



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
{{item.tracking_number}}

Agenda Item Number: 3

Agenda Date: August 31, 2022

In Control: Economic and Workforce Development Committee Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Brenda Hicks-Sorensen

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Briefing and possible action regarding the City's Economic Development Department Strategic Plan.

SUMMARY:

Briefing and possible action regarding the City's Economic Development Department Strategic Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On February 17, 2022, City Council approved a professional services agreement with TIP Strategies, Inc. for completion of an Economic Development Strategy. The City is exploring innovative approaches to managing its incentives policy, ways to leverage investments and infrastructure to spur meaningful growth and development opportunities and determine the Economic Development Department's strongest and best role in the region's economic development delivery system.

In April 2022, the strategic plan kicked-off with a robust stakeholder engagement process with an emphasis on diverse representation and multiple opportunities for participation. Additionally, consideration of and alignment with recent economic development planning efforts, including the Greater: SATX Regional Economic Development Strategy, drafted in 2019, and the Alamo Area Council of Government (AACOG) Economic Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2018-2023; as well as other relevant plans, such as SA Tomorrow.

Throughout the course of nine days spread out over 3 weeks, the consultants in combination with EDD staff, conducted a total of 22 roundtables and 23 interviews. Key takeaways from this process include:

- San Antonio's authenticity, rich cultural history, and affordability are assets
- The City's economic development tools are fragmented, and many local organizations duplicate efforts
- An either/or mindset holds back opportunity
- There is tension between growth and preserving the status quo

A preliminary review of the strategic plan efforts was presented to Economic and Workforce Development Committee (EWDC) on June 10, 2022, followed by the Opportunity Phase in which a target industry review, organizational assessment, small business assessment, niche opportunities analysis, best practice review, and goals & objectives were completed. Additional targeted stakeholder meetings were conducted August 16-August 29, 2022.

ISSUE:

The Economic Development Strategic Plan is a guiding document and defines the Economic Development Department's (EDD) role in the pathway to a more resilient economy, providing direction on competing with national and global peers. In addition to a robust stakeholder engagement process other key analysis undertaken include a review of the City's target industries, a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis and a perception survey of site selectors and real estate brokers.

The plan outlines four main goals to leverage existing strengths, mitigate challenges, and build on the momentum of existing initiatives, which are listed below. Recommended strategies for each goal are outlined in the plan. Each of these goals will be measured against Economic Performance Indicators to gauge progress and Growth Targets to measure long-term outcomes.

1. Innovation and Industry - Retain, expand, and attract businesses within each strategic industry cluster, provide more effective small business support, and facilitate innovation-centric entrepreneurship.
2. Placemaking and Real Estate - Accelerate place-based real estate development projects that create quality spaces for new jobs and investment in San Antonio's regional centers and neighborhood economic nodes.
3. Talent and Workforce - Ensure San Antonio residents have accessible pathways to well-paying jobs and employers have access to a robust pipeline of talent.

4. Capacity and Resources - Align the City's economic development tools around strategic growth and coordinate with local organizations on shared goals and actions that benefit San Antonio as a whole.

The Strategic Plan will serve as a foundational guiding document. With acceptance of the strategic plan, the EDD will utilize the plan to develop a multi-year work plan.

The Strategic Plan is tentatively scheduled for B Session presentation on September 28, 2022, and Council action on October 20, 2022, following action from the EWDC.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.

ALTERNATIVES:

Without acceptance of this plan, the EDD would need to explore alternative options to setting a strategic vision and priorities for the department.

RECOMMENDATION:

The EDD recommends acceptance of the Economic Development Strategic Plan.