



# Republic Square

## Summary

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) is working in collaboration with the Downtown Austin Alliance, the Austin Parks Foundation, and a variety of downtown stakeholders to transform these often overlooked and underutilized Historic Squares into beautiful green places buzzing with people and activity. This new initiative will bring together private and public resources to create physical improvements and programs that attract, engage, and reflect Austin's diverse community.

## Description

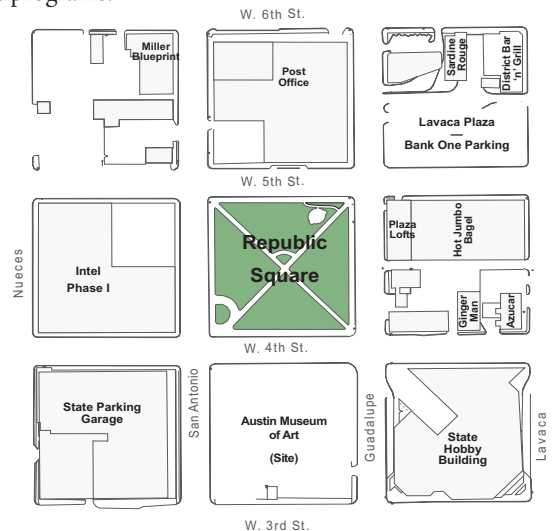
In 1999, the Downtown Austin Alliance in partnership with the Austin Parks & Recreation Department created a Republic Square Task force made up of surrounding business owners, residents and members of the arts community. The task force developed a plan known as the Republic Square Task Force Final Recommendations. Shortly after that, the Austin Parks Foundation joined the partnership to provide technical and fundraising assistance.

In February 2001, a partnership between the Austin Parks Foundation, Downtown Austin Alliance and City of Austin Parks & Recreation Department was formalized through a signed memorandum of understanding. The purpose of the partnership is to revitalize the downtown historic parks, beginning with Republic Square, creating beautiful public gathering places that attract a variety of citizens with cultural (dance, music, arts), political, civic, historic, outdoor film, and family oriented programs.

In October, 2001, a landscape architectural firm, TBG Partners, was hired to do a conceptual design for the redevelopment of Republic Square. The design will be utilized by the Austin Parks Foundation for fund raising. TBG Partners will work in concert with Jesus Moroles, an internationally known sculptor. Mr. Moroles has been commissioned by the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) to create an artistic piece for the park. TCA will also create a cultural endowment in order to sustain the artistic elements of the park.

In November 2001, a design charrette was held which attracted a variety of interested community leaders. Based on this input, preliminary designs are in progress. During December, 2001, and January 2002, various boards and commissions have been updated on the progress of the design ideas for Republic Square. These included the Historic Landmark Commission, the Design Commission, the Downtown Commission, and the Land and Facilities subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation Board. The Austin Parks Foundation have joined together with TCA to implement a historic research effort for Republic Square, which will ultimately be used for historical interpretation of the park.

A conceptual design for Republic Square Park has been completed. The proposed plan is a collaborative effort between the artist, the landscape architect, and the Republic Square partners. The 'picturesque' style design combines hardscape paths cutting through green spaces with a promenade between a double row of trees on three sides of the park. The artwork is a waterwall and three monumental columns with water coursing down



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them. The conceptual design will be presented to the same four boards and commissions during the month of May that saw it in the preliminary design stage. Austin Parks Foundation and Downtown Austin Alliance will then use this design to raise funds for construction

It is envisioned that Republic Square, while retaining its historic value, will be the city plaza of downtown Austin. Its location within a rapidly growing, vibrant, metropolitan setting creates a rich environment for the creation of a civic square with a unique appeal and personality. Republic Square will be a place where downtown visitors, employees and residents can gather to eat, relax and enjoy a variety of activities.

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### Basic Data

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