



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number: 18-2851

Agenda Item Number: 2.

Agenda Date: 4/17/2018

In Control: Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee

DEPARTMENT: Office of Historic Preservation

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Shanon Miller, Director

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: All

SUBJECT:

Briefing regarding recommended sites for viewshed protection.

SUMMARY:

District 7 Councilwoman Sandoval and District 2 Councilman Shaw have submitted a City Council Resolution to initiate the process to consider additional San Antonio landmarks for viewshed protection and to enable the establishment of potential Viewshed Protection Districts. The CCR also directs OHP staff to study additional views and vistas of historic places, landmarks, and cultural resources for consideration for viewshed protection.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Viewshed protection districts and view corridors are a common tool used by cities to safeguard iconic and historic views and vistas. San Antonio has used Viewshed Protection Districts as a development tool since 2003. In order to provide a process for City Council to consider additional viewsheds, OHP staff prepared UDC amendments through public input. The Arts, Culture, and Heritage Committee recommended UDC amendments on March 28. The Historic and Design Review Commission also recommended approval of the amendments on April 4.

As a next step in the process, OHP staff will provide a recommendation regarding which potential viewshed protection districts warrant further exploration. Public input meetings were held on January 29 and March 5. In February, OHP launched an online visual survey to assess potential viewsheds for eligibility against the three, draft evaluation criteria. Utilizing the most popular photos collected by the public, the survey yielded consistent results regarding which views aligned with the evaluation criteria and rose to the highest level of public concern.

With direction from the Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee on March 28, OHP staff has conducted additional site analysis, through input from a technical committee, to provide detailed recommendations regarding priority viewsheds. A Resolution to proceed with individual viewshed zoning overlays will require City Council action following a committee recommendation.

ISSUE:

Viewshed Protection Districts function as a zoning overlay. With a district in place, individual projects within the district are reviewed for conformance with any imposed height restrictions as part of the development review process.

With direction from Council, staff would further explore the best approaches for each site and work with the public to develop and propose any new zoning districts.

ALTERNATIVES:

As an alternative, no sites would be further explored for viewshed protection.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Professional services will be required to provide a survey and metes and bounds description for any new district. Consultant fees could range between \$5,000 and \$15,000 per site depending on the complexity and number of desired viewsheds for each site.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that four sites be explored further and submitted to City Council for Resolution to proceed with the development of individual viewshed protection districts through public input.