



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Veronica Briseño, Chief Economic Recovery Officer, City of Austin cb

DATE: August 28, 2020

SUBJECT: Update on COVID-19 Economic Recovery Programs

This memorandum summarizes the City of Austin's progress implementing several programs that the Austin City Council adopted through [Resolution No. 20200326-088](#), [Resolution No. 20200409-086](#), [Resolution No. 20200423-040](#), [Resolution No. 20200507-023](#), and [Resolution No. 20200604-040](#). Each program supports and sustains local businesses, non-profit organizations, or residents that are financially impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic. To the greatest extent possible, City staff is prioritizing equity, need, and vulnerability as they create and deliver this critical assistance during this unprecedented time. The table below summarizes the implementation schedule for all economic recovery programs. Exhibit A provides more information on progress to date for each program.

TABLE 1: ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR

April 2020	May 2020	June 2020
Austin Economic Injury Bridge Loan Program	Relief of Emergency Needs for Tenants (RENT) Pilot	Austin Creative Space Disaster Relief Program
Relief in a State of Emergency (RISE)		Austin Music Disaster Relief Fund
July 2020	August 2020*	September 2020*
Austin Childcare Provider Relief Grant	Austin Music Disaster Relief Fund	Austin Civilian Conservation Corps
Austin Non-Profit Relief Grant	Creative Worker Assistance Program	Commercial Landlord Relief Grant
Austin Small Business Relief Grant	Relief in a State of Emergency (RISE)	Technical Assistance Program
	Relief of Emergency Needs for Tenants (RENT)	Worker and Customer Safety Program
		Austin Non-Profit Relief Grant
<i>*Target launch timelines for future programs are subject to change.</i>		

Five-Phase Program Development Approach

City staff is tracking their progress using the five-phase approach created by the City of Austin Economic Development Department. This model allows staff and stakeholders to monitor program development from ideation through implementation. The deliverables and activities for each phase is based on lessons learned from previous grant programs that the Economic Development Department administered.

Phase One

- **Key Deliverable:** **Complete mission-critical foundational milestones**
- **Types of Activities:** Assign Economic Development Department staff to a project team
Draft program guidelines and application materials
Draft scopes of work and contracts for third-party administrators
Identify internal and external support services
Receive input from other City departments, as necessary
Complete sector research and data analysis

Phase Two

- **Key Deliverable:** **Finalize program materials for City Council/City Manager approval**
- **Types of Activities:** Receive Law Department review of program materials
Receive Equity Office review of program materials
Finalize all program documents created in Phase One
Interview potential third-party administrators
Conduct contract negotiations with the third-party administrator

Phase Three

- **Key Deliverable:** **Receive necessary City Council/City Manager approvals**
- **Types of Activities:** Receive City Council approval for third-party contracts
Complete internal staff briefings regarding third-party relationships
Host kick-off meetings with the third-party administrator
Finalize a communications and stakeholder engagement plan
Establish a framework for collecting and reporting metrics and data

Phase Four

- **Key Deliverable:** **Manage successful program implementation**
- **Types of Activities:** Provide regular updates to the City Council and City executives
Implement the communications and stakeholder engagement plan
Review eligible and complete applications
Host/record webinars and/or information sessions
Track data for future reporting
Distribute funds to applicants
Display information on a data dashboard
Analyze real-time program performance
Provide support services for stakeholders (e.g. application assistance)

Phase Five

- **Key Deliverable:** **Program completion and closeout**
- **Types of Activities:** Report final program metrics
Complete compliance reviews
Verify all third-party contract deliverables are complete
Produce program summary highlighting lessons learned

Conclusion

City staff is working to ensure each program effectively and equitably addresses the needs of local businesses, non-profit organizations, and residents impacted by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Our Economic Recovery Strike Team will update this memo every 14 days. Please contact me at Veronica.Briseno@austintexas.gov if you have questions regarding this update.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
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Exhibit A. Program Development Matrix (Programs Listed Alphabetically)

Fund	Funding Allocation	Program Description	Current Phase	Actions Completed Since July 31, 2020 Memo	Tasks for Next 14 days
Austin Childcare Provider Relief Grant (formerly the Childcare Support Fund)	\$1 million	Grants up to \$50,000 for eligible childcare providers in Austin.	Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received an allocation of \$148 thousand from Mayor Pro Tem Garza from her remaining office balance. Sent award announcements to all eligible applicants. Distributed the original \$1 million program funds. Facilitated a “Glows and Grows” session with United Way and City staff to inform future program launches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize an allocation plan for the additional \$148 thousand received from Mayor Pro Tem Garza.
Austin Civilian Conservation Corps	\$2 million	Partnerships with existing workforce development nonprofits to train & employ people to deliver sustainability projects such as trail maintenance, reforestation, wildfire fuel mitigation.	Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised recruiting approach for early projects to leverage partner networks. Advanced agreements with five programs; one launched. Began lived experience user research project scoping with potential partners and stakeholders. Advanced partnership to add a stronger service component to the Carpenters Union program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize agreements with remaining initial programs. Finalize recruiting and data collection requirements. Finalize and launch web page and marketing materials. Continue development on next round of programs. Finalize lived experience user research project scope, roles, initial activities.
Austin Creative Space Disaster Relief Program	\$1 million	Grants up to \$50,000 for for-profit live music venues, performance spaces, art galleries, arts-focused nonprofits	Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awarded funds to 32 out of 65 eligible applicants, with funding totaling \$988 thousand. Sent award announcements to all eligible applicants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize contracts with approved applicants. Mail checks to applicants.

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		and individual artists facing temporary or permanent displacement.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sent contacts to approved applicants. 	
Austin Creative Worker Relief Grant	\$3.5 million	Mini-grants to individual creative-sector workers.	Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opened application on August 17, 2020. Apply at ATXrecovers.com. Held four webinars with the third party administrator (Austin Better Business Bureau). Providing technical assistance to applicants via contract with third party administrator (Texas Accountants and Lawyers for the Arts). Meeting daily with third party administrators and EDD support team to troubleshoot any issues during the open application. Monitoring all communications through City of Austin and Community Champions. Responding to any press inquiries about the program as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close application portal at 5 p.m. on Friday, August 28, 2020. Notify applicants of their eligibility status in early September. Finalize scoring and ranking of eligible applicants by mid-September. Collect and report data for the public facing dashboard. <p>Application Closes: August 28, 2020. Apply at ATXrecovers.com.</p>
Austin Economic Injury Bridge Loan Program	\$5.6 million	Loans up to \$35,000 to support local, small businesses until they receive federal Economic Injury Disaster Loans.	Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nineteen of 70 approved applicants accepted a loan. Fifty-one approved applicants declined a loan offer either due to acceptance of other federal disaster assistance or non-acceptance of loan terms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and collecting Austin Economic Injury Bridge Loans payments for next 12 months.

Fund	Funding Allocation	Program Description	Current Phase	Actions Completed Since July 31, 2020 Memo	Tasks for Next 14 days
Austin Music Disaster Relief Fund	\$1.5 million	Grants of \$1,000 to support performing musicians that have not received other COVID-19 financial relief.	Phase 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sent award announcements to all eligible applicants. • Third party administrator (MusiCares Foundation) mailed checks to approved applicants. • Summarized “Glows and Grows” to inform future program launches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all awarded applicants receive their checks. • Close out program.
Austin Non - Profit Relief Grant (formerly Austin Nonprofit and Civic Health Organizations Relief Fund, or ANCHOR Fund)	\$6.35 million	Grants up to \$20,000 for expenses incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.	Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed scoring and lottery for all applications. • Sent award announcements to all eligible applicants. • Third party administrator (Austin Better Business Bureau) mailed checks to approved applicants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing memorandum to Mayor and Council regarding staff recommendations for a second round of the Austin Non-Profit Relief Grant, which will distribute approx. \$2 million that was not distributed during the first round.
Austin Small Business Relief Grant (formerly the Commercial Loans for Economic Assistance and Recovery Act, or CLEAR Act)	\$16.5 million	Grants up to \$40,000 for expenses incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and/or for purchases to comply with safety requirements.	Phase 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sent award announcements to all eligible applicants. • Third party administrator (Austin Better Business Bureau) mailed checks to approved applicants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all awarded applicants receive their checks. • Close out program.
Commercial Landlord Relief Grant	\$1 million	Grants to commercial landlords that agree to enter long-term leases with tenants that	Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with Economic Development Department staff to regarding stakeholder input that may help inform the program development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete best practice review. • Discuss gaps identified through previous grant programs that may be addressed through this grant.

Fund	Funding Allocation	Program Description	Current Phase	Actions Completed Since July 31, 2020 Memo	Tasks for Next 14 days
(Long-Term Lease Stability Fund)		deliver community benefits.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft program guidelines and options for Economic Development Department staff to review.
Relief in a State of Emergency (RISE)	\$12 million	Direct financial assistance to underserved communities impacted by COVID-19.	Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four agencies with executed agreements (the Austin Area Urban League, El Buen Samaritano, and the Family Independence Initiative) have begun to distribute \$2 million of the additional \$12 million RISE funds. The Family Independence Initiative and El Buen Samaritano have been awarded agreements to conduct the phone assistance and online portal for the RISE 2.0 distribution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff expects for partner agencies to disburse \$2 million of the RISE 2.0 funding by the second week in September. The updated timeline for the RISE 2.0 timeline is being finalized.
Relief of Emergency Needs for Tenants (RENT)	\$12.4 million	Multi-month rental assistance for households earning up to 80% Median Family Income (MFI).	Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opened application on August 19, 2020. Apply at austintexas.gov/RENT. Selected first round of applicants for funding through random lottery on Wednesday, August 26, 2020. Held two community webinars (August 12th & 14th) to provide information on RENT to community-based organizations; a third webinar was held specifically for landlords to inform them of the program. In collaboration with the Equity Office, NHCD released a Request for Grant Applications to provide grants to community-based groups and small businesses to assist with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize all contracts and grant agreements associated with this program. <p>Application Closes: When funding ends. Apply at austintexas.gov/RENT.</p>

Fund	Funding Allocation	Program Description	Current Phase	Actions Completed Since July 31, 2020 Memo	Tasks for Next 14 days
				<p>outreach and direct application assistance, with the goal of reaching underserved and underrepresented low-income communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NHCD staff are receiving and reviewing daily reports providing demographic information of households applying for assistance. 	
Technical Assistance Program	\$1 million	The Technical Assistance Program will focus on classes, workshops, and individual coaching for grantees' relevant needs.	Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying specific technical assistance to support relief programs and vulnerable populations. Identifying community champions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft scopes of work and targeted deliverables to support relief programs and vulnerable populations. Discussions with community partners.
Worker and Customer Safety Program	\$1.5 million	Contract with counseling services provider to expand access for workers dealing with COVID-19-related mental health challenges.	Pre-Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Development Department staff met with Austin Public Health staff to discuss potential partnership on program implementation and to begin reviewing existing contracts with mental health providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize review of existing mental health contracts that the City of Austin has executed. Host meeting between the Economic Development Department, Austin Public Health, and the City of Austin Employee Assistance program.