

Funding Request
From the Mexican-American Music Alliance (MAMA) and
the Latin Music Coalition Austin (LMCA)
To the Austin Music Commission
August 5, 2020

Summary

- The MAMA and LMCA requests that the Austin Music Commission consider funding from the Live Music Fund for Latino music initiatives that fit within the guidelines of Texas State Statue governing HOT funds
- The MAMA/LMCA requests a Latino Music fund in the amount of \$1.5 million be established that addresses city music tourism needs while at the same time addresses the funding disparity that exists to support Mexican-American and Latino musicians, community venues, and music industry development
- The MAMA/LMCA also requests that \$2 million of the \$12 million bond funds approved in 2018 for creative spaces be allocated to the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican-American Cultural Center (ESB-MACC) to develop a music HUB as called for in the 2016 Austin Music and Creative Ecosystem Omnibus Resolution approved by the City Council

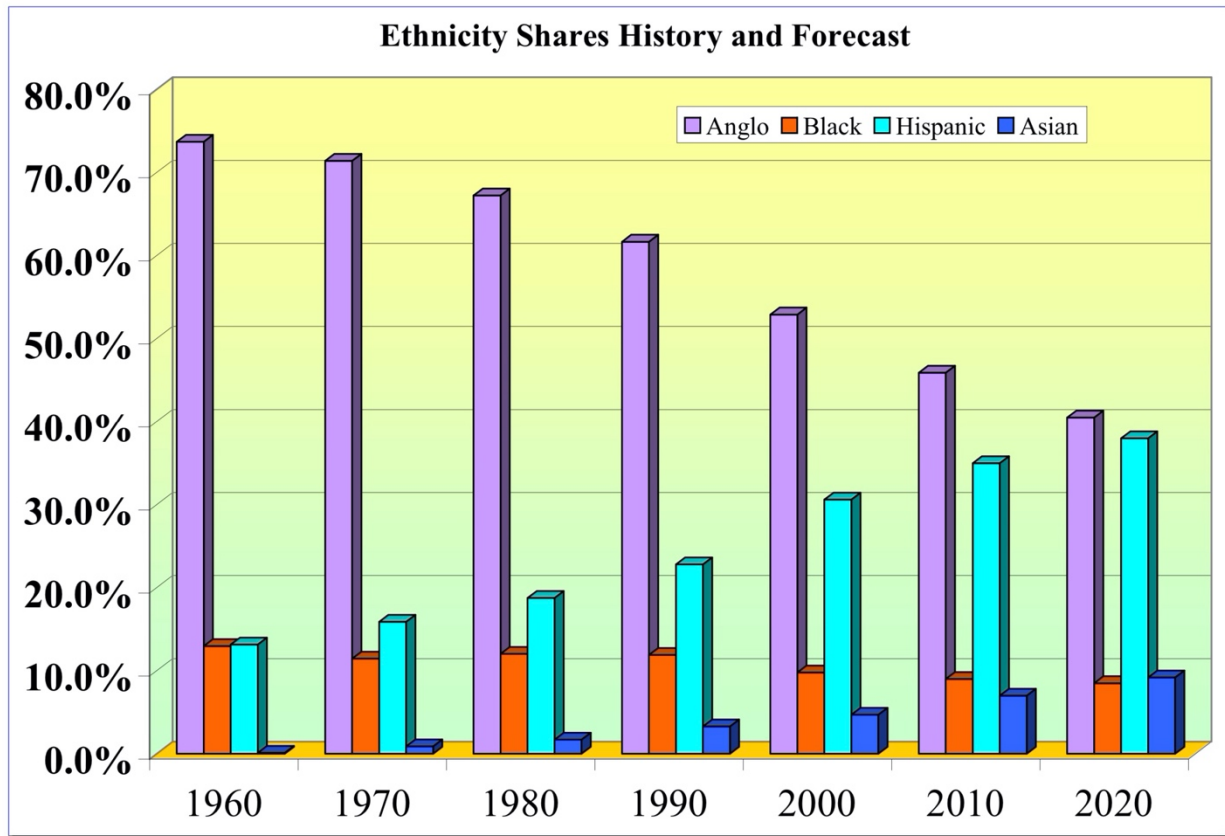
Background

Equity, diversity, and inclusion are recognized as a critical priority in the Austin music, arts and culture sector. Austin's music industry should be a model of diversity and innovation based on its demographics and diversity of music genres. Equity for Austin's Mexican-American and Latino populations should be Austin's response to its changing social environment and an expression of its shared values. Latino music has long influenced popular American music and yet it remains in the shadows of the Live Music Capital of the World. With the popularity of Latino music in the mainstream media, listening to this music is no longer something culturally obscure. Latino music helps shape Latino identity by empowering and helping those who have assimilated to mainstream music in the United States to reconnect with their cultural roots. The music brings a source of pride about one's heritage and identity as a Mexican-American and Latino.

Demography and Gaps

America's demographics are changing—and the nation's economic fate will hinge on how we respond to these changes. As the population grows more diverse and people of color become the majority, equity—fair and just inclusion—has become an urgent economic imperative. By 2042, racial minority groups will become the majority of the US population, but the City of Austin is already a Majority-Minority city. The City of Austin's demographer estimates that the City's White population dropped below 50% sometime during 2005. The estimated White share of the population is at 45%; the Black population at 7%; the Asian population at 8% and the Latino population is at 40%.

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Mexican-American and Latin Music is struggling to appeal to Austin’s new wave of potential audiences. The Live Music Fund offers an avenue for Latino Music to attract more diverse audiences, donors, employees, and other key stakeholders if they want to achieve programmatic, financial, and operational success in the very near future. Mutual goals of the MAMA and LMCA are to have a thriving, diverse, inclusive and equitable music, arts, and culture community. Austin needs partners to make equity and inclusion a point of pride for the creative community. A consistent revenue stream for Mexican-American/Latino musicians and related support organizations presents an opportunity to operationalize equity rather than continued aspirational statements about wanting to achieve racial equity for musicians and the music industry.

Live Music Fund request

The Live Music Fund was created by City ordinance funded through an additional two percent hotel occupancy tax for the Convention Center expansion, an amount equal to 15% of the two percent assessment. According to the City budget, it is estimated that there will be \$2,469,405

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at the end of September 2020. An additional amount of \$2,225,829 is budgeted for the upcoming fiscal year, 2020-21.

The Coalition's members have worked in music tourism and understand that the Live Music Fund's use of hotel occupancy taxes meet the requirements of Texas Tax Code Section 351.101(a) (4). The uses must encourage, promote, and improve the arts including music for the purposes of directly enhancing and promoting tourism and the convention and hotel industry.

The coalition's request for a Latino Music Fund is 33% of the total amount in the Live Music Fund as shown in the proposed budget. This equates to \$1.5 million. The funds are intended to be used for music tourism primarily for music festivals that feature local Mexican-American and Latino music artists that will attract local and non-local audiences and visitors.

Music HUB Request

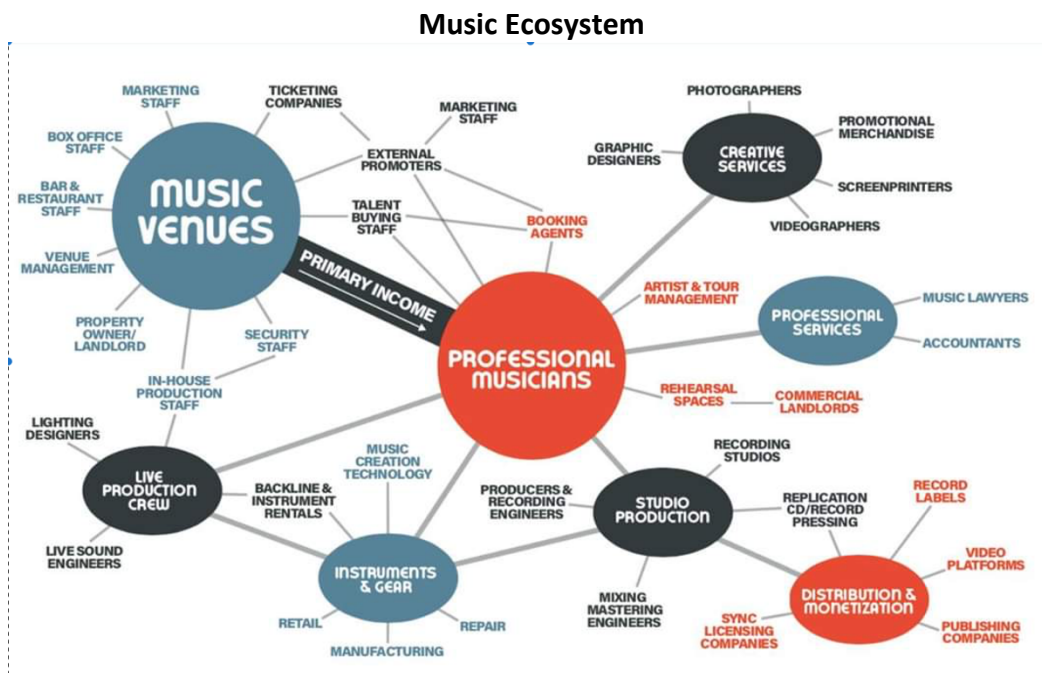
The 2016 Council approved the Austin Music and Creative Ecosystem Resolution that called for "the creation of a music HUB that supports the music industry by offering a collection of resources and services for musicians under one roof." In 2018 voters approved a \$12 million bond proposal to acquire creative spaces for the arts and music. At the time it was envisioned that half of the \$12 million proposal or \$6 million would be allocated for a Music HUB(s). Previously, members of the MAMA and LMCA have spoken in favor before the Music Commission and at City sponsored staff forums to use a portion of these funds to create a Music HUB at the ESB-MACC. The previously funded expansion of the ESB-MACC did not include any music related space and an additional \$2 million in funds would create a music HUB space.

Since the \$12 million bond for creatives spaces was approved, the City has been negotiating an agreement with the Texas Facilities Commission to create a process to obtain creative spaces using the \$12 million approved bond program. City staff is expecting outside real estate brokers to identify sites and landowners as potential facility operators. The Coalition is requesting that City staff consider the ESB-MACC site for inclusion in the staff's acquisition proposal. At the public forum for the \$12 million bond program for creative spaces, the MAMA/LMAC members spoke in favor of an ESB-MACC public option for space as a Music HUB. The MAMA/LMCA requests that before any proposal goes out to private real estate consultants; that City staff review this with the Music Commission and the public to have an open and transparent process and to ensure that the ESB-MACC can be included as a potential candidate for the \$12 million creative bonds.

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The two overriding aims of a Music HUB at the ESB-MACC is to broaden and increase the opportunities for music-making of all ages, regardless of their background and personal circumstances, and to raise the standards of music provision to the highest levels possible.

The ESB-MACC Music HUB would provide a comprehensive understanding and education for the music ecosystem. Like all ecosystems, it is diverse and in constant evolution. It includes the music industry music venues, music education, and ancillary industries. The ESB-MACC Music HUB would be a collaboration between key local and regional music organizations that provide subject matter expertise on aspects of the music ecosystem as shown below.



For further information contact:

Leonard Davila
Mexican-American Music Alliance
lfdtexas@aol.com
512-921-1961

Alex Vallejo
Latin Music Coalition Austin
Vallejobooking@gmail.com
512-699-4111