



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**19-2989

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**Agenda Item Number:** 21.

**Agenda Date:** 4/4/2019

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Center City Development & Operations

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** John Jacks

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** City-wide

### **SUBJECT:**

A resolution accepting the San Antonio Urban Lighting Master Plan.

### **SUMMARY:**

On February 8, 2018, City Council authorized a contract with Alderson & Associates, Inc. for the development of the San Antonio Urban Lighting Master Plan (ULMP). The contract scope included a lighting study and the development of an Urban Lighting Master Plan for a total amount not to exceed \$500,000. The cost was shared equally by the City and CPS Energy. This resolution accepts the report and recommends that it be used as a lighting guideline for bond projects and capital projects, where applicable.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

On February 8, 2018, City Council authorized a contract with Alderson & Associates, Inc. for the development of the San Antonio Urban Lighting Master Plan (ULMP). The contract scope included a lighting study and the development of an Urban Lighting Master Plan for a total amount not to exceed \$500,000, and the cost was shared equally by the City and CPS Energy. Alderson & Associates is a local engineering firm with experience on a number of San Antonio projects including the River Walk Lighting Master Plan, Hanger 9, and Miraflores Park. Alderson teamed with Randy Burkett Lighting Design, Inc. on the project. Burkett previously worked with Alderson on the River Walk Lighting Master Plan, and he has worked on many other lighting projects, including the Arlington VA Lighting Master Plan, Gateway Arch lighting in St. Louis, MO, the MLK Jr. Memorial lighting design and implementation in Washington DC, and the GSA Hipolito Federal Building lighting design and implementation in San Antonio. On March 6, 2019, City Council was briefed on the key findings of the report during B Session. This resolution formally accepts the report and lighting study and

encourages its use as a guideline for the design and implementation of lighting in bond projects and capital projects, where applicable.

The objective of the ULMP was to engage the creativity of architects and lighting experts, gather input from the public and downtown stakeholders on how a unified lighting plan could improve the experience in downtown and urban neighborhoods, and to create a more unified lighting character throughout our urban core, urban corridors, and neighborhoods. The Plan provides guidance on issues related to light as an influence on orientation, wayfinding, place making, aesthetic enrichment, and the reinforcement of perception related to safety and security.

The study area for the ULMP was the downtown area within the highway loop, the area immediately adjacent to the Alamodome, and portions of the Lavaca and King William neighborhoods that fall within District 1. The major areas of study within the plan include:

- **Streetscapes** - Lighting for the streets and public thoroughfares, including vehicular roadway and bicycle traffic, as well as pedestrian activity on sidewalks, crosswalks, and other gathering areas.
- **City Parks** - Seventeen parks are within the confines of the project's scope. The work in these parks focused on after-dark pedestrian activity, including informal interaction with surroundings, routine social engagement, recreation and special events, as well as aesthetics and beautification.
- **Civic Art** - Existing public art within the scope boundaries that provides, or could provide, positive impact for the community through nighttime illumination. Incentivizing private entities to illuminate their publicly viewable art.
- **Building Facades** - Study of the current and potential impact of lighted exterior building facades for both aesthetic appeal and overall contribution to safety and security within the urban environment, especially streetscapes

The scope of work included an inventory and assessment of the condition and performance of existing lighting assets; the gathering of downtown stakeholder and public input, to include input on unique lighting needs around historical and culturally significant areas; a survey of lighting for parks and plazas in the study area; and, the creation of a detailed Lighting Master Plan with cost estimates based on the vetted vision. The primary components of the Master Plan are:

- A catalog with categories of lighting equipment combinations, technology and features;
- The application of lighting categories to specific situations in the study area based on field conditions like pedestrian traffic and street volumes, with application guidance and models to mapped locations;
- The identification and documentation of all equipment recommended throughout the target area.

The consultant was also tasked with installing temporary lighting as a mockup to test the impact of lighting enhancements on two publicly owned and one privately owned building located in the downtown. These lighting mockups were completed at the City-owned Plaza de Armas and Municipal Plaza buildings, as well as the privately owned Savoy Building located at 116 E Houston. These mockups informed the guidelines for different lighting techniques and provided strategies that can be applied to buildings in our downtown and urban neighborhoods.

The project was managed by the Transportation & Capital Improvements Department with input and guidance from Center City Development & Operations, Parks & Recreation, Finance, Arts & Culture, and CPS Energy. Staff and CPS will utilize the plan to identify projects and opportunities for implementation of new Urban Lighting Guidelines. These guidelines will be incorporated into future large scale capital projects, such as major Bond road reconstruction projects, art installations, and lighting projects within urban parks.

**ISSUE:**

Prior to completion of the ULMP, the City lacked a comprehensive guideline for lighting. As a result, there is a significant variance in lighting character throughout our urban core and neighborhoods. This study was undertaken to create an informed and uniform guideline for lighting of various types of roadways, parks, art projects, and facilities. The ULMP will be used by many City departments as well as design consultants hired onto City capital projects, and it is expected to have a significant impact on lighting design. While the study is specific to downtown, the recommendations in the study serve as a framework for projects throughout the city.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The City Council could choose not to accept the ULMP through this resolution.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact for accepting the ULMP report and lighting study. The report will be used as a guideline to inform design of future projects.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends acceptance of the ULMP as produced by Alderson & Associates, Inc.