

City of San Antonio



Minutes Public Safety Committee

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6, Chair
Dr. Sukh Kaur, Dist. 1 | Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, Dist. 2
Marina Alderete Gavito, Dist. 7 | Marc Whyte, Dist. 10

Tuesday, February 18, 2025

9:30 AM

Council Briefing Room

The Public Safety Committee convened a regular meeting at the City Hall Council Briefing Room beginning at 2:02 PM. Executive Assistant SueAnn Reyes took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Melissa Cabello Havrda, *Chair*
Dr. Sukh Kaur, *Member*
Marina Alderete Gavito, *Member*
Marc Whyte, *Member*

Members Absent: Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, *Member*

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of minutes from the November 18, 2024 Public Safety Committee Meeting

Councilmember Kaur moved to Approve the minutes of the November 18, 2024, Public Safety Committee meeting. Councilmember Whyte seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Cabello Havrda, Kaur, Alderete Gavito, Whyte

Absent: McKee-Rodriguez

Consent

2. Submission of a High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) grant application and acceptance of funds upon award in an amount up to \$2,174,657 from the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) for the period of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2026. [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; William P. McManus, Chief of Police]

Councilmember Kaur moved to Approve on the Consent Agenda, Councilmember Alderete Gavito

seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Cabello Havrda, Kaur, Alderete Gavito, Whyte

Absent: McKee-Rodriguez

- 3. San Antonio Police Department supplemental grant award in an amount not to exceed \$550,000.00 for the Comprehensive Selective Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) Grant from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for the period of October 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025.** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; William P. McManus, Chief of Police]

Councilmember Kaur moved to Approve on the Consent Agenda, Councilmember Alderete Gavito seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Cabello Havrda, Kaur, Alderete Gavito, Whyte

Absent: McKee-Rodriguez

Briefing and Possible Action on

- 4. Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Manny Pelaez (District 8) on Overnight Parking Regulations for Oversized Commercial Vehicles and Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Adriana Rocha Garcia (District 4) on a Designated Oversized Vehicle Parking Facility.** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; Maria Vargas, Director, Integrated Community Safety Office]

Deputy City Manager, Maria Villagomez, introduced the Item and noted that it addressed two Council Consideration Requests (CCR) that was submitted by Councilmember Pelaez in May 2022 (CCR 202-0003) addressing Overnight Parking Regulations for Oversized Commercial Vehicles and CCR 2024-0012 submitted by Councilmember Rocha Garcia on consideration of a Designated Oversized Vehicle Parking Facility. She introduced Public Safety Outcomes Coordinator Maria Vargas-Yates who would present the Item.

Vargas-Yates provided a definition of oversized motor vehicles under City Code 35-A101, which stated that an oversized vehicle was over 24 feet in length, over eight feet in height, and eight feet wide. She noted that recreational vehicles as defined in the Chapter would not be considered oversized vehicles.

Vargas-Yates indicated that under the CCR authored by Councilmember Pelaez, the City Code was revised to regulate overnight parking of oversized vehicles in a manner that better protected the rights of residents and homeowners. She added that the process reviewed and evaluated regulations in major Texas cities and the Item was initially heard by the Governance Committee and then assigned to the Public Safety Committee for review.

Vargas-Yates provided an overview of CCR 2024-0012, which requested more outreach opportunities to drivers and residents regarding potential changes to the City Code that would impact overnight parking of oversized vehicles. She stated that an analysis of private spaces that allowed oversized parking for rent or free of charge was to be completed and a plan to initiate a designated facility for oversized parking with City-owned land, in partnership with the impoundment facility space, or through means of a contract with

private businesses, was recommended.

Vargas-Yates reviewed the timeline of both CCRs beginning in May 2022 with the submission by Councilmember Pelaez of CCR 2022-0003 the initial CCR, and staff conducted public comment sessions to recommend changes to the City Code, and submittal of CCR 2024-0012. She added that CCR2024-0012 was reviewed by the Public Safety Committee in August 2024, and a survey to gather input was released in October 2024, with virtual townhall meetings held in November 2024.

Vargas-Yates reviewed citation data from years 2020 to 2024 associated with oversized truck parking under Ordinance 19-194(a). She presented and spoke to a map identifying top truck parking citations in 2024 within the City limits.

Vargas-Yates provided an overview of existing laws and the proposed Ordinance change for March 2024 addressing commercial oversized vehicle parking. She reviewed current and proposed maps identifying zoning and buffer zones for parking.

Vargas-Yates spoke to the community engagement survey conducted between October 4 and November 1, 2024 targeting residential truck drivers. She reviewed outreach conducted and survey results, which indicated that 83% of drivers had challenges in finding overnight parking. Vargas-Yates noted the various parking alternatives currently used by oversized vehicle owners.

Vargas-Yates stated that two virtual townhall meetings had been conducted with presentations and a panel session with representation from the departments of Transportation, Development Services, Public Works, the San Antonio Police Department, and the Integrated Community Safety Office. She reviewed items of concern from participants and spoke to the categories discussed.

Vargas-Yates reviewed the 15 private lots/facilities in the San Antonio city limits which included travel centers, parking businesses, and gas stations/truck stops. She stated that the average cost of parking was \$28 per day/night and \$160 per month. Vargas-Yates noted that location sites were concentrated in the 78219 (Council District 2) and 78211 (Council District 4) zip codes. Vargas-Yates reviewed Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) statistics on identified parking locations and lengths of parking stays. She discussed analysis of vacant land, which included over 1,675 properties covering 7,855 acres.

Vargas-Yates spoke to possible Ordinance changes for consideration, which included updated street signage installed by the Public Works Department addressing loading/unloading restrictions and other exceptions. She noted that other considerations included increased fines for parking in unauthorized areas and expanding the buffer zone to 1,000 feet from residential areas. Vargas-Yates added that changed options could include enforcement and education by SAFFE Officers.

Vargas-Yates stated that a formal request was made to TxDOT to prioritize the San Antonio District for a parking study and noted the Texas cities that had already had studies conducted. She noted that TxDOT was identifying a solution for safe truck parking through the development of a Truck Parking Action Plan and had prioritized its parking needs in order to invest in projects, policies, and programs for the greatest impact on the safety and mobility of truck drivers. Vargas-Yates stated that staff was requesting input from the Committee on options presented and requested to move the CCRs to a B Session for further discussion.

DISCUSSION

Chair Cabello Havrda recognized Councilmember Pelaez and invited his comments on the Item. Councilmember Pelaez stated that he did not feel that there was any opposition to the Item from fellow Councilmembers and he requested that the Item not be forwarded to a B Session. He felt that the Unified Development Code (UDC) process was a more efficient manner to address an Ordinance change. Councilmember Pelaez indicated that he submitted the CCR in May 2022 and the issue was significant enough to immediately address through the current UDC process. Councilmember Pelaez stressed that this was not a “witch hunt” directed at truck drivers but sought a balance of interest between residents and truck drivers.

Chair Cabello Havrda acknowledged that the process had taken a long time but there had been a great deal of public engagement, which was relevant to the process.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito also acknowledged the length of time that the CCR had been under consideration but stated that the public outreach was important in the process. She spoke to the data presented for hot spots for illegal parking citations but noted that those areas lacked parking options for truck drivers. Councilmember Alderete Gavito did not support the use of fines when there were not good parking options available nor the installation of additional signage.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito expressed concern with the relevance and timeliness of the TxDOT study to be conducted and questioned if the City should consider conducting the study itself. She supported the 1,000-foot buffer recommendation but asked for clarification on time frames. Villagomez stated that staff reviewed policies other cities had related to overnight parking, which was expanded to daytime parking, which they addressed with buffer zones to discourage any parking within buffer areas. Councilmember Alderete Gavito reiterated the need for additional parking options for oversized vehicles.

Chair Cabello Havrda asked for clarification on CCR 2024-0012 and relevance for facility parking and if staff had a recommendation on that CCR. Villagomez clarified that TxDOT had completed various city studies on the issue of oversized vehicles, and she spoke to a recent study completed with the City of Houston. She stated that the City of San Antonio had requested a study to be conducted of San Antonio to identify gaps and options for parking. Villagomez expanded on the vacant land map that displayed land options for a parking facilities and noted that staff was requesting input from the Committee. Councilmember Alderete Gavito stated that it was important to address parking options.

Villagomez reviewed the options staff requested Committee input for, which included parking buffer zones and restrictive parking signage. She also added that input was requested on whether to proceed with the request for TxDOT to prioritize the San Antonio District for a parking study with the goal of addressing truck parking shortages. She also clarified that staff was not making a recommendation on the parking facility, but did identify available land for the Committee's input. Chair Cabello Havrda stated that the Items were complicated issues and that it was good to address both Items together and it was important to move forward with input and not delay the process at the Committee level any further.

Villagomez stated that based on input from the Committee, staff would move forward to present to the entire City Council and better determine if a policy change was needed or if it should be included in a bond project since a facility would be expensive to build. Chair Cabello Havrda stated that creative consideration would be needed, and possible solutions might include conversations with community

partners such as VIA. Councilmember Alderete Gavito stated that she was more supportive of Option A for restrictive parking in residential areas with buffer zones and restated that she felt that the TxDOT study would be a slow process and staff could provide sufficient data.

Councilmember Whyte stated that it was the City's responsibility to protect its residents and neighborhoods and agreed that the process had taken a long time to review. He also supported the option that included restricted parking with buffer zones with related signage. Councilmember Whyte asked who would be enforcing the restrictions. Vargas-Yates confirmed that the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) would be responsible for enforcement. Councilmember Whyte expressed concern regarding the expectation for SAPD to provide enforcement in a timely manner, especially in school zones. Police Chief William McManus clarified that vehicles used to pick up students were considered standing and not parked while waiting for students but he added that large vehicle parking issues were not always considered a priority. Councilmember Whyte reiterated his concern of timely addressing issues and understood the priorities of police officers and their responsibility to address priority safety issues but he felt that the enforcement could fall by the wayside based on police staffing.

Councilmember Whyte asked for clarification on the appeals process for violations. Vargas-Yates stated that staff would need to strike a balance between the proposed options for proactive enforcement with signage in identified troubled areas. Villagomez added that signage could be concentrated in the top 10 areas for violations and adjustments made as well as other areas identified to add signage and enforcement. She also clarified that Parking and Code Enforcement staff would be charged with enforcing parking violations. Councilmember Whyte reiterated the need for effective and timely enforcement to address resident concerns.

Councilmember Kaur commended staff on the community engagement process and stated that residents had provided her with input from those sessions. She requested data on the number of attendees for the townhall meetings. Vargas-Yates stated that she would provide data to the Committee.

Councilmember Kaur stated that she supported the CCR submitted by Councilmember Rocha Garcia for a parking facility. She asked if signage would describe associated penalties for illegal parking. Vargas-Yates confirmed that signage would include a reference to the relevant Ordinance and a targeted approach would be implemented to address areas with parking issues.

Councilmember Kaur requested a map to provide to residents for identified parking site areas. Villagomez stated that Public Safety staff would be working with homeowner associations to provide educational materials and mapping option tools for industrial parking. Councilmember Kaur noted that a more cost-effective option for consideration could be to have staff available to address issues on a case-by-case basis.

Councilmember Kaur asked if the CCR could assign reserve officers or administrative officers to address enforcement. Villagomez stated that staff would consider that option.

Chair Cabello Havrda requested that individual meetings with Councilmembers not on the Committee be held to update them on the Item.

Councilmember Whyte moved to Approve. Councilmember Kaur seconded the motion. The motion carried

by the following vote:

Aye: Cabello Havrda, Kaur, Alderete Gavito, Whyte

Absent: McKee-Rodriguez

5. **San Antonio Fire Department's Statistics for the 1st Quarter of FY 2025.** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; Valerie Frausto, Fire Chief]
6. **San Antonio Police Department Crime Data for Calendar Year 2024.** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; William P. McManus, Chief of Police]

Items 5 and 6 were presented together.

Deputy City Manager, Maria Villagomez, introduced the Items and noted that the Fire and Police Chiefs would be providing updates on statistics for the first quarter of FY 2025.

Fire Chief, Valerie Frausto, provided an overview of the San Antonio Fire Department (SAFD) statistics in terms of medical and non-medical incidents since 2022. She stated that medical incidents had increased slightly each year but that non-medical incidents had remained constant over the past three years. Frausto noted that the first quarter statistics reflected the same trend for the number of incidents.

Frausto reviewed SAFD response time data by divisions and by fiscal year and noted that response times remained consistent and in acceptable ranges for the first quarter of FY 2025. She noted that response times in the first quarter were consistent and in acceptable ranges. She stated that leadership was continuously exploring operational efficiencies to decrease response times. She reviewed the top 10 medical call types and stated that calls responding to someone who was sick were most of the calls with motor vehicle collisions second.

Frausto reported that there was a decline in working structure fires during the past three years and the first quarter of FY 2025, which was primarily due to improvements in fire prevention education and code enforcement. She reviewed structure fires by council districts for the past three years. She summarized that SAFD continued to have downward trends in the number of incidents and response times.

Police Chief, William McManus, presented an overview of Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) reporting requirements, crime statistics for calendar year 2024, and strategies to reduce violent crime and property crime. He noted that the FBI required reporting crime offenses within each incident using the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). He reported that the System classified offenses in two groups, which were A or B, with Group A being the most serious crimes. According to McManus, Group A crimes were divided into three crime categories: 1) Against persons, 2) Against society, or 3) Against property. He added that Group B offenses were only included in crime statistics and only reported if an arrest was made.

McManus provided an explanation and examples of types of Group A and B crimes. He noted that in 2024, SAPD received over 2.2 million incident calls which generated 1,821,029 dispatched calls which was slightly higher than calls dispatched in 2023. McManus reviewed call response times since 2022 and noted that emergency response times had decreased by 30 seconds while non-emergency calls increased since 2022 but had decreased slightly from 2023.

McManus provided an overview of the number of arrests made since 2022, which reflected an increase of about 3,000 arrests in 2024. He noted that crime was down, and police workload was down, which maintained order on the streets.

McManus reported that there was a 2.4% decrease since 2022 in NIBRS crime statistics for crimes against a person, 1.5% increase in crimes against society, and a 7.7% decrease in crimes against property. He reviewed specific crime data for each category.

McManus stated that the strategies used to reduce crime included working with the community on strategies for violent crimes, property crimes, community policing, and collaborative strategies. He noted that the development of various formal plans, partnerships, and task forces assisted in the reduction of these crimes.

DISCUSSION

Chair Cabello Havrda thanked and acknowledged the SAPD on the progress for reducing overall crime by almost 6%. She also recognized the SAFD for their dedicated work in responding to emergencies.

Councilmember Whyte asked of factors identified for the increase in emergency calls. Frausto stated that calls fluctuated each year, but that weather could be a factor with extreme cold and heat impacting incidents.

Councilmember Whyte asked what items in the Budget were needed for SAFD to be effective. Frausto stated that the focus of SAFD continued to be the processing of calls and information received to respond to incidents with sufficient and appropriate units to ensure that other units were available to respond to other incidents as needed.

Councilmember Whyte asked for clarification on a recent event where an engine was not available due to repairs and asked what was being done to ensure that this did not happen in the future. Frausto stated that the incident was addressed, and leadership had reviewed maintenance processes and activity to ensure that readiness was not impacted for all areas of the City. She reiterated that SAFD was ready and confident to meet future events in the most efficient and effective manner to protect the City.

Councilmember Whyte asked for details on reduction of response time metrics. McManus stated that staff worked hard to meet staffing needs. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that Budget improvements for increased police officer staffing had greatly impacted the number of officers in the field and had positively impacted response times.

Councilmember Whyte asked for clarification on the Downtown Camera Plan and if it had been proven effective. McManus clarified that the cameras had not yet been installed. Assistant Police Chief Rick Riley reported that SAPD had hired four new call intake staff to monitor camera feeds from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. daily. He added that this should assist in decreasing response times in the future.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked for data on repeat callers for individuals who were sick. Frausto stated that data would be provided to the Committee. Councilmember Alderete Gavito requested data over the past 12 months to determine if sick calls needed other services to free up SAFD resources for other calls.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito requested violent crime statistics by council district. Villagomez stated that data was available on the website dashboard by zip code and staff would provide data by council districts.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked if there were any plans to expand the Downtown Camera Plan in other parts of the City. Villagomez stated that at this time it was not planned to roll out into other parts of the City, but it could be discussed under the Budget process for consideration. Maria Vargas-Yates stated that staff would be conducting an evaluation on the advocacy of the technology and its effects on response times and effectiveness.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito noted that there were instances where individuals released from incarceration were committing violent crimes against police officers and she asked if there was anything SAPD was doing to mitigate this. McManus stated that there wasn't really anything that SAPD could do except to make an issue of it. He noted that it was important to review bail reform under the Texas legislature and the magistrate process under the Texas Constitution.

Councilmember Kaur noted that it was difficult to gain reports on non-emergency response times and she would like to address reporting options for the council districts to provide to residents. She requested that more specific data be provided on different crimes to educate residents about crimes. Villagomez clarified that data gathered was used to develop strategies to address different types of crime and that staff in the future could report how strategies were developed based on gathered data. Councilmember Kaur stated that it was important to see the direct connections of data and initiatives developed for understanding.

No action was taken on the Items.

Executive Session

Executive Session was not held.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

Melissa Cabello Havrda, Chair

*Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk*