



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Kevin Johns, Director
Economic Development Department

DATE: April 6, 2017

SUBJECT: Music and Creative Ecosystem Omnibus Activation Resolution

City Council Resolution No. 2017-0126-040, directed the City Manager to move forward with implementation of the Music and Creative Ecosystem Stabilization recommendations funded by City Council during the FY 2017 budget adoption process. It further directed staff to consider specific program elements included via attachment to the resolution, reiterated the support for the creation of an entertainment services group within the Music and Entertainment Division of the Economic Development Department (EDD) and implementation of the Nightlife Initiative. The resolution called for a status report to City Council within 60 days.

The EDD has made significant progress in the implementation of the staff recommendations in the Music and Creative Ecosystem Stabilization report released in June 2016. Funding in the cumulative amount of \$475,000 was allocated in FY 2017 in support of three specific initiatives. The specific items, current status, and next steps are listed below:

- Creation of an entertainment services group (\$200,000 towards 2 FTEs): The first of the two positions, the entertainment services manager, was filled as of March 6, 2017. This position is responsibility for day-to-day management of all music-related permitting and will also be playing a key role in the development of the agent of change policy and entertainment license. The recruitment process for the music program specialist position is currently underway. Interviews for this position will take place in early April and we anticipate having this position filled by early May, when the Red River pilot program begins.
- Transitional funding for performing arts and creative affordable space needs (\$200,000): EDD researched various options to best deploy this funding and will be seeking City Council approval of a grant program, versus a loan program, to support nonprofits facing permanent displacement, those previously displaced, or with lease renewals at substantially higher rates. Grants will be made on a competitive basis, determined by the criteria which will include project need, readiness, scope and request amount. Priority will be given to organizations confronting immediate and critical needs. Additional program criteria and processes are currently being finalized. We anticipate seeking City Council approval for this grant program in May 2017.
- Revenue development program and platform (\$75,000): EDD is currently negotiating a contract with DIY Advisors, the creators of the “Indie Band Survival Guide” for licensing of revenue development training materials. This contract should be fully executed in late April. This will be followed by a competitive solicitation process for the development of the web platform to host this training material. We anticipate having the web platform contract in place by August and having the platform available to the public by February 2018.

City Council Resolution No. 2017-0126-040 also encouraged the implementation of the nightlife initiative. A preliminary draft of such an initiative was developed in 2016 and outlined a comprehensive approach for managing Austin's nighttime economy through a full suite of inter-departmental actions. Given the high demands on entertainment services staff in connection with the spring festival season, agent of change and entertainment license initiatives, we expect to have the research associated with the nightlife initiative completed by August 2017. Inter-departmental coordination will begin shortly thereafter, with development of an implementation plan by the end of the calendar year.

I appreciate your continued support of the many initiatives EDD undertakes to support our local music and creative industry. Please feel free to contact me at 512-974-7802 or Alejandra Lopez, Deputy Director at 512-974-2343 should you have any additional questions.

xc: Elaine Hart, Interim City Manager
Greg Canally, Interim Chief Financial Officer