



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
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Agenda Item Number: 8

Agenda Date: January 22, 2024

In Control: Governance Committee Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Office of Historic Preservation

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Shanon Shea Miller

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Establishment of a Cultural Heritage District for the 1300-1900 blocks of N. Main Avenue, in recognition of the area's importance to the LGBTQIA Community

SUMMARY:

On October 19, 2023, Councilmembers Sukh Kaur (District 1) and Jalen McKee-Rodriguez (District 2) submitted a Council Consideration Request (CCR) regarding the establishment of a Cultural Heritage District for the 1300-1900 blocks of N. Main Avenue, in recognition of the area's importance to the LGBTQIA Community.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Cultural Heritage recognition is an endorsement of noteworthy sites, structures, objects, businesses and the living heritage—the expressions, traditions, knowledge, skills, identity and representations—that impart a distinct aspect to the city and serve as tangible and intangible

reminders of the city's culture and heritage. The intent is to build awareness and knowledge of San Antonio's living heritage. The recognition is designed for neighborhoods, corridors, individual buildings, sites, objects and elements of social heritage that hold historic or cultural value to the community beyond architectural value.

Per the CCR, North Main Avenue is a focal point for San Antonio's LGBTQIA+ community. The commercial corridor is home to numerous LGBTQIA+ owned and oriented businesses and hosts the annual "Pride Bigger than Texas" Festival and Parade, a celebration of identity, belonging, and activism. Recognition of the area's cultural significance increased in 2018 with the installation of the City's first Rainbow Crosswalk, a symbol of acceptance and celebration.

Properties or areas that are important to our cultural heritage may not always be recognizable as the most significant architecturally. Many times properties of cultural significance are important to a community because of associated events or people or because they have been long-standing institutions or gathering places within a neighborhood. They are the places that provide a sense of identity. By recognizing and authenticating places of cultural significance in our city as Cultural Heritage Districts or Buildings, we help to preserve our unique and diverse history. Cultural Heritage recognition is an honorific title endorsed by the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC) upon recommendation from the Office of Historic Preservation staff. There is no design review process for Cultural Heritage Districts or Cultural Heritage Buildings.

ISSUE:

The Office of Historic Preservation will brief the Governance Committee on the Cultural Heritage District program, which promotes awareness of the history and culture of an area or community.

With direction from the Governance Committee, the Office of Historic Preservation will work with Districts 1 and 2 to bring together stakeholders in order to initiate the establishment of a new Cultural Heritage District that will recognize and celebrate the significant spaces and stories of San Antonio's LGBTQIA+ community.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends referral to the Planning and Community Development Committee for further consideration.