



OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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TO: Mayor and City Council
 FROM: Councilman Jalen McKee-Rodriguez
 COPIES TO: Erik Walsh, City Manager; Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk; Andy Segovia, City Attorney; John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager; Emily McGinn, Assistant to City Council
 SUBJECT: Faith-Based Land for Community Benefit Initiative
 DATE: February 6, 2025

Issue Proposed for Consideration:

After coordinating this Council Consideration Request (CCR) with the City Manager, we ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

Faith-Based Land for Community Benefit Initiative (FBLCBI)

Brief Background:

Many faith-based organizations in San Antonio own underutilized land that could support affordable housing, food security, climate resilience, parks and green space, and public health initiatives. At the same time, the city faces rising housing costs, food insecurity, climate-related risks, and homelessness. By partnering with faith-based organizations, the City can help transform surplus land into community-serving spaces while ensuring sustainable development and equitable resource distribution.

Ideal projects proposed as a result of the program would include affordable and transitional housing, safe parking programs for the unhoused, community gardens, urban farms and food forests, solar energy hubs, stormwater management solutions, cooling centers and resiliency hubs, as well as opportunities to provide youth programming, violence prevention initiatives, and safe spaces for marginalized communities.

The program could be funded through a mix of city grants, public-private partnerships, and state or federal incentives, Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) dollars, and more. Financial support for churches could include tax incentives, grants, bond dollars, and access to affordable loans.

We propose establishing a task force consisting of representatives from San Antonio's faith-based community to streamline implementation and provide ongoing technical assistance.

To reduce the administrative burden on faith-based organizations, the City could offer a centralized application process for churches, allowing them to access zoning adjustments, permitting, and funding opportunities through a single point of contact. Additionally, a technical assistance program could provide expertise and support with land development, legal, and financial considerations.

The Task Force should consider implementation of an expedited zoning process for proposed projects that meet designated criteria as well as development of such criteria.

Request:


We formally request City staff to develop the Faith-Based Land for Community Benefit Initiative, including a task force to oversee its implementation, identify funding sources, and create a streamlined process for faith-based institutions to engage in these projects.



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This initiative will help unlock unused church property for the benefit of our communities and contribute to addressing San Antonio's most pressing challenges.

Council Consideration Request Submitted by:


Jalen McKee-Rodriguez
Councilman, District 2

Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures

District

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