

City of San Antonio



Minutes Planning and Community Development Committee

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4
Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Teri Castillo, Dist. 5
Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8 | John Courage, Dist. 9

Monday, May 20, 2024

10:00 AM

Council Briefing Room

The Planning and Community Development Council Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Council Briefing Room beginning at 10:00 AM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Chair*
Phyllis Viagran, *Member*
Teri Castillo, *Member*
John Courage, *Member*

Members Absent: Manny Pelaez, *Member*

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of minutes from April 25, 2024 Planning and Community Development Committee Meeting

Councilmember Courage moved to Approve the minutes of the April 25, 2024 Planning and Community Development Council Committee meeting. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Viagran, Castillo, Courage

Absent: Pelaez

Public Comment

Dewayne Nelson, Chair of the Building Standards Board (BSB), recommended that the City Council consider the facts regarding dangerous and dilapidated structures which were evaluated by Code

Officers and other Development Services Department (DSD) staff recommended demolishing or repairing but, after all facts had been gathered and presented, then, BSB issued an independent ruling.

Briefing and Possible Action on

- 2. The Planning & Community Development Council Committee will review and consider applicants for 1 At-Large board seat to the Building Standards Board. Appointee will serve a term of office to begin upon approval by the City Council and to expire on May 31, 2025.** [Debbie Racca- Sittre, City Clerk]

Chair Rocha Garcia announced that five applicants had withdrawn their applications including Evelyn Brown, David Garcia, Christine Salini, Samuel Stevens, and Troy Summers. Jose Auces did not attend nor submit a written statement. Wesley Jones provided a written statement which was read aloud by the City Clerk. The Committee interviewed Robert Benke and John Bonillas in person.

Chair Rocha Garcia recessed the meeting into Executive Session at 10:34 a.m. to deliberate the appointment of the Building Standards Board applicants pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.074 (personnel matters), and to discuss related legal issues, pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

Chair Rocha Garcia reconvened the meeting in Open Session at 10:46 a.m. and announced that no official action had been taken in Executive Session.

Councilmember Castillo moved to recommend and forward the appointment of Robert Benke to the City Council to fill the At Large Seat of the Building Standards Board for the remainder of the unexpired term. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Viagran, Castillo
Absent: Pelaez, Courage

- 3. Briefing and possible action on the Eastside Community Area Plan.** [John Peterek, Interim Assistant City Manager; Bridgett White, Director, Planning]

Director of Planning Bridget White, provided a map and listed boundaries of the sub-area planning area and described the public outreach and engagement that occurred during the planning process which included five community meetings that were held virtually due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The East Side community area was an approximately six-mile area, according to White.

White listed the six plan goals which included: 1) Community stability and inclusion, 2) Employment and opportunity, 3) History, culture, and art, 4) Gathering places, 5) Connected neighborhoods, and 6) Healthy green neighborhoods. Of the three land use recommendations and 11 related strategies, White reported that the following were selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 1.1: Initiate and support rezoning requests in areas designated as mixed-use to provide a mix of uses designed to support pedestrians and transit use. For City initiated rezoning, ensure

existing detached single-family residences continue to be permitted by right and are not made nonconforming.

Strategy 2.4: Support rezoning requests that would add residential dwelling units to or within existing structures, to encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of existing buildings and housing stock.

Strategy 3.1: Include site and building design standards within any new mixed-use and transit-oriented zoning districts in the Unified Development Code (UDC). New development in mixed-use centers and corridors should incorporate design elements such as windows in street facing walls, primary building entrances that face a street or street-oriented courtyard, and parking located behind the primary structure rather than between the street frontage and building face.

Of the three Focus Areas recommendations and 11 related strategies, White reported that the following were selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 1.1: Support grassroots efforts and local business in creating pedestrian-oriented community hubs by increasing public investment in street trees and landscaping, decorative lighting, public art, seating, street parking, façade revitalization, and building restoration that enhance the experience of walking, spending time, and interacting.

Strategy 3.1: Prioritize the completion and enhancement of sidewalk networks near VIA's Advanced Rapid Transit and Primo services.

Strategy 3.2: Prioritize affordable housing subsidies in the vicinity of VIA's Advanced Rapid Transit and Primo services.

Of the four Mobility recommendations and 11 related strategies, White reported that the following was selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 4.1: Improve the first/last mile experience of transit riders by enhancing sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks, and bicycle facilities near VIA Metropolitan Transit transfer areas, Primo station areas, and future Advanced Rapid Transit Silver Line station areas. Additional improvements to creating inviting, quality public spaces at transit stations include shade, seating, safety lighting, and public art. The location and prioritization of these investments should consider VIA's planned timeline for improving service. Based on the current analysis, priority improvement areas are in the vicinity of:

- East Houston Street and Cherry Street;
- East Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue;
- East Houston Street and Walters Street; and
- East Houston Street and Union Pacific Railroad near the Frost Bank Center.

Of the five Amenities & Public Space recommendations and 16 related strategies, White reported that the following were selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 3.1: Use green stormwater infrastructure in public street improvement projects and future

bond projects.

Strategy 3.2: Use street trees to complement other necessary improvements for pedestrian safety and comfort when completing street projects.

The Plan contains three Housing recommendations and nine associated strategies. The following was selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 2.1: Identify strategies and financial tools that could help mitigate the impacts of escalating property values for lower-income residents. The Plan contains three Economic Development recommendations and 11 associated strategies. The following was selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 1.1: Support the creation of neighborhood business improvement districts or other public-private partnerships that enable local business owners to act collectively to invest in and improve the physical environment around their establishments.

White outlined the Plan implementation process and provided a timeline for consideration by City Council. White requested that the Planning & Community Development Committee approve the Item to move forward to the Planning Commission and ultimately, the City Council.

DISCUSSION:

Chair Rocha Garcia acknowledged the work of the stakeholders. Councilmember Viagran asked if Council District 2 Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez was supportive of the plan. White stated that the Council District 2 Councilmember had been briefed and was in support.

Councilmember Castillo moved to Approve. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Viagran, Castillo
Absent: Pelaez, Courage

4. Briefing and possible action on the Texas A&M-San Antonio Area Regional Center Plan. [John Peterek, Interim Assistant City Manager; Bridgett White, Director, Planning]

Director of Planning Bridget White, provided a map and listed boundaries of the sub-area planning area and described the public outreach and engagement that occurred during the planning process which included four community meetings that were held virtually due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

White stated that the vision was that the Texas A&M-San Antonio Area Regional Center would be a dynamic community that provided quality education, plentiful housing options, and economic opportunity, while respecting and protecting the rural and natural character of the areas that serve as transition to the manufacturing uses at the core of the Regional Center. She noted that as a major educational and industrial hub for the region, this community would champion the institutions that called it home, while supporting the growth of other technology and research industries that would be the driving force behind private investment. The community would lead the evolution of San

Antonio's South Side by incorporating innovative solutions to environmental sustainability, mobility, and public health, according to White.

White listed seven goals of the plan.

Goal 1: The construction and expansion of necessary infrastructure should facilitate appropriate development in the area.

Goal 2: The projected growth of Texas A&M University-San Antonio catalyzed the addition of retail, entertainment, and service industry uses, as well as off-campus housing options.

Goal 3: New development was focused in targeted areas and along high-traffic corridors, and appropriately transitions to rural homes, ranches, and protected natural areas to protect the rural character of the area.

Goal 4: Natural assets, such as the Medina River Preserve, Medina River Greenway, and Leon Creek Preserve Natural Area, would be utilized as amenities to educate and to attract future residents and visitors while also linking the places where people live and work.

Goal 5: The natural environment and associated ecosystem would be preserved and served to help maintain the rural character of the area and enhance biodiversity and climate change resilience.

Goal 6: The Texas A&M-San Antonio area is a dynamic mixed-use activity center, with an improved multimodal network, expanded multi-use trail and greenway connections, and better transit service linking the area to downtown and other employment centers throughout the city.

Goal 7: The Texas A&M-San Antonio Area Regional Center is a well-rounded, sustainable, environmentally friendly, and innovative economy. Of the five Land Use recommendations and 11 related strategies, White reported that the following were selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 1.1: Properties north of Jaguar Parkway should be zoned to allow for vertical mixed-use projects including multi-family and community-scaled uses.

Strategy 2.1: Property along Mauermann Road should maintain the Light Industrial land use designation and related permitted zoning districts. Property north of Mauermann Road may be suitable for limited commercial uses, on a small scale, where accessible from Mauermann Road.

Recommendation 3: Implement the Guiding Principles (as described in the “Heavy Industrial” Future Land Use section of this plan) related to development adjacent to Heavy Industrial areas, such as the Toyota Motor Manufacturing Texas (TMMTX) plant, to ensure appropriate transitions between future development and Heavy Industrial areas within the Regional Center.

Strategy 3.1: Implement an overlay zoning district consistent with the Guiding Principles to ensure compatible future development near heavy industrial uses, such as the TMMTX plant.

Strategy 4.1: As the Texas A&M University-San Antonio campus continues to develop, coordinate with the Texas A&M University System to ensure that properties near on-campus activity centers which were zoned to allow for complementary uses based on traffic patterns, access, and retail or employment demand.

Recommendation 5: Facilitate watershed protection and landscape preservation near key riparian corridors in the plan area, such as Leon Creek and the Medina River.

Of the three Focus Area recommendations and 11 related strategies, White reported that the following were selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 1.2: Work with transportation partners to ensure that the intersection of Jaguar Parkway and University Way can be efficiently reconfigured to achieve the desired vision of the VIDA San Antonio Zócalo.

Strategy 1.3: Amend the Unified Development Code (UDC) to create new zoning districts that will support mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development at a variety of scales within the focus areas.

Strategy 2.1: Provide examples and models for developers on how to build more compact, walkable residential neighborhoods that utilize and integrate multiple types of housing. Utilize the Place Types developed in the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, such as the Green Neighborhood, Trail-Oriented Development, and Multimodal Mixed-Use place types, to encourage new amenity-rich neighborhood designs and approaches.

Of the five Mobility recommendations and 14 related strategies, White reported that the following were selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 1.2: In anticipation of adding more focal points of activity, invest in well-designed pedestrian crossings that incorporate best practices for safety and placemaking at all future intersections within the mixed-use areas of the Texas A&M-San Antonio Area Regional Center.

Strategy 2.1: Ensure long-term sustainable street design by incorporating elements like bioswales and pervious pavement to manage stormwater run-off and street trees to provide shade.

Mobility Recommendation 4: Consider the Regional Center's freight movements and the need for efficient east-west connectivity in land use and transportation planning activities.

Strategy 4.4: Using the City of San Antonio Major Thoroughfare Plan (MTP) as a guide, encourage continual dialogue between relevant local, State, and Federal entities in pursuing east-west connectivity options through the Regional Center.

White reported that the Plan contained three total Amenities and Public Space recommendations with associated strategies. She noted that the following were selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 1.1: Identify trail routes to connect Palo Alto College, the VIDA San Antonio Development, the Texas A&M University-San Antonio campus, and the Medina River Greenway that are compatible with land uses in the area.

Strategy 2.2: Identify areas that could benefit from green infrastructure and consider packaging improvements into future bond projects to be eligible for additional funding, including rebate programs, from the San Antonio River Authority (SARA).

White stated that the Plan contained three Housing recommendations with eight associated strategies. She reported that the following were selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 1.1: Encourage higher-density housing and mixed-use development in the two focus areas located north and east of the Texas A&M University-San Antonio campus.

Strategy 3.1: Coordinated with utility providers to identify and address infrastructure challenges in the area, specifically the lack of a sewer connection at Southwest Loop 410 and University Way.

White stated that the Plan contained four total Economic Development recommendations with 13 associated strategies. She reported that the following were selected for priority implementation:

Strategy 2.2: Continue to support the VIDA San Antonio development through the existing Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) and City capital investments as long as the development aligns with the envisioned future land use plan for the area. Work with Southstar, Texas A&M University-San Antonio, the Toyota Motor Manufacturing Texas (TMMTX), other property owners, and utility providers to identify and build infrastructure improvements that will support future growth in the area.

Strategy 2.3: Use City capital investments, future City Bond cycles, Federal/State/Local programs and incentives, public financing tools, and public-private partnerships as possible funding sources.

White outlined the Plan implementation process and provided a timeline for consideration by the City Council. White requested that the Planning & Community Development Committee approve the Item to move forward to the Planning Commission and ultimately, to the City Council.

DISCUSSION:

Chair Rocha Garcia acknowledged the work of the stakeholders and noted the lack of sewer and other infrastructure as well as internet that had been a challenge for the area. She was aware that there were freight mobility issues and noted that access to the Toyota Plant was stalled because SAWS was working there and closed the road down to one lane. She was pleased that the trails were being brought into the Transportation Plan.

Councilmember Viagran asked how high the multi-family or other buildings could be. White stated that the height and details would depend on the specific location, but all buildings would need to meet the City's building codes. Councilmember Viagran suggested building a bridge over the railroad near Jaguar Parkway to connect the Regional Centers. Councilmember Viagran requested a list of the stakeholders so she could thank them and recommended looking at opportunities for Federal grants.

Councilmember Castillo commented that the housing stakeholder group was recommending density and multi-family housing.

Councilmember Castillo moved to Approve. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Viagran, Castillo
Absent: Pelaez, Courage

5. Briefing and possible action on the Senior Assistance Pilot Program, which offers seniors aged 65 or older and/or disabled direct assistance with lawn/alley maintenance and tree trimming or removal. [John Peterek, Interim Assistant City Manager; Michael Shannon, Director, Development Services]

Councilmember Alderete Gavito, who was not on the Committee, provided an opening statement regarding the Pilot Program which she created, and recommended that the Program be continued. Councilmember Alderete Gavito did not deliberate or answer questions.

Director of the Development Services Department (DSD) Mike Shannon stated that there was \$100,000 approved for FY 2024 to help homeowners/renters that were elderly (age 65 or older), disabled or had a financial hardship with abatement assistance if they had a code violation for overgrown vegetation, debris, tree removal or trimming. He noted that through the Program, the resident did not receive a citation, nor did they have to pay for the abatement. Shannon provided a chart of funding available by Council District which was \$10,000 per council district, noting that the greater need had been in Council Districts, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Shannon reported that 37 households had received assistance, 11 were in the queue and approximately \$65,000 had been spent. Shannon indicated that the lessons learned included the fact that abatements were more expensive than anticipated with an average cost of \$1,400 and some areas/council districts used up their allocation more quickly.

Chair Rocha Garcia thanked Councilmember Alderete Gavito for her work initiating the Program. She noted that there was a great need for the Program and advocated for another round of funding for the Program and more outreach and potential collaboration with other programs such as The Gonzaba Foundation's Grass Busters Program.

Councilmember Courage supported the Program noting that it had not been used as much in every council district and recommended that all remaining funds be pooled and re-divided for FY 2025 and he supported a continuation of the Program.

Councilmember Viagran recommended reducing the Budget for the council districts to fund those with greater need and ensure those who requested assistance could receive it no matter the district; Districts 1, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 should get only \$5,000. She recommended leveraging the partnership with Gonzaba Foundation's Grass Busters Program.

Councilmember Castillo commented that an equal distribution of the funding was not necessarily an equitable distribution and she supported the recommendation by Councilmember Courage to

reallocate the remaining funds.

The item was for briefing so no action was taken.

Consent Agenda

- 6. Ordinance approving an agreement with the San Antonio Housing Trust Public Facility Corporation in an amount up to \$2,535,000 for the acquisition of approximately 1.57 acres at 811 W. Houston Street, San Antonio, Texas 78207 located in Council District 5. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]**

Councilmember Castillo moved to Approve on the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Viagran, Castillo, Courage
Absent: Pelaez

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Approved

Adriana Rocha Garcia, Chair

Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk