



RECOMMENDATION RESOLUTION

Historic Preservation Commission

Recommendation Number: (2019-04RR): Recommending the expansion of the city’s historic preservation program.

WHEREAS, the City’s Comprehensive Plan, “Vision San Marcos: A River Runs Through Us,” recognizes that the citizens of San Marcos “are conscious of preserving our rich historical past and will pursue future cultural enrichment”; and

WHEREAS, toward that end, the City boasts seven locally designated historic districts and eight locally designated landmarks, 1,406 surveyed resources of historic age, while other structures and sites have been recognized at the national and state levels for their historical or cultural significance;

WHEREAS, the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program generated \$176.2 billion in GDP since 1978; and

WHEREAS, Federal historic preservation tax incentives generated \$7.4 billion in GDP and 129,000 jobs in 2018; and

WHEREAS, as of October 31, 2019, during the first four years of the State tax credit program, the Texas Historical Commission has certified 202 projects (including multiple phases of work at individual buildings), with \$1.44 billion in qualified rehabilitation costs; and

WHEREAS, historic preservation is consistent with the city’s efforts to encourage sustainability, energy efficiency and green building, as well as striving to discourage landfill waste and suburban sprawl; and

WHEREAS, the City of San Marcos, as the authority approving the designation of historic zoning, must balance priorities of preservation stewardship of the local tax base in the interest of culture, prosperity, education, and the general welfare of residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of San Marcos, a Certified Local Government (CLG) since 1990, is a partner in preservation with local, State, and Federal governments, working together in the Federal Preservation Program to help communities save the irreplaceable historic character of places and, as such through the certification process, are expected to make a local commitment to historic preservation; and

WHEREAS, being a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City of San Marcos is willing to demonstrate our community’s commitment to saving what is important from the past for future

generations, and a readiness to take on successful preservation projects, allowing the community to compete for new opportunities; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to enhance the City's historic resources, further advance services to the public, and further fulfill our commitments as a part in preservation as a Certified Local Government (CLG), the City sought the services of a consultant to conduct an updated survey of historic resources, and solicited recommendations for implementation; and

WHEREAS, on September 3, 2019, the historic resources survey, My Historic SMTX, was adopted by the San Marcos City Council with recommended changes to the San Marcos Development Code; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Preservation Commission believes that proper and timely implementation of the My Historic SMTX historic resources survey, proper implementation of the city's demolition review ordinance, as well as other projects to recognize and designate local landmarks and local historic districts, requires additional resources and a strong commitment from our City Council.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission recommends to the San Marcos City Council consider the following proposals as part of its 2020-2021 Visioning Workshops, Budget Workshops, and other meetings as appropriate:

1. The expansion of the current Historic Preservation Officer position to a full-time position with no duties or responsibilities unrelated to historic preservation.
2. The creation of a part-time position of "City Historian" or similar as part of the Office of Historic Preservation.
3. A cost-benefit analysis conducted by the City Manager or his designee, of maintaining the city's Office of Historic Preservation as part of the Planning Department, or moving the Office to another city department, or establishing a new department of the city government and present a recommendation to the City Council for consideration.
4. Expanded training opportunities in historic preservation for the City Council, the Planning & Zoning Commission, and the Historic Preservation Commission.

Date of Approval: December 5, 2019

Record of the vote:

Attest: Griffin Spell
Griffin Spell, Chair, Historic Preservation Commission