

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	59706	Agenda Number	74.
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Meeting Date:	6/16/2016	Department:	Planning and Zoning
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Subject

Conduct a public hearing and consider an ordinance amending the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan by adopting the South Central Waterfront Vision Framework Plan (also known as a Small Area Plan) for the geographic area located just south of downtown and bounded by South First on the west, Blunn Creek to the east, Lady Bird Lake on the north, and East Riverside Drive and Bouldin Creek on the south. (District 9)

Amount and Source of Funding

Fiscal Note

Purchasing Language:

Prior Council Action:

November 3, 2011 - Council approved Resolution No. 20111103-037 supporting the City's application for a technical assistance grant from the American Institute of Architects Sustainable Design Assessment Team.
 August 8, 2013 - Council approved Resolution No. 20130808-58 directing the City Manager to initiate a comprehensive small-area planning process for the South Shore Central Sub-district of the Waterfront Overlay and the three adjacent parcels of the Travis Heights Sub-district.
 January 23, 2014 - Council approved Resolution No. 20140123-060 directing the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board to hold additional meetings, as deemed necessary, to participate in engagement activities for the South Central Waterfront small-area planning process.
 February 27, 2014 - Council approved Resolution No. 2014227-044 directing the City Manager to review and verify estimated costs associated with the development of the South Central Waterfront small-area plan, to identify an appropriate funding source, and to prepare a budget amendment for Council consideration.
 September 9, 2014 - Council adopts fiscal year 2014-2015 budget which includes \$200,000 funding request from Planning & Zoning for consultant services for the South Central Waterfront small-area planning;
 June 18, 2015 - Council authorizes award, negotiation and execution of a contract with ECONorthwest to provide consulting services for finance and economic development for the South Central Waterfront small-area planning process.
 April 5, 2016 - Briefing on the South Central Waterfront Initiative.

For More Information:

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Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

May 13, 2013 - Presentation to the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board. No action taken.
 July 8, 2013 - Waterfront Planning Advisory Board passed a resolution to recommend that the Council initiate a small-area planning process be initiated for the South Central Waterfront area, and that the Council provide funding for consultant services for this effort.
 December 9, 2013 - Waterfront Planning Advisory Board voted 6-0 to create a Stakeholders Outreach Committee for the South Central Waterfront planning effort. The stakeholder committee would include three members of the Board, plus area property owners, adjacent

	neighborhood leaders, affordable housing advocates, and other stakeholders. Also, the Board voted 6-0 to request that Council allow the Board to hold additional meetings in 2014, as needed, to participate in the small-area planning effort. April 12, 2016 - Presentation to the Planning Commission. No action taken. May 24, 2016 - Approved by the Planning Commission on a vote of 10-0 vote with Commissioners Thompson and Pineyro DeHoyos absent, with the additional recommendation that the Council reconstitute a Waterfront Planning Advisory Board (WPAB).
MBE / WBE:	
Related Items:	

Additional Backup Information

In 2011, the Waterfront Planning Advisory Board (WPAB) identified that the South Shore Central sub-district and adjacent waterfront properties to the east faced particular challenges and risks with increasing development pressures. In response, the WPAB supported staff in a series of grant-funding efforts to provide consultant services and opportunity for public input, analysis, and preliminary recommendations on how to best achieve the principles of the 1985 Town Lake Study for the South Shore Central area. Over the course of 2012 – 2013, these efforts led to a series of successful public engagement activities, involving hundreds of citizens and producing preliminary studies. Based on these preliminary planning efforts, the WPAB recommended in July 2013 that the Council formally initiate a small area planning process for this area.

In August of 2013, the City Council passed a resolution to officially initiate a comprehensive small-area planning process for a 118 acre district on the south shore of Lady Bird Lake. This planning process is now known as the South Central Waterfront (SCW) Initiative. The SCW Initiative aims to establish a vision and provide a cohesive set of recommendations to guide public and private development over the next 20-plus years. The goal is to ensure that, as this area inevitably changes, every increment of change will contribute to making a great new district that:

- Establishes a lively, attractive pedestrian environment;
- Expands open space and creates great public spaces;
- Enhances connection to and along the waterfront; and,
- Includes 10% to 20% new affordable housing units.

In 2013-2014, Planning & Zoning staff conducted a vigorous public engagement process, engaging over 600 Austin citizens through various workshops and public events, and consulted with the WPAB, as well as a SCW Stakeholder Outreach Committee which includes representatives from neighborhoods adjacent to the SCW, major property owners in the SCW, and other stakeholders. Based on these efforts and incorporating best practices and previous planning, staff developed and delivered to the City Council in September of 2014 the SCW Interim Vision Framework Report (Report). This 2014 Report, which was a milestone towards completing a small area plan, established a vision for how public and private investments can be coordinated to promote positive transformation.

In September 2014, the City Council approved FY'15 budget included funding to hire consultant services, specifically in finance, economic development, and urban design, to assist staff with building upon the 2014 Report in order to develop a full-fledged small area plan. Additionally, the City received a competitive award in fall 2014 from the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which provided additional consultant services. Over the course of 2015, staff has engaged an additional 200 citizens in workshops, continuation of public waterfront lecture series, and other outreach activities. Staff and the consultant team are now completing these cumulative efforts to deliver the SCW small area plan to the Council. In preparation for the delivery of the small-area plan, staff presented a briefing at a Council Work Session on April 5, 2016.

The SCW Vision Framework Plan includes an emphasis on compact and connected development, sustainability, equity, and the environment promotes the vision, goals, and many policies of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan (Plan). The SCW Vision Framework Plan provides a vision for how the impending wave of private redevelopment in this area could be coordinated with City investments, using incentives and public-private partnerships, to realize a new urban mixed-use district, tied together with a network of parks, trails, new green streets and upgraded arterials, that promotes walking and bicycling, as well as other modes of transportation. The Plan features several major public

realm opportunities, including a signature waterfront park, new pedestrian plazas, major trail connections, and model streetscapes. Additionally, the Plan is committed to seeing that between 10% - 20% of the new dwelling units that are added to the district are permanently affordable. The Plan presents a financial strategy to realize public realm improvements and affordable housing, as well as recommendations for future management and maintenance for the district.

If the SCW Vision Framework Plan is adopted, it would set forth future potential actions including amendments to the Future Land Use Map for both Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan, and South River City Combined Neighborhood Plan, as well as other potential future actions as will be enumerated in the Plan document.