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# Sustaining creativity in the creative archetype: The case of Austin, Texas

Joshua Long

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## Abstract

Recently, the popular literature on creative industries and the urban creative landscape has been largely dominated by the work of one scholar, Richard Florida. The popularity of Richard Florida's work has led to a zealous implementation of his creative class thesis by many city officials, policymakers, and urban planners. Recent studies have investigated the impact of creative city implementation in previously working class and industrial cities, but given Florida's popularity and influence, it is also necessary to evaluate the sustainability of cities touted as creative success stories by Florida and others. This article examines the case of Austin, Texas, seeking to evaluate Florida's model city in light of recent empirical research. This research suggests that while Austin has witnessed impressive economic prosperity, the "externalities" or unforeseen challenges associated with creative development are equally evident. Further, this

research suggests that previously overlooked socio-cultural challenges (e.g. loss of urban cultural character, sense of detachment, over-commercialization) in Austin threaten to potentially undermine the sustainability of this mode of development.



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## Keywords

Creative city; Richard Florida; Urban cultural landscapes; Place attachment

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