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Jacqui Schraad  
Executive Director

June 9, 2010

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

**Re: Preservation Program Review**

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

The Heritage Society of Austin respectfully urges Council to seize the opportunity that has been presented for a review of Austin's preservation program. We do not oppose the adoption of interim measures while such a review is being conducted, but can not support limiting the ability of the Historic Landmark Commission to initiate designations. In addition, we believe it is crucial to recognize that the measures proposed in the Council resolution do not represent good preservation practices and should by no means become a permanent part of our City's Preservation program code. Therefore, HSA strongly urges that you adopt these temporary measures with a definite expiration date.



HERITAGE  
SOCIETY OF  
AUSTIN

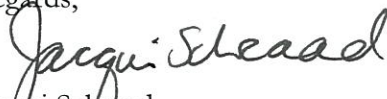
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Furthermore, we appreciate that these two amendments are accompanied by the Council's initiation of a review of the economics of the City's Preservation Program. Historic preservation has significant economic benefits for our city, as well as a vital component to our quality of life. The preservation incentives should be carefully and thoughtfully constructed to support the goals of the program and ensure its maximum results. The Heritage Society offers to help the Historic Landmarks Commission in this effort in any way possible. We strongly recommend that this group study our peer cities' best practices of incentives for Local Historic Districts and Historic Landmark Zoning, with the goal of making recommendations to ensure that Austin's program is structured to meet the goal of preserving of our City's rich cultural and architectural past.

Additionally, we hope that as limits to the historic landmark designations are considered, the Council will also direct the City Manager to work at the same time with the Historic Landmark Commission to develop procedures to facilitate the establishment of Local Historic Districts.

We hope a review of the preservation program will be used as an opportunity to study and update Austin's policies to stand as a national example of effective preservation practices. 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