

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received **NOV 18 1982**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Fischer House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 1008 West Avenue

N/A not for publication

city, town Austin

N/A vicinity of

state Texas

code 048

county Travis

code 453

3. Classification

Category

- district
- building(s)
- structure
- site
- object

Ownership

- public
- private
- both

Public Acquisition

- N/A in process
- being considered

Status

- occupied
- unoccupied
- work in progress

Accessible

- yes: restricted
- yes: unrestricted
- no

Present Use

- agriculture
- commercial
- educational
- entertainment
- government
- industrial
- military
- museum
- park
- private residence
- religious
- scientific
- transportation
- other:

4. Owner of Property

name Durelle and Harry T. Eidson

street & number 606 West Lynn #15

city, town Austin

N/A vicinity of

state Texas 78703

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Travis County Courthouse

street & number 1000 Guadalupe

city, town Austin

state Texas

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Landmark Inventory;
Historic Sites Inventory

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978;1981

federal state county local

depository for survey records City of Austin Landmark Commission; Texas Historical Commission

city, town Austin

state Texas

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Fischer House is a handsome one-story residence with basement, situated on the west-sloping corner of 10th Street and West Avenue near downtown Austin. It was built in 1882 of brick and cut limestone in the Italianate mode, although it is a rather subdued statement of that High-Victorian style and displays Greek Revival symmetry. The house has a rectangular, symmetrical plan with hall, and is capped by a low, hipped roof of asphalt shingles. The original front porch on the east facade has been removed, and the early, two-story back porch is now enclosed. The structure has recently been renovated, is in excellent condition, and is used as professional office space. Its prominent siting and handsome Italianate detailing make the Fischer House a distinctive Austin landmark.

Originally located near the western edge of Austin about eight blocks west of the Capitol, the Fischer House and other older residences, many of which have been converted to commercial use, are now interspersed with modern office buildings. The front elevation of the house faces east, and is moderately detailed and ornate. A small, rectangular porch stands in front of the double doors of the entrance. The recent porch roof was not original, and was removed during the last renovation. Above the door is the pediment of a cross-gable with cornice returns, supported by cut-limestone pilasters which complement the evenly cut quoins encountered at all four corners of the house. Corbeled brick dentils and a circular, louvered vent can be seen in the pediment. A cut-stone hood mold with a protruding keystone caps the double door.

There are two symmetrically placed windows to the right and left of the entrance. They and the two windows of each side elevation are double-hung with four-over-four lights. Each shows a cut-stone hood mold with large keystone. An incised wooden tympanum with vine-like motifs is set-in just below each window arch, and adds a light, decorative touch. The eaves overhang markedly and are supported by evenly-spaced wooden modillions, as well as by ornamental wooden brackets at the corners of the house over the quoins and over the pilasters which border the front entrance. Below the bank of modillions is a row of attractive brick dentils. A thick, cut-stone watertable tops the irregularly coursed, rough-stone foundation which creates a lower story at the back of the house where the land slopes downhill. The two-story rear (west) porch has been enclosed with clapboard siding, probably during the remodeling done in the 1930s. It has six irregular bays and obscures from view the original back door located on the previous northwest corner of the brick west facade, as well as the two windows of the original brick rear wall. These windows have been shortened and their lower portions bricked up.

The interior of the house features a modified four-room plan with central hall. It is modified in the sense that the back half of the "hall" is an enclosed room wider than the front hall space. The wall separating the southeastern front room from the hall was removed at an undetermined time, but has recently been reconstructed. The northwest room has been partitioned for operational purposes (kitchen and bath), and the two-story back porch was enclosed, probably in the 1930s. There is a stone-walled basement room below the rear porch which is floored with red ceramic tiles, apparently modern. Back-to-back fireplaces occur between the two southern rooms. The one in the front room exhibits a Georgian Revival mantel likely dating from the renovation done in the 1930s. The corner china closets in the back-central room also appear to belong to that renovation. The mantel of the southwestern room, however, is simple and appears to be original. This small chamber also shows chair-molding with wainscoting beneath.

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

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The front doorway consists of two in-swinging doors, each of which has one main light made up of several pieces of beveled glass set in metal, and two small vertical lights beneath. There is also an arched transom with two lights. The main entrance is marked on the inside by a smooth, wide architrave or facing which follows the curve of the arch above the door. The beaded wooden ceilings are now outlined with a prominent cornice molding, with a smaller picture molding a foot or so below the ceiling. Four-panel doors between rooms have box locks. There are two short and corbeled chimneys in the house, one for the double fireplace between the two southern rooms, and another in the northwestern part of the house, probably once serving as a kitchen flue. The floors of the main part of the Fischer House are of oak and are in very good condition; they seemingly date to the remodeling of the 1930s. During the recent renovation the interior was re-decorated in a restrained and appropriate style.

Also situated on the property are a small parking lot and a 20th-century, two-story frame structure that blends well with the house, especially with its back porch. This auxiliary building is not, however, a contributing element to the nominated property. Two stone hitching posts remain in front of the house, and a metal fence runs around much of the property and has been in place for many years.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1882 **Builder/Architect** Joseph and Francis Fischer

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Fischer House was built in 1882 by a Prussian-born stonemason, Joseph Fischer and his son, Francis, in the High-Victorian Italianate style. Francis eventually attained a high degree of prominence as a stonemason in Austin, and contributed his craftsmanship to many important local buildings. The present structure is similar to the nearby Twin Houses, small Italianate structures on 14th Street, Austin, which are the other major small Italianate stone houses surviving in the city. Both are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The small-scale plan and restrained detailing were popular, vernacular adaptations of more elaborate, sophisticated motifs.

Joseph Fischer came to Austin from Prussia via the German settlement in New Braunfels, Texas. He was a fine stonemason and his son Francis followed in his footsteps. Both father and son very likely worked on the house described herein. It was built in 1882, and served both as office and residence for the Fischer family. It is said that stone from the recently burned Capitol building may have been used in its construction. The same claim is made for the Twin Houses at 502 and 504 West 14th Street, which are also small Italianate houses with prominent cut stonework in their facades. The elaborate brackets and low roofline of the Fischer House reflect Italianate influence, but are not often used so successfully on such small, one-story buildings. Except for the more elaborate and more highly decorated Twin Houses, few if any other structures of this type and size survive in Austin.

Joseph Fischer died in 1889 and Francis took the reins of the family business. He went on to become one of the most prominent stonemasons and masonry contractors in Austin. He worked on the present State Capitol and contributed to the masonry of the Speech Building and the Old Law Building at the University of Texas. In addition he worked on both the Austin Y.M.C.A. building, and a building on the campus of St. Edwards University. In 1899 he was also involved in the construction of a dam in Mexico. The family stayed in the Austin area. Joseph, Jr., who became a local grocer, had his home across the street from the Fischer House, at 1100 West Avenue. And John B. Fischer, who was a business partner of Joseph, Jr., also had a house nearby, at 813 West 11th Street.

By 1909 Francis had moved out of the Fischer House, but the building remained in the hands of the family until 1938, when it was sold as part of the estate of Katerina, Francis' wife. It continued to be used as a residence until the middle 1970s, after which it saw service as a barbershop and bookstore. Since its recent restoration in 1979–80 by the Eidson family, the present owners, the Fischer House has served as professional office space. In March of 1981, the Eidsons received an award from the Heritage Society of Austin for their careful preservation work.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately one

Quadrangle name Austin East

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 14 620340 3849680
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet. The nominated property contains the original house and the auxiliary structure behind it.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title LeRoy Johnson, Jr. (and Danial Elswick, Texas Historical Commission, Austin)

organization date November 4, 1982

street & number 2408 Leon #1114 telephone (512) 477-0714

city or town Austin state Texas 78705

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *[Signature]*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 10 Nov. 1982

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

[Signature] **Entered in the National Register** date 12/6/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet

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Bibliography:

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Austin, Texas. Survey Form for Historic Landmark Inventory, #C14h-78-025.
Landmark Commission, City of Austin, 1978.

Goeldner, Paul, compiler. Texas Catalog. San Antonio, Texas: Trinity University
Press, 1974.

Turner, William Keeton, to Danial Elswick, Austin, Texas. Interview, November 3, 1980.

Sanborn Map Co. Map of Austin, Texas, 1900. On file, Barker Texas History Center,
Austin.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

Part of Outlot Number Five (5) in Division "E" in the City of Austin, as said Outlot was decreed to be located by the District Court of Travis County, Texas, in Cause No. 7418. entitled Mary A. Smith and husband, S. T. Smith, vs, Frances T. Burlage, et al, more particularly described as follows: Beginning at the intersection of the South line of West Eleventh Street and the West line of West Avenue, said beginning point being described in decree rendered by said court in said cause at a point opposite the South line of Mesquite Street where it strikes West Avenue, 80 feet South of where the North line of Mesquite Street extended would strike the west boundary line of West Avenue, said Street defined as Mesquite Street in said decree being now known as West Eleventh Street; Thence Southward with the West line of West Avenue 92 feet to a stake; Thence at right angles with West Avenue westward 128 feet to corner; Thence in a line parallel with West Avenue Northward 92 feet to corner in the South line of said West Eleventh Street; Thence Eastward with the South line of said West Eleventh Street 128 feet to the place of beginning.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Fischer House
Travis County
TEXAS

Working No. 11/18/82-3066

Fed. Reg. Date: 2.1.83

Date Due: 12/16/82 - 1/2/83

Action: ACCEPT 12/16/82

RETURN

REJECT

Federal Agency: _____

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Entered in the
National Register

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____

Reviewer _____

Discipline _____

Date _____

see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: technical corrections cited below
 substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Area of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- _____ summary paragraph
- _____ completeness
- _____ clarity
- _____ applicable criteria
- _____ justification of areas checked
- _____ relating significance to the resource
- _____ context
- _____ relationship of integrity to significance
- _____ justification of exception
- _____ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Average of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

USGT References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

13. Other

- _____ Maps
- _____ Photographs
- _____ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



METAPHYSICAL
BOOK STORE

FEDERAL
CATHOLIC CHURCH

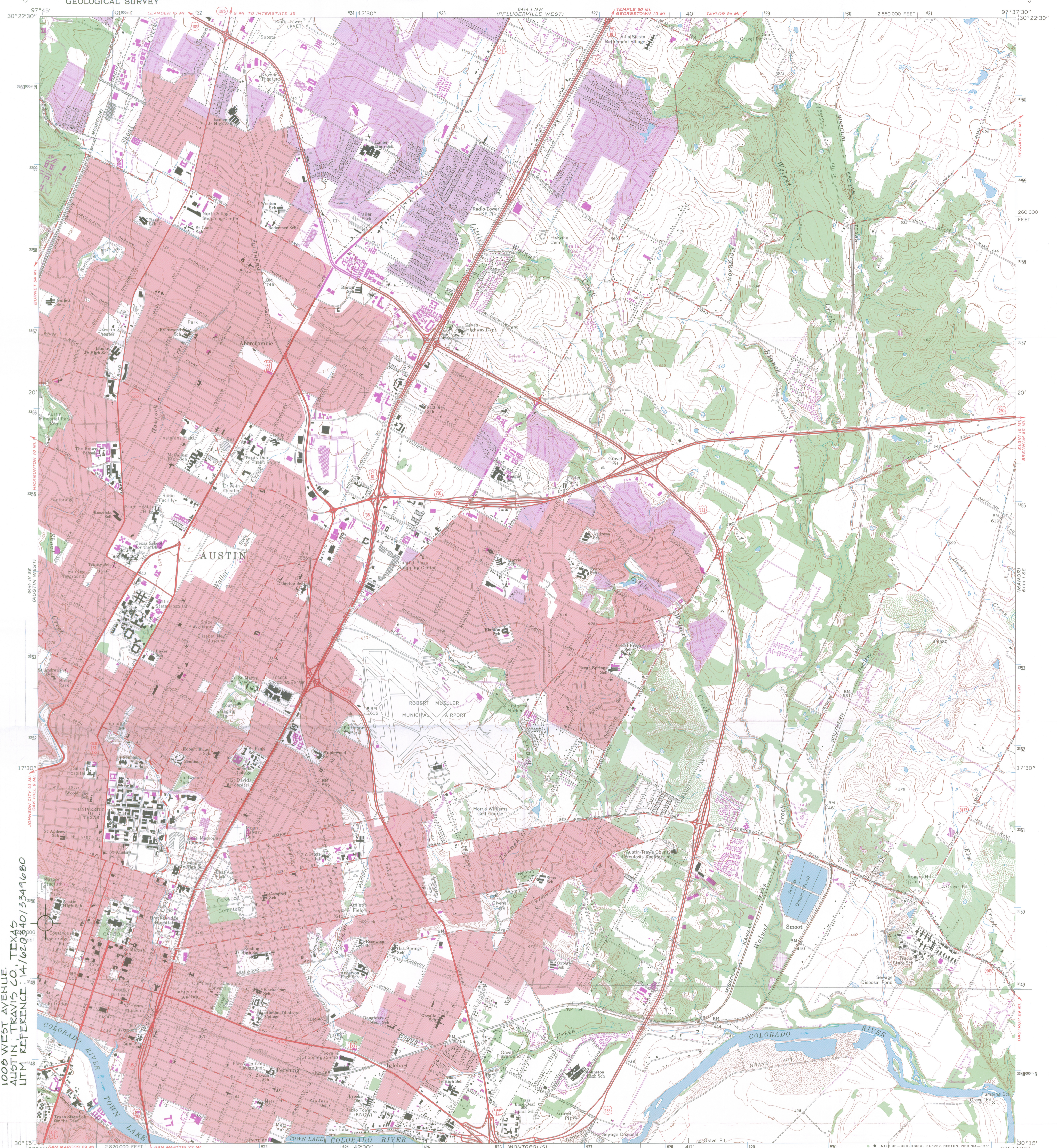
The Fischer House
1008 West Avenue, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Carol Kennedy, photographer
late 1970s
neg. on file, Texas Historical Commission
view of front elevation, looking west
no. 1 of 3



The Fischer House
1008 West Avenue, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Jeff Powell, photographer
1981
neg. on file, Texas Historical Commission
view of front elevation, looking northwest
no. 2 of 3

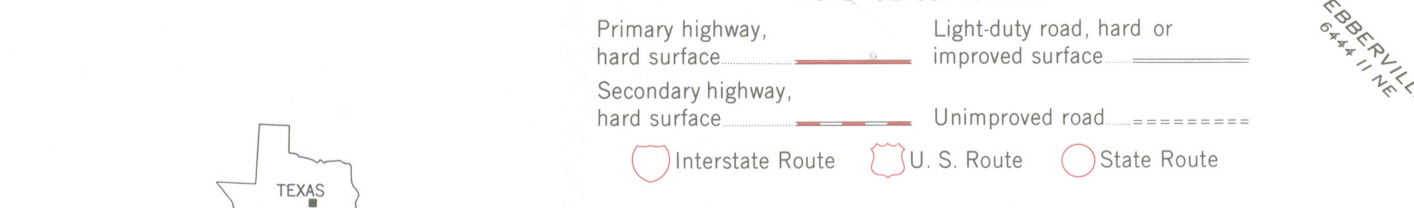
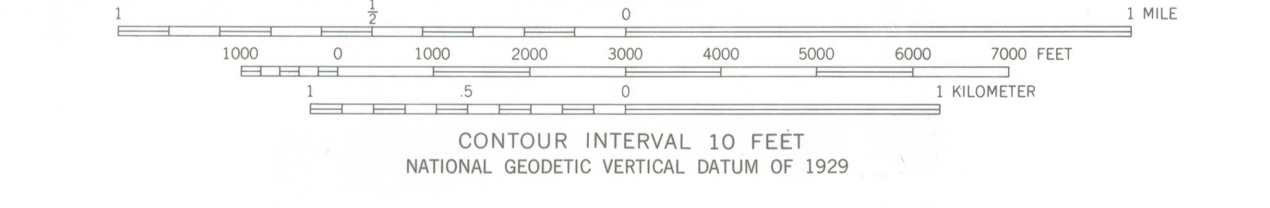
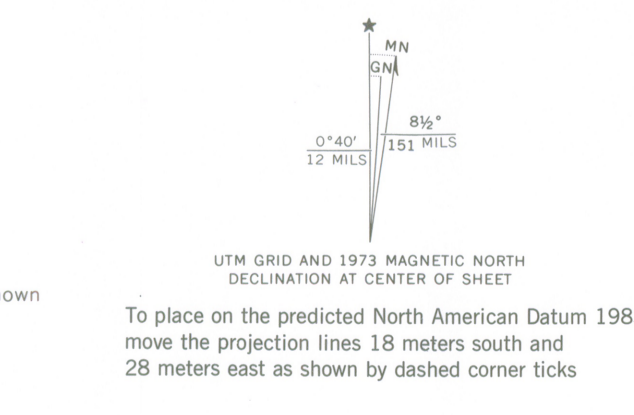


The Fischer House
1008 West Avenue, Austin, Travis County, Texas
Jeff Powell, photographer
1981
neg. on file, Texas Historical Commission
view of rear of house showing enclosed back porch,
looking southeast
no. 3 of 3



FISCHER HOUSE
1008 WEST AVENUE
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS
UTM REFERENCE: 14J620340133491680

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS and USC&GS
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1952. Field checked 1954. Revised from
aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,
central zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines
Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs
taken 1973. This information not field checked
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

AUSTIN EAST, TEX.
N3015—W9737.5/7.5
1966
PHOTOREVISED 1973
DMA 6444 1 SW—SERIES V882