

ACTIVATION AWARD

Souly Austin supports the vision of a Merchants Association by providing seed funding for organizational development and district projects. The Souly Austin Activation Award is a small grant provided to the business district upon formation of the business district’s merchants association. The award provides direct resources to support the district in building upon the economic vibrancy and sustainability of the district.

Award Goals Include:

- Support district development activities
- Provide initial seed funds for association formation/activities
- Nurture cohesive, collaborative, consensus amongst association
- Develop project management capacity
- Support projects/activities in District Economic Strategy

Project Description

The East 12th Street Merchants Association (ETSMA) Activation Award was awarded in August 2018 upon successful formation on their merchants association. ETSMA allocated Activation Award funding towards the execution of their annual Return and Discover Festival for both 2018 and 2019. The annual event goals are to increase district awareness, celebrate historical and cultural heritage, and increase business visitorship.

The **2018 Return and Discover Festival** was held on October 6, 2018 at the Mission Possible Parking Lot, located in a centralized district focal point, to ease of access into the district by festival attendees. The Association leveraged the Activation Award, with funding through private contributions and the City of Austin’s Cultural Events Grant program. The Association utilized the event as the premiere of the documentary “Reflections on a Legacy: East 12th Street”, which was produced through seed placemaking funds provided to the business district through the Souly Austin Program.

The **2019 Return and Discover Festival** was held on November 16, 2019. The Association leveraged funding through private contributions along with majority funding through remaining Activation Award funds. The Association developed a District-Wide Business Scavenger Hunt to activate the entire business district and increase business participation during the festival. Additionally, the



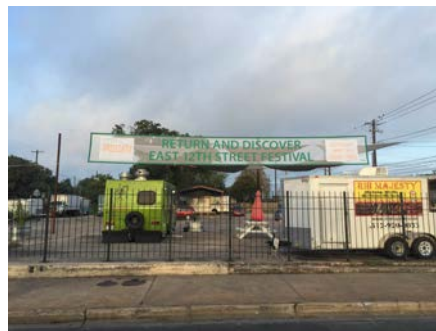
ACTIVATION AWARD

Association held the first annual public official dunking booth, featuring Council Member Natasha Harper-Madison; County Commission Jeff Travillion; and Austin Police Department Chief Brian Manley. Mayor Steven Adler participated in the event by providing remarks to festival attendees.

These events support major goals of Souly Austin, the Economic Development Department, and the City of Austin, including revenue generation for small, local businesses, supporting Austin-based artists and creative professionals, promoting pedestrian-oriented amenities, and preservation and stabilization of culture and music venues and small, local businesses.

Event Partners:

- Austin Revitalization Authority
- Clean Cause
- Mission Possible
- Eureka Holdings
- Souly Austin
- Public City
- Austin Revitalization Authority
- Stephanie Lang
- Rachel Winston
- Funmi
- Misson Possible
- Huston-Tillotson University
- Eureka Holdings
- City of Austin – EDD - Cultural Arts Division



Metrics
Number of District Businesses Engaged - 29
Number of Partners - 18
Number of Creative Artists Engaged - 17
Media/News Hits - 75
Dollars Leveraged - \$7,000
Volunteer Hours - Estimated 200

SCAVENGER HUNT GAME RULES:

THE SCAVENGER HUNT WILL BE CONFINED TO MERCHANTS IN AND ALONG THE EAST 12TH BUSINESS DISTRICT (PLEASE SEE LIST OF MERCHANTS AND MAP OF ALL PARTICIPATING BUSINESSES IN THE GAME).

THE SCAVENGER HUNTERS WILL VISIT THE IDENTIFIED MERCHANTS, TAKE A SELFIE/PIC IN FRONT OF THE PARTICIPATING BUSINESS WITH THE ITEMS/IN THE AREA THAT BUSINESS HAS SELECTED AND/OR WITH THE OWNER/MANAGEMENT/STAFF, AND TAG THE RESPECTIVE BUSINESS, THEIR HASHTAG AND THE FESTIVAL PAGES ALONG WITH THE HASHTAGS: #EAST12THSTREET #RANDO2019 #SOULYATX

NAMES OF THE SCAVENGER HUNTERS WHO COMPLETE THE "MISSION" WILL BE RANDOMLY SELECTED TO WIN A GRAND PRIZE! ONLY ONE (1) WINNER WILL BE CHOSEN.



ACTIVATION AWARD

District Strategy Alignment:

- **Economic Growth Strategies; Objective 1.** Explore the feasibility and resources needed to host events and programming in the district that highlight the District culture and history and promote unique business offerings and attract patrons
- **Economic Growth Strategies; Objective 2.** Promote East 12th Street as a lunch destination to increase patrons and sales of restaurants including food vendors in the District.
- **Economic Growth Strategies; Strategy 3.1** – Market and promote the district to both locals and tourists
- **Music, Culture, and Arts Strategies; Objective 4.** Develop additional cultural programming and family-friendly programming to enhance district identity and enhance and celebrate a sense of place.
- **Music, Culture and Arts Strategies; Objective 5.** Support community based nonprofit organizations

Challenges:

- Lack of capacity to accomplish project amongst Board
- Public relations/media strategy to increase event awareness
- Clear communication between all project parties to ensure proper messaging for implementation
- Loss of momentum due to missed contractual deadlines
- Business involvement and event promotion

Successes:

- Procurement of a fiscal sponsor to provide fiduciary control
- Partnership with City Departments for project involvement
- Partnership with vendors, artists, and event activities