

RESOLUTION NO.

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WHEREAS, the Economic Development Department’s (EDD) June 2016 Response to the Music and Creative Ecosystem Omnibus Resolution (Resolution No. 20160303-019) identified affordable space for artists and musicians as a priority concern area; and

WHEREAS, the City’s Creative Space Assistance Program (CSAP) is to support creative organizations facing temporary or permanent displacement, previously displaced, or facing lease renewals at substantially higher rates; and

WHEREAS, while priority for CSAP assistance is given to organizations confronting immediate and critical needs, there are several barriers that appear to make artists facing difficulty paying rent due to COVID-19 ineligible for these funds; and

WHEREAS, the current CSAP application requirement that only 501(c)(3) organizations can apply will exclude collectives of artists, as well as individual artists who rent or lease space for their work, and the time it takes to get 501(c)(3) status typically takes six months or longer; and

WHEREAS, the current CSAP application requirement of a “substantial” rent increase will also exclude many artists facing COVID-19 reduction in income, dramatic in some cases, who cannot pay their current rent; and

WHEREAS, the CSAP requires a three-year minimum lease term, which presents a barrier to vulnerable artists who may have a month-to-month or shorter-term lease; and

WHEREAS, the Small Business Administration's emergency coronavirus relief fund has reached its \$350 billion funding limit and is no longer accepting any more applications; and

25 **WHEREAS**, the City of Austin intends to provide the maximum benefit of relief
26 to as many vulnerable artists impacted by the COVID-19 public health crisis as possible;
27 **NOW, THEREFORE,**

28 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

29 The City Manager is directed to immediately use the Creative Space Assistance
30 Program (CSAP) funding, or such other funds as may be available, for a temporary Austin
31 Creative Space Disaster Relief Program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to
32 provide emergency grants throughout the duration of the emergency, available to
33 vulnerable local artists that utilizes to the greatest extent possible the existing CSAP
34 program purpose and guidelines with eligibility to be updated to include criteria that
35 address the new need for assistance with creative spaces rental and related costs created
36 by the COVID-19 pandemic, with assistance distributed as soon as possible, no later than
37 June 15, 2020. Staff should review and update the existing CSAP guidelines including
38 the Contract Commitments, Eligibility Requirements, Eligible Request Categories,
39 Evaluation Criteria and Scoring, and Grant Fund Policies to be more flexible to
40 specifically address the needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic in the creative arts
41 community for preserving creative spaces through the duration of the emergency.

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ADOPTED: _____, 2020

ATTEST: _____

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk