



CONGRESS
FOR THE NEW
URBANISM
CENTRAL TEXAS
CHAPTER

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October 7, 2013

Honorable Lee Leffingwell
Honorable Sheryl Cole
Honorable Chris Riley
Honorable Mike Martinez
Honorable Kathie Tovo
Honorable Laura Morrison
Honorable Bill Spelman
Mr. Marc Ott
City of Austin
P.O. Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767

Dear Mayor, Mayor Pro-tem, City Council and City Manager:

The Central Texas Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism supports the creation of a Red River Cultural District to be created on the 600-900 blocks of Red River Street. The Downtown Plan, the Create Austin Plan, the Waller Creek District Master Plan, and, of course, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan all have established policies to advance the promotion and preservation of cultural and/or heritage community/neighborhood districts. Policy statements include:

- *Waller Creek District Master Plan:*

Waller Creek is not only Austin's opportunity to create a highly unique creek corridor and trail system, but incentivizing it as "home" to Austin's creative community will help to give this emerging district an authentic Austin flavor, and it will make a strong statement to both residents and visitors about the importance of the creative community in our city.

- *Downtown Austin Plan:*

AU-4.4: Provide incentives and programs for the protection of Red River Street as an authentic live music district.

- *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan:*

CP4. Continue to sustain and grow Austin's successful live music scene, festivals, theater, film and digital media, and other creative offerings.

Design of the Red River Cultural District can be informed by The Charter of the New Urbanism, which calls for creating distinctive places and states that "urban places should be framed by architecture and landscape design that celebrate local history, climate, ecology, and building practice". It further states that "public gathering places require important sites to reinforce community identity and the culture of democracy. They deserve distinctive form, because their role is different from that of other buildings and places that constitute the fabric of the city." In addition: "Preservation and renewal of

historic buildings, districts, and landscapes affirm the continuity and evolution of urban society.”

To advance these goals for Austin, The Central Texas CNU Chapter asks the City to officially designate a Red River Cultural District. This would be done with the specific intent of having local Austin and Central Texas branding within the area, specifically featuring local art and culture, original live music, and other diverse creative industries. Of course, property rights of land owners within any district should be respected and other goals for Downtown development also should be respected.

Thank you for your consideration and we hope you will support this exciting opportunity for Austin. Please feel free to contact us with any questions, as we would be happy to discuss this issue with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cid Galindo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cid" being more prominent than the last name "Galindo".

Cid Galindo, President
The Congress for New Urbanism, Central Texas Chapter

cc: Kevin Johns, Director, EGRSO, City of Austin
Rodney Gonzales, Deputy Director, EGRSO, City of Austin
Janet Seibert, Civic Arts Program Consultant, EGRSO, City of Austin