

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
Ana Sandoval, Dist. 7 | Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8
John Courage, Dist. 9 | Clayton Perry, Dist. 10

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

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 2:16 PM. Interim City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Council Members present:

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

ABSENT: None

ITEMS

1. Post-Solicitation Briefing for the construction of street improvements related to the Zona Cultural Streets; Commerce, San Saba, and Santa Rosa (2017 Bond Projects). [Roderick Sanchez, Assistant City Manager; Razi Hosseini, Director, Public Works]

City Manager Erik Walsh introduced Item 1 and Director of Public Works Razi Hosseini provided a presentation on the background and status of the Zona Cultural project funded by the 2017 Street Bond. Hosseini reviewed the map, timeline, and major components of the project as well as information on the contract and solicitation.

Mayor Nirenberg wanted to ensure that the Director of Transportation had been involved in the project and Hosseini confirmed that this had occurred.

Councilmember Bravo stated that Jeff Speck, Urban Planner with the Urban Land Institute, visited recently and Speck recommended converting multi-lane one-way roads to two-way roads in order to develop retail on both sides of the street on Commerce Street and Market Street.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez asked how Market Square businesses would be kept informed on updates and changes related to the Plan. Hosseini replied that there had been input from the businesses and Pete Cortez of the La Familia Cortez restaurants was on the selection panel for the Zona Cultural contractor. City Manager Walsh described the engagement with the Market Square tenants and assured the City Council that there would be extensive communication with the stakeholders in the area throughout the project.

Councilmember Castillo asked about vendor space proposed on San Saba Street and who would manage that space. Director of Center City and Downtown Operations John Jacks explained that his office would manage the rental agreements and whether the space was a lease or temporary rental would depend on the associated programming. Jacks mentioned the possibility of doing a rotation of vendors similar to the current spaces in the plaza at Market Square. Councilmember Castillo asked if TIRZ funds would be utilized for the project. Hosseini confirmed that TIRZ funding would not be used on the project.

Councilmember Perry asked about changes to the project and whether any changes to design would impact the budget and schedule. Hosseini confirmed that changes to the design would impact budget and schedule. Councilmember Perry recommended a different treatment instead of brick pavers be used as they required heavy maintenance and upkeep once installed. Hosseini explained that the new pavers were placed on reinforced concrete and would not shift as the previously installed method which were not on a solid surface. Councilmember Perry asked about the associated SBEDA waiver and asked for details about the communications with contractors regarding waivers. Michael Sindon, Small Business Administrator with the Economic Development Department explained the waiver process at a high level. City Manager Walsh stated that a presentation on the SBEDA waiver process would be made to the Audit and Accountability Committee.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked why there were not any bike lanes on Commerce or San Saba Street. Hosseini stated that there was not enough right of way for bike lanes on Commerce or San Saba and the lanes would not connect to other bike lanes but there were bike lanes on Buena Vista/Dolorosa/Market Street one block to the South of South Santa Rosa and one block East of the streets. City Manager Walsh explained that adding bike lanes at this point would require a redesign and would add time and funding to the project. Hosseini suggested waiting for the Bicycle Master

Plan so to complete more thoroughly. Councilmember Cabello Havrda continued to advocate for more bike lanes on San Saba Street.

Councilmember Sandoval supported the request by Councilmember Cabello Havrda for bike lanes on Commerce Street and suggested evaluating the design for a protected two-way bike lane. Assistant City Manager Rod Sanchez explained that the Commerce Street businesses were not supportive of bike lanes. Councilmember Sandoval inquired about any additional revenue or enforcement of on-street parking along Santa Rosa Street. Center City Development and Operations Director John Jacks explained that there was not currently parking on S. Santa Rosa and that meters would be added but noted that the parking would probably would not produce significant revenue as it was a small area which would not require more parking enforcement personnel. Councilmember Sandoval challenged staff to consider the bike lanes.

Councilmember Pelaez asked Director of Transportation Tomika Monterville to provide an update on the timeline for some of the bicycle network transportation plans. Monterville said that the scope of work for the Bike Master Plan was being reviewed and provided a timeline and description of the process for selection of a consultant. Monterville did not recommend delaying improvements for this area as the project contained necessary safety and pedestrian improvements. Monterville responded to the two-way street recommendation and suggested that there should be a larger conversation later regarding this but stressed that much work had been done on the design of this project and recommended moving forward with the project as presented.

Councilmember Viagran stated that brick pavers at the crosswalks were not easy to navigate in ladies high heel shoes and wanted staff to consider other treatment. Councilmember Viagran was otherwise supportive of the plan.

Councilmember Courage mentioned that the project goal was to make downtown more walkable and noted that VIA Metropolitan Transit was limited for persons from the Northside and asked about parking in this area. Hosseini explained that limited on-street parking was being created with the project. Jacks suggested that alternatives to driving cars downtown should be explored and added that it was time to review the parking needs downtown following the pandemic. Councilmember Courage was concerned about the impact on businesses.

Councilmember Bravo explained that two-way traffic was safer and better for retail development and requested this change to be considered as well as the bike lanes. Councilmember Bravo suggested that new projects should consider sustainability and alternative transportation such as bicycles to help keep young people in San Antonio as they wanted to use bicycles and other alternative modes of transportation.

Councilmember Sandoval expressed her concern related to one-way streets suggesting that while it was conducive to bus transit, it caused higher vehicle speeds. Councilmember Sandoval added that without bike lanes, some cyclers would still ride on those streets and not go a block over to stay on bike lanes and the on-street parking could be an issue for cyclers as well and asked for improved signage for cyclers. Hosseini explained that there was an extensive traffic study which did not recommend changing Commerce to two-way because it needed to be changed for its entire length

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Pro Tem Perry recessed the meeting at 3:15 PM and called for Executive Session to begin at 4:00 PM to consult with the City Attorney's Office (Texas Government Code Section 551.071) and deliberate or discuss any of 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 collective bargaining pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- D. Legal issues related to litigation involving the City pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- E. Legal issues relating to COVID-19 preparedness pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- F. Legal update and analysis on CPS litigation and investigations related to the Winter Storm pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

ADJOURNMENT

Approved

Ron Nirenberg
Mayor

Attest:

Debbie Racca-Sittre
Interim City Clerk