



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

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

**DATE:** July 17, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Update on COVID-19 Economic Recovery Programs

This memorandum summarizes the Economic Development Department's progress on implementing several programs that the Austin City Council 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, Economic Development Department staff are prioritizing equity, need, and vulnerability as they create and deliver this critical assistance during this unprecedented time.

### **Five-Phase Program Development Approach**

Economic Development Department staff are using a five-phase approach to develop these economic recovery programs. This model allows staff and stakeholders to track 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. See Exhibit A for information about each phase.

### **COVID-19 Economic Recovery Programs: Progress to Date**

Staff implementation efforts continue with the achievement of several significant milestones outlined below and in Exhibit B.

- **Austin Economic Injury Bridge Loan Program** is in Phase Four. The program is no longer accepting inquiries. City staff responded to 1,117 inquiries from business owners seeking financial assistance due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Economic Development Department staff and the Loan Review Committee are completing their review of 150 eligible applications submitted before the program deadline. To date, 70 applicants are approved for loans totaling \$2 million. These funds will help small businesses retain 890 jobs. More program metrics are available on [the Austin Economic Injury Bridge Loan Program Dashboard](#).
- **Austin Music Disaster Relief Fund** is in Phase Four. The program is no longer accepting applications. Economic Development Department staff completed their review of 838 applications submitted before the deadline and approved 725 applicants for the \$1,000 grant. The remaining applications (95) were denied due to ineligibility. Specifically, 55 applicants already

received a coronavirus relief grant from the MusiCares Foundation, 48 applicants did not reside in the City of Austin, four applicants were not performing musicians, four applicants were unreachable for follow-up, and two applicants missed the application deadline.

- **Austin Creative Space Disaster Relief Program** is in Phase Four. The program is no longer accepting new applications. Economic Development Department staff are completing their review of the 65 applications submitted before the deadline, which collectively total \$2.7 million in requested funds from this \$1 million program.
- **Austin Childcare Provider Relief Grant** (formerly the “Childcare Support Fund”) is in Phase Four. The program will begin accepting applications on July 21, 2020 through [www.ATXrecovers.com](http://www.ATXrecovers.com). The United Way of Greater Austin is the third party administrator for this program. Funds will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Applicants’ maximum possible award amount is based on the number of enrolled students receiving Childcare Subsidies (CCS), direct teacher staffing, Texas Rising Star rating or National Accreditation, and total eligible expenses incurred.
- **Austin Small Business Relief Grant** (formerly the “Commercial Loans for Economic Assistance and Recovery Fund” or “CLEAR Fund”) is in Phase Four. Economic Development Department staff began accepting applications for this program on July 7, 2020 through [www.ATXrecovers.com](http://www.ATXrecovers.com). The application period closes on July 24, 2020. The program has generated a large volume of interest, with applicants and community stakeholders contacting the program’s third-party administrator (Better Business Bureau) and Community Champions daily. Economic Development Department staff anticipate funding requests to exceed total funds available. The program has received 1,044 applications to date, totaling approximately \$29.5 million in requested funds. The median employee count is four, and the median reported annual revenue is \$322,000. Nearly 20 percent of applicants are in the restaurant industry; 11 percent are arts, entertainment, or recreation businesses; 10 percent are personal care businesses; and nine percent are retail businesses.
- **Austin Non-Profit Relief Grant** (formerly the “Austin Nonprofit and Civic Health Organizations Relief Fund” or “ANCHOR Fund”) is in Phase Four. Economic Development Department staff began accepting applications for this program on July 7, 2020 through [www.ATXrecovers.com](http://www.ATXrecovers.com). The application period closes on July 24, 2020. The program has generated a large volume of interest, with applicants and community stakeholders contacting the program’s third-party administrator (Better Business Bureau) and Community Champions daily. The program has received 29 applications to date, totaling approximately \$480,000. Thirteen applicants selected the “Arts and Culture” category, four selected the “Education” category, three selected the “Environment and Animals” category, two selected the “Health and human Services” category, one selected the “Workforce Development and Legal Services” category, and six selected the “Other” category.
- **The Creative Worker Relief Grant, Commercial Landlord Relief Grant, Workforce Development Relief Program, Technical Assistance Program and Worker and Customer Safety Program** are in Phase One. The Creative Sector Relief Grant will enter Phase 2 in the coming days. Economic Development Department staff are drafting program guidelines and forming internal project teams to manage these economic recovery programs.

## Conclusion

Economic Development Department staff are 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 department will update this memo every 14 days. Please contact me at [Sylvia.Holt-Rabb@austintexas.gov](mailto:Sylvia.Holt-Rabb@austintexas.gov) if you have questions regarding this update.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager  
J. Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager  
Veronica Briseño, Chief Economic Recovery Officer

## Exhibit A. Summary of Economic Recovery Program Phases

### 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

Exhibit B. Program Development Matrix

Fund	Funding Allocation	Program Description	Current Phase	Actions Completed Since June 29, 2020 Memo	Tasks for Next 14 days
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"> <li>• <b>Application Closed: May 8, 2020</b></li> <li>• Received final packages from inquiring business on June 26.</li> <li>• Loan Review Committee approved final set of underwritten packages on July 13.</li> <li>• 150 completed loan packages underwritten for loan review committee consideration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to process closing documents and check issuance for the 70 approved loan applicants.</li> <li>• Develop final close out report on the impact of up to \$2.2 million in loan fund award.</li> <li>• Balance of funds will be deployed through the Family Business Loan Program.</li> </ul>
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 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Application Closed: June 26, 2020</b></li> <li>• Reviewed 838 applications to determine eligibility for grant.</li> <li>• Notified applicants of their award or ineligibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issuing checks to the approved 725 applicants.</li> <li>• Develop final close out report on the impact of the \$725,000 in grant fund award.</li> <li>• Balance of funds will be deployed through a second round of the Austin Music Disaster Relief Fund.</li> </ul>
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 and individual artists facing temporary or permanent displacement.	Phase 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Application Closed: June 17, 2020</b></li> <li>• Convened Grant Review Panel to begin reviewing 65 submitted applications.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize review of submitted applications.</li> <li>• Finalize contract terms and requirements.</li> <li>• Notify applicants of their award status.</li> <li>• Process payments to approved applicants.</li> </ul>

Fund	Funding Allocation	Program Description	Current Phase	Actions Completed Since June 29, 2020 Memo	Tasks for Next 14 days
<b>Austin Childcare Provider Relief Grant</b> (formerly the Childcare Support Fund)	\$1 million	Grants up to \$50,000 for eligible childcare providers in Austin.	Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalized review of program materials with other City departments, including Equity Office and Law Department.</li> <li>• Briefed City Manager’s Office on program guidelines.</li> <li>• Briefed City Council Panel on Economic Recovery on program guidelines.</li> <li>• Finalized online grant application.</li> <li>• Finalized website content, including checklist of required materials and frequently asked questions.</li> <li>• Finalized stakeholder engagement and communications plan.</li> <li>• Translated program materials.</li> <li>• Scheduled dates for program webinars.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open the application on July 21, 2020.</li> <li>• Host/record webinars and/or information sessions.</li> <li>• Provide support services for stakeholders (e.g. application assistance)</li> <li>• Review eligible and complete applications.</li> <li>• Notify applicants of their eligibility status and award amount.</li> <li>• Distribute funds to applicants.</li> <li>• Track data for future reporting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Application Opens: July 21, 2020</b>  <b>Apply at <a href="http://www.ATXrecovers.com">www.ATXrecovers.com</a>.</b></p>
<b>Austin Small Business Relief Grant</b> (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 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opened the application portal, allowing applicants to submit their application in several languages.</li> <li>• Started reviewing eligible and complete applications.</li> <li>• Notified applicants of eligibility status.</li> <li>• Hosted webinars for interested stakeholders and posted webinar recordings for further reference.</li> <li>• Provided application support services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue program implementation (e.g. review eligible applications, notify applicants of eligibility status, provide supportive services for stakeholders, etc.).</li> <li>• Notify applicants of award status.</li> </ul> <p><b>Application Open Until: July 24, 2020</b>  <b>Apply at <a href="http://www.ATXrecovers.com">www.ATXrecovers.com</a>.</b></p>

Fund	Funding Allocation	Program Description	Current Phase	Actions Completed Since June 29, 2020 Memo	Tasks for Next 14 days
<b>Austin Non - Profit Relief Grant</b> (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"> <li>Opened the application portal, allowing applicants to submit their application in several languages.</li> <li>Started reviewing eligible and complete applications.</li> <li>Notified applicants of eligibility status.</li> <li>Hosted webinars for interested stakeholders and posted webinar recordings for further reference.</li> <li>Provided application support services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue program implementation (e.g. review eligible applications, notify applicants of eligibility status, provide supportive services for stakeholders, etc.).</li> <li>Notify applicants of award status.</li> </ul> <p><b>Application Open Until: July 24, 2020</b>  <b>Apply at <a href="http://www.ATXrecovers.com">www.ATXrecovers.com</a>.</b></p>
<b>Creative Worker Relief Grant</b>	\$3.5 million	Mini-grants to individual creative-sector workers.	Phase 1, moving into Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assembled internal team.</li> <li>Benchmarked research with similar programs in other cities.</li> <li>Drafted program guidelines.</li> <li>Identified potential third party administrators to interview.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalize draft program guidelines with input from Law Department and Equity Office.</li> <li>Interview potential third party administrators.</li> <li>Draft contract for third party administrator.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial Landlord Relief Grant</b> (Long-Term Lease Stability Fund)	\$1 million	Grants to commercial landlords that agree to enter long-term leases with tenants that deliver community benefits.	Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued best practice review and peer city engagement.</li> <li>Leverage lessons learned from similar programs to facilitate successful program development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete best practice review.</li> <li>Draft program guidelines.</li> <li>Identify administrative options.</li> </ul>
<b>Workforce Development Relief Program</b>	\$2 million	Training and skills development (this includes the Austin Civilian Conservation Corps).	Pre-Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing current workforce development contracts and programming.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify needs and direction for workforce development relief.</li> </ul>

Fund	Funding Allocation	Program Description	Current Phase	Actions Completed Since June 29, 2020 Memo	Tasks for Next 14 days
<b>Worker and Customer Safety Program</b>	\$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"> <li>• Reviewing current applicable contracts and programming.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify direction for worker and customer safety program, in collaboration with Austin Public Health.</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Assistance Program</b>	\$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"> <li>• Identifying specific technical assistance to support relief programs and vulnerable populations.</li> <li>• Identifying community champions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft scopes of work and targeted deliverables to support relief programs and vulnerable populations.</li> <li>• Discussions with community partners.</li> </ul>