

**HOUSING COMMISSION
OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2021, 11:30 AM
VIA BOARD ROOM (1021 SAN PEDRO) & VIDEO CONFERENCE**

Members Present: Robert Abraham, Member
Nicole Collazo for Pedro Alanis, Member
Jeff Arndt, Member
Kristin Davila, Member
Shirley Gonzales, Chair
Ed Hinojosa, Member
Taneka Nikki Johnson, Member
Amanda Lee Keammerer, Member
Sarah Sanchez, Member

Members Absent: *None*

Staff Present: Mark Carmona, *City Manager's Office*;
Verónica R. Soto, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Juan Valdez, *Mayor's Office*;
Teresa Myers, *Mayor's Office*;
Jameene Williams, *City Attorney's Office*;
Ian Benavidez, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Sara Wamsley, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Jaime Lalley-Damron; *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Allison Beaver, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Rachel Smith, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Crystal Grafft, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Sharon Chan, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*

-
- **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Chair Shirley Gonzales at 11:36 AM.
 - **Roll Call** – Allison Beaver, Housing Policy Manager, called the roll. At the time when roll call was conducted, eight (8) members were present representing a quorum.
 - **Public Comments** – Chair Gonzales announced there were three (3) residents signed up to speak for public comment.
 - 1) **General** – Leticia Sanchez, resident of District 5 and co-chair of the Historic Westside Association, spoke regarding the process for people needing immediate assistance for rent. She stated she receives phone calls from residents attempting to apply but who state the process is too technical, such as needing to include an email address and scanning documents. Sanchez noted that residents were informed that it may take 30 to 45 days to hear an outcome and have difficulty when attempting to contact a representative. She requested for the process to be fixed. She also noted that the process to sign up to speak for the Housing Commission meeting was extremely difficult. She stated she attempted to seek help from the contact number listed in the agenda and received the Office of the City Clerk instead of NHSD.

- 2) **Agenda Item 3** – Rebecca Flores spoke regarding the difficulty to sign up for public comment. She stated that her neighborhood is being gentrified and her and her neighbors are being pushed out. She stated that Carmona was hired as the Chief Housing Officer to coordinate and unify different departments and systems with a focused goal to end housing displacement. Flores noted the community has a high expectation of Carmona to put the needs of most vulnerable in the community first and foremost. She called for Carmona to communicate with housing justice community leaders such as Maria Rosalva, Jessica O. Guerrero, Carol Awero, Ruth Rodriguez, Kayla Miranda, Graciela Sanchez, Linda Ortega, Letty Sanchez, and others. Flores stated the City must recognize that many families in the City earn an extremely low income and address the inequitable policies that were implemented in the past and not redline their needs. She recommended not using the AMI that included the San Antonio/New Braunfels metro area as San Antonio residents earn \$2,000 less than stated in the metro area’s numbers.
- 3) **General** – Jessica O. Guerrero, former Chair of the Commission, spoke regarding feedback on the Housing Bond (Evaluation Framework) criteria. She demanded changing the definition of the word “displacement” in the recommendation and to use ForEveryoneHome’s definition of displacement, as voluntary and involuntary displacement dismisses the experiences of those displaced. She requested the definition of displacement continue the progress of the analysis of displacement done by that group and be respectful. She stated that staff is using COVID as an excuse for a lack of progress on larger initiatives and asked stakeholders and staff to stop using the pandemic as an excuse. She requested that there not be a silo effect in the discussion of housing. She commended Commissioner Johnson for volunteering for the Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing subcommittee as she holds perspective on people that have experienced housing insecurity and others like her need to be in the discussion.

Staff note: The Housing Commission deadline for submitted written comment is 24 hours before the meeting. The reason for this is because it takes 24 hours for comments received in a language other than English to be translated. Speakers can leave a voicemail to be played during the meeting up to three hours before the meeting. Speakers can sign up to speak live during the meeting virtually up to 3 hours before the meeting or to speak during the meeting in person up until the meeting starts. Speakers who call past the deadline are given the opportunity to submit a written comment to be included in the minutes but not read during the meeting, and to sign up in advance for the following meeting.

1. **Item #3: Meet and greet with San Antonio’s new Chief Housing Officer (CHO), Mark Carmona.**

Chair Gonzales welcomed Mark Carmona, Chief Housing Officer, to speak.

Commissioner Keammerer entered at 11:40 AM.

Mark Carmona introduced himself to the Commission. Carmona noted he has worked for over thirty years in social services for the community, most recently as the President and CEO for Haven for Hope and a consultant for the H.E. Butt Foundation. He stated the CHO is positioned to integrate external and internal systems and pairs well with his personal three A’s strategy (Alignment, Adaptability, Agility). Through housing near transportation, work location, community, and cultural assists, the City can bring a greater quality of life to residents.

Commissioner Arndt welcomed Carmona and noted that the VIA Metro Center is a repurposed supermarket. He stated that the Commission’s leadership is here to support

every effort and looked forward to working with Carmona.

Commissioner Johnson welcomed Carmona and inquired what was one of his main goals related to working with the Commission. Carmona stated his goal with the Commission was to facilitate transparency and accountability to the community. He envisioned the building of a foundation that was beyond the Commission and himself that ten to twenty years later would be agile enough to shift to the future city housing needs.

Commissioner Abraham welcomed Carmona and his expertise. He stated that many organizations in the housing space care so deeply about their work that their foci can become muddle. A chief like Carmona can facilitate more efficient collaboration. Carmona agreed there are gaps and overlap with different systems but believed in the housing community network's ability to collaborate and noted the implementation was key.

2. Item #1: Briefing and possible action related to the development of guiding principles for use as an Evaluation Framework for the proposed 2022-2027 Housing Bond a presentation by Commissioners who drafted the Evaluation Framework.

Gonzales requested Jaime Lalley-Damron (Housing Bond Administrator), Commission Keammerer, and Commissioner Davila present.

Damron stated the Commission was charged with developing an Evaluation Framework for the 2022-2027 Housing Bond that focused on the Mayor's Three Pillars (Housing as Public Infrastructure, Resiliency, and Connectivity). Damron noted the Evaluation Framework, if adopted, would be used by the Citizen Bond Committee in the project selection process. Damron noted the Commissioners had met for several workshops and incorporated public feedback from meetings and surveys to help develop the framework. She stated Commissioner Keammerer and Davila worked to incorporate public feedback into the Framework draft. Some comments from the public included: build with the end user in mind, be accountable and report results in a transparent way, and incorporate universal design and age-in place features.

Commissioner Keammerer noted the mindset for the Framework was to have a clear concise tool for staff that included context for the evaluator of how the Framework should be used. She began reading the following draft:

Projects supported with bond funding must:

- Advance the priorities established in the SHIP;
- Exemplify the SHIP's core values of affordability, choice, quality, and accessibility; and
- Connect vulnerable populations to stable housing.

The Housing Commission recognizes the tremendous need for affordable, safe, and healthy dignified housing options for individuals and families with limited financial resources, and those who are most vulnerable to housing instability and involuntary displacement.

Projects that serve the 95,000 households identified as most vulnerable must be prioritized. The leveraging of private, local, state, and federal funding is a critical component to maximizing the number households impacted.

Connectivity

Housing bond projects must promote resident choice and improve connectivity among people, resources, and opportunities by:

- Prioritizing vulnerable populations and increasing their access to stable housing;
- Ensuring wide geographic availability and working to decrease racial and social economic segregation;
- Integrating high-speed, reliable, and affordable internet and mobile infrastructure into design plans;
- Creating walkable, well-lit, and ADA-accessible pathways to public transit options;
- Providing appropriate and comprehensive supportive services for renters and homeowners; and
- Connecting residents to neighborhood-serving amenities and institutions, cultural assets, regional centers, and economic corridors.

Public Health

Housing bond projects must work to improve public health outcomes by:

- Meeting and exceeding the minimum requirements for accessibility;
- Designing housing units with children and multi-generational households in mind, including but not limited to outdoor play areas, green spaces, recreational areas, and safety;
- Resolving issues with lead abatement, mold, lack of sanitary facilities, and/or other environmental hazards;
- Reducing structural and physical barriers to mobility on existing housing units;
- Increasing accessible options for persons with disabilities on newly constructed units;
- Increasing access to public transportation and trail systems; and
- Ensuring residents have increased access to health services and facilities.

Resiliency

Housing bond projects must foster community resiliency by:

- Meeting the needs of economically-disadvantaged populations, including but not limited to front-line workers, senior citizens, low-income families with children, persons experiencing houselessness, person with disabilities, and veterans;
- Creating building designs that prioritize energy efficiency, sustainable water reduction features, resilient building and weatherization practices, residential storm water control features, and/or innovative and bold strategies to reduce the environmental impacts of development and lower energy costs for residents and homeowners;
- Bringing major mechanical and structural systems (foundation, roof, plumbing, electrical, and HVAC) up to code in older housing stock;
- Educating residents about how to maintain and protect their housing asset(s); and
- Not causing direct, involuntary permanent displacement of residents.

Keammerer stated the graphics in the Framework were a visual key added for the bond process, show delineation of purview, and how the draft will fit with the other pieces.

Johnson requested the following edits:

- “Not causing direct, involuntary permanent displacement of residents” moved from Resiliency to Public Health.
- “Increasing access to public transportation and trail systems” moved from Public Health to Connectivity.

Arndt agreed with Johnson’s recommendations.

Gonzales requested more visuals and elaboration on the Framework’s points for better reception and comprehension of the Framework’s goals. Sara Wamsley, Affordable Housing Administrator, stated if the content met Commissioner expectations, staff could work with Government and Public Affairs (GPA) for better graphic designs.

Commissioner Davila noted the Definition of Affordability was also included in the Framework as requested through community feedback. Davila also requested the following edit:

- “Access to full-service grocery stores” in Public Health.

Abraham agreed with Davila’s recommendation. He noted that the Framework seemed to incorporate the public’s feedback and concerns.

Gonzales noted community feedback requested having professions associated with AMI levels for better identification. Carmona agreed the Framework needed better association to the community and may be best to list professions with AMIs. He also noted Commissioners should view the Framework as a coordinated approach as even if the Housing Bond is approved, the funds would not be enough without the help of the other systems and partners in place. Gonzales noted that visuals of the coordination aspect would be beneficial as well.

Commissioner Arndt motioned to approve the amended Housing Bond Evaluation Framework. Commissioner Hinojosa seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Gonzales paused for an announcement regarding Public Comment. Wamsley noted there were comments in the WebEx chat regarding people that had signup to speak. She noted there seemed to be a system issue and requested people call staff directly, request sign up in the chat window, or submit a written statement that could be read and recorded in the meeting minutes.

3. Item #2: Briefing and possible action related to the formation of a Removable Barriers to Affordable Housing Development subcommittee of the Housing Commission including the subcommittee’s purpose, charge, and composition.

Gonzales requested Sara Wamsley present.

Wamsley acknowledged that two of the Tri-Chairs of the Removing Barriers Working Group (RBWG), Cynthia Spielman from Tier 1 Neighborhoods, Jim Bailey from Alamo Architects, were present at the meeting. She noted that the RBWG convened in 2019 at the request of the Mayor’s Office to assist in UDC (Unified Development Code) amendments, recommendations for accessory dwelling units (ADU), and public engagement. As such, the RBWG umbrellaed three subcommittees (regulatory cost burden, accessory dwelling units, public engagement and outreach). The UDC amendment process under DSD (Development Services Department) was paused due to the pandemic but is now resuming. Staff

recommended incorporating the public engagement and outreach efforts to the existing Commission subcommittee and formalizing the other two parts of the RBWG into a Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing subcommittee (RBAH).

Wamsley stated the charge of the RBAH is to identify barriers to affordable housing and propose amendments to the UDC by February 1, 2022. RBAH goals would be to prepare UDC updates, continue work on ADU incentives and awareness, and recommend strategies to align City plans around development and code issues. Regarding the appointment process, staff recommended to initially appoint members that include some of the previous RBWG members, set one-year term limits, and conduct open recruitment for the next round of appointments. If formalized RBAH's next steps would be to appoint members, have the subcommittee work on the UDC recommendations until December, have public outreach and edits in January, and submit the recommended amendments to DSD in February 2022. Wamsley and Gonzales invited Spielman and Bailey to introduce themselves.

Cynthia Spielman, co-founder of Tier 1 Neighborhood Coalition, introduced herself and noted that Tier 1 included over 50 interloped neighborhoods and coalitions and partners with other suburban coalitions. Jim Bailey of Alamo Architects and co-author of the Housing Policy Framework introduced himself. He stated that Spielman and himself have worked with various commissions and committees to bring awareness and assist in navigating and breaking down regulatory barriers to better help underserved communities.

Gonzales thanked Spielman and Bailey for their work thus far. She nominated Commissioner Alanis, Spielman, and Bailey to be appointed to the RBAH subcommittee. Gonzales inquired if the previous RBWG members would all be recommended for the new subcommittee. Bailey stated their intention is to have good community representation but the formal members would largely consist of technical experts that had experience with the UDC development issues. The UDC recommendations would also incorporate outreach and public feedback throughout the process before final recommendation to the Commission and DSD. He asked if Commissioners have a strong recommendation for a subcommittee appointment to inform the staff so that they can be included in the vetting process. Ian Benavidez, Assistant Director, reminded Commissioners that today's possible action would only be to create the RBAH subcommittee but not the appointment of members which would be at the next regular Commission meeting.

Johnson inquired if only one Commissioner would be able to serve on the subcommittee. Gonzales stated that the subcommittee needed at least one, but more could serve. Johnson volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

Keammerer inquired regarding Slide 26, if a one-year appointment is typical for this type of subcommittee and would it be possible to have the term of the initial members to only last until February 1, 2022. Wamsley stated that Commission has discretion about the duration of the term. Keammerer asked what the repercussions may be of having terms end in February and term length in relation to the current subcommittees. Wamsley noted there should be no impact in relation to the other subcommittees, but for continuity the Commission could stagger the term lengths so there would be an anchor of members during the rotations.

Keammerer requested a list of the previous RBWG members. Wamsley stated staff would follow up to send Commissioners the list. Bailey noted that the February 1st deadline was a

part of a series of discussions for the UDC amendments and recommended that the initial membership be for the duration of the process i.e. until the UDC amendments are passed by Council. Arndt inquired when the amendments were expected to be brought to Council. Keammerer agreed that a timeline after the initial February deadline would be important. Allison Beaver, Housing Policy Manager, noted from the City Attorney's Office that details regarding charge and scope of the RBAH can be determined first. Terms for the subcommittee can be a specific date or when the goal or charge of the RBAH is accomplished, such as adoption of the UDC amendments by Council. The subcommittee could be sunsetted at that time and a new RBAH could be formed with a different charge, goal, and term. Wamsley noted that anticipated Council action would be on or around October 2022. Jameene Williams, Assistant City Attorney, noted regarding the composition of members to ensure that Commissioner membership in the subcommittee stay below four as five Commissioners would be a quorum and require public agenda creation and posting.

Commissioner Abraham motioned to approve the formation of the Removable Barriers to Affordable Housing subcommittee as presented by staff including the charge, goal, and composition. Commissioner Arndt seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Collazo stated that Commissioner Alanis requested to be included in the RBAH and recommended to incorporate two Commissioners in the member composition.

Arndt recommended that the RBAH charge include "Continued work through the UDC amendment adoption." Keammerer noted that the work may extend past the October timeframe. Arndt altered his recommendation to sunset the subcommittee after Council adoption of the UDC amendments and recommended that the initial term for the RBAH members be for the duration of the full process until Council adoption. Davila concurred that with the term duration. Wamsley clarified that the RBAH would also be actively involved with DSD and the UDC amendment process.

Commissioner Abraham motioned to approve the amended creation of the Removable Barriers to Affordable Housing subcommittee with the charge and scope as presented by staff with modifications by Commissioner Arndt and authorizing up to four Housing Commissioners to serve on the subcommittee. Commissioner Arndt seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Chair Gonzales paused for public comment.

Wamsley noted that the City had transitioned to a new agenda posting system which resulted in staff not receiving the list of public comment speakers. She stated if any of the public was still unable to contact staff during the meeting to speak, they could contact staff after the meeting and have their comments included in the meeting minutes and forwarded to the Commissioners. She apologized for the inconvenience of the sign-up process and requested the public who had difficulty signing up provide staff feedback of what their sign-up experience was so the issues could be rectified for future meetings.

Closing-

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned without contest at 1:03 PM.