



CONTACT

Nicole Klepadlo, Project Manager
City of Austin, Economic Development Department
nicole.klepadlo@austintexas.gov
512-974-7739

WHAT IS THE SOUL-Y AUSTIN BUSINESS DISTRICT INCUBATOR?

The Soul-y Austin Business District Incubator is a pilot initiative of the City of Austin Economic Development Department's Commercial Stabilization Program. Under the pilot initiative, business owners receive a flexible set of tools to assist in the formation of merchants associations and organized commercial districts.

A vibrant commercial district offers a range of retail, restaurants, and services that reflect a unique culture and soul of its own and provide amenities to the community. These elements are essential to a socially and economically healthy Austin. The pilot initiative is designed to promote and support businesses of all sizes and types within the city's commercial areas and corridors. Merchants associations can help steer these processes and create ideal conditions for commercial districts.

WHAT IS A MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION?

A merchants association is a group of business owners that exists to anchor and stabilize neighboring businesses around beautification efforts, marketing and promotions, business retention, and economic development activities within a commercial district. Collectively, merchants associations act as a unified voice and assist in leading and influencing positive changes.



SOUL-Y AUSTIN ON THE WEB

Visit our website to learn more about the pilot initiative and to subscribe to our mailing list:

www.austintexas.gov/soulyatx



#SOULYATX UPDATES

Follow us on Twitter for district spotlights, community photos, and more!



MERCHANTS ASSOCIATIONS

WHY ORGANIZE?

The benefits of organized commercial districts include: **greater capacity** for small businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive; **increased job opportunities**; business **stability**; readily-accessible community **goods and services**; **preservation of unique cultures and environments**; **business retention and support services** for existing and legacy businesses; **increased sales revenue and taxes**; and increased **pedestrian and bike friendly communities**.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Soul-y Austin seeks to empower motivated, Austin-area brick-and-mortar businesses of all sizes and types within a commercial area or corridor.

The pilot initiative provides an array of support services that include:

- Education on merchants associations
- Engagement of interested businesses
- Coaching towards the formation of merchants associations
- Commercial district planning
- Business development and training
- Business Loans and Music Venue Loans
- Marketing and promotion tools
- Monetary district activation awards
- Unified voice to the City of Austin