



Souly Austin

Application FAQs

1. What services, resources, and tools come with participating in the Souly Austin program?

The Souly Austin program provides a variety of resources, coaching opportunities, and capacity building to assist interested business districts in forming a successful merchants association organization. A breakdown of our year to year services is below:

Year 1

- Support Business Outreach and Consensus Building
- Merchant's Association Formation Assistance
- Development of an Economic District Strategy
- Development of District Branding (Logo and Tagline)
- Development of a place-enhancing project
- Upon successful formation, Associations receive a \$20,000 Activation Award

Year 2

- Continued District Leadership Training
- Updated Economic District Strategy Analysis
- Assistance with district-wide issues, as needed
- Annual Association Assessments and Evaluations
- Inclusion of District improvement needs in City of Austin long-term planning

Year 3, 4, & 5

- Support with District Initiatives
- Continues District Leadership Training
- Updated Economic District Strategy Analysis
- Assistance with district-wide issues, as needed
- Area Market Research Resources
- Annual Association Assessments and Evaluations
- Limited ombudsman services:
- Liaison with COA initiatives and programs
- Secondary support for permits

2. What is the application deadline?

The Souly Austin New Districts Applications are due on Thursday, October 30th by 5 P.M.

3. What is the general size of a successful business district?

As outlined in our application, we encourage the boundaries include a commercial corridor no more than one (1) mile long, or a commercial node area no more than a quarter mile long and a quarter mile wide. Furthermore, proposed district should have no fewer than 20 and no more than 110



brick-and-mortar businesses. The Souly Austin's largest business district, the East Cesar Chavez Business District, spans approximately 1-mile from I-35 to Pleasant Valley and consists of over 100 businesses. This is a recommendation and your application if area is larger or smaller should provide details.

4. Are there specific business requirements for participation in the program, similar to those in the Chapter 380 Agreements?

Unlike the Economic Development Departments Chapter 380 incentive agreements, the Souly Austin program does not require businesses to have in place certain policies or practices in which would qualify them for our program services. All businesses located in your interested business area are encouraged to participate in the program.

5. What is current success rate of participating districts?

The Souly Austin program has an 100% success rate in developing interested business areas into fully formed Merchant's Associations. While each district is unique in their development, our team has tailored a process in which we believe all interested and engaged business areas can be successful in coming together and collaborating in the development of a successful merchant's association for their business district.

6. Have you have any situations where an organization might be seen as an initial conflict of interest?

The Souly Austin program welcomes exploring partnerships with a diverse array of community business-oriented organizations. The Souly Austin program evaluates all partners to ensure that all conflicts of interest are recognized and addressed early on in any district/merchant association formation. As the program is designed to provide services in support of a merchants association formation, we ensure that any support, resources, and funding are in alignment with the associations needs and established strategies. To date no organizations have been identified as a conflict of interest.

7. What funding is offered through the Souly Austin program during the five-year program period?

The Souly Austin program provides two types of funding opportunities to successful business districts.

- A place-enhancing grant of \$15,000. The funding is provided to our professional consultant who will provide all the support to successfully deploy a project in the District.
- The merchant's association is awarded a one-time \$20,000 activation award designed to provide the newly formed association with initial funds to establish the associations organizational capacity, marketing, and potential funding for unique project proposals.
- Items such as graphic support and branding support are provided during the formation process but funding is not allocated to the association for this.