



Downtown
Redevelopment
Authority

Board of Directors Meeting
May 9, 2023

Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone, Number Three
City of Houston

Downtown Redevelopment Authority
Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone Number Three, City of Houston

Board of Directors Meeting
May 9, 2023

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Tour of Downtown Launchpad

DRA/TIRZ#3 Board Meeting
May 9, 2023



Downtown Launchpad

Anchor Tenants



MC | MASSCHALLENGE

masschallenge.org



impacthub.net



gener8tor

gener8tor.com

Downtown Launchpad Floor Plan



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

April 11, 2023

The Board of Directors (the "Board") of the Downtown Redevelopment Authority (the "Authority") convened in regular session, in person and open to the public, at the Authority's office, located at 1221 McKinney Street, Suite 4250, Houston, TX 77010, on the 11th of April 2023, and the roll was called of the duly constituted officers and members of the Board, to wit:

Curtis Flowers	Chair
Michele Sabino	Vice Chair
Barry Mandel	Secretary
Regina Garcia	Director
Keith Hamm	Director
James Harrison	Director
Sherman Lewis	Director
Tiko Reynolds-Hausman	Director
William Taylor	Director

and all of said persons were present except for Secretary Mandel and Directors Hamm and Lewis. Also present were Allen Douglas, Executive Director; Kris Larson, President; Jana Gunter, Director of Finance; and Jamie Perkins, Executive Assistant & Paralegal, staff members Jenna Beasley, Varun Cidambi, Brett DeBord, David Gwin, Lonnie Hoogeboom, Jamie Perkins, Albert Sanchez, Ann Taylor and Candace Williams; and Algenita Davis, consultant to the Authority.

Team Members from Street Sense participated virtually to present at the meeting. Attendees included Executive Director Donna Oetzel, Andrea Lee, Shelby Mras, and Claire Strickland. Andrew Busker with the City of Houston's Office of Economic Development was present from the public.

DETERMINE QUORUM; CALL TO ORDER

Chair Flowers conducted a roll call. A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order at 12:05 PM.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Flowers invited all meeting attendees to introduce themselves and welcomed all. Next, President Larson took a moment to introduce the Authority's newly hired Administrative Assistant and Board Liaison, Candace Williams.

Chair Flowers asked if there were any comments from the public. There were no comments from the public.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Board considered approving the minutes of the March 14, 2023 regular joint board meeting. Hearing no questions or need for discussion; Chair Flowers made a motion, moved by Director Harrison and seconded by Vice Chair Sabino, and the minutes of the March 14, 2023 regular joint board meeting were approved as presented.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

March 2023 Finance Summary

Chair Flowers asked Jana Gunter to provide updates from finance and administration. Ms. Gunter shared highlights from the check register for the month ending March 31, 2023, the third quarter financials, and the third quarter investment report. No one had questions or comments.

A motion to accept the (i) March check register, (ii) the third quarter financials, and (iii) the third quarter investment report was entertained by Chair Flowers; moved by Director Harrison and seconded by Director Hausman, and all three of the above items were accepted as presented.

CROSS-ORGANIZATIONAL REBRANDING

Chair Flowers called on Executive Director Douglas to introduce this item. Executive Director Douglas shared a summary of the upcoming rebranding project and how it fits into the Authority's inter-organizational goals. Next, he asked Ann Taylor to provide additional details.

Ms. Taylor elaborated further on the project's goals, notably to have one public facing company and brand. Next, she introduced the team from Street Sense. Donna Oetzel from Street Sense provided a short summary about Street Sense as a company and notable items on their portfolio. Next, Ms. Oetzel shared a presentation outlining milestones of the project and talking points for the board to consider and provide feedback.

Discussion ensued and questions were asked and answered. Ms. Taylor closed by asking the Board to participate in a survey developed in conjunction with Street Sense. No further action was required.

PRESENTATION AND UPDATE ON THE COTSWOLD FOUNTAINS

Next, Chair Flowers invited Brett DeBord and Dusty McCartney to share an update and slide show highlighting the restoration work on the Cotswold Fountains. Mr. DeBord began by going over the history of the Cotswold fountains. Next, Mr. McCartney shared several before and after images of fountains that have been restored. Questions were asked and answered. No further action was needed at this time.

PRESENTATION OF BLOCK-FACE STUDY TO CONNECT DOWNTOWN

Lastly, Chair Flowers called on Executive Director Douglas to talk about the block-face study to connect downtown. Executive Director Douglas shared information about the project's purpose, and introduced Varun Cidambi and Jacque Gonzalez. Mr. Cidambi and Ms. Gonzalez shared a presentation of their findings while walking through certain streets of downtown. They explained how a scoring system developed, the criteria used in the scoring system, and how this information helps illustrate which areas are considered walkable, and which areas need improvement to become walkable. Questions were asked and answered, and discussion ensued. No further action was required.

OTHER BUSINESS

Goal-Based Updates

Executive Director Douglas referred to the Goal-Based updates in the materials previously provided, which contained notable items and updates based on each company wide goal for the month of April. No further action was needed.

NEXT MEETINGS

Chair Flowers announced the dates and times of the upcoming Collaborative Committee and Board meetings as follows:

- Enhance Downtown – Monday, April 17th at 12:00 PM
- Connect Downtown – Tuesday, April 18th at 9:00 AM
- Thrive Downtown – Wednesday, April 19th at 12:00 PM
- Engage Downtown – Thursday, April 20th at 12:00 PM
- Board of Directors – Tuesday, May 9th at 12:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was called to adjourn at 1:30 PM.

Barry Mandel, Secretary
Downtown Redevelopment Authority
("Authority")

DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
TAX INCREMENT REINVESTMENT ZONE NUMBER THREE**

April 11, 2023

The Board of Directors (the "Board") of the Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone Number Three (the "Zone") convened in regular session, in person and open to the public, at the Zone's office, located at 1221 McKinney Street, Suite 4250, Houston, TX 77010, on the 11th of April 2023, and the roll was called of the duly constituted officers and members of the Board, to wit:

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Barry Mandel, Secretary
Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone
Number Three ("Zone")

DRAFT



Check register for April 2023

- Total checks issued in April 2023 were \$188K.
 - Central Houston, Inc.
 - Admin support - \$187K
 - Trebly Park
 - Wakefield AV& Cabling - \$1K

2023 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program (DBE) Activity Report (7/1 – 3/31)



Downtown
Redevelopment
Authority

	2023	2022
	Operating	Operating
Total Certified MWBE	\$499K	\$2,173K
Adj. Total Spending	\$12,463K	\$10,515K
Less: Qualified Exclusions	(\$11,173K)	(\$4,650K)
Qualifying Total Spending	\$1,289K	\$5,865K
% MWBE Certified	38.7%	37.1%
Total Self-Certified MWBE	\$15K	-
% Cert. + Self Cert.	39.8%	37.1%
GOAL	20.0%	20.0%

Downtown Redevelopment Authority
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program (DBE) Activity Report

Reporting Period: 7/1/2022 -3/31/2023

	2023	2022
	<u>DRA TIRZ #3</u>	<u>DRA TIRZ #3</u>
Total Certified DBE	\$ 498,552	\$ 2,173,476
Adjusted Total Spending	\$ 12,462,785	\$ 10,515,269
Less Qualified for Exclusion	\$ (11,173,355)	\$ (4,650,108)
Qualifying Total Spending	\$ 1,289,430	\$ 5,865,161
%DBE Certified	38.7%	37.1%
Total Self-Certified MWBE	\$ 15,000	\$ -
% Certified + Self-Certified	39.8%	37.1%

Downtown Redevelopment Authority Private Development Agreements Policy and Criteria

Purpose: To establish policy and criteria outlining necessary and sufficient conditions to assist the Downtown Redevelopment Authority (“Authority” or “Board” or “DRA”) & staff when considering development agreements proposed by private parties to jointly fund eligible developments.

These agreements typically take the form of economic development reimbursement contributions, whether the reimbursement is authorized as a direct payment reimbursing eligible costs (as with the façade grant program) or as an indirect payment as a percentage of a property’s tax bill reimbursed yearly upon proof of tax payment (as with the Downtown Living Initiative program).

Goal: To create a fair, clear, and predictable process for evaluating private capital investment that conforms with the Authority’s Project Plan and Strategic Alignment Plan and adheres to state and local legal requirements in a way that serves to maximize the public benefit of reimbursed tax increment funds via a private development.

Fair policy and criteria support equitable decision-making from the Authority both across differing private development proposals and between those proposals and requests for Zone funds from competing needs in separate DRA projects. Fair policy and criteria also enhance the certainty among private developers that their eligible proposals will receive appropriate review.

Clear policy and criteria assist the Authority in reasonably and objectively reviewing the viability of proposals and authorizing the use of incremental tax funds generated within the Zone. Authority adopted policies and criteria also provide applicants and the public with clear expectations regarding the Authority’s considerations for requests to participate.

Predictable policy and criteria enhance Authority decision-making by highlighting those private development projects most promising to the public while underscoring specific areas for further negotiation. Predictable policy and criteria also foster private investment within the Zone by maximizing rationality in the deployment of public funds into qualifying private developments.

General: The Authority continues to encourage and facilitate strategic new private investment in Downtown Houston within the designated boundaries of the

Zone. The DRA Board has the authority to support the development or redevelopment of properties in the Zone by entering into development agreements that provide Zone benefits including reimbursement to private entities incurring the costs of certain, eligible expenses. The Authority has precedent for participating in private development agreements within the terms of an established program, as it did with the Downtown Living Initiative. The Authority may also consider engaging in private development agreements on a case-by-case basis within the terms of the policy and criteria established herein. In all instances, eligible expenses put forth by private development must directly involve public infrastructure or sufficiently reflect a provable public purpose.

[Board authority derives from Texas Constitution, Article III, Sec. 52(a), Texas Tax Code 311, City Ordinance 2005-1051]

Funding:

The Authority collects funds for use toward public improvements and eligible programs through its designated Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone. Tax increment is captured tax revenue based on the difference between the initial taxable value of a property assessed at the time that property is annexed into the Zone and any increased assessed taxable value that may have resulted from market valuation increases, as well as direct and adjacent new investment.

Public Infrastructure

And

Public Purpose:

In consideration of development projects in the Zone which will address blight, enhance property values and tax revenues, produce additional jobs, and align with the Project Plan amendments affirmed by City Council, the Authority may determine that it is in the best interests of the Zone and the City to enter into an economic development benefits agreement with a private entity for reimbursement of eligible public infrastructure and/or public purpose costs associated with a capital project.

Public Infrastructure:

The Authority may enter into an agreement that it considers necessary to further the Project Plan and Reinvestment Zone Financing Plan and achieve the Zone's purpose pursuant to that Plan. The Zone may dedicate, pledge, or otherwise provide for the use of revenue in the tax increment fund to pay any project costs that benefit the Zone, including but not limited to project costs relating to the cost of affordable housing, areas of public assembly, the remediation of conditions that contaminate public or private land or buildings, the preservation of the facade of a private or public building, the demolition of public or private buildings, public educational facilities, transit facilities, or the construction of a road, sidewalk, or other public infrastructure, such as but not limited to public sanitary sewer and storm water systems, landscaping including tree canopy, traffic lights and streetscape, vegetation, lighting, way-finding, trash receptacles and benches within the boundaries of a Zone.

[Board authority derives from Section 311.010(b) of the Texas Tax Code]

Public Purpose:

The Authority has the power to enter into agreements that benefit the public purpose of the Zone and also advance business and commercial activity in the Zone. The Authority may provide contributions for a project to induce investment in the Zone, so long as that induced investment carries sufficient public purpose, which may include developing and diversifying the economy of the Zone, eliminating unemployment and underemployment in the Zone, and developing or expanding transportation, business, and commercial activity in the Zone, including programs to make grants and loans from the tax increment fund of the Zone in an aggregate amount for activities that benefit the Zone and stimulate business and commercial activity in the Zone.

[Board authority derives from and must adhere to Article III, Section 52(a) of the Texas Constitution, Section 311.010(h) of the Texas Tax Code, and City Ordinance No. 2005-1051]

The expenditure of public funds accomplishes a public purpose when:

- (1) the expenditure's predominant purpose is to accomplish a public purpose, not solely to benefit private parties; and,
- (2) the Authority or other public entity retains public control over the funds to ensure that the public purpose is accomplished and to protect the public's investment; and,
- (3) the Zone or other public entity is ensured of receiving a return benefit.

Expanding upon these three requirements:

(1) The Authority has the right and responsibility to determine whether a public purpose is served by a particular expenditure, and to respond to any proposed development agreement accordingly. Benefits from a private development agreement may be recognized as serving both a private and public purpose, and an expenditure which incidentally benefits a private party is not invalidated if it is made for the direct accomplishment of a legitimate public purpose. Thus, an incidental benefit to a private developer is acceptable if, in the opinion of the Authority, the agreement is predominantly for the direct accomplishment of a legitimate public purpose in the Zone.

(2) The Board has the authority and responsibility to see that sufficient controls are established when designating the use of public funds to ensure that the expenditure serves a public purpose. The form in which sufficient control takes place varies by application.

(3) What constitutes a sufficient return benefit in any given case will

depend on a number of factors with the ultimate consideration being a project's consistency with the Authority's Project Plan amendments and Strategic Alignment Plan. Sufficient return benefit, under this consideration, need not be equal but there must not be such a gross disparity in the return benefit as to suggest unconscionability, bad faith, or fraud.

Guidelines:

The following policy guidelines are meant to establish parameters to assist the Authority in its decision-making processes as well as to provide direction for those in the private sector seeking public funds. In order for an economic redevelopment project to be eligible to receive DRA assistance, it must satisfy all of the following criteria:

1. The project site must be located within the boundary of the Zone as designated by City Council. A map of the current Zone boundaries is attached as MAP 1. While not legally required, currently all property within the Zone is contiguous.
2. The proposed redevelopment must conform to all building codes, permits, and City Ordinances.
3. The proposed redevelopment must result in the retention and/or creation of permanent jobs, or the addition of residential units within the Zone as determined by the Board. Each development agreement will contain provisions for compliance.
4. To satisfy the requirement of "return benefit" and accomplish a public purpose, the proposed redevelopment must involve significant private investment so as to assure adequate yield of tax increment financing revenues. As determined by the Board, construction related to private investment must yield such captured valuation as to exceed any committed Zone funds by at least five-fold. Thus, for each 1 million committed by the Zone the related private investment yields an incremental valuation increase of 5 million. The Board may adopt "return benefit" considerations that involve 'areas' of need within the Zone, such as workforce or affordable or accessible housing; institutional accommodations such as educational facilities; enhanced connectivity benefits; or, retail opportunities that address access and equity such as grocery, pharmacy, or medical facilities.
5. Pursuant to the Board's review and amendment, the maximum time period in which expenses are eligible for reimbursement from the Zone for any one project shall not exceed fifteen years from

the inception of the first year of reimbursement.

6. Authority assistance shall be administered and paid to the ownership entity on a reimbursement basis and will be fully described in the development agreement between the Authority and developer. The agreement shall be written in accordance with the terms of this policy and will serve as a legally binding contract, which will enjoy the full effect of law. The agreement will include a schedule of estimated annual reimbursement payments.
7. Subject to the other limitations of this policy, the amount of eligible and captured incremental tax value contributed through reimbursement shall not exceed 80% of the yearly assessed tax on the project property.
8. In the event of a transfer or sale of the property, the development agreement may be assigned to the new owner of the property with prior written consent by the DRA. The proposed new buyer shall be required to submit information to the Authority regarding proposed job and/or residential additions and any other information required by the Authority for it to make a determination regarding the assignment of the agreement. Such an assignment will be in accord with the guidelines and the executed agreement and will not be unreasonably withheld.
9. The developer shall provide a pro forma analysis of the project to the Authority's legal counsel. Said analysis shall be used, in part, to verify the need for reimbursement and reasonableness of the request.
10. Integral to any project proposal, the developer shall provide specific analysis in support of any claim of 'public improvement' for which it seeks reimbursement whether claimed as public infrastructure or public benefit. Support for such a claim may be satisfied through the clear application of designated easements, public covenants, or prior and continued public ownership. Developer shall assume responsibility for the maintenance and operation of all property to which developer has granted easements or covenants to a public entity.
11. If approved by the Authority Board, eligible costs for off-site public infrastructure may also be eligible for payment of accrued interest on unpaid reimbursable costs at an agreed upon rate of interest. Off-site public infrastructure shall be located outside of the project building typically in the public rights of way or public easements, or on public property. Interest will accrue from the

later date of the developer having paid for the eligible cost item or the Authority having begun to capture project tax increment revenues.

12. Each development agreement shall designate a milestone event that signifies project completion (such as the issuance of a temporary certificate of occupancy). That event will vary depending upon the type of project, but it shall be fair, clear and predictable for all parties.
13. Reimbursement under the terms of an agreement shall not begin before the first full year of tax assessment after project completion.
14. If approved by the Authority Board, eligible expenses for on-site public facilities are eligible for reimbursement without interest. Reimbursement shall not begin until the Authority has begun to capture project tax increment revenues.
15. The obligation of the Authority to reimburse the developer for eligible costs shall be subordinate to existing and future debt obligations of the Authority. To the extent that other debt obligations reduce the ability of the Authority to reimburse the developer, the term of reimbursement may be extended for an appropriate period of time to assure reimbursement.
16. The developer shall prepare or cause to be prepared the plans and specifications for the public improvements – whether designated as public infrastructure or public benefits -- as described in the development’s project costs as applicable and submit the same to the Authority for approval. The Authority shall approve or reject the proposed plans and specifications within thirty (30) business days of submission. In the event of the rejection of the plans and specifications, the Authority shall include specific reasons for such rejection in writing. The Authority and developer each agree to exercise commercially reasonable efforts to promptly resolve any objections to the proposed plans and specifications. On approval of the plans and specifications by the Authority, the same shall constitute the final plans and specification. Any modifications (other than corrective changes) to the Final Plans and Specifications shall be submitted to the Authority for its reasonable approval. For purposes hereof, “corrective changes” mean any necessary and reasonable changes required to correct defects or deficiencies in construction as originally contemplated by the plans and specifications, or as may be necessary to obtain required permits, inspections or approvals from governmental authorities.

17. The Authority shall pay the reimbursement to the ownership entity of the project in annual installments by October 1st of each year beginning no sooner than the first full operating year after the agreed upon event that marks the project completion and ending under the terms of the agreement, subject to and conditioned upon the following:
- (i) no later than September 1st in the First Full Operating Year, the ownership entity shall provide to the Authority:
 - (a) three (3) full and complete sets of final “record” drawings for the project, including public improvements, whether public infrastructure or public benefits, and
 - (b) a summary of all project costs eligible for reimbursement that accurately details related expenses, receipts for qualifying expenses, plus appropriate releases and lien waivers in forms acceptable to the Authority; and
 - (ii) no later than September 1st in each calendar year beginning with the first full operating year, the ownership entity shall annually provide to the Authority:
 - (a) evidence that all ad valorem taxes due to all taxing jurisdictions for the present or future tax account or accounts relative to the project have been paid in full; and
 - (b) evidence that the ownership entity still operates the project for the use as funded under the agreement; and
 - (c) evidence that the public improvements are built and maintained in accordance with the development agreement, final plans and specifications including compliance with all City regulations; and
 - (d) evidence that the public has sufficient and appropriate access to the public benefits identified in the agreement; and
 - (e) any other information reasonably requested by the Authority and related to the public improvements.

18. The DRA has the authority to create a designated fund from portions of a project's incremental increase in value. The Board may consider that achieving a sufficient degree of public benefit may include the creation of a designated fund established prior to the triggered reimbursement payments and comprised of the development tax increment produced by a project. The designated funds shall be earmarked for public infrastructure and public purpose projects authorized by the Authority to address public community enhancement to the development. The terms of such a fund would be established within the development agreement.

Policy

Changes:

These guidelines may be modified or waived by the Authority at any time, and without notice. The Executive Director shall periodically perform a review of the guidelines and prepare a report recommending any changes to the policy necessary to improve the effectiveness of the policy. The Executive Director may recommend elimination of the policy if financial conditions warrant if the goals of the policy are deemed to be accomplished or based on other factors.

Contact for more information:

Allen Douglas, Executive Director
Downtown Redevelopment Authority
Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone No. 3
1221 McKinney Street
Suite 4250
Houston, Texas 77010

TEL: 713-650-1470
CELL: 216-375-8447
e-mail: jadouglas@downtowntirz.com

PROJECT NAME	Montrose Pedestrian-Bicycle Bridge over Allen Parkway
PROJECT PLAN	DRA/TIRZ 3 has been in communications and negotiations with the Montrose Redevelopment Authority (MRA)/TIRZ 27 regarding an interlocal agreement to fund a portion of the capital improvements associated with the MRA project for Montrose Boulevard reconstruction.
REQUEST	Capital Improvement Project financing of \$1,600,000 for an interlocal agreement.
DESCRIPTION	The MRA project scope is for Montrose Boulevard from IH-69 at the south to the eastbound frontage road of Allen Parkway at the north. The DRA project is a short extension of the MRA Montrose project: to design and construct a new bridge over Allen Parkway. The project scope entails the addition of engineering-design services and construction activities for the northernmost segment of Montrose intersections at eastbound and westbound frontages roads adjacent to Allen Parkway and a pedestrian-bicycle infill bridge over the depressed lanes of Allen Parkway, ultimately connecting the Ismaili Center, under construction, with Buffalo Bayou Park.
ACTION ITEM	Request full DRA Board approval for DRA to enter an Interlocal Agreement with MRA/ TIRZ 27 to fund an amount not to exceed \$1,600,000 for capital improvements to engineer-design and construct a pedestrian-bicycle bridge at Montrose Boulevard over the depressed lanes of Allen Parkway. The project includes safe crossings from a new crosswalk landing at the Ismaili Center at the southern limits of the DRA scope-area to a crosswalk landing at Buffalo Bayou Park (in proximity to the Plensa sculpture gardens) at the northern limits. This DRA project scope is an addition to the larger Montrose Boulevard reconstruction project funded and delivered by MRA/TIRZ 27.
CONTACTS	DRA: Allen Douglas, Executive Director MRA: Joe Webb, Chairman



CENTRAL HOUSTON, INC.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT PLAN UPDATES

MAY 2023

GOAL 1

Champion major projects, initiatives and investments that improve Downtown.

- 1.2** Continue to advocate for the implementation of TxDOT's North Houston Highway Improvement Project and the Civic Opportunities that reconnect communities.

Highlight: In recent weeks, CHI management collaborated with the Mayor's office to devise the next iteration of the Mayor's Steering Committee on the North Houston Highway Improvement Project. CHI will support the Mayor's team in developing content for the committees and participate as a committee member. The first meeting of the new iteration of the Steering Committee was held virtually on April 6th. The meeting was focused on comparing the MOUs / FHWA VRA, establishing a committee charter & answering questions from members. The next meeting is May 24th.

Participating Agencies:



- 1.3** Collaborate with partners such as the City of Houston, Harris County, Greater Houston Partnership and Houston First to leverage opportunities for shared strategies to improve Downtown Houston.

Highlight: As a component of the next phase for the Big Art. Bigger Change. mural program, CHI and the HDMD were joined by Harris County and the City of Houston in supporting the program. HDMD authorized up to \$270,000 in funding for the program, while the County has pledged up to \$330,000 and the City \$70,000. Additionally, the City and County have donated walls to the program and participated on the project's oversight committee, ensuring that the mural designs are consistent with local sensibilities.

Participating Agency:



GOAL 2

Enhance and maintain a comfortable, welcoming, and well-managed public realm.

- 2.2** Cultivate nature across Downtown, including its urban forest, planters, and other greenspace elements.

Highlight: Earlier this year, CHI management authorized Davey Resource Group to begin implementation of their TreeKeeper smart monitoring system. DRG's arborist inventoried and entered data for all 2,026 trees that HDMD is responsible for maintaining, which consists of right-of-way trees, Park trees, and Allen Parkway trees. 95.4% of the trees inventoried were in Good/Fair condition. The collected data will guide future maintenance initiatives and identify opportunities to expand the urban tree canopy.

Participating Agency:



- 2.8** Prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Highlight: The 2023 Downtown Emergency Preparedness/Hurricane Briefing has been scheduled for Wednesday, May 17th, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM in Lyondell Basell Tower's Exchange Conference Center at 1221 McKinney Street. Presentations and discussions of respective emergency plans and preparations will be provided by HDMD, the Houston Police Department, City of Houston's Office of Emergency Management, METRO Transit Authority, and Houston Public Works.

Participating Agencies:



GOAL 3

Drive vibrancy through improved street-level connectivity, a commitment to walkability, and inclusive programming strategies.

3.6 Plan, design, and construct public infrastructure that supports safety and equity.

Highlight: Generally bounded by Hamilton, Pierce, Fannin, and Polk Streets, the long-term project to improve sidewalks along 40-blockfaces in the southeast quadrant of Downtown is advancing towards construction. TxDOT is the lead agency for the project. The total construction grant is \$3,446,245, with \$2,259,445 funded by federal and state government and \$1,186,800 funded by the Downtown District as the local sponsor; the District's portion includes the full value of engineering-design services. On April 13th, the Downtown District submitted a proportional payment of \$362,259 per the construction estimate in partial fulfillment of the Advance Funding Agreement from 2022. Through the Texas Transportation Commission, TxDOT is expected to award the contract in late-May 2023, with construction to start 60-90 days after the award.

Participating Agencies:



3.8 Prioritize investments in pedestrian lighting on key walking corridors and near residential buildings.

Highlight: On April 14th, CHI management issued a Request for Proposals to forty-two lighting design consultants for the Downtown Pedestrian Lighting Framework. Seven proposals were received on May 2nd and reviewed by an evaluation panel on May 5th. A recommendation to execute an agreement and the related expenditures is scheduled for the Downtown District's Board meeting on May 11th. Fieldwork analysis and planning for prioritized implementation is scheduled to begin in late-May and run through the end of the year.

Participating Agency:



GOAL 4

Foster a vital and thriving economy through business growth, residential expansion, and enhanced reasons to be in Downtown.

- 4.9** Research and develop return-to-office strategies to accelerate the return of employees to Downtown.

Highlight: Return-to-office (RTO) trends continued to provide encouraging news for Downtown Houston. Relative to a 5-year average vs. pre-pandemic levels, in-office work continued to trend upward and recorded an average RTO rate of 67.70% for April, a 3.7% gain over March. Downtown posted another single-day peak RTO rate since the pandemic's onset, as Tuesday, April 4th, recorded a 78.5% RTO rate. That rate surpassed the previous peak day of 76.6% from Tuesday, March 21st. The 3.7% month-over-month gain translates into an additional 5,275 employees Downtown throughout the workweek.

Participating Agencies:



- 4.10** Continue investing in innovation and technology start-ups to support the diversification of the Downtown employment base.

Highlight: To advance on the "Optimize the Downtown Launchpad" item from CHI's 2023 Top 20 initiatives, CHI management hired Ryan LeVasseur as a part-time contract employee. Ryan's 12-week scope includes assessing the Downtown Launchpad's programmatic, operational, budgetary, and partnership structures and current conditions compared to the organization's goals. An analysis output will consist of identifying areas that require change and/or opportunities for improvements to maximize the development of future business enterprises that choose to locate more permanently Downtown.

Before joining CHI in this capacity, Ryan was the Managing Director of Real Estate at Rice Management Company. He directed all aspects of developing the Ion, including design and construction oversight, programming, activation, and leasing. Ryan began his tenure with CHI on May 1st, the 92nd anniversary of the Empire State Building's opening in New York in 1931.

Participating Agencies:



GOAL 5

Develop a hivemind of intelligence and goodwill by genuinely engaging and convening stakeholders.

- 5.5** Consolidate websites to be more user-friendly, Downtown-focused, and valued as the most critical information clearinghouse about Downtown.

Highlight: After issuing a public RFP for web design services, CHI management received more than a dozen proposals to perform the specified scope of work. *Geocentric*, a US-based web design company that specializes in websites for urban place management entities such as Central Houston and its affiliates, was selected. This effort will consolidate the organization's six stand-alone websites into a singular site that delivers an improved user experience and a more efficient method for accessing information about Downtown & the organizations advancing it. The new website will be launched by the end of 2023.

Participating Agencies:



- 5.6** Improve and expand external communications to increase awareness of CHI, its actions, and general Downtown happenings.

Highlight: After issuing a public RFP for public relations services, CHI management received numerous proposals from prospective agencies seeking to serve as the organization's agency of record. Ultimately, CKP Group was selected. CKP group's office is located in Downtown Houston, and they are a woman-owned, certified Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) in the State of Texas. To kick start their engagement, the team from CKP joined the *Goal 5 Engage Committee* for a robust discussion on stories about Downtown that the media doesn't cover adequately.

Participating Agencies:

