plan development)

Marion Sanchez and Justin Schneider, working group facilitators (plan revisions)

Steve Sadowsky passed away in January 2022. Staff recognize and honor Steve's longtime dedication, deep expertise, and love for this city.

* Previous staff

Technical Advisory Group

A Technical Advisory Group composed of staff from 14 City departments offered targeted advice and expertise.

Members

Austin Energy	Heidi Kasper
Austin History Center	Marina Islas
Austin Resource Recovery	Jason McCombs
Development Services	Chris Sapuppo
Code	Marlayna Wright
Economic Development	
Districts	Matthew Schmidt
Small Business	Danny Brewer, Nicole Klepadlo *
Equity Office	Amanda Jasso, Ayshea Khan *
Financial Services	Christine Maguire
Housing	
Displacement Prevention	Meredith Sisnett, Tymon Khamsi *
Real Estate	Dawn Perkins
Law	Mary Marrero
Resilience	Marc Coudert
Sustainability	Rohan Lilauwala
Parks and Recreation	
Heritage Tourism	Melissa Alvarado, Sehila Casper *
Historic Preservation	Ellen Colfax, Kim McKnight
Equity and Inclusion	Sona Shah
African American Cultural Heritage Facility	TJ Owens *
Mexican American Cultural Center	Michelle Rojas
Planning	
Communications	Alyssa Lane
Demography	Lila Valencia
Inclusive Planning	Shanisha Johnson, Laura Keating *
Urban Design	Aaron Jenkins *
Zoning	Marcelle Boudreaux, Wendy Rhoades *
Transportation and Public Works	Cole Kitten

Focus Groups

Owners of longstanding, iconic small businesses, representatives from neighborhood associations across the city, and cultural and heritage organization staff and board members participated in three focus groups. With 23 members total, these groups provided input on specific issues and feedback on draft recommendations.

Cultural and heritage organizations

Alexandria Anderson, Raasin in the Sun

Rowena Dasch, Neill-Cochran House Museum

Maica Jordan, Austin Theatre Alliance

Daniel Llanes, Dances for the World / For the Love Of It

Christopher Markley, German Texan Heritage Society

Charles Peveto, Austin History Center Association, Friends of Wooldridge Square, Preservation Austin

Dr. Clayton Shorkey, Texas Music Museum

Legacy businesses

Jennifer Attal Allen, El Patio

William Bridges, Deep Eddy Cabaret; Cisco's Mexican Restaurant, Bakery & Bar; Arlyn Studios; Antone's Nightclub; Lamberts Downtown Barbecue

Regina Estrada, Joe's Bakery

Teghan Hahn, Wild About Music

Jade Place, Hillside Farmacy

Shannon Sedwick, Esther's Follies Theater, The Tavern at 12th and Lamar, Stars Café

Neighborhood associations

Janet Beinke, Aldridge Place Historic District

Patricia Calhoun, Rogers-Washington-Holy Cross Neighborhood Association

Dianna Dean, E. MLK Neighborhood Plan Contact Team

Carol M. Cespedes, South Windmill Run Neighborhood Association

Jane Hayman, Pemberton Heights Neighborhood Association

Jeff Jack, Zilker Neighborhood Association / past president of Austin Neighborhoods Council

Melanie Martinez, South River City Citizens' Historic Preservation Committee / Travis Heights-Fairview Park Historic District Team

Caroline Reynolds, Allandale Neighborhood Association

Ted Siff, Old Austin Neighborhood Association

Ricardo Zavala, Dove Springs Proud

▼ Ishmael Dotson, father of Thelma Calhoun. Mr. Dotson owned a shop at 500 E. 6th Street.

Outreach

Staff reached out to the following groups and organizations during the planning process. Initially, groups were asked to advertise the Preservation Plan Working Group application and community heritage survey. Many were also engaged for the focus groups opportunity. Later, groups were requested to share information about the Equity-Based Preservation Plan and invite their networks to provide feedback on the draft plan.

Community organizations

African American Youth Harvest Foundation

Asian Family Support Services of Austin

AURA

Austin Asian American Film Festival

Austin Free-Net

Austin History Center Association

Austin Justice Coalition

Austin NAACP

Austin Neighborhoods Council

Austin Revitalization Authority

AustinUP

Bethany Cemetery Association

Blackland Community Development Corporation

Blackshear Community Development Corporation

Central Texas Collective for Racial Equity

Clarksville Community Development Corporation

Community Action Network (CAN)

East Austin Conservancy

E4 Youth

Filipino Young Professionals

Forklift Danceworks

Go Austin/Vamos Austin (GAVA)

Great Promise for American Indians

Guadalupe Neighborhood Development Corporation

Historic Bridge Foundation

House museums—various, including Neill-Cochran House Museum

La Raza Roundtable

Las Comadres

Latinitas

Leadership Austin

LULAC District XII

Museums—various, including the French Legation, Mexic-Arte Museum, and Neill-Cochran House Museum

PODER

San Jose-Montopolis Cemetery Association

Save Austin's Cemeteries

Save Our Springs Alliance

Six Square

Tejano Genealogy Society

Tejano Trails

W. H. Passon Society

Professional organizations and coalitions

AIA Austin

APA Texas

Associated General Contractors of America - Austin Chapter

Austin Bar Association

Austin Board of Realtors (ABOR)

Austin Housing Coalition

Austin Infill Coalition

Austin Lodging Association

Austin NARI (National Association of the Remodeling Industry)

CNU Central Texas

DECA - Digital Empowerment Community of Austin

Greener Together Austin

Home Builders Association

Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA)

Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS)

Society of Architectural Historians - Southeast Chapter (SESAH)

Texas Archeological Society

Texas ASLA

Texas Association of Builders

ULI Austin

Business organizations

Rally Austin

Austin Independent Business Alliance / IBIZ districts

Austin LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce

Black Women in Business

Business Investment Growth (BiG) Austin

Downtown Austin Alliance

East Cesar Chavez Neighborhood Business District

Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce

Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce

Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce

Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Pecan Street Festival

Red River Cultural District

South Congress Public Improvement District

Visit Austin

Educational institutions

Austin Community College

Austin Independent School District

Huston-Tillotson University

St. Edward's University

University of Texas at Austin: Center for Societal Impact, Center for Sustainable Development, Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, Community Engagement Center, Environmental Science Institute, Historic Preservation program, Planning program, School of Information

Preservation commissions and organizations

DoCoMoMo

Preservation Austin

Preservation Texas

Texas Historical Commission

Travis County Historical Commission

Midtexmod

Community members

Historic landmark owners

Historic district contacts

National Register district contacts

Neighborhood associations and other registered community organizations

Heritage Grant recipients

People involved with previous Historic Preservation Office projects (Translating Community History, Design Standards Working Group)

Legacy businesses

Lists obtained from news articles and the Economic Development Department

Other

ATX Barrio Archive

Building Bridges

Equity Action Team

Farandula Texas

The Austin Common

City boards and commissions

African American Resource Advisory Commission

Asian American Quality of Life Advisory Commission

Austin Youth Council

Building and Standards Commission

Commission on Aging

Community Development Commission

Comprehensive Plan Joint Committee

Design Commission

Downtown Commission

Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission

Historic Landmark Commission

LGBTQIA+ Resource Advisory Commission

Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

Parks and Recreation Board

Planning Commission

Tourism Commission

Zero Waste Advisory Commission

Zoning and Platting Commission

City departments and facilities

Austin History Center

Austin Public Library

City Council offices

Development Services Department

Economic Development Department

Equity Office

Financial Services Department

Housing Department

Innovation Office

Law Department

Parks and Recreation Department

- African American Cultural and Heritage Facility
- Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center

Planning Department

Office of Resilience

Office of Sustainability

Places that matter to Austinites (left to right): a distinctive local fence, the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, and a creek in South Austin.

Citations

1 Mike Powe, PhD, Old Buildings in a Changing Austin: Historic Preservation, Density, and Affordability presentation, September 25, 2019.

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26 Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, qtd. in Affordable Housing and Density Issue Brief, Preservation Priorities Task Force (Fall 2021).

27 Austin Housing Analysis, University of Texas at Austin (2021).

28 Paul Brophy and Carey Shea, "Opinion: Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing Is Hiding in Plain Sight" (*Shelterforce*, July 2019), qtd. in Affordable Housing and Density Issue Brief [PDF], Preservation Priorities Task Force (Fall 2021).

Image Credits

Cover: South Congress Avenue, 1948 (C05767), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library; Deep Eddy Apartments, 1970s, courtesy of Chen Chen Wu; Cisco's, City of Austin; Rosewood Park, ca. 1959-69 (PICA 24201) and Campfire Float at Fiesta del Barrio (PICA 29995), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.

i All images submitted as part of the community heritage survey in fall 2021, with permission given for use. Credits: Lunar New Year celebration, courtesy of Pearl Wu; Mayfield Park, courtesy of Bruce Evans; the landmarked Mary Baylor House in Clarksville, submitted anonymously; a Mexican American celebration at the Capitol, courtesy of Fidencio Hernandez; Barton Hills home, submitted anonymously; Huston-Tillotson University, photo by Keep It Digital, courtesy of Linda Y. Jackson.

ii Preservation Plan Working Group members (phase 1), City of Austin

2 Six Square mural, Reese Heard; homes in the Mary Street Historic District, City of Austin; children playing, Preservation Austin

3 Outreach and engagement around the draft Equity-Based Preservation Plan, City of Austin (left) and Creative Action (right)

4 Icons from the Noun Project: Community by Gan Khoon Lay, focus group by mikicon, committee by Adrien Coquet, wrench by Suryaman, city by Laurent Genereux

5 Preservation Plan Working Group discussions, City of Austin

6 Outreach around the Equity-Based Preservation Plan, City of Austin; community kickoff event for the plan, City of Austin

7 Community forum about the preservation plan, Taiwanese American Professionals - Austin Chapter; focus group about the preservation with representatives from historically black churches, Anderson Community Development Corporation

9 Preservation Plan Working Group discussion and notes, City of Austin

10 People talking after the community kickoff for the draft plan, February 2024

11 Icons from the Noun Project: Community by Gan Khoon Lay, property owner by Pro Symbols, pyramid by Smalllike, friends by Hyuk Jun Kwon, flags by Erica Grau, armadillo by Amanda Sebastiani, Texas by Alexander Skowalsky, United States by Ted Grajeda, commission by Vectors Point (multiplied)

12 Icon from the Noun Project: district (house excerpt) by Flatart; Smoot/Terrace Park Historic District building, City of Austin

13 Music + listening map, Amy Moreland, Austin's Atlas; "Then vs. Now" at the Neill-Cochran House, courtesy of Rowena Dasch

14 Icons from the Noun Project: Dollar bill by Jake Dunham, construction worker by IconTrack, district (house excerpt) by Flatart, pizza by Blake Kathryn, groceries by Jae Deasigner, haircut by Hopkins, property tax by iconhome, landlord by Ayub Irawan, barber by Adrien Coquet, cashier by Jae Deasigner, pizza shop worker by Llisole, pizza shop by Ian Rahmadi Kurniawan, tax by Graphic Enginer (sic), hamburger by Curve, veterinarian by Gan Khoon Lay, roller skates by Bakunetsu Kaito, ice cream by mikicon, plumber by Gan Khoon Lay, paycheck by Nociconist, property tax by iconhome

15 Map by City of Austin using classification from Preservation Austin for historic landmarks' associations with underrepresented communities (list updated by City staff August 2024)

17 The Texas Freedom Colonies Project; Joe and Dora Lung, n.d., Lung House National Register nomination

19 Map from 1928 City Plan; aerial view of Air Conditioned Village, 1954, by Dewey Mears, Atlas Obscura

20 The original Our Lady of Guadalupe Church (AR-2009-047-012), Jesse Herrera Photographs, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Texas; Rosewood Courts, 1954 (ASPL_DM-54-C18907), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

21 HOLC map, 1935; Chinese community members at a Texas Senate hearing, 1937 (nd-36-a001-01, Neal Douglass Photograph Archive [AR.2005.048]), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

22-23 Dependency (slave quarters) at Neill-Cochran House Museum, Neill-Cochran House Museum; Holly Street Power Plant, ca. 1970 (PICA 14501), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library; I-35 construction, 1960, texasfreeway.com

24 Aqua Fest protest, ca. 1970-79, *Austin Citizen* (PICA 11695), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library; East Austin students during busing, 1971 (PICA 10494), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

23 "Clarksville efforts rebuffed," *Austin Statesman* 1/21/1970; "Clarksville finally gets recognition, help," *Austin American-Statesman* 2/8/1976; North Flats-Howson House, one of the first historic landmarks designated in Austin, from the Old Austin Neighborhood Association

26 Photo contact sheet from City of Austin Comprehensive Survey of Cultural Resources, 1984, City of Austin

27 Pride march, 1989, University of North Texas Libraries Special Collections; Desired Development Zone map, 2018, by Robin Poitras, in "Transforming Rainey Street," by Eliot Tretter and Elizabeth J. Mueller

28-29 84-86 Rainey Street, 1984, by Joe Freeman, Historic Resources of East Austin survey; 84-86 Rainey Street, 2020, Google Street View; Rogers-Washington-Holy Cross Historic District, 2020, City of Austin

32 Pie chart by City of Austin using classification from Preservation Austin for historic landmarks' associations with underrepresented communities; Juneteenth Parade, 2017, photo by Montinique Monroe for *The Austin Chronicle*; Taiwanese American Softball Team, 1991, courtesy of Peter Wu

33 Queer History Series flyer, Austin Queerbomb; Instagram posts from ATX Barrio Archive

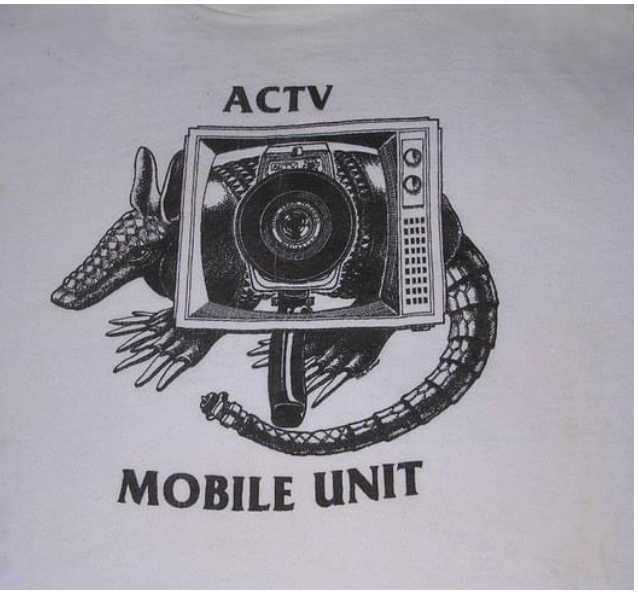
34 Excerpt from Barrio Archives tour, Preservation Austin; state marker, City of Austin

35 Map of places in Austin that matter to community members, 2024, City of Austin

36 Victory Grill, Texas Historical Commission; Joe's Bakery, joesbakery.com; La Loteria mural unveiling (8/3/2015), John Anderson for The Austin Chronicle

37 Icon from the Noun Project: Property owner by ProSymbols; Elizondo Flower Shop, City of San Antonio; San Francisco legacy business sandwich board, Osaki Creative; San Francisco legacy business map, City and County of San Francisco

38 Potential archaeological liability map, City of Austin using data from TXDOT



39 Artifacts, San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation

40 Johnny Limon, The Projecto/Open Chair, for Translating Community History project, City of Austin; Busy Bee Nursery, with owner/director Rose Williams and students, Marilyn Poole and Ira Jerome Poole, courtesy of Marilyn Poole. "Busy Bee was an important contributor to early education in East Austin," writes Ms. Poole. "It operated out of Ms. Rose's home on Tillotson Avenue, next door to the home of Jerome Hill, renowned gardener and architect of the landscape design at Huston-Tillotson College."

41 Fourplex in Hyde Park Historic District, Thoughtbarn

43 Screenshots of City programs, City of Austin; The Projecto/Open Chair, for Translating Community History project, City of Austin; demolition of E. 32nd Street house, City of Austin

44 Aldridge Place Historic District, City of Austin

45 Diagram of house showing where energy is lost, City of Austin Historic Design Standards

46 Volma Overton, Sr., during a "speak-in" or filibuster of the Austin City Council on April 2, 1964 (PICA 28542), Austin American-Statesman Photographic Morgue (AR.2014.039), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Texas; Texas School for the Deaf, submitted anonymously as part of the community heritage survey; community members celebrating Edward Rendon, Sr. Park, courtesy of Bertha Rendon Delgado

47 Equity-Based Preservation Plan community ambassadors, 2024, City of Austin

48 Wood window workshop, City of Austin; Austin Board of Realtors website

49 Excerpt from Design Resource Center on Pinterest, San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation

50 Historic Landmark Commission, 2024, ATXN

51 Vets Restore, 4Culture; weatherstripping and repair photos, City of Austin Historic Design Standards

52 Funeral for a Home, Al Jazeera America

53 "Stories within Stories," Austin Asian American Film Festival; representatives from community organizations that received mini-grants for preservation plan outreach, 2024

54 Community archive, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library; door hanger, San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation

55 East Austin Conservancy staff doing outreach about the preservation plan at the Si Se Puede Cesar Chavez March & Day of Action, 2024; summer camp, Atlanta Preservation Center

56 Survey map, City of Austin

57 Cultural mapping, San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation

58 Bar graph created by City of Austin

59 Homes in the Robertson/Stuart & Mair Historic District, City of Austin; excerpt from Historic Resources of East Austin Multiple Resource Area nomination form, 1985, National Park Service

60 Homes in the Rogers Washington Holy Cross and Hyde Park historic districts, City of Austin; map created by the City of Austin using icon from the Noun Project: United States by Ted Grajeda

62 Homes in the Smoot/Terrace Park Historic District, City of Austin; Brass-Goddard House, a historic landmark located in the Castle Hill Historic District, City of Austin; Herrera House, a historic landmark, City of Austin

63 Icons from the Noun Project: worker by Gan Khoon Lay, construction worker by IconTrack, district (house excerpt) by Flatart, painter by Gan Khoon Lay; graphic showing tax exemptions for historic landmarks by City of Austin, using 2023 data from Travis Central Appraisal District

64 TDR sketch in New York City, "Buying Sky" policy brief, Furman Center, New York University

65 Map created by the City of Austin using icon from the Noun Project: United States by Ted Grajeda

66 Icons from the Noun Project: armadillo by Amanda Sebastiani, Texas by Alexander Skowalsky, United States by Ted Grajeda

67 Detail of people looking at a building plan, Alena Darmel, Pexels

68 Table excerpted from Historic Design Standards, City of Austin

69 Chart created by the City of Austin using 2023 permit data

70 Icons from the Noun Project: Renovate by Eucalyp, house extension by gzz, derelict flat by Ed Harrison. Photos: Frisco, Facebook via Austin Monitor; W. 11th Street house, City of Austin; Sneed House by Ernesto Rodriguez, Pinterest; Congress Avenue building, City of Austin

71 Hyde Park house, courtesy of O'Connell Architecture

72 Preservation Plan Working Group meetings, City of Austin; Historic Design Standards, City of Austin

73 Chart created by City of Austin

74 Katrina Simpson and neighbors, Translating Community History project, Open Chair for the City of Austin

75 Republic Square, courtesy of Gloria Mata Pennington; home on E. St. John, courtesy of John and Beulah Cooper. The Coopers write, "This classic home built 1972 graces the corner of 1012 East Saint John and Bethune avenues in Rev. A.K. Black Addition east of IH35." The neighborhood was "established for African-heritage sharecropper families to buy/own affordably over time, starting in the 1930s north of 290E."

77 Representatives of community organizations that received mini-grants for preservation plan outreach

78 Collage created by ambassador Dianna Dean, photo by Dianna Dean; participant from focus group facilitated by Ms. Dean, photo by Dianna Dean; time capsules created by Maplewood Elementary students with Creative Action, photo by Creative Action; Anderson Community Development Corporation members tabling at Corinth Missionary Baptist Church, photo by Anderson CDC; Taiwanese American Professionals-Austin Chapter and The New Philanthropists "Pearls and Preservation" event, photo by TAP-ATX

79 Community ambassadors for preservation plan outreach

80-81 Timeline created by City of Austin

82 Students boycotting the closure of L.C. Anderson High School, 1971 (PICA 07569), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.

83 Threadgill's sign, courtesy of Kurt

84 Ishmael Dotson, courtesy of Patricia Calhoun

86 Fence, courtesy of Bo McCarver

87 Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, City of Austin; creek, likely in Oak Hill, courtesy of Carol Cespedes

90 ACTV Mobile Unit, courtesy of Sue Sende Cole; mural and truck, submitted anonymously as part of the community heritage survey

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