



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 26

Agenda Date: March 20, 2025

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Parks & Recreation Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Homer Garcia III

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: District 5

SUBJECT:

Ordinance approving the naming of The San Antonio Natatorium to Atanacio Garcia Natatorium.

SUMMARY:

Naming of The San Antonio Natatorium to Atanacio Garcia Natatorium.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Atanacio Garcia was a man deeply committed to both his community and his country. His life was marked by service and a strong dedication to improving the lives of others. As a retired Army veteran and postal worker, Garcia's civic engagement spanned several decades, with his most significant achievement being his role in establishing the San Antonio Natatorium, a public swimming pool located in the West Side of San Antonio.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Garcia recognized the need for a community swimming pool. The West Side had a large youth population but lacked access to recreational swimming or the opportunity to train for competitive events. At the time, the nearest pools were miles away, making them out of reach for many families. As a retired postal worker, Garcia knew the power of community involvement and took the initiative to organize efforts to build a state-of-the-art

facility. Through his efforts with Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and COPS/Metro Alliance, his organizing resulted in the opening of the San Antonio Natatorium in June 1981—an Olympic-sized pool designed to benefit local children and families.

Garcia faced significant challenges in bringing this vision to life. At the time, the West Side was often overlooked by City Hall, and the idea of building a pool in the area was seen as ambitious, even unrealistic. Nevertheless, Garcia's determination, combined with support from local organizations like COPS/Metro Alliance, ultimately led to the project's success. His relentless advocacy and ability to rally community support through petitions convinced the City of the need for such a facility.

Beyond his work with the natatorium, Garcia's dedication to his community never wavered. He was a constant presence on the West Side, often helping elderly residents with transportation or helping in other ways. Even in retirement, Garcia remained deeply involved in his neighborhood taking regular walks around Lanier High School to collect recyclables and clean up litter. His life is a testament to the values of civic duty and service, and his contributions continue to inspire those who strive to make a difference in their communities. Atanacio Garcia passed away on March 6, 2014, at the age of 86, but his impact on San Antonio and beyond remains a lasting example of dedication and leadership. Garcia is a cherished figure in District 5, and his influence on our community is undeniable. Renaming the San Antonio Natatorium to the Atanacio Garcia Natatorium will serve as a lasting tribute to his unwavering commitment to San Antonio and his lifelong dedication to improving the lives of those around him.

Staff followed the naming process in accordance with Ordinance No. 2011-03-31-0239. A committee was established to hold a public hearing on this proposal. The committee consisted of Rose Araujo-Iracheta, Community Representative selected by Councilmember Teri Castillo, Council District 5, and Nikki Ramos, Assistant Director of the Parks and Recreation Department. Notification was mailed to those within a fourteen hundred (1400) foot radius of the San Antonio Natatorium. Publication was placed in the San Antonio Express-News, San Antonio Report, SA Speak Up, e-blast to the Parks and Recreation Department's 4,500 subscribers, and District 5 communication platforms. Based on the responses received from the public notice mailout and both in-person and written comments, 38 notices were in favor of the proposed naming, and 2 notices were in opposition. Following public input, the public hearing concluded with the committee recommending moving forward to the City Council naming the San Antonio Natatorium to the Atanacio Garcia Natatorium.

ISSUE:

This ordinance authorizes naming the San Antonio Natatorium to Atanacio Garcia Natatorium, located at 1430 W Cesar E. Chavez Blvd in Council District 5. This action is consistent with the City's Naming of City Facilities and Streets ordinance.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could elect not to name the San Antonio Natatorium to Atanacio Garcia Natatorium, located at 1430 W Cesar E. Chavez Blvd in Council District 5, and allow it to remain as-is.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approving the naming of San Antonio Natatorium to Atanacio Garcia Natatorium, located at 1430 W Cesar E. Chavez Blvd in Council District 5.