

# 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

**Friday, June 28, 2024**

**1:00 PM**

**Council Briefing Room**

The Public Safety Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Council Briefing Room beginning at 1:03 PM. Deputy City Clerk Aurora Perkins took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

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

**Members Absent:** None

### Approval of Minutes

#### 1. Approval of minutes from the May 21, 2024 Public Safety Committee meeting.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez moved to Approve the minutes of the May 21, 2024 Public Safety Committee meeting. Councilmember Alderete Gavito seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Cabello Havrda, McKee-Rodriguez, Alderete Gavito, Whyte  
**Absent:** Kaur

### Consent Agenda

2. **Briefing and possible action on the acceptance of grant funds, upon award, for an amount not to exceed \$4,000,000.00 from the Office of the Governor, Public Safety Office, Homeland Security Grant Division, Texas Anti-Gang Program for FY25 for the San Antonio Police Department for the period of September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025.** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; William P. McManus, Chief of Police]

Councilmember Whyte moved to Approve. Councilmember Alderete Gavito seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** McKee-Rodriguez, Alderete Gavito, Whyte, Cabello Havrda  
**Absent:** Kaur

3. **Briefing and possible action on the acceptance of funds, upon award, in an amount not to exceed \$68,000.00 for the Office of the Governor (OOG), Public Safety Office, Criminal Justice Division (CJD), Bullet-Resistant Shield Grant Program for the period of September 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025.** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; William P. McManus, Chief of Police]

Councilmember Whyte moved to Approve. Councilmember Alderete Gavito seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** McKee-Rodriguez, Alderete Gavito, Whyte, Cabello Havrda  
**Absent:** Kaur

4. **Briefing and possible action on the acceptance of funds, upon award, in an amount not to exceed \$60,638.00 for the Office of the Governor (OOG), Public Safety Office, Criminal Justice Division (CJD), Rifle-Resistant Body Armor Grant Program for the period of September 1, 2024, through August 31, 2025.** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; William P. McManus, Chief of Police]

Councilmember Whyte moved to Approve. Councilmember Alderete Gavito seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** McKee-Rodriguez, Alderete Gavito, Whyte, Cabello Havrda  
**Absent:** Kaur

#### **Briefing and Possible Action on**

5. **Briefing on an update on the San Antonio Community Outreach and Resiliency Effort (SA-CORE) and Mental Health and Public Safety Strategic Guide.** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; Claude A. Jacob, Director, Health]

Jessie Higgins, Chief Mental Health Officer, provided an update on the SA-CORE and Mental Health and Public Safety Strategic Guide and background of the SA-CORE Team and a review of the Year 1 pilot results. She acknowledged the collaborative efforts of City staff and the Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council (STRAC).

Higgins spoke to the need for mental health calls within the City of San Antonio and noted that there was an increase in calls since 2019. She reviewed a map of mental health calls for calendar year 2023 with over 32,452 calls total. She noted that April 2023 had the most calls in one month with over 10,000 mental health calls received from all parts of the City.

Higgins reviewed the organizational chart for the SAPD Mental Health Unit, the SAFD Mobile Integrated Health Unit, and the multidisciplinary approach to mental health programs/services. She spoke to the personnel dedicated to both SAPD and SAFD and services referred to by each entity to include drug overdose service, mental health services, and other crisis situations. She stated that collaborations with Metro Health were a key part of the organizational structure. Higgins noted that the multidisciplinary approach provided extensive training and education on available services and spoke to the different programs and partners providing services.

Higgins stated that in 2021, the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute analyzed the San Antonio First Response System. She noted that a key finding was that there was an existing system of collaborative efforts both internally and external to the City. She stated that the Study recommended the expansion of policing and community approach to mental health emergency response to give more response options to support SAFD.

Higgins reviewed the objectives of the SA-CORE Program which was to first respond to 9-1-1 mental health calls and to assist individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis using the least restrictive approach with a clinical team at the forefront. Secondly, Higgins stated that another objective was to reduce unnecessary arrests by routing persons to the correct levels of care and thus increase access to outpatient services.

Higgins noted that in FY 2022 the SA-CORE Program was initiated and worked out of the SAPD Central Substation seven days per week from the hours of 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM. She noted that the Program was launched in April 2022. She spoke to the composition of the SA-CORE Team which included a mental health clinician, a SAFD Mobile Integrated Healthcare Paramedic, and a SAPD Mental Health Unit Officer. She added that there were separate clinicians that followed up with individuals after the first contact from the Team.

Higgins reviewed the SA-CORE Year 1 Pilot Program results which included responding to 1,465 calls from the period of April 2022 to March 2023. She stated that 35% of the calls were resolved on scene by the SA-CORE Team, 28% of calls were put in emergency detention and 13% were transported to a behavioral clinic or hospital. She noted that less than 1% of calls resulted in an arrest, 12% of calls were categorized as other due to being unable to locate reported individuals, and 12% of responses were canceled while in route to the location.

Higgins reviewed SA-CORE follow-up outcomes data collected by the Center for Health Care Services (CHCS) from April 2022-December 2022 from 740 unique clients. She stated that each call was followed up by an SA-CORE clinician who would then either transition or discharge a person. She stated that of individuals transitioned to CHCS, 15% were already connected to CHCS, 56% started utilizing CHCS services and 29% refused services.

Higgins reviewed the SA-CORE expansion timeline with the City Council and noted that the City Council had approved two additional teams in May 2023, approved three teams for 24/7 coverage in September 2023, and that SA-CORE began citywide coverage with the three teams (16 hours/daily) on January 1, 2024. Higgins stated that in July 2024 the Program would begin 24/7 coverage for all three teams.

Higgins reviewed a map of citywide coverage of the SA-CORE Program which was divided into two teams from January 1, 2024 to April 20, 2024 for 16 hours per day, seven days a week and resulted in 1,224 response calls. She spoke to call data for each team and the areas of responsibility.

Higgins reviewed the engagement of the SA-CORE clinicians for follow-up services referrals which totaled 885 follow-up contacts. She spoke to data results to include referrals to CHCS, referring to providers, in-progress cases, and those who declined services.

Higgins stated that the next steps in the Program included 24-hour coverage which would begin the following week. She expressed her appreciation for the partnership of Metro Health, SAFD, and SAPD. She noted that the Mental Health Guide would be used to provide education and collaboration between the entities.

Higgins provided an overview of Mental Health and Public Safety Strategic Guide updates stating that the purpose of the Guide was to establish the issue areas at the intersection of Mental Health and Public Safety for the City, providing a defined vision and purpose to address mental and public health and identify examples of similar work in other communities. She stated that the overall goal was to align strategic goals across the City departments of Metro Health, SAPD, and SAFD.

Higgins spoke to community roles for each entity and noted that limitations/gaps of service providers and services would impact determined goals. She noted the need to define the City of San Antonio's scope of responsibility, including limitations on roles and the goals for engaging in mental health work. She stated that defining the role and level of engagement for each department was needed to include how they collectively work together to engage in each other's work. She added that once goals and role expectations were determined, the City would need to align staffing, funding, training, and equipment needs based on the determined roles.

Higgins noted that the interaction of Mental Health and Public Safety would require continued collaboration and identification of referred services. She stated that this included identifying appropriate party response to 9-1-1 calls and people involved in initial crisis responses. She spoke to development of systemic options to address the shortage in treatment capacity across the health care system. She noted the need to further reduce dependence on law enforcement response as the primary point of entry into a system of care.

Higgins stressed the importance of community partnerships at the City and County level to ensure response and delivery of needed services. She noted the need for expansion of existing work to add capacity to the call responses. She added that collaborative legislative advocacy efforts were needed to improve the system capacity and funding allocations from the State and Federal Government sources.

Higgins reviewed the next steps in the process to include identifying recommendations based on interview feedback, departmental feedback, and researching initiatives from other cities. In addition, next steps included defining opportunities for existing work and expansion of upstream preventive work.

## DISCUSSION

Chair Cabello Havrda stated that this Program had much to be proud of and feel good about especially with services being expanded to 24 hours.

Chair Cabello Havrda stated that the Program results had been positive but there was still more to accomplish. She was pleased that the results identified only six arrests in responding to over 1,400 calls. She asked for clarification on what defined emergency detention services. Higgins stated that emergency detentions occurred when a person was identified as being a danger to themselves and was admitted into the hospital for 48 hours.

Chair Cabello Havrda asked if the 24-hour services would be available to all Team areas. Higgins stated that services would be divided equally between the Teams and referred to the City map for unit locations and areas of responsibility.

Chair Cabello Havrda asked that the map of SAPD CY 2023 mental health dispatch response counts be redone to further define address incident sites. Higgins stated that the data would be redone for clarity.

Chair Cabello Havrda asked if incidents were being reviewed for services to individuals and not locations. Higgins stated that response data was not only for locations but also for high-call users or addresses which could be calls from apartment complexes. Chair Cabello Havrda noted that it was important to look at individual resident homes that may have high call volume and to drill down on reasons for the call so to address true issues. Higgins confirmed that through the Southwest Texas Crisis Collaborative, staff, and service partners were gathering data on locations and the individual's name to make sure issues were being addressed.

Chair Cabello Havrda asked of the data for the usage of 9-1-1 calls and if there was staff at the 9-1-1 call level to address mental health response. Higgins stated that future endeavors of the Program would be to include a mental health option and response into services under the strategic plan. Chair Cabello Havrda requested accelerated action on providing a mental health option when calling 9-1-1.

Chair Cabello Havrda asked for the opinions of SAPD Officers of the Program and services referrals. Lt. Paul Castillon, Director of the SAPD Mental Health Unit, stated that SAPD Officers worked closely with the clinicians and other Metro Health experts to quickly address incidents in a collaborative effort.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked what percentage of mental health programs were responded to by the four teams. Higgins stated that there were over 10,000 calls and staff responded to 1,400 calls. She stated that some of the reasons that more calls were not responded

to were because services currently were not available 24 hours a day and spoke to limitations of response team call capability. She also reviewed the process for addressing mental psychotic episodes and circumstances that required additional resources.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked for clarification on the number of calls responded to. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that 12% of calls were responded to. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested data on the outcomes of calls that were not responded to by the SA-CORE Team and identifying which of those calls could have been applicable to this Program. He stated that this could be a better way to identify gaps and the need for services. Higgins stated that data would be provided and would also provide data on calls that were responded to after going to full 24-hour coverage beginning August 1, 2024.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked how many calls resulted in the use of force by SAPD. Castillion stated that he would provide the exact data but that it was less than five incidents. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez stated that he was pleased to see that there were fewer incidents of violent action due to the Program.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked what attributed to the higher number of cancelled calls in the South and West Sides of the City. Higgins stated that the SA-CORE Team met every two weeks to analyze all data to include cancelled calls. She stated that many incidents were due to geographic challenges and getting to calls promptly. Higgins stated that the Bexar County SMART Team which addressed similar issues also experienced geographic challenges on responses. She noted that SMART was also analyzing data and found that many counties were addressing challenges and remedies. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested overlay data of Bexar County response incidents and outcomes. Higgins stated that she would request data from Bexar County.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito noted that she had participated in a ride along with a SA-CORE Team and was pleased to see the services they provided. She asked for reasons why people refuse mental health services from CHCS. Higgins stated that ultimately individuals have a choice to enter services but some may refuse due to location or convenience of service locations, they may already have a mental health provider, or they may not feel they are ready to enter services. Higgins noted that clinicians conduct follow-up calls after 24 hours, seven days, 30, 60 and 90 days to see if individuals will enter mental health services.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked what efforts were made to contact individuals for follow-up services prior to closing a case. Higgins stated that of the 24% of follow-up cases that could not be followed up on had calls and contacts at the 30, 60, and 90-day intervals.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito supported a dedicated call line for individuals to use when seeking services and not just through the 9-1-1 operator reporting an incident.

Councilmember Kaur expressed her support of the Program and noted that the number of calls able to be responded to was due to the increase in the number of teams. She noted that response to calls more than tripled but asked when most calls were being placed. Higgins stated that calls fluctuated between times of the day and on actual days and stated that data was collected to analyze call volume.

Councilmember Kaur requested call data on and location demographics comparisons to mental health calls and those conducted by normal patrol services to determine the need for services. Higgins noted that call and response data from mental health calls were more robust than those conducted outside the SA-CORE framework but that staff would work to gather data and report back to the Committee.

Councilmember Whyte asked for clarification on SA-CORE expansion. Higgins stated that the need for mental health services was greatly needed to expand and she hoped that the mental health guide would provide opportunities for synergy and data. She stated that staff and partners were continuously identifying and evaluating future services.

Councilmember Whyte agreed on the need for continued collaboration between the City and County services. He asked what was being done to expand services. Higgins stated that staff would be meeting regularly to identify funding and separation of services and synergy. She stated that she was confident of future services.

No action was taken on this Item.

**6. Briefing and possible action to consider removing Hemisfair Park from the list of park properties not subject to the 11 pm curfew under Section 22-28 of the City Code.** [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; John Jacks, Director Center City Operations]

Assistant City Manager Lori Houston stated that staff was seeking feedback and consideration for the adjustment of hours for the Hemisfair Park area. She noted that City Code Section 22- 28 included Hemisfair as a park that had a curfew time with no operations between 11:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. She stated that the section identified Woodlawn Lake Park, Hemisfair, Alamo Plaza, Market Square, La Villita, and the Riverwalk between Josephine Street and Eagleland Drive as 24-hour parks.

Houston noted that currently anyone found in a City park not identified on the 24-hour park list during non-operating hours could receive a citation under Section 22-28(f). She stated that HPARC had adopted operating hours that closed Hemisfair at midnight. However, because Hemisfair fell under an exception to the 11 p.m. curfew, HPARC's curfew was not enforceable by a citation.

Houston noted that staff and stakeholders conducted meetings with Hemisfair tenants and downtown residents to discuss their security concerns about lifting the curfew at Hemisfair and activity in the park after hours. She stated that in response to those concerns, City staff would evaluate removing Hemisfair Park from the 24-hour park list to consider specific hours of operations. She stated that a plan would be developed in partnership with the tenants, stakeholders and the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) to better address safety concerns that could include a curfew, enhanced lighting and/or extended police presence during evening hours. She added that the plan would seek input from users of the Park and neighborhoods nearby, as well as the City's Parks and Recreation Board.

Houston stated that staff recommended that once a plan was developed, a potential amendment to the City Code would be made to add the hours of operation of Hemisfair Park with the

recommendation brought to City Council for consideration in August/September 2024.

## DISCUSSION

Councilmember Kaur thanked Councilmember Whyte for assisting her in bringing the Item forward due to safety concerns after Fiesta events and concerns of businesses seeking to increase public safety at Hemisfair. She noted increased activity at Hemisfair and the need for continued security and improved lighting and other safety components with a set plan in place. She stated that a curfew could be part of the plan along with increased security and spoke to recent shooting incidents of people running through the park. Councilmember Kaur requested that the lights on Cesar Chavez be looked at since they had been out possibly due to the street construction occurring adjacent to the park.

Councilmember Kaur noted that meeting with Hemispark tenants and residents showed support for establishment of a park curfew and increased security. She stated that for the 68 complex residents security was needed to be able to walk from the parking garage or restaurants to their homes and she requested continued discussions with the residents to obtain their feedback.

Councilmember Kaur thanked the Chair and staff for bringing the Item forward due to increased concerns. Houston clarified that all businesses within Hemisfair closed by 10 p.m. and that the curfew would be after those hours and staff would work closely with all concerned on addressing residents traveling within the park to their homes and allowing for flexibility of the plan.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked what were the arguments against a curfew. Houston stated that as of yet there was no feedback against the curfew but noted that meetings would be held to fully identify recommendations based on stakeholder feedback to include residents traveling within the park.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito requested curfew related citation issuance data.

Councilmember Whyte highlighted the need to address the issue and concerns for safety and he supported staff and stakeholder efforts to include tenants, Centro San Antonio, and City staff to discuss this issue. He spoke of recent meetings with tenants to gain their feedback.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked if the Hemisfair property was private property. Houston confirmed that Hemisfair was owned by the City. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez stated that he had an issue with people not being able to be at this park just as other 24-hour parks. He asked why this park was different from those parks. Houston stated that the main reason was that the Park had a residential component within the park boundaries. She noted that the Item was brought forward due to the request for consideration by Councilmembers Kaur and Whyte.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez expressed concerns regarding a blanket curfew and access that residents would have that other individuals would not have because they do not have ownership as residents. He asked why a blanket curfew would not be applied to all 24-hour parks. Houston stated that she would not recommend the Riverwalk due to its proximity to



resident neighborhoods and activities such as people walking their dogs. She noted that Hemisfair was different due to the mixed-use development and activity associated with the park. She stated that the curfew issue could be brought up for Market Square and La Villita but that she had concerns

for Market Square since it had 24-hour businesses on its premises. She added that exceptions could be granted in establishing curfew and related activities.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez expressed concern for addressing curfews based on fear. He stated that he was concerned of over policing of areas and inconsistency in addressing issues such as those at Market Square. He spoke to recent incidents at Market Square and the need for addressing issues at those venues rather than Hemisfair which was a more residential area and instances when people traveled through Hemisfair with no issues of bad behavior and being cited for no reason other than a curfew being in place.

Chair Cabello Havrda asked if SAPD Officers had discretion in issuing citations depending on the severity of offenses. Assistant Police Chief Chris Benavides confirmed that Officers had discretion on citations and addressing of activity or suspicion of activity.

Councilmember Kaur stated that language could be added to the Ordinance to address "walk-thru" situations in contrast to loitering within the park. She asked if a pilot program could be initiated to track violations and related data. Deputy City Manager Maria Villagomez stated that to establish a curfew and related citations an Ordinance would need to be added to the City Code and would normally be able to be in a pilot program. First City Attorney Liz Provencio stated that staff could explore ways to demonstrate the intent related to the curfew and citations and set a time for reevaluation of the Ordinance once data was gathered.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez stated that he did not support adding a curfew at Hemisfair Park. He asked of the data on the number of 9-1-1 calls placed at Hemisfair Park and if any reported violent crime. Public Safety Outcomes Coordinator Maria Vargas-Yates stated that there were over 2,378 calls over the last three years specific to Hemisfair Park. She noted that from June 10, 2023 to June 10, 2024, there were 1,157 calls made from on-park activities and the next being made by Patrol Officers. She stated that during the last three years, the majority of the incidents were considered disturbances as 261 calls were associated with activity through the entirety of the park premises. She added that the top call time of instances was 6:00 a.m. with 208 calls and at 10:00 p.m. with 206 calls, noting that these were outside of proposed curfew hours.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez acknowledged that the majority of the calls were outside of the curfew hours. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested data on how many calls were alcohol related. Assistant Chief Chris Benavides stated that data would be provided. Deputy City Manager Villagomez noted that the curfew would be one of several tools to be used by SAPD to monitor the area to include improved lighting and security. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez reiterated that he was not supportive of curfew.

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

motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Cabello Havrda, Kaur, Alderete Gavito, Whyte  
**No:** McKee-Rodriguez

**7. Briefing on Phase II of the Violent Crime Reduction Plan** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; Maria Vargas, Director, Integrated Community Safety Office]

Dr. Michael Smith of UTSA provided an update on Phase II of the Violent Crime Reduction Plan (POPBP). He noted that POPBP was a place-based crime control strategy based on three realities: 1) Crime was concentrated among a relatively small number of offenders, victims, and places; 2) A small number of places account for most crime in any city; and 3) Criminogenic places are often networked.

Smith reviewed the POPBP strategy which was comprised of three elements which were a vulnerable victim, a motivated offender, and the lack of a capable guardian. Smith stated that POPBP had extensive literature that documented the effectiveness of problem-oriented policing on reducing crime and disorder at crime hot spots. He noted that a 2019 meta-analysis of 65 studies and 78 tests of hot spot strategies found that 62/78 test (79%) produced crime control gain over other controls.

Smith noted that POPBP was the mid-term strategy in the San Antonio Violence Prevention Plan. He stated that with input from the University of Texas-San Antonio (UTSA) research team, a multidisciplinary working group had developed a detailed operations plan for the initial POPBP site in San Antonio. Smith added that UTSA had designed a data collection form that would allow for detailed capture of implementation and outcome data for the selected site.

Smith spoke to initial UTSA site selection data collected in the Fall of 2023 which included all crime incidents from September 2021 through August 2023 to include violence calls for service. He noted that UTSA had identified five locations across San Antonio that ranked among the four evaluated categories which included violent crime incidents, violent crime arrests, warrant arrests, and violence calls for service.

Smith stated that the recommended site for the POPBP would be the Rosemont Apartments at Highland Park located at 1303 Rigsby Avenue. He noted that the Rosemont was the only location that ranked in the top 10 for violent crime, violence calls for service, and violent arrests.

Smith reviewed next steps in the POPBP process which include following UTSA-provided training to department directors and working group members in the Fall 2024 for the site. He stated that City efforts to address the underlying conditions conducive to crime in the area were currently underway. He added that the UTSA research team would collect and track data on the agreed-upon process and impact metrics for the site and report results every six months as part of the bi-annual reports to the City.

Maria Vargas-Yates provided an overview of the Violent Crime Reduction Plan: Phase II and strategies for the Rosemont Apartments located in Council District 2 and operated by Opportunity

Home and Beacon Communities. She reviewed the working group composition of the Executive POPBP Team (EPT) comprised of department directors from 12 different City departments.

Vargas-Yates reviewed the EPT recommendation categories which included strategies to connect residents to City and community services, safety, and improvements to the physical environment. She stated that recommendations under the connection to services category included conducting a survey to understand resident needs, educating and connecting residents to services, addressing roaming and stray animals, and bi-weekly abatement and outreach of nearby homeless encampments.

Vargas-Yates spoke to the recommendations for safety which included deployment of SAPD license plate readers and mobile telescoping cameras, use of door security for residents, and determining the impact to Highview Apartments located next door to Rosemont. She stated that SAPD would monitor criminal activity at the nearby food mart and increase data sharing between the Rosemont security and SAPD.

Vargas-Yates reviewed the recommendations for improvements to the physical environment: The Development Services Department (DSD) would review 3-1-1 calls each week to address code issues and install three additional streetlights. She stated that City staff would work with Rosemont to repair or enhance fencing, lighting, and security cameras and assess and restore streets and sidewalks in the area.

Vargas-Yates reviewed the timeline of the EPT process which included working sessions from April to May 2024, six-month implementation from June to December 2024, and evaluation of program impact and continued activities in January 2025. She stated that all efforts would be reported to UTSA for tracking and the Integrated Community Safety Office (ICSO) would coordinate and evaluate efforts at Rosemont. She noted that Metro Health would conduct a follow-up survey at Rosemont to gauge the Program's impact.

Vargas-Yates stated that funding for the Program would come from existing SAPD resources. She noted that the POPBP Team proposed to utilize approximately \$417,000 from the \$3.5 million Community Safety Reserve Fund with \$405,000 for camera upgrades to the location and \$15,000 for the Animal Care Services (ACS) vaccine clinic.

Vargas-Yates stated that staff recommended the use of \$420,000 from the FY 2024 Community Safety Reserve Fund for Phase II of the POPBP and she noted that the Item would be brought before the the full City Council for consideration in August 2024.

## DISCUSSION

Chair Cabello Havrda asked for clarification on funding resources for the Program. Vargas Yates stated that the department directors were confident of the use of existing funding for the programs with the exception of the \$417,000 to be used for cameras and the vaccine clinic. Chair Cabello Havrda asked if funding for the extra items was coming from the specific departments. Deputy City Manager Maria Villagomez clarified that SAPD had a Community Safety Reserve that staff would request approval from the City Council to authorize.

Chair Cabello Havrda asked if Hot Spot Policing was still being used or if this would follow a cumulative approach. Smith confirmed that the Program followed a comprehensive approach and Hot Spotting was part of the approach. Chair Cabello Havrda supported the comprehensive approach and asked if other programs would be used in conjunction with the Program. Vargas-Yates stated that the Program was similar in intent to the Good Neighbor Program used in single-family areas and staff would look to possibly expand the program to multi-family areas.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez noted, as mentioned in the presentations, that changing the underlying conditions that generated crime problems could produce longer-lasting gains than short-term treatments that increased police visibility alone meaning that efforts to address a root cause would yield better than what had been focused on in the past (police visibility only). He stated that his priority when elected was to find a comprehensive approach to address the root causes of crime and achieve true community safety.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez spoke to his recommended tools including the establishment of an Office of Crime Prevention and Recidivism to guide all departments in oversight and provide expertise to community safety programs. He stated that the other tool was a street lighting index to allow the City to be more proactive in applying street lighting to areas without relying on residents to petition for lighting improvements and now funding was available to address gap lighting areas. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez noted his support of progress made and the establishment of short and long term goals. He spoke to an example of addressing food desert issues and Gardopia Apartments in his council district which helped reduce crime.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez noted that while the Rosemont Apartments were in Council District 2, it was surrounded by Council District 3 resident homes. He stated that this property and resident homes were a perfect example of interweaving of the council districts and addressing bigger-picture issues and engagement. He expressed concern that of the \$420,000 being spent at the site, most was spent on security and cameras and that this would not solely address crime.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested a more creative way to address needs within the area such as the ACS vaccine program and asked for consideration for General Fund dollars to be used to connect youth and senior services to the area. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that staff had not yet identified any opportunities outside the General Fund but that staff could come back to the Committee for future funding and that staff would be seeking grants to fund programs as identified. Vargas-Yates spoke to future grant opportunities for training programs for previously incarcerated individuals or nutrition programs and seeking opportunities for innovative solutions.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested data on the organization and non-profit stakeholders that worked in the area and that could be resource providers to this area. Vargas-Yates stated that data was being collected and would be provided to the committee. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez noted that he had not received data on community services being funded through ARPA by council district. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that she would provide the data to him.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito noted that the considered sites were apartment complexes and

asked if this was intentional. Smith stated that it was not intentional and the sites were based solely on crime data. Councilmember Alderete Gavito stated that it was important to address underlying factors that could impact crime.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito asked if the sites had a connection to Opportunity Home. Smith stated that they did not. Councilmember Alderete Gavito stated that she did want to see collaborations with Opportunity Home as needed.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito stated that she supported animal care programs such as vaccine clinics and requested consideration for spay and neuter services at the Rosemont facility.

Councilmember Kaur noted that one of the sites considered for the Program was in her council district (10362 Sahara) which her office received numerous calls about, and asked if they would continue to gain attention as a potential site or support. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that the Program was very fluid and sites would continue to be evaluated for future inclusion in POPBP and reported back to the Committee. Councilmember Kaur asked if the Sahara site was still treated as a Hot Spot. Assistant Police Chief Robert Blanton confirmed that the site was still included in Hot Spot policing. Councilmember Kaur requested data on the sites to the current date, outside of the study time frame.

Councilmember Whyte stated that he supported the Program and consideration of collaboration with Opportunity Home programs. Vargas-Yates confirmed that Opportunity Home's collaborative efforts to address on property improvements such as lighting and infrastructure were made which they alone could complete since they owned the property sites. She stated that communications between SAPD and Opportunity Home were key to addressing security and crime occurrences on the sites.

Councilmember Whyte asked about long-term plans for sustaining this type of program once funding expired. Vargas-Yates stated that continued monitoring of the sites would be included under the Good Neighbor Program expansion into multi-family locations and would evaluate issues to provide solutions under the Program.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez stated that he wanted to make sure that the issue of improved street lighting was needed and requested that gaps to lighting be addressed especially in Hot Spot Policing areas. He noted that the sites considered in the Program were apartment complexes and asked for an evaluation of the top 20 Hot Spot sites to see if there were street light gaps/index at those locations which could be impacting crime. He stated that this should be a priority and additional funding outside the identified \$5 million for street lights be considered to address lighting concerns. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that staff was also looking to be more targeted in the use of funding for lighting and other infrastructure gaps.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked for clarification of Hot Spot data for the Rosemont site and why the site had only two Hot Spot treatments in Fall 2023. Smith clarified that the Hot Spot treatments were done in retrospect for one year and that Rosemont then had only two inspections conducted every six months. He noted that since the study timeframe it had received additional Hot Spot treatments.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested a meeting with staff to discuss other sites within his council district to include the Midcrown location that was considered under this Program. He spoke to establishing a plan to use City Council funding to address issues. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked of the long-term goals for the other sites. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that data on Hot Spot Policing would continue to be gathered and if hot spot policing did not improve services they may be moved up to this Program under Phase II.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez moved to Approve. Councilmember Whyte seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Cabello Havrda, Kaur, McKee-Rodriguez, Alderete Gavito, Whyte

**8. Briefing on the Collaborative Commission on Domestic Violence Cumulative Progress Report and Strategic Plan.** [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager; Claude A. Jacob, Director, Health]

Deputy City Manager Maria Villagomez provided an update on the Cumulative Progress Report for 2019-2022 and the Strategic Plan for 2024-2028 for Domestic Violence. She recognized members of the Collaborative Commission on Domestic Violence (CCDV) and noted that the Program was in partnership with Bexar County and members of local government, judiciary, law enforcement, prosecution, non-profits, healthcare, and higher education.

Deputy City Manager Villagomez reviewed the background and comprehensive approach to addressing domestic violence within the City of San Antonio. She highlighted system improvements to include improvements to the protective order process, expanded capacity for legal services, and enhancements to the justice system process. She noted the creation of a Domestic Violence Navigation Line and changes to the City's Crisis Intervention Model. She spoke to efforts and input from partner organizations such as the Family Justice Center, Bexar County Sheriff's Office, and CCDV.

Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that improvements included increased data sharing and transparency among service organizations and improved identification of risk by law enforcement. She noted that before the CCDV there was not a document that compiled the data that the many partner organizations could utilize for services to families and provide information via a database that reflected areas for improvement. She spoke to the program which had been implemented to enforce existing firearm prohibitions.

Deputy City Manager Villagomez highlighted improvements under the category of education that included enhanced education and marketing of services under a collaborative communications campaign and hosting of an Annual Symposium on Domestic Violence. She added that the communications campaign included enhanced area resource directories which included digital billboards.

Deputy City Manager Villagomez spoke to stakeholder partnerships in delivering parenting training with a trained workforce that supported the domestic violence system. She added that police trainees were also provided training at the academy level to prepare them for response.

Deputy City Manager Villagomez reviewed the new Strategic Plan for 2024-2028 developed by the Metro Health Department and spoke to the shared focus on three strategies which were data utilization, a communication campaign, and healthy relationships in bringing services to families through the efforts of City staff and partner organizations.

## DISCUSSIONS

Chair Cabello Havrda stated that she supported the Program and its progress in supporting domestic violence victims. She acknowledged the community members in attendance and stated that even the smallest refinements to the system could have large-scale positive effects.

Chair Cabello Havrda spoke to the importance of data sharing and transparency among organizations because it provided a good opportunity for collaboration from organizations doing good work in addressing domestic violence. She expressed concern that domestic violence defendants were not appearing in court and not completing counseling. She stressed the importance of addressing challenges of resource availability for defendants. Joe Nino with the City Attorney's Office clarified that the City issued Misdemeanor Class C offenses which did not have to be supervised and spoke to challenges to follow the defendant and hold them accountable for required actions. He noted that Bexar County had a larger system and resources that could follow defendants closer and issue warrants as needed.

Chair Cabello Havrda requested that the Commission identify ways that the City could better follow defendants and hold them accountable for required counseling. Nino clarified that the County did issue Probation Officers who followed defendants which the City utilized. Chair Cabello Havrda spoke to the limit of counseling resources since all providers used the same resources which caused challenges for defendants to meet counseling requirements within 60 days. Nino stated that the court system worked very closely with defendants and worked with defendants to work with waiving fees and timing. Chair Cabello Havrda requested data on the timeliness of defendants being able to enter counseling services. Nino stated that staff would provide that information.

Patricia Castillo, Executive Director of the P.E.A.C.E. Initiative, spoke to the difference between counseling and educational programs for domestic violence. She expressed the need for the use of both services to address domestic abuse. Martha Pelaez, Executive Director of the Family Violence Prevention Center, reviewed the difficulty of individuals to enroll in programs in a timely manner so to address domestic abuse counseling to all involved. Chair Cabello Havrda requested collaboration to address resources for dealing with all cycles and levels of domestic abuse.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito acknowledged the work of the community stakeholders to address intervention services and counseling.

Councilmember Kaur asked for the status of a case study conducted on domestic violence which followed two cases through the System. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that the case study had been completed and reported data to the CCDV and she would forward the report to the Committee.

Councilmember Whyte asked for the metrics to be used to measure the effectiveness of the Plan. Erica Holler Stevenson, Mental Health Administrator stated that metrics would be provided to the Committee and that each category had related bio-metrics associated with them. Councilmember Whyte asked how CCDV would track improvement in data acquisition and sharing of that to all parties. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that a data system had been developed to share data and that staff was working on developing and evaluating the best way to tell the story of the data collected. She stated that staff would report data back to the Committee.

No action was taken on this briefed item.

### **Executive Session**

No Executive Session was held.

### **Consideration of items for future meetings**

None

### **Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

**Approved**

---

*Melissa Cabello Havrda, Chair*

---

*Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk*