



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
{{item.tracking_number}}

Agenda Item Number: 2

Agenda Date: August 19, 2024

In Control: Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

DEPARTMENT: Police Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: William McManus, Chief of Police

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

A Just Transition from Horse-Drawn Carriages

SUMMARY:

Briefing and possible action on an update to the Transportation Committee on information requested by the Committee including options relating to the operation of horse carriages, briefing and researching horse-drawn carriage industry in other cities, and the transition alternatives to owners and employees of the horse-drawn carriage industry considering the City Council Consideration Request (CCR) asking for a Just Transition from Horse-Drawn Carriages.

Staff will ask the Transportation Committee for feedback on information presented.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A City Council Consideration Request (CCR) authored by Councilmember Phyllis Viagran and Councilmember Jalen McKee-Rodriguez regarding the development of a plan to phase out the use of horses with horse-drawn carriages in San Antonio, to include the abolishment of ordinance(s) or policies as they relate to Chapter 33 permitting equine drawn carriages was submitted on November 28, 2022.

The CCR requested the plan include:

1. Determination of the feasibility and establishment of a program to support a workforce transition from horse-drawn carriages to electric carriages and pedicabs;
2. The establishment of a prohibition of the use of horses with carriage rides; and
3. Immediate cessation of the issuance of all new horse-drawn carriage permits, medallions, and/or Special Event Permits so that eventually all valid permits, medallions, and/or Special Event Permits have expired.

The CCR was heard by the Governance Committee on April 17, 2024, and referred to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

On June 4, 2024, staffed briefed the CCR to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Transportation Advisory Board Meeting: On May 22, 2024, the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) met and discussed the CCR. Representatives from all five carriage companies spoke on horse carriage operations, including lessening downtown congestion, the need for temporary carriage stands, and the importance of the carriage industry to carriage drivers and horse owners. The TAB unanimously recommended that the City Council consider keeping horse-drawn carriages in San Antonio and that City staff work with the horse carriage industry to set conditions to continue downtown carriage services.

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee: On June 4, 2024, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee was briefed on the CCR. At this meeting Staff presented a plan to address the CCR that included a timeline to address the CCR.

- June 2024 – Complete research on how other cities have transitioned from horse-drawn carriages to electric carriages and pedicabs or other methods of transportation.
- June 2024 - Obtain feedback from the Animal Care Services Board on CCR
- July 2024 – Meet with horse-drawn carriages stakeholders.
- August 2024 – Brief Transportation Committee on results of best practice research and input from horse-drawn carriages stakeholders and City’s Animal Care Services Board.

The Transportation Committed agreed with the timeline and also requested:

- Conduct a survey regarding carriage options with tourists and downtown businesses.
- Obtain an objective veterinarian evaluation of the horses.
- Research the Horse Carriage and Electric Carriage industries in other cities including the transition to horseless carriages or another industry.
- Develop a draft plan that incorporates feedback from carriage operators, carriage owners and options.

ISSUE:

Staff from the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD), Economic Development Department, and Communications and Engagement Department will update the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (Committee) regarding the status of research of other cities, results of the community survey, feedback from the Transportation Advisory Board, Animal Care Services Board, and feedback from horse carriage owners. Staff will be seeking input from the Committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

No alternatives.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff will be seeking input from Transportation Committee.