



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**

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**Agenda Item Number:** 28

**Agenda Date:** June 23, 2022

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Office of Historic Preservation

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Shanon Shea Miller

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:**

Underrepresented Community Grant Acceptance

**SUMMARY:**

This ordinance ratifies the submission of a grant application and authorizes acceptance of funds upon award, not to exceed \$50,000.00, from the National Park Service's Underrepresented Community Grant Program for consultation services to facilitate the Historical African American Neighborhoods Survey, an initiative to document the built environment of extant historical African American neighborhoods located near downtown, resulting in at least one new nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

General

The Office of Historic Preservation aims to better represent the African American community of San Antonio's extensive history through a historic resource survey funded by the National Park Service (NPS) Underrepresented Community Grant (UCG). Currently, there is a dearth of federal and state designated historic properties reflecting local African American cultural heritage. The

proposed undertaking aims to rectify this by better highlighting the extant built environment of the historical African American community in San Antonio, focusing surveys on five areas within a 3-mile radius of downtown that have largely been untouched from urban renewal and modern redevelopment. This multi-year initiative will include extensive community engagement with partner organizations and will complement the African American Cultural Context Statement that is currently being drafted by the Office of Historic Preservation.

This project is in support of several local and federal historic preservation goals. As a Certified Local Government, the proposed undertaking supports the City of San Antonio's annual obligation to the National Park Service of keeping an inventory of historic properties. The proposed historic resource survey is also in line with several of the goals of the City of San Antonio's Strategic Historic Preservation Plan, including: to preserve and protect the historic districts, places, structures, buildings, landscapes, archeology, culture, and stories of San Antonio; update existing surveys and conduct new inventories of historic resources throughout the City; use the new information to designate additional districts and target public and private resources; use the new information to create an "early warning" system to increase awareness and action regarding endangered sites, buildings, landscapes, and viewsheds; and make surveys more accessible to the public to promote a greater understanding of significant historic resources.

#### Grants

The Historical African American Neighborhoods Survey is being supported in part by an Underrepresented Communities grant from the Historic Preservation Fund administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. The requested funding will allow the Office of Historic Preservation to engage a consultant to complete the field survey and historic resources report. This information, combined with staff research and community participation, will result in at least one new nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

The City of San Antonio has never been awarded funding under this grant program. The City has preliminarily been awarded a grant of \$50,000. No matching funds are required. The estimated completion date for the project is Spring 2025.

#### ISSUE:

Tangible cultural heritage associated with the African American community is underrepresented in San Antonio, especially in regards to properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Funding awarded from the Underrepresented Community Grant will help facilitate a historic resources survey of five historically African American neighborhoods within a 3-mile radius of downtown. Information acquired from this initiative will not only assist in the nomination of property to the NRHP, but will also support the City of San Antonio's Certified Local Government obligations and furthers several elements of the City of San Antonio Strategic Historic Preservation Plan.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Non-acceptance of the grant would terminate the project.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This ordinance ratifies the submission of a grant application and authorizes acceptance of funds upon award, not to exceed \$50,000, from the National Park Service for consultation services to facilitate the Historical African American Neighborhoods Survey. This grant does not require matching funds.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the City Council ratify the grant proposal and authorize the acceptance of the grant.