



RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

LGBTQ Quality of Life Advisory Commission

Recommendation Number: 20260309-015: LGBTQ Entertainment District

WHEREAS, the State of Texas, through directives to enforce roadway safety and pavement marking compliance, has required removal of decorative and message-based roadway art, including rainbow and culturally themed crosswalks, with potential risk to transportation funding for noncompliance; and

WHEREAS, the rainbow crosswalk at West 4th Street and Colorado Street has served as a widely recognized marker of Austin's LGBTQ cultural and entertainment district, signaling safety, belonging, and civic recognition for LGBTQIA+ residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the removal of highly visible cultural markers in public spaces may negatively affect community cohesion, cultural tourism, and small business activity within established neighborhood corridors; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin operates a Street Banner Program that provides a lawful and compliant framework for district identity markers, including over-street and street-pole banners, consistent with roadway regulations; and

WHEREAS, the development of an LGBTQ Entertainment District, supported by culturally identifiable infrastructure, may strengthen economic activity, tourism, and small business vitality within the district; and

WHEREAS, exploration of a Micro Public Improvement District (Micro-PID) or similar localized funding and maintenance structure may provide a sustainable mechanism for district identity infrastructure, programming, and long-term stewardship; and

WHEREAS, community-centered public art and engagement processes improve representation, legitimacy, and long-term community ownership of civic cultural markers; and

WHEREAS, timely execution of a compliant transition strategy is necessary to meet state-mandated deadlines and minimize disruption to community identity, tourism, and district economic activity; and

WHEREAS, this effort aligns with the work of the Mayor's Task Force on transitioning from decorative crosswalks to compliant public-space district markers and identity infrastructure;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life Commission recommends that the Austin City Council direct the City Manager to prioritize and establish a one-time LGBTQ

Entertainment District Cultural Infrastructure Pilot to replace removed decorative crosswalk markers with compliant district identifiers, including banners, flags, wayfinding elements, and related identity infrastructure, with an initial focus on the West 4th Street corridor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission recommends allocating \$120,000 in one-time funding for design, fabrication, and installation of district identity infrastructure, utilizing the City's existing Street Banner Program and related standards where feasible.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the pilot include a structured community engagement and local artist process to develop culturally authentic district marker designs reflective of Austin's LGBTQ community and broader cultural identity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission recommends the City explore the feasibility of establishing a Micro Public Improvement District (Micro-PID) or similar localized mechanism to support long-term maintenance, programming, and sustainability of the LGBTQ Entertainment District.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission recommends the City provide in-kind support for implementation, including interdepartmental coordination, permitting, traffic and safety planning as needed, communications support, and access to City meeting and planning spaces.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission recommends coordination of a community recognition or send-off event at the time of crosswalk retirement to respectfully acknowledge the crosswalk's cultural significance and mark the transition to compliant district identity infrastructure.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Commission requests reporting to City Council and relevant commissions on implementation progress, timelines, community participation, funding pathways, and recommendations for expansion to additional cultural and entertainment districts in future budget cycles.

Date of Approval: March 9, 2026

Motioned By: Seconded By:

Vote: 9-0

For: Chair Coyne, Vice Chair McLeod, Secretary Benson, Commissioners Brown, Davis, Fierro-Pérez, Knutson, Pituk, Rivas

Against: None

Abstain: None

Off the dais: None

Absent: Commissioners Bandit, Johnson, Krueger, Neal

Attest: *Ryan Sperling*

(Ryan Sperling, Staff Liaison)