



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
**CENTER CITY DEVELOPMENT  
 & OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT**

**Alamo Plaza Advisory Committee**

**MINUTES**

**Tuesday, August 26, 2014**

**6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.**

**Convention Center**

**Room 103**

Councilmember Diego Bernal	Tri-Chair	Present
Marise McDermott	Tri-Chair	Present
Sue Ann Pemberton, FAIA	Tri-Chair	Present
Howard Peak	1994 Alamo Plaza Study Committee Representative	Present
Ramon J. Vasquez	History/Archeology Representative	Present
Dr. Steve Tomka	History/Archeology Representative	Present
Dr. Sharon Skrobarcek	History/Archeology Representative	Present
Larry L. Laine	State of Texas Designee	Absent
Mardi Arce	Federal Government Designee	Absent
Frank Z. Ruttenberg	Private Property Owner Representative	Present
Davis Phillips	Tourism Designee	Present
Roger Perez	District 1 Appointee	Present
Anthony Edwards	District 2 Appointee	Present
Patricia Mejia	District 3 Appointee	Present
Rudolph F. Rodriguez	District 4 Appointee	Absent
Gabe Farias	District 5 Appointee	Absent
Rudi Rodriguez	District 6 Appointee	Present
Ed Torres	District 7 Appointee	Present
Boone Powell, FAIA	District 8 Appointee	Present
Bill Brendel	District 9 Appointee	Present
Jack Judson	District 10 Appointee	Absent

Others Present: Colleen Swain (CCDO), Sarah Esserlieu (CCDO), Mimi Quintanilla (Consultant, Facilitator), Jonathan Featherston (CCDO), Rose Galvez (CCDO), David Garza (CCDO), Bruce Martin (CCDO), Aurora Perkins (CCDO), Margaret Pahl (DSD), Thomas Davis (EDD), Nicholas Fuqua (OHP), Claudia Guerra (OHP), Stewart Johnson (SARF), Rodney Dziuk (TCI), Randy Matyear (TCI), Jamaal Moreno (TCI), Eric Reyna (TCI), Carol Warkoczewski (TCI), Pat Schneider (TCI), Alma Nunez (TCI), Jaime Camero (TCI), Jackie King (GLO), Adrianna Cabrera (volunteer), Juan Solis (volunteer), Isabel Howard (volunteer), Jason Lilianthal (volunteer)

**DISABILITY ACCESS STATEMENT**



All street level entrances to the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center are accessible to persons with disabilities. Parking is available at the Marina Garage located at 850 E. Commerce. Auxiliary aids and services, including Deaf interpreters, must be requested forty-eight [48] hours prior to the meeting. For accessibility assistance, call 207-7268 or 711 (Texas Relay Service for the Deaf).

1. **Welcome** by Colleen Swain and Councilman Diego Bernal at 6:10 pm.

2. **Committee Charge and Meeting Overview**

Mimi Quintanilla reviewed the meeting goals (see attached Slide 2). She explained the format of the meeting and explained that the purpose of the meeting was not to discuss detailed changes in the area around the Alamo, but to take the thirty-thousand-foot view and to discuss the bigger picture. She reviewed the committee’s purpose and membership (see attached Slides 3-5). She reviewed the process for the Alamo Plaza Advisory Committee and the master plan (see attached Slide 6) as well as the timeline (see attached Slides 7-8). She reviewed the agenda (see attached Slide 9) and explained the purpose of the group exercises is to rate the vision, guiding principles, and themes and goals, and to make recommendations for clarification. She stated that during the public comments period, each individual would have 3 minutes to speak. Groups would have 9 minutes. She encouraged lively discussion and reviewed the ground rules (see attached Slide 10). Mimi Quintanilla explained the purpose of vision statements, guiding principles, and the primary consideration for the Master Plan (see attached Slides 11-13). She explained the draft vision, guiding principles, and updated themes (see attached Slides 14-16).

3. **Vision and Guiding Principles**

Mimi Quintanilla encouraged table leaders to engage community members in conversation in small groups at each table about the proposed vision and guiding principles. Community members had 25 minutes to discuss the vision and guiding principles. Then each table leader reported a two-minute summary to the room at large about the discussion at their table focusing on three main areas of support and three main areas of concern. There were 19 tables with ten seats per table.

- Table 9 – Support: Tell a complete, inclusive story – not just the Battle of the Alamo. Recognize and respect the families; find the burial grounds. Concern: The 1836 “entry point” terminology is unclear. The group expressed a desire to expand the meaning of the place. They requested including working artisans in the types of activities in the Plaza.
- Table 5 – Support: The group supported engaging visitors, telling the story of the Battle of the Alamo, and recommended combining vision statements #3 and 4. Supported guiding principles #1, 2, & 9. Concern: There were too many guiding principles. The area should be fun to encourage visitors to come back. They recommended including technology in exhibits and charismatic actors to interpret some activities.
- Table 14 – Support: Visitors want to know about the Battle of the Alamo, emphasis on authenticity. Concern: Vision statement #2 should be expanded to include the international community. There should be greater unified leadership and stewardship of the plaza, and the plaza should connect to other parts of the city.
- Table 12 – Support: The group supported vision #2 & 3 and guiding principle #3. Concern: Guiding principle #1 – the phrasing is confusing, misleading, and it undermines the other guiding principles. Guiding principle #9 doesn’t fit in with the other principles.

- Table 2 – Support: Guiding principles #3 & 4, preservation, accessibility, spiritual experience and sacred ground. Support for vision #2 & 4, and respect for all aspects of history. Concern: The group recommended against moving the cenotaph and encouraged keeping the plaza sacred. They expressed concern that it not be turned into a theme park. Under guiding principle # 5, the group requested clarification of ‘balance.’ Guiding principle #2 should be clearer about who is in control of management.
- Table 6 – Support: Highlight multicultural aspect of the Plaza. Concern: There should be greater emphasis on context of the event – look at the larger perspective (not just the plaza). The group recommended including the Alamo is the genesis of San Antonio’s culture and legacy into the vision statement.
- Table 10 – Concern: Vision #2 – tell the *true* story, make it sacred space, include interpretive murals, and make it clear they were defending liberty as part of vision #4. The group recommended unifying the Alamo with the Plaza and putting the compound walls back. Under guiding principle #5, the group recommended bringing dignity and focus to show respect.
- Table 4 – Support: Improved visitor experience, 1836 is the entry point, supported guiding principles #3, 5, & 7. Concerns: Put a dome over the Alamo so it’s not so hot. The plaza should be authentic, so if it was a dirt plaza in 1800s, it should be again. The group expressed the need for a museum, increase visitor experience, too many guiding principles.
- Table – Support: Vision & guiding principles were well thought out and the group was supportive of the committee’s efforts. Concerns: The group recommended that changes in the plaza should not only focus on tourists but the community as well. They recommended making the site more compelling, developing an orientation point of to the area, making it accessible, and ensuring people understand the city grew up around the mission – it’s part of the urban environment.
- Table – Support: Under vision #3, the group recommended telling the whole story so the battle makes sense, which is also the story of San Antonio. They supported guiding principles #3, 5, & 7 (emphasis on premier visitor experience). They recommended connecting the story to other parts of the city. Concern: The group expressed a desire for continued re-enactments, and a concern about the lack of comprehension regarding the original grounds.
- Table 19 – Concern: In the vision, the term ‘visitor’ seems to exclude the community. Under vision #2, the group stated that the impact was international and 1836 is limited as the entry point. It should start with Mission San Antonio de Valero. ‘Embrace the continuum’ should be higher in the guiding principles. The group requested clarification of the term ‘wayfinding’ and about what ‘connectivity’ refers to. The group expressed that there was not enough time to discuss the vision and guiding principles.

- Table 18 – Concern: The site should be treated with reverence for the Battle of 1836. It is sacred ground. No commerce should be allowed on the plaza – it should be dedicated only to history. A world-class visitor center should be built as a Texas History center to ensure the message of the Alamo is not diluted. Support: This could be more than the plaza, it should be a district that should be obvious approaching from all directions. The group supported vision #1 and guiding principle #1.
- Table 11 – Support: The group supported vision #1, 3, & 4. Visual impact of the Alamo, connect to the history of the city and the Alamo. History should be connected to other locations. 1836 should be the entry point but not the end point.
- Table 16 – Support: The group supported the vision. Guiding principle #5: If balance is done right, the other guiding principles will fall in line. Concern: Certain commercial attractions should be removed to increase visitor experience. Connectivity – using Pearl Harbor and Gettysburg are not good parallel sites because they are not in urban environments. Boston and Philadelphia are better examples. The group suggested that under unified leadership everyone should work together. They also expressed concern over funding.
- Table 17 – Support: Connectivity. Make the plaza authentic for tourists and residents with respectful activities. Concern: It should be a San Antonio experience, not just an Alamo experience.
- Table 7 – Concern: 1836 Battle of the Alamo is an Anglo story and negates Native Americans and Spanish-speaking people. It is not the full story.

#### **4. Themes and Goals**

Mimi Quintanilla asked community members to read over the 4 poster-sized Themes and Goals posted throughout the room. Each community member was provided with 6 red and 6 green stickers. Community members were asked to take 10 minutes to place green dots next to themes or goals they supported and red dots next to those about which they had concerns.

#### **5. Comments, Questions and Answers**

Community members were given 3 minutes to speak for individuals and 9 minutes for groups.

Community members were encouraged to fill out comment cards and question and answer sheets. Mimi Quintanilla announced online comments would be accepted through Friday, August 29. There were 29 individuals and one group signed up to speak.

Many comments were related to the 1836 entry point. Many individuals expressed support for this and spoke in favor of returning the site to the way it appeared in 1836. Concerns related to the 1836 entry point expressed that it discounts that the site was first a mission settled by Franciscans and Native Americans. Some spoke in favor of encouraging the City of San Antonio to recognize the Native Americans, the Spanish, and those that contributed to the mission. There was also support of protecting the site as sacred as an Indian Pueblo, Campo Santo, and as Mission San Antonio de Valero.



Other comments encouraged accurate historical representation of the full, in-depth history of the Alamo. Some voiced concern over commercial elements along the plaza and recommended removal of the controversial businesses. Many spoke in favor of protecting the hallowed ground as sacred commemorating the fallen soldiers in the Battle of the Alamo. Others spoke in favor of protecting the site as a sacred Native American burial ground. Other comments include ownership of the Plaza, increasing accessibility to the site, constructing a world-class museum, the impact of the UNESCO World Heritage Site designation, the possibility of an archaeological dig in the Plaza, and including the story of slaves and women and the confluence of cultures.

## **6. Wrap-Up**

Mimi Quintanilla and Colleen Swain thanked the community and encouraged everyone to fill out comment cards. Colleen Swain invited people to visit [www.sanantonio.gov/ccdo](http://www.sanantonio.gov/ccdo) to fill out an online comment card. She explained the committee would take the public comments into consideration. Meeting ended at 9:23.

**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**PowerPoint Presentation**

# Alamo Plaza

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Advisory Committee  
Public Meeting

Vision and Guiding Principles  
Themes and Goals

# Tonight's Meeting Goals

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- To provide an opportunity to provide public input and to understand the charge of the Alamo Plaza Advisory Committee
- To review updates to the 1994 Alamo Plaza Study
- To review the process for developing a Master Plan for the Alamo area experience
- To provide an opportunity for the public to lend support and voice concerns for the vision and guiding principles for the Alamo area experience

# Alamo Plaza Advisory Committee Purpose

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*Excerpted from 2014-03-06-0127*

An ordinance approving a process, strategy and future steps for the development of a Comprehensive Master Plan for Alamo Plaza and surrounding area, to include the establishment of a 21 member Alamo Plaza Advisory Committee.

*Dated March 6, 2014*

# Alamo Plaza Advisory Committee

## Tri-Chairs

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Councilman Diego Bernal

Marise McDermott

Sue Ann Pemberton

Anthony Edwards

Bill Brendel

Boone Powell

David Phillips

Ed Torres

Frank Ruttenberg

Gabe Farias

Howard Peak

Jack Judson

Larry Laine

Mardi Arce

Patricia Mejia

Ramon J. Vasquez

Roger Perez

Rudi Rodriguez

Rudolph Rodriguez

Sharon Skrobarcek

Steve Tomka

# Alamo Plaza Advisory Committee

## Purpose

- 1) Assist in the updating of the 1994 Report

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- 2) Create a vision and guiding principles for the redevelopment of Alamo area experience
- 3) Assist in the development of the scope of work for the development of a master plan for the Alamo area experience
- 4) Provide general oversight of the development and implementation of the master plan selection process and make recommendations for its completion

# Process

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- Based on public input, Committee will refine and revise Vision and Guiding Principles for inclusion in the Request For Qualifications (RFQ)
- Presentation to the Quality of Life Committee
- Presentation at City Council B Session
- Presentation to City Council for consideration of recommended 1994 updates, Vision, Guiding Principles and scope of work for RFQ.
- Issue RFQ and then the Request For Proposals (RFP)
- Master Plan team to be identified in 2015
- The Committee provides general oversight of the development of the master plan selection process and makes recommendations for completion

# Timeline

## Request For Qualifications (RFQ)

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- September 15 Review public input and discuss to incorporate into final draft
- October 7 Finalize 1994 Update, Vision and Guiding Principles, review scope of work for RFQ
- October 21 Quality of life Committee Presentation
- November 12 B Session Presentation: 1994 plan update, vision, guiding principles, scope of work for RFQ
- Late 2014 City Council Presentation: vision and guiding principles, scope of work and request authorization to proceed with RFQ process

# RFQ Process

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December 2014	Issue Request for Qualifications
March 2015	Issue Request for Proposals (RFP)
May/June 2015	Presentation of recommendation to City Council
December 2015	Presentation of Master Plan to City Council

# Agenda

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- I. Welcome
- II. Background & Meeting Overview
- III. Vision and Guiding Principles
  - a) Small Group Exercise
- IV. Themes and Goals
  - a) Group Exercise
- V. Public Comments, Questions & Answers

# Meeting Ground Rules

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- All comments are good and will be considered
- Focus on the topic of discussion and the task
- Be clear and concise in making your comments and expressing your thoughts
- Respect and honor agreements about time
- Conversations and challenges are a part of the process

# Vision Statements

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- Concise way to express major goals and strategic objectives
- Direct all eyes towards the hoped-for results of short- and long-term decisions and actions

## **VISION**

Becoming What You Desire

Aspiring to a different, stronger, more effective state of being

Focusing actions and means to achieve those ends

# Guiding Principles

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Guide the behavior of the organization or site in all circumstances regardless of changes in goals, strategies, or management structure

# Primary consideration for the Master Plan

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The Alamo area experience  
should be the premier historic  
destination in Texas

# The Alamo Area Experience

## Draft Vision

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1. Engage visitors in ways to personally connect to the Alamo area experience
2. Tell the story of the Battle of the Alamo and its impact on the Republic of Texas, City of San Antonio, State of Texas, and the United States
3. Include and interpret the diverse cultures that contributed to the story of the Alamo area experience through meaningful and memorable experiences for visitors
4. Tell the in-depth history of the Alamo area as a tribute to all who lived, fought, and died there

# Alamo Area Experience Guiding Principles

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1. 1836 is the entry point
2. Unified leadership under the management of a single steward (public and private) with a sustainable business model
3. Preservation and interpretation of evidence-based features
4. Access: intellectual, experiential and physical
5. Balance: scholarship, historical context, visitor experience
6. Sustainability: social, economic and environmental impact
7. Premier Visitor Experiences: physical space and interpretation
8. Embrace the continuum of history, understanding and healing
9. Connectivity and wayfinding: the river, neighborhoods, La Villita, the cathedral, the other plazas

# Updated Themes

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- A. The evolution of settlements and cultures around the Alamo area
- B. Tell the story of the 1836 Battle of the Alamo
- C. The Alamo area is a place of remembrance
- D. The Alamo area experience represents a continuum of urban development and commerce in San Antonio

# Theme A

The evolution of settlements and cultures around the Alamo area

## 2014 Goals

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- Tell the story of the environment and the Native Americans
- Tell the story of the Spanish influence and settlement, including the three types of towns: the Indian-Led Mission Towns/Pueblos, the Soldier/Settler Town, the Civilian Town
- Tell the story of the Mexicans, the settlement by Americans and other Texian immigrant cultures, and the coming of the Revolution

# Theme B

Tell the story of the 1836 Battle of the Alamo

## 2014 Goals

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- Present the politics of the Texas Revolution
- Provide background to set the stage for the Battle:  
September 1835 to February 22, 1836
- Provide ways to understand the geography of the  
battlefield site
- Be inclusive in telling all sides of the military story
- Tell the story of the local population's participation and  
reaction to the battle

# Theme C

The Alamo area is a place of remembrance

## 2014 Goals

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- Recognize all cultures and events in the Alamo area that have contributed to the history of the Alamo area experience
- Regard the Alamo area experience with reverence and as a tribute to all who lived, fought, and died there
- Provide background and context for the fight for self-determination (self-rule)

# Theme D

The Alamo area experience represents a continuum of urban development and commerce in San Antonio

## 2014 Goals

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- Interpret what the Alamo area looked like over the different periods of the more than 300 year history of the Alamo area and its relationship to other sites, other missions and related features
- Interpret how the Alamo area experience has transformed over more than 300 years and how it continues to be a community gathering place

# Public Comments

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Comments are limited to  
3 minutes per person

Cards for additional comments are available  
by the entry and exit doors

# Themes

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- A. The evolution of settlements and cultures around the Alamo area
- B. Tell the story of the 1836 Battle of the Alamo
- C. The Alamo area is a place of remembrance
- D. The Alamo area experience represents a continuum of urban development and commerce in San Antonio

# For More Information

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If you would like more information contact:

Colleen Swain, Assistant Director

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210.207.4089 or [Colleen.Swain@sanantonio.gov](mailto:Colleen.Swain@sanantonio.gov)

Sarah Esserlieu

Center City Development & Operations Department  
210.207.0108 or [Sarah.Esserlieu@sanantonio.gov](mailto:Sarah.Esserlieu@sanantonio.gov)

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Thank You  
for your time this evening  
and for your commitment  
to the public process