

## A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

#### Hello Downtowners,

The past year has presented both amazing opportunities and complex challenges for our community. Hospitality has picked up in a big way. Art, activations, and events have brought hundreds of thousands back into our urban core. Fiesta was back and the Roadrunners Football energized everyone! The new UTSA and Weston Urban projects, coupled with public sector investments in San Pedro Creek, Zona Cultural, and Hemisfair promise to transform our cityscape in the next five years.

At the same time, we face serious challenges including rapid inflation, erosion of public safety perception, increasing homelessness, severe weather events, hybrid work and encroachment of personal rights. These are negatively impacting residents, students and workers downtown and, in many cases, across the entire city.

While many of these forces are beyond our scope, we work with city, community and business leaders to adapt quickly and thoughtfully. In that spirit, we work hard every day to catalyze a vibrant and diverse collection of neighborhoods in and surrounding downtown.

Our long view is that downtown becomes home to 100,000 people from all walks of life. Where individuals, students and families live, grow, learn and play together. A neighborhood supported by a robust, inclusive economic ecosystem and offers amazing spaces and experiences for locals and visitors alike to dive into our city's art and culture.

As you read this report, you will become familiar with the work we do in our Public

Improvement District. We wake up every day thinking about how we can make this .8 square miles in downtown San Antonio more beautiful, welcoming, playful, and prosperous.

I am so proud of what this team has been able to accomplish through our clean and safe programs augmented with art, activations, economic development, storytelling and homeless assistance. Downtown is resilient, surprising, welcoming and beautiful. Our residents love El Centro. We have challenges for sure, and I'm confident the future is going to be more beautiful, exciting and prosperous for downtown SATX.

As you may be aware, the Public Improvement District is up for renewal next year. It's current ten-year term coming to an end. Serving our community is a privilege, one that we would be honored to continue for years to come. We will be coordinating closely with the property owners, businesses, and residents in the district as well as City leadership to plan for a renewed PID that best serves the community. If you are a downtowner, we encourage you to read through this report to familiarize yourself with Centro's work.

The story of our organization and of our city continues to unfold. I very much hope you will join us for that journey. Thank you for supporting us and the work we do. As always feel free to contact us anytime if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely, Matt Brown, CEO



#### **WE ARE ON A MISSION**

Centro strives every day to catalyze a more beautiful, playful, prosperous and welcoming downtown San Antonio that amplifies our culture, heritage and spirit.

#### **OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

We seek to think big, have fun, get the right stuff done, and be good to others. Living by our principles below helps us achieve this.

**Community:** Devoted to serving, reflecting, and building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

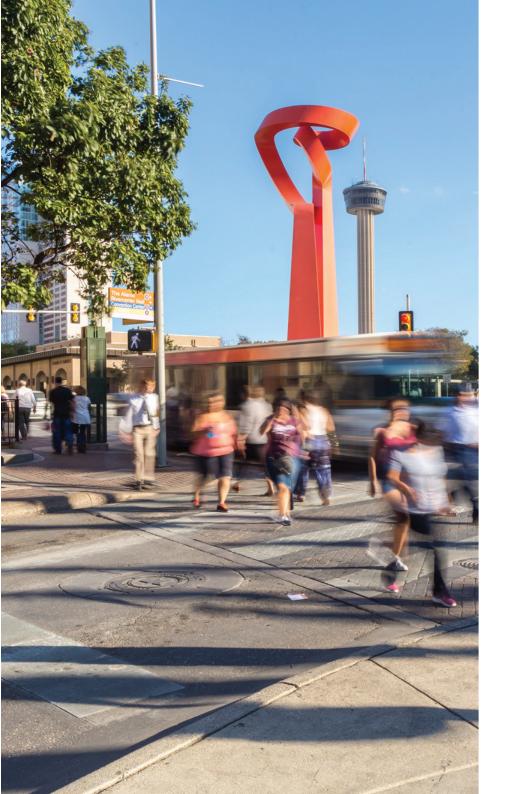
**Courage:** Demonstrate passion, bravery, and commitment to do the right thing. Be vulnerable and learn from our missteps. a complete, well-functioning ecosystem of neighborhoods and thriving enterprises situated in the

**Creativity:** Be curious. Be outrageously imaginative problem-solvers and play-makers.

**Empathy:** Listen with an open heart. Treat everyone with care, kindness, and respect.

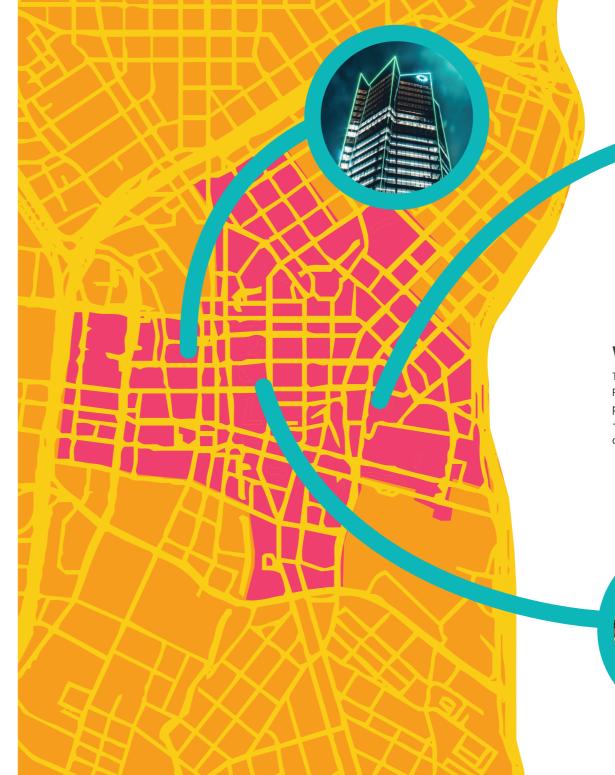
**Dedication:** Be pragmatic, tenacious, and intentional in our work and effort.

Join us as we work every day to help cultivate a complete, well-functioning ecosystem of neighborhoods and thriving enterprises situated in the civic and cultural epicenter of our beautiful, historic city.



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#### WHAT'S THE PID?

The Public Improvement District is a .8 square mile area in downtown San Antonio. Property owners within this District voluntarily pay an assessment based on their property values, which funds Centro's services, including- but not limited to- clean + safe maintenance, landscaping, hospitality, economic development, homeless outreach, marketing + events, and public art.







We partnered with the City of San Antonio in March to install a second Portland Loo at the corner of Crockett and Navarro streets.

These free public restrooms are much needed options for people visiting and traveling downtown and help to reduce

instances of human waste on the streets.

0.000

38,289 GUM SPOTS REMOVED

8,222

BUS STOPS PRESSURE WASHED

GRAFFITI

**REMOVED** 

108,683 TRASH BAGS

757,198
PEOPLE ASSISTED

44,227,911
TOTAL SQ FT
PRESSURE WASHING

## CLEAN & SAFE SERVICES

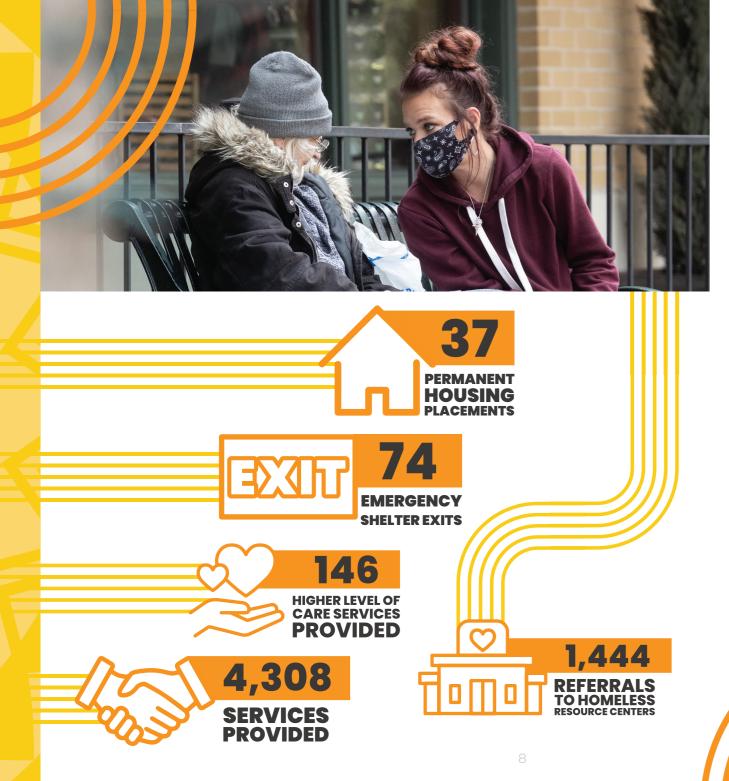
Our Ambassadors work 24/7 365 so that San Antonio has the cleanest downtown in the U.S. Our services include power-washing sidewalks and bus stops, sweeping and picking up waste, graffiti removal, bird abatement and trash collection.

This year we created a second daytime pressure washing team that works as a hot shot team to clean up messes that occur throughout the day and to deep clean residential areas of the district.

Since the onset of the pandemic, the clean team has maintained rigorous cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

And we assisted big events like Fiesta, Día de Los Muertos, the Holiday River Parade, New Year's Eve celebrations, and many others, providing cleaning and hospitality to visitors returning to enjoy downtown!

We strive for downtown to shine every day. We continue to adapt our techniques to adapt to the changing needs. In 2023, we will invest hundreds of thousands more in staff so we can deliver the highest quality cleaning for all our friends downtown.



#### **HOMELESS OUTREACH**

This year, we partnered with a downtown business that provides entry-level employment to unsheltered people who are ready to take the first step toward stabilizing their lives. The Centro outreach team collaborated with this business to help 4 of their employees connect to services, shelter, and eventually housing.

The team made another important connection with a group home network capable of sheltering clients with severe mental health issues and other disabilities – people who could not otherwise access shelter. We successfully referred 5 clients to these group homes.

This year, for the first time, Centro began working with a Texas Medicaid provider. The insurance company assisted us by providing two additional case management teams to help a client with a very difficult situation. Ultimately, they were able to make a referral to 811 housing – a housing resource that only state social service agencies have access to.

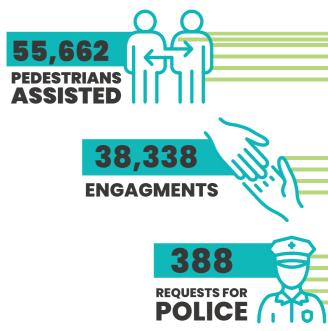
At the end of August, our Homeless Outreach team began a new phase of their work. The team transitioned its operations to Corazon Ministries, one of our most dedicated partners in serving the unsheltered community. Centro looks forward to expanding the impact of the program through its partnership with Corazon.



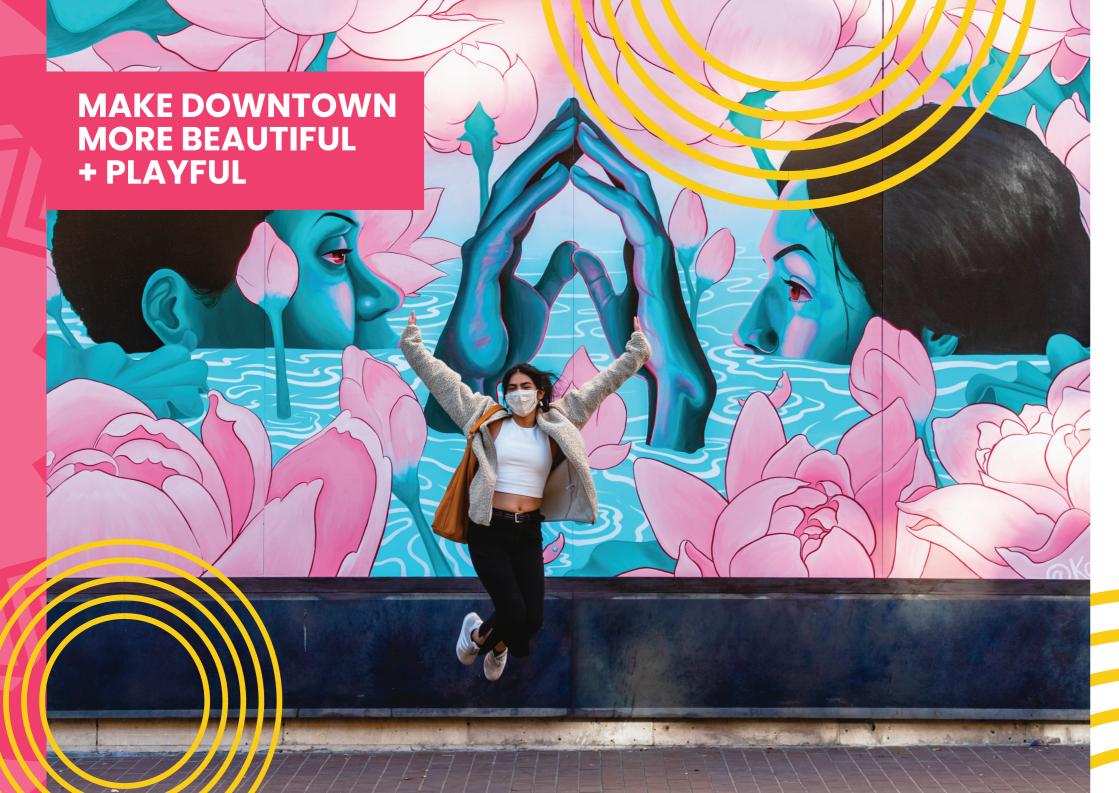
#### SAFE SERVICES

We launched a new quality-of-life ambassador program in December of 2021 to provide a visible presence to improve safety in the district. The quality-of-life ambassadors are knowledgeable about local ordinances and laws that govern quality-of-life crimes and help dissuade uncivil behaviors, provide information and assistance to people experiencing homelessness, and observe and report violations to the police. The quality-of-life team has worked closely with the Centro outreach team, Christian Assistance Ministry, Corazon Ministries, SAPD, and other partners to create a safer environment for all.

While the program has delivered positive results, downtown is experiencing increases in quality-of-life crimes and decreasing public safety perception. We will increase our program by 50-100% in 2023 and will collaborate more closely than ever with partners in the private and public sectors to increase public safety while simultaneously connecting those in need to services.







#### **ART EVERYWHERE**

San Antonio has a rich artistic history which is more alive today than ever. We believe downtown is a place for extraordinary experiences; it's where our memories are made and become the stories we tell. And artists are some of our most cherished storytellers and memory-makers. Centro's Art Everywhere Project celebrates artists by enabling them to bring more creativity, provocations and beauty into the public realm.

This past year we continued to 'make art happen.' Installing 45 works of art added even more vibrancy, diversity and safety to downtown. The Art Everywhere Project is also an economic development tool. Serving as the local artists-to-business matchmaker, we optimized our turn-key art program so even more downtown businesses can say YES to art that works for them - and make it happen. Beyond the visual arts, we sponsored dozens of music, film, performance and culinary arts events at Peacock Alley, La Zona and Travis Park.

#### **FAST FACTS**

By utilizing different installation techniques, like window film or removeable substrates, we can share more art while honoring our historic downtown architectural fabric.



7"Art Walk" **TOURS HOSTED, TOTALING 150 ATTENDEES** 

O WORKS OF ART INSTALLED

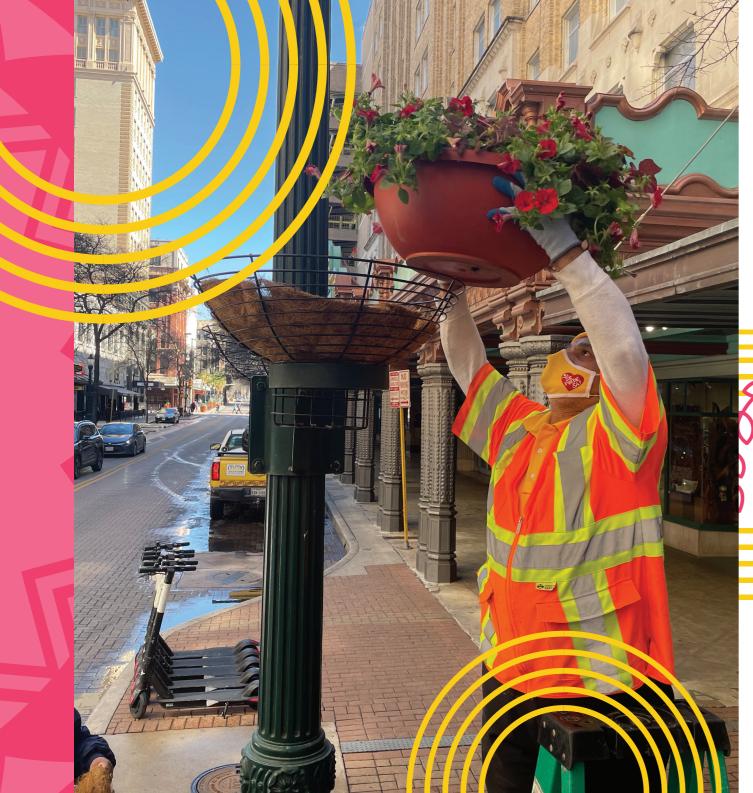






CALM

ON



#### **LANDSCAPING**

Centro installs and maintains landscaping and planters in the district to support property owners and businesses. We do this by supplementing existing City of San Antonio services to ensure a more beautiful, friendly, and vibrant overall environment.

This year, we fully implemented a strategic plan for plant design and pot placement in the district. The design is low maintenance, requires less water, and provides shade and additional cultural value, including native trees, and perennial flowering plants.

1,000
POTS AND
HANGING BASKETS
MAINTAINED

250
TREES PLANTED
DOWNTOWN

#### **FAST FACTS**

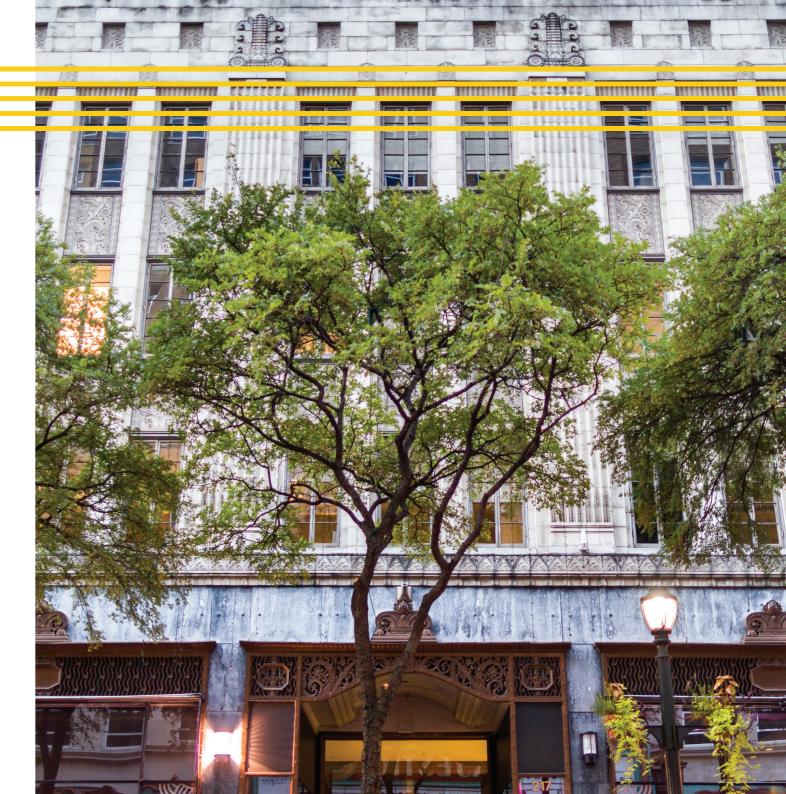
Centro built its own nursery where we maintain and nurture plants that can be used to replace damaged or stolen plants in the district more quickly.

#### **SHADE EQUITY**

#### **Shade The Sidewalks**

Shade is a civic resource that should be shared by all. Centro's commissioned Shade Equity shade study is nearly complete and will be published by the Fall of this year. Designed to better understand the shade needs in and opportunities for downtown San Antonio, it will help create positive impact on the future of San Antonio's urban core. With climate change and high temperatures being a part of our future, the pedestrian experience is of the utmost importance.

The study, with an open-source intent, will include a thorough assessment of conditions; it will also recommend design strategies and key shade interventions that will improve current heat island conditions downtown. With the ability for long-range implementation in both the private and public sectors, our aim is to have the study serve as the foundation for a shade policy at the City level.







#### **PEACOCK ALLEY**

#### **EVENTS, PROGRAMMING & PLAY ACTIVATIONS**

Whether we were putting up holiday lights or making it snow to sprinkle some magic to streets and parks, or partnering with artists, makers and creative organizations to activate music, art and play, Centro delivered 162 engaging, playful, and puro events and activations in the center city for an estimated 180,000 residents and visitors.

We supported the growth of new and tenured traditions at Travis Park including the Rotary Ice Rink and Taco Fest, hosted quarterly information sessions to eliminate barriers and inspire 70 NEW collaboration partnerships including Tech Bloc and BRUK OUT and engaged in a community-wide open call to curate dynamic and inspiring animations from hyperlocals to expand our Peacock Alley Initiative and debut new placemaking spot "La Zona", located in the heart of the Zona Cultural District.

#### **LA ZONA**

70 NEW COLLABORATIONS

180,000 ATTENDEES

162
EVENTS +
ACTIVATIONS

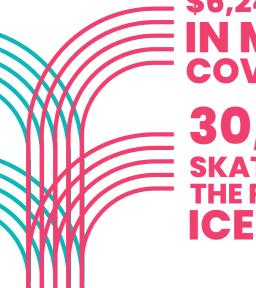




## **TIS' THE SEASON**

110,000 **VISITORS TO** TRAVIS PARK DURING THE **HOLIDAYS** 

3,600,000+ **DIGITAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS** 



\$6,240,000+ N MEDIA COVERAGE

30,000 **SKATERS AT** THE ROTARY **ICE RINK** 

## **HOLIDAY** WONDERLAND

Downtown San Antonio during the holiday season is truly magical, especially at Travis Park. This year's Holiday programming, including the Rotary Ice Rink presented by Valero, was no exception. Despite unseasonably warm weather and a new emerging variant of COVID, locals and visitors alike were inspired to create new and honor tenured traditions at Travis Park.

Through new partnership and agreements, including a Travis Park management agreement with the City of San Antonio and Service agreement between Rotary and Ice Rink Events, Centro proudly led the holiday operations and programming for the park October 2021 -February 2022.



### **QUICK QUOTE**

"We couldn't be more thrilled to have worked with Centro San Antonio this holiday season. Seeing how much un adults and kids alike enjoyed hemselves, we can't wait to see what Centro has up their sleeve for 2022." -Carino + Paloma Cortez, La Familia Cortez Restaurants





The celebrated event series returned in Summer 2022, featuring over 30 local activators, representing artists, musicians, educators, artisans, and more.

## 18,000+ **ATTENDEES** \$2,000,000+ IN MEDIA **COVERAGE**



#### **FAMILY PRIDE DAY**



Family Pride Day returned to Madison Square Park for its third year. Attendance and media impact doubled over last year. The 2022 Grand Marshal was Angel Flores, transgender activist and athlete, and star of Season Six of Netflix's "Queer Eye."



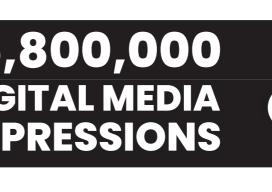


Our storytelling shared not only our work, but the momentum of downtown San Antonio far and wide. Peacock Alley, Art Everywhere, our Ambassadors, and local small businesses were shared thousands of times across the social media sphere. Publications at the local and regional levels took notice of our work and shared the story of our city with the wider world.

Whether it's the newest TikTok dance, an Insta recap of last weekend's wild festival, or an in-depth listicle of the city's top Pride events, we are making sure people hear about how awesome downtown is.



15,800,000 **DIGITAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS** 







## **ADVOCACY**

#### **Economic Development**

Centro advocated for small business grants, outreach dollars, and provided input on the \$30.9 million in ARPA funds for small business. Through our advocacy as part of the Business Development (BDO) Alliance, we were able to secure \$625,000 in outreach dollars, \$5.25 million in placemaking grants, \$17 million in COVID Impact Grants, and an easier application process for this round of grants than those of 2020.

Centro has been advocating for construction relief in the form of improved communication, signage, parking solutions during closures, and grants if needed to support business in 2021 and 2022. The City is committed to addressing this issue in fall 2022.

#### Zona Cultural

2022 was a year of extraordinary transformation for Zona Cultural, a Texas Commission of the Arts designated cultural district. These 44 contiguous blocks on the west side of downtown and on the near west side of San Antonio are home to some of the city's most treasured cultural assets, including Market Square, Main Plaza, and San Pedro Creek. With significant new public and private investment, and implementation of the Centro commissioned 'Zona Cultural Design Guidelines,' the vision is now becoming reality.

We convened stakeholders over the past two years in a Catalytic Committee to identify potential downtown project that would benefit the entire San Antonio community and facilitate its prosperity and growth. Those projects included \$18 Million for Hemisfair Civic Park, \$9 Million for Hemisfair Boulevard, and \$5 Million for Probandt St. Voters approved these projects on May 7 as part of the 2022 Bond Package. These projects will break ground over the next five years. Their impact on quality of life, commerce, and community spaces will be felt for decades to come.

#### TIRZ Funding

In addition to the 2022 Bond, we mobilized support for the allocation of additional funding for capital projects through the Midtown and Houston Street Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ). The Catalytic Committee's first recommended and then approved projects allocated \$17 million for Upper Broadway, \$22 million for Dolorosa St., and \$14 million for Flores St.

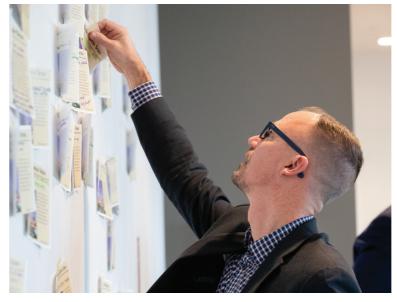
#### Redistrictina

During City Council redistricting in Summer 2022, we rallied neighbors and neighborhood businesses to preserve the continuity and community bonds of our downtown neighborhood through single member district representation. The proposed map would have resulted in not just the splitting of neighborhoods, but a population disparity between Districts 1 and 5. With a revised map- resulting from community feedback-population parity was reached while also adhering to the committee's guiding criteria regarding neighborhood continuity and enriching assets, thereby serving neighborhoods best.

## **PROSPERITY**

Connect People to Strengthen Local Economy & Community. Secure Allies to Help Achieve Our Vision.









#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### Grant Distribution

In Summer 2021, the City awarded Centro two grants totaling \$500,000 from the Houston Street and Midtown Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZs) to administer grants to small businesses affected by construction along the Alamo Plaza and Broadway Corridor Road improvements. The grants were intended primarily for restaurants and retail establishments and favored minority, women, and veteran owned small businesses. Centro received 68 applications, of which 39 were approved for funding with an average grant amount of \$10,769.

#### UTSA + Harvard MBA Program

San Antonio was one of 16 cities across the US where Harvard deployed their MBA students to help solve customer problems. The 70 students were embedded in 13 San Antonio organizations. Centro partnered with UTSA to help develop solutions to welcome students and faculty downtown so that when they arrived, they understood downtown, where to go, and what to do for fun with a goal of ensuring they would forever remember our city fondly after they return to Harvard.

#### Local Economic Development Plan

We developed an economic development strategy for downtown to help existing businesses, grow new ones, and strengthen the downtown small business ecosystem. The plan focuses on local small businesses and entrepreneurs that enhance the downtown quality of life. The strategy was built in collaboration with area economic development organizations and was vetted by the Economic Development Committee. Learn more at centrosanantonio.org/resources

2030 URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY





## DOWNTOWN URBAN DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

With the sunset of the Strategic Framework Plan for the Center City and the related Implementation Plan, Centro developed a strategy to guide downtown development efforts through 2030 and well beyond. The strategy will be built upon the momentum generated by ongoing efforts as well as existing planning initiatives, such as the SA Tomorrow Downtown Regional Center Plan, among many others. It is being developed in accordance with national best practices and stakeholder input through a variety of methods. The resulting strategy will have specific goals, tactical methods, and measurable outcomes focused on enhancing the quality of life downtown to guide our collective efforts in the coming decade. Since late 2021, we've hosted focus groups and conducted interviews and surveys. The strategy will be published in Fall of 2022 DATA REQUESTS COMPLETED \$420,000+ RAISED

### DATA CENTRAL

In late 2021, Centro officially launched the Data Central initiative with the goal of becoming the trusted source for all downtown business, demographic, development, community, and other data and information relied on by a range of stakeholders, including businesses, city government, site selectors, residents, community organizations and educational institutions. We aim to provide accurate quantitative data to help tell an accurate story of our downtown.

### **GRANTS + SPONSORSHIPS**

Other than funding for our homeless outreach that was secured in 2021 and Travis Park programming, we far underperformed our grant goals. Fortunately, FY22 is looking much stronger with \$600K firmly committed.

**FAST FACT** 

There are over 5,300 new housing units planned to come online by 2025 in the downtown area, 2,239 of which are planned in the PID.

#### **FAST FACT**

There are currently 27 developments under construction (public and private) including streets and buildings, representing a \$1.6B investment in our downtown.



### **MEMBERSHIP**

The Centro Alliance is a separate non-profit membership organization which amplifies and supports the efforts of the Centro Public Improvement District. Community and connection are pillars of Centro membership, so we've expanded engagement opportunities by offering an individual level, known as our Advocate level, for the very first time! This redesign has also introduced a brand new event series known as the MIX. Each MIX is a one of a kind evening aimed at connecting "movers, shakers, and industry makers" from all different industries and disciplines downtown with the hopes of sparking creative collaboration to drive investment and shared passion in San Antonio's future. Learn more at,

centrosanantonio.org/membership

#### **QUICK QUOTE**

"The Centro team have a way of curating experiences that go way beyond a networking event or a party. The level of detail, like having Jefferson Bodega play their own signature soundtrack in their popup space... the diversity of people in attendance, finding common ground around downtown and things they're passionate about... the experience of getting a behind-thescenes look at one of downtown's treasures paired with curated local flavors.... I could go on."

-Erika Ragsdale, Redevelopment Officer at

-Erika Ragsdale, Redevelopment Officer at The City of San Antonio

#### **QUICK QUOTE**

"Being a member of Centro has been one of the best decisions I've made since moving to San Antonio! Getting to support local businesses and artists and being in-the-know on what's going on downtown has not only allowed me to grow a solid social life but also to cultivate true connections and friendships in the city!"

-Demetre Harris, Advocate Member

## **97 MEMBERS**

2 MIX EVENTS TOTALING 300 ATTENDEES



### **IN CLOSING**

This past year was full of successes, a few surprises and a couple of under-performing areas. All within a climate of serious external challenges that has pushed us to be increasingly adaptable, responsive and ingenious. While the challenges persist, we look to the future with confidence and optimism. We are assured that our team, stakeholders and partners will collaborate well and invest the resources to make significant improvements in the near term.

As we look more into the future, we strive to ensure downtown, aka El Centro, is full of art, events, spaces and places that make this a specular neighborhood in which to live, love, learn and play.

All this work takes a full team of dedicated, passionate people to accomplish. We encourage you to visit our About Page at the link below to meet our team and learn about each of them.

https://centrosanantonio.org/this-is-your-downtown/

## **SPECIAL THANKS**

Many thanks to some of those who make Centro's work possible:

#### VISIT MEMBERSHIP PAGE

www.centrosanantonio.org/membership

## CENTRO PREMIER MEMBERS

Frost Bank

**Graystreet Properties** 

**Hixon Properties** 

## MEMBERS

CPS Energy

Hotel Valencia

Jackson Walker

## COUNCIL

**AREA Real Estate** 

**Broaddus & Associates** 

DreamOn Group

ECRO Ltd.

Go Rio

La Familia Cortez Restaurants

The Majestic Theatre

Pearl Build, LLC

Raba Kistner

Skanska

Universal Services Group

University of Texas at San Antonio

Weston Properties

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# CENITRO SAN ANTONIO

**CENTROSA.ORG**