



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

South Central Waterfront Advisory Board

Recommendation Number: (20230117-2):

Recommendation to codify the South Central Waterfront Advisory Board's review and input of all developments within the geographical boundaries of the Plan and Zone.

WHEREAS, the South Central Waterfront district, comprised of 35 properties across the river from downtown Austin, is on the brink of wholesale redevelopment.

WHEREAS, the South Central Waterfront Vision Framework Plan (SCW Plan or Plan), adopted by Council in 2016, sets a path to leverage redevelopment to retrofit approximately 20 new acres of the public realm (parks and open spaces, trails, green streets, and public plazas) across the district, and to create hundreds of units of affordable housing.

WHEREAS, the bulk of these community benefits – new public realm and affordable housing – will be built on private properties. To realize the community benefits in the vision, the SCW Plan called for the City to develop and adopt key implementation tools so that the City can facilitate and support creative public/private partnerships, one of these being the creation of the South Central Waterfront Advisory Board.

WHEREAS, the South Central Waterfront Advisory Board (SCWAB or the Board) has diligently carried out its duties since its inception on February 16, 2017, and has made various recommendations to Council in line with its mission and, most importantly, in fulfillment of the South Central Waterfront Vision Plan.

WHEREAS, Article 2, "Purpose and Duties" of the South Central Waterfront Advisory Board's charter states:

"The purpose of the board is to provide continuity and communication among stakeholders and advocates as the South Central Waterfront Plan moves towards implementation and to provide recommendations to the city council regarding plan implementation."

WHEREAS, the recent unveiling of several proposals for Planned Unit Developments (PUD) of properties within the South Central Waterfront has brought to the forefront the need for the SCWAB's involvement in the redevelopment process to be codified into the City's many ordinances.

WHEREAS, the SCWAB's mission is to ensure that the redevelopment of properties in the South Central Waterfront is in line with the goals of the Plan and provides the maximum benefits to the community at large. To further this mission, the community must have a voice as early in the development process as possible.

WHEREAS, there is currently no framework for when or how developers or city staff must seek the Board's input. The Board's diligence has mitigated the lack of this formal framework through its outreach to the development community via its Active Projects Working Group. Because of their work, developers have historically requested the Board's input in an official capacity at least once before going to Council.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin's residents cannot rely on developers' goodwill to ensure public transparency and community input. This could leave the community without a voice in the redevelopment process to ensure all community benefits have been maximized.

WHEREAS, Council has created and set the recapture rate for the South Central Waterfront Tax Incremental Redevelopment Zone, which will provide needed funds for community benefits in the Zone. The need for community input is all the more critical given the recent establishment of this zone.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the South Central Waterfront Advisory Board encourages the Austin City Council to direct the City Manager to research and establish a formal process for the Board's input to be sought by developers and staff, and to work with the SCWAB to establish this process with intent to complete this task by no later than April of 2023.

Date of Approval: January 17, 2023

Record of the vote: Unanimous on a 7-0 vote

Attest: Samuel Franco – Chair, South Central Waterfront Advisory Board


