



MAYOR'S COMMITTEE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES RECOMMENDATION 20250808-008

Date: July 28, 2025

Subject: Recommendation to the City Council Supporting the Inclusion of a Community Center in the South Congress and Riverside Mixed-Use Development

Motioned By: Gabriel Arellano

Seconded By: _____

Recommendation

The Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities recommends that the Austin City Council direct the City Manager to initiate negotiations with Related Companies to include a dedicated Community Center in the South Congress and Riverside mixed-use development.

Description of Recommendation to Council

- Direct the Planning and Zoning Department to revise the rezoning approval for the South Congress and Riverside development to include a Community Center.
- Allocate initial funding support for the Community Center from the FY2025–26 city budget.
- Ensure collaboration with the Office of Equity and Inclusion and the Human Rights Commission to evaluate equity and accessibility compliance.
- Facilitate a meeting between City officials and Related Companies, including representatives from the disability community, to co-develop inclusive design and programming features.

Rationale

- **Equity and Civil Rights:**

The disability community, which constitutes approximately 15% of Austin's population, currently lacks equitable access to accessible venues. A community center would provide essential space for services, inclusive programming, and public gatherings. This proposal aligns with the City of Austin's Strategic Direction 2023 goals and civil rights ordinances such as the Austin CROWN Act and Title II of the ADA.

- **Community Needs:**

Public sentiment gathered via social media and local reporting shows a strong desire for affordable and community-oriented spaces. A community center will meet this need while serving as a resilience hub during climate emergencies and

preserving the cultural integrity of historic neighborhoods.

- **Economic and Social Benefits:**

The proposed center will support small and disability-owned businesses, provide gathering space, and enhance pedestrian-friendly design by fostering a greater sense of community belonging and safety.

- **Inclusive Programming and Governance:**

The center will feature workshops in disability rights, Indigenous rights, ASL education, and STEM activities. Its leadership will prioritize governance by representatives of marginalized communities, including people with disabilities, people of color, and LGBTQ individuals.

Vote

For: [#]

Against: [#]

Abstain: [#]

Absent: [#]

Attest:

[Signature line for staff or board member]