



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 2

Agenda Date: March 6, 2024

In Control: City Council B Session

DEPARTMENT: Center City Development & Operations

DEPARTMENT HEAD: John Jacks

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: District 1

SUBJECT:

Downtown Strategic Plan

SUMMARY:

Briefing on the scope, process, and timeline for the development of a Downtown Strategic Plan. The effort will be done in partnership with Centro San Antonio and Visit San Antonio.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Strategic Framework Plan for the Center City was completed in December 2011. It was commissioned and funded by Centro San Antonio with support from the City, and was led by HR&A Advisors, Inc., with support by Alamo Architects and Ximenes & Associates, Inc. The final report summarized a series of recommendations to support the growth of the Center City in order to meet the goals set by the community in SA2020. The City then created the Center City Implementation Plan that helped identify the tools necessary to implement the Framework Plan and it was adopted by City Council in 2012. These two plans were the road map for the “Decade of Downtown” and led to numerous successes in downtown.

- The Strategic Plan called for increased public investment in downtown and the Implementation Plan recommended the Bond Programs for 2012 and 2017 include substantial funding for downtown. The 2012 Bond Program included approximately

\$100 million for downtown, and the 2017 Bond Program included approximately \$170 million for downtown.

- The Strategic Plan called for a Housing First Strategy and set a goal of 7,500 new housing units to the greater downtown area. The implementation plan recommended the development of an as of right incentive system to facilitate housing development. In 2012, City Council adopted the Center City Housing Incentive Policy. As a result, a total of 9,094 new housing units were added to the greater downtown area.
- The Implementation Plan also recommended a Placed Based Strategy for downtown. Through coordinated planning efforts with HPARC, Centro, UTSA, Market Square Tenants, and several other stakeholders, the City established a place-based approach for Zona Cultural/San Pedro Creek and Hemisfair/Alamo. These 2 areas represent a combined total of \$2.2 billion in investment.
- The Implementation Plan also recommended that the City create design guidelines and master plans for downtown. Since 2012, the City adopted design guidelines for downtown and adopted the Hemisfair Master Plan and the Downtown Regional Center Plan.

ISSUE:

The City has partnered with Centro San Antonio and Visit San Antonio to develop a new Strategic Framework Plan for downtown. The document is over 10 years old and the strategies must be revisited. The strategy for downtown must reflect the growth over the past 14 years and the impacts that COVID has had on working environments and the need for more public spaces. The plan will be informed by the Downtown Regional Center Plan, an economic impact study for downtown, the Transit Oriented Development Plan, and a housing study will address the supply, demand, and development cost for housing to include both affordable and market rate housing.

Centro has contracted with HR&A on the development of the new Plan. Representatives from the City, Centro, and Visit San Antonio will brief City Council on the scope of the plans, the process, and timeline.

ALTERNATIVES:

For briefing purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The City contributed \$45,000 to the effort. The City funding will support the housing study component. Centro San Antonio contribution is \$255,000 and Visit San Antonio is also committing \$255,000 to the effort.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only. Staff will brief the Council on the scope, process, and timeline and will return to the Planning and Community Development Committee for updates prior to proceeding to City Council for a resolution of support for the Strategic Plan and potential council action on specific implementation tools.