



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 17

Agenda Date: January 26, 2023

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Office of the City Attorney

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Andy Segovia

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: District 1

SUBJECT:

Initiation of condemnation for Real Estate Acquisition of real property on behalf of the Texas General Land Office to construct a new Alamo Visitor Center and Museum at 516 E. Houston Street

SUMMARY:

An ordinance authorizing the acquisition through negotiation or condemnation of interests in land on behalf of the Texas General Land Office ("GLO") sufficient for project purposes involving 516 East Houston Street fee simple parcel of privately-owned real property located in downtown San Antonio of Bexar County in New City Block 423 Block 24 Lot E 36 FT of 2 OR A14 located in Council District 1, related to the Alamo Visitor Center and Museum declaring the project to be for public use and a public necessity for the acquisition.

This public use project is required to construct the Alamo Visitor Center and Museum located in the Crockett Block, Palace Theater, and Woolworth Buildings on Alamo Plaza in downtown San Antonio. The construction of the Alamo Visitor Center and the Museum is necessary to implement the Alamo Project as developed and agreed to by the City of San Antonio, the GLO, and the Alamo Trust. Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 2206.001, these items require City Council to initiate a motion authorizing the use of power of eminent domain, should it be needed.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Alamo Visitor Center and Museum is located within Council District 1. The Alamo Master Plan adopted by the City of San Antonio on May 11, 2017, revised October 18, 2018 and April 15, 2021 calls for the development and construction of a Visitor Center and Museum. The Alamo Master Plan is being implemented as a joint effort between the City of San Antonio, the GLO and the Alamo Trust. Without the additional new land the planned museum footprint, dedicated content spaces, and programing will not be possible, including the designated Civil Rights exhibit space.

The project will require acquiring a fee simple parcel. Upon completion of the design phase, construction is expected to begin in June 2023 with completion in 2026.

Once acquisition of the property is complete, the Alamo Visitor Center and Museum will be able to begin construction. The Alamo Visitor Center and Museum are integral to the objective of providing a world class visitor experience envisioned by the Alamo Master Plan.

The City will use every effort available to obtain the necessary land rights for the project through good faith negotiations but may require eminent domain if the negotiations are unsuccessful. For the City to exercise its power of eminent domain, the City of San Antonio City Council must declare the project as a public project. The City of San Antonio has the authority and power to exercise eminent domain (condemning property) under Article I, Section 17 of the Texas Constitution and Texas Local Government Code.

Approval of this ordinance is a continuation of City Council policy to determine and declare certain projects necessary for a public purpose and public use and authorizes the acquisition of private property for the public project by negotiation or condemnation. This public use project is necessary for construction of the Alamo Visitor Center and Museum consistent with the Alamo Master Plan.

ISSUE:

If the property cannot be acquired in a timely manner, then the construction of the Alamo Visitors Center and Museum will be delayed which will impact the overall costs and timing of the entire Alamo Master Plan. The City will work with the GLO and use every effort available to obtain the necessary land rights for the project through good faith negotiations but may require eminent domain if the negotiations are unsuccessful.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could choose not to approve this request and require the Alamo Management Committee to redesign the project, increasing costs and resulting in the project's delay.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance does not have an immediate financial impact on the City of San Antonio. Acquisition and condemnation costs will be negotiated with GLO under the Alamo Plan governing structure.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this request to authorize acquisition by negotiation or condemnation for the needed land interests for Alamo Visitor Center and Museum project.