



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
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Agenda Item Number: 6

Agenda Date: February 21, 2024

In Control: San Antonio Housing Commission Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Neighborhood and Housing Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Veronica Garcia, Director

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Director to report updates on Neighborhood and Housing Services Department Programs.

SUMMARY:

Each month the Director prepares a report on program updates directly affecting the Housing Commission and its charge.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Director's Report will include: (a) Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP) Event Recap; (b) ADU Permit-Ready RFQ Update; (c) Public Information Campaign Update; (d) Property Tax Help Campaign Update; (e) Housing Assistance Program Update; (f) Upcoming meetings

ISSUE:

a) Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP) Event Recap

On January 27, 2024, the City of San Antonio's Neighborhood & Housing Services Department (NHSD), Opportunity Home San Antonio, San Antonio Housing Trust (SAHT), and Bexar County held the 2nd Annual SHIP Event - "Housing in San Antonio". The event took place at Sam Houston High School in District 2. The event had over 600 attendees, 100 volunteers, and 54 registered resource tables. Event highlights include welcoming remarks by HUD Deputy Secretary Adrienne Todman, Mayor Ron Nirenberg, Councilmember Jaleen McKee-Rodriguez, NHSD's Director Veronica Garcia, Opportunity Home's CEO Ed Hinojosa, Jr; and San Antonio Housing Trust's Executive Director Pedro Alanis. In addition, the event featured two open panel conversations, three interactive/informative displays; and a multi-faceted renters' workshop.

b) ADU Permit-Ready RFQ Update

In March, NHSD will issue a Request for Qualifications to receive Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Permit-Ready Plans. ADU Permit-Ready Plans include renderings of the designed ADU structure and 80% ADU building plans. These are prototypical plans that will be reviewed for code compliance by the City's Development Services Department. Using an ADU Permit-Ready Plan will save prospective ADU builders time and money in the design and permit review processes. ADU Permit-Ready Plans are an element of the ADU Program.

The goal of the ADU Program is to increase affordable housing options and create inclusive living spaces. This program aims to remove barriers in the constructing and financing of an ADU. The ADU Program will include ADU Permit-Ready Plans, Incentives, Education & Financial Resources, Outreach, and an ADU Website.

c) Public Information Campaign Update

As part of the FY2024 City budget, City Council approved an Affordable Housing Public Information Campaign. The first phase of the campaign will prioritize renter rights, homelessness and storytelling. The campaign also includes a narrative change regarding housing affordability throughout San Antonio.

To date, the campaign has featured five families and individuals on their housing stability journey, all of whom were highlighted at the Housing in San Antonio event. The campaign also supported a citywide ADU design competition, the production of the first RentwiseSA video and distribution of an informational renter's guide in English and Spanish. The next phase will include a request for proposal to identify a consultant to assist with the housing affordability narrative change.

d) Property Tax Help Campaign Update

The Property Tax Help Campaign aims to help homeowners file for homestead exemptions and learn how to protest their property tax valuations. NHSD has partnered with Texas True Tax to help facilitate 12 in person and 2 virtual sessions.

Bexar County Tax Assessor and Bexar County Appraisal District will be available to answer questions at each session. There will be free notary services and language services including American Sign Language and Spanish interpretation.

The first session will be February 24th at 10:00 am at Harris Middle School.

The Mexican American Unity Council (MAUC) began hosting their year-round satellite offices to help families file exemptions on February 1st. Services are provided in English and Spanish. Additional language interpretation, including ASL, are available upon request. Services are currently available at three locations.

MAUC Center – Walk-ins welcome. Appointments encouraged.

2300 W. Commerce Suite 200, 78207

Mondays 8am-5pm

Tuesdays 9am-7pm

Wednesdays 8am-5pm

Thursdays 8am – 5pm

First Saturday of the month 9am-12pm

Palacio Del Sol - By appointment only

400 N. Frio, 78207

Stonehouse – By appointment only

4950 Woodstone Drive, 78230

Session dates, location, and additional information may be accessed online at www.sanantonio.gov/propertytaxhelp.

e) Housing Assistance Program Update

NHSD, in coordination with the City’s Department of Human Services (DHS), began to accept Rental Assistance referrals on February 15th through the Homeless Connections Hotline at 210-207-1799. This streamlined effort will help expedite the process of providing Rental Assistance for residents, while also linking them with additional prevention resources. Residents in need of Rental Assistance can call the Homeless Connections Hotline and complete a pre-screening process. Eligible residents will be referred to submit an online application for Rental Assistance. Through this process, the program will be able to connect San Antonio’s most vulnerable population with housing stability services.

Pre-screened applicants living in San Antonio will be eligible to receive up to three consecutive months (arrears and may include current and future) for a maximum of \$3,500 of rental assistance and \$1,500 of utilities assistance. Due to limited funds, if applicants received rental assistance from our programs within 12 months of applying, they will not be eligible for an additional award.

NHSD will also continue to support households in need with a variety of resources. In particular, the Resident Relocation Assistance Program is accepting applications, and the Eviction Intervention Team remains active at all precinct courts providing the latest information on intervention services and free legal aid resources.

f) Upcoming Meetings

The next regular meeting of the Housing Commission will be held on March 27, 2024. Other important upcoming meetings include:

- 3/4: Public Engagement & Outreach Subcommittee
- 3/4 & 3/18: Removing Barriers Technical Working Group
- 3/7: Renters' Solutions Subcommittee Meeting
- 3/19: Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing Development & Preservation Subcommittee
- 3/21: Dashboard & Annual Report Subcommittee

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact at this time.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing and discussion purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing and discussion purposes only.