



City of Fayetteville, Arkansas

113 West Mountain Street
Fayetteville, AR 72701
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Legislation Text

File #: 2023-1272

Application for a Certified Local Government Grant from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program for the 2024 grant year in the amount of \$40,000 with a proposed \$15,000 cash match: Submitted by CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE STAFF. The request is for a grant application requesting \$20,000 for a Multiple Property Documentation Form for the University Heights/Haskell Heights neighborhood, \$20,000 for a historic context statement for the Spout Spring neighborhood, and a budget amendment for a grant match of \$15,000.

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE APPLICATIONS FOR TWO CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT GRANTS IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF \$40,000.00 THROUGH THE ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM FOR THE PREPARATION OF A MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM FOR THE UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS AND HASKELL HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOODS AND A HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT FOR THE SPOUT SPRING NEIGHBORHOOD, AND TO APPROVE A BUDGET ADJUSTMENT FOR THE CITY'S GRANT MATCH IN THE AMOUNT OF \$15,000.00

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE, ARKANSAS:

Section 1: That the City Council of the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas hereby authorizes the Mayor to apply for a Certified Local Government grant through the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program in the amount of \$20,000.00 for the preparation of a multiple property documentation form for the University Heights and Haskell Heights neighborhoods.

Section 2: That the City Council of the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas hereby authorizes the Mayor to apply for a Certified Local Government grant through the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program in the amount of \$20,000.00 for the preparation of a historic context statement for the Spout Spring neighborhood.

Section 3: That the City Council of the City of Fayetteville, Arkansas hereby approves a budget adjustment, a copy of which is attached to this Resolution, to provide matching funds in the amount of \$15,000.00.



MEETING OF DECEMBER 5, 2023

TO: Mayor Jordan and City Council

THRU: Susan Norton, Chief of Staff
Jonathan Curth, Development Services Director

FROM: Britin Bostick, Long Range Planning/Special Projects Manager

DATE:

SUBJECT: **Application for a Certified Local Government Grant from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program for the 2024 grant year in the amount of \$40,000 with a proposed \$15,000 cash match: Submitted by CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE STAFF. The request is for a grant application requesting \$20,000 for a Multiple Property Documentation Form for the University Heights/Haskell Heights neighborhood, \$20,000 for a historic context statement for the Spout Spring neighborhood, and a budget amendment for a grant match of \$15,000.**

RECOMMENDATION:

City staff recommends approval of an application for a Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) for the 2024 grant year in the amount of \$40,000 with a proposed \$15,000 cash match for a total project budget of \$55,000 for a Multiple Property Documentation Form and a Historic Context Statement. The Historic District Commission (HDC) joins staff in recommending both projects, and the Black Heritage Preservation Commission (BHPC) joins staff in recommending the Spout Spring Historic Context Statement.

BACKGROUND:

In March 2023, the Fayetteville City Council approved a CLG grant award from AHPP for a historic context statement of the University Heights/Haskell Heights neighborhood. The approval included a budget amendment for a \$5,000 grant match. Prior to the historic context statement project being submitted to AHPP, state historic preservation staff recommended a two-phase approach to completing the University Heights project, with the first phase being the historic context statement currently underway, and the second phase being a Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) that would set a foundation for future historic preservation work, including the nomination of eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places. The two-phase approach was designed to be able to complete the entire scope of the project in a feasible timeline given the CLG grants must be completed in about 18 months.

An MPDF is a cover document under which a nomination to the National Register of Historic Places is prepared that provides additional background context. The context can focus on topics as broad as the historical and architectural development of an entire city or as narrow as a specific cultural group, architectural type, or any other area of significance under which a property could be nominated. There are other components of an MPDF that also provide guidelines for associated property types, their significance and registration requirements. When a nomination is written for a property associated with a particular MPDF, the

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added context can enhance the nomination, making it more likely to get listed. Once the National Register Office reviews and approves a new MPDF submission and lists the nomination(s) submitted with it, then future properties can be nominated under the approved submission. This proposed project is aligned with Action Items 3.6 – Historic District Outreach, 3.7 – Local Historic District Designation, 3.8 Multiple Property Designation, 4.4 – Program Promotion, 4.7 – Learning Opportunities: Workshops, and 5.5 – Historic Contexts: Diverse Histories in the Fayetteville's Heritage & Historic Preservation Plan as adopted by the City Council in July 2023. The Historic District Commissioners considered this project and grant proposal in their regular meeting on October 12, 2023 and concurred with staff's recommendation to submit the project for the grant application, voting 6-0-0 in favor of forwarding the grant application request to the City Council.

In June 2023, a resolution was proposed to the City Council to purchase real property in the historic Spout Spring neighborhood. The resolution was tabled to provide additional time for discussion and development of the resolution's proposal. At the October 3, 2023 City Council meeting Emma Willis, a consultant retained by Northwest Arkansas Black Heritage, presented an alternative plan to the Council, the creation of a local historic district for the Spout Spring neighborhood. In the following weeks, Ms. Willis has worked with the community to gather petition signatures and develop the framework for the proposed district.

Provided this, and given the success of current projects along with opportunities to support the future historic preservation work of the city's historic commissions, staff is recommending the submittal of a second project for the 2024 CLG grant cycle: a historic context statement for the Spout Spring neighborhood. The historic context statement represents an opportunity to formally capture important historic themes and development patterns in the Spout Spring neighborhood. Additionally, this statement would act as an organizing structure for grouping information about historic properties that share a common theme, place, and time. A historic context focuses on describing those historical development patterns within which the significance of a resource can be understood, with the intent of providing a focused, analytical framework for identifying and evaluating resources and concisely explaining what aspects of geography, history, and culture significantly shaped the physical development of an area. This includes land use patterns and the built environment over time, what important property types were associated with those developments, why they are important, and what characteristics they need for consideration as an important representation of their type and context. While many structures in the Spout Spring neighborhood no longer exist, a context statement provides the opportunity to review the area regardless of the structures that remain and help provide a foundational document to support future work. This project can be completed independent of the establishment of a local historic district and can act as a supplement to that work.

The Historic District Commissioners considered this project and grant proposal in their regular meeting on October 12, 2023 and concurred with staff's recommendation to submit the project for the grant application, voting 6-0-0 in favor of forwarding the grant application request to the City Council. The Black Heritage Preservation Commission considered this project and grant proposal in their regular meeting on October 19, 2023 and concurred with staff's recommendation to submit the project for the grant application, voting 5-0-0 in favor of forwarding the grant application request to the City Council.

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DISCUSSION:

The proposed projects for this grant application are the University Heights/Haskell Heights MPDF (1) and the Spout Spring Historic Context Statement (2). The documents attached are required for the grant application submittal.

1. University Heights/Haskell Heights MPDF

The proposed project is a Multiple Property Documentation Form for the University Heights and Haskell Heights neighborhoods. The University Heights and Haskell Heights neighborhoods are located directly to the west of the University of Arkansas main campus in Fayetteville. The approximate borders of the neighborhoods are Cleveland/Wedington Drive to the north, Razorback Road and Garland Avenue to the east, Nettleship Street to the south, and Sang Avenue to the west (see attached map). AHPP conducted a site visit in 2017 and followed with a letter recommending an architectural survey and noting the potential importance of early farmhouses and houses with connections to faculty from the University of Arkansas. The neighborhoods comprised a total of 414 parcels and 389 structures in 2021, with at least 253 or 65% of the structures being greater than 50 years old, according to public records.

This MPDF would require a project consultant to complete the work, both to provide needed capacity to perform the work and to meet the Secretary of the Interior's qualifications for this type of project. Staff has solicited cost estimates from qualified and experienced professionals and has received a cost range of \$30,000-\$35,000 for the MPDF. The range in prices is due to the location of prospective consultants relative to Fayetteville and associated travel costs, time, and resources needed for research, along with the anticipated written deliverables and the requirement that the form be presented to the State Review Board in Little Rock, Arkansas. Project budget estimates were gathered by communicating the information provided by AHPP as to the MPDF project deadlines and expectations to project consultants who are active in the historic preservation field and experienced in this type of work, as well as who meet the Secretary of the Interior (SOI) qualifications for the project work.

Should this project receive a grant award, the outcomes and work products will provide the Fayetteville Historic District Commission with a more clear understanding of the process to select and administer a neighborhood research and documentation project, an avenue for connecting with historic neighborhoods to understand their status and history, an advocacy tool for additional steps in the preservation process, and an important next step in both following through with a longtime request and in maintaining momentum as the Citywide Heritage & Historic Preservation Master Plan action items are underway. The Fayetteville Historic District Commission continues to express a desire to serve the community by demonstrating that not only is valuable historic preservation work available through the CLG grant programs, but also that local historic preservation work includes a thoughtful process to research, document, and evaluate the historic resources that are in need of protection and stewardship.

1. Spout Spring Historic Context Statement

The Spout Spring neighborhood is a historic neighborhood in Fayetteville that has been the center of the Black community since the end of the Civil War. The neighborhood includes land and structures of the historic St. James United Methodist Church and St. James Missionary Baptist Church, the Henderson School (an 1870s brick school building for Black children and the first public school in Arkansas which is now a private

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residence), and other important historic places, some of which no longer have the original or historic structures. The Green Book, a guidebook for Black roadtrippers during the era of Jim Crow laws, lists three addresses in Fayetteville, all of which were in this historic neighborhood. According to a 1904 city directory, dozens of Black families resided here as well as in two neighborhoods to the north on either side of College Avenue.

Given there is currently a petition for a local historic district in circulation in this neighborhood (see attached map for the proposed project area for the historic context statement, which slightly overlaps the Washington-Willow National Register Historic District), city staff, the Black Heritage Preservation Commission, and the Historic District Commission propose to request grant funding from AHPP's CLG program to support a historic context statement to help assess and document not only the current state of the neighborhood and its historic structures, but also the historic development patterns and important themes that would inform stewardship of the remaining structures and the basis for future historic preservation work.

BUDGET/STAFF IMPACT:

\$15,000 from general fund

ATTACHMENTS: SRF (#3), BA (#4), University Heights-Haskell Heights Project Boundary (#5), Spout Spring Historic Context Project Area Map (#6)

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