



November 13, 2025

**Re: Zoning Request – CASE: C14-2024-0160 (1000 Red River)**

Dear Chair and Commissioners of the Austin Planning Commission,

On behalf of the [Red River Cultural District](#), we are writing to share our formal recommendations on CASE: C14-2024-0160 (1000 Red River).

The [Red River Cultural District](#) (RRCD) is a vibrant cultural tourism and entertainment area that stretches along Red River Street from 4th Street to 15th Street, bounded by Interstate 35 to the east and extending west to Neches Street and Trinity Street. This cultural corridor—known as Austin’s “Music Mile”—connects a collection of Austin’s independent live music venues, hospitality services, and bars and restaurants, with the Moody Center marking its northern end. The District is home to the German Texan Heritage Society, the Austin Symphony and the First Baptist Church and the expanding Waterloo Park and Greenway.

The Austin City Council formally [established the Cultural District](#) in 2013, and in 2020, the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) designated it as an official State Cultural District. As a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, the RRCD is managed by the Red River Merchants’ Association, which seeks to celebrate, preserve and evolve Red River’s creative, business and music ecosystem sustainably.

The site at **1000 Red River** represents a unique opportunity to serve as a catalyst along the Red River Cultural District corridor, particularly as the Innovation District, Medical District Campus, and Waterloo Greenway continue to evolve. Located within Austin’s rapidly developing eastern downtown, this area is at the heart of several transformative initiatives that are reshaping the city’s cultural and economic landscape. The Palm District Plan provides significant guidance on a vision and priorities for this area but realizing its full potential will require collaboration among city leaders, developers, cultural partners, and community stakeholders.

RRCD understands today's action is a zoning request, and while we support the general request of the applicant, we want to emphasize the importance of a broader vision—one that celebrates culture, innovation, and evolution, while remaining grounded in the authentic cultural roots that define Austin.

Our priorities include encouraging mixed-use development that enhances pedestrian-scale activation with the future connection to Waterloo Greenway trail system and fosters a vibrant and diverse walkable environment. With the site spanning a full City block and 3 acres, the site serves as a main connector from Austin's Convention Center, along the Cultural District corridor to Waterloo Park, and further north to intersect with the work of the Innovation District. We strongly encourage the following as the project development plans come to life:

- Street-level uses specifically Red River facing such as coffee shop, book store, and local-serving retail that promote daytime activity;
- Consideration of spaces for nonprofit organizations, artists, and cultural practitioners; and
- Inclusion of an indoor or outdoor hub that celebrates the intersection of the Cultural District, Waterloo Greenway, Innovation District, and the work—providing a gathering place for residents, tourists, and stakeholders.
- Consideration to the built environment including landscaping elements, streetscaping features that offer a pleasant pedestrian environment while also fostering a sense of place.

While it is not clear at this time what the long term redevelopment will look like, we want to note several important construction mitigation considerations for the surrounding area that we would like to get ahead of in partnership with the applicant:

- The German Texan Heritage Society, which hosts school-age children, educational classes, and numerous festivals drawing thousands of attendees each year, must be protected from undue construction impacts such as noise, dust, and access limitations.
- Nearby music venues rely on uninterrupted operations, including tour bus access and parking. Ensuring these activities are not disrupted is critical to maintaining the integrity of Austin's live music ecosystem.
- We urge that any proposed housing or building materials be evaluated for their compatibility with the surrounding 12+ indoor and outdoor music venues, consistent with the City of Austin's Venue Compatibility and Assessment policies. This will help maintain a balance between the evolution of the District and the celebration of Austin's cultural and music assets.

In conclusion, we are eager to welcome this stakeholder as part of the Cultural District and look forward to collaborating to ensure that future development reflects our shared vision of a district that celebrates creativity, innovation, and community.

While our organization has not yet been engaged by the applicant. As this project moves forward within the Red River Cultural District, we hope today's discussion opens the door for active collaboration. We see this development as an opportunity to partner in strengthening and complementing the district's cultural ecosystem, ensuring it continues to grow with the Cultural District—not simply adjacent to it.

Sincerely,

Christopher Markley, German Texan Heritage Society

Heather Kaplan, Mohawk

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