

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting: August 23, 2018

Item Number: 020

Parks and Recreation

Approve phased recommendations for the improvement of the Seaholm Waterfront, a 3 acre park site, which includes the Seaholm Intake Building.

District(s) Affected: District 9

Lead Department	Parks and Recreation Department
Fiscal Note	This item has no fiscal impact.
For More Information	Liana Kallivoka, Assistant Director, 512-974-9455; Kimberly McKnight, Acting Division Manager, 512-974-9478; Vera Labriola, Business Process Specialist, 512-974-6716
Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action	<p>June 25, 2018-Approved by the Design Commission on a vote of 8-0 with Commissioners Gonzales and Henao-Robledo absent and one vacancy.</p> <p>July 18, 2018-Approved by the Downtown Commission on a vote of 8-0 with Commissioners Belvin, Moore, and Sargent absent.</p> <p>July 23, 2018 - Approved by the Historic Landmark Commission on a vote of 7-0 with Commissioners Brown, Galindo, Hibbs, and Hudson absent.</p> <p>July 24, 2018-Unanimously approved by the Parks and Recreation Board.</p>

Additional Backup Information:

The Seaholm Waterfront includes the Seaholm Intake building, which has an iconic Art Deco design and once was the pump house for the Seaholm Power Plant. The Seaholm Power Plant, a City-owned retired power generation facility, was designed by Burns & McDonnell Engineering Co. and built of cast concrete in two phases in 1950 and 1955 by Odom Construction. Seaholm Intake is part of that overall structure. The Seaholm Power Plant represents a strong civic presence in the cityscape of downtown Austin and showcases a unique period of American Art Deco municipal architecture and Public Works engineering. Seaholm operated as a power plant until 1989. In 1996, Austin City Council authorized the decommissioning of the plant and all the associated buildings, in preparation for future adaptive re-use. The Seaholm Intake Facility is located on the banks of Lady Bird Lake and the Ann and Roy Butler Hike-and-Bike Trail. PARD assumed responsibility for the Seaholm Intake structure in 2011.

The Austin Parks Foundation and The Trail Foundation, in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD), have completed the planning study for the future of Seaholm Waterfront, the historic Seaholm Intake structure and its surrounding parkland. The study, completed by architecture and urbanism firm Studio Gang, reveals a potential concept for future park improvements and the repurposing of the decommissioned Seaholm Intake structures for public use and recreation. The study area spanned between the Pfluger Bridge and Shoal Creek, and from the lake's edge to Cesar Chavez.

The study's goal was to develop a highly adaptable, long-range vision for the historic Seaholm Intake structure and underutilized surrounding parkland. Work on early phases including safety requirements and code compliance improvements could begin in the near future and the other phases and amenities would be built out in the coming years. The preferred design concept for the adaptive re-use of the building features an open and flexible space that can be used any day by the public, or periodically for events, and on occasion for large gatherings with the ability to serve food and beverages. Additional features of the proposed plan include the addition of support structures, flexible lawn space, multiple water access points, trail improvements and an amphitheater. Several important principles guided the planning process and potential design of the Seaholm Waterfront including embracing and preserving the historic integrity of the building, engaging with the local community and experts, restoring and diversifying the ecology in the area, and building sustainable principles into the design and operational models.

The planning phase, which began in May 2017, was designed to provide PARD and the City of Austin with a highly adaptable, long-range vision for the historic Seaholm Intake structure and underutilized surrounding parkland by developing the Seaholm Intake into a public facility, while respecting the historic significance of the structure. The study was funded solely by the Austin Parks Foundation and The Trail Foundation.