



## MUSIC COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION 20210405-4b

Date: April 5, 2021

Subject: Budget Recommendation

Motioned By: Gavin Garcia

Seconded By: Graham Reynolds

### Recommendation

Recommendation to City Council requesting a minimum of \$20 million per year for two years, from any and all available sources, to provide recovery for Austin music community losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Austin music initiatives and programs for **Preservation, Innovation, and Elevation (PIE)** of the Austin music industry, venues, festivals, and professionals.

### Description of Recommendation to Council

The Music Commission, in support of the music community, recommends that Austin City Council designate a minimum of \$20 Million per year in funding to Austin music professionals, organizations, and enterprises for their use in sustaining operations, fueling Austin music industry growth, and supporting the music community in the face of pandemic-related economic losses, a growing affordability crisis, and substantial institutional equity concerns in Austin.

The Commission gratefully acknowledges the support the Austin music industry received from the City of Austin through COVID relief programs, and strongly recommends dedicated funding to support and elevate the Austin music economy. Sources for the requested \$20 Million per year could include, but is not limited to the American Rescue Plan, and city general revenue, hotel occupancy taxes, or other funds.

### Rationale:

- Austin is the Music Capital of the World and the music industry here is a major driver of tourism and economic growth for the City of Austin
  - The music economy all but ground to halt during the pandemic, creating severe economic losses and uncertainty for the future.
  - The music community, with the direction, encouragement, and support of the Music Commission, is in the process of developing equity & fair pay programming initiatives that will require funding to be viable to historically underserved communities.
  - The Live Music Fund concept was created in acknowledgement of the need to financially support the growth of the Austin Music Industry with the **PIE** funding recommendation/overlay which seeks to repair historic equity concerns within live music.
  - The Creative Space bond was created in acknowledgement of the increasing scarcity of affordable space for venues, studios, and other spaces designated for creative uses.
  - On March 25, 2021, Austin City Council passed [Resolution No. 20210325-111](#), which directed staff to inventory funding available for relief and recovery, and to identifying four priority areas:  
**Specific recommendations for are for each of the four priority areas as related to music are:**
1. Homelessness, and related housing, mental health, and substance use issues;
    - Funding for music worker mental health and health directed to existing local organizations
      - i. HAAM
      - ii. SIMS Foundation

- iii. Communities for Recovery
- 2. Early childhood care and education that is high quality and affordable
  - o Funding for school student music education programs, both in-person and remote-learning, led by Austin musicians and local music orgs, in accordance with school employment verification standards
  - o Funding for family-friendly and children’s music programming in Austin City Parks and facilities managed by PARD, including renovation of existing stages and performance spaces.
- 3. Jobs for working class Austinites that include good wages, benefits, and workplace protections, and associated workforce development
  - o Funding as offered through the Federal Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program
  - o Funding designed to address gaps and misses from the Shuttered Venue Grant Program, due to easily predictable impact of the first-come first-served nature of its grant distribution process.
- Developing long-term sustainable business models preserving Austin’s historic venues
    - o Austin Music Marketing Campaigns
    - o Funding for equity, artist development, and fair pay initiatives for the Austin music industry, as proposed by the Music Commission’s Equity and Fair Pay Program
    - o Venue and creative space grants
    - o Paid CoA music gigs to elevate and support ATX musicians and music workers
    - o Paid Musical Performances at Music Commission and City Council Meetings
- 4. Food and housing insecurity
  - o Funding for feasibility studies and programs to create affordable housing options directly benefiting musicians
  - o Model based on targeted low-income housing units (similar to past proposals associated with Mosaic Sound Collective)
  - o Model based on successful principles of Community First! Village “Music Dorm” program, offering time-limited no-frills housing to qualified

**Conclusion**

Swift action to appropriate these funds will help move Austin’s music industry toward recovery and sustainability. It will further demonstrate the City Council’s acknowledgement of the critical role the music community plays in the overall economic health and character of Austin.

**Vote**

For: 9 (Chair Chaka Mahone, Vice-Chair Anne-Charlotte Patterson, Secretary Oren Rosenthal, Al Duarte, Gavin Garcia, Doug Leveton, Nagavalli Medicharla, Patrice Pike, Graham Reynolds)

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 1 (Stuart Sullivan)

Attest: Kim McCarson, Liaison