

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the Austin Convention Center currently occupies over six city blocks and 881,400 square feet of space on prime real estate along East Cesar Chavez Street in downtown Austin; and

WHEREAS, in March of 2014, the Austin Convention Center Department (ACCD) engaged a consultant team to develop a Long Range Master Plan to address future operational needs of the Convention Center; and

WHEREAS, the ACCD expects that the Master Plan will include a recommendation that additional Convention Center space will be needed to accommodate increased demand, as evidenced by rapid growth in Austin's downtown hotel inventory; and

WHEREAS, the ACCD expects that the Master Plan recommendation will be to construct up to 305,000 additional square feet of exhibit, ballroom, and meeting space, which would require equivalent of three to four City blocks; and

WHEREAS, the ACCD has determined that expansion to the west of the Convention Center, beginning with Block 8 of the Original City of Austin, is the most feasible option; and

WHEREAS, in November 2014, the ACCD started the process to acquire Block 8 under the imminence of condemnation, through the Office of Real Estate Services issuing a Letter of Intent to Acquire (LOI) to the property owners; and

WHEREAS, issuing a LOI is the first step in the acquisition process, but does not commit the City to complete the purchase of the properties; and

WHEREAS, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) has a desire to contribute to its members' knowledge and expertise on important civic projects and ULI has indicated a willingness to form a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) consisting of national and local experts with extensive knowledge of comparable projects in other cities to evaluate options for a Convention Center expansion; and

WHEREAS, the TAP could provide insight into the proposed expansion of the Convention Center, as well as alternative options for increasing the size of the space while maintaining its current footprint; and

WHEREAS, ULI has estimated that the TAP would cost \$10,000, and City staff have indicated that it could potentially be funded through Hotel Occupancy Tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations from the group should be finalized no later than June 30, 2015; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to work with the Urban Land Institute so that a Technical Assistance Panel can provide expert recommendations on the proposed expansion of the Convention Center, including options for increasing the size of the space through expansion of the footprint as well as options within its current footprint.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to report back to City Council on the results of the Technical Assistance Panel in advance of any final action being taken to build on the properties related to the expansion of the Convention Center.

ADOPTED: _____

ATTEST: _____

Jeannette S. Goodall
City Clerk