



Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center Master Plan Process

Description:

The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department is developing a new vision and Master Plan for the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center (ESB-MACC). The process has sought public input on programming that might direct the expansion of existing or new buildings, new facilities, new shade structures, parking, landscaping and the potential redesign of the Plaza.

Mission of the ESB-MACC:

The Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center is dedicated to the preservation, creation, presentation, and promotion of Mexican American cultural arts and Latino cultures.

History of the ESB-MACC:

In 1999, a bond package was approved by the voters to construct the Mexican American Cultural Center. The following year, the City authorized a professional services agreement with CasaBella + Del Campo and Maru and Teodoro Gonzalez de Leon for architectural design and construction phase services. First, a Master Plan for the Mexican American Cultural Center was developed in 2000 with input from the community and from various Mexican American arts organizations. Construction of Phase I of the Mexican American Cultural Center began in January of 2006, and the facility was completed in June of 2007. The reality of the long-time dream was finalized on September 15, 2007 with a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by thousands from the community. In 2010, the facility was renamed the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center in honor of the late community leader who was instrumental in the creation of the center.

Funding:

The funding for the master plan originates from a Council-approved action in August 2015, which formalized a lease agreement for construction staging on city-owned land at 64 Rainey Street by the developer of an adjacent residential building at 70 Rainey. The City chose to direct the lease revenue, which totals \$400K, to PARD for the development of a new ESB-MACC master plan and associated site improvements. The current cost of the master plan is \$276K.

Background on Consultant Contract:

Once funding for the master plan was in place, PARD moved forward to directly contract with CasaBella Architects, which required action by Boards, Commissions and Council. Following is the timeline for the approval of the contract with CasaBella Architects:

- **October 5, 2016:** The ESB-MACC Advisory Board recommended that Austin City Council to authorize the negotiation and execution of a professional services agreement with Jaime Beaman, AIA, Inc. and CasaBella Architects to provide design and planning services for the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center in an amount not to exceed \$360,000. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0-0.

- **October 11, 2016:** Contract and Concessions Committee of the Parks and Recreation Board recommends to the Parks and Recreation Board that the City Council authorize the negotiation and execution of a professional services agreement with Jaime Beaman AIA, Inc. and CasaBella Architects in an amount not to exceed \$360,000. It was further motioned to recommend including parking plan, addressing site and facility security, bathroom allocation, financing, and management structures in the Scope of Work. The motion carried on a vote of 4-0-0.
- **October 25, 2016:** The Parks and Recreation Board recommended to the City Council the authorization of the negotiation and execution of a professional services agreement with Jaime Beaman AIA, Inc. and CasaBella Architects in an amount not to exceed \$360,000. The motion carried on a vote of 9-0-0.
- **December 15, 2016:** The Austin City Council authorized negotiation a professional services agreement with Jaime Beaman, AIA, Inc. and CasaBella Architects to provide design and planning services for the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center for a total contract amount not to exceed \$360,000. The motion carried on a vote of 10-0. NOTE: Council requested that the negotiated contract be brought back to Council for approval.
- **March 8, 2017:** The ESB-MACC Advisory Board recommended that Austin City Council authorize the execution of a professional services agreement with Jaime Beaman, AIA, Inc. and CasaBella Architects to provide design and planning services for the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center in an amount not to exceed \$276,000. The motion carried on a vote of 8-0.
- **March 23, 2017:** The Austin City Council authorized execution of a professional services agreement with Jaime Beaman, AIA, Inc. and CasaBella Architects to provide design and planning services for the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center for a total contract amount not to exceed \$276,431. The motion carried on a vote of 8-1.

Summary of Community Engagement

Following the execution of a contract with CasaBella Architects in early April 2017, PARD staff worked with CasaBella Architects and Cultural Strategies, community engagement consultant, to develop the Public Involvement Plan.

The principal goals of the Public Involvement Plan are to:

1. Create awareness and educate the community of the development of the ESB-MACC Master Plan, the public input needed, and the design process.
2. Present information in a manner that overcame language barriers and was culturally sensitive.
3. Provide a variety of means for public participation that were accessible in terms of location and time so that certain individuals or groups were not precluded from participating in the process.
4. Gain substantive insights from the public input process that established a common vision for the ESB-MACC, and informed the design team's approach to the update.

The elements listed below represent the overall strategies, tools and tactics implemented for engaging the public and stakeholders. They were designed to provide equitable, innovative, and convenient participation across participant segments in the community:

- **Public Meetings** – Three public meetings were hosted for English and Spanish-speakers to educate participants on the scope and process of the Master Plan, and provide direct engagement with CasaBella Architects.
- **Focus Groups** – Nine focus groups were held for English and Spanish-speakers throughout the process to allow for focused discussion on specific elements of the Plan study areas.

- Survey – A print and online survey was developed in English and Spanish to serve as a primary tool to gather feedback from stakeholders and interested residents. 287 people responded to the initial survey.
- Questionnaires – Two print and online questionnaires were developed in English and Spanish to request public feedback on how well the design concepts presented during Phase 2 and 3 solved the current constraints and future space needs for more specific key elements of the Plan. Approximately 46 questionnaires were received during Phase 2 and 70 were received during Phase 3.
- News Media – Drafting and distribution of press releases encouraged news media coverage in English and Spanish at the beginning and during the public input process.
- Event Flyers – Print and digital flyers were created and distributed in English and Spanish with messaging that promoted public meetings and the importance of public participation. These were disseminated electronically to stakeholder email databases, ESB-MACC lists, group list serves, social media and on the project website.
- E-Newsletter-blasts – Email blasts were drafted in English and Spanish and sent to the list of stakeholders developed by the consultant team to promote public meetings, participation in focus groups, and provide project updates. All electronic communications encouraged interested residents to opt-in to received project updates and invitation to future meetings.
- Social Media – PARD promoted public meeting notices and events through Facebook and NextDoor.
- Website – PARD implemented a project website in English and Spanish to provide stakeholders with a one-stop-shop for information on all of the project components, a schedule of the Master Plan activities and updates, as well as public meeting material, Master Plan presentations and boards, along with links to related websites.

Targeted Outreach

The consultant team worked with the city staff and the ESB-MACC board to develop a list of organizations, and individuals during the initial phase that was believed to share an interest in the development of the Master Plan and should be reached with communication materials. Outreach to this list of stakeholders was conducted by both the city staff and consultant team primarily through electronic communications, which included save the date, public meeting notices and reminders, a survey, and other project updates. To amplify the reach, requests were also made of cultural and arts groups to assist in sharing these notices with their members and list serves. The ESB-MACC staff complemented the outbound communication efforts by including messaging within its scheduled e-newsletters. Below is a list of relevant stakeholder categories that were incorporated as a part of the Public Involvement Plan implementation:

- City Staff/Boards and Commissions/Advisory Committees/Elected Officials
- MACC Advisory Board, MACC/PARD Boards (current and past), PARD Facilities Management/Grounds Maintenance
- Cultural Arts and Community Groups, Adjacent Neighbors, Schools and Libraries
- Civic Organizations such as the Waller Creek Conservancy, Trail Foundation, Downtown Alliance
- News Media

An initial contact list of over 200 contacts was developed representing cultural arts groups, community and civic leaders, AISD school contacts, and news media services. This list represented a general breakdown of the available resources. The following resources were used to develop the contact list:

- Master List of arts organization and individuals (200+ contacts)
- Focus Group Lists of performing/visual, cultural arts, ESB-MACC Latino Arts Residency Program, Leadership and Partner (130+ contacts)
- Community and Cultural Arts Listservs managed by cultural groups who share notices (1,800+ contacts)
- ESB-MACC managed email lists (7,000+ contacts)

Master Plan Process Meeting Dates:

Spanish language translation available at all meetings

Public Meetings	Dates
Public Meeting #1 (80 participants)	June 17, 2017
Public Meeting #2 (60 participants)	October 7, 2017
Public Meeting #3 (45 participants)	January 20, 2018
Focus Groups	
Round 1 Focus Groups: Designed to garner input from ESB-MACC Board Members (past and present), ESB-MACC staff, Arts and Cultural Community, and Planning Partners (17 total participants)	May 23, 2017 June 20, 2017 June 26, 2017 June 28, 2017
Round #2 Focus Groups: Designed to garner more in depth input from theater, performance and visual arts community; education, cultural and community groups (26 total participants)	November 29, 2017 November 30, 2017 December 1, 2017 December 4, 2017
Spanish language presentation (35 participants)	January 29, 2018

Tentative 2018 Board, Commission Dates (subject to change):

Briefing, discussion, and action on a recommendation to the City Council on the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center Master Plan	
Hispanic Quality of Life Commission	March 20
Waller Creek LGC	March 21 (daytime mtg)
Downtown Commission	March 21
Design Commission	March 26
ESB-MACC Board	April 4
PARB	April 24
Planning Commission	May 8
City Council	May 24

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Conceptual rendering or photos of proposed plans: A link to the conceptual design can be found at the following link: <https://goo.gl/2Tqkov>

ESB-MACC Master Plan Website: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/emma-s-barrientos-mexican-american-cultural-center-master-plan>

ESB-MACC Website: <http://austintexas.gov/esbmacc>

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