



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Sylnovia Holt-Rabb, Interim Director   
Economic Development Department

**DATE:** June 25, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Response to CIUR 2186 – Resolution No. 20190808-144 regarding Red River Cultural District Enhancements

This memorandum provides a summary of the progress the Economic Development Department and partnering departments have made in addressing the directives of [City Council Resolution No. 20190808-144](#), and supporting [City Council Resolution No. 20170608-033](#). Resolution 20190808-144 directs the City Manager to use available funds from the Great Streets Program to expeditiously deliver projects described in Resolution No. 20170608-033. Projects include partial alley closures, improving trash and recycling collection, installing lighting, installing temporary art, and completing pedestrian mobility improvements including sidewalk redesign. Additionally, costs associated with design, engineering, and project manager fees are to be included. Project prioritization categories include:

- *Level 1 Project Prioritization inclusive of Safety and Accessibility Improvements:* alley closure, lighting as deemed necessary from the study, Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, addressing absent sidewalks, installation of trash receptacles and pedestrian crosswalk restriping
- *Level 2 Project Prioritization inclusive of Hardscapes and Right of Way Enhancements:* sidewalk repair, design and engineering for curb cuts and sidewalk redesign, and street alignment
- *Level 3 Project Prioritization inclusive of Beautification Projects:* planter boxes, trees, and maintenance

### Red River Cultural District Background

The Red River Cultural District is an area stretching between 6th Street and 12th Street along Red River and encompasses businesses within two blocks of Red River. The district is home to 10 live music venues, hotels and other businesses in an area essential to Austin's music industry ecosystem. The Red River Cultural District Merchants Association was created with the assistance of [the Economic Development Department's Souly Austin program](#). An extensive community organizing and engagement effort supported the identification of the enhancements outlined in both resolutions mentioned above. Ninety percent of business and property owners participated in the engagement effort. Consensus on priorities for the Red River Cultural District are outlined in the [Red River Cultural District Economic Strategy](#). Implementing both City Council resolutions relies on programmatic support of Souly Austin.

### Progress to Date

Staff implementation efforts continue with the achievement of several significant milestones outlined in the prior memorandum to Mayor and City Council – [CIUR 2186 Update \(November 21, 2019\)](#):

- All permits for the alleyway gate and fence system are secured and the installation is complete. Additional details are available in the attached matrix.

- Austin Resource Recovery installed 10 trash and recycling receptacles along Red River between 6th Street and 11th Street. Austin Resource Recovery is providing regular collection service to these cans.
- Austin Energy completed a lighting study for the district. The light study concluded that the existing lighting meets and exceeds Austin Energy standards for street lighting. Staff explored solar lighting options, and this will be factored into the design and engineering phase of the project.
- Public Works staff completed conceptual designs. Economic Development Department and Public Works staff met with Red River Cultural District stakeholders on January 31, 2020 to share designs and gather feedback.
- Design Phase scope was approved, including a service agreement, and work has begun between Public Works' Engineering Services Division and Economic Development Department staff. The Design Phase will daylight any funding gaps beyond the allocated \$1.3 million and maintenance considerations. Design Phase will include a full construction plan for review, permitting, bidding, and construction.

### **Next Steps (60 Days)**

Per City Council's direction, staff will prioritize the following actions over the next 60 days:

- Complete cost estimates highlighting any funding gaps beyond the allocated \$1.3 million and maintenance considerations.
- Complete the Construction Plans and Contract documents, including full construction set for review, permitting, and bidding construction.
- Develop engineering cost estimates and full project scope inclusive of site visits, Austin Utility Location and Coordination Committee coordination, and quality management.
- Continue efforts to address long term maintenance and funding allocations.

Project specific updates as well as scoping and administrative updates can be found in Matrix 1 Resolution Items, Updates and Cost Estimates. To increase transparency and communication on the items within Resolution No. 20190808-144, [the City of Austin created a Red River Area Improvements webpage](#) to share regular updates.

Staff will provide City Council a update on September 1, 2020. For more information please contact, Nicole Klepadlo, Redevelopment Project Manager, Economic Development Department at 512-974-7739 or [Nicole.Klepadlo@austintexas.gov](mailto:Nicole.Klepadlo@austintexas.gov).

xc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager  
J. Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager

**Table 1: Resolution Items, Updates and Cost Estimates**

**Legend:**

ARR – Austin Resources Recovery Department      ATD – Austin Transportation Department      PW – Public Works Department      UD – Urban Design Division, Planning Department  
 AFD – Austin Fire Department      EDD – Economic Development Department      ROW – Right-of-way      RRCDMA – Red River Cultural District Merchants Association

Enhancement	City Team	Actions		Resources	
		To date	Next 60 Days	Estimated Costs	Maintenance
<b>Project Scoping &amp; Administrative</b>	EDD, PW, APD, AFD, ATD, AE, AW, DSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular Project team meetings held</li> <li>Project manager assigned</li> <li>Conceptual Design completed</li> <li>District existing conditions walk completed</li> <li>Completion of DRAFT timeline with phasing approach for implementation</li> <li>Attend Austin Utility Location Coordination Committee (AULCC) – as needed</li> <li>Seek APD review on designs specific to Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)</li> <li>Coordination with ATD re: 9<sup>th</sup> street alignment and parking meters – commitment secured for project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify resources of long-term maintenance for specific items</li> <li>Completion of the Construction Plans and Contract documents, including full construction set for review, permitting and bidding construction.</li> <li>Development of engineering costs estimate and full project scope inclusive of site visits, AULCC coordination, and quality management.</li> </ul>	Design Phase: Estimate \$130,462 (1073 Hours)  Construction: TBD	N/A
<b>Alleyway</b> <i>Completed</i>	EDD, PW, APD, AFD, ATD, AE, AW, DSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Completed December 23, 2019</li> </ul>	N/A - COMPLETED	Total Cost: \$192,000 (Includes: Construction, Inspector, Project Manager Fees, Building Permit, Site Plan, and Gate/Fence)	Long term maintenance costs and responsibility has not been determined. EDD will resume this role until a partner can be identified.
<b>Trash Receptacles</b>	EDD, ARR, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 cans installed throughout the District</li> <li>Secured ARR commitment for ongoing trash pickup upon installation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determination of maintenance costs and responsibilities should trash can become damaged.</li> </ul>	Estimated Phase 1 Cost: \$20,500	Maintenance costs for can replacement has not been determined. EDD will resume this role until a partner can be identified.  ARR commitment to trash pickup service
<b>Lighting</b>	EDD, PW, AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder locations identified for additional lighting.</li> </ul>	Explore options for pedestrian scale lighting and solar options	TBD	N/A as of 1/30/2020

Enhancement	City Team	Actions		Resources	
		To date	Next 60 Days	Estimated Costs	Maintenance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street Lighting Study completed; study concluded existing lighting meet and exceed AE standards for street lighting.</li> <li>Two lights identified for repair, AE completed maintenance</li> </ul>	Design and engineering considerations to be handled during design scope		
<b>Temporary Art</b>  <i>Completed</i>	EDD, RRCDMA, ATD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed. Installation of three (3) murals honoring its history and culture (Elysium, Cheer Up Charlies and Stubbs)</li> </ul>	N/A - COMPLETED	EDD Souly Austin expenditures total: \$13,000  Private business contribution: \$7,500	RRCDMA businesses
<b>Sidewalks</b>	EDD, PW, ATD, UD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducted physical condition and ADA compliance survey</li> <li>Analyzed alignment with Sidewalk Master Plan and Five Year Capital Improvements Plan</li> <li>Prioritization of sidewalk improvements into phases</li> <li>Included completing sidewalk network</li> <li>Various meetings with in house design tea,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See <b>Project Scoping &amp; Administrative</b></li> </ul>	To be completed upon Design Phase completion and successful bid received	Maintenance costs and frequency, responsibility and implementation have not been determined.
<b>Planter Boxes/Landscaping</b>	EDD, PW, ATD, UD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of draft designs and cost estimates based on owner input and enhancing the overall aesthetics and safety of the District</li> <li>Feedback from business community early Feb 2020</li> <li></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See <b>Project Scoping &amp; Administrative</b></li> <li>Secure cost estimates for external maintenance; or partner on existing maintenance contract</li> <li>Finalize cost estimates for all fabrication, installation and maintenance</li> <li>Explore final use of adopt a median for planter box placement</li> <li>Complete an implementation timeline with phasing</li> </ul>	Pending cost estimate which will include design and engineering.	Maintenance costs and frequency, responsibility and implementation have not been determined.
<b>Signage and Wayfinding</b>	EDD, UD, ATD, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$200,000 provided through Historic Preservation Fund for Red River signage</li> <li>Finalized and approved sign locations</li> <li>Meeting 11/13/2019, 1/2020</li> <li>Feedback from District on sign content needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineering design for specific signs</li> <li>Identify timeline for fabrication and installation – PW and ATD coordination needed</li> <li>Refine graphics needed for signage</li> </ul>	\$200,000	TBD