



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 7/1/2018 to 6/30/2019

Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Plan Implementation Advisory Commission

The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is:

Advise the City Council on implementation of the Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Master Plan, the 1996 Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Process and Goals Task Force Report, and other redevelopment issues at Robert Mueller Municipal Airport, including proposed amendments to the Master Plan, land disposition strategy, traffic, urban design and zoning issues, demolition of existing facilities; and at the request of the City Council, make recommendations on amendments to the Master Plan and other matters related to Robert Mueller Airport redevelopment. Section [2-1-169](#) of the City Code.

The Robert Mueller Municipal Airport (RMMA) Plan Implementation Advisory Commission (PIAC) was created in 2000 to provide oversight at a time when the Redevelopment and Reuse Plan for Mueller had been accepted, and the City was preparing to seek a master developer. In 2002 the master developer, Catellus, was selected and approved by City Council, and in December of 2004, the Master Development Agreement (MDA) between the City of Austin and Catellus was approved by City Council and executed. Because the MDA contractually obligates the City and Catellus to develop the property per the provisions in the agreement, the practical role of the PIAC has evolved to encompass the following:

1. Advise Council on items that come before Council, including those needing formal approval, such as proposed zoning revisions;
2. Advise Council on any items that require Council approval stipulated in the MDA, such as selling land within the Mueller boundary to another governmental entity;
3. Advise Council on bigger picture topics that may impact the ability to implement the plans as fully anticipated, such as, but not limited to, transit or Interstate 35 improvements; and
4. Serve as a venue for the master developer and City staff to report progress, hear concerns and receive feedback. This last role is paramount and provides a unique opportunity to

problem-solve as Catellus, together with the community and City staff, work to implement the Mueller vision.

Background

The plans to redevelop the airport were guided by a vision and goals developed with extensive community input. In 1996, a Council-appointed 16-member task force representing a broad spectrum of Austin interests called for the creation of a compact, pedestrian-oriented, and mixed-use community.

The task force challenged the City to create a district that would be a model for responsible urban development - an alternative to land-consumptive and automobile-dependent development patterns throughout the region that could influence the form and pattern of growth within Austin as it entered the new millennium. With this vision, the task force and the City Council articulated some clear goals, stating the redevelopment of RMMA must marshal long-term market forces through an effective public-private partnership to promote:

- *Fiscal Responsibility:* Redevelopment must create a positive revenue stream that will fund on-site infrastructure and increase the City's tax base for the benefit of all citizens.
- *Economic Development:* The project should serve to reinforce Austin's role in an increasingly global marketplace and create a wide range of employment opportunities for a diversity of the community's citizens.
- *East Austin Revitalization:* The project must promote economic development opportunities within East Austin, giving local residents a direct stake in redevelopment.
- *Compatibility with Surrounding Neighborhoods:* Development must maintain and enhance the quality of life in adjacent neighborhoods, providing complementary linkages, land uses and transportation patterns.
- *Diversity:* Redevelopment must offer a wide range of housing choices in order to create a new community of socially and economically diverse residents.
- *Sustainability:* Development should be planned in a way that promotes energy and water efficiency, environmental quality, reduced auto dependency, watershed protection and green space preservation.

In 1997, the City initiated the redevelopment master planning process that included comprehensive public participation at all stages of the work. Specific planning principles were established that became the structuring elements of the master plan to support a vision of a new community within a community—one that is welcoming, diverse and inclusive, that complements and extends the surrounding neighborhoods and that becomes an integral part of the urban and social fabric of Austin.

Redevelopment of the airport was also intended to achieve broader public objectives for economic development and revitalization, helping to overcome the perceptual barrier of the IH-35 freeway, and providing an alternative to the outward expansion of the City.

In 2000, the City Council accepted the “Robert Mueller Municipal Airport Redevelopment and Reuse Plan” and directed implementation of it, which subsequently led to the solicitation for a Master Developer for Mueller. Today, the Mueller Design Book serves as the Master Plan and encompasses and incorporates the 2000 Redevelopment and Reuse Plan along with refinements that have been made to the Plan since its adoption.

2018 PIAC Activities

The following is a summary of the past year's activities by the PIAC toward implementation of the Master Plan:

1. Describe the board’s actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board’s mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.

(Reference all reports, recommendations, letters or resolutions presented to the City Council on mission-specific issues. If some of the elements of the mission statement were not acted on by the board in the past year, the report should explain why no action was taken.)

The Commission sent the following communications to the Mayor and City Council, available on the City’s RMMA PIAC Boards and Commissions website (<http://www.austintexas.gov/rmmapiac>), under Meeting Documents by month:

- The Commission continued to monitor public discussions regarding the 2015 International Fire Code Local Amendments, including attendance at stakeholder meetings. The original proposed local amendments were inconsistent with the City Council-approved vision of Mueller as a compact urban village with narrower streets designed to distribute traffic in a manner that serves automobiles, cyclists and pedestrians. Some of the commission’s concerns were reflected in the March 4, 2019 Austin Transportation and Austin Fire Department joint memo to City Council on fire code amendments and street design.
- The Commission received an update during the August 14, 2018 meeting on the status of Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) outreach efforts for the Mueller development. At the time of the briefing, more than \$45.2 million in contracts had been awarded to MBE/WBE vendors since the launch of the Mueller development.
- The Commission received a briefing from the Economic Development Department on the financing of the Mueller development. The project’s finance plan indicates revenue from Tax Increment Financing (TIF), sales taxes and property taxes continue to exceed project costs.
- The Commission received a briefing at the September 11, 2018 from Catellus on affordable housing activities. At the time of the briefing, 1,248 units of affordable housing had been constructed at Mueller, including 701 apartments and 547 homes. The

Commission also received an update during the November 13, 2018 meeting from the Mueller Foundation regarding its initiative to improve program operations.

- At the February 12, 2019 meeting, the Commission approved the creation of a working group focused on transition-related items as Mueller development is completed.
- The Commission received briefings on the Mueller Parking and Transportation Management District (PTMD) during the March 5, 2019 meeting and the PTMD dynamic curb pilot during the April 9, 2019 meeting.
- The Commission received briefings on the city's Green Building initiative at Mueller during the February 12 meeting and the Austin Energy Department's SHINES project during the April 9, 2019 meeting.
- The Commission was briefed on the status of the Project Connect Initiative by Capital Metro officials during the May 14, 2019 meeting. The presentation included an overview of local bus routes, high capacity bus service and potential commuter rail options in Northeast Austin, including the Mueller area.

2. Determine if the board's actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.

(If any of the board's actions were outside the scope of the mission statement, the report should explain the non-compliance issues.)

The briefings on both the Mueller Foundation and housing affordability initiatives support the Master Plan goal of affordability. The briefing on the Mueller project's financial status support the goal of fiscal responsibility. The briefing on Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise outreach efforts for the Mueller development support the goals of economic development and East Austin revitalization. The briefings on the Green Building initiative and the SHINES project support the goal of sustainability.

3. List the board's goals and objectives for the new calendar year.

(Make sure the goals and objectives fall within the mission statement of the board/commission.)

The Commission's mission is to advise the city council on implementation of the Robert Mueller Airport Master Plan, including proposed amendments to the Master Plan, land disposition strategy, traffic, urban design and zoning issues, demolition of existing facilities, and at the request of the City Council, to make recommendations on amendments to the Master Plan.

Accordingly, the Commission's goals and objectives for the new calendar year are to monitor and when appropriate, advise the City Council on the following topics, informed by the Master Plan, the Mueller Development Agreement (MDA), and are organized below under each of the six community aspirations the 1996 RMMA Process and Goals Task Force established for the redevelopment of Austin's former airport:

Fiscal Responsibility

The Commission will request an update from the City of Austin Financial Services and Economic Development Departments on Mueller's overall project costs and tax increment financing (TIF) debt to assure the revenue stream continues to adequately fund on-site infrastructure; that the City of Austin continues to face minimal financial risk; and that the City's tax base will benefit once Mueller's TIF debt is retired.

Economic Development

The Commission may request updates on the types of business recruited to and locating at Mueller to assure they offer a variety of employment opportunities in line with Austin's position in the global marketplace. The MDA specifies that Catellus make a good faith effort that at least 30% of businesses in Mueller's Town Center are local. The MDA also sets goals on contracting and employment opportunities for Minority and Women Owned Businesses (MWBE). The Commission will ask for updates on these items.

East Austin Revitalization

The Commission may seek information on where those employed at Mueller reside to determine if the east Austin community is benefiting as envisioned. Noting the successful commercial environment at Mueller, the Commission will encourage the solicitation of local businesses to locate at Mueller to offer services, goods and employment opportunities not readily available in the area.

Early in Mueller's redevelopment discussions, the community expressed the desire to preserve Mueller's Control Tower and Hangar. The Commission will continue to request updates on the progress towards opening the Tower to the public and that Catellus seek public input for the Tower Block planning, and for updates on the disposition and potential reuse of the Mueller Hangar.

Compatibility with Surrounding Neighborhoods

The Commission will request updates from the City of Austin Transportation Department, Catellus and their transportation and planning consultants to ensure Mueller remains accessible to the larger Austin community, that Mueller's land uses are complementary to the adjacent neighborhoods, and that Mueller's streets provide safe, multi-modal connections and accessibility. The commission hopes to continue receiving updates on the design and progress of the E. 51st Street Mobility Improvement Project, anticipated to start construction in the spring of 2020.

Most aspects of the proposed Austin Independent School District middle school at Mueller fall outside of the City's and Commission's jurisdiction. However, with the school now in its planning stages and construction scheduled to begin in 2020, the Commission will advocate for collaboration between AISD and the City or other appropriate entities for potential "civic" or joint-use facilities at and near the school as noted in the MDA and shown on the illustrative plan.

The Commission will continue to serve as a venue for public input and for the dissemination of information regarding Mueller-related issues.

Diversity & Affordability

The Commission will continue to receive updates on Mueller's affordable program, and to advocate for continuation of the successful efforts to date in exceeding the goal that at least twenty-five percent of Mueller's dwelling units be initially affordable, and continue efforts to preserve long-term affordability. Commissioners will request annual updates on the Mueller Foundation's audits, and additional information regarding the program's sustainability. Though limited by jurisdictional constraints, the Commission will urge continued communication between the City of Austin, Travis Central Appraisal District, Mueller Foundation and affordable-homeowners to maintain long-term affordability.

The Commission will encourage Mueller's success to be an example for increasing affordability options in Austin, and may request available data to determine if enhancing the mix of housing types might provide affordable market-rate housing for a more diverse population, including families and senior residents.

Sustainability

Commissioners may seek data on Mueller's existing and expected workforce to consider recommendations to better accommodate the housing, utility, transportation and daily needs of those living and working at Mueller.

The Commission will continue to request updates on best practices for sustainable development, park planning, energy and water conservation, and watershed protection, and will explore and encourage alternative transportation solutions within, through, and to Mueller. The Commission may explore how the urban planning successes at Mueller could provide examples for better land use options throughout the City of Austin.

Looking beyond 2019, the Commission has formed a working group to better understand the transition process regarding governance functions, oversight, and events that Catellus and Mueller offer to residents and the greater Austin community once the MDA is completed. The working group will review Mueller's goals and the MDA, and consult with staff, Catellus and the community to determine recommendations for Mueller beyond the MDA.