

# City of San Antonio



## Minutes

### Planning and Community Development Committee

#### 2021 – 2023 Council Members

Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4 Mario Bravo, Dist. 1  
| Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 Teri Castillo, Dist. 5  
| John Courage, Dist. 9

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**Monday, May 9, 2022**

**10:00 AM**

**Council Briefing Room**

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**Members Present:** Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Chair  
Mario Bravo, Member  
Phyllis Viagran, Member  
Teri Castillo, Member  
John Courage Member

**Members Absent:** None

#### Approval of Minutes

#### 1. Approval of minutes from March 25, 2022 Planning and Community Development Committee Meeting

Councilmember Courage moved to Approve the minutes from the March 25, 2022 Planning and Community Development meeting. Councilmember Viagran seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Rocha Garcia, Viagran, Courage

**Absent:** Bravo, Castillo

#### Consent Agenda

#### Briefing and Possible Action on

#### 2. Consideration of one (1) At-Large Appointment to the Building Standards Board [Debbie Racca-Sittre, Interim City Clerk]

Councilmember Viagran moved to approve. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** Rocha Garcia, Viagran, Courage

**No:** Castillo

**Abstain:** Bravo

### **3. Briefing and possible action on Tax Increment Financing Program and Potential Policy**

**Updates** [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Interim Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]

Ian Benavides, Interim Deputy Director of the Neighborhood and Housing Services Department (NHSD) provided an update on the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Program and potential policy updates. He noted that the policy was adopted on May 14, 2015 and reviewed how the TIF policy would be used to clearly illustrate and detail the requirements for applicants, guide for Staff, Tax Incremental Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) Board and council on priorities, housing and would streamline the application process. Benavides discussed the policy update process and timeline of the process and reviewed feedback received by the Mayor and City Council on various housing issues/objectives.

Benavides stated that the feedback received provided focus areas for staff review and consideration of recommendations to the TIF program. He reviewed the initial focus areas and stated that after receiving the Committee's feedback, staff would conduct stakeholder engagement and meetings to receive additional feedback.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Chair Rocha Garcia stated that she was pleased that staff had reached out to Councilmembers to receive input and feedback but asked for another meeting to discuss additional comments. Chair Rocha Garcia asked for clarification on feedback from other City Departments and community stakeholders. Benavides confirmed that meetings with both groups would be conducted to gain feedback. Chair Rocha Garcia stated that it would be important to gain feedback on transportation and funding assessments.

Councilmember Castillo noted that this review was timely and important to align priorities for housing policy. She asked if staff had discussed funding triggers for housing projects. Benavides stated that discussions with developers and community stakeholders were continuous to identify needed amenities and staff were open to continued discussions. Councilmember Castillo requested that a list of San Antonio Housing Trust projects be included in discussions and for an updated status of the Housing Voucher Program.

Councilmember Viagran stressed the importance of fiber and stated that digital divide issues were a priority. She stated that senior benefits were crucial to consider and noted her concern with challenges of developers and stakeholders being flexible in the amenities provided to the

community in their projects and the impact of property tax increases.

Councilmember Courage expressed his concern on the proposed timeline for the policy update and noted that the newly approved Bond Program and other housing programs could impact the updating of this policy. He stressed that it was important for City Council to be updated on stakeholder meetings so that they were aware of issues and recommendations not just at the approval phase and to provide continued feedback to the process. Benavides stated that staff would provide feedback to the Committee as community feedback was received and were open to adjusting the timeline if needed.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked if it was possible for the Committee to be provided a committee report as an agenda item to review proposed recommendations. Assistant City Manager Lori Houston agreed to provide an updated report to the Committee in upcoming meetings.

Councilmember Bravo stressed that it was important to be realistic on the timeline and asked when and where tax rate increased funding would be directed towards affordable housing. He stressed that projects still needed a CAP and that any future TIRZ projects have more energy efficiency components added to them. Councilmember Bravo stated that affordable projects should consider food deserts and the need for grocery stores in the City core. Benavides stated that staff would meet with Councilmember Bravo's office to discuss his concerns further. Chair Rocha Garcia asked that staff meet with each Committee Member prior to presenting to the entire Committee.

Councilmember Castillo stressed the importance of including affordable housing in all projects and leveraging with community stakeholders such as the San Antonio Housing Trust. She noted that it was important to prioritize energy efficiency and East and Westside projects.

Councilmember Courage asked how many of the recommendations could be added to the City's Building Code and recommended that staff work closely with the Development Services Department (DSD) to make requirements in the Building Code. Benavides stated that staff would work with DSD and review what could be incorporated into the City's Building Code.

Councilmember Viagran noted that updated Building Codes could be costly to implement and asked that Councilmembers be provided reports of what the costs would be. She noted that food deserts would be difficult to address in housing policy but would be important to address in other committees such as the Community Health, Environment, and Culture Committee. She thanked staff for their work on the Item.

Councilmember Bravo agreed that it was important to address recommendations and possible incorporation into the Building Code and the impact of costs of energy efficiency component into housing developments. Councilmember Bravo noted that the costs of energy efficiencies were often passed onto affordable housing residents and it was important to be realistic regarding cost

restrictions of implementing these components and to communicate to the Committee of such limitations.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked if there was a utility gap map to see where gaps occurred. Benavides stated that staff would work with CPS Energy to provide the map. Chair Rocha Garcia asked if there were other tools that could be used for housing incentives. Assistant City Manager Lori Houston stated that the City used tax rebates and that CPS Energy and SAWS had other tools that could be used and that the City focused on available grant funding. Chair Rocha Garcia asked if there was a heat map for needed Market Rate housing. Benavides stated that this study would identify the need for market rate housing.

No action was required for Item 3.

**4. A briefing and possible action on the Homeless Response System in San Antonio.** [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Melody Woosley, Director, Human Services]

Assistant City Manager Lori Houston provided an overview of the Homeless Response System and introduced members of the Homeless Response Team to include representatives of the Christian Assistance Program, Haven for Hope, Centro San Antonio, South Alamo Alliance for the Homeless (SARAH), SAM Ministries, Corazon Ministries San Antonio and City Departments.

Assistant City Manager Houston reviewed the purpose and guiding documents for the Homeless Plan which included the Strategic Housing Implementation Plan and the Strategic Homeless Plan. She discussed the Housing Continuum which addressed all housing categories from homeless to market rate ownership and reviewed the homelessness continuum of care services for housing needs. Assistant City Manager Houston reviewed the composition of the homeless population and why they were homeless. She stated that the Point In Time (PIT) count was a count that was provided annually to identify the sheltered and unsheltered homeless population. She reviewed the key elements of the Homeless Response System to include numerous community partners, outreach and intake efforts, and the identified need for all forms of homeless housing and related services. Assistant City Manager Houston stated that there was a need for over 1,000 permanent supportive housing units and that next steps included the City pursuing additional permanent housing options to include leveraging funding opportunities for the 2022 Bond Program. She reviewed the need for other types of supportive housing and associated services.

Assistant City Manager Houston stated that the City and SARAH were developing a homeless system dashboard which would be updated quarterly and located on the SARAH website to review homeless and housing metrics. She stressed that there were currently strong community partnerships and services to address homeless issues.

Chair Rocha Garcia stated that it was important to share the process for homeless services. She asked for more information and discussion on SHIP priority item #4 to address permanent

supportive and affordable housing. She asked if the homeless team worked with the San Antonio Police Department (SAPD) to identify homeless issues and to assist with homeless services delivery. Assistant City Manager Houston stated that SAPD provided information on services available to homeless population and worked with community partners to develop pilot programs. Chair Rocha Garcia stated that it was important to continue discussions and education on income based housing needs.

Councilmember Bravo stated that it was important to increase the number of detox beds available to the homeless. Councilmember Bravo expressed his support of the current programs available to the homeless and the need to expand current services. He requested that Chief McManus provide an update on SAPD services provided at a future committee meeting.

Councilmember Courage asked for clarification on the homeless hotline availability. Assistant City Manager Houston clarified the services provided on the hotline and noted that residents could access the hotline through 3-1-1. She provided the direct hotline number to the Committee. Councilmember Courage expressed his concern regarding currently available resources and the timeline to meeting the needs of homeless.

Councilmember Viagran stressed that it was important to concentrate on victims of domestic violence and young adults because by doing so, it would address the largest percentage of the homeless population. She stated that permanent supportive housing was much needed and should be priority item. Councilmember Viagran asked if it was better to increase the number of city staff or support of partner staffing to address homeless needs and delivery of services. Assistant City Manager Houston stated that this was continuously reviewed and that the City had funded partner positions in the past so to better deliver services.

Councilmember Viagran requested data and metrics on the agencies providing ID recovery services and a list of faith based leaders providing homeless services. She asked that discussions be held with Texas Department of Transportation to address issues with homeless encampments in drainage ditches.

Councilmember Castillo stated that it was important to address the funding and need for outreach workers due to the increasing number of homeless each year. She expressed her concern on the need for permanent supportive housing and the waiting list for affordable housing. She requested discussion on building additional affordable housing stock.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked of the hours the Housing Hotline was available and what services were available after hours. Assistant City Manager Houston stated that the hotline was available until 7 PM and that the 9-1-1 Call Center was utilized for after hour calls.

No action was required for Item 4.

**5. Briefing and possible action on Housing Assistance Program (HAP) Update [Lori Houston,**

Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Interim Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]

Veronica Garcia, Interim Director of the Neighborhood and Housing Services Department, provided an update on the Housing Assistance Program (HAP) and eligibility requirements for resident participants. She provided an overview of the services provided to include housing stability assistance and relocation assistance. Garcia reviewed the HAP Budget and resident resources to include advanced outreach, Right to Counsel Program services and other community services.

Chair Rocha Garcia thanked staff for their work on the HAP and services provided to residents and asked if there was sufficient staff to address the number of applications. Garcia stated that there were currently 30 temporary staff processing applications and noted that they could use more staff.

Councilmember Castillo asked if there was a deadline for HAP applications. Garcia stated that there was not a specific deadline for applications but awards would only be available as funding existed. Councilmember Castillo stated that it was important to review the Risk Mitigation Fund to address eviction situations.

No action was required for Item 5.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:38 AM.

**Approved**

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*Adriana Rocha Garcia, Chair*

**Respectfully Submitted**

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*Debbie Racca-Sittre, Interim City Clerk*