

//Fairstead

February 12, 2026

Dear Ms. Treadwell,

Aurora Apartments – Waiver Request & Material Amendment Fee

I hope you are well.

I am writing regarding **Aurora Apartments in San Antonio** to respectfully request a waiver related to the requirement for screens on all operable windows. Due to the property's historic designation and the associated preservation requirements, installation of screens on all operable windows was not feasible without conflicting with the approved historic standards. The window specifications were developed in coordination with the applicable historic review authorities to ensure compliance with preservation requirements and to maintain the integrity of the historic façade.

We acknowledge that this waiver request should have been submitted earlier and apologize for the oversight. We respectfully request TDHCA's consideration of this waiver in light of the historic constraints and the project's overall compliance with applicable design and preservation requirements. We are happy to provide any additional documentation needed to support this request.

Additionally, we understand this change may constitute a material amendment. Would you please advise where we should remit the \$2,500 material amendment fee and to whose attention it should be directed?

Thank you very much for your guidance and consideration. We appreciate your assistance and look forward to your direction on next steps.

Sincerely,

Catherine Fennell



P.O. Box 12276
Austin, Texas 78711-2276
512-463-6100
thc.texas.gov

March 5, 2026

Attention: Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
221 East 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Subject: Aurora Apartment Hotel
509 Howard St, San Antonio, Bexar County

The above historic building was considered one of South Texas' most luxurious residential high-rises at the time of its construction in 1930. The residential hotel offered fully furnished in-unit kitchens as well as hotel rooms with shared public spaces and services, a confluence lifestyle most commonly seen in major American commercial centers such as New York and Chicago but a relatively novel concept in Texas. The Eclectic ten-story building with basement and three-story rooftop penthouse exhibits a blend of Spanish Colonial Revival, Beaux Arts, Art Deco, and Gothic Revival influences. The building's exceptional integrity and historical significance led to the successful listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and its character defining features – including the cast stone ornamentation, windows, balconies, and brick exterior – remain remarkably intact.

A major rehabilitation project to repair this affordable senior housing was recently completed. The work was certified to receive tax credits under the Texas Historic Preservation Tax Credit program and the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit program in December 2025, based on successful completion of construction in compliance with program requirements. Both of these programs require projects to meet the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation (Standards)*, an analysis that was completed during construction. The work scope included a thoughtful restoration of the extant historic windows, in compliance with the Standards. For this reason, the TDHCA requirement for insect screens is of concern to our office.

We have studied historic photographs depicting the hotel over time and have concluded that there were no window screens historically present on the building. Our office's opinion is that installation of window screens would present a difficult design challenge and would generally detract from the character of the building, thereby making the installation of window screens incompatible with the character of the building. Moreover, installation of window screens after the project was already successfully completed under the tax credit programs would threaten the tax credits already earned.

In summation, our office does not recommend window screens for this historic building, and we support the applicant in their request that TDHCA waive this requirement.

Sincerely,

Valerie Magolan
Tax Credit Program Coordinator, Division of Architecture, Texas Historical Commission
512-463-3857 | valerie.magolan@thc.texas.gov