

**State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio**



**Meeting Minutes
City Council B Session**
City Hall Complex
San Antonio, Texas 78205

2021 – 2023 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg
Mario Bravo, Dist. 1 | Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, Dist. 2
Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4
Teri Castillo, Dist. 5 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6
Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8 | John Courage, Dist. 9
Clayton Perry, Dist. 10

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

2:00 PM

Municipal Plaza Building

The City Council convened a regular meeting in the Norma S. Rodriguez Council Chamber in the Municipal Plaza Building beginning at 2:03 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Council Members present:

PRESENT: 10 – Nirenberg, Bravo, McKee-Rodriguez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage, Perry

ITEMS

Mayor Nirenberg postponed Item 1 to February 2, 2023 in the interest of time and called for Item 2 to be heard first.

2. Briefing by the San Antonio Police Department in collaboration with the University of Texas at San Antonio on the implementation of a Violent Crime Reduction Plan. [Maria Villagomez, Deputy City Manager; William P. McManus, Chief of Police]

City Manager Walsh introduced the Item noting that there were some keys to success that included a robust communication and engagement plan and supervision of Police Officers. San

Antonio Police Department (SAPD) Chief William McManus provided an overview of the partnership with the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). Chief McManus stated that the goals were to: reverse the current increasing trend in reported violent crime, reduce the number of victims of violent crimes, increase community trust and engagement with SAPD, and improve place based conditions that contributed to violence.

McManus described the strategy to identify violent crime “hot spots” using data that would assess changes in crime every 60-90 days. He noted that emerging hot spots would be added and “cooled” hot spots would be removed. McManus reported that UTSA would conduct a semi-annual analysis of violent crime (within hot spots, substations, and city-wide), calls for service, catchment areas and Plan fidelity but the Plan would include reports to SAPD quarterly. McManus reported that the metrics included a year-over-year decrease in violent and property crimes of at least one percent.

Dr. Michael Smith, UTSA Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, introduced the following members of his team: Dr. Rob Tillyer, Dr. Brandon Tregle and Dr. Chantal Fahmy. Smith opened the presentation by addressing an incident that happened recently in Memphis, Tennessee and described the difference between the proposed Plan and what happened in Memphis with the Scorpion Unit. Smith stated that the Plan was a data-driven, evidence-based Plan to improve violent crime outcomes in a modern and professional manner and he provided a chart indicating there had been a 47% increase in violent crime since 2019 in San Antonio. Smith commented that violent crime was geographically concentrated in a relatively small number of places named “hot spots.” He added that the Plan divided the city into 100 square meter grids and noted that just nine of those grids accounted for 10% of the overall violent crime.

Smith stated that the near-term strategy was to substantially increase police visibility in areas where violent crime was concentrated and prioritized street level deterrence in those “hot spots.” He noted that the mid-term strategy focused on violent places in the city using a Problem-Oriented, Place-Based Policing (POPBP) approach. He stated that a longer-term, offender-based strategy was planned to utilize focused deterrence to help break the cycle of violence among the small number of repeat and high-risk offenders, who were responsible for most violent crime in San Antonio. Smith provided a timeline for the Plan which began January 1, 2023 and would continue for 12 months with reports and evaluation every 60-90 days.

Mayor Nirenberg thanked the presenters and recognized that it was the entire City of San Antonio organization’s responsibility to keep its residents safe, not just SAPD and asked the City Manager to list other areas that impacted community safety. City Manager Walsh replied that part of the study was to help define and identify those intersecting areas and the SAPD staffing analysis would be completed in March 2023 which would also help inform the five-year Plan to improve community safety. Deputy City Manager Maria Villagomez added that Metro Health was also working on a Violence Prevention Plan which would connect with the SAPD Plan. Mayor Nirenberg recommended that UTSA use data in other City departments to help inform creative solutions to crime.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda expressed support for the partnership with UTSA and requested an analysis of the many potential factors related to the increase in crime. Councilmember Cabello

Havrda asked how many Officers would be assigned to a hot spot and asked of their reporting structure. McManus stated that there were about 28 Officers (SAFFE, street crimes and patrol Officers all worked in the hot spot area) that were rotated and expected to spend 15 minutes at a time simply to provide high visibility in the area. McManus stated that Deputy Chief Bobby Blanton was responsible for the Plan.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda requested quarterly updates at the Public Safety Committee meetings and suggested a review of the Plan more often than 60-90 days. Smith stated that less than 60 days would not be enough time to measure impact even though data was collected daily. Councilmember Cabello Havrda requested a dashboard of the data and mentioned that community input and concerns were important as well as data. Councilmember Cabello Havrda noted that the Plan had a high reliance on enforcement but should also provide prevention-based solutions.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked Smith to provide more information on the background and education of the UTSA team. Councilmember Rocha Garcia suggested that social services would be a requirement for the success of the Plan such as housing/homeless prevention, code enforcement and parks/recreation services. Councilmember Rocha Garcia noted that she was the Chair of the Planning & Community Development Committee which focused on many of these areas to help create a better living experience for our residents, particularly those in multi-family units by ensuring tenants knew their rights. She mentioned that the FY 2023 Budget included funding for a new illegal dumping crew at Solid Waste and included funding for Metro Health to connect recently incarcerated individuals with services. Councilmember Rocha Garcia expressed concern that there were many great Plans but no follow-through and was hopeful that SAPD would continue this effort.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia recommended working with the San Antonio Apartment Association to improve services to multi-family residents. She also wanted to ensure broad support of the POPBP. She asked how the Plan would utilize social media reports. Smith stated that the reports of crime would come from SAPD, not social media. Councilmember Rocha Garcia recommended coordination with the Bexar County District Attorney's (DA) Office to ensure proper prosecution of offenses. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that the DA had agreed to participate in the analysis by providing information. City Manager Walsh commented that there was a collective responsibility between the City and the DA to ensure that the Plan was effective and sustainable and the last effort was stifled due to the police collective bargaining agreement.

Mayor Nirenberg added that the changes made recently to the collective bargaining agreement would help this time.

Councilmember Courage asked if victims of violent crimes who went to the hospital were required to report to SAPD. McManus stated that it was a practice but not a requirement. Councilmember Courage asked if there was a relationship between violent crimes against a person and crimes against property. McManus did not think there was a relationship, and the focus of the Plan was on violent crimes against people. Councilmember Courage noted that his constituents were more concerned with property crimes. Smith noted that even though the Plan's

focus was on violent crime, the strategies outlined would also help reduce property crimes. Smith stated that property crime often went unreported, but violent crime was more likely to be reported. Councilmember Courage suggested that this meant there was even more property crime than was thought.

Councilmember Courage noted that the Plan focused on only a small portion (5%) of the City and expressed concern with the rest of the City. Councilmember Courage recommended that the Plan could identify the need for more police resources. City Manager Walsh stated that there was a staffing analysis underway aside from the Plan which would be reported to the City Council in mid-March 2023. Councilmember Courage requested results from the Plan developed by the City of Dallas to help ensure our Plan would be successful. McManus stated that SAPD had units that focused on property crimes and by adding this Violent Crime Plan, property crimes would not be ignored.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez commented that this Plan could make real changes in the “hot spots” if we could better understand where and why crime was happening so that resources could be added to improve outcomes and whether the criminologists would help identify the costs. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez hoped that policies that were implemented would help keep our families safe, but wanted to ensure that over policing and crime prevention were addressed. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez recommended more involvement from the community in those hot spot locations.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez expressed concern with the Plan creating a unit like the Scorpion Unit that recently was involved in an incident in Nashville, Tennessee which began over policing and ultimately led to the Officer involved death of an unarmed Black man who was accused of committing a minor traffic violation. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez expressed concern with a police culture that was difficult to overcome. He noted that the key foundation of a crime prevention Plan was to realize that police alone could not solve the problem and funding was needed to make meaningful investments to address societal flaws.

City Manager Walsh stated that the entire City Council would need to have a policy level conversation about resources and funding and could use the Plan to help inform, however, the Plan would not justify specific spending. City Manager Walsh commented that Chief McManus was working hard to eliminate the “arrogance of authority” culture that led to situations like those in Memphis. McManus stated that on the first day and last day of the Cadet Academy he spoke to them about the “arrogance of authority” and added that there was more training on de-escalation methods and professionalism.

Councilmember Bravo complemented some of the Police Officers that he had encountered in his council district but asked how local crime statistics compared to peer cities. McManus stated that crime was up nationally, but it was difficult to measure apples-to-apples because crime statistics were being reported in different ways in different cities. Councilmember Bravo asked if community members could request that Officers slowly drive through an area called “patrol-by’s.” McManus stated that patrol-by’s were available everywhere but the hot spot patrol-by’s were more intensive because they turned on their lights and stayed longer even though they didn’t leave their vehicles.

Councilmember Bravo recommended a second look at Metro Health's Restorative Justice Plan and a focus on problem houses. Smith stated that restorative justice was not a part of the Violent Crime Plan. McManus reported that Officers investigated problem houses, but the hot spot Plan was focused on violent crime which was not usually the situation in the problem houses.

Councilmember Bravo suggested connecting to resources such as Ready to Work SA to help previously incarcerated persons, so they did not re-offend. McManus commented that any resources to help deter crime would be considered.

Councilmember Perry asked how much the contract with UTSA cost. Deputy City Manager Villagomez stated that the cost was \$110,000 for one year. Councilmember Perry requested benchmarks with other cities noting that UTSA was implementing the Plan in Dallas. Smith stated that the baseline was crime in San Antonio year over year, rather than a comparison between cities.

Councilmember Perry clarified that additional Officers would be from the same substation or reallocated from other parts of the city and asked for a communication plan. McManus confirmed that resources were already available and stated that they would talk to neighborhoods about the Plan. Councilmember Perry commented that property crimes made residents feel unsafe as well as violent crime. McManus agreed that property crime was a serious issue, and the Violent Crime Plan would not impact the enforcement of property crime offences. Councilmember Perry commented that residents wanted more patrols.

Councilmember Perry requested clarification on the use of the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS). McManus stated that the NIBRS began being utilized in 2021 and trends could be reported accordingly.

Councilmember Pelaez commented that the community appreciated the work of Chief McManus and his professionalism but added that many community members still felt unsafe. Councilmember Pelaez asked Chief McManus if he supported the Plan. McManus responded that he was 100% behind the Plan and felt it would make a difference. Councilmember Pelaez suggested that additional police presence would only help reduce crime in the hot spots while the police were there but recommended that more steps needed to be taken for long-term change. Councilmember Pelaez commented on the excellent qualifications of the UTSA team.

Councilmember Castillo noted that her residents wanted to see more San Antonio Fear Free Environment (SAFFE) Officers in the neighborhood. McManus stated that they would need to take Officers from the patrol division or get more staff in order to increase the number of SAFFE Officers. Councilmember Castillo recommended that SAPD needed to set clear expectations for the Plan with the community and requested a briefing on the hot spot locations. Councilmember Castillo commented that investing in vacant lots and buildings drastically reduced crime and recommended investment in these areas to show the community positive changes in the community. Smith agreed that there was a direct correlation between the social problems and violent crimes and there was strong evidence that improvement of vacant buildings and lots, helped improve crime rates.

Councilmember Castillo asked for a clarification on the focus on the 5% of the individuals that committed 50% of the violent crimes and recommended more connection with the DA as she was concerned that there would be over policing of areas with low-income people of color. Smith stated that the model identified those individuals who were under active supervision (such as parole or probation) and leveraged call in sessions and the provision of more social services. Councilmember Castillo expressed concern with the police mistaking identities of people in her council district. McManus stated that the plan was not to go out and scare people but to provide more presence to help deter crime. Councilmember Castillo requested a door-to-door outreach with the community as many of her residents did not attend neighborhood meetings.

Councilmember Viagran noted that there were 231 homicides in San Antonio last year and requested statistics on the demographics of the victims. Councilmember Viagran recommended reviewing the Mayor's Commission on Policing Report from 2017 because there were many initiatives listed that were started but were discontinued and could have helped reduce crime. She noted the uptick in violent crimes in apartment complexes and recommended collaboration with the San Antonio Apartment Association. Councilmember Viagran requested a timeline for the second phase of the Plan to implement the POPBP. Chief McManus stated that the POPBP would be implemented after six months of the first phase.

Councilmember Viagran expressed concern about organized crime and whether this was considered in the Violent Crime Plan. Smith stated that the study analyzed numbers at the macro level and not individual cases. McManus mentioned the Texas Anti-Gang (TAG) Unit funded by the Governor's Office and noted that SAPD's follow-up units focused on organized crime. Councilmember Viagran stated that she was looking forward to the manpower study to help inform City Council on the needs of SAPD.

Councilmember Castillo requested a list or map of the apartment complexes that were hot spots and expressed concern that this fact could cause residents to oppose new apartment complexes being built when the city desperately needed more affordable housing. Councilmember Castillo requested more information on the TAG Unit and expressed concern that the study suggested poor people committed more crime. Smith requested information on the income demographics in the hot spots.

Mayor Nirenberg acknowledged that there was frustration with the lack of past follow through and noted that the difference was that this approach was data driven. He stated that the City needed a broad evaluation of many aspects of our community in order to positively impact the generational challenges of increasing violent crime. Mayor Nirenberg suggested that time was needed to make changes that were long lasting.

Mayor Nirenberg reconvened the B Session meeting on Thursday, February 2, 2023 at 2:44 PM. All members were present.

1. Pre-solicitation briefing and possible action on the second round of the 2022-2027 Housing Bond [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Director, Neighborhood & Housing Services Department]

City Manager Erik Walsh introduced the Item and Veronica Garcia, Director of the Neighborhood and Housing Services Department (NHSD), who provided an overview of the Housing Bond Program and its goals. Garcia provided a summary of the first round of awards which included 14 approved projects and stated that the second round Request for Proposals (RFP) would be released in February 2023 with responses due March 20, 2023. She added that the permanent supportive housing RFP had closed and would be brought before the Planning & Community Development Committee (PCDC) in March 2023 and City Council in April 2023.

Garcia listed Federal programs that had been leveraged including the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program, Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) tax credits for energy efficient homes, grants and loans.

Garcia reported that allocations of \$18 million of Bond funding was for rental housing acquisition and \$5 million was for homeownership production and \$21 million was set aside for other creative programs such as land banking, community land trusts, accessory dwelling units, small rehab programs, etc. Garcia stated that all new construction projects would receive a Displacement Impact Assessment and she provided a timeline for the RFPs.

Mayor Nirenberg stated that he was glad to see the inclusion of IRA funding and recommended factoring the energy efficiency programs into affordability calculations. Garcia commented that sometimes the energy efficiency costs increased the cost of construction. Assistant City Manager Lori Houston commented that sustainability was a part of the scoring and affordability for the tenant was also considered. City Manager Walsh noted that staff concluded that it was more important to keep the program on schedule than to work out all details related to the new Federal IRA.

Mayor Nirenberg suggested providing information to the building contractors so they could access funding from the IRA.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia recommended debriefings with the first round applicants that were not successful. Garcia confirmed that those conversations had occurred, and they were invited to participate in the second round. Councilmember Rocha Garcia suggested that other strategies might need more time in the process and recommended assurance that the projects met the citizen committee's recommendations. Councilmember Rocha Garcia wanted to ensure that the Housing Commission had weighed in on the RFP and process.

Councilmember Castillo spoke in support of the first round of awards which had resulted in 33% deeply affordable units out of the total 2,532 units as well as 22% being public housing or income-based. Councilmember Castillo clarified that the set aside money would have the same parameters as the first round.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez commented that although the projects from Round 1 were great projects, more investment was needed on the east side of town due to historic systems of oppression. Garcia committed to working with partners to focus on trying to get some projects in Council District 2. City Manager Walsh commented that staff did not control who applied. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez recommended extensive outreach to try and get proposals for housing in Council District 2.

Councilmember Viagran noted that Council District 3 was the largest geographic district in the city and wanted to ensure that the southside got its share of affordable housing units as most of the developers had been focusing on market rate housing in the area. Councilmember Viagran noted that developers were looking at San Antonio from all over Texas as a great place to build affordable housing.

Councilmember Courage wanted to reassess the funding in the first round of ARPA funding. Garcia provided an overview of the funding and status of the remaining awards. She noted the funding application collection closure and timeline for remaining funding cycles. Councilmember Courage commented on the \$21 million set aside for future projects and recommended that if not all of the funding was allocated under the RFP, the remaining funding should go back into the same category.

Councilmember Perry recommended industry benchmarking to ensure that the cost per square foot was within a competitive range. Garcia stated that every project went through a full underwriting process which included an analysis of cost. Assistant City Manager Houston explained that the trends were analyzed and costs were compared industry-wide through close partnerships with San Antonio Board of Realtors and development groups but the underwriting scoring process included comparable projects.

Councilmember Perry asked why non-profits received points. Assistant City Manager Houston stated that the Bond Committee and City Council approved criteria which included points for non-profits to build partnerships and capacity. Councilmember Perry requested a list of the non-profits that had proposed on the Housing Bond and with the total amount of funding they were receiving from the City. Assistant City Manager Houston stated that the project budgets were reviewed specified to the projects and evaluations did not include a review of the entire agency's budget or allow funding their operations with the Housing Bond funds. Assistant City Manager Houston added that partnering with non-profits allowed the projects to achieve deeper affordability and provide wrap-around services.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked for an evaluation of the first round unsuccessful proposals along with lessons learned for the second round and asked if they were eligible to reapply. Garcia stated that debriefings were provided and they could reapply. Councilmember Cabello Havrda requested clarification on the process for rehabilitation and whether the repairs were minor or major.

Councilmember Bravo stated that he was looking forward to more permanent supportive housing and asked if the staff recommendations would be brought before the PCDC.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia requested a map of all of the projects and a list of projects by council district. Garcia stated that the web dashboard had general locations to protect the privacy of residents involved in the rehabilitation program. Councilmember Rocha Garcia recalled that the PCDC had advocated for additional points for non-profits and those were reduced at B Session.

Councilmember Pelaez commented that developers from other cities were wanting information on

our program and RFPs. Garcia stated that they could contact her for more information.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting into Executive Session at 4:36 p.m. to discuss the following:

- A. Economic development negotiations pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.087 (economic development).
- B. The purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.072 (real property).
- C. Legal issues related to litigation involving the City pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- D. Legal issues relating to COVID-19 preparedness pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

Mayor Nirenberg reconvened the meeting in Open Session at 5:10 p.m. and recessed the meeting in order to hear Item 1 the next day.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 1:42 PM.

Approved

**Ron Nirenberg
Mayor**

**Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk**