



# Austin Design Commission

## Recommendation 20170522-04A

Date: May 22, 2017

Subject: Design Commission recommendations on the 4th Street Skybridge

Motion by: Melissa Henao-Robledo      Second By: Evan Taniguchi

### Recommendation

The Austin Design Commission recommends the 4th Street Skybridge with four conditions

### Description of Recommendation to Council

The DC recommends the Encroachment Agreement include the following conditions for approval:

- 1) The skybridge shall allow for public access during the hours during which Capital Metro is running trains.
- 2) The Hilton shall coordinate with the Convention Center to ensure a public access point for the south side of the skybridge. Convention Center doors shall be unlocked for pedestrian access and the Hilton lobby and employees shall welcome public access to the bridge on the north.
- 3) Signage shall be provided at street level and on the skybridge to welcome the public to utilize the structure.
- 4) The Hilton shall coordinate with ATD and Capital Metro to further enhance ground level pedestrian safety, including adding safety measures at the hotel entry directly adjacent to the tracks.

### Rationale

Dear Members of the City Council and Mayor Adler,

The Design Commission (DC) does not generally recommend approval of skybridges in Austin, Texas, given that these elevated structures do not further the intent of the City's adopted Urban Design Guidelines (UDG). The UDGs suggest a focus on structural and technological solutions to pedestrian travel that improve and enhance the ground level streetscape and do not restrict or appear to restrict public access and enjoyment in the public realm.

For this specific project, the DC recommends conditional approval of the Encroachment Agreement to construct a publicly accessible skybridge between the Hilton Hotel and Austin Convention Center on 4th Street. Austin Transportation Department and Capital Metro representatives have stated that this structure offers substantial pedestrian safety for convention center users and the public to cross 4th Street given heavy current and future pedestrian traffic associated with the Convention Center and planned expansion of the Downtown Metrorail Station between Red River and Trinity Street.

David Carroll, Chair

Bart Whatley, Vice Chair

Aan Coleman

Beau Frail

Samuel Franco

Martha Gonzalez

Katie Halloran

Conor Kenny

Melissa Henao-Robledo

Evan Taniguchi

Katie Mulholland,  
Executive Liaison

Nichole Koerth,  
Staff Liaison

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Respectfully,

City of Austin Design Commission

**Vote:** 8-1

For: Aan Coleman, Beau Frail, Samuel Franco, Martha Gonzalez, Katie Halloran, Melissa Henao-Robledo, Evan Taniguchi, Bart Whatley

Against: Conor Kenny

Abstain: n/a

Absent: David Carroll

Attest:



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