



May 13, 2026

Hon. Mayor John Whitmire and Houston City Council  
City Hall  
901 Bagby Street  
Houston, Texas 77002

RE: Letter of Support – Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

Dear Mayor Whitmire and Members of City Council,

On behalf of Central Houston's Board of Directors, we are writing to express our support for the Mayor's proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Budget. Central Houston is a 501(c)6 membership organization dedicated to the commercial, civic, and cultural wellbeing of the heart of our region, and a part of the Downtown Houston+ family of mission-aligned organizations.

In short: Downtown Houston's continued vitality depends on a financially stable City government that can maintain essential services, invest in public spaces, and coordinate effectively with Downtown partners, property owners, businesses, residents, and civic institutions. We support the Administration's continued focus on the City's long-term structural financial health. A sustainable municipal budget is necessary not only to preserve core citywide services, but also to ensure that Downtown remains safe, active, and economically competitive. The City's ability to provide reliable police, fire, EMS, public works, parks, solid waste, and homelessness-response capacity has a direct and material impact on Downtown's recovery, reinvestment, and long-term success.

Downtown's public realm is one of Houston's most important civic assets. Its parks, plazas, sidewalks, streets, and gathering places support workers, residents, visitors, convention attendees, arts and cultural patrons, and small businesses every day. The proposed budget is important because it helps preserve the City's capacity to maintain and care for several Downtown parks and public spaces, including the operational support required to keep those assets safe, accessible, well-managed, and welcoming. Continued investment in park maintenance and public-space stewardship is central to Downtown's role as Houston's front door.

We also support the proposed budget because it protects public safety resources that are essential to Downtown's daily operations and long-term revitalization. Downtown place management depends on consistent coordination among the Houston Police Department, Houston Fire Department, emergency medical services, METRO, private security partners, property owners, and district personnel. Maintaining adequate public safety capacity enables Downtown to support major events, office activity, residential growth, nightlife, tourism, convention business, and civic gatherings while responding appropriately to quality-of-life concerns.

In addition, the City's continued capacity to address homelessness remains a critical priority for Downtown Houston. We recognize that homelessness is a complex regional issue requiring coordinated outreach, housing navigation, behavioral health resources, public safety engagement, and sustained interagency collaboration. The proposed budget helps preserve the City's ability to continue this work in partnership with service providers, public agencies, philanthropic partners, and Downtown stakeholders. This capacity is essential to ensure that unsheltered individuals are connected to appropriate resources while Downtown's public spaces remain safe, functional, and accessible for all users.

We further recognize the Administration's efforts to address cost drivers, improve operational efficiency, and pursue a more structurally balanced budget. As the City evaluates additional revenue streams, including solid waste and right-of-way fees, we encourage continued consideration of dedicated, sustainable funding mechanisms that align Houston with peer cities and support the reliable delivery of essential municipal services. These services are particularly consequential in Downtown, where high daily use, regional visitation, major events, and concentrated infrastructure require consistent municipal performance.

The Fiscal Year 2027 Budget represents an important step toward addressing long-standing structural budget challenges while protecting the general fund and preserving service capacity. For Downtown Houston, this is not an abstract fiscal issue; it is directly tied to public safety, homelessness response, park maintenance, infrastructure reliability, economic development, and the public experience of the city's core.

We commend the Whitmire Administration and City Council for advancing a budget that recognizes the dynamic needs of Houstonians while prioritizing the City's long-term fiscal position. We also encourage continued stakeholder engagement in future budget cycles so that municipal priorities reflect the operational realities of Houston's districts, neighborhoods, business corridors, and civic destinations. To that end, we appreciate the outreach to our Board and the invitation to receive questions and suggestions.

Downtown Houston's place management partners remain committed to working collaboratively with the Mayor, City Council, City departments, public agencies, nonprofit providers, property owners, and business and civic stakeholders to support a clean, safe, active, and economically resilient Downtown. We appreciate your leadership and your continued attention to the municipal services and public investments that sustain Houston's urban core.

Thank you for your consideration, partnership, and dedication to the health of the City of Houston.

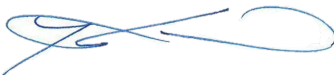
Respectfully,



Stephanie Burritt  
Chair  
Central Houston Inc. Board of Directors



Alex Jessett,  
Vice-Chair  
Central Houston, Inc. Board of Directors



Kris Larson, AICP, LPM  
President & CEO  
Central Houston, Inc.  
Enclosure(s)/Attachment(s)