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March 23, 2021

Austin City Council
301 W. Second Street
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mayor Adler, Mayor Pro Tem Harper-Madison, and City Council Members,

Re: Parks and Recreation Department's Dougherty Arts Center Replacement Project

Preservation Austin exists to empower Austinites to shape a more inclusive, resilient, and meaningful community culture through preservation. We write today to respectfully support the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department's (PAR) Dougherty Arts Center Replacement Proposal Option 1B, which respects the existing PAR Headquarters Building.

PAR's Headquarters was constructed in 1959 as the first permanent home for the department. Prolific local architect, Roy Earl Dillard, designed the building. The brick and glass building features mid-century modern elements such as a flat roof, wide eaves, and curtain windows. Some of the bricks in the structure were from Michael Butler's brickyard, which previously occupied the land. The buff bricks were a staple of Austin construction in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A 1976 addition features a blocky massing with a punched fenestration. The building is eligible for listing on the National Register for its high degree of architectural integrity and its contribution to Austin's recreational development.

The headquarters' creation allowed PAR to better steward Austin's public lands by maintaining parkland, preserving trails, and offering educational enrichment, cultural events, sports, and aquatic activities. Preservation Austin supports the preservation and continued use of this building across potential scenarios. This building is part of PAR's legacy and cultural identity. Its location by Zilker Park, on the Hike and Bike Trail, is very significant.

We are particularly supportive of Option 1B, PAR's preferred scenario, which allows the department to stay onsite and expand operations through a historically sensitive addition. Historic buildings such as the PAR headquarters are flexible, and additions are feasible following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The new construction in the western portion of the site creates a stronger civic presence, identity, and trail adjacency. Option 1B best supports PAR's operational and preservation goals.

Preservation Austin supports PAR as an incredible steward of our public spaces and historic resources. PAR's historic resource inventory features more than 300 sites, buildings, structures, and objects. Preservation Austin has given awards to PAR projects such as Shipe Park Pool Shelter, Oakwood Chapel, and Sparky Park, among others. We also routinely support PAR's work designating local parks as Lone Star Legacy Parks, including Rosewood Park, Parque Zaragosa, and Wooldridge Square. Fiesta

Gardens' National Register listing and ongoing rehabilitation is a recent example of PARD's incredible stewardship. PARD is a valuable partner in promoting heritage tourism, with public parks, museums, and cultural centers among the city's top tourist attractions.

Preservation Austin encourages City Council to support Parks and Recreation Department's Dougherty Arts Center Replacement Proposal Option 1B. PARD's Headquarters, a National-Register eligible building, should be maintained onsite and preserved. We recognize and applaud PARD's dedication to preserving Austin's natural and cultural heritage.

Thank you for your service to the community,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Clayton Bullock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clayton Bullock, President