

City Council designates Germantown as a City historic district

Germantown becomes the City's 20th Historic District.

The Germantown Historic District is a small wedge of land located east of Woodland Heights and bounded by Houston Avenue to the west, I-45 to the north and east, and Woodland Park to the south. The Germantown name is leftover from the late 1800s when the rural land north of White Oak Bayou was populated by German immigrant farming families. Germantown as we know it today is just a small portion of this larger area. Developed as a neighborhood in the very early 20th century, most of the proposed historic district was originally the homestead of a local German family, the Grotas. The Grota Homestead evolved into a stable working class neighborhood until the construction of I-45 in the 1960s split the neighborhood and forced some households and businesses to move. After a period of decline, the neighborhood has experienced revitalization in recent years and retains most of its original housing stock. Of the 71 structures in the proposed district, 83 percent are over 50 years of age and classified as contributing to the district.

The proposed historic district is almost entirely residential and contains a significant mix of bungalows and modest houses with Craftsman, American Four Square, Queen Anne and Colonial Revival architectural details. A handful of larger houses face Woodland Park. The proposed district also includes Woodland Park itself, which was developed in 1903 and is one of Houston's oldest parks.

"Property owners in the newly designated Germantown Historic District can now breathe a sigh of relief that their historic homes are now protected and the architectural character of their neighborhood will be maintained. We are preserving Houston's history and know this designation will benefit the District and City for years to come," said Wendy Parker, applicant, Germantown Historic District.

