

February 14, 2017

Alex Lopez, Deputy Director  
City of Austin Economic Development Department  
301 W. Second Street  
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Alex,

I am resigning my position as Music Program Manager for the City of Austin effective February 14, 2017.

This last month has given me time to reflect on the past seven years, the launch and establishment of the Music and Entertainment Division, and my role. This month has allowed me to reach this decision standing outside of the day to day.

Music is a defining and beloved element of our City's identity, culture, and quality of life. It has been for decades. Yet, until 2010, we had no division in city government to support our music ecosystem. I was brought in as a member of the music industry to serve this important and vital segment of the cultural and economic life of the city.

We have accomplished much. I am proud of what we now have in place.

The original vision of the Division was to focus on the economic development of the music industry and community. However, Austin's growth produced an ever-expanding focus around sound complaints, permitting and various ordinances, which were quickly prioritized to be the Division's focus.

It is time for me to return to my core passion of creating vibrant music cities and ensuring that Austin is the most forward thinking music city. I am excited to focus on that passion and will be exploring how to best support and grow our music industry in a different way.

As a music industry person, I realize I work differently. I understand why protocol is important in the life of a city bureaucracy, and I realize it is time for me to not work within a bureaucracy any longer. I can serve as an outside resource.

As I move on from my formal position I am fulfilled to have worked with my team, the City, and the music community at large to build a solid foundation for this Division to serve the City for years to come. It is my hope the work continues far beyond what we have put in place so far. You can count on me to always be at your side as an advocate for Austin music. I will never leave our primary vision and mission. I will just be working from a different vantage point.

In particular I look forward to building on the foundation we created with the music industry census. We have a clear roadmap of what Austin needs to do to build our music economy. I believe that when the private sector gets more involved Austin will find even more success. I want to continue to find ways for the private sector to plug in.

Together, we can create a climate where Austin music brands flourish within and beyond Austin.

I am grateful for the opportunity I've had over the last seven years, and look forward to finding new ways to continue to advocate for Austin music.

Sincerely,

Don Pitts  
Music Program Manager  
City of Austin, Music and Entertainment Division