

To Whom It May Concern;

Please allow this letter to serve as an endorsement of the proposed Washington Parking Benefit District (PBD) from the Organized Kollaboration on Restaurant Affairs (OKRA).

OKRA serves as an independent, community-supported advocacy group for restaurant and bar owners throughout the city of Houston. At the heart of our organization is our belief in the importance of cultivating a relationship between vibrant food cultures and local communities, and it is our view that the process to establish the Washington PBD incorporated this perspective throughout the development of these proposals.

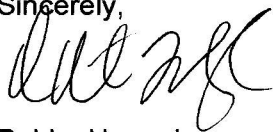
As an organization that believes that the strategic use of on-street parking is beneficial to density and commercial development, we feel the Washington PBD appropriately weighs the need for on-street parking resources for business owners with concerns of neighborhood residents. The unique circumstances of Washington Avenue's development over the past ten years without a local Management District necessitate this response from city planners. While we would like to see longer parking times incorporated into parking meter restrictions, generally, we believe this proposal is a thoughtfully considered approach for Washington Avenue.

Restaurants and bars are an essential element of the Washington Corridor. As a collaborative of independent restaurant and bar owners, some of which are active business owners on Washington Avenue, it is OKRA's belief that we should act as committed community partners: both supported by and supporting our local neighborhoods. We believe strongly that in the future, the City of Houston should continue to generate neighborhood specific solutions that address the unique concerns of urban areas in our city.

Despite our endorsement of the Washington PBD, we do NOT feel that the Washington PBD should be considered a blueprint for other areas in Houston. Instead, we advocate that a similar PROCESS whereby the individual elements of each neighborhood are considered and distinct policies are generated is more appropriate. The process that resulted in the Washington PBD is what should become a model here, not the specific policy. Instituting the Washington PBD in other parts of Houston would only result in further frustration from restaurant and bar owners, who in the past (and in the future) will actively protest blanket policies, such as increases to minimum parking requirements.

Given our specific thoughts, OKRA strongly urges you to approve the proposal of the Washington Parking Benefit District, and we look forward to continuing to share our perspective on parking and other issues related to restaurants and bars in Houston.

Sincerely,



Bobby Heugel

President

Organized Kollaboration on Restaurant Affairs