

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
AMONG STAKEHOLDERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A
SIGNATURE CULTURAL PARK AT TOWN LAKE PARK
THAT INCLUDES
A PERFORMING ARTS CENTER AT PALMER AUDITORIUM,
A HIGH QUALITY COMMUNITY EVENTS CENTER, AND
RELATED PARKING FACILITIES**

This memorandum of Understanding is made by and among the Junior League of Austin, The South Central Coalition of Neighborhoods, Friends of the Parks, and ARTS* Center Stage.

WHEREAS, the success of planning efforts to develop a signature cultural park on the 54 acres of dedicated parkland surrounding Palmer Auditorium and the City Coliseum depends on the forging of a relationship of trust and flexibility among the Junior League of Austin, the South Central Coalition of Neighborhoods; Friends of the Parks, and ARTS* Center Stage (the stakeholder organizations); and

WHEREAS, the stakeholder organizations agree that passage of both Propositions 11 and 12 on the November 3rd ballot is critical to creating the outstanding cultural and open space amenities we want to pass on to the next generation of Austinites; and

WHEREAS, Proposition 11 and 12 function as a package such that the renovation of Palmer Auditorium, the development of the surrounding parkland as a cultural park, the construction of a community events center, or construction of parking facilities moves forward only if the all of these projects move forward; and

WHEREAS, all opportunities to develop creative approaches to simultaneously meeting the critical needs of all the stakeholders should be vigorously pursued; and

WHEREAS, only an open and honest process will create a design for the entire 54 acres that does in fact meet the critical needs of all of the stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, brainstorming without judgement, flexible consideration of multiple drafts of the design and layout of the cultural park, and mutual respect for the goals and needs of the various stakeholders are all essential to moving the design process forward in a positive direction; and

WHEREAS, the stakeholder organizations agree on the importance of articulating each group's core values relative to the park and related facilities and pledging to work together in the spirit of mutual respect for these core values; and

WHEREAS, assuming that Propositions 11 and 12 pass on November 3, the master planning process for the entire 54 acres must proceed efficiently so that the construction of the community events center and parking structure, the development of the park, and the renovation of Palmer can begin with a minimum of delay; and

WHEREAS, the ultimate success of the cultural park depends on retaining a master planner who all of the stakeholders acknowledge as most qualified to meet the stakeholders' goals and work within the community-driven process laid out herein;

NOW THEREFORE, the Junior League of Austin, the South Central Coalition of Neighborhoods, the Friends of the Parks, and ARTS* Center Stage agree to this Memorandum of Understanding as follows:

1. The undersigned stakeholder organizations collectively acknowledge the following core values of each group and pledge to work toward an ultimate design solution that reflects all of these values to the greatest extent possible:

Junior League:

- ◆Size--exhibit space of 70,000 square feet, plus appropriate common area, support and service space
- ◆Functionality--all exhibit space on one level; good access and parking for service vehicles; good access for event attendees; secure and close parking for attendees
- ◆Quality--free span facility with at least 30-35 foot height requirements
- ◆Integration--facility fits into the overall park design and is not a "step-child" on the tract
- ◆Aesthetics--facility is attractive
- ◆Timing and Sequence--Palmer remains open for use through December 2000, and community events center is completed and open for use by early 2001.

South Central Coalition of Neighborhoods:

- ◆Minimize neighborhood traffic impacts by precluding cut-through traffic on Bouldin and Dawson and taking other steps deemed necessary after review of a city traffic impact analysis
- ◆Safe and convenient pedestrian access to the park from the surrounding neighborhoods
- ◆Park aesthetics a priority rather than an afterthought
- ◆Analyze impact of and reconsider the proposed 30,000 square feet of retail/concessions
- ◆Calm traffic along Barton Springs Road without reducing vehicle capacity--give Barton Springs Road a boulevard treatment, e.g., a median with landscaping
- ◆Installation of a median on Barton Springs Road, preservation of the trees on either side of Barton Springs Road, and prevention of cut through traffic into the neighborhood south of Barton Springs Road must be addressed before consideration of any proposal to install parking spaces on Barton Springs Road
- ◆Open, inclusive, community-driven master planning process for the entire 54 acre site
- ◆Adequate consideration of transit in the planning of the site
- ◆Comprehensive study of parking options for the site and its component facilities. (Explore creative parking alternatives in order to limit construction of new spaces to the minimum needed)

Friends of the Parks:

- ◆Maximize the contiguous open space with emphasis on massing rather than fragmenting this space
- ◆Create a continuous and significant swath of open space west of Palmer as the centerpiece of the cultural park, opening the site Barton Springs Road to Town Lake
- ◆Minimize vehicular traffic and parking within the open space
- ◆Give the park external appeal and maintain attractive sight lines within
- ◆Observe the parkland dedication and use the Town Lake Comprehensive Plan as the planning foundation for the park development

ARTS*Center Stage:

- ◆Include nothing in the master plan that impinges on the Arts Center Stage mission-"to create and manage a state-of-the-art, multi-venue facility that will host the broad spectrum of Austin's performing arts organizations"
- ◆The performing arts center will start construction by 2001 and be open by 2003. This schedule dictates a need to expedite the master planning process for the park amenities, community events center, and parking.
- ◆Safe and convenient parking
- ◆Convenient access for stage and set delivery to the backstage area
- ◆Adequate and safe access for event attendees
- ◆Pretty view of downtown from the north side of Palmer Auditorium

2. The undersigned will work cooperatively and in good faith to ensure that all master planning meetings include representation of every stakeholder organization listed herein.
3. The undersigned call for an immediate city traffic impact analysis comparing the impact on neighborhood traffic patterns of the community events center taking access off of Riverside Drive versus First Street versus Barton Springs Road.
4. Each of the undersigned stakeholder organizations will actively work to ensure that concerns arising from any other stakeholder organization will be addressed constructively and respectfully by the larger group.
5. A master planner for the layout of the entire 54 acres and design of the park will be selected through a consensus-based process resulting in agreement among every stakeholder organization listed herein. The master planner will be from outside Austin. He or she will also have direct experience creating designs that reflect the types of core value concerns laid out in this document and have demonstrated skill in facilitating a community-driven design process.
6. The stakeholders agree to work together to ensure that any RFP issued by the city for master planning services reflects this memorandum in general and term #5 in particular.
7. The undersigned stakeholder organizations agree to work together to expedite the master planning process so that construction of facilities can begin with a minimum of delay.

AGREED AND ACCEPTED BY:

DATE: 10-6-98

JUNIOR LEAGUE OF AUSTIN

By: *Nancy Prudeaux, President*
Martha Ramsey, TREASURER

DATE: 10-6-98

SOUTH CENTRAL COALITION OF
NEIGHBORHOODS

By: *Ellen Johnson*

DATE: 10-6-98

FRIENDS OF THE PARKS

By: *Robert Cohen*

DATE: 10-6-98

ARTS* CENTER STAGE

By: *Ben Barton*
Ben Barton
vice chair Acting Chairman
Greater Austin Performing Arts
*Center Inc., 41619 ARTS**
Center Stage