



South Central Waterfront Advisory Board

Recommendation No. 20190520-3dii

Date: May 20, 2019
Subject: FY 2020 Budget Recommendation to Establish Dedicated Staff to Oversee Implementation of South Central Waterfront Plan
Motioned By: Brooke Bailey
Seconded By: Linda Guerrero

Recommendation

The South Central Waterfront Advisory Board (SCWAB) recommends that the City Council allocate budget to establish a dedicated staff position, with necessary staff support, to oversee the long-term implementation of the South Central Waterfront Plan.

Description of Recommendation to Council

The 2016 South Central Waterfront Vision Framework Plan (SCW Plan) sets a framework for the City to partner with private properties which chose to redevelop over the next 20 years. The public/private coordination of this redevelopment will unfold over the next 20 years and will require a constant and dedicated City staff assignment to ensure continuity of management and coordination of efforts.

The South Central Waterfront Advisory Board (SCWAB) voted unanimously (9-0) at their April 15, 2019 meeting, recommending to City Council to allocate funds in the FY 2020 budget to establish a dedicated staff position with administrative budget to oversee the implementation of the South Central Waterfront Plan. This recommendation has been submitted as part of Boards and Commissions recommendation for FY 2020 budget considerations.

This recommendation is in alignment with the Economic Opportunity & Affordability, Mobility, Health & Environment, and Government That Works for All Strategic Outcomes of the City's Strategic Direction 2023. Within the Economic Opportunity & Affordability outcome, this recommendation addresses key indicators around employment/unemployment, cost of living compared to income, and housing availability and affordability. Within the Mobility outcome, this recommendation addresses key indicators around traffic congestion, accessibility to transportation choices, and condition of transportation-related infrastructure. Within the Health & Environment outcome, this recommendation addresses key indicators around accessibility to quality parks, trails, and recreational opportunities,

environmental quality, and climate change and community resilience. Within the Government That Works for All outcome, this recommendation addresses key indicators around financial cost and sustainability of City government.

Rationale

The City Council adopted the South Central Waterfront Vision Framework Plan (SCW Plan) in 2016. The SCW Framework Plan established a vision to leverage redevelopment to retrofit a new compact and connected public realm into a patchwork of private properties, creating a districtwide network of green streets, parks, trails and public open spaces (approximately 20 new acres), as well as achieving 20% new affordable housing units in the district (estimated to be over 500 units). To realize the vision, the SCW Framework Plan recommends a series of interdependent implementation measures including development of opt-in zoning regulations (i.e. Regulating Plan), adoption of innovative financial tools (most importantly, creating a Tax Increment Finance Zone, or TIF), fostering public-private partnerships, leveraging the single city property at One Texas Center for affordable housing, and strategic capital investments in infrastructure.

The 14-point implementation strategy in the SCW Plan identifies coordination of City Government to effectively implement plan as critical to the Plan's success. The SCW Plan recommends that "the City Manager should identify a lead city department and staff to implement the SCW Plan, and key City departments should assign point individuals to an interdepartmental work group with a central oversight role for plan implementation." After the plan's adoption in 2016, then City Manager and Assistant City Manager convened a meeting to discuss this implementation. All momentum was lost after their departure in Fall 2016 and this item has been stalled since.

Economic studies (2016 & 2018) indicate that the market will support up to 6.5 M square feet of new development in the South Central Waterfront between 2020-2040. This private reinvestment could generate \$322 M of city tax revenues during this 20 year period, as well as leveraging up to \$65 M of private fees to dedicate to realizing the South Central Waterfront vision (parks, open spaces, mobility improvements, affordable housing). These community benefits impact all Austinites. Current market research completed by Capitol Market Research in 2018 confirms the South Central Waterfront's redevelopment potential to triple in density, to 8.5 million SF by 2040. Implementing the SCW Plan's financial, regulatory and district management toolkits could capture hundreds-of-millions of dollars between 2020 and 2040 to secure these community benefits.

As redevelopment of the SCW district unfolds over the next 20 years, the City must create a dedicated staff position, with adequate staff support (i.e., a dedicated SCW Project Manager) and identify a lead department, with responsibility and authority to plan, coordinate, and administer redevelopment and project delivery. Having a designated position will ensure internal City staff continuity, authority and coordination which will be required to deliver the SCW Plan's community benefits (SCW district parks, open spaces, green streetscapes, new mobility connectivity and improvements, and 20% affordable housing).

Vote

For: *Chair* Samuel Franco, *Vice Chair* James Schissler, Linda Guerrero, Cory Walton, Brooke Bailey, Alfred Godfrey

Against: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Francoise Luca, Wendy Price Todd, 1 Vacant Seat

Attest: Samuel Franco, Chair


