



Planning & Inspections

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Oscar Leeser

January 12, 2021

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CITY MANAGER

Tommy Gonzalez

Gregory Smith
National Register Coordinator
History Programs Division
Texas Historical Commission
P.O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Mr. Smith:

On January 11, 2021 the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) of the City of El Paso voted 6 to 0 to support the National Register of Historic Places nomination of the Downtown historic district.

The Downtown El Paso National Register Historic District meets National Register Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic History, Community Planning and Development, and Commerce and Criterion C which is significance in the area of Architecture. As stated in the nomination, "Despite the combined negative effect these non-historic alterations have on the district's integrity, the Downtown El Paso Historic District retains its historic streetscapes and building density, and the bustling commercial and business activity that defined the historic period endures. Overall, the district retains its integrity of location, setting, association, materials, workmanship, design, and feeling to a degree that enables it to convey its historic, architectural, and cultural significance."

During the HLC meeting, several people commented on the proposed nomination with the majority of the callers in support. One property owner stated "It is long overdue that we recognize the value of historically black and brown neighborhoods, few of which have historic designations and protections."

Philip F. Etiwe, Director

Planning and Inspections Department | 801 Texas Ave. | El Paso, TX 79901
Office: (915) 212-0104 | FAX: (915) 212-0084



DELIVERING EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES



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In the last several years the district has seen numerous demolitions of irreplaceable historic buildings that were often around 100 years old in age or greater. Because of the continued threat to remove even more buildings, the survey was commissioned as an alternative to further destruction. By listing these properties on the National Register, owners will have the option and the opportunity to apply for federal and state tax incentives rather than demolish the buildings altogether. This nomination will save El Paso's unique and storied built environment from disappearing.

We respectfully ask the State Board of Review to approve the nomination in recognition of El Paso's history and building stock.

Should you have further questions, please contact me at velazquezpx@elpasotexas.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Providencia Velázquez".

Providencia Velázquez
Historic Preservation Officer
City of El Paso

Philip F. Etiwe, Director

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