



**BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION
DOWNTOWN COMMISSION**

Recommendation Number: 20130821-04

Recommendation to develop a Rainey Street District Plan

WHEREAS, the Austin City Council adopted the Downtown Austin Plan in 2011, which contains a number of overarching urban design priorities and district-specific goals for the Rainey Street District, including: creating stronger pedestrian and bicycle linkages, establishing an infrastructure master plan; allowing for the orderly transition to a high density, mixed-use neighborhood; better connecting MACC to Downtown and East Austin; and requiring ground-level space to be suitable for active, pedestrian-oriented uses; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has yet to adopt a plan and policies to adequately further these goals and urban design priorities in the Rainey Street District; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Commission issued a report 10 years ago, in December 2003, making a number of recommendations concerning development in the Rainey Street neighborhood. These recommendations included rezoning the neighborhood to CBD zoning and a call for action to create a pedestrian-oriented environment, to promote positive redevelopment, and to ensure “redevelopment maintains a ‘sense of place’ that is unique and attractive.” The CBD zoning was adopted for the area but little in the way of additional zoning regulations, incentives, or other policies have been adopted to promote positive redevelopment in the area; and

WHEREAS, there is no plan in place to address the future of the Rainey Street alleyways, which present opportunities to further the goals and urban design priorities in the Downtown Plan, including bicycle, pedestrian and transit connectivity, open space, and a pedestrian-oriented environment, in addition to preserving their important role for trash collection and other services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE DOWNTOWN COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The Downtown Commission recommends that the Austin City Council direct staff, and provide appropriate financial support for staff, to develop a District plan for the Rainey Street area that includes an implementation strategy to address the goals and priorities set out in the Downtown Area Plan for the Rainey Street District. The District plan should include urban design standards and incentives for the development of pedestrian-oriented commercial uses and engaging public spaces, a plan for the area’s alleys, and a plan to create stronger pedestrian and bicycle linkages. In developing the plan, City staff should work closely with residents, businesses, property owners, the Mexican American Cultural Center, and other stakeholders in the city.

Date of Approval: August 21, 2013

Record of the vote: 8-0

Attest: Michael R. Knox (Staff or board member can sign)