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February 2, 2010

Mayor Lee Leffingwell,
Mayor Pro Tem Martinez, and City Council Members
City of Austin
Post Office Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-8865

Re: Heritage Tree Ordinance

Dear Mayor Leffingwell, Mayor Pro Tem Martinez and Council Members:



**HERITAGE
SOCIETY OF
AUSTIN**
P.O. BOX 2113
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768
512-474-5198
FAX 512-476-8687

The Heritage Society of Austin is writing to express support for the adoption of a Heritage Tree Ordinance that will provide steadfast protection for these unique assets to Austin.

The Heritage Society of Austin is committed to conservation as part of our mission, which is to promote the recognition and experience of Austin's diverse cultural heritage through the preservation of historic treasures and places. Heritage Trees are irreplaceable historic treasures of Austin and are an important component of the historic context and story of our City. Therefore, the Heritage Society of Austin respectfully requests that City Council adopt a Heritage Tree Ordinance that includes the following components:

- Real economic disincentives for removal of heritage trees, defined as those from selected species that have reached a trunk diameter of 24 inches or larger;
- Transparency, public notice and public participation in city tree decisions; and
- Vigorous enforcement with stiffer penalties and mitigation rates for removal of these trees.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this issue and all your ongoing work to build a great future for our city while respecting our valued heritage.

Regards,


Jacqui Schraad
Executive Director