

BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Arts Commission

Recommendation Number: 20160815-6.a.i: Arts Commission Recommendations on the Music and Creative Ecosystem Stabilization Recommendations (Staff Response to City Council Resolution No. 20160303-019)

WHEREAS, on March 3, 2016 the Austin City Council adopted Resolution No. 20160303-019, referred to as the Music and Creative Ecosystem Omnibus Resolution (the “Omnibus Resolution”), designed to address the commitment of the City to support the creative community and acknowledging the growing challenges faced by the Austin music and creative communities as documented in multiple studies, including the *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan*, the *CreateAustin Cultural Master Plan*, *The Austin Music Census*, and the *Building Austin’s Creative Capacity Cultural Needs Assessment*, among others; and

WHEREAS, the Arts Commission has been working to address the on-going challenges facing the creative community since well before the introduction and passage of the Omnibus Resolution (City Council Resolution No. 20160303-019) and has continued to receive public input and collaborate with community partners, including holding both a special called meeting and a joint meeting with the Music Commission on the Omnibus Resolution in April 2016; and

WHEREAS in June 2016 the Economic Development Department delivered the Music and Creative Ecosystem Stabilization Recommendations (Staff Response to City Council Resolution No. 20160303-019) (the “Staff Response”) to the Austin City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Arts Commission, based on public input received , voted at our July 16, 2016 meeting to prioritize the staff recommendations of Affordable Space, Land Use Regulations, Permitting and Licensing, and Incentives, Tools and Loans as our top priorities; and

WHEREAS, the Arts Commission convened a Special Called Meeting on August 2, 2016 to gather additional feedback from impacted organizations and individuals and to discuss the Music and Creative Ecosystem Stabilization Recommendations (Staff Response to the Omnibus Resolution); and

WHEREAS, after receiving comments from 16 additional creative community members at the special called meeting and having discussion, the Arts Commission voted to further prioritize staff recommendations and add-to the priorities voted on at the July 16, 2016 Arts Commission meeting the following additional priority areas: Affordable Space Crisis Fund, Agent of Change, Professional Development, Genre Development (reframed as Equity, Diversity and Inclusion), Revenue Development, Cultural Tourism, Entertainment License, Artists’ Safety Net, Cultural Districts, Public Art in Private Development; and

WHEREAS the Arts Commission further endorsed the establishment of a public relations campaign designed to drive attendance by local Austinites to local arts and music events; and

WHEREAS, the Arts Commission voted to broaden the language of the Staff Response to ensure meaningful support of Creatives in all areas not currently mentioned, including but not limited to, streamlining **permitting/ licensing** and land use regulations, expanding revenue development and safety net, and all other priority categories; and

WHEREAS the Arts Commission further voted to highlight the urgent need for immediate action; and

WHEREAS, the Arts Commission further adopted a formal recommendation to allocate \$350,000 from the General Fund to immediately establish an Emergency Venue Assistance Fund for Creative Venues outside the Omnibus Resolution; and

WHEREAS the Arts Commission continues to support the priorities of our colleagues on the Music Commission in support of the Resolution; and

WHEREAS the Arts Commission recognizes and acknowledges that the process of addressing the community concerns as articulated in the **Omnibus** Resolution and the Staff Recommendations will be ongoing and will require the continued commitment and engagement of public and private entities over time, and has appointed a policy working group made up of Commissioners and public members from the creative community **for that purpose**; and

WHEREAS the Arts Commission recognizes that a number of priority items require specific financial and policy support from the City Council to be successful; and

WHEREAS the Arts Commission recognizes that time is of the essence on key provisions relating to Affordable Space and other priority items,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Arts Commission with the support of the arts community, urges the Austin City Council to support, through any and all means necessary, the following recommendations and to give them full and immediate consideration;

- Provide not less than \$200,000 for funding to address the creative/arts space crisis by providing low or no-interest bridge loans for use to address code or permitting issues in existing spaces, secure leases for new creative space, etc.;
- Create an Entertainment Services Group to address the permitting and code assistance needs of both the music and creative sectors, and include staff to address the needs of both;
- Support the adoption of the Agent of Change policy;
- Identify City owned properties/**facilities** and support their repurposing for cultural arts uses;
- Support immediate amendments to land use regulations and codes that will facilitate the development and preservation of creative venues prior to the adoption of CodeNEXT;
- Continue to prioritize the development of creative/arts space by creating low or no-interest bridge loan programs or other low-cost access to capital for pre-development projects including but not limited to ThinkEAST, the proposed Winnebago Lane development, and Mosaic Sound Collective;

- Begin the process of developing a Cultural Land Trust/Strike Fund and other methods designed to leverage-public sector funding for a public-private purchase and preservation of culturally significant properties to be used for affordable commercial and residential creative spaces;
- Support revenue development strategies designed to create or improve revenue generation for local artists including, but not limited to, creating a comprehensive audience development and expansion campaign, promoting public art components within private development, supporting a sister cities arts exchange and export program, and any other revenue programs;
- Expand existing health and human services safety net resources to include the needs of the Austin creative-community using whatever means available, including but not limited to the expansion of existing programs to include the creative community or the development of public/private partnerships;
- Fund the development and designation of cultural arts districts and creative hubs;
- Engage the corporate and business community in public/private partnerships;
- Support the completion of existing cultural arts centers previously bond funded by proposing a future bond package; and
- Support the recommendations submitted by the Music Commission based on votes recorded at their Special Called Meeting on Tuesday, July 12, 2016.

Date of Approval: August 15, 2016

Record of the Vote: Unanimous on a 9-0 vote, Commissioner Stillwell absent.

Attest:  _____