

Late Backup

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To the council,

Last year I gave up my 23rd Street Market license after 7 years. I still make my living vending crafts at markets and events but could not deal with that market any longer. Let me give you just a few of the reasons why.

1. Vendors often came up with ideas to promote or better the market. Seldom was any of it followed up on because the parks department did not have the personnel or time.
2. It seemed that preference was given to vendors that made "hippy" type items, i.e. pipes and hemp jewelry. The same vendors who peddle these items encourage street kids, drug dealers and vulgar loud people in general to "hang out" in the market. They scare away legitimate customers with money.
3. A disagreement regarding jurisdiction often left the market without police presents and vendors and customers were aggressively pan handled and harassed.

There are a great many cities with permanent craft markets that bring in revenue through fees , tourists and taxes. Portland and Eugene, Oregon come to mind as does Seattle , Washington. Hand crafts generate billions of dollars annually in revenue through out the country.

Per Crafts Report magazine:

CRAFTS ARE BIG BUSINESS. MANY OF US HAVE BELIEVED THIS FOR YEARS, BUT THE CRAFT ORGANIZATION DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION (CODA) HAS FINALLY GIVEN US THE NUMBERS TO PROVE IT. ACCORDING TO THE CODA SURVEY, THE FIRST-EVER SURVEY OF CRAFTS' IMPACT ON THE NATIONAL ECONOMY, THE FINE CRAFTS MARKET IS A \$13.8 BILLION INDUSTRY. AS A POINT OF COMPARISON, THE CRAFTS INDUSTRY IS ABOUT HALF THE SIZE OF THE \$29.9 BILLION TOY INDUSTRY (SOURCE: TOY MANUFACTURERS OF AMERICA). IT IS ROUGHLY THREE TIMES THE SIZE OF THE \$4 BILLION ORGANIC FOODS INDUSTRY (SOURCE: ORGANIC TRADE ASSOCIATION). AND IT IS JUST SLIGHTLY SMALLER THAN THE \$16 BILLION RETAIL FLORAL MARKET (SOURCE: SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FLORISTS).

Austin has a wonderful venue for crafters. Instead of killing this venue totally by handing it over to already over burdened park workers why not strengthen the market council, add a vendor or two to the council and even hire a market coordinator. This is an under utilized resource. It is up to you to bring this market to its potential.

Thanks for your consideration, Mona Prater

To the council

As a former and a current vendor at the 23rd St Market we have concerns regarding proposed changes in licensing at the market. Due to busy schedules and limited resources we are concerned Parks and Rec will have little time to dedicate to this endeavor. We believe the following is vital to the revitalization and continuation of the Market:

- 1 Staffer(s) dedicated to licensing
- 2 That all applicants must bring receipts showing components, this will cut down on "resellers"
- 3 Postponement of changeover until rules/regs/guidelines can be written by work group composed of staff and Market vendors
- 4 Vendors direct involvement in decision making

Crafts are big business. It is time to turn the Market around and make it work for everyone. Below is a short excerpt from Craft Organization Directors Association (CODA).

These statistics are drawn from The CODA Survey: The Impact of Crafts on the National Economy, prepared by the Center for Business Research, John A. Walker College of Business, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC. The Craft Organization Directors Association is an organization whose mission is to support the work of craft administration professionals of state, regional, and national craft-related organizations.

Economic Facts

There are 106,000 to 126,000 craftspeople working in the United States today.

The average gross sales/revenue per craftsperson is \$76,025.

The total impact of craft sales is \$12.3 to \$13.8 billion per year. This is one-third the volume of shoes purchased in the US and four times the value of taxicab rides.

Median household income of craftspeople is \$50,000 per year, 26% above the national median of \$39,657.

Income from craft activities comprises 47% of household income on average. 22% of craft households derive all of their income from craft. Austin needs to focus on the potential of the 23rd St Market. Many cities have already turned such dedicated spaces into tourist destinations, impacting the economy. Portland, Oregon is a great example.

This can only be done if the city, Park and Rec and the vendors work together.

Mona and Danny Prater