

City of San Antonio



Minutes Governance Committee 2023 – 2025 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg, Chair
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6
Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8 | John Courage, Dist. 9

Monday, January 22, 2024

3:00 PM

City Hall

The Governance Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Media Briefing Room at 3:04 PM. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Ron Nirenberg, *Mayor, Chair*
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Member*
Melissa Cabello Havrda, *Member*
Manny Pelaez, *Member*
John Courage, *Member*

Members Absent: None

Approval of Minutes

1. Governance Committee Meeting on November 20, 2023.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve the minutes of the November 20, 2023 Governance Committee meeting. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Manny Pelaez (District 8) regarding CoSA / ISD School Mass Shooting Prevention and Response Program [María Villagómez, Deputy City Manager]

Deputy City Manager Maria Villagomez provided an overview of the Council Consideration Request (CCR). She noted that the San Antonio Police Department supported mass shooting prevention efforts in schools through coordination within the Fusion Center and the Mental Health Unit and stated that the Violence Prevention Strategic Plan would build on SA Forward to incorporate prevention strategies for community violence issues, specifically prioritizing gun violence with goals of: preventing gun violence involving adults and youth, improving access to services and support for victims/survivors and reducing repeated violence by perpetrators. She noted that the Violence Prevention Strategic Plan strategies and projected outcomes were planned to be presented at the January 24, 2024 City Council "B" Session.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Pelaez recommended that the studies of safety and physical security at the school districts be included in the "B" Session presentation. He noted that the CCR was created after the Robb Elementary School shooting in Uvalde, Texas because the State of Texas only allotted each school \$10 per student for safety and he surmised that there was a great need for increased safety.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia supported improved school safety and solutions to gun violence.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda noted there were public and private schools but recommended that the City Council advocate for State funding for public schools.

Mayor Nirenberg expressed frustration with the State's response to school safety and looked forward to hearing about the response to the CCR in the Violence Prevention Plan and wanted to see what could be most impactful.

Councilmember Pelaez requested that the school shooting Item be presented on January 31, 2024 instead as he had planned to be out of town. City Manager Erik Walsh stated that the City Council would be in an Executive Session at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on January 31, 2024 and the "B" session was already posted for this week to include the Violence Prevention Plan. Mayor Nirenberg did not recommend moving the "B" session as it was already posted.

Councilmember Pelaez moved that the CCR be briefed to the Public Safety Committee after the "B" session this week. Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage

- 3. Council Consideration Request by Councilmembers Jalen McKee-Rodriguez (District 2) and Marc K. Whyte (District 10) regarding the creation of a grant fund to aid small businesses affected by construction delays.** [Alex Lopez, Assistant City Manager; Brenda Hicks-Sorensen, Director, Economic Development Department]

Assistant City Manager Alejandra "Alex" Lopez provided an overview of the Council Consideration Request (CCR). She stated that the Economic Development Department (EDD)

had begun to design the program first by reaching out to stakeholders including small businesses impacted by construction, 2023 COVID/Construction Grant Program recipients, the Small Business Advisory Commission and small business serving organizations. She reported that project eligibility criteria were being developed to include: business eligibility criteria, type of assistance, administrative considerations and lessons learned from past programs. She added that a recommendation was planned to be presented to the full City Council at the February 28, 2024 City Council “B” Session.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Cabello Havrda noted that the issue really stemmed from the closures on Broadway and stated that there was more work to be done regarding the actual project and limiting closures rather than after the fact grants. City Manager Walsh noted that the staff had a process to host multiple meetings with impacted businesses from the “here we come” meeting to individual door-to-door meetings throughout the entire project. Councilmember Cabello Havrda suggested that the Marbach Street Project might be a good project in which to expand communication.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia recommended development of a dashboard for the small business grants.

Councilmember Courage recommended that the Small Business Program be expanded before the FY 2025 Budget process. Assistant City Manager Lopez stated that they planned to engage with telecommunication and utility partners and look at existing COVID Grant funding. City Manager Walsh stated that City Council could consider the options at the “B” Session and could potentially review the Item at the Mid-Year Budget Adjustment, but it too was early to discuss.

Mayor Nirenberg characterized the program as an expansion of the COVID Relief Grants but without the Federal requirements to justify the impact of COVID to sales as street construction could significantly impact local businesses; noting that there was a program created for the Blanco Road Project and no one applied.

The committee had general consensus that the Item would be presented at “B” Session on February 28, 2024 as recommended by staff.

4. Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Teri Castillo (District 5) on Green Alleyways Pilot Program. [Roderick Sanchez, Assistant City Manager; Razi Hosseini, Director, Public Works]

Assistant City Manager Rod Sanchez provided an overview of the Council Consideration Request (CCR). He commented that Public Works currently used permeable paving, materials and other sustainable methods as part of the City’s alley maintenance program to address stormwater ponding and runoff. Assistant City Manager Sanchez reported that the City had conducted a condition assessment which identified 3,522 non-service alleys citywide and provided a condition and graded them from A –F, with 412 alleys without utilities.

Assistant City Manager Sanchez stated that Public Works had developed a three-year plan to

develop a maintenance schedule for repairs of non-service alleys without utilities across the City based on condition. He reported that the FY 2024 Budget included \$1.3 million to address 80 non-service alleys Grades D – F and the FY 2025 Budget included \$2.6 million to address 165 non-service alleys Grade C. He noted that the FY 2026 Budget was expected to address 167 non-service alleys for preventative maintenance and staff would coordinate with the utilities to address remaining alleys with utilities. Assistant City Manager Sanchez concluded that by adding funding for the Non-Service Alley Maintenance Program in the FY 2024 Budget, the intent of the CCR was met.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked if additional funding was needed for this project after the initial three years. City Manager Walsh stated that there would be a need to budget for future years.

Mayor Nirenberg stated that improving the urban heat island effect was a priority over simply maintaining alleyways and suggested that the Office of Sustainability be involved in the program.

There was general consensus that the intent of the CCR had been met and could be closed.

5. Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia (District 4) regarding the creation of a Code Compliance Strategic Plan. [Roderick Sanchez, Assistant City Manager; Michael Shannon, Director, Development Services Department]

Assistant City Manager Rod Sanchez provided an overview of the Council Consideration Request (CCR). He recommended development of a Strategic Plan that would reevaluate current operating procedures to align with news goals and technology, standardize process for hardship referral, prioritize enforcement for vacant lots, create education materials for common code violations, make tools available and describe how the process worked to balance proactive and reactive cases. Assistant City Manager Sanchez stated that the next step was to provide findings and regular updates to the Planning and Community Development Committee then bringing the Item to the full City Council for consideration.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Rocha Garcia supported creation of a Code Compliance Strategic Plan for Code to help improve community quality of life. Councilmember Courage recommended a review of evening and late night code compliance services.

Mayor Nirenberg supported the staff recommendation but recommended more assistance to vulnerable populations that might be targeted by their neighbors.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to refer the Item to the Planning and Community Development Committee. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage

6. Council Consideration Request by Councilmembers Marc K. Whyte (District 10), Teri Castillo (District 5), and Sukh Kaur (District 1) regarding the creation of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan. [Roderick Sanchez, Assistant City Manager; Catherine Hernandez, Interim Director, Transportation Department]

Assistant City Manager Rod Sanchez provided an overview of the Council Consideration Request (CCR). He stated that staff recommended that City staff review the current Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zone District Codes, create a TOD Taskforce with representatives from neighborhoods along ART corridors, experts in housing and transit development projects, VIA and City staff. Assistant City Manager Sanchez stated that he would present the proposed Unified Development Code (UDC) recommendations and feedback gathered from the TOD Taskforce to the full City Council at a “B” Session for input.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Cabello Havrda supported the development of a task force and recommended including the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

Mayor Nirenberg supported the Item and recommended a “B” Session to get updates on the SA Tomorrow Plan and suggested combining the TOD discussion into the overall discussion about comprehensive planning.

Councilmember Courage recommended a presentation to the Transportation Committee. Councilmember Cabello Havrda did not want to delay the program by sending it to Transportation Committee before “B” Session.

Councilmember Courage moved to have the Transportation Committee continue the discussion after the “B” Session briefing. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage

7. Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Manny Pelaez (District 8) on a Homeless Encampment Education Campaign. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Melody Woosley, Director, Human Services]

Assistant City Manager Lori Houston provided an overview of the Council Consideration Request (CCR). She reported that the FY 2024 Budget provided funding for a communications manager and to develop a public education campaign on homelessness. She noted that the campaign was expected to align with the CCR and include various strategies to build empathy and awareness of homelessness in San Antonio to include a comprehensive community dashboard, multi-media efforts to develop empathy and awareness, as well as proactive neighborhood engagement through meetings and monthly online communications. Staff proposed to brief the Governance Committee on the primary components of the public education campaign. Assistant City Manager Houston stated that the draft campaign outline would be brought before the Planning and Community Development Committee in March 2024 and would be included in an April City Council “B” Session briefing on homelessness.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Rocha Garcia recommended involving shelters and homeless individuals in the development of the public education campaign and agreed with Mayor Nirenberg that there needed to be a dashboard of dashboards.

Councilmember Courage requested clarification as to whether the plan was to talk to the homeless or to educate the community.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda expressed concern that the community might still be upset with homeless encampments even with a dashboard and with this effort and recommended addressing the stigma of homelessness. Assistant City Manager Houston stated that they hoped telling individual stories would improve the stigma. City Manager Walsh noted that it was important that the City reacted to community complaints, reacted quickly and performed the cleanup.

Mayor Nirenberg recommended a broad housing production strategy public educational campaign in addition to the issue of homelessness.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to refer the Item to Planning and Community Development Committee. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage

8. **Council Consideration Request by Councilmembers Sukh Kaur (District 1), Jalen McKee-Rodriguez (District 2), and Marina Alderete Gavito (District 7) on the establishment of a Cultural Heritage District for the 1300-1900 blocks of N. Main Avenue, in recognition of the area's importance to the LGBTQIA Community.** [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Shanon Shea Miller, Director, Office of Historic Preservation]

Assistant City Manager Lori Houston provided an overview of the Council Consideration Request (CCR). She recommended that staff conduct a Reconnaissance Survey, "Story catching" (oral histories), cultural mapping, public input, produce a Cultural Significance Report and seek endorsement by the Historic & Design Review Commission (HDRC). Assistant City Manager Houston recommended referral to the Planning and Community Development Committee for further consideration.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Rocha Garcia and Mayor Nirenberg supported development of a cultural district.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda moved to refer the Item to the Planning and Community Development Committee. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez, Courage

Councilmember Cabello Havrda expressed concern that some of the Council Consideration Requests (CCR)s were redundant to work that the City was already doing and noted that none were really novel ideas so she looked forward to having a discussion about the CCR process.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Approved

***Ron Nirenberg
Mayor***

Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk