

Renovation Narrative

Ashby Place — Commercial Structure

741 & 725 W. Ashby Place, San Antonio, Texas 78212

*City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation — Substantial Rehabilitation Tax Incentive (Tax Certification) and
City of San Antonio Fee Waiver Program*

Property: Ashby Place — Mixed-Use Historic Property
Property Address: 741 & 725 W. Ashby Place, San Antonio, TX 78212
Legal Description: NCB 1891, Block 8, Lot 17
Property ID (BCAD): 15004
Zoning: IDZ-2, NCD-2 (Neighborhood Conservation District), AHOD
Designation Status: Historic Landmark application filed with OHP — pending HDRC hearing on May 20, 2026
Property Owner: Ashby Place Owner, LLC
Architect / Applicant: Javier D. Alonso, RA — Pre Hospitality (TBAE #27193)
Drawing Set Reviewed: Ashby Place — Commercial Set, 04.01.2026
Programs Requested: (1) Substantial Rehabilitation Tax Incentive — Tax Certification (commercial – Five Zero / Five Fifty); (2) City of San Antonio Fee Waiver Program
Subject of this Narrative: 741 W. Ashby Place — historic single-story commercial structure
Adjacent New Construction: 725 W. Ashby Place — new-build multifamily, est. completion July 2026 (separate scope)
BCAD Appraised Value (Structure): \$80,500
Estimated Construction Cost: \$111,000 (per construction estimate submitted with application)
30% Substantial Rehab Threshold: \$24,150 — exceeded (estimate is approximately 138% of appraised value)
Construction Schedule: Approximately 3 months; work to commence following HDRC action and issuance of permits

Note: *This narrative is prepared in support of an application to the City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) for Tax Certification under the Substantial Rehabilitation Tax Incentive program (City Ordinances Nos. 52281 and 52282) and for fee relief under the City of San Antonio Fee Waiver Program. The narrative is based on the architectural plan set titled “Ashby Place — Commercial Set,” dated April 1, 2026, which is currently marked “Not for Construction, Permitting, or Regulatory Use.” The scope described below is the proposed scope as currently designed and is subject to refinement in the construction*

documents and in any conditions of approval imposed by the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC).

1. Historic Designation and Program Eligibility

Eligibility for both the Substantial Rehabilitation Tax Incentive and the City Fee Waiver Program requires that the property be a national, state, or locally designated historic landmark, or be located within a national or local historic district. The property at 741 & 725 W. Ashby Place is located in the Tobin Hill / Beacon Hill area of central San Antonio and is currently zoned IDZ-2 with a Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD-2) overlay.

The owner has filed an application for Historic Landmark (HL) designation with the City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation. That application is scheduled to be heard by the Historic and Design Review Commission at its May 20, 2026 meeting. This Tax Certification application and the related Fee Waiver request are submitted concurrently and are predicated on HDRC recommendation and ultimate City Council approval of the Historic Landmark designation; both applications should be reviewed and finalized in coordination with the HL designation case.

Because the structure at 741 W. Ashby Place is being rehabilitated for commercial use (Group A-2 Assembly), the requested incentive is the commercial-only Option 2 “Five Zero / Five Fifty” — no City property taxes for the first five years following Tax Verification, then City property taxes assessed at fifty percent of the post-rehabilitation value for the subsequent five years.

The “substantial rehabilitation” threshold — qualifying rehabilitation cost equal to or greater than 30% of the structure’s pre-rehabilitation assessed value — is comfortably met by this project. The Bexar County Appraisal District currently appraises the structure at \$80,500; thirty percent of that value is \$24,150. The construction estimate submitted with this application is \$111,000, which represents approximately 138% of the structure’s appraised value and exceeds the substantial-rehabilitation threshold by more than four-and-a-half times.

2. Project Overview

Ashby Place is a mixed-use development on a single parcel comprising two addressed structures. The historic single-story commercial structure at 741 W. Ashby Place (700 sq. ft.) — the subject of this narrative and of the pending Historic Landmark designation — is the only historic resource on the parcel. The adjacent two-story multifamily building at 725 W. Ashby Place (4,348 sq. ft. per floor; 8,696 sq. ft. total) is a new-construction structure, currently under construction and anticipated to reach substantial completion in July 2026. The new-construction multifamily building is not subject to historic review; it is referenced here only to clarify the overall site context and the relationship of the two addresses on the parcel.

Following rehabilitation, the historic structure at 741 W. Ashby Place will be returned to active commercial use as a neighborhood-serving food-and-beverage establishment (Group A-2 Assembly), with a new dining room, a small back-of-house prep area, an ADA-accessible restroom, a compact office, and an associated outdoor brick paver patio enclosed by a screen wall of regionally produced D’Hanis structural clay tile. The work has been designed to retain the historic character, massing, and materials of the existing building while restoring it to a use consistent with its long-standing role as a neighborhood commercial anchor along W. Ashby Place.

Construction is planned in sequence with the City’s historic review process: the rehabilitation work at 741 W. Ashby Place will commence only after HDRC action on the pending Historic Landmark designation and issuance of the Certificate of Appropriateness and applicable building permits. The construction schedule for the rehabilitation is approximately three months from notice to proceed, which dovetails with the substantial completion of the adjacent new-construction multifamily building at 725 W. Ashby Place in July 2026 and with the planned stabilization of the overall site.

3. Existing Conditions

The existing commercial structure is a small, single-story rectangular building with a parapeted, low-slope roof, set close to the W. Ashby Place street edge in the manner typical of early-twentieth-century neighborhood commercial buildings in San Antonio. The primary structure is masonry (existing brick and structural clay tile bearing walls), with portions of the exterior currently sheathed in deteriorated wood siding. Windows along the front and side elevations are predominantly fixed and operable wood-sash units, with at least one transom assembly above a former door opening on the side elevation facing the apartments.

4. Itemized Scope of Work

The following itemized list of proposed work satisfies the OHP requirement for a detailed list of interior and exterior scope. Each item is documented on the referenced drawing sheet(s) in the Commercial Set.

4.1 Exterior — Site

- Construct a new outdoor dining patio adjacent to the indoor dining area, with new brick pavers set on the existing concrete flatwork (top of brick set 6 inches below finished floor) (Sheets A2.20 / A2.50).
- Construct a freestanding screen wall enclosing the patio of D’Hanis 8x8x12 structural clay tile in a running-bond pattern with a 3-inch open gap, set on the existing concrete curb (Sheet A2.20, Keynote 7).
- Provide new concrete steps connecting the patio to finished floor with the top of tread set flush (Sheet A2.20, Keynote 8).

4.2 Exterior — Building Shell

- Retain existing primary masonry shell (perimeter walls, parapet, sound roof structure) (Sheet A2.20, Keynote 1: “Existing Structure to Remain”).
- Remove non-original infill walls and vinyl framed windows (A2.20).
- Construct new infill walls, with new wood frames windows, and wood doors, with smooth stucco to match existing historic exterior (Sheet A2.40).
- Repair existing windows identified to remain and repaint in place; do not replace (Sheet A2.20).
- Field-fit new clad-wood doors to existing exterior door openings where reused; size new clad-wood doors and windows per the Door and Window Schedule (Sheets A2.90 / A2.91).
- Construct a small back-of-house addition behind the historic shell — slab on grade with “salt rock” concrete finish, new CMU walls finished in stucco, exposed pipe-steel columns and steel framing (1 coat primer + 2 coats epoxy), and a galvanized corrugated metal roof at steel framing (Sheets A2.20–A2.24).

4.3 Interior

- Remove non-historic interior partitions and reconfigure the interior into: a single open Dining Room (≈ 454 sq. ft.); a Prep Area (≈ 155 sq. ft.); an ADA-accessible Restroom (≈ 24 sq. ft.); and an Office (≈ 22 sq. ft.) (Sheet A2.20).
- Construct new non-load-bearing interior partitions; partitions are demountable and do not engage the historic perimeter walls.
- Provide solid-core, two-panel shaker interior doors with two coats of primer and one coat of oil-based paint; commercial-grade hardware (basis of design: Schlage Broadway lever, satin chrome) (Sheet A2.90 General Notes).
- Retain existing interior ceilings where present; remove loose paint, patch as required, and apply 1 coat primer + 2 coats finish paint (Sheet A2.20, Keynote 16).
- Provide new suspended ceiling at the Prep Area only (Keynote 14); provide new gypsum-board ceiling with light orange-peel texture at the Restroom (Keynote 15).
- Provide a new reflected ceiling layout consistent with Sheet A2.22 — Reflected Ceiling Plan, Proposed Commercial.

4.4 Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing

- Provide new electrical meter, service, and breaker panel at a code-compliant exterior location (Sheet M2.10 / electrical sheets, Keynotes 1 & 3).
- Use surface-mount outlets and exposed conduit at existing masonry walls and at existing ceilings to remain (Keynotes 4 & 5) — a deliberately reversible installation that avoids chasing into historic fabric.

- Provide new HVAC consisting of one Air Handling Unit (AHU 01), one Outdoor Unit (OU 01), and one Exhaust Fan (EF 01), with a full-service cutoff switch at the condenser (Sheet M2.10, Commercial HVAC Equipment Schedule, Keynote 2).
- Provide new lighting per the Light Fixture Schedule: 4-inch recessed cans (Lithonia 4SEMW or similar), 2x2 LED panels (Lithonia CPX 2X2 or similar), surface-mount cans (WAC FM-240103-CS-BK), and a ceiling fan in the Dining Room (Sheet electrical schedule).
- Provide new plumbing limited to a single Restroom (vanity P.01, toilet P.02) and an electric water heater (P.04); reuse existing water and sewer lines where serviceable (Sheet plumbing schedule).

5. Alignment with HDRC Historic Design Guidelines and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards

The proposed scope has been designed to comply with the City of San Antonio Historic Design Guidelines and Unified Development Code Section 35-630, and is consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, on which the City's guidelines are based:

- Use: The building is being returned to a commercial use consistent with its historic role as a neighborhood-serving commercial structure (SOI Standard 1).
- Character: The historic character of the building — its massing, parapeted street wall, masonry shell, and primary fenestration pattern — is retained (SOI Standard 2).
- No false history: New work, particularly the back-of-house addition and the clay-tile screen wall, is differentiated from the historic structure in material, massing, and roof form, and is not designed to create a false sense of historical development (SOI Standard 3).
- Significant changes: Demolition is limited to non-original accretions (rear lean-to, deteriorated wood siding, non-original porch and ramp); no historic features that have themselves achieved significance are being removed (SOI Standard 4).
- Distinctive features: Distinctive features — including the front parapet, the existing transom window, and the historic masonry shell — are preserved and repaired (SOI Standard 5).
- Repair vs. replace: Deteriorated historic features (windows, ceilings, masonry) are repaired rather than replaced wherever feasible; replacements match the original in design, material, and visual appearance (SOI Standard 6).
- New additions: The new back-of-house addition is differentiated from the historic structure through material (corrugated metal roof, exposed steel) and is compatible in massing and scale (SOI Standard 9).
- Reversibility: New work — including the addition, the patio screen wall, surface-mounted electrical, and interior partitions — is detailed so that it could be removed in the future without impairing the essential form and integrity of the historic structure (SOI Standard 10).

6. Permitting, HDRC Review, and Code Compliance

The owner acknowledges that approval of this Tax Certification application does not substitute for either a Certificate of Appropriateness or a building permit. A Certificate of Appropriateness will be obtained from OHP / HDRC for all exterior work prior to construction, and a building permit will be obtained from the City of San Antonio Development Services Department before commencement of work. Final Building Inspection clearance (closed permits and Certificate of Occupancy) will be provided to OHP at the Tax Verification stage following completion.

The proposed work has been designed to comply with the 2024 International Building, Mechanical, and Plumbing Codes; the 2020 National Electrical Code; the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code; OSHA; and the 2012 Texas Accessibility Standards. The commercial structure is classified as Group A-2 Assembly, Type V-B construction, with a total area of 1,267 sq. ft. (well within the 6,000 sq. ft. allowable area for non-sprinklered A-2 / V-B construction under IBC Table 506.2). Three exits are provided where two are required (IBC Table 1006.3.2); common path of egress travel is limited to 75 feet, and exit access travel distance is limited to 200 feet, both within code limits.

7. Summary

The proposed rehabilitation of 741 W. Ashby Place preserves the historic single-story commercial shell that anchors the Ashby Place property; limits demolition to non-original and deteriorated accretions; repairs and reuses original windows, masonry, and interior ceilings wherever feasible; and supports the building's return to active commercial use through a clearly differentiated, reversible back-of-house addition and a new outdoor patio. Taken together, the work is consistent with the HDRC Historic Design Guidelines, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, and the requirements of the City of San Antonio Substantial Rehabilitation Tax Incentive program (Ordinances Nos. 52281 and 52282) and the City of San Antonio Fee Waiver Program.

Appendix A — Items Submitted with this Application and Items to Follow

Submitted with this application:

- This Renovation Narrative.
- Architectural plan set: "Ashby Place — Commercial Set," dated 04.01.2026.
- Construction cost estimate (\$111,000) supporting the substantial-rehabilitation threshold.
- Color photographs of the existing exterior (all elevations) and existing interior conditions, including a color photograph from the W. Ashby Place street frontage.
- Reference to the pending Historic Landmark application (HDRC hearing on May 20, 2026).

To follow / finalize:

- HDRC recommendation and City Council action on the pending Historic Landmark designation (anticipated following the May 20, 2026 HDRC hearing).