



City of Austin

City Manager's Office

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Spencer Cronk, City Manager

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February 21, 2020

Office of Sarah Eckhardt

Travis County Judge

PO Box 1748

Austin, TX 78767

sarah.eckhardt@traviscountytexas.gov

Via email

RE: Palm School Initial Offer

Dear Judge Eckhardt and County Commissioners:

On behalf of the City Council, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to both you and the Travis County Commissioners for your patience as we reviewed options in preparation for a proposal to acquire the Swante Palm School from the County. I look forward to our continued collaboration with Travis County on developing strategic partnerships that mutually benefit our community.

Please accept this letter as the City's offer to purchase, in fee simple, the property known as Palm School in exchange for \$10 million. The City welcomes this opportunity to partner with the County on preserving this important property for the benefit of the public and in alignment with community comments. We hope that the proposed conveyance of the property to the City will allow us to collaborate on future public programs that will support the vision of our shared community. The Council supports Travis County's stated intent to use the funds for Health and Human Service functions including, but not limited to, homelessness, respite care, senior care, and care for other vulnerable populations to further display our shared goals to the community.

In 2017, the City Council directed City staff to allocate 15% of the hotel occupancy tax revenue as a Historic Preservation Fund and we intend to use this funding source to acquire the property. We are committed to restore Palm School and have identified several potential funding sources for the extensive renovation, ongoing maintenance and operation costs.

The Palm School property represents an inspirational and essential piece of our shared community, and the public's desire to find a future use of the property that both maintains public ownership and preserves its historic significance and cultural values has been made clear. Continued public ownership through the City of Austin is responsive to community comments collected by the Travis County Palm School Advisory Board.

We are excited about the potential to acquire Palm School and to program it in ways that benefit Palm Park and Waterloo Greenway, a project in which both Travis County and the City of Austin have invested in which will celebrate the rich historic, cultural context of this area. At your earliest convenience, please advise me of the County's response to our offer. We hope you find it acceptable and if so, then we will begin drafting the agreement necessary to facilitate the conveyance of the historic Palm School to the City.

Respectfully submitted,



Spencer Cronk
City Manager



xc: Mayor and City Council, City of Austin
Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager, City of Austin
Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager, City of Austin
Anne Morgan, City Attorney, City of Austin
Elaine Hart, Chief Financial Officer, City of Austin
Alex Gale, Interim Director, Office of Real Estate Services, City of Austin