



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:** 18-5641

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**Agenda Item Number:** 1.

**Agenda Date:** 10/10/2018

**In Control:** City Council B Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** City Manager's Office

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City-Wide

### **SUBJECT:**

Alamo Plan Update

### **SUMMARY:**

A briefing on the Alamo Plan

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

On October 15, 2015, City Council executed a cooperative agreement among the Texas General Land Office (GLO), Alamo Endowment Board, and the City of San Antonio regarding the Joint Master Plan for the Alamo and surrounding area. The Agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of each party as well as the management and oversight structure for the master plan's development and adoption. The Agreement created a six member Management Committee that includes two representatives from each entity. Councilmember Roberto Treviño and City Manager Sheryl Sculley represent the City of San Antonio. The Agreement also created a two member Executive Committee and appoints the Mayor of San Antonio and the Commissioner for the General Land Office.

The Cooperative Agreement identified the Vision and Guiding Principles developed by the Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee as the foundation for the master plan. The Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee includes 26 members appointed by the Mayor, City Council, or General Land Office and 4 technical advisory members representing industry organizations. The Alamo Citizen Advisory Committee was established to create a framework for the Alamo Master Plan and provide feedback to the Management Committee on its implementation.

The Management Committee selected Preservation Design Partnership (PDP) in association with San Antonio-based Fisher Heck Architects and Grupo De Diseño Urbano (GDU) of Mexico to lead the Alamo master planning process. On May 11, 2017, City Council unanimously approved the Alamo Master Plan, which consists of five key concepts:

1. Restoration of the Church and Long Barrack.
2. Delineation of the historic footprint.
3. Recapture the Historic Mission Plaza and create a sense of reverence and respect on the historic battlefield.
4. Repurpose the Crockett Block, Woolworth, and Palace buildings into a world-class visitor center and museum that tells the story of the Battle of the Alamo and over 300 years of layered history.
5. Create a sense of arrival to the site and enhance connectivity between the site and other public spaces.

City Council also provided conceptual approval for the restoration and relocation of the Cenotaph, closure of sections of Alamo and Crockett Streets, and the conveyance or lease of right of way necessary to reclaim the historic Plaza.

The approval of the Master Plan and conceptual approval of the specific site strategies was necessary to proceed with the next steps for the project which included the development of an interpretive plan. In December 2017, the Management Committee announced the selection of PGAV Destinations to lead development of the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan and design of Alamo Plaza. The team also includes Reed-Hilderbrand landscape architects and Cultural Innovations museum and cultural heritage consultants. The team first unveiled the Plan to the Alamo Citizens Advisory Committee and the public in May 2018.

The Plan proposed by the consultant team further developed the proposed strategies necessary to achieve the five key concepts in the Master Plan. The more prominent site strategies include:

- Closing and restricting sections of Alamo Street, Houston Street, and Crockett Street to pedestrian and emergency vehicles only;
- Repairing and relocating the Cenotaph within Alamo Plaza;
- Developing a new parade route that honors the complete history of the Alamo;
- Assessing the adaptive reuse for the Crockett, Palace, and Woolworth Buildings; establishing a formal point of entry to the Plaza during museum hours; and
- Leasing to the GLO portions of the Street and Plaza necessary to recapture the Plaza

These strategies are referred to collectively as the Alamo Plan and some of them require approval from specific regulatory agencies such as the Planning Commission and Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC) for the City of San Antonio, Texas Historical Commission (THC), and the City of San Antonio City Council.

On August 30, 2018, the Alamo Citizens Advisory Committee approved seven resolutions in support of the Plan, including one recommending that the City enter into a long-term ground lease and management agreement with the GLO to manage the historic Alamo Plaza. The resolutions were submitted to the Alamo Management Committee on August 31, 2018. The Alamo Management Committee unanimously approved the Alamo Plan and sent it to the Alamo Executive Committee for their consideration. On October 2, the Alamo Executive Committee comprised of Mayor Ron Nirenberg and Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush approved the Alamo Plan.

## **ISSUE:**

The purpose of this briefing is to provide an overview of the Alamo Plan and the process for its approval. Since 2014, the process has included over 50 public meetings and over 200 stakeholder meetings. Community input will continue through the design and implementation phase for the project. In order to proceed to the design phase for the Alamo Project, GLO and City staff has initiated the steps to obtain the necessary approvals for several of the site strategies identified in the Alamo Plan.

Planning Commission recommendation to City Council is required to close sections of Alamo Street, Houston Street, and Crocket Street to vehicular access and create a pedestrian only right of way and to close, vacate, and abandon right of way on Alamo and Houston Street necessary to recapture the historic Plaza. Additionally, the Planning Commission must make a recommendation to City Council regarding the proposed lease between the City and GLO for the City owned property necessary to recapture the historic Alamo Plaza.

The HDRC must review the proposed design changes to the Alamo Plaza and make a recommendation to City Council. The proposed design changes include the relocation of the Cenotaph, the establishment of a formal point of entry to the Plaza during museum hours, and the rerouting of the two Fiesta parades in a manner that still accommodates important Fiesta traditions to include the floral tribute. The Office of Historic Preservation must also review and approve the relocation and repair plan for the Cenotaph prior to any work beginning.

The Texas Historical Commission must review and approve the relocation of the Cenotaph and the proposed plans for the historic buildings owned by the State of Texas. While the HDRC does not have purview over the historic buildings owned by the State of Texas, HDRC will review and provide comments on the recommendation to THC.

The City of San Antonio City Council must consider the closure of the sections of Alamo Street, Houston Street, and Crocket Street to vehicles to create a pedestrian only right of way and the abandonment of the right of way on Alamo and Houston Street necessary to recapture the historic Plaza. City Council must also consider the ground lease and management agreement with the General Land Office.

The lease agreement between the City and GLO for the operation of the Plaza defines the roles and responsibilities for each party. The term of the lease is for 50 years with two 25 year extensions. The GLO is responsible for the day to day operations of the Alamo Plaza to include custodial, programming, and security. The lease also defines the roles and responsibilities of each party as it relates to site strategies in the Plan.

A joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Historic and Design Review Commission has been scheduled for October 10th at 5:30 PM at 1901 South Alamo. The Texas Historical Commission will receive a briefing on the Alamo Plan on October 23, 2018. This item is tentatively scheduled for City Council action on October 18, 2018.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

This item is for briefing purposes only.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This item is for briefing purposes only. However, the City adopted Fiscal Year 2016 capital budget included \$17 million for the redevelopment of the Alamo Plaza and surrounding area. Additionally, the 2017 bond program includes approximately \$21 million for construction of facilities in support of Alamo area

improvements and street improvements. The Texas Legislature approved \$31.5 million in 2015 and \$75 million in 2017 for the restoration of the Alamo and redevelopment of the surrounding area. The Alamo Endowment is committed to raising private funds for implementation of the Alamo Plan. The public and private funding commitments will allow for the implementation of the Alamo Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This item is for briefing purposes only.