

CITY OF DALLAS

Historic and Cultural Preservation Strategy

March 2024

DRAFT



City of Dallas

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Land and People Acknowledgment

The City of Dallas acknowledges the traditional territory of north Texas occupied by multiple American Indian groups along with the Trinity River which provided seasonal homes and trading exchanges. Most notably, it was inhabited by the Caddo, Wichita, and nomadic tribes such as the Comanche, Kiowa, and ancestral tribes. We recognize the American Indian peoples as original stewards of this land and all the relatives within it. The acknowledgment is a small gesture, to a larger commitment to showing respect through ongoing awareness and action.

Letter from the City Manager

Dallas residents,

In recent years, the City of Dallas has demonstrated firm commitment to anchoring policies, programs, and operations in racial equity. In 2020, we focused the goals of our Climate Action Plan (CECAP) on quality of life and moving the needle forward on racial equity. In 2023, we re-envisioned our incentives policy to be predicated on equitable economic development. Every plan, from climate, mobility, economic development, to this Historic and Cultural Preservation Strategy, is powered by **a single goal: a more equitable future for our city.**

Dallas has become a city nationally renowned for the speed of new development and regional growth. Building new things and putting value on the ground has captured attention and dominated Dallas' story in recent times. People believe it is easier to start from scratch. If you are a student of preservation, you know that there is simply more to the story. **Preservation is not an impediment to development, but rather an asset** to be activated to amplify the stories that have gone untold and, consequently, chart an equitable, prosperous future for all residents of Dallas.

We must reposition the city's view on preservation to reach beyond just the four walls of an existing structure, and capitalize on the assets that preservation brings, which include expanding access to affordable housing, equitable economic development in underserved neighborhoods, and opportunities for adaptive reuse and sustainable practices.

This new strategy aims to take a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to historic and cultural preservation with a citywide lens. To transform our preservation function to be as efficient and equitable as it can be, the City must support a team of strong, qualified preservation staff, allocate resources preservation tools and programs, and facilitate collaborations between preservation staff and other key Departments. We must think boldly and beyond what we have always done to protect the richness of our community.

I would like to thank our city's incredible community of preservation advocates who work tirelessly to ensure our city's history remains an important part of how Dallas grows and develops as a leading city. Many voices, perspectives, and ideas went into creating this catalytic strategy for preservation. The City is ready to be an enthusiastic collaborator and partner to the diverse preservation community in Dallas and acknowledges that it has not always been. I deeply appreciate the work, energy, and spirit that residents of this city contributed to the strategy detailed here.

One of our values in our city is integrity, and to me, that means if we say we are going to do something, we should do it.

In the spirit of excellence!

T.C. Broadnax

City Manager, City of Dallas

Letter from the Steering Committee Co-Chairs

Whose stories do we remember as we live, work, and play in Dallas?

Walking through the city, it's not so much the legacies and legends that are on display that are striking, but rather those that are absent. Today's built environment offers few echoes of the many communities that helped create this city: the aspiring new Americans, the generations of Black and Brown heroes, the resilient Dallasites of every race and religion who created a home here. Our city is better because they lived here; our lives would be richer if we remembered and honored those histories.

Many locations of significance for Black and Brown communities, such as Dallas's first Black high school, North Dallas/Freedman's Town, Little Mexico, and many other such neighborhoods and spaces, have been demolished or even paved over for highway construction. Other spaces are becoming increasingly endangered or at risk of being destroyed as new developments and new residents replace the old.

50 years ago Dallas passed its first historic preservation ordinances. The current moment calls for a continuation to move that important work forward, incorporating learnings to create a more equitable Dallas. Over the last year, a committee composed of both community historians and preservation professionals deliberated on what the priorities should be for the next half century. In this document, we offer a vision where our city's diverse histories and cultures are evident, protected, and celebrated. We hope to enrich the lives of today's residents by imbuing their everyday spaces with meaning. Architecturally significant buildings are not the only spaces rich with history; we hope to expand the concept of preservation to encompass other types of places that have been touchstones in Dallas history.

We would like to recognize the leadership of our City Manager for championing the idea that the City's historic and cultural preservation efforts must be grounded in equity, just as its economic development, housing, and mobilities initiatives are.

We are hopeful and optimistic that this new guiding vision will result in policies and practices that honor more aspects of Dallas' past. What do we want to remember? If we start with that inquisitiveness and ask, "what was here?," each new discovery is a setting stone towards a Dallas that honors all the communities that helped it become the city that it is today.

Brent Brown and Amber Simms

Co-Chairs, Historic Preservation Steering Committee

Letter from the Landmark Commission

PLACEHOLDER

Executive Summary

The City of Dallas is committed to reducing racial disparities and assisting close-knit historically marginalized communities in preserving their history and culture. The City has an opportunity to meaningfully commit to this work by dedicating the resources and tools needed to equitably preserve history and culture in Dallas. Historic designation via zoning is just one tool. To provide a truly equitable preservation function that can assist people of different racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds in preserving the places that are important to them, the City will need to embrace a collaborative citywide approach of meeting neighborhood needs. This Strategic Plan outlines the steps and resources required for the City to build a suite of historic and cultural preservation tools that serves all of Dallas.

This Strategy introduces a vision and mission for the City's enhanced historic and cultural preservation functions to serve as pillars that clarify the City's purpose and role in preservation. In recognition of how racism has deeply affected the built environment in Dallas, the vision and mission intentionally broaden the City's role in historic preservation beyond the current regulatory program:

- *How can the City better serve historically marginalized neighborhoods struggling with disinvestment, but also with development pressures and displacement?*
- *How can the City help preserve the history and culture of communities whose homes were systematically erased by highway construction and blight removal?*

Many of Dallas' most powerful stories do not have an architecturally significant building to house them. Many of the best tools of preservation are also tools of economic development, sustainability, affordability, arts and culture, and small business, functions that exist across City departments. For these reasons, the Strategic Plan broadens the role of the City's historic and cultural preservation efforts beyond the Historic Preservation program within the Department of Planning and Urban Design. The ultimate intent is to best utilize the City of Dallas' resources to make Dallas a place where a diversity of histories and cultures are evident, protected, and celebrated.

Vision

The City of Dallas envisions a future where our city's diverse histories and cultures are evident, protected, and celebrated.

We aspire to enrich the lives of today's residents by embracing the history and culture of their communities.

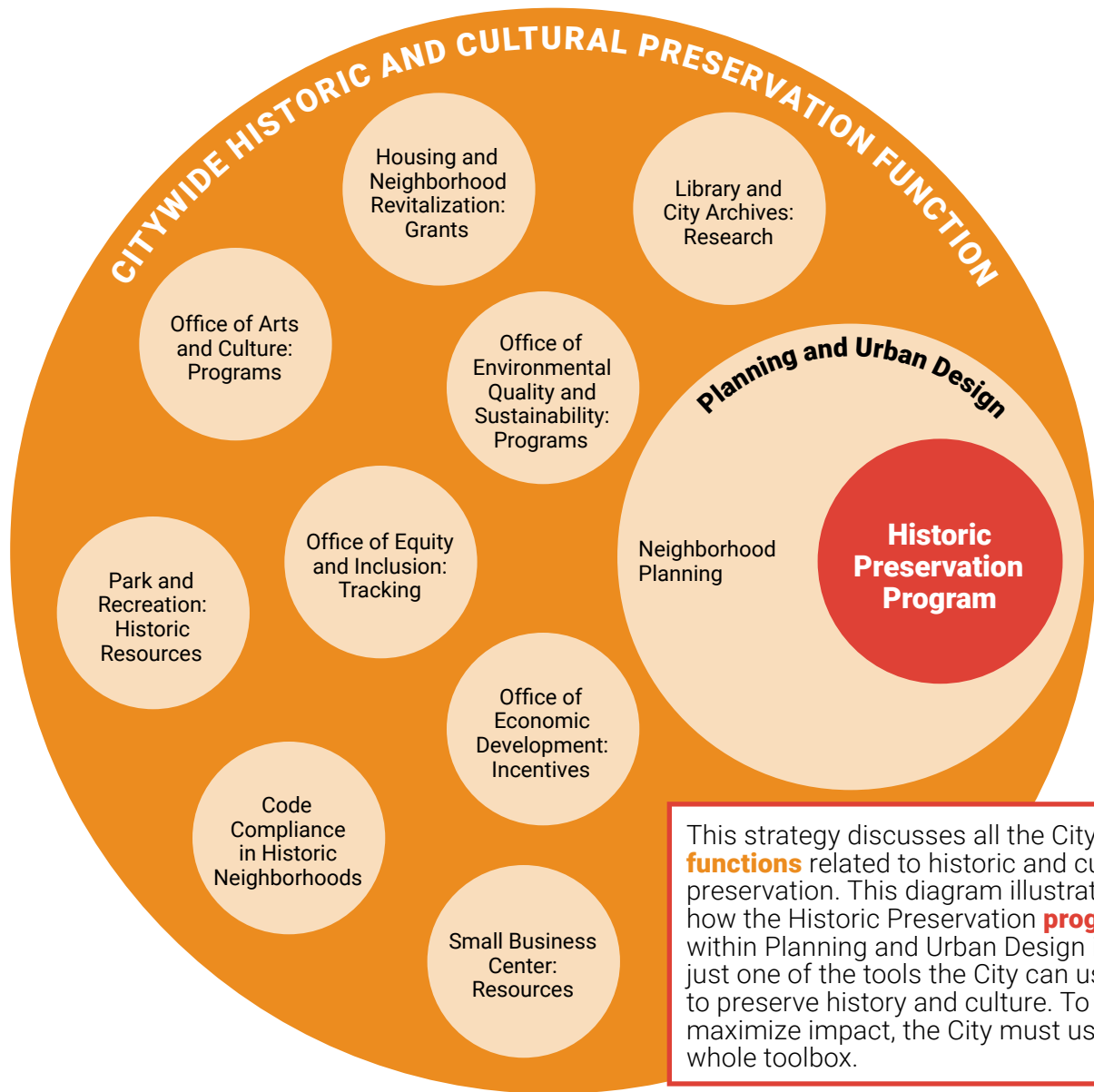
We envision a city where future development recognizes and responds to Dallas' past. Preserving history and culture is a non-negotiable, integral part of equitable and authentic growth.

Mission

Through its historic and cultural preservation tools and regulations, the City aims to support Dallas communities—including property owners, residents, and community organizations—in their efforts to preserve and conserve the places that are important to them.

Figure 1: Historic Preservation Program and Functions

P+UD's Historic Preservation Program
• Housed within Planning and Urban Design • Primarily deals with regulatory tools related to zoning, including the designation of Dallas' landmark historic districts and individual landmarks, design review for designated structures, and tax incentives for designated structures'
The City's Historic and Cultural Preservation Functions
• Tools across City departments related to historic and cultural preservation • Includes tools related to different aspects of preservation, including City programs, grants, and incentives supporting economic development, housing repairs, cultural organizations, small businesses, and sustainability • Includes departments managing historic and cultural assets, such as Park and Recreation and Code Compliance





Pike Park
Image courtesy of the historic preservation team.

Empowering Preservation

Empowering Preservation

Enacted in 1973, the City of Dallas' historic preservation ordinance and program have saved many of the places that make Dallas special and reflect its diverse history and culture. Dedicated staff and Landmark Commissioners have devoted impressive time and effort to saving places and in doing so have saved stories, stabilized neighborhoods, honored Dallas heroes, brought investment back to the urban core, and have revitalized the cornerstones of communities.

Since the program's founding, **City of Dallas staff and preservation advocates have used historic preservation as a tool to:**

- **Stabilize neighborhoods** amid the flight of middle-class families to the suburbs. Many historic neighborhoods suffered from disinvestment from the 1960s to early 1990s. Historic district designation helped stabilize many neighborhoods that are now a historic resource and provide a range of housing options to Dallas residents, like South Boulevard/Park Row (1977), Winnetka Heights (1981), and Lake Cliff (1997).
- **Remember Dallas' prominent Civil Rights leaders**, such as Juanita Craft and Kathlyn Joy Gilliam. The program memorialized their lives and work in the Civil Rights movement by designating their homes as City of Dallas landmarks. In 2023, the program collaborated with the Office of Arts and Culture and local advocates to open a museum at the Juanita Craft House.¹
- **Bring investment and life back into downtown** by pairing the local historic tax exemption program with tax increment reinvestment zone incentives and state and federal historic tax credits to save historic buildings that have since become multifamily housing, iconic hotels such as the Statler and The Kimpton Pittman, and mixed-use properties, enabling the current growth and success of new development in the historic core of Dallas. The adaptive reuse of the historic Sears' distribution facility into Southside on Lamar was a catalytic project in the Cedars, producing 450 apartments and 80,000 square feet of commercial space, and winning an Economic Development Award from the International Downtown

¹ Catherine Wendlandt, "[Juanita Craft's Little White House Is Now a Museum](#)", D Magazine, June 20, 2023.



Built in 1907, Dallas High School was a public secondary school until its closing in 1995. The classical revival structure was renovated into a mixed-use property in 2017 and is a core part of the Downtown City Center District.

Image courtesy of the City of Dallas Historic Preservation Team.

Association in 2002.² According to Dallas Central Appraisal District data, in 1999, prior to the redevelopment, the property was valued at just over \$2 million. By the time the City's historic tax incentives for the building expired in 2015, the property was valued at almost \$15 million.³

- **Save the cornerstones of communities.** The City of Dallas landmarked the Knights of Pythias Temple (1989), St. Ann's Catholic School (1999), and Old Dallas High School/Crozier Tech (2000) despite the owners' objections, saving all of them from certain demolition.⁴ Partnerships between preservation advocates and community organizers were essential to saving these landmarks, which are significant to Dallas' Black and Hispanic communities. Designed by William Sidney Pittman, the first Black architect in Texas, the Knights of Pythias Temple was the center of Dallas' Black community in the early 20th century. St. Ann's School was in the heart of Little

² Norman Alston Architects, "[South Side on Lamar](#)".

³ Dallas Central Appraisal District, [Taxable Value: 1409 Botham Jean Blvd](#), 2023.

⁴ David Preziosi, "[To Save or Not to Save: The Moral Dilemma](#)," *Columns* 34, no. 3 (2017).

Mexico and one of the first schools serving Dallas' Mexican American community. The City's demolition section of the preservation ordinance was strengthened after the demolition of the Art Moderne Dr Pepper plant in 1997 and was instrumental in saving Crozier Tech/Old Dallas High School, which was also significant to the Mexican American community. In the late 1980s, community leaders, including Dr. Mamie McKnight and Robert Prince, partnered with Black Dallas Remembered, the African American Museum, the Landmark Commission, and the City's preservation program to designate the Freedman's Cemetery, and, in coordination with the Texas Department of Transportation, save a cemetery that memorializes a Freedman's community almost completely erased by development and highway construction.

These remarkable achievements have relied heavily on a passionate community of volunteers, many of whom have dedicated their lives to preserving history and culture in Dallas.

The historic preservation budget has often been one of the first to be cut in times of financial stress, requiring staff to be resilient and resourceful in getting their work done:

- From 1988 to 2015, insufficient funding was allocated to prepare full preservation plans or updated historic resource surveys for the entire City, so program staff and the Landmark Commission undertook hosting an annual retreat to create an annual Program of Work. They also consistently partnered with external organizations like Preservation Dallas to complete updated resource surveys and plans where possible, such as the Downtown and Deep Ellum Historic Resources Survey and Context Statements (completed 2022).
- In 2009, staffing for the preservation program was cut to one full-time staff

member in response to the financial crisis, putting an incredible strain on the program and reducing its efficacy.

- In 2010, the City of Dallas adopted an ordinance that allowed an expedited demolition process for structures under 3,000 square feet within designated historic districts. The ordinance was supported by City leadership and City attorneys looking to streamline the approvals process for demolitions of structures that were not up to code. This ordinance directly contradicted the purpose of the historic preservation program. Landmark Commissioners opposed it and often voted against the ordinance (risking legal action) to save structures, especially homes in the Tenth Street Historic District Freedman's Town.⁵

IN 2021 PROPERTIES WITHIN
HISTORIC DISTRICTS WERE VALUED

5% higher

THAN SIMILAR PROPERTIES IN
NON-DESIGNATED NEIGHBORHOODS

A determined and united coalition of preservation staff and advocates weathered these intense budget and staffing shortages and lack of political support from City leadership for historic preservation, while continuing to serve Dallas' residents even in incredibly challenging times.

In addition to the challenges faced by staff, Dallas' market pressures have been changing. While disinvestment was the primary threat to urban neighborhoods when the program was founded, now increasingly gentrification and displacement due to rising property values are communities' primary concerns. A 2001 study of historic districts in Texas showed that properties within historic districts in Dallas, on average, were valued 5% higher than similar properties in non-designated neighborhoods.⁶

⁵ More on the 3,000 square foot rule and the Tenth Street Historic District on p. 18.

⁶ Robin Leichenko, N. Edward Coulson, and David Listokin, "Historic Preservation and Residential Property Values: An Analysis of Texas Cities". *Urban Studies* 38, no. 11 (2001): 1983.



An alumnus of Crozier Tech stands in the lobby at his restored alma mater to ask a question at a panel event on the future of historic and cultural preservation co-hosted by Dallas Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation and Preservation Dallas.

Image by JD Waldron.

At the time, that slight increase in property value was key to stabilizing neighborhoods without displacing current residents. In 2024 much more drastic and rapid property value increases are threatening to destabilize tight-knit communities near downtown.

Many of those communities at risk of gentrification and displacement today are historically marginalized. In recent years, the City of Dallas has begun to integrate racial equity across City plans and policies, acknowledging the disparities created by structural racism and intentionally using City policies and investments to address them. This work has been accompanied by an increasing awareness and public knowledge of the history of Dallas' communities of color. Powerful community voices such as Remembering Black Dallas⁷; the Dallas Mexican American Historical League; the Jewish Federation; the American Indian Council; and Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation contributed to a 2019 "Undesign the Redline" exhibit at City Hall. The City's Office of Equity and Inclusion sponsored a "community-driven process to chronicle the history of civil rights and culture in Dallas to preserve in City archives."⁸ Dallas now proudly

⁷ Remembering Black Dallas was preceded by another non-profit organization, Black Dallas Remembered, founded by Dallas historian Dr. Mamie McKnight. Dr. McKnight was instrumental in the designation of the Freedman's Cemetery, the Juanita Craft House, the Tenth Street Historic District, the Wheatley Place Historic District, and South Boulevard/Park Row Historic District.

⁸ [City of Dallas Racial Equity Plan](#), 22.

promotes Black History through bus tours led by members of Remembering Black Dallas, books on the infrastructure projects that eliminated several minority neighborhoods,⁹ and plaques memorializing lynching sites.¹⁰ In 2022, City Council adopted the City's first Racial Equity Plan.

In this moment, the City of Dallas is committed to reducing racial disparities and addressing changing threats to historic communities.

The City has an opportunity to meaningfully commit to this work by dedicating the resources and tools needed to equitably preserve history and culture in Dallas. Historic designation alone is one tool to recognize historic neighborhoods and communities. To provide a truly equitable preservation function that can assist people of different racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds in preserving the places that are important to them, the City will need to embrace a collaborative community-wide approach to meet neighborhood needs.

This Strategic Plan outlines the steps and resources required for the City to build a suite of historic and cultural preservation tools that serves all of Dallas. The plan also introduces a vision and mission for the City's enhanced historic preservation function, which serve as pillars that clarify the City's purpose and role in preservation. In recognition of how racism has deeply affected the built environment in Dallas, the vision and mission intentionally broaden the City's role in historic preservation beyond the current program by asking:

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City of Dallas' Definition of Equity

Equity means that each person has the resources and services necessary to thrive in each person's own unique identities, circumstances, and histories. Equity focuses on eliminating disparities while improving outcomes for all. Racial equity is a situation that is achieved when people are thriving and neither race nor ethnicity statistically dictates, determines, or predicts one's social outcome or ability to thrive.

Equity within historic preservation: a situation in which diverse histories and cultures are valued, and neither race nor ethnicity, income, religion, sexuality, location of residence, or other identity determines or predicts one's ability to preserve their history and culture.

⁹ Collin Yarborough, *Paved A Way: Infrastructure, Policy, and Racism in an American City* (Potomac: New Degree Press, 2021).

¹⁰ Jason Beeferman, "[Site of Dallas' 1910 lynching recognized by state 113 years later](#)," The Dallas Morning News, July 27, 2023. Zara Amaechi, "[No longer are we denying': Dallas honors lynching victim with marker along the Trinity River](#)," KERA News, November 6, 2023.

Freedman's Cemetery and Memorial

In 1993, the largest cemetery excavation in the United States took place in Dallas, TX. The area excavated was revealed to be what is known as Freedman's Cemetery, a burial ground for over 5,000 formerly enslaved people and their descendants. Freedman's Cemetery, located in what was once known as North Dallas/Freedman's Town is located approximately two miles north of the downtown area at the intersection of Lemmon Avenue and Central Expressway. In the mid-1990s the City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture Public Art Program conducted a national search for artists to submit qualifications for consideration to design, fabricate, and install a memorial dedicated to recognition of the destruction of the Freedman's Cemetery. David Newton was selected. Freedman's Memorial eloquently tells the story of an African man and woman, standing proud, strong, and healthy located in the two niches on either side of the entryway arch.



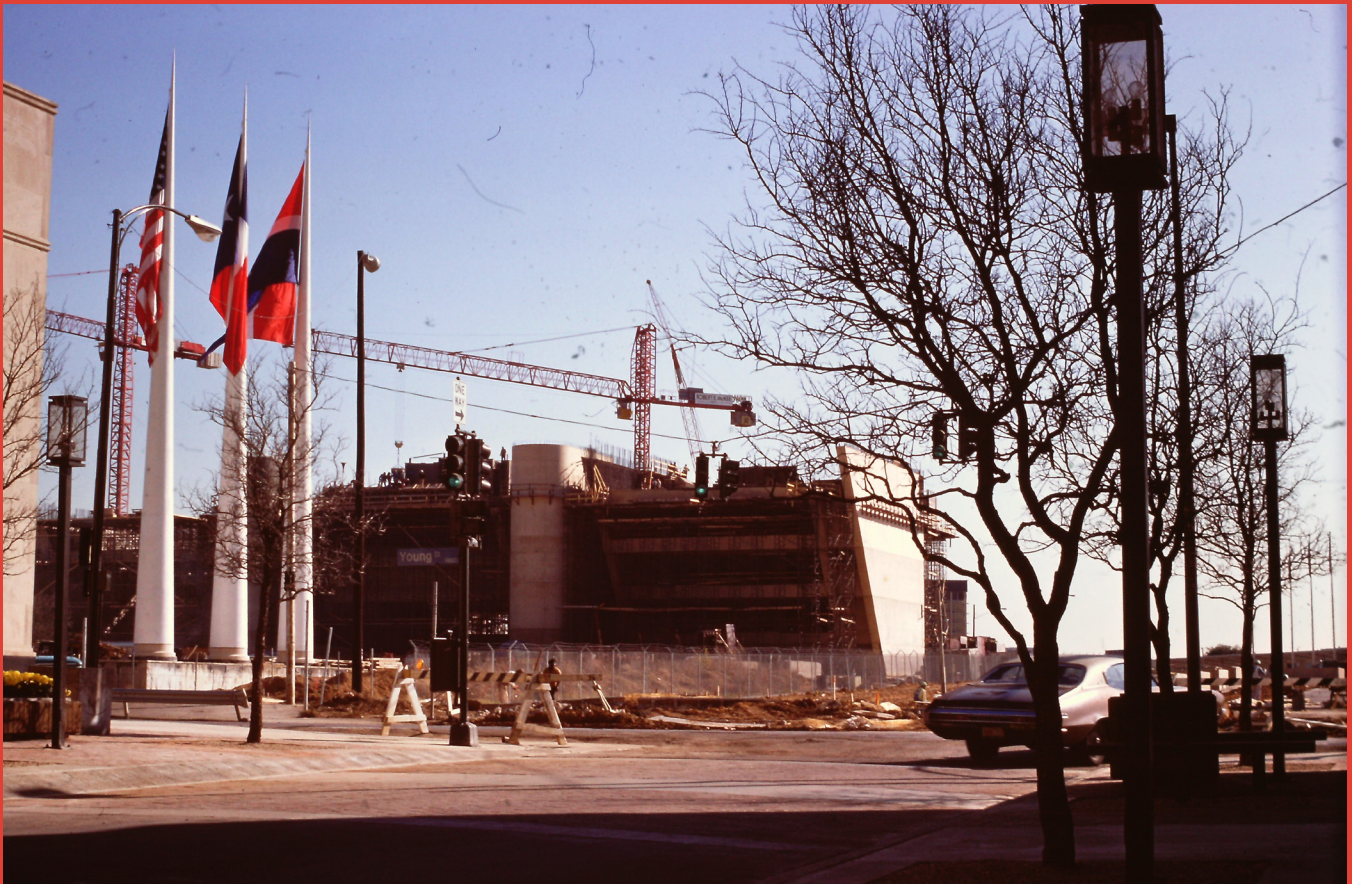
Image courtesy of Amber Sims



Image courtesy of the Historic Preservation Team

Dr. Mamie McKnight

After a career in education, Dr. Mamie McKnight became a leading preservationist. She founded Black Dallas Remembered, which was instrumental in designating Freedman's Cemetery, the Juanita Craft House, the Tenth Street Historic District, Whatley Place Historic District, and South Boulevard/Park Row Historic District. She inspired many families to record their histories.



City Hall under construction, 1974.
Image courtesy of the City of Dallas historic preservation team.

Historic Preservation: Past Planning and Policy Development Efforts

Over the past 60 years,

historic preservation advocates and City of Dallas staff have helped shape Dallas' built environment. From its creation in 1973, the Historic Preservation program has sought to protect underappreciated places from powerful public and private actors inclined towards demolition-fueled growth.



One of the last visible remnants of the 'Little Mexico' neighborhood, Luna Tortilla Factory remained in this location until leaving the area in 2007.

Image courtesy of the Dallas Mexican American Historical League.

Without advocates' vision and perseverance, there would be no regulatory systems in place to safeguard Dallas' history and identity. Their efforts saved particularly important properties and helped stabilize and revitalize historic neighborhoods.

These accomplishments occurred despite budget cuts, staff turnover, development pressures, and, often, owners' objections. The City's Historic Preservation program has long lacked adequate staff resources to operate proactively making future planning efforts challenging. Despite these limitations, staff, Landmark Commissioners, and volunteers have created numerous plans and recommendations for the program, many of which are listed in Figure 2. When staffing and funding were particularly tight (no funding was allocated for a full updated preservation plan between 1988 and 2015) staff and the Landmark Commission were proactive amid the circumstances and held annual retreats to create Programs of Work. They also responded quickly to emergent needs. After the demolition of the landmarked Art Moderne Dr Pepper plant on Mockingbird Lane in 1997, the Landmark Commission approved amendments to the demolition ordinance that made it one of the strongest in the nation. Figure 2 highlights consistent themes that have emerged throughout decades of major planning efforts.

Figure 2: Prior Recommendations Still Applicable Today

Recommendation	1976 Preservation Plan	1983 Preservation Plan	1988 Preservation Plan	2015 Downtown Historic Preservation Task Force	2018 & 2021 Landmark Commission Ad Hoc Committees
Simplify designation process	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Streamline and expand administrative process to foster efficiency		✓	✓	✓	✓
Address demolition philosophy and review concerns			✓	✓	✓
Increase and enhance education and publicity of preservation(shift from reactive to proactive)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Focus on preservation without displacement			✓		
Direct ongoing notification of designated and potentially eligible properties on incentive and benefits		✓			
Integrate preservation into City planning activities and increase interdepartmental coordination	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recognize important sites and events	✓				
Create, publicize, and revise economic incentives	✓	✓		✓	
Reuse historic material from demolitions	✓				
Enforce minimum building standards		✓			
Create alternatives to historic preservation		✓	✓		

Recommendation	1976 Preservation Plan	1983 Preservation Plan	1988 Preservation Plan	2015 Downtown Historic Preservation Task Force	2018 & 2021 Landmark Commission Ad Hoc Committees
Keep historic resource information updated	✓	✓		✓	✓
Consolidate all historic resources survey material, building permits, etc., and provide public access			✓	✓	
Designate historically significant City-owned properties			✓		
Address program funding limitations		✓	✓	✓	
Create guidebook for maintenance		✓		✓	
Keep Preservation Plan updated		✓		✓	
Encourage Neighborhood Planning		✓			

An expanded history of the City of Dallas' Historic Preservation program is included in Appendix D.

The 2024 Strategy with a Focus on Equity

As the previously outlined history shows, efforts to rethink the City's approach and priorities in historic preservation have been active for decades. Numerous committees, task forces, residents, real estate professionals, City staff, and others have convened to identify challenges, envision improvements, and craft recommendations. The outcomes of past deliberations have ranged from guiding principles to detailed edits of local ordinances.

This Strategy builds on the work already done by the Landmark Commission, preservation and neighborhood advocates, and staff over the past fifty years. The City of Dallas hired HR&A Advisors, Inc. (HR&A) to work with City staff and community leaders to develop a mission and vision for its historic preservation functions consistent with Dallas' recently approved Equitable Economic Development Policy and Racial Equity Plan, including a concrete set of tasks and resources needed to accomplish that vision.

Over the past seven months, City staff have worked closely with HR&A Advisors to engage a wide breadth of stakeholders and advisory groups to understand Dallas communities' challenges and needs related to historic and cultural preservation, and the tools that departments across the City can bring to bear.

Strategy Engagement Goals

The planning team identified the following goals to engage the public and other key stakeholders:

- Engage groups that have historically not been served by the Historic Preservation program, identifying what they need to preserve their communities' history and culture.
- Support the building of a new, diverse constituency around historic preservation that is engaged with the City.
- Use the wide range of experience and expertise of Dallas' historic preservation community to design strategies that improve the health and efficacy of the City's historic and cultural preservation functions.
- Ensure that all stakeholders feel heard and empowered, building out a community-driven vision for the future of the City's preservation functions and consensus around a path for implementation.
- Assemble a diverse historic preservation stakeholder group (Historic and Cultural Preservation Stakeholder Steering Committee) that will both push the status quo and lend the experience and guidance of long-time preservation experts.

Advisory Groups

Interdepartmental Core Team

Assistant City Manager Majed Al-Ghafry convened an interdepartmental Core Team of leaders in departments whose work touches preservation and historic neighborhoods, including Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, Park and Recreation, the Office of Arts and Culture, the Office of Equity and Inclusion, Development Services, Public Works, Code Compliance, and the Office of Economic Development. These leaders participated in individual interviews and group workshops.

Historic and Cultural Preservation Stakeholder Steering Committee

The Stakeholder Steering Committee is a group of diverse leaders in preservation, architecture, community organizing, and racial equity convened by the City Manager. This group has dedicated many hours to informing the planning process and reviewing recommendations for the Strategy. The committee is chaired by Amber Sims and Brent Brown and includes Evelyn Montgomery, the current Chair of the Landmark Commission, and David Preziosi, Landmark Commissioner for District 13. A full list of Steering Committee members is included in the Appendix.

Landmark Commission Ad-Hoc Committee

An ad hoc committee of the Landmark Commission was convened in the summer of 2023 for reviewing early recommendations to improve administrative functions and update ordinances, as well as provide additional input and feedback on the remainder of the Strategy. Additionally, the full Landmark Commission received monthly briefings on the planning process and many commissioners attended community workshops.

Figure 3: Engagement Process and Outcomes



Convene

In June 2023, all advisory groups (Interdepartmental Core Team, Stakeholder Steering Committee, and Landmark Commission) convened with Historic Preservation staff to identify key goals for the strategizing process. This meeting was followed by one-on-one interviews with leaders from each City department represented on the Core Team.

The advisory groups and staff raised consistent themes, including making history an integral and visible part of Dallas' growth, increasing efficiency and accessibility of preservation processes and resources, and prioritizing the preservation of history and culture in historically marginalized neighborhoods. The team combined these themes with input from the public and other stakeholders to create the following goals that organize the recommendations of the Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: Preserve Dallas' diverse history in ways that contribute to our cultural and economic future.

Goal 2: Empower residents to preserve the places that are important to them.

Goal 3: Maximize the benefits that all of Dallas—residents, property owners, and developers—receive from historic preservation so that they will want to do more of it.

Historic Preservation: Past Planning and Policy Development Efforts

Workshop

Through **nine internal workshops**, recommendations on all themes were vetted by the Stakeholder Steering Committee, Historic Preservation staff, and Planning and Urban Design leadership.

In September, Planning and Urban Design hosted **three public workshops** to gather feedback on recommendations focused on equitably preserving Dallas' diverse history and culture. Sixty residents participated in these in-person workshops, representing both currently designated historic districts and communities exploring options to preserve the culture of their neighborhoods.

Review

The first draft of the Strategy was reviewed by over 40 stakeholders in late 2023, including all Historic Preservation and Planning and Urban Design Staff, community leaders on the Steering Committee, leadership from other City Departments, Landmark Commissioners, and leadership of key partner organizations such as Preservation Dallas. The planning team hosted several briefings and one-on-one meetings to gather feedback from Landmark Commissioners, key staff members, and non-profit leaders.

On January 5, 2024, a second draft of the Strategy was circulated to all reviewers who were pleased with how their feedback had been incorporated and submitted final feedback to the team.



Historic and cultural preservation strategy workshop with residents in West Dallas.



Historic and cultural preservation strategy workshop with residents at Old City Park.



Historic and cultural preservation strategy workshop with residents in East Dallas.



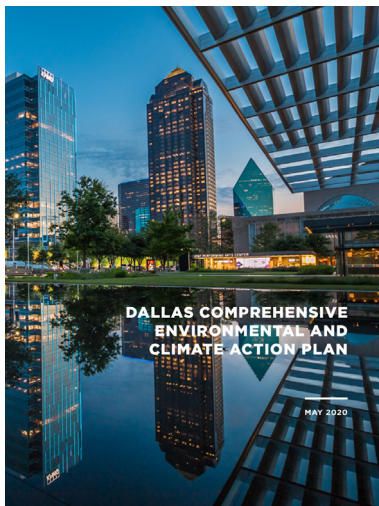
Beaumont Barbeque was listed in the Green Book, a travel guide that listed safe places for African Americans to visit during the Jim Crow era, from 1941-1967. It was demolished along with much of Freedman's Town during the construction of Central Expressway and the expansion of Uptown. Image courtesy of Dallas historic preservation team and the Dallas Public Library.

The Need for a Strategy for Historic Preservation Focused On Racial Equity

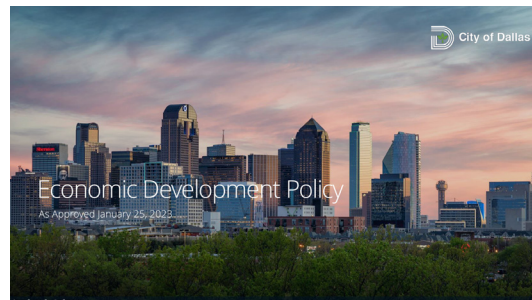
Racial Equity:

A Lens Guiding Program and Policy Reforms Citywide

Since 2020, the Dallas City Council has passed the [Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan](#) (CECAP), the [Connect Dallas Strategic Mobility Plan](#) (Connect Dallas), the [Racial Equity Plan](#) (REP), the [Economic Development Policy](#) (EDP), the [Economic Development Policy and Incentives Policy](#) (Incentives Policy), and the [Dallas Housing Policy 2033](#) (DHP33), aligning the City under a shared mission and vision to support equity in environmental justice, mobility, employment, economic opportunities, and housing for all Dallas residents. With the passing of the Racial Equity Plan and Economic Development Policy, Dallas began to turn its attention to the City's role in equitably preserving Dallas' history and culture.



2020
Comprehensive
Environmental and Climate
Action Plan



2023
Economic Development
Policy and Incentives Policy



2022
Racial Equity Plan



2023
Housing Policy

Figure 4 itemizes the action items pertaining to historic and cultural preservation in all City plans and policies adopted since 2016. Many recommendations are repeated from previous preservation plans or preservation staff efforts.

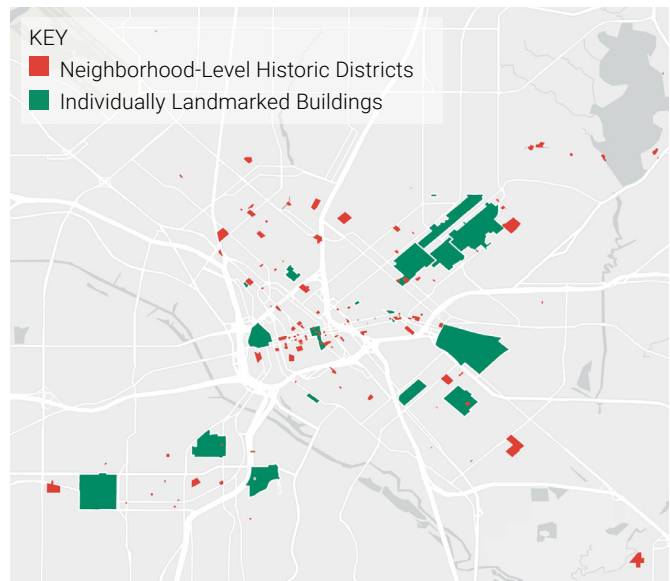


Image Courtesy of HR&A team.

Figure 4: Historic and Cultural Preservation Action Items Since 2016

City of Dallas Plans and Policies	Action Items Relevant to Historic and Cultural Preservation
ForwardDallas (draft)	• Prioritize neighborhoods identified most at risk of displacement for neighborhood planning and rezoning efforts, including conservation districts, neighborhood stabilization overlays, and historic districts.¹¹ • Facilitate collaborative placemaking initiatives in underserved spaces to reimagine the adaptive reuse of historically and culturally significant structures and places.¹² • Expand the suite of context sensitive design and preservation tools, including historic and conservation districts and neighborhood stabilization overlay programs, and update applicable ordinances to better respond to rapidly changing conditions in established neighborhoods.¹³
Economic Development Policy (2023)	• Prioritize underserved communities of color and the development of processes to promote a responsive local government when it comes to historic preservation.¹⁴ • Develop a package of City Code amendments, policies, and ordinances that apply to historic landmarks and districts within neighborhoods that meet certain criteria and would allow a more equitable allocation of staff resources for economic development initiatives in underserved communities of color. • Review existing City code, policies, and ordinances and identify gaps to inform the development of options for the creation of a historic preservation rehabilitation grant program.¹⁵

¹¹ [ForwardDallas Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update Draft #1](#) (2023), 13.

¹² [ForwardDallas](#), 14.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁴ [City of Dallas Economic Development Policy](#), 29.

¹⁵ [City of Dallas Economic Development Policy](#), 45.

City of Dallas Plans and Policies	Action Items Relevant to Historic and Cultural Preservation
Racial Equity Plan (2022)	• Make a recommendation to City Council to assess City support for historical homes/structures that are not tied to property value. • Increase number, from zero to three, of historical preservation pieces of collateral, outreach events, education, and awareness presentations or publications in historically disadvantaged communities provided in English and Spanish by May 2025. • Make a recommendation to increase the number of residents from historically disadvantaged communities on the Landmark Commission by October 2026.¹⁶ • Provide better community understanding and engagement through improved language access and increased engagement with historically disadvantaged communities during City decision making processes.¹⁷ • Build stable housing communities that contribute to neighborhood safety and economic opportunity.¹⁸ • Revitalize and renovate existing housing stock that currently does not meet code requirements.¹⁹ • Work with the Mayor and City Council to develop training programs for new and existing commissions, boards, and committee members, under coordination of P+UD, that build their knowledge base and equity awareness to improve decision making and outcomes by the end of the FY22-23.²⁰ • P+UD will host a minimum of five capacity building training modules in historically disadvantaged communities by December 31, 2022. Capacity building modules will include Navigating City Services, Data is Power, Neighborhood Organization Guide and Let's Plan Together.²¹
Dallas Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan (2020)	• Encourage the development of material markets focusing on creating new economic opportunities.²² • Develop clear and comprehensive educational program for building owners and tenants about existing energy efficiency programs.²³ • Implement a citywide building weatherization program through partnership with community organizations.²⁴ • Establish a building efficiency and electrification program (for existing buildings) to replace appliances and systems with electric and other efficient and cost-effective options.²⁵

¹⁶ [City of Dallas Racial Equity Plan](#), 108.

¹⁷ [City of Dallas Racial Equity Plan](#), 130.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 131.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 35.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 117.

²² [Dallas Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan](#) (2020), 117.

²³ [Dallas Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan](#), 53.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 54.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 56.

City of Dallas Plans and Policies	Action Items Relevant to Historic and Cultural Preservation
Dallas Cultural Plan (2018)	• Provide, create, and incentivize the creation of spaces and places to encourage and allow arts and culture in Dallas to thrive and grow citywide.²⁶ – Maximize existing spaces, by repurposing or revamping unused or underutilized facilities and preserving and adapting historic assets. • Establish a supportive arts ecosystem that nourishes the creative and innovative energy of Dallas artists. – Wayfinding, signage, murals, and interactive platforms can help residents and visitors connect with community heritage in free and innovative ways. OCA can partner with the Historic Preservation program, Dallas Historical Society, and other heritage groups to ensure all residents and neighborhoods are included.²⁷
Dallas Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan (2016)	• Document, preserve, and restore important historic, cultural, and natural resources assets. – Establish guidelines for the design and maintenance of the Department’s historic, cultural, and natural resources. – Identify resources of potential historic significance that may need protection and have potential educational and interpretive value. – Pursue designation of appropriate facilities and historic resources as local landmarks or for inclusion in the national register. – Develop an official recognition program for important natural resources. • Establish an interpretive and education program plan and guidelines. – Educate staff on fundamentals of historic, cultural, and natural resource interpretation. – Work with community partners (e.g., volunteers, community groups, conservation organizations, universities, youth programs) to develop and implement interpretive programs.²⁸

²⁶ [Dallas Cultural Plan](#), 65.

²⁷ [Dallas Cultural Plan](#), 87.

²⁸ [Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan](#) (2016), 132.

Addressing Known Challenges with Preservation

When the preservation program struggles, so do our neighborhoods. Since its inception, political support and funding for the City's preservation program has fluctuated based on leadership and economic conditions. Following the economic downturn in 2008, the program was reduced from eight full-time staff members to one full-time staff member. This instability has perpetuated the model of focusing solely on the design review process and reacting to preservation crises as other programming seems untenable with so little funding, staff, or political support.

Following the demolition of buildings within the National Register of Historic Places' Downtown Dallas Historic District in 2014, former Mayor Michael Rawlings appointed a task force to address how historic preservation and economic development, with a focus on Greater Downtown, can work together for a better Dallas. The task force's report concluded with nine recommendations, including simplifying the design review and designation processes, adding staff capacity, improving cross-departmental collaboration, and directing resources towards public education. One of the recommendations was that the City and Preservation Dallas collaborate on a historic resource survey for Greater Downtown, which was completed in 2022.²⁹ Staff turnover, capacity constraints, and the disruptive effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have delayed the implementation of the remaining recommendations. In 2023, a reorganization returned the Historic Preservation program to the Department of Planning and Urban Design, a move that encourages collaboration and integrating historic preservation into other planning efforts.

Lack of support for the preservation program often translates into inadequate support for residents living in historic communities. Historic districts with lower incomes have a more difficult time fully participating in the benefits of historic designation due to barriers like a lack of accessible educational resources on preservation, designation and

²⁹ Preservation Dallas, [Downtown and Deep Ellum Historic Resources Survey and Context Statements](#), 2022.



In 1911, thousands of Latin Americans fleeing the Mexican Revolution moved into the cramped ten block boundary of Frog Town. The neighborhood then became known as Little Mexico and, along with Pike Park, remained the cultural heart of the Mexican American community in Dallas for decades to come.

Image Courtesy of the Dallas Mexican American Historical League.

Certificate of Appropriateness processes that can be challenging to navigate, and potentially expensive historically appropriate repairs.³⁰ These challenges can be seen in Dallas' Wheatley Place (designated 2000) and Tenth Street (designated 1993) historic districts. The tools of a traditional Dallas landmark historic district alone do not address Wheatley Place and Tenth Street's preservation needs and challenges, including:

- The need for title clearance and other legal assistance for communities that historically have not had access to legal services OR different legal requirements to receive home repair assistance to accommodate how neighborhood property has been inherited
- The purchase of properties by absentee owners, sometimes also leading to demolition by neglect
- Approval processes that may be inaccessible to communities with little

³⁰ While members of the Designation Committee of the Landmark Commission volunteer their time to assist low-income applicants pursuing designation who cannot afford to hire a consultant, there is an opportunity to make the process of pursuing designation more equitable by not relying solely on unpaid volunteer labor to assist applicants, and instead simplifying the process and institutionalizing staff capacity for assistance in addition to volunteer commissioner assistance.

experience navigating City Hall, and insufficient staff capacity for outreach

- Lack of proactive outreach leading to extensive and costly repairs needed on many structures, with inadequate or inaccessible funding available
- Highway construction and expansion, and increases in homelessness, leading to an increase in housefires and demolition by neglect

In 2010, the City of Dallas adopted an ordinance that allowed an expedited demolition process for structures under 3,000 square feet within designated historic districts. The ordinance was supported by City attorneys looking to streamline the approvals process for demolitions of structures that were not up to code. This ordinance, which was strongly opposed by the preservation community, facilitated the demolition of many modest historic homes, particularly in Tenth Street, which lost many of its contributing structures.

Through the advocacy efforts of residents with support from organizations such as buildingcommunityWORKSHOP, the Inclusive Communities Project, and Preservation Dallas, Tenth Street received a Texas State Historic Marker in 2015 and was listed in 2019 as one of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 11 Most Endangered Places because of the continued loss of historic

structures that contributed to the neighborhood's significance.³¹ Court ordered demolitions were responsible for the loss of dozens of buildings in the mid-2010s until Tenth Street started getting national attention in 2019, and the City passed a resolution to stop funding court ordered demolitions in Tenth Street.³²

Since 2010, members of the Landmark Commission have bravely defied the "3,000 square feet" rule in the ordinance, risking legal action by voting against the existing ordinance to deny approvals for demolitions in Tenth Street.

City of Dallas staff, Landmark Commissioners, and the Stakeholder Steering Committee for this strategy agreed that the 3,000 square foot rule blatantly contradicted the City's value of racial equity as it resulted in the disproportionate loss of historic structures in low-income communities of color, especially Tenth Street. Historic Preservation staff initiated the process to amend the development code in July 2023, eliminating the square foot rule.

Historic district designation alone is not enough to preserve neighborhoods like Tenth Street. Increasingly, other communities of color in Dallas are looking for tools to conserve their neighborhoods, and in addition to zoning changes, need planning assistance and resources. Undesignated historic neighborhoods—such as parts of West Dallas, South Dallas, Joppa, and Five Mile—are facing the pressures of gentrification and new construction and are looking to the City of Dallas for assistance to save their heritage. While alternative zoning tools such as conservation districts and neighborhood stabilization overlays begin to address the challenges of undesignated neighborhoods (see more under ["Growing Determination to Save Neighborhoods... but how?"](#)), a more comprehensive, coordinated, and consistent approach is necessary to protect place-based history and culture.



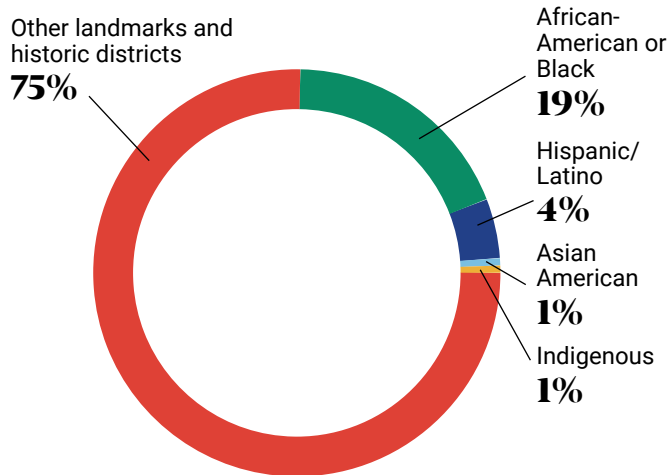
The White Rock Cemetery Garden of Memories was established in 1854 as part of the Upper White Rock Freedmen community. At the time of the writing of this strategy, it is the latest landmark to be considered for designation by the City. Image courtesy of the City of Dallas historic preservation team.

³¹ National Trust for Historic Preservation, ["Discover America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places for 2019"](#), May 30, 2019.

³² Robert Wilonsky, ["Dallas will temporarily halt demolitions in what's left of historic Tenth Street District"](#), Dallas Morning News, August 14, 2019.

Need to Elevate Dallas' Diverse Mix of Histories and Cultures

Figure 5: City of Dallas Landmarks and Historic Districts Commemorating Histories Explicitly Tied to a Community of Color (2024)



Of the 153 current individual landmarks and historic districts, 36 are significant to Black, Mexican American, or Indigenous communities, specifically:³³

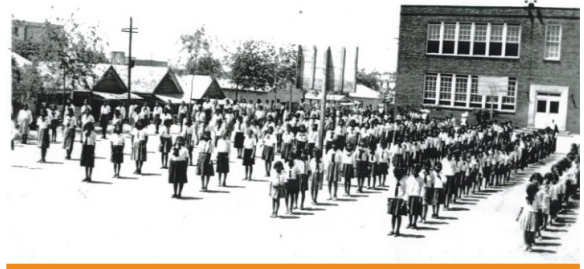
- 29 are significant to African-American communities.
- 1 is significant to Indigenous communities.
- 6 are significant to Hispanic/Latino communities.
- 1 is significant to Asian-American communities.

Current demographics of Dallas, per the 2020 Census:

- White (not Hispanic or Latino) 28.6%
- White (Hispanic or Latino) 25.2%
- Black or African American 24.0%
- American Indian and Alaska Native 0.5%
- Asian 3.5%
- Two or More Races 9.3%

*This does not include demolished structures.

³³ For a complete list of City of Dallas Landmarks memorializing places of importance to communities of color, please refer to [Appendix C](#). Landmarks considered significant to communities of color were either gathering places, businesses, or schools specifically serving the communities, the homes of community leaders, or the sites of events significant to those communities.



St. Ann's School

St. Ann's School, built in 1927, was the first school for Hispanic children built in Dallas. Through the efforts of many organizers from Little Mexico—including Leanor and Ronnie Villareal, Helen and Liz Cedillo, Christine Diaz, and Gloria Ramos—the school became a Dallas Landmark in 1999 and is now a bar and restaurant that retains nods to the school's origins as a home-base for Little Mexico's Mexican American Catholic community.



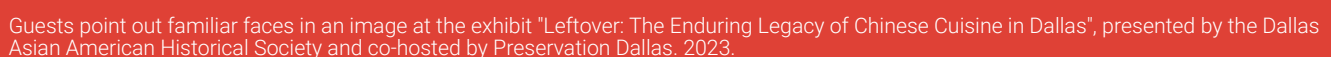
Knights of Pythias Temple

The Knights of Pythias Temple, built in 1916, is a key landmark for Dallas' Black history. Designed by Texas' first Black architect, William Sidney Pittman, it served as a social and cultural hub for Dallas' Black community for much of the early 20th century. While the building was landmarked by the City in 1989 despite owner objection—and is now part of the Kimpton Pittman hotel—many Dallas residents are unaware of its origins. And while the interior of the building retains historic finishes, there is limited information that points to its origins or importance to the Black community; while there are many historic photographs, none depict Black people.

Top: Image courtesy of the Dallas Mexican American Historical League.

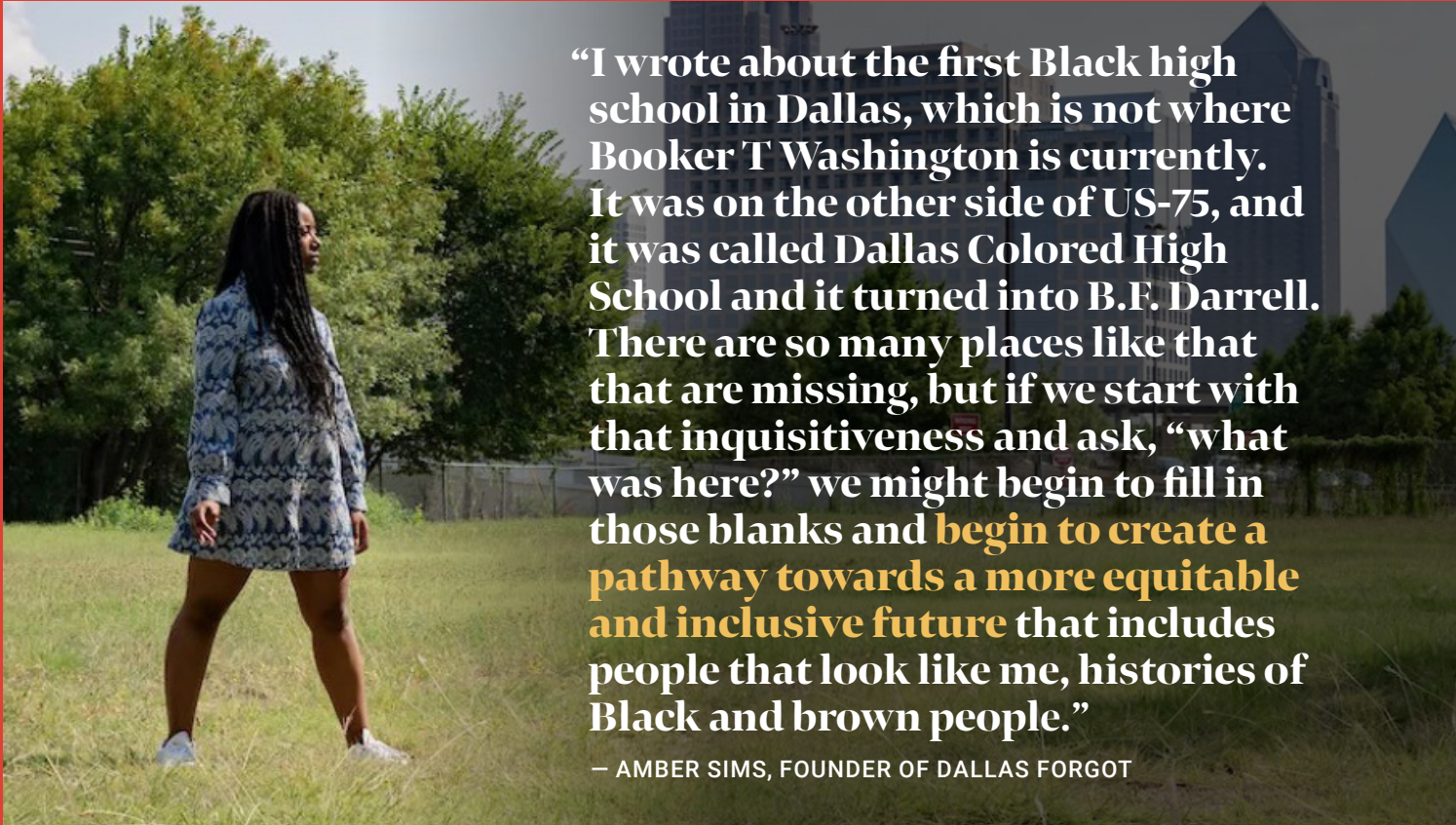
Bottom: Image courtesy of the City of Dallas historic preservation team.

— STEPHANIE DRENKA AND DENISE JOHNSON, CO-FOUNDERS OF THE DALLAS ASIAN AMERICAN HISTORIC SOCIETY



“We need to up our game if we want to **commit to the acknowledgement, appreciation, and honor** of the Mexican American community that actually contributed to the building of Dallas. There’s a lot that we still have to do here.”

— ROSEMARY HINAJOSA, DISTRICT 6 LANDMARK COMMISSIONER AND BOARD MEMBER OF THE DALLAS MEXICAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL LEAGUE



“I wrote about the first Black high school in Dallas, which is not where Booker T Washington is currently. It was on the other side of US-75, and it was called Dallas Colored High School and it turned into B.F. Darrell. There are so many places like that that are missing, but if we start with that inquisitiveness and ask, “what was here?” we might begin to fill in those blanks and **begin to create a pathway towards a more equitable and inclusive future** that includes people that look like me, histories of Black and brown people.”

— AMBER SIMS, FOUNDER OF DALLAS FORGOT

Story author Amber Sims stands on a vacant lot at Hall Street and Cochran Avenue, which her research led her to identify as the site of Dallas’ original “Colored High School,” later renamed the B.F. Darrell School.

Photo by Nitashia Johnson

“Historic preservation is most effective when it serves a higher purpose. **Preservation is critical for sustainability, economic development, and revitalization of places.** It fosters a sense of place and belonging... It must reflect our vibrant cultures and our roots. I want our young people to experience Dallas history in a way that goes beyond the final resting places of our ancestors.”

— VICTORIA CLOW, CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF PRESERVATION DALLAS

Growing Determination to Save Neighborhoods... But How?

The past few years have seen major mobilization from Dallas' Black and Hispanic communities around preserving their neighborhoods, with a focus on stabilizing property values and maintaining the authentic feel that supports community traditions and culture. These efforts have come to the forefront recently, especially in West Dallas, Queen City, Colonial Hill, and Elm Thicket, with more and more neighborhoods pursuing zoning changes and overlays.

While the spectrum of neighborhood stabilization overlays (NSO), conservation districts, and historic districts does, in appearance, provide a variety of options, the complex designation, application, and enforcement processes have hindered their accessibility and efficacy for everyday residents.

Figure 6: Summary of Zoning Tools

Adapted from City of Dallas [Conservation District Educational Brochure](#)

	Purpose	What Can Be Regulated	Type of Regulation
Planned Development	To encourage a unified development for an area without distinctive character	Setbacks, lot coverage, density	Reviewed by building permit staff
Neighborhood Stabilization Overlay	To encourage redevelopment compatible with an area with existing character and structures	Front yard setbacks, side and corner yard setbacks, garage placement, height plane	Reviewed by building permit staff
Conservation District	To protect the physical attributes and general look and feel of a neighborhood	Regulations are determined by the neighborhood and must include minimum development and architectural standards.	A work review form and plans are reviewed by conservation district staff, in addition to any review required for a building permit.
Historic District	To protect historic character and architecture with a high degree of accuracy	All exterior modifications or site modifications	A Certificate of Appropriateness is reviewed by historic preservation staff, the Neighborhood Task Force, and the Landmark Commission.

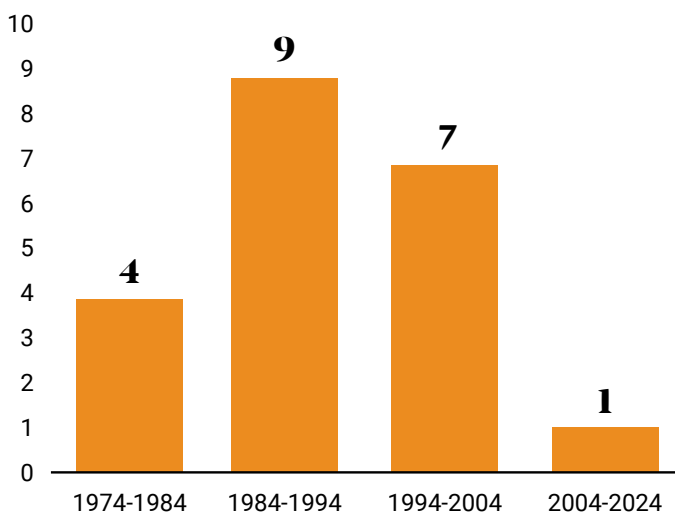
In La Bajada, where residents organized to establish a Neighborhood Stabilization Overlay in 2012, residents are frustrated with the overlay not accomplishing the stabilization they had hoped for. Despite the NSO, there have been many new homes over 3,000 square feet constructed and valued at over \$800,000 according to the Dallas County Assessors' website, in a neighborhood where, 10-years ago, the average parcel with a modest home was valued around \$50,000. The code as currently written for NSOs does not sufficiently maintain the character of a neighborhood in the face of intense development pressure. Another example occurred in 2022, when the Elm Thicket/North Park neighborhood organized to update their zoning by adjusting existing Planned Development Districts to prevent rapid change through incompatible new construction in the close-knit historically Black neighborhood. The success of those zoning changes will be determined by the quality of enforcement (by both Code Compliance and Building Inspection) and their ability to stand up to the strength of the market.

The upcoming 2024 update of the Dallas Development Code is intended to align zoning with identified needs and address challenges with accessibility in zoning changes. Currently, the process of applying for a zoning overlay or zoning change is daunting. To complete a successful application, NSOs require residents to survey their own neighborhoods, using tape measures to record setbacks, building heights, and other elements on their own. In October 2023, the Joppa neighborhood was unsuccessful in the final stages of applying for an NSO after spending more than a year going through the process.

While more and more neighborhoods have been pursuing conservation districts and NSOs, no new historic districts have been designated in 17 years, with the last designation occurring in 2006 with Junius Heights. This is partially due to state legislation passed in the 2020s that has made the creation of new districts almost impossible, requiring overwhelming consensus by property owners and governing bodies. Additionally, some residents say that they do not view historic districts as a viable option—largely due to perception that the most strenuous designation would be too restrictive for property owners and might come with additional unwanted costs and burdens of enforcement.

While designation has helped to protect modest historic Black neighborhoods like Tenth Street and Wheatley Place from any incompatible development, it does not provide the resources that could help protect them from disrepair or demolition by neglect. In order to enhance the impact of the Historic Preservation program and equitably meet neighborhood needs, the City must dedicate additional staff and resources to proactive and outreach-oriented preservation and embrace a collaborative, citywide approach to helping residents preserve their history and culture.

Figure 7:
Designation of Historic Districts over Time



Source: City of Dallas Landmark Data



Image by JD Waldron.

The City of Dallas' Mission and Vision for Historic Preservation

In June 2023, key stakeholders in the strategic planning process for Historic and Cultural Preservation gathered for a leadership meeting. Attendees included the City Manager, historic preservation staff, the Interdepartmental Core Team, members of the Stakeholder Steering Committee for the strategic plan, and Landmark Commissioners.³⁴ The team collected answers to the question:

“What would you most like the Strategic Plan for Historic and Cultural Preservation to achieve?”

Common goals identified included:

- Increasing accessibility, making the City's preservation tools more accessible and navigable for residents.
- Increasing efficiency in the process of design review, allowing staff to dedicate time to other impactful programming.
- Increasing inclusion, developing programs, landmark designations, and Landmark Commissioner appointments that serve and represent communities of color.
- Increasing community engagement, outreach, and education around preservation.
- Developing tools to serve endangered neighborhoods that are not designated or do not want to be designated as historic districts.

In October, leaders from Planning and Urban Design and the City Manager's Office gathered with the Stakeholder Steering Committee. The team collected answers to the question:

“What does a future in which the City's preservation function is doing its best possible work look like?”

They envisioned:

- Dallas as a city where history is evident and present: a place where people can know their communities' history and interact with it daily.
- Preservation of history and culture being understood as an essential asset in Dallas' growth, economic development, and real estate development, not an impediment.
- Historic and cultural preservation as core values of all City departments in the way they conduct their work.
- History and culture, especially the history and culture of historically marginalized communities, are understood as essential assets to Dallas.
- A historic and cultural preservation function benefiting and reaching all historic neighborhoods, even those not designated.
- A wide diversity of City landmarks that showcase Dallas' culturally and racially diverse history.
- Efficiency and efficacy in the design review process to maximize time for complementary, people-focused, impactful work.
- Historic communities are visually represented and present in their original spaces (not moved or relegated to a museum in a different part of town).

³⁴ A complete list of engagement participants is included in Appendix B.

Vision and mission statements for the City of Dallas' historic and cultural preservation efforts were generated from the outputs of these discussions. The following statements reflect the guiding values and aspirations of the Dallas' communities and civic leaders:

Vision

The City of Dallas envisions a future where our city's diverse histories and cultures are evident, protected, and celebrated.

We aspire to enrich the lives of today's residents by embracing the history and culture of their communities.

We envision a city where future development recognizes and responds to Dallas' past. Preserving history and culture is a non-negotiable, integral part of equitable and authentic growth.

Mission

Through its historic and cultural preservation tools and regulations, the City aims to support Dallas communities—including property owners, residents, and community organizations—in their efforts to preserve and conserve the places that are important to them.



Image Courtesy of the South Central Civic League.



Image courtesy of the Dallas Historic Preservation Team

Goals and Actions: An Introduction

The following actions presented in this plan were designed to help the City of Dallas reach the following goals:

Goal 1: Preserve Dallas’ diverse history in ways that contribute to our cultural and economic future.

Goal 2: Empower residents to preserve the places that are important to them.

Goal 3: Maximize the benefits that all of Dallas—residents, property owners, and developers—receive from historic preservation so that they will want to do more of it.

By pursuing these goals, the City will:

- **support the preservation and teaching of a truthful and inclusive history of Dallas;**
- **utilize history and culture as a driver of economic development, successful place-based real estate development, and tourism;**
- **invest in preserving and telling the stories of Black, Hispanic, Jewish, Asian-American, LGBTQ+, and other historically marginalized communities; and**
- **empower residents across Dallas to preserve the places that matter to them, like churches and cemeteries, small businesses, and gathering places**

The City’s Historic Preservation program has achieved much despite chronic budget cuts, staff turnover, and development pressures. Stakeholders, advocates, and City staff have long agreed on the measures needed to ensure that the program is efficient, equitable, and transparent. This Strategy incorporates prior administrative recommendations into the following Goals and Actions, complete with timelines, action steps, roles and responsibilities, and resources required for implementation.

Figure 8 offers a snapshot of the goals and actions. Actions pertaining to existing historic preservation functions housed within Planning and Urban Design are highlighted in green. Actions detailing collaborations between City departments related to preservation are highlighted in orange. Actions that involve the creation of new programs, tools, or resources are not highlighted.

Figure 8: Strategy Goals

Goal	Action
GOAL 1 Preserve Dallas' diverse history in ways that contribute to our cultural and economic future.	1.1 Ensure that historic preservation administrative processes, structures, and decision-making bodies reflect the City's value of equity.
	1.2 Honor historically marginalized communities and the places that are important to them.
	1.3 Make Dallas' diverse history visible throughout the City.
	1.4 Leverage public parks and buildings as vehicles for remembering Dallas' history.
	1.5 Encourage residents and visitors to explore Dallas' diverse history.
	1.6 Ensure that Dallas' diversity of cultures continues to be a factor when determining the historic and cultural significance of potential landmarks.
	1.7 Proactively design repair support programs and resources that will help preserve naturally occurring affordable housing.
GOAL 2 Empower residents to preserve the places that are important to them.	2.1 Engage residents and businesses across Dallas to identify and proactively protect culturally significant places.
	2.2 Make it easy for all residents to navigate the City's historic preservation program.
	2.3 Create a program focused on helping communities access existing City resources that best meet their neighborhood preservation needs.
	2.4 Preserve and promote centers of cultural activity throughout our city.
	2.5 Support legacy small businesses and cultural organizations that contribute significantly to the culture and community of their neighborhoods.
	2.6 Help historic property owners and residents tackle their homes' unique maintenance needs and take full advantage of the tools and resources available to them.
GOAL 3 Maximize the benefits that all of Dallas—residents, property owners, developers—receive from historic preservation so they will want to do more of it.	3.1 Streamline and simplify tax incentives to encourage developers and property owners to preserve historic structures.
	3.2 Increase affordability and sustainability in historic districts through the reuse of materials.
	3.3 Adapt City services to the unique needs of historic districts.
	3.4 Maximize the impacts of the City's preservation and sustainability work by combining efforts.
	3.5 Focus the historic preservation program on people and impact by streamlining time-consuming processes.
	3.6 Ensure that long-term, the historic preservation program is stable, sustainable, and accountable.

Key

- ☐ Actions pertaining to the existing Historic Preservation **program within P+UD**.
☐ Actions pertaining to the larger historic and cultural preservation **function across departments**.

The following section provides details on the actions that will help the City achieve the plan's three goals. Each action item has a summary that includes five subsections:

Challenge

A challenge to achieving the associated goal raised by stakeholders through community engagement and previous planning efforts.

Solution

An action or actions to be taken to address the challenge and accomplish the associated goal.

Stakeholders

The department leading the action and key internal (City) and external (non-City) partners in implementing that action.

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications

Steps to implementing the action, including associated cost estimates and types (one-time, recurring, annual, internal, or outsourced).

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success

Datapoints and other indicators that can be used to track implementation and progress in meeting equity and preservation goals.

Goal 1: Preserve Dallas' diverse history in ways that contribute to our cultural and economic future.

1.1 Ensure that historic preservation administrative processes, structures, and decision-making bodies reflect the City's value of equity.

Challenges:

Equity in preservation would be a state in which people are able to preserve the places that matter to them regardless of their race, ethnicity, income and education levels, cultural practices, religion, sexuality, or other identities. Currently, factors of identity and ownership hinder some communities' ability to benefit from the Historic Preservation program because they either do not have clear ownership of historically or culturally significant properties, or there is insufficient research and documentation of the history of their marginalized community to be used in the designation process. Additionally, many residents find historic preservation processes difficult to navigate, and there is not sufficient Historic Preservation staff capacity for education, outreach, and direct resident assistance.

During community engagement and outreach for this Strategic Plan, residents expressed frustration over the City's inability to support and reform the Historic Preservation program—despite decades of recommendations offered by communities and preservation advocates—and noted the lack of education and outreach that might empower more diverse communities to benefit from preservation resources. Participants from historically marginalized communities

expressed the least amount of trust in the program and the most concerns about the City's ability to deliver on tools and processes that would be both accessible and effective in addressing challenges ranging from gentrification to disrepair. They also provided descriptive examples of past policies and decisions resulting in harm that fundamentally undermined their trust in the program and government in general. The consistent defunding of the Historic Preservation program throughout the years has made it very challenging for staff to build the trust necessary for the City to effectively and consistently collaborate with residents of historically marginalized neighborhoods on historic and cultural preservation.

“Instead of holding back we must have the courage to step forward, take our bureaucratic structures down to the studs and rebuild them through the lens of racial and social equity.”

— MARC OTT,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF INTERNATIONAL CITY MANAGERS
ASSOCIATION

Barriers to equity embedded in the current structure and processes of the City's Historic Preservation program include:

- Insufficient Code Compliance staff in conservation districts and historic districts, leading to inequitable enforcement and lack of proactive outreach

and resource provision to residents struggling to keep their properties up to code. Planning and Urban Design staff estimate that a minimum of five to six dedicated inspectors trained in conservation districts and historic districts are necessary for proactive and equitable enforcement.

- Lack of adequate representation of diverse communities on the Landmark Commission.³⁵
- Insufficient staff resources dedicated to education and outreach.
- Lack of readily available history representing communities of color and marginalized communities could lead to unconscious biases.
- Potential unconscious biases could be magnified by lack of consistent racial equity training for historic preservation staff, Landmark Commissioners, and Task Force members.

Solutions:

While the Strategic Plan is a roadmap to achieve equity in preservation, the following suite of solutions focuses on eliminating barriers to equity in administrative practices and structures:

1. Conduct unconscious bias training with historic preservation staff, Landmark Commission, and Task Force members annually.
2. Create a process for City Council members to increase the number of Landmark Commissioners appointed from historically marginalized communities, as recommended by the Racial Equity Plan (2021).³⁶ A suggested process includes :
 - Staff should work with partner organizations such as the Greater Dallas Planning Council, American Institute of Architects Dallas, Preservation Dallas, Remembering Black Dallas, the Dallas Mexican American Historical League, and relevant neighborhood groups to create a diverse list of potential candidates to pull from when there is an opening on the commission.
 - Staff must produce a formal recommendation to the appropriate Council member providing one to three potential candidates. For each candidate, staff should outline what perspectives they bring to the Commission in terms of racial, ethnic, cultural, or socioeconomic background and/or residence in a historically marginalized community, in addition to any formal professional training or advocacy experience they have.
3. Once new staff are hired, redistribute time allocated for community outreach and education to a minimum 10% of total staff time.
4. Use Code Compliance staff's on-the-ground knowledge of current conditions to create tiers of neglect for designated structures most in need of repairs so Code Compliance staff can prioritize high-risk properties with a focus on equitable outcomes.

³⁵ Though Dallas City Code § 51A-3.103(a)(2) states that "The membership of the landmark commission must, as nearly as may be practicable, reflect the racial and ethnic makeup of the city's population," that charge has not always been prioritized in the process of new Landmark Commissioner appointment by City Council members. A clearer process of ensuring adequate representation of historically marginalized communities is needed.

³⁶ [City of Dallas Racial Equity Plan](#), 108.

- Tier 1 (High Risk) are properties at imminent risk of demolition by neglect.
- Tier 2 (Medium Risk) are properties with multiple previous citations for code violations and significant challenges with structural integrity, and safety.
- Tier 3 (Low Risk) are properties with no previous major citations and no significant challenges with structural integrity and safety.

Staff resources would be allocated towards immediate compliance for critical Tier 1 cases, and preventative outreach to Tier 2 and Tier 3 property owners with resources like home repair grants or connections to affordable contractors via Preservation Dallas. This proactive outreach would resolve violations and prevent further deterioration or citations. This type of preventative outreach will require additional historic and conservation districts training for Code Compliance staff, both through a new hire dedicated to those districts and through implementing a regular preservation module for all code officers at Code School. 311 tickets related to historic or conservation districts should not be closed out without Preservation Code officer review. All final decisions related to code compliance in historic or conservation districts should include Preservation Code staff.

5. Add additional Code Inspectors dedicated to historic and conservation districts with a focus on preventative outreach to property owners.
6. Add a feature in the Salesforce interface used by Code Compliance Officers that notifies them when a complaint stems from a historic district, conservation district, or individual landmark.
7. Partner with Preservation Dallas to create guides for each historic and conservation district based on each neighborhood's design guidelines and expectations for residents, staff, and Commissioners by September 2027. These guides should increase consistency and fair and equitable outcomes. Pilot guides with select districts in the first year of executing the action.
 - Guides would include an overview for applicants and staff on typical housing typologies in each neighborhood and visual guidance on character-defining features for historic structures. Staff have already begun creating such a guide for the Tenth Street Historic District.
 - Leverage and supplement existing guides that staff developed in 2008-09 to optimize resources and build consistency for all newly designated districts.

Stakeholders:**Lead Department:**

- Planning and Urban Design

City and Public Partners:

- City Attorney's Office
- City Communications, Outreach and Marketing
- City Manager's Office
- City Office of Equity and Inclusion
- Code Compliance Department
- Interdepartmental Core Team (if it is created)

External Partners:

- Preservation Dallas
- State of Texas Office of Historic Preservation
- Big City Preservation Network
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Preservation Texas
- National Alliance of Preservation Commissions

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Conduct unconscious bias training with staff, Landmark Commission, and Task Force Members annually beginning in 2024.	OEI + HP consulting on material development	In-house or External, Reoccurring	Yes
Create a plan to work with Council members to increase the number of Landmark Commissioners appointed from historically marginalized communities by October 2026, as recommended by the Racial Equity Plan (2021).	OEI	In-house Annual	
Increase time allocated for community outreach and education to a minimum of 10% of total staff time.	OEI	In-house Reoccurring	Yes
Create preventative tiers of neglect for designated structures most in need of repairs so Code Compliance staff can connect high risk historic property owners to resources.	IT + CC	In-house Annual	
Add another Code Inspector in historic and conservation districts with a focus on preventative outreach to property owners.	CC	In-house Reoccurring	Yes
Add a feature in the Salesforce interface used by Code Compliance Officers that notifies them when a complaint stems from a historic district, conservation district, or individual landmark.	CC	In-house One-Time	Yes
Implement preservation training module at Code School by July 2024.	CC	In-house Reoccurring	Yes
Create guides for each historic and conservation district based on their resources to increase consistency and equitable outcomes by September 2027.	HP + Preservation Dallas	In-house One-Time	

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Percentage of Landmark Commission cases aligning with staff recommendations
- Landmark Commission membership
- Number of citations for designated structures by tier and change in citations over time
- Percentage of staff time allocated for outreach and education annually

1.2 Honor historically marginalized communities and the places that are important to them.

Challenges:

The history of marginalized communities and communities of color is not readily available to much of Dallas. Landmark Commissioners, Task Force members, and members of the public who are making decisions about what to try to preserve in Dallas may not be aware of the detailed history of certain communities because it has not been as thoroughly researched or is not typically taught as part of the history of Dallas. For example, prior to the founding of the Dallas Asian American Historical Society in 2022, there was not a centralized location or resource to learn about the history of Asian American communities in Dallas.

Additionally, while individual Landmark Commissioners and Historic Preservation staff members have collaborated with or been a part of community-based history organizations such as the Dallas Mexican American Historical League, there is no ongoing formal structure of collaboration between the City of Dallas' Historic Preservation program and constituent advocacy groups.³⁷

Solution:

Cultural context statements improve the identification, designation, and preservation of landmarks that are significant to historically marginalized communities. They can also be an equitable development tool to inform future neighborhood and development plans. Developing cultural context statements is an opportunity for City government to work with community-based advocacy organizations and community leaders to create documents that are lasting resources for appointed and elected officials (Landmark Commissioners and City Council members), local educators, and students in understanding the unique and detailed history of Dallas' diverse communities. In 2022, the City of Dallas completed resource surveys and cultural context statements for the Downtown and Deep Ellum neighborhoods with the assistance of Preservation Dallas.³⁸ Future efforts can build upon these context statements to cover more geographies and populations across Dallas. Cultural context statements are often very thorough documents of historical analysis and should be published and shared widely in Dallas Public Libraries as a resource for all residents—not just those working within the Historic Preservation program. They can also be a resource for Dallas educators looking to teach a more in-depth and inclusive history of Dallas in the classroom. These statements, if written collaboratively with community leaders, would be an impactful tool for building trust with communities.

Residents expressed interest in developing the following cultural context statements during the development of this plan:

- Mexican American History and Culture in Dallas
- LGBTQ+ History and Culture in Dallas
- African American History and Culture in Dallas
- Asian American History and Culture in Dallas

³⁷ In the past, preservation staff set up informal quarterly lunches with community advocacy groups.

³⁸ [Historic Resources Survey of Downtown Dallas and Deep Ellum](#), ArcGIS dataset, 2022.

- Indigenous History and Culture in Dallas³⁹
- Jewish History and Culture in Dallas

Stakeholders:**Lead Department**

- Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI)
- City and Public Partners
- Dallas Public Library
- Dallas City Archives

External Partners:

- Preservation Dallas
- Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation
- Remembering Black Dallas
- Dallas Mexican American Historical League
- Dallas Asian American Historical Society
- The Dallas Way
- The Intertribal Community Council of Texas,
- All local university special collections and archives

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Identify priority communities for the development of cultural context statements. Communities with the most currently endangered cultural resources should be prioritized.	OEI	In-house or External, One-time	Yes
Establish a formal collaboration with a lead community-based organization, lead academic partner (ideally a professor of history or preservation at a local institution), and lead City staff member to develop each statement.	OEI	External One-time*	
The City should work with community-based organization and academic partners to release a joint announcement of the collaboration and solicit public input, especially oral histories, photographs, and other valuable sources. The development of each cultural context statement should include multiple opportunities for public input.	OEI	External One-time	
Once complete, cultural context statements should be released for public comment and formally adopted by the Landmark Commission.	P+UD/ HP	Internal One-time	
After adoption, published cultural context statements should be published and distributed to Dallas Public Library branches.	CC	Internal One-time	

*Philanthropy helps funding external collaboration

³⁹ In the past, preservation staff tried to include Indigenous history in the historic resource surveys but were told to limit the timeline to the 1860s forward by either consultants or City leadership. The City's priority of equity and inclusion should be reflected in all future surveys.

A significant amount of the labor required for this recommendation comes from external sources. If CBO and academic partners do not have independent funding to support this work, the City should consider partnering with a philanthropic source to provide compensation to external partners. If the application process for individual grants is too time consuming for City staff to undertake, the grants should be structured to allow for smaller awards to be grouped together in practical amounts of more than \$25,000.

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Priority communities are identified (alongside the Office of Equity and Inclusion) and project partnerships created by 2026.
- At least one statement is created per year until all priority communities have been addressed.
- Cultural context statements are used more frequently in other forums, including real estate development projects, schools, and book clubs, through cross-departmental collaboration.

1.3 Make Dallas' diverse history visible throughout the City.

Challenges:

The creation of informational signage about historic sites depends primarily on state and national organizations—such as the Texas Historical Commission, the National Register of Historic Places—and select advocacy organizations—such as the Community Remembrance Project—that have worked to provide signage for specific sites. The most popular signage program provided by the Texas Historical Commission is prohibitively expensive and maintains high barriers to entry due to the level of research required, the cost of the marker itself, the long process of approval and production, and the ultimate challenge of finding a location to place the marker if the relevant property owners are not directly involved.⁴⁰

Dallas has informational signage in some neighborhoods throughout the City. For example, Preservation Dallas has signage in Main Street Garden, Ferris Plaza, and Pacific Plaza highlighting historic buildings visible from those parks. The Park and Recreation Department has signage in Dealey Plaza and in Martyr's Park. Uptown Dallas has many historic signs thanks to Uptown Dallas Inc., Fair Park has extensive signage about the history of the park and the buildings thanks to Fair Park First, and the Deep Ellum Foundation recently erected a sign in Deep Ellum about the history of the district. However, a more financially accessible signage program is required to ensure the diversity of Dallas' history is captured for neighborhoods throughout the city. The lack of informational signage in some historic parts of the City that have been unable to gather funding feeds perceptions that those neighborhoods don't have many significant historic resources or landmarks.

Solution:

A City-initiated signage program would provide an accessible, lower-cost alternative to state and national programs, while also giving the City an opportunity to curate public history and empower residents and neighborhoods to share the stories that are important to them—highlighting the stories of historically marginalized communities and others that have been systematically forgotten.

An accessible application process, starting with an online intake form, would be followed by an in-person consultation with a historic preservation planner or librarian or archivist in the Dallas History and Archives Division who can give applicants the support and resources they need to research and write their story. If a sign is in the public right-of-way, P+UD staff should work with the Department of Public Works to navigate any administrative processes that might increase costs, including permits and reviews. Signs should be made of durable material to be a long-lasting investment in public history.

Finally, hosting the program through the City allows Historic Preservation staff to collaborate with other City departments to facilitate placement of the marker—working with landowners and communities as necessary to advocate for public history and find permanent homes for signage.

⁴⁰ Some local nonprofits have worked with communities to support them through the Texas Historical Commission marker application process and raise money to cover any costs. The [THC's Undertold Markers](#) program is another resource for those needing financial assistance.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

City and Public Partners

- Dallas Municipal Archives
- Dallas Public Library – History and Archives

External Partners

- Preservation Dallas
- Local foundations

Historic Preservation staff should partner with the City's Municipal Archives and Dallas Public Library to provide research and writing consultations to local signage applicants prior to their submitting their final application. Preservation Dallas may be an additional resource for research assistance.

Secondly, a 2009 amendment to the Texas Tax Code allows Hotel Occupancy Tax revenues to be used to pay for directional signage to tourist sites and informational signage at historic locations. Other funds like Community Development Block Grants can also be used for this purpose. Historic Preservation staff should keep an updated list of recommended funding sources from other departments that can be used by residents to reduce costs.

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Historic Preservation staff develop an online intake application for residents interested in signage.	P+UD/HP +IT	One-Time In-house	Yes
Historic Preservation staff meet with Public Library and Archives staff to develop a marker consultation agenda and procedure for applicants.	P+UD/HP+ Library	No-Cost Annual In-house	
Historic Preservation staff design a template for city-initiated historic signage to ensure information representation is standardized.	P+UD/HP	No-Cost One-Time In-house	
Historic Preservation staff generate an ongoing contract with a local provider to create the signage.	P+UD/HP + Procurement	Ongoing In-house*	
The City launches the program with a press release and public workshop for interested applicants.	P+UD/HP + Comms	Ongoing In-house*	

* Philanthropy could fund signs

A local signage program is relatively low-cost and high impact. Staff time required to review applications is likely minimal, depending on application volume. The biggest investment in staff hours will be in setting up the program. Staff time will also be required for collecting historical information from applicants, vetting the information for accuracy, and working with the applicants to present it on the signage.

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Number of applications in the first three years of implementation
- Number of signs installed
- Geographic distribution of signs
- Percentage of signs pertaining to historically marginalized communities
- Length of time from initiation to installation.

1.4 Leverage public parks and buildings as vehicles for remembering Dallas' history.

Challenges:

Many of Dallas' culturally and historically significant resources can be found in parks and City-owned structures like libraries, recreation centers, and other civic buildings, while some parks are located within historic districts (such as Lake Cliff Park, Dorothy & Wallace Savage Park, Fair Park, Stemmons Plaza, Oak Cliff Cemetery, Dealey Plaza, Founders Plaza, West End Square, sections of Main Street Garden Park, Harwood Park, and Wheatley Park). Others do not fall within historic districts but still contain historically significant resources (such as Old City Park, Stevens Park, White Rock Lake, Flag Pole Hill, and Reverchon Park), and Dallas' Park and Recreation Department (DPARD)'s current upkeep and new construction protocol does not require any formal coordination with Historic Preservation staff. DPARD typically hires external architects or other specialists to assist in the preservation of historic structures within parks. DPARD staff do not collaborate with Historic Preservation staff unless they are required to because the resource in question is designated as an individual City of Dallas landmark or within a designated historic district. Most City-owned, publicly used buildings are either managed by DPARD (like community centers, recreation centers, and cemeteries) or the City's Building Services Department. In addition to some of these buildings being historic themselves, all these buildings have great potential to host history exhibits and educational programming, exposing the public to more learning opportunities.

Collaboration between Historic Preservation staff and other departments that manage properties has been hindered by departments' fear of the additional procedural burdens of landmark designation. Designated properties must have any major exterior repairs or additions approved by the Landmark Commission, adding another procedural step for City staff to complete before making decisions, which is perceived as an impediment to efficient park and civic building management. These procedural burden issues have left multiple historic structures within park properties without the protection that designation provides. The 2015 Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan recognizes a need for further preservation and interpretation of historic and cultural resources but that the department "lacks trained staff and funding to repair and restore historic resources."⁴¹ Historic exhibits in other City-owned structures can also benefit from trained staff that focus on historic preservation of places that are predominantly for public use.

In addition to the challenge of preserving known public historic and cultural resources, there is also the challenge of identifying unknown resources. Designation of natural spaces that include archeological sites is complicated. Historic Preservation staff with archeological expertise are needed to certify that archaeological resources are protected by the most fitting local, state, or national designation or program and ensure the best outcomes. For example, parks near the Trinity River may have historically significant artifacts that require archeological research and expertise to identify and preserve. The Comanche site in the Trinity Forest is an archeologically significant site that requires a review with a Tribal Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service's Tribal Historic Preservation Program. Historic Preservation staff with archeological knowledge need to work with DPARD to ensure they are steered to the most suitable program that can help them manage their sites while keeping the recreational integrity of the park intact.

⁴¹ [Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan](#) (2016), 78.

Solution:

Efficiency and trust are key to making interdepartmental collaboration on preservation sustainable. This plan recommends making two key changes to facilitate preservation of publicly owned properties—such as those managed by DPARD and Building Services—and ensure ongoing collaboration:

1. Establish a citywide administrative review process for publicly owned properties 45 years of age or older, requiring approval only from Historic Preservation staff. This has been recommended in previous preservation plans and would allow for consistent and efficient preservation of City-owned historic buildings.
2. Amend the Certificate of Appropriateness process for designated City-owned properties to be administrative (requiring only Historic Preservation staff approval), except in the case of demolitions, major additions, or large rehabilitations, which would go to the Landmark Commission. The administrative process should not be limited to only those structures within historic districts, but also for historic resources in public parks and buildings outside of districts. Changes to certain structures in Fair Park may still require Landmark Commission approval.

These adjustments would support DPARD in meeting the goals in their Comprehensive Plan under Action 9.1 to “Document, preserve, and restore important historic, cultural, and natural resources assets:”

- 9.1.1. Establish guidelines for the design and maintenance of DPARD’s historic, cultural, and natural resources.
- 9.1.2. Identify resources of potential historic significance that may need protection and have potential educational and interpretive value.
- 9.1.3. Pursue designation of appropriate facilities and historic resources as local landmarks or for inclusion in the national register.

These adjustments would create additional capacity for DPARD and Building Services staff to collaborate with Historic Preservation staff on interpretive signage, programming, and other types of activation and education within publicly owned buildings and parks. Additionally, DPARD may have capacity to pursue hiring or contracting an archaeologist to research select parks.

Preservation of historic resources in public places can also promote tourism, providing visitors an opportunity to experience an authentic connection to the City’s diverse history while exploring. The City of Austin utilizes Hotel Occupancy Tax funding to support historic projects and staffing related to tourism. In Austin, a strong partnership between the Park and Recreation Department (PARC) and the historic preservation staff has been essential to implement the PARC’s Historic Preservation and Tourism Program.⁴²

Stakeholders:

Lead Departments

- Planning and Urban Design
- Park and Recreation Department
- Building Services

City and Public Partners

- Office of Arts and Culture

External Partners

- Preservation Dallas

⁴² [City of Austin, Historic Preservation and Tourism Program](#)

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Convene a task force of P+UD, Building Services, and DPARD leadership to create a proposed code amendment that would establish an administrative review process for changes to City-owned structures 45 years of age or older. The proposed process should be approved by the City Manager.	City Attorney	One-Time In-house	Yes
Initiate a code amendment process to allow administrative review of any changes to already designated City-owned structures with historic resources outside of designated districts. This change would exclude major additions and demolitions, which would still go to the Landmark Commission for review.	City Attorney	One-Time In-house	Yes
Conduct basic training for relevant DPARD and Building Services staff on City historic and cultural preservation processes and tools.	P+UD/HP +DPARD + BSD	One-Time In-house	
Similar to City of Austin, establish DPARD and Building Services preservation liaisons to collaborate with Historic Preservation staff on approvals as well as activation, signage, and programming for publicly owned historic sites.	P+UD/HP +DPARD + BSD	One-Time In-house	
Assess whether additional hires or contractors, such as an archaeologist, are needed to effectively preserve publicly owned historic and cultural resources.	P+UD/HP +DPARD + BSD	One-Time In-house	

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Number of historically significant resources identified that are owned by the City of Dallas
- Number of resources officially designated within Dallas parks
- Number of publicly owned historically significant resources identified within communities of color
- Number of annual activations of City-owned historic parks and buildings

1.5 Encourage residents and visitors to explore Dallas' diverse history.

Challenges:

Visitors to Dallas—and, in fact, many residents—are aware of only a few nationally famous historic landmarks to visit or learn about. There is an opportunity to celebrate and promote Dallas' vibrant history and culture by making a much more diverse number of historic landmarks and locations accessible to residents and visitors for visiting and learning about different neighborhoods and their history.

Solution:

The City of Dallas could partner with external stakeholders such as, universities and nonprofits, to create a user-friendly map of Dallas landmarks that helps residents and visitors access the City's stories, as well as host regularly scheduled programming that promotes preservation and historic sites. The City should consider collaborating with external partners, such as Visit Dallas, to create user-friendly promotional materials and program events promoting history and culture. An easy first step is to create ArcGIS Story maps using information that the Historic Preservation staff has already collected, such as stories on the previous Office of Historic Preservation's blog.⁴³ Hotel Occupancy Tax revenues could be used to fund programming that promotes history and culture if it can be shown to directly relate to enhancing and promoting tourism and the convention and hotel industry.

The City' online version of the map should include other useful data, including which historic and cultural resources are eligible for local, state, or federal tax incentives and major grants to help communities access preservation resources.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

External Partners

- Visit Dallas

City and Public Partners

- GIS Services
- Office of Arts and Culture
- Municipal Archives

⁴³ [City of Dallas Office of Historic Preservation](#), 2021.

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Gather necessary data for maps and promotional materials.	GIS + P+UD/HP	One-Time In-house	Yes
Produce promotional materials, including an aesthetically appealing, user-friendly map that can be shared digitally and distributed in print.	OAC, Visit Dallas, Communications	One-Time Outsource*	
Establish a partnership with external organizations, such as Visit Dallas, to distribute promotional materials and collaborate on hosting preservation-related events.	OAC, Visit Dallas, Communications	No-Cost One-Time Outsource*	
Distribute and promote the map, making it available at different locations throughout the City.	OAC, Visit Dallas, Communications	Ongoing Outsource*	

*This step can be done with philanthropic support

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Number of visits to the web-based map
- Number of print copies distributed
- Diversity of landmarks and neighborhoods on the map reflect Dallas' cultural and racial diversity

1.6 Ensure that Dallas' diversity of cultures continues to be a factor when determining the historic and cultural significance of potential landmarks.

Challenges:

The City of Dallas' development code defines historical significance in a very broad manner, which has allowed the Landmark Commission and staff to be inclusive in designating a diversity of landmarks. The definition of historical significance is impactful because it determines whether a building, place, or district qualifies to be given landmark status. While the current language is inclusive, architectural significance or the age and integrity of structures is still often valued over cultural significance. Landmarking a structure or place that is not architecturally significant can present additional challenges and pushback from resistant property owners who might not like the appearance of the building or interpret the code to favor architectural significance.

Similarly, the current individual landmark designation process focuses substantially on documenting the architecture of the site, and regulations after designation focus on preserving the physical features of the site. Documenting and preserving physical features may not be most important to a community hoping to landmark a site, like a community center or gathering place, for its cultural importance and to preserve its significance and use for future generations.

Dallas City Code Sec. 51A-4.501(b)

A historic overlay district may be established to preserve places and areas of historical, cultural, or architectural importance and significance if the place or area has three or more of the following characteristics:

1. **History, heritage and culture:** Represents the historical development, ethnic heritage or cultural characteristics of the city, state, or country.
2. **Historic event:** Location as or association with the site of a significant historic event.
3. **Significant persons:** Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city, state, or country.
4. **Architecture:** Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, landscape design, method of construction, exceptional craftsmanship, architectural innovation, or contains details which represent folk or ethnic art.
5. **Architect or master builder:** Represents the work of an architect, designer or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city, state, or country.
6. **Historic context:** Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation based on historic, cultural, or architectural characteristics.
7. **Unique visual feature:** Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community or the city that is a source of pride or cultural significance.
8. **Archaeological:** Archaeological or paleontological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric interest.
9. **National and state recognition:** Eligible for or designated as a National Historic Landmark, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark, State Archeological Landmark, American Civil Engineering Landmark, or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Solution:

The City should create a separate “Cultural Landmark” designation. The designation application would focus more on the history of what has happened at the site rather than the architecture of the site. Similarly, the regulations protecting the site after it is designated could be less stringent than those of a City of Dallas Landmark, allowing property owners to make more necessary structural adaptations to a site while still protecting its cultural use and importance.

Additionally, if necessary, after completing a cultural resources survey, the City could amend the preservation code to be more explicit about the importance of designating landmarks and districts of cultural significance, regardless of their age, architectural integrity or consistency, or other physical features.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

City and Public Partners

- None

External Partners

- Preservation Dallas
- Remembering Black Dallas
- Dallas Mexican American Historical League
- Dallas Jewish Historical Society
- Dallas Asian American Historical Society

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/Source	Year 1 Priority
Complete cultural resources surveys throughout the City with strong external partnerships.	Procurement + P+UD/HP	One-Time Outsource	Yes, following completion of summary survey
Historic Preservation staff use the findings of the cultural resource surveys to develop an amendment to the development code that elaborates on the importance of designating landmarks of cultural significance in Dallas and what those landmarks might look like.	CAO + P+UD/HP	One-Time In-house	
Historic Preservation staff work with the Landmark Commission and City Council to host public hearings and complete the amendment to the development code.	CAO + P+UD/HP	One-Time In-house	
Develop Cultural Landmark designation.	P+UD/HP	One-Time In-house	

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Percentage of City of Dallas Landmarks with marked cultural significance versus traditional historical or architectural.
- Percentage of applications for landmarks of cultural significance approved before versus after the code amendment. This will ensure that landmark designations are calculated based on the number of applications received and not a forced action on people to designate.

1.7 Proactively design repair support programs and resources that will help preserve naturally occurring affordable housing.

Challenge:

Housing stock across Dallas is aging. Some pre-war homes in parts of South Dallas and primarily Post-World War II single and multifamily homes make up the majority of housing in historically and culturally significant neighborhoods. They also provide much of the City's naturally occurring affordable housing. As properties continue to age and require increased maintenance investment, the City should actively prioritize identifying the current conditions and repair needs of housing in historically and culturally significant neighborhoods, using code compliance data to do so wherever possible. This research should inform adaptations to repair programs and other tools so they can be most effectively leveraged to preserve mid-century housing and its affordability.

Most post-World War II housing is not located in a designated historic district, and property owners in post-war neighborhoods may perceive historic district designation as a burden due to lengthy approval processes and the perceived cost of historically appropriate repairs. Identifying what resources historic designation could unlock for those property owners could be key to reframing designation as an asset.

It is essential to proactively evaluate what types and levels of funds will be required to incentivize and assist owners of aging properties to maintain and improve their housing. The process could also ascertain whether historic designation could be key to saving certain areas, buildings, or clusters of affordable housing.

Solution:

The City should first conduct a survey to understand the current state of aging, naturally occurring affordable housing stock in historically and cultural significant neighborhoods, followed by a needs assessment to guide existing policies and programs adjustments that meet the identified needs. Survey efforts should prioritize areas in which the ratio of the assessed land value to the value of the improvement (or structure) is high (i.e., prioritizing neighborhoods where rising land values make the land far more valuable than the housing itself).

1. Existing Conditions: The City should leverage internal and external input to gain a robust understanding of current historic and affordable housing stock. This would entail partnerships with the City's Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, Office of Environmental Quality, and consulting data from local universities and nonprofits, such as the Child Poverty Action Lab, that have done extensive housing studies in Dallas.
2. Adjusting Policy and Programs to Effectively Preserve Aging Housing: After completing surveys of affordable housing stock in historically and culturally significant neighborhoods, the City should encourage property owners to pursue designation so they can benefit from tax exemption programs like Tex. Tax Code § 11.24.⁴⁴ In addition, the City should work with community and education partners to create a guide identifying the most common housing types in Post-World War II neighborhoods, guidance on exterior home repairs, and contact information for City resources that aid residents with the efforts to repair and maintain their properties.

⁴⁴ [Tex. Tax Code § 11.24](#)

Once the existing conditions survey is complete, the City should notify property owners of existing Home Repair grants, loans, and other funds they qualify for through the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization based on the assessment.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization

City and Public Partners

- Code Compliance Department
- Office of Environmental Quality

External Partners

- Local universities like University of Texas at Arlington and University of North Texas
- Child Poverty Action Lab

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Identify neighborhoods with the oldest housing stock that have historic or cultural significance. This will require coordination between the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization and Historic Preservation staff.	DHNR	One-Time External	
Shortlist neighborhoods that are historically or culturally significant and in need of home conditions assessment.	DHNR	One-Time External	
Conduct the assessment in partnership with Code Compliance staff.	DHNR	One-Time In-House and External	
Create a guide of best methods to repair, fund, and maintain homes in historic neighborhoods as per the identity of existing homes.	DHNR	One-Time In-House and External	
Engage with universities like University of Texas at Arlington and University of North Texas to develop the guide and recommend design processes and methods in historic neighborhoods. For instance, UTA Architecture, Landscape, and Planning professors and students are working with Joppa residents to create a playbook that documents the historically and culturally significant places and structures in the neighborhood.	DHNR	One-Time External	
Match the most suitable grants and funds to residents utilizing the multiple funding sources for home improvements and repairs. If residents express the desire to designate, include funds and resources that can be unlocked through historic and cultural designation.	DHNR	Ongoing Internal	

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Assign a projected number of neighborhoods that the department can identify and evaluate each year, and measure success based on goal set by staff.
- Number of homes identified and condition assessments conducted across the City.
- Number of neighborhoods assessments finished before assigning them a historic designation.
- Number of homes granted home repair loans and grants in historic neighborhoods.

Goal 2: Empower residents to preserve the places that are important to them.

2.1 Engage residents and businesses across Dallas to identify and proactively protect culturally significant places.

Challenges:

There is growing interest from many constituencies (especially advocates of preservation, racial equity, arts and culture, community organizing, and anti-displacement) to make a concerted and organized effort to document and preserve Dallas' historic and cultural resources. However, the City cannot help preserve cultural resources if they do not know what or where they are.

Cultural resources are places or buildings that should be preserved or conserved for their importance to a community's culture, even if they are not otherwise historic, of a certain age or style, contributing to a historic district, related to historic events, or otherwise architecturally significant.

Solution:

While traditional historic resource surveys are often based on architecture, cultural resource surveys are conducted with more community engagement to identify places that are important to people, which has led to more effective identification and preservation of cultural and historical resources in historically marginalized communities.

However, because Dallas' citywide historic resource surveys haven't been updated since the 1970s, it will be essential to first conduct a **high-level, citywide summary survey** to gain a basic inventory and understanding of what historic and cultural resources exist in Dallas. The summary survey will help identify areas where more in-depth engagement should be concentrated to identify cultural resources.

The people-focused process of completing a cultural resource survey accomplishes several important goals, including:

- Identify culturally significant individual landmarks to flag for designation. The City of Los Angeles and the City of San Francisco have used cultural resource surveys to identify, document, and designate places that are important to a community's culture.⁴⁵
- Identify neighborhoods or areas with preservation needs and connecting them with appropriate programs and resources.
- Educate and connecting residents, small businesses, and organizations with relevant tools and programs offered by their city.

⁴⁵ The City of San Francisco is currently undergoing a multi-year historic and cultural resource survey process. San Francisco Planning Department, "[SF Survey: Citywide Cultural Resources Survey](#)". The [Los Angeles Conservancy's Landmark THIS!](#) Program has helped community leaders apply for local designation of culturally important places.

- Engage residents across Dallas to build a new public narrative around Dallas' identity, grounded in what residents say is important to them about their city.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

City and Public Partners

- None

External Partners

- Neighborhood Associations
- Community-based organizations,
- Philanthropic Partners (to compensate resident ambassadors)

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/Source	Year 1 Priority
Ensure that the RFP released to procure a contractor to update Dallas' historic resource surveys includes required qualifications around equitable community engagement and identifying cultural resources OR release a separate RFP for the culture resource survey to be conducted in collaboration with the consultants** conducting the historic resource survey.	P+UD	One-time Outsource*	Yes
Consider working with the hired consultants** to develop a resident ambassador program to increase surveying and interviewing capacity, hiring, and compensating residents to survey their own neighborhoods and interview their neighbors to identify cultural resources. Evaluate and build on Preservation Dallas' existing program to support cultural resource survey efforts.	P+UD	One-time Outsource*	Yes

*Use Philanthropic funding sources

**Historic Preservation staff should be included in the hiring process of qualified preservation consultants.

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Number of cultural resources identified
- Number and diversity of residents participating (e.g., completing surveys, being interviewed, serving as an ambassador) in the cultural resources survey effort

2.2 Make it easy for all residents to navigate the City's historic preservation program.

Challenges:

Throughout the engagement process, the team heard that even experienced architects, developers, and landowners find navigating the Historic Preservation program intimidating, let alone average residents. Many Dallas residents are likely unfamiliar with the Historic Preservation program, its purpose, tools, and processes—and currently it is very difficult to learn about the program online. Resources on the website are out of date and difficult to locate, and many are difficult to understand for the average reader without a background in preservation or local government processes. Additionally, data that residents may need to use in their applications for Certificates of Appropriateness, such as historic resource surveys, can only be accessed by speaking with a preservation planner, who is, in many cases, working with an outdated historic resources survey. Depending on the geographic location of the site, number of changes that the structure has undergone, and if the applicant is proposing major renovations, the Certificate of Appropriateness can require reviewing historic resource surveys, historic ordinances, or (at the least) reviewing the historic Sanborn maps via the Dallas Public Library. This process can be intimidating for new applicants.

The current online guide for how to apply for the designation of an individual landmark recommends that applicants hire external consultants to successfully complete the process.⁴⁶ Preservation staff and the Designation Committee of the Landmark Commission work with applicants who lack funds by helping them research the property, write the report, and develop the criteria. However, the current online guide does not make these available resources consistently evident or accessible. Some applicants expressed concern that the website is out of date, referencing contact information for personnel that have left their staff positions. Additional mid-level planner hires are necessary to keep the website up to date and assist residents with designations.

In summary, the primary barriers to equity in navigating the Historic Preservation program:

- Complex designation and Certificate of Appropriateness processes with insufficient staff to provide customer assistance
- Lack of accessible, up-to-date information about the program and how to complete applications
- Difficulty accessing essential data and information needed to successfully complete applications
- Out-of-date resources like historic resource surveys

⁴⁶ [City of Dallas Office of Historic Preservation, "Landmark Designation – Individual Structures."](#)

Solutions:

Resolving accessibility challenges will require simplifying, where possible, unnecessarily complicated processes and institutionalizing methods to ensure that each customer gets the assistance and information they require to successfully navigate processes. The first steps to do so are:

1. Maximize online access to accurate and up-to-date information about historic properties, and encourage applicants to use the online services as much as possible. This reduces staff time allocated to customer service inquiries and the length of time needed to review an application. Technological innovations and governmental process improvements are the primary tools available to create a more accessible local government.
2. Keep historic resource surveys up to date with regular revisions and digitizing results.
3. Create a “how-to” guide for residents conducting routine work and maintenance on their historic properties that can be administratively approved.
4. Work with Planning and Urban Design staff to improve the design of the website, making it easier to navigate and ensuring that all resources are up to date.
5. Simplify the designation process and create expedited processes for properties that have already received state or national designations. Make it explicit to interested applicants when processes are expedited to encourage further participation.
6. Any City Attorneys working on preservation law should document their interpretations of the law relevant to any of the preservation programs. This will help to create more transparency and consistency in decision making even when there is City Attorney turnover.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

City and Public Partners

- City Attorney’s Office
- Development Services – Permitting Software

External Partners

- Preservation Dallas
- State of Texas Office of Historic Preservation
- Big City Preservation Network
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Preservation Texas
- National Alliance of Preservation Commissions

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Begin update of historic resources survey, beginning with summary survey, by Fall 2024.	P+UD	Initial funding allocated Ongoing Outsource	Yes
Complete routine work and historic maintenance guide process and procedures by January 2025. All online and digitization steps will require support from IT team.	P+UD	One-Time In-house or Outsource*	Yes
Complete online access to historic resource survey data and prior staff reports by January 2027.	IT	One-Time In-house or Outsource*	
Launch new website by January 2025.	IT	One-Time In-house or Outsource*	
Amend the City of Dallas' code to simplify the designation process and make criteria for designation more inclusive.	IT	One-time In-house	

*Use Philanthropic funding sources to conduct surveys

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Number of customer inquiries by email or phone
- # Customer service requests that require only a referral to the appropriate website link to be completed. can be closed out with referral to the appropriate website link.

2.3 Create a program focused on helping communities access existing City resources that best meet their neighborhood preservation needs.

Challenges:

As referenced in recommendation 2.1, many of Dallas' communities and neighborhoods are actively seeking to preserve their history and culture. These communities vary greatly in terms of capacity, resources, and level of organization. A one-size-fits-all approach is not adequate to support neighborhoods with different cultures, values, and resources facing vastly different pressures, from gentrification to disinvestment. Many residents are unaware that the City has resources and programs to assist them, and if they are aware, they find it difficult to navigate which resources they are eligible for and how to apply.

This challenge is compounded by the fact that there is not currently a City-wide resource allocation system that looks at how grants and other funds are distributed across neighborhoods and by different departments. While some individual programs prioritize certain at-risk neighborhoods, such as ARPA home repair funds that are exclusive to Tenth Street, Joppa, and Five Mile, there is not currently a lens to analyze how resource allocation is prioritized across City programs and across the geography of the city. This means that communities who may receive the most benefit from a City program, fund, or grant may not be aware the program exists and may not be prioritized for it.

Solution:

Create a neighborhood-level designation that is focused on helping a community (including residents, small businesses, and cultural organizations) access **non-zoning** City resources that will most effectively assist them in preserving their history and culture. This designation differs from a historic district designation in that it is **not** a zoning overlay that places restrictions on individual properties or the appearance of properties. Instead, it is an honorary designation that gives residents and business owners within the bounds of the designated neighborhood access to a resource navigator at City Hall – a planner within Planning and Urban Design– whose job is to ensure residents of Legacy Neighborhoods can efficiently access resources they are eligible for across the City that will help stabilize and preserve their neighborhood and culture.

A Legacy Neighborhood is a neighborhood with historic and cultural preservation needs that cannot be met by zoning change alone. Qualitative criteria for designation may include:

- Demonstrated historic and cultural assets within the neighborhood, including individually designated local, State, or National landmarks, multiple locally-owned small businesses, cultural organizations, or churches with long-standing congregations, and/or historic homes or community gathering spaces
- Previous organized neighborhood attempts to secure a zoning overlay or zoning change to preserve history and culture (i.e., the neighborhood has seriously pursued or achieved a PD zoning change or an NSO, Conservation District, or Historic District overlay with Planning and Urban

Design) Examples of neighborhoods like this include Queen City (no zoning overlay achieved), Joppa (NSO attempted but not achieved), Elm Thicket (PD achieved, but legacy residents still struggling with rising property values), and Tenth Street (Historic District achieved, but neighborhood still struggling with preservation, investment, and home repair challenges)

Quantitative Criteria for designation may include the following metrics that can be used to demonstrate displacement pressure:

- Households: average income level and poverty rate
- Homes: home value changes and mortgage approvals
- Development: single-family market change and new construction

Specific benchmarks for quantitative criteria must be decided through further research by Planning and Urban Design in partnership with other departments conducting work on anti-displacement measures.

Many residents engaged throughout this strategic planning process were primarily concerned with being able to remain in their neighborhoods while preserving the small businesses, arts, and cultural organizations that made their communities special. There are currently ample resources across the City focused on anti-displacement, equitable economic development, supporting arts and culture, and sustainability that address these concerns, ranging from home repair funds to grants for small businesses and public art programs (see the diagram on the following page).

Planning and Urban Design can utilize the proposed engagement via the cultural resources survey process (see 2.1) to identify neighborhoods that may be good candidates for the Legacy Neighborhood program.⁴⁷ Through the designation process, planners would utilize conversations with community members and key data indicators (such as property value increase over time or concentration and type of code complaints) to help the neighborhood identify which programs and resources best address their concerns. Once designated, all residents living within the bounds of the Legacy Neighborhood would be prioritized to receive funds or assistance from the agreed-upon City programs. The Legacy Neighborhood program will maximize the impacts of City investments in neighborhoods while holding historic legacy at its core.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

City and Public Partners

- All City Departments, with a focus on those with programs listed below

External Partners

- Neighborhood Associations
- Community-Based Organizations

Dedicated staff within Planning and Urban Design with knowledge of historic and cultural preservation would act as navigators to assist residents with designation and connecting them with appropriate resources throughout the City. Planning and Urban Design is the best Department to house the navigators as their planners currently conduct extensive community engagement and neighborhood-based planning.

⁴⁷ Elizabeth Morton, "[How to Help Black-Owned Businesses Thrive](#)", American Planning Association Magazine, February 17, 2022.

Figure 9: Existing Resources for Legacy Neighborhoods (November 2023)

	OED*	OAC*	HOU*	OEQS*	SBC*
Anti-Displacement	- Food Access Program - Infrastructure Improvement Program/ Fund		Home Improvement and home repair programs that are targeted for historically marginalized communities	- Minor Plumbing Repair Program (with Dallas Water Utilities) - Weatherization Assistance Program (with DCHHS) - Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP with DCHHS) - Environmental Justice Fund	
Equitable Economic Development	- Community Development Program/Fund - Infrastructure Improvement Program/Fund	- Public Art Program - Arts Activate	Mixed-Income Housing Development Bonus (MIHDB)		- Neighborhood Empowerment Zone - South Dallas Fair Park Opportunity Fund - Southern Dallas Investment Fund - ARPA Small Business Assistance/ Nonprofit Assistance - Small Business Adaptive Reuse Program
Cultural Preservation + Creative Placemaking		- Community Artist Program - Cultural Organizations Program			
Sustainability				- Brownfields Program - Solar Residential Program (with ONCOR) - Building Materials Recycling (with DSS)	

*OED – Office of Economic Development; OAC – Office of Arts and Culture; HOU – Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization; OEQS – Office of Environmental Quality and Sustainability; SBC – Small Business Center

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Initiate hiring of a Program Manager with experience in collaborative work with communities and resource navigation.	P+UD/HR	Ongoing In-house*	
Assemble a committee of staff from all related departments (OED, OCA, HOU, OEQS, SBC, P+UD) to develop a series of guidelines to determine if applicants were eligible for the Legacy Neighborhood program and what resources they would be prioritized for, including key qualitative and quantitative data indicators.	P+UD	One-Time In-house or Outsource*	
The Legacy Neighborhood Program Manager works with P+UD leadership to develop an accessible application and process for neighborhoods that would like to be a part of the program.	P+UD	One-Time In-house or Outsource*	
Pilot the program in the first year of initiation with one to three neighborhoods, reconvening the interdepartmental committee quarterly to assess what is working well and what may need to be adjusted.	P+UD	One-Time In-house or Outsource*	

*Philanthropic funding can be used for the pilot

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Decide on metrics for evaluation for each neighborhood during the designation process, based on their primary concerns.
- Number and diversity of residents participating (e.g., completing surveys, being interviewed, serving as an ambassador) in the cultural resources survey effort.

2.4 Preserve and promote centers of cultural activity throughout our city.

Challenges:

Dallas has many small districts that are key cultural assets but not formally recognized or supported by the City. Branding, preserving, reorganizing, and supporting cultural districts that have organically sprouted throughout Dallas has been left up to the community. In some neighborhoods, such as Deep Ellum, residents and property owners organized their own entities, such as the Deep Ellum Foundation, to help promote their neighborhood, offer arts programming, and preserve cultural uses. Most other culturally significant districts—such as Jefferson Boulevard in Oak Cliff, the Tin District in West Dallas, and parts of South Dallas—do not have robust organizational support and would benefit greatly from assistance with neighborhood planning to sustain cultural uses, name recognition, signage, and support for cultural programming.

While the Office of Arts and Culture (OAC) provides essential support for cultural organizations, programming, and public art, none of these resources are geographically specific or prioritized by target areas or neighborhoods. While the Texas Commission on the Arts provides a cultural district designation, (currently Deep Ellum, the Arts District, and Fair Park) it is primarily honorary and does not allocate any resources towards designated districts.

Solution:

Create a non-zoning cultural district designation that provides financial, planning, and (if applicable) marketing support to districts with a concentration of cultural resources and activities, with the goal of supporting and sustaining cultural districts. This designation would be a collaboration between the OAC and the P+UD

The allocation of **financial and planning support** for cultural districts should reflect the priority to support and sustain existing cultural uses, organizations, and programming in the district. Possibilities should include:

- Prioritize applicants within cultural districts for one or more existing OAC grant programs
- Create a new cultural district support fund within the OAC
- Discounting permitting costs and other city-related fees for cultural organizations within cultural districts
- Incorporate supporting and sustaining cultural uses and culturally significant practices (like street vending, multigenerational living, and small-scale agriculture) into P+UD's Neighborhood Planning program
- Connect cultural district leadership (community organizations or coalitions) with capacity-building resources and trainings offered by local organizations and nonprofits

Visibility and branding support for cultural districts should reflect the priority of celebrating Dallas' communities and culture and making cultural assets more accessible and broadly known to the public. This support may come in terms of:

- An online digital map of cultural districts
- Support from the City's communications team to publicize the designation of new districts
- Assistance from P+UD in placing signage marking districts
- Small grant assistance for organizations representing cultural districts to support marketing, branding, and graphic design

The designation process would be initiated by an organization or a coalition of community members.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design with the Office of Arts and Culture

External Partners

- To be determined in the program design process.

City and Public Partners

- City of Dallas Communications

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
P+UD and the Office of Arts and Culture assemble a committee of four to five staff to co-design the Cultural District program.	OAC	One-Time In-house*	
The P+UD/OAC committee develops designation criteria, application processes, and financial support sources and options for the Cultural District program. These recommendations will be reviewed by the Director of each department and the applicable Assistant City Managers.	OAC	One-Time In-house*	
Once program design has been approved and funding sources identified, the P+UD/OAC committee should assign a staff member within each department to oversee the administration of a three-year pilot period of the Cultural District program in which no more than two districts will be designated.	OAC	One-Time In-house*	
The Cultural District co-leads will work with the City's Office of Communications, Outreach, and Marketing to host a public launch of the Cultural District Pilot program, potentially inviting representatives from one to three cultural neighborhoods that may be interested in applying for the pilot.	OAC	One-Time In-house*	

At the conclusion of the pilot, the P+UD/OAC co-leads could evaluate whether additional staff capacity will be required to designate and administer incentives for districts depending on demonstrated resident interest and experience with the pilot districts.

OAC

One-Time
In-house*

*Philanthropic funding can be used for the pilot

Depending on the success of the Cultural District program, it could potentially create a need for additional staffing in either the OAC or P+UD. The program's three-year pilot period allows for OAC and P+UD staff to assess the demands of staffing the designation and administration of no more than two districts to understand if additional hiring is required.

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Visitation numbers for designated versus non-designated cultural districts
- Change in annual ticket sales and other revenue-related metrics of cultural organizations in designated versus non-designated cultural districts
- Percentage of cultural organizations and uses in designated districts versus non-designated districts over time
- Survey of cultural organizations and small businesses in designated districts, quarterly during the pilot period and annually thereafter.

2.5 Support legacy small businesses and cultural organizations that contribute significantly to the culture and community of their neighborhoods.

Challenges:

While many local, state, and federal programs exist to protect historic buildings, there are very few resources to preserve the historically and culturally significant businesses. Many gentrifying neighborhoods—such as North Oak Cliff, West Dallas, and parts of East Dallas—are home to family-run and culturally centered businesses and organizations that have been keystones of their communities for decades. Small businesses like restaurants, stores with authentic or handmade products, and service providers such as barber and beauty shops are important parts of Dallas communities' culture. Neighborhood cultural organizations like community centers, theaters, and dance and art studios help keep traditional visual and performing arts alive. These organizations, especially nonprofit cultural organizations, are often the first to suffer from increases in property values driving up property taxes and/or commercial rents.

Solution:

Planning and Urban Design will partner with the Small Business Center to create a Legacy Small Business and Cultural Organization program focused on preserving historically or culturally significant small businesses and organizations by preventing their displacement. In line with the recommendations of the 2021 Racial Equity Plan, P+UD and SBC should establish a system of prioritizing designated organizations that are minority or women-owned for financial support.

Legacy small businesses are “those longstanding, character-defining independent enterprises—barber shops, bakeries, and bookstores—that have sustained a sense of place for a generation or more.”⁴⁸ The [Small Business Anti-Displacement Network](#) should be used as a resource to assist with design of the program, ensuring that the designation provides meaningful anti-displacement resources in addition to recognition of historic and cultural significance.

The allocation of **financial support** for legacy small businesses and cultural organizations should reflect the priority to support their continued operation and prevent their displacement. Possibilities could include:

- Establish a rent stabilization fund to provide grants to landlords who agree to offer or extend leases of 10+ years to registered legacy small businesses and cultural organizations (see San Francisco's [Rent Stabilization Grant for Legacy Small Businesses](#)).
- Establish a commercial rent stabilization ordinance that applies to businesses or nonprofits with under a certain number of employees continuously licensed for more than a certain number of years. A commercial rent stabilization ordinance was passed in [Seattle during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) and is currently [proposed](#) for New York City.
- Reintroduce programs like the Facilities Usage Reimbursement Program (FURP).

⁴⁸ Elizabeth Morton, “[How to Help Black-Owned Businesses Thrive](#)”, American Planning Association Magazine, February 17, 2022.

- Offer tax credits or property tax abatements to legacy small business or cultural organization operators who own their space.
- Partner with a local foundation to create an emergency fund for legacy small businesses and organizations that could provide temporary assistance with operating costs in the case of emergencies, sudden revenue declines, or sudden operating cost increases. Such funds have been helpful for small businesses in the past, especially during the pandemic.
- Reduce or waive fees for permitting and other city-related expenses.

Visibility and branding support for legacy small businesses and cultural organizations should reflect the priority of celebrating Dallas' communities and culture and making these historic organizations and businesses more known to the public. This support may come in terms of:

- A digital map of legacy small businesses and cultural organizations
- Plaques or stickers for designated legacy small businesses and cultural organizations
- Façade improvement grants for designated businesses and cultural organizations
- A guidebook of legacy small businesses and cultural organizations in Dallas distributed to hotels throughout the City in coordination with Visit Dallas.
- Assisting legacy small businesses in becoming City suppliers

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design with the Office of Arts and Culture

External Partners

- To be determined in the program design process.

City and Public Partners

- City of Dallas Communications

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
The City Manager's Office works with Human Resources to hire an additional Program Manager for the Small Business Center to assist with the administration of this program and add the necessary additional capacity on other SBC programming. Assess P+UD capacity to determine if an additional hire is also needed on their side.	SBC	One-Time Internal	
The Director of P+UD should assign a Historic Preservation Planner to collaborate with the SBC Program Manager on designing the program.	SBC	One-Time Internal	
Develop designation criteria (considering necessary differences between businesses and cultural organizations) and financial support criteria that take into account racial equity goals and demonstrated financial need.	SBC	One-Time Internal	

Develop an accessible application process and online form.	SBC	One-Time Internal
Engage small business owners, City leadership, and potential philanthropic partners to understand which financial incentives would be most feasible, efficient, and effective.	SBC	One-Time Internal or External
Final program design should be approved by the City Manager's Office and the Workforce, Education, and Equity Committee of City Council.	SBC	One-Time Internal
P+UD and SBC should work with the City's Office of Communications, Outreach, and Marketing to publicly launch the program and provide information sessions.	SBC	One-Time Internal

Due to the Small Business Center's staff being at capacity, an additional hire will be necessary to make this program successful. The allocation of financial incentives and support for designated organizations will also be necessary to make this program truly impactful.

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Diversity of businesses and cultural organizations designated
- Financial health and stability of designated organizations over time
- Change in visitation, revenues, or program participants of designated organizations

2.6 Help historic property owners and residents tackle their homes' unique maintenance needs and take full advantage of the tools and resources available to them.

Challenges:

Residents who may be interested in learning more about preserving history and culture or looking for practical advice on how to repair their historic homes must rely on programming offered by local nonprofits. While Preservation Dallas provides educational programming and historic building tours for the public, and training for realtors in Dallas, it is a small organization and needs additional capacity and networks to reach audiences beyond those already invested in preservation.

The lack of accessible opportunities to learn about preservation prevents the preservation advocates constituency from growing and diversifying. The inaccessibility of knowledge makes the field appear insular and exclusive.

Solution:

Planning and Urban Design can establish a formal partnership with Preservation Dallas to provide a regular schedule of accessible historic preservation workshops catered to the average Dallas resident who may have no previous knowledge of preservation or preservation issues. By supporting robust educational opportunities, the City will encourage the growth of a larger community of preservation advocates of all races, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds who may help support and supplement the efforts of this plan.

It is key that these offerings occur on a regular and predictable schedule, either bi-weekly or monthly. Whenever possible, workshop presentations should be recorded and posted on Preservation Dallas' website.

Areas of interest for community members, as expressed in the September 2023 community engagement, include:

- Researching your historic home or neighborhood landmark
- Learning how to use Dallas Public Library and Dallas Municipal Archives resources
- Learning basic historic home repair skills
- Navigating the City of Dallas' landmark designation process
- Completing a Certificate of Appropriateness

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design: Historic Preservation

External Partners

- Preservation Dallas
- Dallas Historical Society

City and Public Partners

- Dallas Public Library
- Dallas City Archives

While Preservation Dallas is a key external partner, the Dallas Public Library, City Archives, and Dallas Historical Society should assist especially with workshops regarding research.

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Formalize current collaboration with Preservation Dallas and assign a Historic Preservation Planner to be the permanent liaison with Preservation Dallas for workshop planning and implementation.	P+UD/HP	Ongoing Internal	Yes
Begin development of a workshop schedule for 2024-2025, potentially including guest instructors from other organizations.	P+UD/HP	Ongoing Internal/External	Yes
The Legacy Neighborhood Program Manager works with P+UD leadership to develop an accessible application and process for neighborhoods that would like to be a part of the program.	P+UD/HP	Ongoing Internal	Yes

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Demographics of workshop participants reflect the demographics of Dallas
 - Record participant demographic data with survey and analyze after each workshop.
- Workshop participation increases over time
- Workshop participants report that the workshop materials helped them to navigate historic preservation processes.

Goal 3: Maximize the benefits that all of Dallas—residents, property owners, developers—receive from historic preservation so they will want to do more of it.

3.1 Streamline and simplify tax incentives to encourage developers and property owners to preserve historic structures.

Challenges:

The Historic Tax Exemption Program is effective in incentivizing developers and property owners to preserve the architectural and historical legacy of Dallas. The City Council plays an important role in approving this program. In the past, Historic Preservation staff have had to fight for resources to maintain the Tax Exemption program.

Most properties receiving incentives are single-family residential. The program has challenges with accessibility for residential applicants for the following reasons:

1. The Dallas County Tax Office requires “wet signatures” on application documents.
2. The City holds liens requiring the property owner repay all foregone taxes to the City if the property is demolished.
3. The capital investment required for owners to be eligible for the tax incentive can be a barrier in low-income neighborhoods or for properties only requiring minor repairs. This challenge has been addressed with the tiered structure that requires less up-front investment in endangered neighborhoods and the \$5,000 rule for minor repairs. The tier structure and other requirements must regularly be revisited to ensure the program remains accessible for current residents.

Solution:

The Dallas Racial Equity Plan recommends amendments to the existing Tax Exemption program that are “aimed at influencing the likelihood that the percentage of resources allocated to historically disadvantaged communities will increase by October 2024.” In alignment with this recommendation, Historic Preservation staff should pursue opportunities to make the program even more accessible to historically disadvantaged communities, including:

1. Work with the City Attorney’s Office to determine an alternative to the currently required lien on the property and full repayment of foregone taxes (in the case of eventual demolition) for designated historically disadvantaged communities.
2. Work with Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization staff, who regularly work with property owners in historically disadvantaged neighborhoods, to determine if further lowering owner expenditure requirements in Tenth

Street and Wheatley Place would allow more residents to qualify for and benefit from the program.

3. Work with the County Tax Office to permanently remove the wet signature requirement.
4. Work with Code Compliance to increase awareness of the incentive in historically disadvantaged historic districts and distribute materials about how to apply.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

External Partners

- None

City and Public Partners

- Office of Economic Development
- Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization
- Code Compliance Department

P+UD should partner with the Office of Economic Development, Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, and Code Compliance to train staff in recognizing which applicants will benefit from the local historic preservation incentives to maximize uptake and resident benefit.

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Create an "Am I Eligible? / How to Apply" flyer targeted towards residents in Tenth Street and Wheatley Place. Work with Code Compliance Officers to increase awareness of the incentive in historically disadvantaged historic districts and distribute materials. Send Preservation Planners to attend neighborhood association meetings in Tenth Street and Wheatley Place to discuss the tax incentive.	P+UD CC	Ongoing Internal	Yes
P+UD leadership meet with the City Attorney's Office (and related staff from Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization) to determine a less onerous alternative than a lien and full repayment of foregone taxes for property owners in highly endangered historically disadvantaged neighborhoods seeking tax abatement.	CAO	One-Time Internal	
When the OED receives applicants for economic development tax incentive programs, they also match the applicants to appropriate historic preservation incentive programs, if applicable.	OED	Ongoing Internal	

Historic Preservation staff meet with Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization staff that work in Tenth Street and Wheatley Place to determine if further lowering owner expenditure requirements in Tenth Street and Wheatley Place would allow more residents to qualify for and benefit from the program.	P+UD	One-Time Internal
Meet with the County Tax Office to determine steps for removing the wet signature requirement.	P+UD	One-Time Internal

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Number of remodeling and renovation projects approved to receive local incentives.
- Geographic distribution of local historic incentives projects including value.
- Total dollar value distributed to applicants and the financial benefits those projects provided.
- Number of properties that maximize utilization of city incentives as per the Incentives Scorecard.

3.2 Increase affordability and sustainability in historic districts by improving access to reusable materials and affordably priced historic materials.

Challenges:

Historic building materials can be expensive and, in some cases, rare. When an older building that the City or residents are unable to preserve is demolished, the community loses the building's impact on the character or heritage of the surrounding neighborhood. Further, they suffer other negative impacts, including the unnecessary disposal and waste of precious building materials and the environmental impacts of demolition and additional tons of material going to landfills.

A barrier to making historic preservation accessible for communities of different backgrounds and income levels is the sometimes-high cost of historically appropriate materials. As both an issue of equity and sustainability, Dallas cannot afford to throw away the materials from historic buildings. Preservation staff have estimated that it is cheaper to fix windows rather than replace them.

Solution:

Planning and Urban Design will collaborate with the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization and the Office of Environmental Quality to establish a Building Deconstruction program. Deconstruction differs from typical demolition processes in that it requires the careful stripping apart and preservation of salvageable materials as the building is taken down rather than destroying them along with the building. This program would require the deconstruction of all buildings in Dallas built before a certain year.

P+UD, Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, and the Office of Environmental Quality may choose to structure the program in several ways but should reflect the priorities to make free or affordable materials accessible to low-income historic communities and to minimize the negative environmental impact of demolition. Potential program structures include:

- Partnering with a philanthropic organization or other external partner to lease a space where historic materials are stored after deconstruction.
- Creating a system of moving building materials directly from the deconstruction site to the site where they will be reused, ideally in the same historic district, and collaborating with Code Compliance to ensure the storage of those materials on the user's lot is allowed and not cited.
- Establishing materials storage sites in several historic districts to keep specific appropriate materials in their hyper-local environment, keeping neighborhoods as authentic as possible and minimizing the program's carbon footprint.

The process of deconstruction is slightly more expensive than demolition as it requires additional labor to remove salvageable materials from the structure prior to demolishing the frame or unsalvageable parts.⁴⁹ As some residents may perceive it as an additional burden, a phased approach of implementing the program is advisable to build public support. For example, the program could begin with requiring

⁴⁹ Case study of successful deconstruction program – [Cornell Study Compares Demolition vs. Deconstruction](#) (2022)

deconstruction for buildings built prior to 1920, then, after the program's third year, expand to buildings built prior to 1930, and so on.⁵⁰

Best practices and precedents have been identified in support of this new program. Deconstruction ordinances have been adopted by the [City of Portland](#), the [City of Milwaukee](#), and the [City of San Antonio](#). An impact report supporting the adoption of the ordinance for San Antonio can be found on [San Antonio's website at sanantonio.gov](#). The City of Houston Solid Waste Management Department operates a [Building Materials Rescue Warehouse](#) for donated materials from individual, supply companies, and builders. The national advocacy organization Build Reuse contains a directory of [member organizations](#) that support building material reuse, including nonprofits that work with city governments on deconstruction efforts.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

External Partners

- None

City and Public Partners

- Office of Economic Development
- Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization
- Code Compliance Department

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
P+UD, Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, and the Office of Environmental Quality should assemble a task force of four to five staff to co-design the deconstruction program. Depending on internal capacity, the City may opt to hire a consultant to staff the Task Force.	co-led by P+UD, HOU, OEQ, DS	One-Time Internal and/or External	
The Task Force profiles comparable programs, including authorizing ordinances, SOPs, staffing levels, and metrics to determine the most suitable design for Dallas.	co-led by P+UD, HOU, OEQ, DS	One-Time Internal and/or External	
The Task Force develops program design (including materials storage and transport), community engagement plan, phasing, and, with the City Attorney's Office, ordinance language for the deconstruction program. These recommendations will be reviewed by the Director of each department and the applicable Assistant City Managers.	co-led by P+UD, HOU, OEQ, DS	One-Time Internal and/or External	

⁵⁰ Identifying age of buildings would require collaborative work with the department of housing and neighborhood revitalization, rather than only relying on DCAD's building age data.

Program design and suggested ordinance should be briefed with applicable City Council committees and Council members before the public hearing process begins.	co-led by P+UD, HOU, OEQ, DS	One-Time Internal
Once program design has been approved and public hearings initiated, staffing for the program and collaboration structures between departments and any external partners for materials storage should be finalized.	co-led by P+UD, HOU, OEQ, DS	One-Time Internal
Staff work with the City's Office of Communications, Outreach, and Marketing to promote the launch of the deconstruction program.	co-led by P+UD, HOU, OEQ, DS	One-Time Internal

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Tons of material diverted from landfills per year
- Number of homes repaired with materials gathered from deconstruction
- Cost savings of property owners using recycled materials

3.3 Adapt City services to the unique needs of historic districts.

Challenges:

Historic neighborhoods require significant infrastructure repair, neighborhood services, and other investments to be compliant with city standards. Currently, there is not an effective institutionalized process that coordinates the Department of Public Works (DPW) and Development Services (platting and subdivision surveys) with Historic Preservation staff to collaborate on preserving both the character and the services and infrastructure of historic neighborhoods.

Currently, DPW coordinates with Historic Preservation staff to ensure ordinance requirements for the district are met. However, if historic districts have previously been infrastructurally neglected for many decades, neighborhood-resource and services providing departments like the DPW and Development Services face the tough challenge of bringing the neighborhood up to standard while addressing its historic identity. If infrastructure changes are not coordinated with historic preservation needs, changes can lead to infrastructural decisions that alter the landscape of historic neighborhoods. The current formal process that brings Historic Preservation staff and these departments together must ensure a strong commitment to capturing the unique needs of historic districts. For neighborhoods that are not currently designated, this formal coordinated process needs to be expanded. Otherwise, we run the risk of potentially altering environmental structures of significance and encroaching on places of significance for development services like paving, drainage, water infrastructure, replatting, and repairs.

Solution:

Historic Preservation staff in partnership with the DPW and Development Services, should institutionalize process and communication guidelines regarding infrastructure work and other land development services works in historic neighborhoods. In historically disinvested communities, further attention on assessments should be considered to ensure updated infrastructure, revised land development surveys, and other services in their neighborhood are coordinated before granting historic designation. If funding is required to bring such neighborhood's infrastructure to current standards, then, designation should help deliver those city services as per the neighborhood's unique character.

Another important consideration for updating overall neighborhood infrastructure is the timeline of communicating those changes to the residents. Residents of historic districts like Tenth Street have expressed that infrastructural changes in their neighborhood would lead to loss of a historic resource (i.e., their cemetery). Including their input using easy-to-understand drawings would help ensure effectively executing both preservation and revitalization of infrastructure. Departments pursuing this kind of infrastructural overhaul should build-in robust community engagement practices during the early stages of projects. For example, DPW should effectively communicate technical drawings at critical stages of the project in accessible formats that residents can easily understand. Surveys of subdivisions, platting, storm water runoff, floodplain demarcation, and other engineering standards must be communicated at the right time to existing residents.

Stakeholders:**Lead Department**

- Department of Public Works and Development Services

City and Public Partners

- Code Compliance Department
- City Communications, Outreach, and Marketing

External Partners

- Neighborhood associations or neighborhood champions with strong knowledge of current conditions.

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Develop a process guideline for assessing current conditions of neighborhood infrastructure and land services for historically disinvested communities that are not currently designated but are highly likely to be considered in the upcoming three to five years.	DPW + DS	One-Time Internal	
Development Services, Public Works, and Historic Preservation staff are essential at this stage to ensure gaps in infrastructure, services, and its impact on historic designation are documented and communicated across departments. The current partnership between DPW and HP staff is for projects in historic districts. However, this relationship and communication should be further expanded to ensure potential historic and conservation districts' needs inventory database captures the unique process that would be required to bring those neighborhoods to current standards while maintaining their historic identity.	DPW + DS	One-Time Internal	
Conduct and fully update all existing infrastructure assessments of the shortlisted neighborhoods (e.g., survey of existing pavement conditions, sidewalk assessment maps, platting surveys, subdivision survey, among others). Most neighborhoods will have some, if not all, of these surveys already updated.	DPW + DS	One-Time Internal or External	
In partnership with the City's Office of Communications, Outreach, and Marketing, develop a communications guideline of presenting and engaging residents with technical and engineering drawings of neighborhood infrastructure.	DPW + DS	One-Time Internal	
Project estimated timelines and future infrastructure updates for each designated neighborhood to ensure historic resources are accounted and proposed design includes requirements for those resources.	DPW + DS	One-Time Internal	

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Number of existing historic or culturally designated neighborhoods that have the most updated existing conditions surveys completed
- Number of proposed historic or culturally designated neighborhoods that receive the most updated condition surveys

3.4 Maximize the impacts of the City's preservation and sustainability work by combining efforts.

Challenges:

In May 2020, the City of Dallas adopted the Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan. The plan identifies “retrofitting and building a weatherization program through partnership with community organizations,” as an important implementation action.⁵¹ The program focuses on reaching lower-income residents and the senior community to modify homes and improve energy benefits of those homes. However, the plan does not explicitly recognize a relationship between preservation and retrofitting. Maximizing the life cycle of historic buildings, sites, and districts is an effective strategy for achieving sustainability.

Solution:

First, rehabilitation and reuse of historic buildings should be recognized and included within the sustainability goals of the City as it extends the lifecycle of built resources, promotes cultural and social diversity in the green future of the City, and saves resources from being used for new construction, while limiting the construction waste that enters landfills. Within the City's future Climate Action Plan updates, a historic preservation element should be added to outline how preservation is inherently sustainable, can help build a green economy that is contextually sensitive, and can foster culturally diverse sustainability.

Second, Historic Preservation staff should work with the Development Services' Green Buildings division to ensure reuse of historic buildings is considered under the Green Buildings rating criteria.

Lastly, wherever possible, private contractors should be provided incentives when they recycle materials from property demolition that can be salvaged for reuse at other locations(e.g., waiving demolition permit fees if contractors recycle material of historic significance at another site; see [Goal 3.2](#)).

The Whole Home Dallas and Green Jobs Skills, the two newest programs, focus on low-income communities of color within the City of Dallas.⁵² With the partnership between the Office of Environmental Quality and the Historic Preservation staff, the two programs can be modified to specifically address the retrofitting needs of low-income communities with historic homes or in historic districts. Successful case studies from Central Texas Region developed by the University of Texas at San Antonio should be adapted for the Dallas area.⁵³

⁵¹ [Dallas Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan](#) (2020), 50.

⁵² [The Whole Home Dallas Program](#)

⁵³ Dupont, Rashed-Ali, Manteufel, Thomson, Guerra, Sanciu, “[Energy Retrofits for Historic Homes in Hot-Humid Climates](#)”, Center for Cultural Sustainability: UTSA College of Architecture, 2013.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Office of Environmental Quality
- Development Services

City and Public Partners

- Planning and Urban Design

External Partners

- Expert contractors specializing in green retrofitting

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

The budget will include modification of the Green Program and Climate Action Plan's strategy to include language on historic preservation. Staff time will be the main budget requirement for conducting the assessments. Minimum Historic Preservation staff time will be required to provide input to sustainability and Climate Action programs and plan to include language on historic preservation.

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Create a green retrofit program that focuses on sustainable retrofitting of historic homes and other buildings.	OEQ and DS	One-Time Internal with External Partners	
Create a green material catalog that can be adopted by historic buildings.	co-led by P+UD, HOU, OEQ	One-Time Internal	
Programs like "The Whole Home Dallas" and "Green Job Skills" are modified to specifically address the retrofitting and weatherization needs of historic homes.	co-led by P+UD, HOU, OEQ	One-Time Internal	
Partner with the Office of Environmental Quality to provide incentives to residents interested in retrofitting their historic homes with green solutions.	co-led by P+UD, HOU, OEQ	One-Time Internal	

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Number of existing historic or culturally designated neighborhoods that have the most updated existing conditions surveys completed
- Number of proposed historic or culturally designated neighborhoods that receive the most updated condition surveys

3.5 Focus the historic preservation program on people and impact by streamlining time-consuming processes.

Challenges:

Efficiency challenges exist in all governmental processes. Secondary efficiency concerns are related to administration and enforcement of policies, rules, and regulations and silos that exist between City departments.

The process needed to obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness (CA) is often mentioned as a challenge for new customers. Outside of routine maintenance, the process to obtain a CA is time consuming and can be an equity issue due to the complexity of the process. For non-routine maintenance CA's, applications first go to a Neighborhood Task Force meeting for feedback. Task Force members volunteer their time to provide counseling to the applicant, and then applications are reviewed at Landmark Commission public hearings along with the Task Force's recommendations. The process is commendable for being very thorough and neighborhood-based, but such an intensive process is not necessary for all projects. In-depth review by multiple bodies is only needed for major additions, demolition, or new construction if there are qualified Preservation staff to assist applicants with smaller-scale applications. Currently, many preservation constituents, including residents of historic districts and Landmark Commissioners, do not feel comfortable with increased administrative review because they do not trust that the Historic Preservation program will have enough capacity or expertise to do the job thoroughly due to a track record of the program being understaffed.

Solution:

To achieve greater equity in local government services, it is essential to critically analyze existing processes, eliminate unnecessary procedures, and create staff capacity to address emergent resident needs. Efficiency can be achieved through technology and critical analysis of existing processes. Creating a staff culture of ongoing process improvement that meets community needs is imperative.

In recent years, more cities have expanded administrative approval of CAs for all cases except demolition, major additions, or new construction. This has occurred, in part, to relieve bureaucratic burdens for applicants and staff time allocated to Board/Commission public hearings.

The following solutions will have the highest equity impact in improving efficiency and prioritizing the experience of residents:

1. Streamline and simplify the Certificate of Appropriateness (CA) process, including a tiered review system that allows administrative review for all cases except demolitions, new construction, and major additions.⁵⁴ This will require a gradual trust building process between City, Historic Preservation staff, Landmark Commissioners, and residents until residents can trust that there will always be qualified planners to conduct careful administrative review.
2. Facilitate collaboration between Historic Preservation planners and planners overseeing conservation districts and neighborhood stabilization

⁵⁴ At the time of this report's publication in March 2024, the Landmark Commission Ad Hoc Committee is actively compiling and assessing initial ideas.

overlays (In Progress). In addition, develop cross trained/hybrid positions as necessary, allowing more flexibility in times when workload is high in one area but low in another.

3. Provide consistent training for Landmarks Commissioners and Neighborhood Task Force members in accordance with Certified Local Government Agreement and Commission policies. Include an allocation for Landmark Commissioner training in the annual P+UD budget.
4. Streamline Landmark Commission Public Hearings by eliminating unnecessary procedural requirements while still complying with State and Federal regulations.
5. Document ordinance interpretations from the City Attorney's Office and staff to increase consistency and efficiency. Document the recommendations of courtesy design reviews so that applicants can demonstrate to the Landmark Commission that they have followed the courtesy design review recommendations made for their case.

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

City and Public Partners

- City Attorney's Office
- City Manager's Office
- Office of Equity and Inclusion
- Development Services
- Office of Economic Development

External Partners

- Preservation Dallas
- Texas Historical Commission
- Big City Preservation Network
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- National Alliance of Preservation Commissions

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Draft initial code amendment recommendations for demolition delay and to streamline the COA process (including tiered structure to increase administrative approval) to be approved by Landmark Commission by May 2024 and secure adoption by July 2024.	P+UD	One-Time Internal	
Remove unnecessary Landmark Commission public hearing procedural requirements by July 2024.	P+UD	One-Time Internal	
Create standard operating procedures for staff and establish documentation of ordinance interpretations by October 2024.	P+UD	One-Time Internal	Yes
Begin annual training for Landmark Commission and Neighborhood Task Force members by July 2024.	P+UD	Ongoing Internal or External	Yes

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Percentage of online application submittal increased to 90%
- Number of online application submittals

3.6 Setup performance management and monitoring to ensure that the Historic Preservation program is stable, sustainable, and accountable in the long term.

Challenges:

Significant and sustainable change in the Historic Preservation program will require stable funding, institutionalizing the values of equity and accessibility, and structures that hold staff across departments and City leadership accountable for their commitments to equitably preserve historical and cultural resources as an essential part of Dallas. Consistent support and funding of the program will be necessary to rebuild trust with constituents after decades of lacking political and financial support for preservation.

While Historic Preservation staff and Landmark Commissioners work to simplify processes, it is critical that staff constantly track outcomes against intended results. If the program is not seeing a notable increase in customer satisfaction, efficiency, and accessibility—leading to better experiences for residents and increasingly diverse customers looking to the program to assist them with preservation—then staff must report these outcomes to the Landmark Commission and reevaluate.

Solution:

By committing to constant innovation, iteration, and improvement, the Historic Preservation program can prove itself as an essential and adaptable service for residents. The program will gain more stable funding and internal support as it becomes important and impactful service to diverse residents across Dallas. The following solutions will institutionalize structures of accountability, feedback, and iteration to provide the best possible service to Dallas residents:

1. Complete an in-depth Preservation Plan that incorporates the findings of updated historic resource surveys and the goals and actions of this Strategic Plan. The Preservation Plan should establish a detailed workplan, standard operating procedures for staff, and priority geographies for the City. The Preservation Plan should be revisited through an annual retreat with the Landmark Commission and Historic Preservation staff to set goals and priorities for each year. Topics to be prioritized for discussion and work planning in the 2024 and 2025 annual retreats include:
 - Revising the demolition delay ordinance to be more impactful and less onerous for staff
 - Discussing and adjusting Landmark Commission meeting times (currently during business hours on Mondays) to allow for candidates who have non-flexible, full-time jobs to be appointed to the Landmark Commission
 - Creating a diverse directory of community partners for educational workshops, trainings, and Landmark Commission recruitment

2. Amend Landmark Commission rules to require an update of the Preservation Plan every five (5) years.
3. Create a customer experience survey, in multiple languages, to identify changes needed to meet customer expectations. Though surveys can be biased of people who are dissatisfied with the experience, questions should be specific enough to ensure constructive feedback.
4. As part of the Preservation Plan, continue comprehensive review of all development processes and procedures related to historic and cultural preservation, conservation districts, and the like to inform future process improvements (In Progress).
5. Create a preservation interdepartmental core team to institutionalize collaborations and shift the focus of the Historic Preservation Program from regulations to influence by including planning as a main activity.
6. Create an onboarding system for new staff, Landmark Commissioners, and Neighborhood Task Force members (In Progress).

These solutions are supported by precedent set forth in other plans, policies, and public input, including:

- 2017 Texas State Historic Preservation Office – Certified Local Government Audit
- State of Texas Historic Preservation Plan
- Steering Committee Feedback
- 2021 Ad Hoc Committee
- National Best Practices
- Historic Preservation Plan recommendations 1976-1988
- Current and former staff input

Stakeholders:

Lead Department

- Planning and Urban Design

City and Public Partners

- City Attorney's Office
- City Communications, Outreach and Marketing

External Partners

- Preservation Dallas
- State of Texas Office of Historic Preservation Office
- Big City Preservation Network
- National Trust for Historic Preservation
- Preservation Texas
- National Alliance of Preservation Commission

Implementation Steps and Budget Implications:

Implementation Steps	Lead Department	Budget Impact/ Source	Year 1 Priority
Release an RFP for a Preservation Plan concurrently with the conducting of the historic resource surveys, incorporating their findings and the goals and actions of this plan.	P+UD	Ongoing Internal or External	Yes
Include a required update of preservation plan every five years in the LMC ROPs.	P+UD	NC	
Implement the customer experience survey and share data with Landmark Commission by 2025.	P+UD	NC	
Track impediments in the development process annually.	P+UD	No-Cost Ongoing Internal	
Conduct quarterly review and revisions to customer facing materials (e.g., videos, applications, customer survey).	P+UD	No-Cost Ongoing Internal	
Create a preservation interdepartmental core team and begin meetings in 2024.	P+UD	No-Cost Ongoing Internal	Yes

Metrics and Other Indicators of Success:

- Customer feedback from customer experience surveys through email using the standard seven domains for measuring customer experience:⁵⁵
 - Overall: (1) Satisfaction, (2) Confidence/Trust
 - Service: (3) Effectiveness/Quality
 - Process: (4) Ease/Simplicity, (5) Efficiency/Speed, (6) Equity/Transparency
 - People: (7) Employee Helpfulness
- Attendance at preservation interdepartmental core team meetings

⁵⁵ “[Building Trust through Improved Service Delivery and Experience](#).” n.d. www.performance.gov. Accessed December 5, 2023.



Photo by JD Waldron

Implementation

First-Year Action Plan (FY 2024-25)

Each lead department will be allocated resources in the 2024-25 fiscal year budget for the outlined actions.

Planning and Urban Design

Actions	Implementation Step	Funding Source	Cost Type
1.1.4 2.3.1	Release job postings for the following positions: - Planner I (Historic Preservation) - Planner II (Historic Preservation) - Senior Planner (Historic Preservation) - Planner II (Neighborhood Planning: Legacy Neighborhoods Resource Navigator) Once new hires are onboarded, increase time allocated for community outreach and education to a minimum of 10% total Historic Preservation staff time.	P+UD Budget	Ongoing Internal 3 FTEs
2.1.1 2.1.2 2.2.1	Release an RFP for updated historic resource surveys, beginning with a citywide summary survey, followed by a historic and cultural resource survey including in-depth community engagement to identify cultural resources.	P+UD Budget	One-Time External Contractor
3.6.1	Release an RFP for a Preservation Plan to be completed concurrently with the historic resource surveys.	P+UD/HP	One-Time External Contractor
3.5.4	Begin annual basic training for Landmark Commissioners and Neighborhood Task Force members. \$10,000 should be included in P+UD's FY2024-25 budget to cover this training.	P+UD and/or OEI Budget	Ongoing Internal
2.6	Formalize current collaboration with Preservation Dallas to host regular preservation workshops and assign a Preservation Planner to be the permanent liaison with Preservation Dallas for workshop planning. Publish a workshop schedule for 2024-2025, including potential guest instructors from other organizations.	P+UD Staff Time	Ongoing Internal with External Partnership
1.5.1	Gather necessary data for maps and promotional materials of historic districts and landmarks.	P+UD Staff Time	One-Time Internal
3.5.3	Create standard operating procedures for staff and establish documentation of ordinance interpretations by October 2024.	P+UD Staff Time	One-Time Internal

Code Compliance Department

Actions	Implementation Step	Funding Source	Cost Type
1.1.4	Release job postings for Officer II (Special Training in Conservation and Historic Districts).	CC Budget	Ongoing Internal 1 FTEs
1.1.5	Add a feature in the Salesforce interface used by Code Compliance Officers that notifies them when a complaint stems from a historic district, conservation district, or individual landmark.	CC Budget	One-Time Internal
1.1.6	Collaborate with Historic Preservation and conservation district staff and Code Compliance officers to implement a historic district and conservation district training module at Code School.	CC Budget	One-Time Internal

Office of Equity and Inclusion

Actions	Implementation Step	Funding Source	Cost Type
1.2.1	Collaborate with Historic Preservation staff to identify priority communities for the development of cultural context statements. Communities with the most currently endangered cultural resources should be prioritized. Begin forming partnerships with academic institutions and local community-based organizations to develop the statements.	OEI Budget	Ongoing for 1-3 Years Internal
1.1.2	Conduct unconscious bias training with staff, Landmark Commission, and Neighborhood Task Force members annually.	OEI Budget	Annual Internal

City Attorney's Office

Actions	Implementation Step	Funding Source	Cost Type
1.4.1	Convene a task force of P+UD, Building Services, and DPARD leadership to create a proposed code amendment that would establish an administrative review process for changes to city-owned structures 45 years of age or older. The proposed process should be approved by the City Manager.	CAO Budget	One-Time Internal
1.4.2	Initiate a code amendment process to allow administrative review of any changes to already designated city-owned structures with historic resources outside of designated districts. This change would exclude major additions and demolitions, which would still go to the Landmark Commission for review.	CAO Budget	One-Time Internal

Summary of Resources Needed for Implementation

Implementation

One-time Investments				
Budgeted for FY23-24 but RFP Not Yet Released	Department	Approx. Cost	Timing	
Historic Resource Surveys	P+UD-HP	\$500K	FY23-24	
Philanthropic Potential				
2.1 Add-on cultural resource survey to Historic Resource Survey Contract	P+UD-HP	\$75k	FY23-24	
2.2 Rebrand and relaunch HP website, manuals, processes, documents.	P+UD-HP	\$75k	FY24-25	
2.4 Pilot Cultural District program	P+UD+OAC	< \$25k	FY24-25	
1.2 Generate cultural context statements	OEI	\$75k	flexible	
1.1.8 Generate design guides for historic districts.	P+UD-HP	\$200k	flexible	
1.5 Generate marketing collateral for Historic Dallas	OAC	< \$25k	flexible	
1.3 Fund signage for new Historic Preservation signage program	P+UD-HP	< \$25k	flexible	
3.2 Pilot Deconstruction program	P+UD-HP	< \$25k	flexible	
Ongoing New Staff Responsibilities				
Budgeted for FY23-24 but Vacant	Department	Position	Timing	FTEs
3.6 Performance-based reporting	P+UD-HP	AD	Underway	1
2.6 Public education workshops	P+UD-HP	Planner I	FY23-24	1
Total				2
New FTE Ask FY24-25				
1.1.4 Increase community outreach and education to a ≥ 10% total staff time	P+UD-HP	Planner II	FY24-25	1
2.3 Begin new Legacy Neighborhood program	P+UD/NP	Planner I	FY23-24	1
3.5 Increase capacity for administrative review	P+UD/NP	Snr Planner	FY24-25	1
1.1 Create capacity for preventative code compliance outreach.	Code	Officer II	FY24-25	1
Total				4
New FTE Ask FY25-26 through FY28-29				
1.1 Create capacity for preventative code compliance outreach	Code	flexible		2
1.4 increase landmark designation capacity, including cultural landmarks	P+UD/HP	flexible		1
1.3 New signage program	P+UD/HP	flexible		1
1.5 New Legacy Business program	SBC	flexible		1
Total				5



Image courtesy of the historic preservation team.

Appendices

Appendix A: Historic Preservation – Roles and Responsibilities

Dallas’ Historic Preservation ecosystem involves a wide array of actors—from regulatory bodies to volunteers, from individuals who have dedicated their professional lives to preservation to new property owners struggling to make sense of what it requires to own a building in a historic district. The complexity involved has led to confusion, sometimes frustration, and a gradual emergence of siloes whereby an increasingly small number of actors are left to shoulder expectations that far exceed their capacity. As already noted, City staff, Landmark Commissioners, and property owners all agree that the current system places an unsustainable volume of responsibilities on the few.

This section strives to bring clarity to an incredibly complex ecosystem. It also aims to draw attention to actors whose role in Historic Preservation has so far been underappreciated and underleveraged, including several City Departments, nonprofits, and resident groups.

The City’s Planning and Urban Design Department

The Planning and Urban Design (P+UD) Department develops comprehensive plans, policies, and programs through effective community engagement. Primarily, P+UD administers future land use policy and zoning for the City. The department’s goal is to advance livability, economic vibrancy, sustainability, and equity within the City of Dallas. The Historic Preservation program returned to P+UD in 2023 and is located within the department’s Preservation and Urban Design section. This section also includes conservation districts. The following chart outlines P+UD programs and functions related to the historic preservation ecosystem.

Planning and Urban Design Department Function and Programs Related to Historic Preservation

Forward Dallas	Forward Dallas is a long-term plan that outlines the vision for the city’s future land use and urban design. While it will take time to see the results of the plan, zoning is the key tool to implement its goals and objectives. Zoning determines what can be built on each property in the City and assigns it a specific use category, such as residential, commercial, industrial, or mixed-use.
Citywide Planning	Citywide plans encompass the whole city in scope and establish policies and/or implementation programs that address a variety of topics and issues.
Area Planning	Area plans focus on specific sections of the City that include clusters of properties that operate distinctly from the city whole, to provide tailored policies, programs, detailed targets, regulations and/or incentives.
Neighborhood Planning	The Dallas Planning and Urban Design (P+UD) Department is working to modernize and streamline the city’s Neighborhood Planning procedures. Neighborhood Planning is initiated by neighborhood organizations for neighborhoods, in conjunction with the City’s staff. The process includes six (6) phases and is meant to have a low barrier of entry, robust community involvement and leadership, and actionable items for communities to achieve results and have accountability.

Zoning	This department reviews and processes zoning requests, subdivision and platting issues, land use termination cases, development code amendments, notification for public hearings, annexations, official zoning maps, and street name changes. Because historic, conservation, and neighborhood stabilization districts are zoning overlays, a public hearing and recommendation is required from the City Plan Commission before the application is scheduled for a council vote.
Urban Design	A city is comprised of thousands of building blocks, including streets, parks, and buildings. Working with residents and landowners to put those pieces together, the City's goal is to employ sound urban design principles to ensure the best quality of life for all. Dallas has numerous tools and services it employs to enhance the outcome for our built environment, including design guidelines, the Urban Design Peer Review process, advice on planning projects, creating urban design visions, and policy direction.
Historic Districts	A historic district is a zoning tool used to protect historic character and architecture with a high degree of accuracy. Historic districts aim to preserve historic integrity and materials from a particular time or period of significance, and govern all exterior modifications or site modifications on properties within a designated district. Historic districts have existed in Dallas since 1976, and are all located near the urban core.
Conservation Districts	A conservation district is a zoning tool used to designate an area(s) within a neighborhood with a distinct physical character. While like historic districts in that they are both forms of preservation, historic districts try to preserve historic integrity and materials from a particular time—often referred to as a period of significance—whereas conservation districts are intended to provide a means of conserving an area's distinctive character by protecting or enhancing its physical attributes. They are often seen as complementary branches of preservation. Conservation districts have existed in Dallas since 1988. These districts exist primarily in East Dallas and Oak Cliff, but as development expands, so does the need to try to retain the communities that already exist. Conservation districts are neighborhood driven in that districts are initiated by the residents themselves, with procedural assistance from City staff throughout the designation process.
Neighborhood Stabilization Overlays (NSO)	The neighborhood stabilization overlay is intended to preserve single-family neighborhoods by imposing neighborhood-specific yard, lot, and space regulations that reflect the existing character of the neighborhood. The NSO does not prevent construction of new single-family structures or the renovation, remodeling, repair, or expansion of existing single-family structures, but, rather, ensures that new single-family structures are compatible with existing single-family structures. NSOs have existed in Dallas since 2005. NSO districts are distinguished from historic districts, which preserve historic residential or commercial places; and from conservation districts, which conserve a residential or commercial area's distinctive atmosphere or character by protecting or enhancing its significant architectural or cultural attributes.

Historic Preservation Program

The City of Dallas' Historic Preservation program was created in 1973, and its staff oversees more than 155 individually designated landmarks and 21 historic districts that contain thousands of structures. The Historic Preservation program provides services related to historic districts, historic structures, and potential historic districts and structures.

The City of Dallas is a Certified Local Government, and as such, plays a vital role in administering federal and state historic regulations and local regulations. This requires coordination with the state, federal government, and other City departments. Additional details about the program's elements and CLG requirements are included here.

Activities/Services	Description
Administer City of Dallas Landmark Commission	The City of Dallas Landmark Commission is a quasi-judicial entity whose members are appointed by City Council members to two-year terms. As required by the Dallas Development Code, the Landmark Commission is responsible for making decisions regarding Certificate of Appropriateness (CA) applications within all City of Dallas historic districts and individually designated structures. Other responsibilities include training and staffing of Ad Hoc and designation committees. As a Certified Local Government (CLG) the Historic Preservation Officer and at least one member of the Preservation Commission must attend one Texas Historical Commission (THC)-sponsored or THC-approved training per year. The training shall focus on historic preservation or a topic directly related to the attendees' roles in the local preservation program.
Administer Task Forces	Each Dallas historic district has an appointed Task Force that meets to discuss current Certificate of Appropriateness (CA) applications and make recommendations to the Landmark Commission regarding the requests. The Task Force recommendations are forwarded to the Landmark Commission for their consideration at the public hearing. Staff attend all meetings and provide training, as necessary.
Process for Certificate of Appropriateness Applications (CA)	A CA must be obtained for work on all structures or sites in a historic district, including non-contributing structures, work that occurs on the rear of any structure, and major landscaping changes anywhere on the property. Many cases require a public hearing at the City of Dallas Landmark Commission while all other cases, primarily routine maintenance, are administratively processed.
Process Certificate for Demolition Applications (CD)	A CD must be obtained before demolition of any designated historic structure can occur. All cases require a public hearing at the City of Dallas Landmark Commission.

Process Individual & Historic District Designation Applications	Historic designation as a City of Dallas Landmark is a type of zoning overlay. The process to designate an historic site is a zoning change request to add the historic designation zoning to the property. This request must be applied for by the property owner. The designation process typically takes a minimum of six months. The process and procedures for designation are outlined in Dallas City Code Section 51A-4.501. The process consists of multiple steps including the following: • Designation Committee • Landmark Commission • City Plan Commission • City Council
Process Historic Tax Incentive Applications	The City offers tax incentives to property owners completing rehabilitation projects to historic properties (City of Dallas Landmarks or structures in historic districts). The tax incentives are administered by the Historic Preservation program. These incentives consist of tax exemptions for rehabilitation or residential conversions. To qualify, the property must be designated as a City of Dallas Landmark or be a contributing property within a historic district.
Enforcement of the Preservation Ordinance	The program includes a Code Compliance officer that monitors designated historic properties. If work is conducted without a Certificate of Appropriateness, the Code Officer works with staff and the applicant to achieve compliance. In addition, the Code Office serves a secondary role of connecting residents with applicable city services.
Administer Certified Local Government Program	The Certified Local Government (CLG) program is a local, state, and federal government partnership to empower local communities to better protect historic resources by identifying local priorities, meeting recognized historic preservation standards, and providing access to financial and technical services to further the identification, evaluation, designation, and protection of buildings, sites, districts, structures, and objects. Communities participating in the CLG program must follow the requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470 et. seq), the National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund Grants Manual, Chapter 15.6 of the Texas Administrative Code, the CLG Certification Agreement, and the policies contained in the State of Texas Certified Local Government Handbook.
Maintain a System for the Inventory and Survey of Historic Resources	Every CLG must maintain a system for the survey and inventory of historic properties coordinated with the statewide historic resources survey process. Inventories shall be updated as changes occur; and surveys shall be updated every 10 years. If the City is unable to update the survey every 10 years, it shall submit a written survey plan to the THC detailing the City's plan to update the survey within a reasonable and agreed upon timeframe. In addition, CLGs shall continue to document new areas, or expand survey areas, as more resources reach historic age (50 years or more).
Submit an Annual Report to Certified Local Government (CLG) Program Staff	Each year, CLG program staff will develop an annual report for the CLG to complete by an achievable deadline. One report is used to collect data for both the National Park Service and THC purposes.

Ensure, to the maximum extent possible, public participation in the local historic preservation program, including the process of nominating properties to the National Register of Historic Places	CLGs shall include the public in the local designation, design review, and National Register nomination process. Successful local preservation programs fully engage the public in preservation efforts beyond public meetings; these activities include educational events, programming for a variety of ages, and sharing information on the City's website or social media platforms.
Monitor and report to the Texas Historical Commission any actions affecting any county courthouse, Recorded Texas Historic Landmark (RTHL), State Antiquities Landmark (SAL), National Register property, and any locally designated landmark	Both RTHL and SAL designations include some measure of protection under state law. The CLG shall notify the THC, or refer the property owner to the THC, if a permit is sought for demolition or alterations to a RTHL or SAL. The property owner is responsible for complying with state law; however, CLGs can help the THC communicate with property owners, leading to better protection of historic resources. Designation in the National Register alone does not restrict an owner's ability to alter, move, or demolish his or her property. As the entity responsible for maintaining an updated list of properties listed in the National Register, the THC asks that CLGs notify the THC's National Register Program of alterations, relocations, or demolitions of properties listed within the CLG's jurisdiction.
Review and comment upon nominations to the National Register of Historic Places	As a participant in the CLG program, the Landmark Commission and the chief elected official are required to coordinate review and separately notify both the THC's National Register program and CLG program of their opinions regarding nominations before consideration by the State Board of Review.
Participate in Section 106 Consultations	Local projects using federal money or requiring a federal license or permit are subject to federal Section 106 regulations.

Most activities and services provided by the Historic Preservation program are required by local ordinances and conditions of the Certified Local Government (CLG) agreement. To meet and maintain the equity values of the City, it is important to annually assess the program to address efficiency, accessibility, and equity. Solutions are outlined in the body of this plan.

The Landmark Commission

The City of Dallas Landmark Commission is a quasi-judicial entity whose 15 members (and three alternates) are appointed by City Council members to two-year terms. As required by the Dallas Development Code, the Landmark Commission is responsible for making decisions regarding Certificate of Appropriateness applications within all City of Dallas historic districts and individually designated structures.

The City of Dallas' Development Code lists the following powers and duties of the Landmark Commission:⁵⁶

1. To thoroughly familiarize itself with the structures, land, areas, and districts within the City that may be eligible for designation as historic overlay districts.
2. To create, examine, and update the Historic Preservation Plan and present any modifications to the City Plan Commission for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan of the City. The Historic Preservation Plan must:
 - a. identify and catalog places and areas of historical, cultural, architectural, or archeological value along with factual verification of their importance and significance;
 - b. identify criteria to be used in establishment of historic overlay districts;
 - c. identify guidelines and review procedures to be used in determining whether to grant or deny Predesignation Certificates of Appropriateness, Certificates of Appropriateness, or Certificates for Demolition or Removal;
 - d. formulate a program for private and public action to promote the preservation of historic structures and districts;
 - e. suggest sources of funds, including federal, state, municipal, private, and foundation sources, for preservation and restoration activities and for acquisitions; and
 - f. recommend incentives for preservation.
3. To recommend to the City Plan Commission that certain places and areas be designated as historic overlay districts.
4. To recommend to the City Council that certain places and areas which cannot be preserved without acquisition, be acquired in fee simple or in some lesser degree by gift or purchase.
5. To recommend changes in use where conditions exist under which the required preservation of a property subject to the predesignation moratorium or a historic structure would cause undue hardship to the owner of the property.
6. To review the application for a building permit for proposed work and design on a property subject to the predesignation moratorium or a historic structure and determine whether a Predesignation Certificate of Appropriateness or a Certificate of Appropriateness should be issued.
7. To recommend, when appropriate, the amendment to or removal of a historic overlay district.
8. To review applications for the demolition or removal of a structure on a property subject to the predesignation moratorium and structures in historic overlay districts and make recommendations, when appropriate, concerning the applications to the City Council.

⁵⁶ [Dallas City Code Section § 51A-3.103](#)

9. To annually review the status of properties subject to the predesignation moratorium and historic overlay districts and include a report of the review in the Landmark Commission minutes.
10. To initiate, when appropriate, the procedure for adopting an ordinance to establish or amend a historic overlay district.
11. To establish task forces as needed to make recommendations to the Landmark Commission on applications for Predesignation Certificates of Appropriateness, Certificates of Appropriateness, and
12. To identify cases of demolition by neglect and initiate remedial actions.
13. To establish guidelines for selection of projects for the Historic Preservation Fund.

Other Regulatory Bodies

Federal Bodies

The federal government plays a significant role in historic preservation. At the municipal level, the most common interaction with the federal government is through the State of Texas Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), which administers their programs. These include the Certified Local Government program (CLG), grants to CLG communities, the federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentive program, the National Register for Historic Places (NRHP), and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and National Environmental Policy Acts (NEPA).

Local governments most significant direct interaction with the federal government in historic preservation is administration of the NHPA and NEPA. Since Housing and Urban Design (HUD) funding is administered at the local level, local governments are the responsibility entity for ensuring compliance with NEPA and the federal laws and authorities has been achieved, for issuing the public notification, for submitting the request for release of funds and certification, when required, and for

ensuring the Environmental Review Record is complete. Since Section 106 of the NHPA (1966) is part of an environmental review, the City of Dallas is responsible for compliance.

State Bodies

The SHPO administers and coordinates the NEPA – Section 106, the CLG, and federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives as well as and state-level historic designations and markers.

Because the SHPO administers and coordinates programs on behalf of the federal government and has state-level programs to administer, frequent coordination and communication with the SHPO is critical to the success of a dynamic city preservation program. The SHPO provides grants, advice, and training to CLG communities.

Additional coordination can include Section 106 reviews for projects needing a permit of license from the federal government. In these cases, the City of Dallas will be asked to review impacts from a review and to serve as a concurring party if an adverse effect is determined. In these cases, the City will work with the SHPO to draft a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This legally binding agreement describes efforts that will be implemented to minimize or mitigate the adverse effect. Once a memorandum is executed, the project may proceed under the terms of the agreement.

As a CLG, the City has significant responsibility in administration of federal and state historic regulations in addition to administration of their local regulations. This requires coordination with the state and other City departments.

Local Governmental Entities

The role of the City's Historic Preservation program is not limited to coordination with federal and state agencies and City departments. Preservation coordination is necessary with other governmental entities such as the Dallas County Historical Commission, Dallas Area Rapid Transit Authority, and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Coordination efforts can range from NHPA Section 106 environmental reviews and identifying potentially affected resources to outreach for discussing potential designations.

Other governmental agencies such as TxDOT are responsible for federal environmental reviews, coordinating with cities to identify potentially affected resources.

A New Approach: Mobilizing all of City Government

Landmark designations, demolition oversight, and redevelopment approvals are broadly recognized as government responsibilities key to the preservation of historic assets. With this Strategy, however, the City of Dallas has put forth a vision and mission that will require the mobilization of additional local government capacities that already exist but have yet to be coordinated in service of historic preservation. This section briefly outlines those capacities, the departments that wield them, and how those departments could become important instruments for carrying out the City's mission.

As depicted in the following graphic, there are three local government functions relevant to historic preservation that require the mobilization of City resources beyond P+UD and the Landmark Commission:

- **The maintenance of comprehensive surveys**, which document the current conditions of properties, neighborhood amenities, and public infrastructure. These surveys identify assets of importance and those at risk, establishing common points of reference that can inform policy priorities and guide rehabilitation activities.
- **Proactive storytelling** to commemorate and, if appropriate, celebrate a location of historic or cultural importance. Such storytelling can take place through permanent installations—such as visual markers, murals, and art pieces—as well as through events, (re)naming, temporary exhibits, and highlighting the location in City communications.
- **The management of incentive and funding programs** designed for private entities (e.g., property owners,

developers, nonprofits, neighborhood groups, legacy businesses,) with the maintenance activities that historic structures require.

In addition to these ongoing functions, any capital construction related to places or buildings that bear a historic designation requires extra levels of inter-departmental coordination. For example, housing projects leveraging federal funding are subject to review under Section 106 of the Federal National Historic Preservation Act (1966). Capital improvements related to water, sewer, transportation, or parks are frequently subject to review under the 1969 State of Texas Antiquities Code.⁵⁷ In both cases, the expertise of City Preservation Planners can help the sponsoring department navigate the issues involved.

Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of various public infrastructure systems including streets, storm water management, traffic engineering and operations, rights-of-way management, rail and transit, and accessibility. Though there is no direct partnership or coordination between the Historic Preservation staff and the Department of Public Works, this Strategy emphasizes the need to build this partnership.

Many historically disadvantaged communities are also infrastructurally disadvantaged, and the Dallas Sidewalk Master Plan recognizes this inequity.⁵⁸ Infrastructurally disadvantaged communities often must prioritize addressing the inequitable distribution of basic street infrastructure and neighborhood amenities, missing out on opportunities to preserve their culturally and historically significant resources as they focus on more urgent matters. Coordination between Public Works and Preservation Planners will help compare historic standards, engineering standards, and current gaps in existing conditions to highlight the issues in executing new projects and coordinate preservation needs. A survey of

⁵⁷ Departments most affected are those commencing any project on public land that may affect archeological sites and will involve five or more acres of ground disturbance; 5,000 or more cubic yards of earth moving; will occur in a historic district or other designated historic site; or will affect a recorded archeological site. [Antiquities Code of Texas – Texas Historical Commission](#)

⁵⁸ [The City of Dallas Sidewalk Master Plan](#)

the required upgrades for older neighborhoods to be at the current infrastructure standards can help streamline development planning in historic districts in the future.

Development Services

Development Services is one of the most critical partners to make historic preservation processes effective and accessible for property owners, developers, and City staff. Coordination with the City's Code Compliance and Development Services Departments is the most critical for high quality, equitable program delivery because historic designations are implemented through zoning and maintenance is enforced through demolition by neglect or minimum building standards. Since changes to existing historically designated structures or new construction in historic districts requires a permit and inspection, and these items are electronically processed through permitting software, close coordination with the Development Services Department is critical.

Code Compliance Department

The Code Compliance Department is an essential partner when it comes to enforcing city regulations related to historically designated structures. All Code Compliance Officers are versed in neighborhood-level code violations, such as weeds, litter, sidewalk obstructions, signage, bulky trash, junked motor vehicles, illegal dumping, illegal outside storage, and graffiti. Officers assigned to historic districts must also be knowledgeable about the City's historic ordinance and the specific standards applicable within each historic district.

Given the specialized knowledge required, in 2019 the Code Compliance Department assigned all historic structure and district enforcement responsibilities to a single Code Officer embedded with the City's Preservation Planners. This specialization has greatly improved staff level of familiarity with historic code violations and has enabled the Code Officer to provide nuanced and knowledgeable support to residents of historic districts. That said, with only a single Code Officer to carry out these duties citywide, the system is exceptionally vulnerable to workload surges and staff turnover. The system is also not equipped to

handle any increase in the number of landmarked properties or historic districts.

Multiple neighborhoods within the City of Dallas have older homes dating to the pre-1960s. Many of these homes are within historically disadvantaged neighborhoods. Homes in such communities are sometimes in violation of code regulations. It is important that if such neighborhoods are considered for historic district designation, a survey of these neighborhoods should be conducted. A home and neighborhood conditions survey can help evaluate the fiscal impact that the residents might face if the historic district standards are enforced on their neighborhood. The new information before designation can help create a warning system regarding endangered structures that require attention.

Office of Arts and Culture

In 2018, the Office of Arts and Culture (OAC) passed the Dallas Cultural Plan, which recognizes that artistic and cultural expression are fundamental to the development of our identity, as individuals and as a community at large.⁵⁹ It also recognizes the historic legacies of racism, overt bias, and injustice that shape our present reality. To address this concern, the OAC aims to serve as convener and connector to catalyze equity in the policies and practices of its partners across the Dallas arts ecosystem. The plan identifies the need to explicitly collaborate with other City departments to incorporate tactics to merge the work needed in arts and culture into their projects and programs. For example, one of the strategies the office has established to create a supportive arts ecosystem is to use wayfinding, signage, murals, and interactive platforms to help residents and visitors connect with community heritage in free and innovative ways. The office aims to partner with the City's Historic Preservation program, the Dallas Historical Society, and other heritage groups to ensure all residents and neighborhoods are included.

Office of Equity and Inclusion

In 2022, the Office of Equity and Inclusion adopted the Racial Equity Plan, with measurable goals and actions for each department to address

⁵⁹ [City of Dallas Cultural Plan](#)

equity.⁶⁰ As detailed in the chapter [“The Need for a Strategy for Historic Preservation Focused On Racial Equity.”](#) several of these actions intersect with the mission and objectives of the City’s Historic Preservation program. For example, the Strategy calls for:

1. An increase in the percentage of City resources allocated to historically disadvantaged communities by October 2024.⁶¹
2. The restructuring of the Historic Tax Incentives program so that eligibility is no longer tied to property values or the magnitude invested in home repairs.
3. More substantial engagement with historically disadvantaged communities via bilingual collateral, outreach events, education, and awareness presentations/publications.
4. An increase in the number of Landmark Commissioners who are members of historically disadvantaged communities.

As the entity charged with monitoring and supporting the ongoing implementation of the Racial Equity Plan, OEI can provide advice and input when it comes to drafting ordinances, creating communication material, and restructuring financial support programs.

Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization

The Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization (DHNR) is charged with investing in the development and preservation of mixed-income housing. Through federal entitlement grants, local funds, bond funds, and other housing development tools, DHNR supports renters, homeowners, and homebuyers in finding, maintaining, and staying in their homes. The major department initiatives that require strong coordination between DHNR staff and the Historic Preservation staff focus on

60 [The Office of Equity and Inclusion, Racial Equity Plan](#)

61 The Racial Equity Plan’s definition of historically disadvantaged communities “refers to communities with the greatest need, communities of color, lower-income neighborhoods, or those neighborhoods that lack access to needed resources including health care, infrastructure, economic opportunities, and retail stores, among others. Least resourced communities.” (p. 149)

the various financial assistance programs for housing rehabilitation that are in historic district neighborhoods and any certificates or permits required to administer those. Currently, multiple home repair programs are targeted for residents in historic districts like the Tenth Street and other older neighborhoods like Joppa, Five Mile Creek, and West Dallas.⁶² Better coordination with the Historic Preservation team and Code Compliance Officers dedicated to those districts can ensure a streamlined process of executing these repair and rehabilitation programs.

Office of Economic Development

Under the Office of Economic Development (OED), City Council unanimously approved the amended City of Dallas Economic Development Policy and a new Economic Development Incentive Program. These policies are proactively addressing economic inequities and outcomes in historically underserved areas, and more proactively align with the City’s Racial Equity Plan. Many historically underserved areas, which are the focus of this policy, are also designated as conservation districts, historic districts, have historically significant structures, or have older housing and other building stock. As noted in the recently adopted Economic Development Policy, to implement any economic development projects, especially in any of the previously-mentioned older neighborhoods, cross-departmental collaboration is essential.⁶³ Collaboration with Historic Preservation staff is key in this effort.

Small Business Center

The Small Business Center is a resource that helps business owners grow and manage their businesses within the City. They offer a variety of grants and loans specifically designed to support entrepreneurs and businesses in the South Dallas area, such as the South Dallas Fair Park Opportunity Fund⁶⁴—which provides financial assistance to small businesses to stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and revitalize the local community in the neighborhood—and the Southern

62 More details on the rehabilitation programs for residents under the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization can be found [here](#).

63 [City of Dallas Economic Development Policy](#)

64 [Funding opportunities related to Small Business Center](#)

Dallas Investment Fund⁶⁵—which provides access to capital for businesses operating in Southern Dallas. A strong partnership between Historic Preservation and the Small Business Center can help address the needs of legacy small businesses that highlight the unique identity of neighborhoods.

In addition to grants and loans, the Small Business Center also offers the Southern Dallas Adaptive Reuse Grant.⁶⁶ This grant is specifically targeted towards businesses seeking to repurpose or renovate existing buildings in Southern Dallas. By encouraging adaptive reuse, this grant program promotes sustainable development, revitalizes underutilized spaces, and enhances the overall appeal and functionality of Southern Dallas neighborhoods.

Department of Park and Recreation

The Department of Park and Recreation (DPARD) manages close to 400 parks totaling more than 21,000 acres. The most notable parks with historic resources include the Old City Park, Fair Park, Pike Park, and multiple historic cemeteries, among others. The Department's 2015 Comprehensive Plan recognizes that "parks have significant or unique natural and historic resources." It also notes that the "historical, cultural, and natural resources in parks are ripe for education and interpretation."⁶⁷

Under its deficiencies section of the Plan, DPARD highlights the "lack of trained staff and funding to repair and restore historic resources."⁶⁸ Additionally, parks near the Trinity River have been documented to have artifacts that should be preserved and protected through archeological interventions. Partnership between DPARD and the Historic Preservation staff can help ensure these current deficiencies identified in the plan are addressed. Establishing guidelines on how to identify, design, and maintain historically significant places within Dallas parks requires strong partnership. Qualified Historic Preservation staff can work with DPARD to protect historic resources within

parks without hampering the programmatic use and function of the parks themselves.

New Approach: Empowering Individual Property Owners, Preservation Professionals, and Neighborhood Groups

Dallas historic preservation systems would not function without the great efforts undertaken by owners of historic properties, preservation professionals, and neighborhood groups. Property owners invest time, passion, and resources into the care of their properties, while preservation professionals contribute their expertise to everything from helping residents navigate the Certificates of Appropriateness process to rehabilitating landmarks to their original glory. Most importantly, coalitions of neighbors who advocate for the places they love are the bedrock of historic preservation in Dallas. Preservation efforts originated with neighbors on Swiss Avenue organizing in the 1960s, and they continue today with powerful coalitions such as West Dallas One working actively to find ways to conserve their heritage and communities amid rapid change.

New Approach: Empowering Nonprofits

Recent data indicates that the City of Dallas Historic Preservation program staff spend 95% of their available time administering the current Historic Preservation program due to insufficient staffing. Administration consists of processing applications for Certificates of Appropriateness (COA), staffing task forces, and facilitating public hearings at the Landmark Commission. Little time is available for active community engagement and education.

Nonprofit organizations can play a significant role in historic and cultural preservation. Often, they fill some of the gap of community needs not covered by local government programs, but City staff capacity is still needed to coordinate with these nonprofit efforts and maximize impact. The most robust nonprofits assist with advocacy, education, and outreach; provide grants for local

⁶⁵ [Funding opportunity related to Small Business Center](#)

⁶⁶ [The Adaptive Reuse Program](#)

⁶⁷ [Park and Recreation Comprehensive Plan](#) (2016), 77-80.

⁶⁸ Ibid. 78.

preservation efforts; and organize volunteer efforts to preserve historic places. A key player in Dallas since 1972 (the year prior to the founding of the City's program), **Preservation Dallas** provides community engagement, building tours, education opportunities for historic homeowners and real estate agents, preservation awards, and advocacy. Historically, the organization also had an easement program and revolving loan fund, and renovated houses. **Heritage Oak Cliff** (established in 1975) has also been a longtime provider of home tours, educational programs, and preservation grants.

In recent years, more and more communities have been establishing nonprofits to focus on the preservation of their history, including:

- **The Dallas Mexican American Historical League** (2008)
- **The Dallas Way** (2011)
- **Remembering Black Dallas** (2015)
- **Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation** (2016)
- **The Dallas Asian American Historical Society** (2022)

While these organizations are not solely focused on the preservation of structures, they have built a more diverse constituency of preservation advocates looking to preserve landmarks and neighborhoods important to communities of color in Dallas.

Appendix B: Engagement and Outreach

Project Leadership

T.C. Broadnax, City Manager

Majed Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager

Julia Ryan, former Chief Planning Officer and Director of Planning and Urban Design

Andrea Gilles, interim Director of Planning and Urban Design

Katherine Singleton, Chief Preservation Planner

Patrick Blaydes, Chief Planner

Steering Committee Members

Amber Sims, Young Leaders, Strong City

Brent Brown, Building Community Workshop

David Preziosi, Texas Historical Foundation and Heritage Oak Cliff

Denise Johnson, Dallas Asian American Historical Society

Evelyn Montgomery, Old Red Museum of Dallas County History and Culture

Larry Johnson, Tenth Street Resident Association

Marcel Quimby, Quimby Preservation

Priscilla Escobedo, Dallas Mexican American Historical League

Shalondria Galimore, South Central Civic League

Stephanie Champion, Builders of Hope CDC

Stephanie Drenka, Dallas Asian American Historical Society

Teresa Coleman Wash, Bishop Arts Theatre Center

Victoria Ferrell Ortiz, RAYO Planning

Victoria Clow, Preservation Dallas

Organizations Engaged	
African American Museum Dallas	La Vista/Edison Task Force
AIA Dallas	Lake Cliff Taskforce
Beloved Community Center	Ledbetter Garden
Dallas Housing Coalition	Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women of TX
Dallas Regional Chamber	Mitchell Garman Architects
Dallas Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation	Munger Place
Deep Ellum Foundation	Old City Park Dallas
Eagle Ford School	South Boulevard/Park Row Task Force
Elm Thicket Northpark Association	Southern Dallas Progress Community Development Corporation
Engage Dallas Network	State Thomas Task Force
Five Mile Neighborhood Association	Tenth Street Historic District
Forest Forward	Tenth/Wheatley Task Force
Greater Dallas Planning Council	Uptown Dallas Inc.
Heritage Oak Cliff	Vecinos Unidos
Hopson Taylor & Associates	Veux Deux Design
Junius Heights Historic District	Winnetka Heights Neighborhood Association

City Department Advisors

Martine Phillippe, Director, Office of Arts and Culture

Lynn Rushton, Public Art Program Manager, Office of Arts and Culture

Haytham Hassan, Assistant Director and City Engineer, Department of Public Works

Olugbenro (Gbenro) Oyekanmi, Assistant City Engineer, Department of Public Works

Lisa Rainey, Manager, Office of Equity and Inclusion

Kevin Acosta, Partnership Liaison, Office of Equity and Inclusion

Thor Erickson, Assistant Director, Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization

Robin Bentley, Director, Office of Economic Development

Ryan O'Connor, Assistant Director of Partnerships and Strategic Initiatives, Park and Recreation

Adrian McClendon, Code Compliance Officer, Office of Historic Preservation

Chris Christian, Director, Code Compliance Department

City Council District	# of Tabling Events	Public Workshops	# of Constituents Engaged via Survey and Workshops
1	5		4
2	6	Workshop at Old City Park	24
3	9		19
4	5		2
5	1		3
6	3	Workshop at West Dallas Multipurpose Center	12
7	4	Workshop at Samuell-Grand Recreation Center	18
8	4		1
9	2		3
10	3		2
11	2		2
12	4		
13	1		3
14	1		2

Appendix C: Places of Importance to Dallas' Communities of Color Designated as City of Dallas Landmarks

Name	Address	Note
Adolphus Hotel	1321 Commerce St.	Featured in Victor H. Green's Negro Motorist Green Book (1936).
Big Spring Site	1121 Pemberton Hill Rd.	Located near a Native American route connecting a Trinity River crossing to eastern Texas.
Bama Pie Company	1701 Fourth Ave.	The Bama Pie Company was among the first major, non-retail enterprises in South Dallas. The company building lies just a few blocks away from the South Dallas Neighborhood, primarily platted and developed exclusively for African American families. These subdivisions grew up around a core community of African American families that already existed along S. Central Avenue (now Central Expressway) and Greer Street (now Metropolitan), by 1898 (Dallas city directory, 1898).
Bluitt Sanitarium/RF Aspley Building	2036-2038 Commerce St.	First medical clinic to be built for African Americans in Dallas.
Booker T. Washington School	2501 Flora St.	Dallas' only high school for African American students for 17 years.
Boyd Hotel	2934 Elm St.	Served as lodging and performance venue for some of the great Blues legends including Blind Lemon Jefferson, Huddle "Leadbelly" Ledbetter and Bill Neely.
City Hotel	2528 Elm St.	Located in Deep Ellum Historic District.
Cumberland Hill School	1901 N. Akard St.	Educated children of numerous nationalities until 1958.
Dallas High School (Crozier Tech)	2218 Bryan St.	Significant to Mexican American students and families who attended
Eagle Ford School	1601 Chalk Hill Rd.	Served elementary and middle school age Anglo and Mexican American children from the southern areas of Eagle Ford, Trinity Portland Cement Company residential villages, Arcadia Park, and surrounding rural areas.
Former Dr. Pepper Dallas Bottling Plant	409, 413, 425, and 429 Second Ave.	Located in Deep Ellum Historic District.
Freedman's Cemetery	Central Expwy and Lemon Ave.	Established as a burial ground for Dallas' early African American population in 1861. This is one of the largest Freedman Cemeteries in the country.

Name	Address	Note
Garvin Cemetery	4000 W. Northwest Hwy	African American cemetery established in 1894 when John Cochran, a Confederate Army veteran, donated the land to the Black community for use as a burial ground.
Gilliam House	3817 Wendelkin St.	Home of prominent civil rights advocate and the first African American woman to be elected president of the DISD Board.
Good Samaritan Hospital	4526 Leland Ave.	Residential hotel for African Americans in 1950s.
Interstate Forwarding Building	3200 Main St.	Located in Deep Ellum Historic District.
James Madison High School	3000 Martin Luther King Blvd.	First opened as Forest Avenue High School to serve white students, then changed names in 1956 when it re-opened to serve students from the predominantly African American neighborhood.
Juanita Craft Home	2618 Warren Ave.	Former home of Juanita Craft, an NAACP leader, former Democratic Precinct Chair, and the first Black woman in Texas history to be deputized as a poll tax collector.
Knights of Pythias Temple	2551 Elm St.	Served as the social, professional, and cultural center of Dallas' African American community. The temple hosted lectures, meetings, conventions, and dances, as well as housed the offices of African American professionals in the area.
L. Butler Nelson Cemetery	2900 Elsie Faye Heggins St.	Served the African American community from its establishment until 1969. The names and dates on the headstones document people who came to Dallas as slaves or were first generation free men and women.
Lincoln High School	5000 Malcolm X Blvd.	The second high school designated for Black students in the city. Many students enrolled here to relieve massive overcrowding at Booker T. Washington High School.
Luna Tortilla Factory	1615 McKinney Ave.	One of the last visible remnants of the 'Little Mexico' neighborhood, Luna Tortilla Factory remained in this location until leaving the area in 2007.
Mayor Bradford House	2905 Maple Ave.	Served as a foster home for Latin American children. In 1953, girls from across Texas, New York, Wisconsin, El Salvador, and Ireland called St. Rita's home.
McCree Cemetery	9934 Audelia Rd.	Contains the graves of Peters Colonists, pioneer settlers, war veterans, and freedmen from the surrounding hamlets of Audelia and Rodgers.

Name	Address	Note
Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery	33 Haymarket Rd.	Served a congregation of rural African Americans who were farmers and tenant farmers in the area.
Park Brothers Warehouse	2639 Elm St.	Located in Deep Ellum Historic District.
Phyllis Wheatley School	2908 Metropolitan Ave.	Elementary school for Black students in Wheatley Place, a historically Black neighborhood in Dallas.
Pike Park	2807 Harry Hines Blvd.	Served the residents of Little Mexico, which remained the cultural heart of the Mexican American community in Dallas for decades to come.
Spence Middle School	4001 Capitol Ave.	Served students in Little Mexico, instituted innovative programs during desegregation such as the Ethnic Committee and possibly the country's only high school Mariachi program.
St. Ann's School	2514 Harry Hines Blvd.	Last remaining early twentieth century Mexican Catholic institution in Dallas.
State Thomas	Fairmount, Colby, and Boll Streets	
St. James AME Temple	624 Good-Latimer Expwy	Designed by African American architect William Sydney Pittman and constructed entirely by African American contractors, workers, and electricians.
St. Joseph's Catholic Church and Academy	2712 Swiss Ave.	Was the St. Andrew Kim Korean Catholic Church from 1977 to 2007
St. Paul United Methodist Church	1816 Routh St.	Home of the oldest African American Methodist congregation in Dallas.
Tenth Street Neighborhood	Clarendon, RL Thornton, 8th St.	One of the only remaining intact Freedman's Towns in the nation.
Texas Farm & Ranch Building	3306 Main St.	Located in Deep Ellum Historic District.
Wheatley Place	Myers, Malcolm X, McDermott, and Meadow Streets	One of the first and most successful residential subdivisions developed specifically for Black citizens in Dallas.
Zion Hill Missionary Baptist Church	909 Morrell Ave.	Served as one of the first African American congregations in East Oak Cliff.

Appendix D: Expanded History of the Historic Preservation Program

1960s –1970s: Preservation as an Urban Design and Revitalization Tool

In the immediate aftermath of the John F. Kennedy assassination, newly elected Dallas Mayor J. Erik Jonasson embarked on an ambitious community engagement effort called “Goals for Dallas,” soliciting and receiving input from over 100,000 residents. The objective was to help the City coalesce around a new vision for the future, one which would rid Dallas of the “City of Hate” moniker, counter trends of urban decline, and “bring change to a parochial, often intolerant and insular community virtually run by business interests.”⁶⁹ One of the goals that emerged was the preservation of neighborhoods, which led directly to the 1971 hiring of Weiming Lu as the Director of Urban Design, the adoption of the Historic Preservation ordinance, and, in 1973, the creation of the Historic Preservation program.⁷⁰

According to the late David Dillon, the architecture critic for the Dallas Morning News, the 1970s were a golden age for Dallas city planning and Mr. Lu was key to the **focus on urban design**. “He began by recruiting an unusually diverse staff that included not only planners and urban designers but architects, geologists, environmentalists, and artists. The message in the method was that, far from being an abstract technical exercise, urban design was an integral part of city life, affecting everything from the layout of streets to the lettering on trash cans.”⁷¹ Historic preservation was integrated into larger planning and design efforts, including arts and culture and environmental stewardship. The 1976 Historic Preservation Plan went so far as to call for the preservation of landscapes, streams, significant trees, and other natural features—ideas that have resurfaced during the past two years. This early thinking enabled the designation of several parks and the historic Big Spring site, the location of a spring where archaeological evidence suggests humans have gathered water for millennia, in 2016.⁷²

Under his leadership, historic preservation was regarded as a neighborhood revitalization tool to be deployed in tandem with various infrastructure investments managed by other departments, making **interdepartmental coordination** key to the mission. As noted in the 1976 Landmark Preservation Plan, the program “cannot be viewed as an isolated process of one particular public agency or interest group. [...] Neighborhood recovery cannot be affected without a total commitment on the part of city government. Numerous departments and agencies can lend their resources and expertise to accomplish the task.”⁷³

The City’s first Preservation Plan, produced within three years of the program’s creation, documented initial accomplishments, opportunities and challenges, and recommendations for the future. The plan also stressed the importance of resident outreach, community education, and the maintenance of up-to-date

69 Carolyn Barta, “[Dream Big: the impact of ethical leadership](#),” *The Daily Campus*, February 6, 2014.

70 Katherine Seale, “[Dialogue: Lemons to Lemonade](#),” AIA Dallas – A Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. November 28, 2023.

71 David Dillon, Dallas Architecture, 1936-1986 and Camile LeFevre, “[Life By Design](#),” Minnesota Alumni. University of Minnesota Alumni Association, Summer 2019.

72 City of Dallas, [Big Spring](#).

73 City of Dallas Department of Urban Planning. “*Landmark Preservation Plan*”. Dallas, Texas: City of Dallas, Texas (1976).

historic resource surveys. Of particular note is a discussion about the appropriate boundaries of administrative review, a topic that continues to be discussed almost 50 years later. The 1976 plan posits that review criteria “should be flexible enough to provide a wide enough latitude for individuality without compromising district design as well as historic integrity.”⁷⁴ Although the program was only four years old, the search for an appropriate balance between regulatory transparency and discretionary evaluation was clearly underway. For greater administrative review to be successful, Landmark Commissioners and historic district property owners must feel confident in the qualifications and ability of staff. Developing this trust is difficult when staffing levels are constantly changing.

The program’s early focus on urban design and revitalization would shift over the following decades. As one contemporary later observed, “this period did not last, and the working environment changed drastically when a developer was elected as mayor. Support for urban design and preservation soon disappeared.”⁷⁵

Successes:

- Created preservation program, enabling ordinance, and increased education, outreach, and partnerships
- Integrated preservation in larger interdepartmental revitalization efforts
- Created Landmark Preservation Plan in 1976 to guide program work plan
- Recognized preservation designation can include cultural and natural resources
- Created historic resource surveys and two historic districts
- Defended the preservation ordinance from legal challenge
- Integrated preservation into city planning activities and increased interdepartmental coordination

⁷⁴ City of Dallas Department of Urban Planning. Landmark Preservation Plan, Dallas, Texas: City of Dallas, Texas (1976).

⁷⁵ Quote Antoinette Le. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Parks Service. Summer 2008. *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship* (Volume 5 Number 2), Antoinette Lee (AJL), former CRM Journal editor, interviewed Lu on November 19, 2001.

Challenges:

- Recognized specialized zoning could result in displacement of low-moderate income groups in some cases⁷⁶
- Identified program administration complexities as a threat to success

1980s: Struggles with Disinvestment

In the 1980s, federal funding for urban planning and preservation studies declined sharply and city governments struggled amid declining revenues, inflation, and growing pressure to prioritize public safety investments. Historic preservation capacity suffered from severe disinvestment, from which it has yet to fully recover. Urban infill development led to demolitions in Dallas’ downtown and other parts of the central city, causing alarm in the preservation community.

In 1983, Dallas City Council adopted an updated Preservation Plan, one which raised the alarm that the program was deteriorating due to insufficient staff capacity and resources. Program shortcomings already documented in 1976 remained unaddressed, including insufficient public outreach, access to information, and procedural complexities. With insufficient capacity to administer the program as originally designed, the City shifted burden of research for designations from staff to the public.

Five years later, in addition to reiterating concerns over procedural complexity and funding levels, the 1988 Preservation Plan raised the issue of **resident displacement** for the first time. In response, the City adopted early historic tax incentive programs, completed two historic resource surveys of pre-1940s Dallas, and completed the requirements to become eligible for state financial assistance. The City also adopted conservation district legislation and designated seven historic districts and four conservation districts.⁷⁷

In other words, the Historic Preservation program responded to financial disinvestment by rethinking its role vis-à-vis the Dallas public. It emerged from

⁷⁶ In some cases, historic district overlays can help mitigate displacement by preventing small affordable homes from being replaced by large luxury homes in quickly gentrifying areas.

⁷⁷ “[Neighborhood Overlay](#).” Development Services, City of Dallas. November 28, 2023.

the 1980s more sensitive to the needs of residents but with limited capacity to execute initiatives beyond administrative tasks and more insulated from the rest of City government.

Successes:

- Council adoption of Preservation Plan updates to guide program work plan
- Updates of historic resources survey for areas of Dallas developed before 1940
- Secured Certified Local Government (CLG) status
- Continued coordination with community preservation interests
- Created tax incentives and conservation district legislation
- Added seven historic districts and four conservation districts

Challenges:

- Inconsistent and inadequate funding and inability to reduce program complexity
- Shifting designation research responsibilities from staff to applicants
- Lack of historic resource materials easily available for public access
- Ongoing displacement concerns of low-to-moderate income residents
- Increased demolition pressure from urban infill development

1990s – 2023:

From Obscurity to a New Beginning

Despite national recognition of the Historic Preservation program in the 1970s and the expansion of the program's scope in the 1980s, the program struggled from the 1990s to today. Although staff continued implementation of the 1988 Preservation Plan resulting in the addition of new districts, those successes diminish in the mid-1990s after the completion of several district designations. Preservation Plan updates were absent during this period. Due to inconsistent

funding, with the low point being during the national financial crisis when the program had only one professional preservationist on staff, little time was spent on education and outreach. All these factors resulted in a program with less relevancy as a guiding force in the reuse of historic neighborhoods. The greater threat was the perception that the program was an impediment.

As the number of new historic designations faded due to lack of program visibility, increased complexity, and lack of funding, the use of conservation districts accelerated in central city residential neighborhoods. Unlike historic districts, conservation district application reviews are administrative providing an additional advantage to historic district where work often requires a review at a Landmark Commission public hearing. While some conservation districts place restrictions on demolitions, most do not. Since 1988, 17 conservation districts have been created and two are currently in process. Due to the length of time needed to create historic and conservation districts, the City of Dallas created neighborhood stabilization overlays (NSO) to provide another zoning mechanism to protect urban neighborhoods. "This was done in response to concerns by neighborhood organizations that the process for initiating, processing, and public hearings to create protective zoning for neighborhoods could take as long as three years. They also felt that many neighborhoods did not need the multiple regulations involved in an Historic District or a Conservation District."

In 2014, a Sunday morning demolition of several historic buildings in Downtown Dallas put preservation back in the spotlight after years of relative obscurity. This action resulted in Mayor Rawlings and Council member Phillip Kingston forming a Downtown Historic Preservation Task Force, led by Landmark Commission Chair Katherine Seale, in 2015.

This Task Force's report highlighted that a program that was once considered a national model was "[...] becoming largely administrative and regulatory due to chronic understaffing. It has become isolated, with little interaction with other City departments. It is no longer a participant in shaping and influencing Dallas's future development. It can no longer serve the city

as a resource for solutions and is no longer able to advocate for existing buildings. This shift to a focus on regulation has contributed to a fracture between preservation and development.”⁷⁸ Many of the issues and associated recommendations highlighted in the 2015 Downtown Historic Preservation Task Force Report were items highlighted since the first Preservation Plan in 1976. In addition to highlighting a lack of adequate funding, the report also noted:

- Insufficient advocacy within the Historic Preservation program
- Lengthy historic designation process and outdated Preservation Plan
- Focus of staff is on administrative duties, limiting time for preservation planning
- Lack of education regarding historic preservation
- Singularly focused on regulation at the detriment of comprehensive and more valuable planning

In the years following Council adoption of the 2015 Downtown Historic Preservation Task Force Report, the City continues to evaluate the best configuration for the Historic Preservation program. Several recommendations from the report were implemented, including the adoption of the demolition delay ordinance in 2015, the hiring of additional Historic Preservation staff, and the completion of the Downtown and Deep Ellum Historic Resource Surveys. In addition, the Landmark Commission created three task forces (2018, 2021, and 2023) to address concerns raised in the 2015 Downtown Historic Preservation Task Force Report in addition to long standing concerns related to program administration.

Since 2018, the City has elevated the need for racial equity across departments and programs. This Strategy for the City’s Historic Preservation Program will outline its vision, mission, and goals aligned with the City’s Racial Equity Plan, Equitable Economic Development Policy, Housing Policy, and other related efforts. The plan will clarify the Historic Preservation program’s role

and relationship to other City services provided through Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, Planning and Urban Design, the Office of Arts and Culture, and others. It will outline phased implementation steps necessary to achieve the vision for the program, including necessary resources and staffing, ordinance updates, partnerships, and new tools.

Successes:

- Designations of sites and neighborhoods important to the African American community, including the Freedman’s Cemetery (1991), Tenth Street Historic District (1993), Wheatley Place Historic District (2000)
- Creation of nine new neighborhood-level historic districts with the last being designated in 2006
- Council adoption of the 2015 Downtown Historic Preservation Task Force Report
- Downtown and Deep Ellum Historic Resource Surveys
- Demolition Delay Ordinance
- National Register District for Deep Ellum
- Initiation of Strategy for Historic Preservation to align with the City’s Racial Equity Plan, Economic Development Policy, Housing Policy, and other related efforts

Concerns:

- Program obscurity and complexity including limited administrative review
- Lack of historic resource materials easily available for public access
- Challenges streamlining processes and insufficient resources to increase innovation and public outreach
- Inconsistent and inadequate funding, and a lack of interdepartmental coordination

⁷⁸ City of Dallas, Texas. *Downtown Dallas Historic Preservation Task Force Final Report: Report of Findings and Recommendations*. Dallas, Texas: City of Dallas, 2015.

Appendix E: Peer Cities Comparison Chart

City	Number of Designated Properties	Number of Individual Landmarks	Certificate of Appropriateness (CA) Applications Received – FY 2023	Number of Full-time Employees (FTEs)
Dallas, TX	~4,000	155 individual landmarks 21 historic districts	593	4
Los Angeles, CA	21,000+	1,255 historic cultural monuments (as of 2022) 35 historic districts. ⁷⁹	Information not available	15
Chicago, IL	Several thousand	384 individual landmarks 62 total historic districts. ⁸⁰	1,855 permit applications reviewed, 2,036 reviews performed total. ⁸¹	9 (November 2023)
Boston, MA	~9,000	109 individual designated landmarks 10 historic districts	1,284	15
Philadelphia, PA	9,965 in historic districts	5,662 individual landmarks 41 historic districts	2,768	10 (starting Jan 22, 2024)
San Antonio, TX	~11,000	~1,500 individual landmarks 31 historic districts	2,718 total applications (including Admin COAs, HDRC cases, and Demolition Reviews)	21
Ft. Worth, TX	Data pending	Data pending	441	10

⁷⁹ [Historical Cultural Monuments List - City of LA Planning \(2022\).](#)

⁸⁰ [Chicago Individual Landmarks Name List, Commission on Chicago Landmarks \(2023\).](#)

⁸¹ [Commission on Chicago Landmarks Annual Report \(2022\).](#)

Appendix F: Glossary

CD - Conservation Districts

CECAP - Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan

DHP33 - the Housing Policy 2033

HD - Historic District

LMC – Landmark Commission

NSO - Neighborhood Stabilization Overlays

OED – Office of Economic Development

P+UD – Planning and Urban Design

REP - Racial Equity Plan

Additional Resources

Dallas Resources

- City of Dallas – Historic Preservation – [Home \(dallascityhall.com\)](http://dallascityhall.com)
- City of Dallas – Historic Preservation Resource Page - [Resources \(dallascityhall.com\)](http://dallascityhall.com)
- City of Dallas – Dallas History Open Data Hub (atlas and history reports, including Thematic Historic Context Statements) - [Dallas History Open Data Hub \(arcgis.com\)](http://arcgis.com)
- Dallas History and Archives Division, Dallas Public Library - Dallas Public Library - [Dallas History & Archives Division \(dallaslibrary2.org\)](http://dallaslibrary2.org)
- Dallas Historical Society - Dallas Historical Society – [Remember Dallas' past builds her future \(dallashistory.org\)](http://dallashistory.org)
- Preservation Dallas – preservationdallas.org

Texas Resources

- Texas Historical Commission - [THC.Texas.Gov - Texas Historical Commission](http://thc.texas.gov)
- Texas Historical Commission Atlas - [Home - Atlas: Texas Historical Commission](http://thc.texas.gov)
- Portal to Texas History - [The Portal to Texas History \(unt.edu\)](http://unt.edu)
- Texas Beyond History - [Texas Beyond History](http://texasbeyondhistory.net)

National Resources

- National Trust for Historic Preservation - [@SavingPlaces | National Trust for Historic Preservation](http://savingplaces.org)
- National Alliance of Preservation Commissions - [National Alliance of Preservation Commissions \(napcommissions.org\)](http://napcommissions.org)
- National Park Service – Technical Services Bulletins - Technical Preservation Services Publications - [Technical Preservation Services \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](http://nps.gov)
- National Park Service - Preservation Briefs - Preservation Briefs - [Technical Preservation Services \(U.S. National Park Service\) \(nps.gov\)](http://nps.gov)
- Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation - [Illustrated Guidelines on Sustainability for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings \(nps.gov\)](http://nps.gov)