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**DOWNTOWN DISTRICT AND DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
EMBARK ON CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT CAMPAIGN FOR MAIN STREET
CORRIDOR**

**“Art Blocks” Public Art and Neighborhood Revitalization Campaign Planned for
Main Street Square**

HOUSTON, TX – The Downtown District and Downtown Redevelopment Authority have embarked on a series of capital improvements for the 19-block length of Main Street in Downtown, from Commerce to Pierce, aimed at enhancing and revitalizing key hubs of activity in Downtown Houston. The capital improvements will focus on four Downtown zones along the Main Street corridor, and includes the Historic District, Central Station, Main Street Square and southern Downtown. Design and construction for the comprehensive improvements is funded by the Downtown Redevelopment District (TIRZ No. 3), with a total project budget of \$12.1 million dollars.

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“Downtown is in a unique position as we enter 2016” said Bob Eury, executive director of the Downtown District. “With Houston playing host to the NCAA Men’s Basketball Championship and later, Super Bowl LI, the city will be in the national and international spotlight. This gives us an opportunity to be the best hosts we can be, and part of that is providing a warm and welcoming environment that showcases our innovation, creativity and spirit. The planned improvements to Main Street are aimed at exactly this, and will create spaces that not only guests, but Houstonians can use and enjoy long into the future.”

Capital improvements throughout the entire 19-block stretch of Main Street will include new street lighting and landscaping elements throughout, along with new sidewalk finishes and roadway drainage improvements in certain blocks. At the completion of the project, expect to see widened sidewalks and granite sidewalk pavers in some zones, new street trees and raised planters along Main Street from Commerce to Pierce, improved lighting systems and wayfinding signage and many more upgrades.

Main Street Square, the pedestrian plaza located between Walker and Dallas, will see significant improvements, including:

- New granite sidewalk pavers at the 900 and 1100 blocks of Main Street.
- New raised planters with curved granite edging and seasonal plantings at the 900 and 1100 blocks.
- New decorative planters along the eastern sidewalk of the 1000 block.
- New LED street lights, including at the fountain in the 1000 block.
- A new B-cycle station at the 900 block, in front of Bombay Pizza.
- New stainless steel water fountains at the 900 and 1200 blocks.
- Restoration of the corner gateway poles at McKinney and Lamar intersections.
- Closure of the southbound driving lane at the 1100 block of Main Street, with widened sidewalk and landscape finishes adjacent to the new office tower at 1111 Travis.
- Maintenance and improvements for Main Street Square’s central fountain, with upgrades to the LED decorative poles that flank the central fountain.
- Improved pedestrian wayfinding signage to be installed along the full length of Main Street, with new signage at the McKinney, Lamar and Dallas crossings of Main Street Square.

In addition to the capital improvements to Main Street Square, the Downtown District will curate and implement a public art and neighborhood revitalization campaign comprised of semi-permanent and temporary art installations, public programming and other experiences. Similar to the restoration and

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revitalization of Market Square Park, the project, dubbed Art Blocks, will aim to awaken change in an area of Downtown that has been largely underutilized, but offers tremendous potential for neighborhood growth. Hardscape and environmental improvements have been carefully designed to address and reflect the needs of the surrounding Downtown inhabitants, and public programming (through art and other activities) will seek to increase the use and profile of Main Street Square in the general Downtown community and beyond.

“We’ve approached programming, both in terms of events and public art, for Main Street Square very similarly to how we approached Market Square Park” said Angie Bertinot, director of marketing and communications for the Downtown District. “We’ve experienced such a tremendous positive response supporting the revitalization and programming efforts in the Market Square neighborhood that we feel excited and energetic about launching a similar effort focused on Main Street Square. Art Blocks at Main Street Square will focus on repurposing and redefining spaces, and integrating public art projects in a way that they feel organic to the surrounding neighborhood. We believe that Art Blocks combined with strong programming will prove transformative for Main Street Square.”

Installation of Art Blocks projects will begin in February of 2016 and will include four semi-permanent and temporary public art projects, as well as myriad “pop-up” installations, experiences and activities planned throughout the initial year-long campaign. Internationally lauded artists and designers are lending their expertise to Art Blocks, including Jessica Stockholder, New York-based collective YesYesNo and Houston’s own Patrick Renner, best known for his installation “FunnelTunnel” along Montrose Boulevard. Art Blocks public art projects will be installed in advance of the NCAA Men’s Basketball Championship (April 2016) and will remain on view through the hosting of Super Bowl LI (February 2017).

All capital improvements to the Main Street corridor are expected to be completed by mid-July 2016.

ABOUT DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

The Downtown District was formed in 1995 for the purpose of revitalizing the urban core of the country’s fourth largest city. Over the past decade, the Downtown District has used a combination of public funds and private resources to catalyze area improvements focusing on the city blocks bordered by Interstate 10, Highway 59, and Interstate 45.

The Downtown District operates under the leadership of a 30-person board of directors who oversee the implementation of the District’s strategic initiatives. Funding for the Downtown District comes from a special assessment on all downtown property owners.

For more information visit downtowndistrict.org or downtownhouston.org.

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