INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2021
2:00 PM
VIDEOCONFERENCE

Members Present:	Councilmember Manny Peláez, Chair, *District 8* Councilmember Roberto Treviño, *District 1* Councilmember Jada Andrews-Sullivan, *District 2* Councilmember John Courage, *District 9* Deanne Cuellar, *Citizen Committee Member* Dirk Elmendorf, *Citizen Committee Member* Will Garrett, *Citizen Committee Member*
Staff Present:	Jennifer Guerrero, *Assistant City Attorney;* John Peterek, *Assistant to the City Manager;* Brian Dillard, *Chief Innovation Officer, Office of Innovation;* Craig Hopkins, *Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Services Department (ITSD);* Candeleria Mendoza, *Smart City Coordinator, Office of Innovation;* Emily Royall, *Smart City Coordinator, Office of Innovation;* Rosalinda Diaz, *Office of the City Clerk*
Others Present:	Jordana Barton, *Methodist Healthcare Ministries*; Brian Regnier, *City Education Partners*; Carl Sheperis, *Texas A&M University-SA*; Luisa Casso, *Toyota*

Call to Order

1. **Approval of the January 26, 2021 Innovation and Technology Committee Meeting Minutes.**

Citizen Member Garrett moved to approve the Minutes from the January 26, 2021 Innovation and Technology Committee Meeting. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

2. **Briefing on updates on the City of San Antonio's Digital Inclusion Efforts to include the Pillar of the Recovery and Resiliency Plan "Connected Beyond the Classroom."** [John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager; Brian Dillard, Chief Innovation Officer, Office of Innovation]

Chief Innovation Officer Brian Dillard provided an update on the progress related to infrastructure, collaboration, and connecting with students in the Connect Beyond The Classroom (CBTC) Program. He noted that 560 units were deployed to the San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) for student distribution and expected to have a total of 1,200 units by the end of March 2021. He added that 800 additional students would join the program in May 2021 when the construction at the Bazan and Collins Library sites were completed. He stated that Edgewood Independent School District (EISD) and Harlandale Independent School District (HISD) would follow the same design plan that was created for SAISD.

Jordana Barton reported on the EISD Project. She explained how the project was based on synergistic partnerships and how each organization brought their own unique skills to the project. She noted that the partnerships created opportunities towards improving digital inclusion and sustainability.

Brian Regnier provided an overview of the EISD Demonstration Project, EISD Pilot coverage areas, and in-home equipment. He noted that the underlay technique used at the Gus Garcia Middle School, Loma Park Elementary, and Memorial High School could be a model for other school sites. He stated that the Customer Premises Equipment (CPE) device was portable and could be moved when relocating to another dwelling. He explained the type of construction required to install the equipment and electricity needed to power the radios at the schools.

Carl Sheperis presented on the Texas A&M University San Antonio evaluation, evaluation deliverables, Digital Inclusion Scholars Program, and Student-Run Help Desk. He noted that they were working on three projects which included the City, County, and Methodist Healthcare Ministries. He stated that the evaluation process was critical in gathering information on the impact to the families that did not have internet service. He added that the data collected would make the project a national model that could be replicated in other cities. He noted that the Student-Run Help Desk would be staffed with trained students from the districts.

Jordana Barton reported on the project funding partners. She stated that the project was supported by philanthropic organizations. She noted that additional funds were raised to include the Digital Inclusion Scholars Program and Student-Run Help Desk.

Councilmember Courage asked how the limitations set by the Texas Legislature on internet service would be overcome and if the government would be providing any Federal funds. John Peterek stated that the project was within the bounds of the regulations set by the legislature and stimulus funds were focused on telecoms to provide certain areas with service. Craig Hopkins stated that funds were being pursued from the Biden Administration for technology infrastructure and they were actively involved in Senate Bill 5 and House Bill 5 to build a Texas State Broadband Plan.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan asked who would be handling the cybersecurity and firewall. Brian Dillard stated that security and connection would go directly through the school districts firewalls.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan questioned how families without homes were being assisted in accessing the internet. Mr. Dillard stated that communication had begun with the school districts to find a solution on how to connect residents who were homeless. Candelaria Mendoza stated that many organizations had added or improved their public Wi-Fi connections. She noted that Haven for Hope had already added public Wi-Fi service to connect students staying at the facility and the San Antonio Housing Authority had expanded their service to their residents.

Brian Dillard outlined the next steps for the digital inclusion efforts. He stated that San Antonio was a national leader for digital inclusion with over 40 organizations and leaders across the City of San Antonio and Bexar County area. He noted that the foundation was created over several years and was centered around the guiding principles and resiliency plan. He reported that the

digital divide assessment conducted two years ago helped identify the disparities of the communities before COVID-19 was present. He spoke about being proactive in applying for all Federal, State, and private funding opportunities as they became available. He stated that the next step would be to look for an external individual in the region who would like to lead the Digital Inclusion Alliance of San Antonio.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan asked if vacant buildings were being revitalized by developers to include digital infrastructure. DeAnne Cuellar stated that the business community was impacted negatively by the digital divide. She noted that commercial businesses were part of the project and would be addressed through the Digital Equity Roadmap component.

Councilmember Courage questioned why CPS Energy and the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) were not part of the slide with the other community partnership's logos since home utilities would eventually be monitored electronically. Mr. Dillard stated that both CPS Energy and SAWS should have been included on the slide as they have been part of the conversation regarding digital inclusion.

Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

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Manny Peláez, Chair

Respectfully Submitted,

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Rosalinda Diaz
Office of the City Clerk