



Recommendation for Action

File #: 23-2484, **Agenda Item #:** 96.

9/14/2023

Posting Language

Conduct a public hearing and consider an ordinance adopting the Palm District Plan as an element of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan.

Lead Department

Planning Department.

Fiscal Note

This item has no fiscal impact.

Prior Council Action:

May 23, 2019 - Approved Resolution No. 20190523-029, which directed staff to develop a small area plan for the Palm District on the eastern edge of Downtown.

For More Information:

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Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:

November 8, 2022 - Planning Commission postponed consideration to November 15, 2022.

November 15, 2022 - Planning Commission conducted a public hearing, discussed, and postponed consideration to December 20, 2022.

December 20, 2022 - Planning Commission postponed consideration to January 10, 2023.

January 10, 2023 - Planning Commission formed a working group for additional outreach and providing amendments for Commission consideration and postponed consideration to February 14, 2023.

February 14, 2023 - Planning Commission postponed consideration to April 25, 2023.

April 25, 2023 - Planning Commission postponed consideration to May 30, 2023.

May 30, 2023 - Planning Commission postponed consideration to June 27, 2023.

June 27, 2023 - Planning Commission postponed consideration to July 11, 2023.

July 11, 2023 - Planning Commission postponed consideration to July 25, 2023.

July 25, 2023 - Planning Commission recommended approval of the Palm District Plan with amendments by a vote of 9-0.

Additional Backup Information:

In 2019, Resolution No. 20190523-029 directed staff to develop a small area plan for the eastern edge of Downtown: Palm District. The planning process formally kicked off in May 2021, and staff has engaged

community through a number of methods, including:

- SpeakUpAustin! website (<https://www.speakupaustin.org/palmdistrict>)
- Online and paper surveys in English and Spanish
- A Palm District online interactive map
- Social media and e-mail newsletter
- Courtesy notification postcard to residents and businesses
- June 2021 Virtual Community Visioning Forums
- July 2021 American Institute of Architects Virtual Design Workshops
- Recordings of all the virtual events to the SpeakUpAustin! website
- Ongoing, targeted outreach to Austin's Mexican American community leaders and longtime residents through interviews and focus groups.

To summarize the collective results of all these engagement efforts, Housing and Planning Department staff created the *Listening Report: What We Heard During the Visioning Phase*. Staff next reviewed and analyzed the community input to develop the draft plan's major themes. Their findings were released in February 2022 in the *Draft Vision Framework*.

In August 2022, a series of four in-person workshops, hosted by the Downtown Austin Alliance, were held at the Neal Kocurek Memorial Austin Convention Center. A design team from Asakura Robinson led community stakeholders through several scenario planning exercises. Based on those results, through conversations with stakeholders, and a review of previous plan materials, the consultant team developed scenarios based on three different themes: Live, Work, and Play. Staff solicited input on those scenarios through a public survey. The Palm District Plan includes a preferred scenario that aligns with the Vision Framework and is guided by public input.

Housing and Planning Department staff briefed the following boards and commissions about the draft Palm District Plan prior to Council consideration:

- Small Area Planning Joint Committee
- Environmental Commission
- Downtown Commission
- Parks Board
- Design Commission
- Hispanic/Latino Quality of Life Resource Advisory Commission
- African American Resource Advisory Commission
- Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center Board
- Historic Landmark Commission
- Planning Commission.