



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 1

Agenda Date: October 18, 2023

In Control: City Council B Session

DEPARTMENT: Office of Historic Preservation

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Shanon Shea Miller

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: District 1

SUBJECT:

Alamo Plan Update

SUMMARY:

Alamo Management Committee members will brief City Council on the Alamo Plan. The briefing will include an overview of progress made on the plan in recent years and upcoming construction projects.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Alamo Plan started in 2015 with the execution of a cooperative agreement among the City of San Antonio, the Texas General Land Office, and the Alamo Endowment, now the Alamo Trust, Inc. The agreement established a multifaceted management and oversight structure:

- The Alamo Executive Committee is the ultimate decision-making authority on the Alamo Plan Project. The Executive Committee includes two members: the Mayor of San Antonio and the General Land Office Commissioner.
- The Alamo Management Committee has primary oversight of the Alamo Plan Project and includes two appointees from each of the following: City of San Antonio, General Land Office, and Alamo Trust. Rebecca Viagran and Andy Segovia represent the City. They

serve alongside Kate Rogers and Hope Andrade with the Alamo Trust and Jeff Gordon and Adrian Piloto with the GLO. The Management Committee reports to the Executive Committee.

- The Alamo Citizens Advisory Committee (ACAC) was established in 2014 by the Mayor to develop the Vision and Guiding Principles to guide the Alamo Plan project. The Committee consists of 26 members to include three mayoral appointed Tri-Chairs: Councilmember Rebecca Viagran, Sue Ann Pemberton, and Aaronetta Pierce. The other members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council. The GLO also has the authority to appoint 5 ACAC members. The ACAC is advisory to the Management Committee. Their role is to review elements of the Alamo Plan to ensure it aligns with the Vision and Guiding Principles.

The Texas Historical Commission and the City's Historic and Design Review Commission review and permit the design and construction of the various components of the Plan. The THC is a state agency staffed by the State Historic Preservation Office and its 15-member board is appointed by the Governor of Texas. The City's HDRC is a City commission staffed by the Office of Historic Preservation and its 11 members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council.

Per the cooperative agreement, the City, GLO, and Alamo Trust developed and approved the Alamo Master Plan 5 key concepts in 2017. The 5 key concepts are:

1. Restoration of Church and Long Barrack
2. Delineation of historic footprint
3. Recapture historic mission plaza and create a sense of reverence and respect on the historic battlefield
4. Repurpose Crockett Block, Woolworth, and Palace buildings into world class visitor center and museum
5. Create a sense of arrival to the site and enhance connectivity between site and other public spaces

Following approval of the Alamo Master Plan, the parties developed specific site strategies necessary to implement the plan and terms for a lease agreement between the City and the GLO, approved in 2018. The site strategies included closing and restricting vehicular traffic on sections of Alamo Plaza, Houston, and Crockett Streets; repairing and relocating the Cenotaph; developing a new Fiesta parade route; assessing the adaptive reuse for the Crockett Block, Palace, and Woolworth Buildings; and establishing a formal entry point into the Plaza. The lease, which requires consistency with the Vision and Guiding Principles, includes sections of Alamo Plaza and Houston Street within the historic mission plaza, and the Paseo del Alamo that links the Riverwalk to Alamo Plaza.

In 2020 the Texas Historical Commission denied the City's permit request to repair and relocate the Cenotaph. The denial jeopardized several components of the Alamo Plan, making it impossible to implement the plan as approved.

On April 15, 2021, City Council authorized a reset of the Alamo Project. As a result of the reset, several changes to the Alamo Plan were made including the following:

- The parade route for the Battle of Flowers and the Fiesta Flambeau parades will allow for the continued use of Alamo Street between Houston and Commerce as long as the organizers enforce procedures that acknowledge the reverence of the site.
- The Cenotaph will be repaired in place and remain in its current location.
- The design of the Visitor Center and Museum will accommodate the Crockett and Woolworth Buildings and will include an exhibit with curated material and information regarding the Civil Rights movement in San Antonio.

Following the reset, Alamo Trust created the Museum Planning Committee and its two subcommittees in 2021. It is comprised of historians, archaeologists, museum experts, and community stakeholders appointed by the GLO Commissioner. They meet regularly to provide advice and content materials for the development of the Visitor Center and Museum and the overall interpretive plan for the Alamo. The Indigenous Peoples Subcommittee and the Civil Rights Subcommittee offer a more comprehensive exploration of the museum's themes for further inclusivity and provide an opportunity for a detailed discussion of key historical events related to civil rights and Indigenous peoples. The Museum Planning Committee and its sub-committees are advisory to the Management Committee.

The Alamo Project has made tremendous progress since the reset. The Collections Building was constructed and opened in March 2023 and the Education Center recently received the necessary permitting from the Texas Historical Commission so construction can begin. In addition, the Texas Legislature approved an additional \$400 million for the project. More recently the City, Alamo Trust, and the GLO through robust coordination were able to negotiate the purchase of a property that was key to the Museum and Visitor Center. With this acquisition, the GLO has all the property that is necessary for the Museum and Visitors Center and the design can be finalized and construction can begin.

ISSUE:

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ALTERNATIVES:

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FISCAL IMPACT:

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RECOMMENDATION:

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