



Recommendation for Action

File #: 18-4037, **Agenda Item #:** 7.

1/31/2019

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of a 12-month contract with Six Square to provide educational, heritage preservation, and economic development programs and services in the African American Cultural Heritage District in an amount not to exceed \$300,000, with two additional 12-month extension options in an estimated amount not to exceed \$300,000 per extension option, for a total estimated contract amount not to exceed \$900,000.

Lead Department

Economic Development.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$300,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Operating Budget of the Economic Development Department. Funding for the remaining extension options is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

Prior Council Action:

Council approved a 12 month contract with two (2) twelve month extension on February 16, 2016.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

This proposed action authorizes funding of a management service contract with Six Square, a 501(c) (3) organization, for economic development programs and services. The recommendation for funding for this contract was originally initiated and approved by the City Council during the FY16 budget process. The Six Square organization is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for residents of central east Austin by preserving the rich heritage and cultural contributions of Austin's African American community through historical interpretations, promotion of cultural and artistic events, and by serving as a catalyst for social and economic development.

Austin's African American Cultural Heritage District was declared as such by the State of Texas on September 3, 2009. The district boundaries, set by City Council in 2007, comprise approximately six square miles of central east Austin. The district is home to numerous sites of national, regional and local historic significance and celebrates African Americans and others who played important roles in creating the vibrancy of Austin.

The Economic Development Department (EDD) seeks to contract with Six Square to expand the prosperity of the district to:

Heritage/Preservation

- Conduct a conference in collaboration with other organizations focused on best practices for historic preservation of African American communities.

Marketing/Branding

- Market Six Square: Austin's Black Cultural District both to residents within the Austin metropolitan statistical area (MSA) and outside the MSA to attract tourists.
- Conduct monthly tours of historic sites within the district and track tourists by zip code.
- Publish and distribute a monthly newsletter and calendar of events for the district.
- Erect wayfinding markers for the district.

Artistic/Cultural Productions

- Conduct artistic and cultural productions within the district using national and local talent for Six Square's Gallery exhibits, The District Cultural Fest, Musical Explorations and other culturally relevant events.

Economic Development

- Partner with local businesses, the Greater Black Chamber, the Urban Renewal Board and continue to invest in the creative sector to spur responsible economic development in central east Austin.

Education

- Continue to work with various educational institutions (Blackshear, Kealing, UT and Texas State) to provide educational workshops, tours, talks and programs to encourage civic engagement among the students with a specific focus on the history of central east Austin, social studies, history and social justice.