



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
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Agenda Item Number: {{item.number}}

Agenda Date: August 22, 2024

In Control: Planning and Community Development Committee

DEPARTMENT: Neighborhood and Housing Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Veronica Garcia, Director

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Council Consideration Request on the establishment of the Water & Sewer Lateral Improvements Program.

SUMMARY:

Councilmember Teri Castillo issued a Council Consideration Request (CCR) for the establishment of the Water & Sewer Lateral Improvements Program aimed at reducing costs to homeowners with a need to repair or install a lateral. The purpose of this briefing is to provide analysis on the CCR and get feedback from the Planning & Community Development Committee of City Council (PCDC).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On April 2, 2024, Councilmember Councilwoman Teri Castillo issued a Council Consideration Request (CCR) for the establishment of the Water & Sewer Lateral Improvements Program, review and update to the Code of Ordinances Chapter 34 Division 2 Article 5 of the Unified

Development Code related to Sewage Transportation, Treatment, and Disposal, and the development of a map of residential properties with missing laterals. The CCR was assigned to the Neighborhood & Housing Services Department (NHSD) and presented to the Governance Committee on May 17, 2024. The Governance Committee referred the CCR to PCDC.

ISSUE:

City staff is requesting feedback from PCDC on the development of a COSA sponsored residential water & sewer lateral installation pilot, review of and update the Code of Ordinances Chapter 34, Article V, Division 2 – Sewage Transportation, Treatment and Disposal, and development of a map of residential properties with missing or improper laterals. An initial analysis of the request identified the following:

- The City does have a program that can help residents with lateral improvements. Homeowners with properties that have missing and improper sewer laterals, or that need sewer later repairs, can get support through the City's Major Rehabilitation program, provided the home is owner-occupied. The financial support is limited and is provided as a forgivable loan to homeowners with household income below 80% of the Area Median Income.
- San Antonio Water System (SAWS) has a Laterals to People program which repairs the sewer lateral from outside a home to the property line. The program does not help homeowners install a new sewer lateral connection where one does not already exist.
- State law requires home sellers to disclose information about utilities on their property, including if it is connected to the sewer main, utilizes septic, or does not have water connection. Defects to those systems must be disclosed if they are known. Prospective buyers can request a special inspection of the sewer laterals before purchasing a home.
- The Code of Ordinances requires laterals to be connected in as direct a manner as possible to the sewer main and has since at least 1988.
- Neither the City nor SAWS has a map of residential properties with missing lateral connections.
- Funding for a lateral improvement program is not specifically identified in either the FY 24 or FY 25 proposed budget. The cost of a lateral repair can range from as little as \$3,000 to over \$20,000. A budget for approximately 10 homes would need to include \$200,000. This does not include the costs to administer the program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only. There is no funding identified in the FY24 Adopted Budget or FY25 Proposed Budget for the program.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

No recommendations will be made at this time. The purpose of this briefing is to get feedback from PCDC. Based on feedback, staff will engage additional stakeholders prior to returning to PCDC with a recommendation.