

**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, January 12, 2022

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 2:09 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, Sandoval, Pelaez, Courage, Perry

ABSENT: None

ITEMS

1. **Community Bond Committee Project Recommendations presentation for the City's Proposed \$1.2 billion 2022 – 2027 General Obligation Bond Program.** [Roderick Sanchez, Assistant City Manager; Razi Hosseini, Director, Public Works]

City Manager Erik Walsh introduced the Item and provided an overview of the process to develop the 2022 Bond recommendations including the work of the Community Bond Committees and tri-chairs: Berto Guerra, Brandon Logan, and Jamie Kowalski. Walsh outlined the propositions and introduced Jamie Kowalski who provided an overview of the role of the committees, listed the individual committee co-chairs and described the process which included 20 meetings and five bus tours. Kowalski added that 702 residents participated and 572 comments were received.

Kowalski introduced the Chair of the Streets, Bridges & Sidewalks Committee John Bailey who provided an overview of the 61 projects that totaled \$477 million and particularly highlighted changes to staff recommendations and explained that if there was savings, it would be prioritized citywide to fund failing “F” Streets.

Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces Committee recommendations were presented by Co-Chairs Jeanette Honermann and Jim Bailey. Bailey highlighted adjustments to staff recommendations that were made by the Committee and recommended that the City Council review the memo that the Co-Chairs submitted. Honermann outlined the committee process and listed input received from residents throughout the City.

Co-Chair of the Drainage & Flood Control Committee Chris Garcia presented Committee recommendations and highlighted changes from staff recommendations including the Committee’s recommendation to not include funding for Public Art in the proposition. Co-Chair Suzanne Scott explained that \$364.6M in projects were considered “below the line” projects because they were above the amount available in the Drainage & Flood Control Proposition. Scott reported that the Committee recommended using Federal Infrastructure funding for these projects and stated that other recommendations were made by the Committee relating to process improvements for future bond processes, creation of a Citizens Advisory Committee and comprehensive flood control and drainage master plan. Scott indicated that the Committee recommended that the City require the use of green stormwater infrastructure and nature-based options in the scope of all Bond projects.

Co-Chair of the Facilities Committee, Dwayne Robinson provided an overview the 18 projects recommended to be funded at \$134 million including addition of funding for a Fire Station and a Citywide Meals-on-Wheels. Projects that were not included in the program but recommended to be considered for other funding totaled over \$15 million. Robinson expressed that maintaining the City’s facilities should be a priority.

Co-Chair of the Housing Committee Shirley Gonzales explained the work accomplished by the Committee to set parameters that would be used by the City to develop future projects from the bond funding in accordance with the Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP). Gonzales reported that the SHIP included plans for preservation and rehabilitation of housing, rental housing at affordable levels and creation of new housing. Co-Chair Katie Vela outlined the six parameters that should be followed for utilization of Bond funding in the Housing Proposition including: serving cost burdened populations, projects prioritizing income-based housing in established neighborhoods, providing access to transportation, meeting requirements of the Unified Development Code, not cause displacement, and Bond funding would be utilized to provide affordability and resident protection.

City Manager Erik Walsh stated that all reports were available on the City’s Bond Website. Walsh explained that the Committees stayed within the proposition dollar amounts provided with the only change being an increase of \$2.5 million to the Facilities Proposition to fully fund Fire Station #33 in City Council District 5 with a reduction to a Streets Project in District 5 to make up for the increase. Walsh noted that the Committees made \$44.7 million in changes, the total number of projects was increased from 166 to 182, the

funding for the Greenway Trails decreased from \$110 million to \$106.5 million, Public Art was recommended by staff at 1.5% for all Propositions except Housing but was removed completely from Drainage Proposition and reduced to 1% in the Parks Proposition. Walsh indicated that City-wide project numbers went from 20 to 22 with no change to regional projects and outlined the Timeline for the Bond Program through election day May 7, 2022.

DISCUSSION:

Mayor Nirenberg introduced the discussion by thanking staff, volunteers who served on the Bond Committees and the community. Mayor Nirenberg stressed that a year and a half ago, the City was only considering a \$600 million Bond, but was pleased to have \$1.2 billion for the Bond Program. Mayor Nirenberg noted that the Bond was one tool that the City could use to meet infrastructure needs but there were opportunities for funding from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Build Back Better (BBB) and other potential grants.

Councilmember Sandoval supported the addition of the Quinton Valley drainage project. Councilmember Sandoval recommended layering other entities' projects with these to ensure enhancements could be maximized on the selected projects during the design process. City Manager Walsh suggested careful crafting of Proposition language in order to allow for leveraging of other funding. Director of Public Works Razi Hosseini explained that his department used Geographic Information System (GIS) layering to coordinate propositions and evaluate projects by other partners such as Bexar County.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda wanted to ensure that youth aging out of the Foster System were considered a "vulnerable population" that should be prioritized for Housing and also asked how projects would receive funding. Assistant City Manager Lori Houston stated that the permanent supportive housing projects would include the youth aging out of the Foster System and explained that Housing Projects would go through a solicitation process that followed the parameters set by the Committee.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda stated that she supported Public Art but respected the community's input which included revisions to the recommendations. Councilmember Cabello Havrda expressed specific support for Marbach Road Drainage, the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) ball courts, Old Spanish Trails Park, Fire Station #33 and a destination park in District 6.

Councilmember Courage supported the proposal and applauded the work of the Bond Committees. Councilmember Courage expressed concern that the recommended changes to Public Art might not meet the percent for art in the current ordinance. City Manager Walsh provided overview that showed that \$3.8 million was decreased from the original staff recommendation, overall percentage of Public Art in the Bond had increased to 1.1%.

Councilmember Viagran thanked the District 3 appointed Committee Members and staff. Councilmember Viagran suggested Public Art funds be adjusted across the board to be equal across propositions. Councilmember Viagran supported funding for new construction of Fire Station #33, Mitchell Lake and Old Mission Trails. Councilmember Viagran asked about a timeline for review of Housing Bond ballot language. Assistant City Manager Lori Houston explained that the Housing Bond was different from the other propositions and would look different on the ballot.

Councilmember Perry recommended more focus on infrastructure and supported the recommendation by the Committees to remove Public Art from the Drainage Proposition and reduce Public Art in the Parks Proposition from 1.5% to 1%. Councilmember Perry asked if the Committees were provided enough time to deliberate. Facilities Committee Chair Robinson responded that there was a healthy amount of dialogue

but recommended a longer process to allow for more engagement within the Committee. Councilmember Perry expressed concern that the Committees were not allowed to move money between the Propositions. City Manager Walsh clarified that City Council could make changes to the total Proposition amounts.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia recognized the District 4 appointees to the Bond Committees adding that she was cautiously optimistic about the improvements and noted that there was never enough money, so she appreciated the additional “below the line” projects that the Committees recommended in the event there was savings or additional funding available. Councilmember Rocha Garcia supported a resident and neighborhood-centric approach to the Bond and requested that future bond programs consider hosting meetings in other parts of the City with accessible parking and during a time that might be more accessible.

Councilmember Castillo noted a great community consensus through the Bond’s community engagement process and thanked the Council District 5 Bond Committee appointees. She requested that future Bond Programs include more basic infrastructure improvements and prioritize drainage and municipal facility projects within District 5. Councilmember Castillo asked for an individual staff briefing to further clarify difference between low barrier or no barrier permanent supportive housing.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez expressed his support for Bond projects identified for Council District 2 but asked if it was possible to remove projects in the amount of what was lost in Public Art to be funded under ARPA funding. City Manager Walsh stated that staff would provide an update of ARPA funding at the City Council B Session meeting on January 26, 2022. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez requested a future staff briefing on the Housing Bond project solicitation and evaluation process.

Councilmember Bravo recognized the District 1 appointees to the Bond Committee and all Bond Committee Members. Councilmember Bravo agreed with fellow Councilmembers on the importance of addressing improvements to future Bond Programs. Councilmember Bravo supported funding for the Arts and noted opportunities for putting the City on the map with its Art Programs and asked to expand Art Funding. Councilmember Bravo did not want to undo any current actions but asked for consideration of additional projects in the Arts and expressed the importance of the Arts to society. Councilmember Bravo noted the challenges with the Sunken Garden Theater project and announced a public meeting to be held January 24, 2022 to further discuss possible improvements. Councilmember Bravo also stated that he was willing to shift Council District Budget funds towards Arts programming.

Councilmember Pelaez recognized staff for their work and objectivity in determining projects for the Bond Program. Councilmember Pelaez expressed his disappointment in the amount of funding for the Arts and cited other Texas Cities that provided higher amounts to the Arts. Councilmember Pelaez also noted that the Bond Program addressed many drainage issues but stated that these projects could include Art components. Councilmember Pelaez stressed that the City needed to discuss opportunities to incorporate Art design in the Bond Program. Councilmember Pelaez noted that UTSA improvements were important to consider in the Bond Program and that the City needed to continue to work with the University to fund community wide programs to be used by residents.

Councilmember Sandoval discussed the concept of equity funding and how it was incorporated to the City’s Budget Program. Councilmember Sandoval noted resident disappointment on what funding was allocated to “F” street improvements and explained how equity funding concept addressed the overall need of the City for capital improvements. Councilmember Sandoval noted the disparity provided by the algorithms used and challenged staff to address and identify other factors in determining funding.

Councilmember Perry stated that he would be coordinating meetings with staff to discuss additional questions and issues.

Councilmember Castillo thanked additional Bond Committee members and Council District team. Councilmember Castillo wanted to ensure that additional conversations be had about Arts funding in this bond and in future bonds stating that she supported the Bond but recommended additional discussions to address a variety of needs in the community.

Councilmember Viagran suggested additional conversations associated with former Air Force Base facilities and other capital projects. Councilmember Viagran stated that she wanted each Bond component to have an Arts Funding component at the 1.5% level and to not include ARPA funding. Councilmember Viagran also recommended discussions on the overall Arts funding allotments. City Manager Walsh stated that the funding could be considered and asked for clarification on the direction for Arts funding.

Councilmember Viagran asked if drainage programs could be addressed in the SA Tomorrow Program. City Manager Walsh stated that these projects needed to be further considered at the individual level. Councilmember Viagran asked that the Sunken Garden capital improvements discussions be televised for resident information.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez clarified his comments on the subject of future funding for police substations and need for audit of the Police Department Budget as well as his support for a review of “F” street capital funding through an equity lense approach.

Councilmember Pelaez expressed his satisfaction with the process for identifying projects for the Bond and managing expectations of proposed funding and identified projects but reminded all that there were other forms of funding that could be identified to include grants and funding partnerships. Jeff Coyle, Assistant City Manager provided clarification of processes to identify alternative funding and Councilmember Pelaez stated that he would be working with staff to identify funding for projects not funded under the Bond Program. Councilmember Pelaez requested a list of projects that were funded outside of prior bond programs in order to provide perspective of projects that were completed outside Bond Programs. Walsh stated that staff would provide data to the City Council for review.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting at 4:35 PM and announced that the Executive Session Items would be carried over to the December 9, 2021 A Session Meeting.

- 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).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting at 4:35 pm.

Approved

**Ron Nirenberg
Mayor**

Attest:

**Debbie Racca-Sittre
Interim City Clerk**