



# City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Community Development - Planning

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: November 18, 2024

Re: Benton-Stephens Neighborhood Historic Survey – Historic Preservation Fund Grant Phase II

## Executive Summary

Approval of this resolution would authorize the City Manager to submit a FY 2026 Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) “final” grant application for a historical survey of a second portion of the Benton-Stephens Neighborhood. If the application is successful, Historic Preservation Fund grants would be awarded on a 60:40 maximum federal – minimum local matching basis. Grant funds are dispersed as a reimbursement of project expenditures. A future appropriation request and a financial assistance agreement would be submitted for Council approval in fiscal year 2026.

## Discussion

The proposed grant, if awarded, would permit the City to hire a qualified consultant, per Section 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 61 (*Procedures for state, tribal, and local government historic preservation programs*), to conduct a second phase of an historic architectural survey of the Benton-Stephens Neighborhood. The boundary between the phases follows the Colt Railroad south from Business Loop 70 to William Street, then east along Amelia Street to Old 63. When Phases I & II of the survey are completed the combined survey area will include all land from Business Loop 70 (north), to Hinkson Avenue (south), and from Old 63 (east), to College Avenue (west).

The Phase II boundary includes roughly 113 acres and 200 structures. The survey boundary varies slightly from the existing Benton-Stephens Urban Conservation Overlay District, as it includes properties located north of the Colt Railroad and Ammonette Street, south of Business Loop 70 (historically Highway 40). These properties are included in the survey area in an effort to use the existing road network to define a simplified boundary, and avoid potential survey gaps.

The majority of the subject properties meet the age requirement (50 years) for designation as local historic properties. This survey will supplement others completed by the City, such as the North-Central Columbia Survey (completed in three phases from 2016 through 2021), informing policy decisions and in determining potential areas for focused preservation efforts, such as designation of historic districts and/or landmarks and neighborhood planning efforts. Within the proposed survey boundary, there are pockets of highly intact residential properties, industrial areas, educational facilities, and traditional commercial corridors. The former Southern Railway/Norfolk Southern railroad line (now COLT Railroad) has had a significant influence on development in central Columbia. This relationship is an important factor in the growth and development of Columbia’s industrial and business community. The railway lies on



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the northern boundary of the Benton-Stephens Urban Conservation Overlay District, and is included in the survey area.

The Benton-Stephens Neighborhood Association has continuously sought a historic survey of the neighborhood and indicated support for the project in the past. Due to the cost-prohibitive nature of surveying the entire neighborhood which contains more than 1,000 properties, the survey has been phased over the course of 4-5 years. Final phasing of the project will be determined in conversations with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Grants Manager. The previous phase of the Benton-Stephens Survey was awarded, but is currently awaiting Federal funding appropriation to SHPO, who administers the grants.

For expenditure comparison purposes, the final phase of the North-Central Survey was completed for a total cost of \$25,000, and included roughly 250 individual historic resources. Using this example, the HPC expects the Benton-Stephens survey to reach a total expense of up to \$125,000 (\$25,000 per year) which would be allocated over an anticipated 5-year project horizon. Based on the 60% Federal reimbursement provisions, a total of \$75,000 would be returned to the City at the completion of the 5 phases or \$15,000 per phase.

A pre-application, which is attached for reference, was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for preliminary comments on August 13<sup>th</sup>. SHPO comments on the pre-application were received on October 31<sup>st</sup> and included only minor technical corrections which staff is presently addressing.

The Historic Preservation Commission discussed the attached pre-application at their August 2024 meeting and were scheduled to act on the "final" application at their November 5, 2024 meeting. Due to an unforeseen lack of quorum the November 5 meeting was cancelled. The Commission is scheduled to discuss the "final" application at their December 3, 2024 meeting where full support is anticipated. The final application is due to SHPO by December 6<sup>th</sup> and the requested resolution of support by City Council is required as an attachment to the final grant application.

The Historical Preservation Commission has delivered five previous architectural surveys using the Historic Preservation Fund match funds grant program (Garth's Addition, East Downtown/Locust, and North-Central Phases I-III). These past survey grants represent an investment of over \$80,000 in documenting Columbia's historic properties, with roughly \$48,000 reimbursed to the City from the Historic Preservation Grant Fund.

In the recent past, the local matching funds for these projects were appropriated by the City Council from their discretionary funds given the limited funding allocated to the Historic Preservation Commission as part of their annual budget (\$5,000) for contractual expenses. However, the Historic Preservation Commission also recently kicked-off their FY 2024 grant project to engage a consultant in the preparation of a city-wide historic preservation plan. The FY 2024 grant funds, given prior reliance on Council reserves, were authorized as a budget amendment to the Historic Preservation Commission's annual budget for contractual services. It is anticipated that grant funds necessary to complete the five phases of the



Benton-Stephens Historic Survey will be sought in a similar fashion with budget amendment requests being submitted for the FY26-FY29.

The pre-application and a locator map are attached for reference.

### Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: \$50,000 over the next two years (FY 2026 & 2027), with an anticipated Federal reimbursement of \$30,000, resulting in a local share of \$20,000.

Long-Term Impact: If three additional phases are anticipated, long-term expenses will include another \$75,000 in FY 2028 through FY 2030, with an anticipated Federal reimbursement of \$45,000, resulting in a local share of \$30,000. Long-term expenses are contingent on Federal funding availability and project approval by the State Historic Preservation Office.

### Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Land Use & Growth Management, Secondary Impact: Economic Development, Tertiary Impact: Infrastructure

### Legislative History

Date	Action
9/5/2023	Approved: (R 130-23) Expressing support for the Benton-Stephens Neighborhood Historic Survey - Phase I; authorizing submission of an FY 2025 Historic Preservation Fund Grant Program - National Register and Survey Grant Application to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources - Division of State Parks.
5/1/2000	Approved: Benton-Stephens Urban Conservation Overlay District (Ord. # 016424)

### Suggested Council Action

Approve the resolution supporting the submission of an application seeking a Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) grant for surveying of a second portion of historic resources in the Benton-Stephens Neighborhood and authorize the City Manager to execute the final application.