



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** Roosevelt Weeks, Director of Libraries  
**DATE:** December 21, 2018  
**SUBJECT:** Recycled Reads Bookstore

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The Recycled Reads bookstore, located at 5335 Burnet Road, opened to the public in February of 2009. Recycled Reads' primary function has been the reuse, repurpose, and recycling of books and other materials from our 20 library locations and from Austin citizens. Recycled Reads has diverted more than 3000 tons of materials from landfills and has contributed to the city's goal of zero waste by 2040. Recycled Reads educates the community on reuse by providing programs and workshops on a regular basis that carry the sustainability message.

The Austin Public Library (APL) is looking to collaborate with Austin Creative Reuse (ACR) to expand reuse efforts to the community. ACR is a non-profit organization that operates a center for reuse and recycling, including collection, distribution, and sale of reusable materials donated by industry and individuals. Additionally, ACR performs community education on recycling and reuse of various materials.

ACR is uniquely aligned with the city's strategic direction in the following areas:

### ***Health and Environment***

- **Waste Diversion:** Diverting 147 tons of materials since the center opened just 2 1/2 years ago, ACR empowers every customer, volunteer, and program participant to expand their waste reduction and diversion in their own lives. Over 99% of incoming materials are diverted from the landfill, and waste is transformed into a valuable resource.
- **Austin Green Business Leaders (AGBL):** ACR was the first organization in the history of the AGBL program to receive a perfect score for "Community Stewardship." ACR practices sustainability in every aspect of their operations, diverting 99% of incoming materials and producing almost no waste in their internal processes. They minimize energy and ensure a healthy, toxin-free environment for the community.
- **Healthy, Connected Community:** ACR's mission of *Fostering conservation and reuse through creativity, education and community building* increases socially cohesive, resilient communities. Volunteers and participants say that Austin Creative Reuse has made them less isolated and increased their sense of connection and purpose.

## ***Culture and Lifelong Learning***

- **Unique programming:** ACR is a vital component of maintaining Austin's unique artistic positioning and culture.
- **Lifelong opportunity:** Everyone is creative, and our community includes people from all backgrounds and all ages, from early childhood through senior citizens. ACR prioritizes accessibility and inclusion for all.

## ***Economic Opportunity and Affordability***

- **Living wage jobs & financial sustainability:** ACR's wage floor is a living wage as determined by the City of Austin. ACR is a primarily revenue-funded nonprofit, focused on developing and maintaining a sustainable financial model that does not rely on grant funding or on paying non-livable wages to the staff. They currently provide nine living wage jobs, and they hope to increase that number with growing revenue in a larger space.
- **Affordable, accessible creativity:** ACR provides uniquely affordable materials to artists, community members, and educators, helping to offset the growing cost of living and ensure that creativity and the arts are accessible to all.

APL is looking to sublease 2/3 of the current space at Recycled Reads to ACR. This will offset some of the rent we pay to operate at this location. The current rent that we pay is \$10,092 per month. Subleasing this space will allow Recycled Reads to continue to operate throughout the city and to expand book sales and reuse programs through our library branches as well as outreach events in the city. This means that every district will have exposure to the Recycled Reads experience.

Recycled Reads plans to provide the following services at our other library locations:

- Collects books and materials
- Conducts book sales
- Provides programs and services on recycling and other topics
- Host fix-it clinics, arts meet-up, and other classes

This partnership will reduce our cost to operate while, as mentioned above, allow APL to expand services to all parts of the city. ACR is a great fit to what we provide and will allow the creative community to have an additional space to use. We are working with the Law Department and Office of Real Estate Services to create the agreement, and we plan to bring an item to City Council on a council meeting agenda in early 2019.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 512-974-7444.

CC: Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Sara Hensley, CPRP, Interim Assistant City Manager  
Assistant City Managers  
Anne Morgan, City Attorney  
Alex Gale, Interim Officer, Real Estate Services