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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Austin Coming Together Acquires Frank Lloyd Wright's J.J. Walser House, Preserving Historic West Side Landmark

CHICAGO — June 24, 2026 — Austin Coming Together (ACT) announced today that it has acquired the J.J. Walser House — the Frank Lloyd Wright-designed residence at 42 N. Central Avenue in Chicago's Austin neighborhood. The acquisition marks a major preservation milestone for Austin, with ACT taking responsibility for the endangered landmark and guiding its next chapter with community accountability and long-term care.

Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1903 for Joseph J. and Grace Walser, the home is a rare example of Wright's Prairie-period residential work in the city of Chicago. It is a designated Chicago Landmark, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and is Wright's only single-family residence on Chicago's West Side.

"The J.J. Walser House is part of Austin's story, and we believe its next chapter should be shaped by the people who call this community home," said Darnell Shields, Executive Director of Austin Coming Together. "ACT stepped in because this house is critically important, not only as a Frank Lloyd Wright design, but as a piece of Austin's history. Our first responsibility is to stabilize this treasured landmark and protect it from further deterioration. From there, we will work with residents and partners to envision a future that honors both the house and the community."

The Walser House has benefited from generations of stewardship, including nearly five decades of care by Hurley and Anne Teague, who purchased the home in 1970. Following Anne Teague's passing in 2019, the property entered a period of vacancy and uncertainty, underscoring the need to protect the home and carry forward its legacy.

ACT is positioned to carry that legacy forward, bringing both preservation leadership and a long-standing commitment to Austin to the next chapter of the Walser House. That combination of architectural preservation and community connection is what partners see as essential to the home's future.

“ACT understands the potential waiting to be unlocked by revitalizing this landmark Frank Lloyd Wright design, celebrating Austin as a destination for notable architecture,” said Barbara Gordon, Executive Director of the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy. “The organization’s deep roots in the community mean they know the rich stories the house can tell about how it has changed over time, and what Austin residents envision for its future.”

The acquisition reflects a broad coalition effort to move the house from uncertainty into stewardship. Preservation partners, community stakeholders, civic leaders, Fannie Mae, and Community Investment Corporation worked with ACT to create a pathway for the property’s transfer, an outcome preservation advocates described as significant for both the landmark and the West Side community.

“Austin Coming Together’s acquisition of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Walser House will be transformative for both the home and the community,” said Ward Miller, Executive Director of Preservation Chicago.

“We commend Austin Coming Together for its vision and determination to preserve the J.J. Walser House, a nationally recognized architectural and cultural asset on Chicago’s West Side,” said Kendra Parzen, Landmarks Illinois Advocacy Manager.

The acquisition is not only about preserving a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed home. It is also about recognizing the Walser House as part of Austin’s future. As steward of the Austin Forward. Together. quality-of-life plan, ACT sees the house as a historic asset with the potential to anchor preservation, education, cultural pride, and community along one of the neighborhood’s key corridors.

ACT extends special thanks to the Frank Lloyd Wright Building Conservancy, Landmarks Illinois, Preservation Chicago, the City of Chicago, local elected officials, community residents, and the Teague family and heirs for their roles in supporting the effort to protect the Walser House.

ACT will share updates as planning moves forward and community engagement opportunities are created. For the latest information, please visit www.austincomingtogether.org/walser.

About Austin Coming Together

Austin Coming Together is a collective impact organization working to advance the Austin Forward. Together. quality-of life plan by building partnerships, aligning resources, and supporting community-led strategies that improve quality of life in Chicago’s Austin community.

About the J.J. Walser House

Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1903, the J.J. Walser House is located at 42 N. Central Avenue in Chicago’s Austin community. Built for Joseph J. and Grace Walser, the house is a Chicago Landmark, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and recognized as an important example of Wright’s Prairie-period residential architecture.