




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

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

DATE: April 16, 2020

SUBJECT: Response to CIUR 2186 - Resolution No. 20190808-144 regarding
Red River Cultural District Enhancements

This memorandum provides a summary of the progress the Economic Development Department (EDD) and partnering Departments have made in addressing the directives of [City Council Resolution 20190808-144](#), and supporting [City Council Resolution 20170608-033](#). Resolution 20190808-144 directs the City Manager to use available funds from the Great Streets Program to expeditiously deliver projects described in Resolution 20170608-033. Projects include alley closure, trash receptacles, lighting, temporary art, and pedestrian mobility improvements including sidewalk redesign. Additionally, costs associated with design, engineering, and project manager fees are to be included. Project prioritization categories to include:

- Level 1 Project Prioritization inclusive of Safety and Accessibility Improvement: alley closure, lighting as deemed necessary from the study, ADA compliance, addressing absent sidewalks, installation of trash receptacles and pedestrian crosswalk restriping
- Level 2 Project Prioritization inclusive of Hardscapes and Right of Way Enhancements: sidewalk repair, design and engineering for curb cuts and sidewalk redesign, and street alignment
- Level 3 Project Prioritization inclusive of Beautification Projects: planter boxes, trees, and maintenance

Red River Cultural District Background

The Red River Cultural District (RRCD) is an area stretching between 6th Street and 12th Street along Red River and encompasses businesses within two blocks of Red River. RRCD is home to ten (10) live music venues, hotels and other businesses in a district essential to Austin's music industry ecosystem. The RRCD Merchants Association was created with the assistance of the Economic Development Department's Souly Austin program. An extensive community organizing, and engagement effort supported the identification of the enhancements outlined in both resolutions mentioned above. Participation among the business and property owner community in the area averaged 90% and consensus on priorities for the District are outlined in the [Red River Cultural District Economic Strategy](#). Carrying out the work outlined in the both Resolutions stems from and relies on programmatic support of the Souly Austin Program. Information about the program is available at: <http://www.austintexas.gov/soulyatx>.

Progress to Date

Staff implementation efforts continue with the achievement of several significant milestones outlined in the prior memorandum to Mayor and City Council - [CIUR 2186 Update \(November 21, 2019\)](#). All permits for the alleyway gate and fence system have been secured and the installation is complete. Additional details are

available in the attached matrix. Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) installed ten trash and recycling receptacles along Red River between 6th and 11th Streets. ARR is providing regular collection service to these cans. Austin Energy (AE) completed a lighting study for the district. The light study concluded that the existing lighting meets and exceeds AE standards for street lighting. Staff will continue to explore other lighting options over the next 90 days. Conceptual designs have been completed by Public Works staff for consideration. EDD and PW met with Red River Cultural District stakeholders on January 31, 2020 to share designs and gather feedback.

Next Steps (90 Days)

Per City Council's direction staff will bring back a completed cost estimate highlighting any gaps in funding beyond the allocated \$1.3 million or maintenance considerations. Outstanding items preventing the cost estimate from being completed for this update that will be addressed in the next 90 days include; identifying applicable lighting alternatives based on the results of the lighting study, final stakeholder feedback on design concepts and maintenance, engineering and installation cost preparation and specifically course of action for implementation. Continued efforts will be made to address long term maintenance and funding allocations.

Project specific updates as well as scoping and administrative updates can be found in Matrix 1 Resolution Items, Updates and Cost Estimates. To increase transparency and communication on the items within Resolution 20190808-144, a City of Austin [webpage](#) has been created where regular updates will also be available.

Staff will report to City Council with a follow up memorandum on June 1, 2020 on progress made. For more information please contact, Nicole Klepadlo, Redevelopment Project Manager in EDD at 512-974-7739 or Nicole.Klepadlo@austintexas.gov.

xc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
 Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager
 J. Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager

Table 1: Resolution Items, Updates and Cost Estimates

Enhancement	City Team	Actions		Resources	
		To date	Next 90 Days	Estimated Costs	Maintenance
Project Scoping & Administrative	EDD, PW, APD, AFD, ATD, AE, AW, DSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Project team meetings held Project manager assigned Design and engineering started; resources committed from PW District existing conditions walk completed Attendance at monthly Coordination Meeting on Asset Management Preliminary design concepts completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of finalized project costs Completion of DRAFT timeline with phasing approach for implementation Identify resources of long-term maintenance for specific items Attend Public Works monthly Coordination Meeting on Asset Management – as needed Attend Austin Utility Location Coordination Committee (AULCC) – as needed Seek APD review on designs specific to Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) 	Pending cost estimates (N/A
Alleyway	EDD, PW, APD, AFD, ATD, AE, AW, DSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Completed December 23, 2019 	N/A - COMPLETED	Total Cost: \$192,000 (Includes: Construction, Inspector, Project Manager Fees, Building Permit, Site Plan, and Gate/Fence)	Long term maintenance costs and responsibility has not been determined. EDD will resume this role until a partner can be identified.
Trash Receptacles	EDD, ARR, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 cans installed throughout the District Secured ARR commitment for ongoing trash pickup upon installation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determination of maintenance costs and responsibilities should trash can become damaged. Identify if additional cans are needed 	Estimated Phase 1 Cost: \$20,500 Estimated Phase 2 would include additional cans. Pending costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance costs for can replacement has not been determined. ARR commitment to trash pickup service
Lighting	EDD, PW, AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder locations identified for additional lighting. Street Lighting Study completed; study concluded existing lighting meet and exceed AE standards for street lighting. 	Explore options for pedestrian scale lighting	AE to cover expense of Study.	N/A as of 1/30/2020

Enhancement	City Team	Actions		Resources	
		To date	Next 90 Days	Estimated Costs	Maintenance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 lights identified for repair; AE completed maintenance 			
Temporary Art <i>Completed</i>	EDD, RRCDMA ATD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed. Installation of three (3) murals honoring its history and culture (Elysium, Cheer Up Charlies and Stubbs) 	Completed.	EDD Souly Austin Program expenditures total: \$13,000 Private business contribution: \$7,500	RRCDMA businesses
Sidewalks	EDD, PW, ATD, UD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted physical condition and ADA compliance survey Analyzed alignment with Sidewalk Master Plan and Five-Year Capital Improvements Plan Prioritization of sidewalk improvements into phases Included completing sidewalk network Various meetings within house design tea, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine cost estimates including design and engineering Meeting with business owners for feedback on conceptual designs Complete a implementation timeline with phasing Identify funding gap 	To be finalized /completed upon design and engineering completed.	Maintenance costs and frequency, responsibility and implementation have not been determined.
Planter Boxes/Landscaping	EDD, PW, ATD, UD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of draft designs based on owner input and enhancing the overall aesthetics and safety of the District Preliminary design completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from business community early Feb 2020 Secure support for business owner maintenance Secure cost estimates for external maintenance; or partner on existing maintenance contract Finalize cost estimates for all fabrication, installation and maintenance Finalize design concepts for planter box placement and materials to use Explore final use of adopt a median for planter box placement Complete an implementation timeline with phasing 	Pending cost estimate which will include design and engineering.	Maintenance costs and frequency, responsibility and implementation have not been determined.
Signage and Wayfinding	EDD, UD, ATD, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$200,000 provided through Historic Preservation Fund for Red River signage Finalized and approved sign locations Meeting 11/13/2019 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering design for specific signs Identify timeline for fabrication and installation Refine graphics needed for signage Feedback from District on sign content needed 	\$200,000	TBD

Legend:

ARR – Austin Resources Recovery Department ATD – Austin Transportation Department PW – Public Works Department UD – Urban Design Division, Planning Department
 AFD – Austin Fire Department EDD – Economic Development Department ROW – Right-of-way RRCDMA – Red River Cultural District Merchants Association