



Recommendation for Action

File #: 21-3331, Agenda Item #: 8.

11/18/2021

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of a contract with Six Square to provide educational, heritage preservation, and economic development programs and services in the African American Cultural Heritage District for a 12-month term in an amount not to exceed \$300,000, with two additional 12 month extension options in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 per extension option, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$900,000.

Lead Department

Economic Development Department.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$300,000.00 is available from FY2021-2022 Operational Budget of Economic Development Department. Funding for the remaining extension options is contingent upon available funding in Economic Development Department future budgets.

Prior Council Action:

February 16, 2016 - Council approved a twelve-month contract with two (2) twelve-month extensions.

January 30, 2019 - Council approved a twelve-month contract with two (2) twelve-month extensions.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

This proposed action authorizes funding of a management service contract with Six Square, a 501(c) (3) organization, for economic development programs and services. The recommendation for funding for this contract was originally initiated and approved by the City Council during the FY16 budget process. The Six Square organization is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for residents of central east Austin by preserving the rich heritage and cultural contributions of Austin's African American community through historical interpretations, promotion of cultural and artistic events, and by serving as a catalyst for social and economic development.

Austin's African American Cultural Heritage District was declared as such by the State of Texas on September 3, 2009. The district boundaries, set by City Council in 2007, comprise approximately six square miles of central east Austin. The district is home to numerous sites of national, regional, and local historic significance and celebrates African Americans and others who played important roles in creating the vibrancy of Austin.

The Economic Development Department (EDD) seeks to contract with Six Square to expand the prosperity of the district to support:

Heritage/Preservation

Conduct community impactful programming with other organizations that highlight the African American Cultural and Heritage District's cultural assets, economic vitality, and historical preservation best practices.

Marketing/Branding

Market the District to residents within the Austin metropolitan statistical area (MSA) and tourists outside the MSA. Conduct monthly tours of historic sites within the district and track tourists by zip code. Publish and distribute a monthly newsletter and calendar of events for the district. Erect wayfinding markers for the district.

Artistic/Cultural Productions

Conduct artistic and cultural productions within the district using national and local talent for Six Square's Gallery exhibits, The District Cultural Fest, Musical Explorations and other culturally relevant events.

Economic Development

Partner with local businesses, the Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce, the Urban Renewal Board, EDD, and non-profits within the district and continue to invest in the creative sector to spur responsible economic development in central east Austin.

Education

Continue to work with various educational institutions (Blackshear Elementary, Kealing Middle School, Huston-Tillotson University, University of Texas, and Texas State University) to provide educational workshops, tours, talks and programs to encourage civic engagement among the students with a specific focus on the history of central east Austin, social studies, history, and social justice.

Strategic Outcome(s):

Economic Opportunity and Affordability, Culture & Lifelong Learning, Health & Environment, Government That Works For All, Safety.