



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST**

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Councilwoman Adriana Rocha Garcia, District 4
COPIES TO: Erik Walsh, City Manager; Leticia Vacek, City Clerk; Andy Segovia, City Attorney; John Peterrek, Assistant to the City Manager; Emily B. McGinn, Interim Assistant to City Council
SUBJECT: Creation of a Small Business Advisory Commission
DATE: Thursday, October 3, 2019

19 OCT -3 AM 11:58

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Issue Proposed for Consideration

I ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

A proposal to create a Small Business Advisory Commission made up of 11 members appointed by the Mayor and Council consisting of a majority of small business owners who will advise on policy issues that may affect small businesses, with ample time for feedback and discussion.

Brief Background

The City of San Antonio has approximately 40,000 registered small businesses and our local economy continues to benefit from small business owners who choose to stay or start a small business in San Antonio. According to the Small Business Office FY2018 Annual Report, small businesses represent 97 % of employment firms.¹

As the backbone to our local economy, we should ensure our small businesses remain economically viable, resilient and competitive. The purpose of this request is to create a commission made up of a majority of small business owners appointed to 2-year terms by the Mayor and Council. Two positions will be for representatives of non-profit organizations and two positions will be for representatives of business organizations. The ideal staffing of the commission would be through the City Auditor's Office as it is independent and reports directly to City Council.

Although the unity and strength of our business community allows our City to attract new opportunities, we also recognize that these entities do not comprise a monolith. A commission composed of small business owners will allow us the opportunity to receive direct feedback regarding proposed policies that may impact small businesses differently than other sectors of the business community.



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Our City is on the verge of great transformations in terms of transportation, housing, infrastructure, sustainability, community and economic development, so the perspectives of our small business owners, which make up 97% of our employers should be taken into consideration before policy decisions are made.

Our current Small Business Advocacy Committee has a specific charge to advise and monitor the goals set forth in the SBEDA ordinance, which assists local small, minority, and women-owned businesses that are ready, willing, and able to do business with the city. In addition, they make recommendations concerning modifications of programs and procedures established in the SBEDA Program, but is not designed, according to its bylaws, to discuss matters beyond those relating to the SBEDA Ordinance, thus the need for the creation of a Small Business Advisory Commission.

The City of San Antonio has the opportunity to be the first major Texas city to form a commission designed to give small business representatives a platform to officially voice concerns regarding proposed policies that can have an impact on the economic vitality of our community.

The City of Austin has the MBEWBE/Small Business Enterprise Procurement Program Advisory Committee with a similar charge as our City's current Small Business Advocacy Committee. The objective of the Office of Business Opportunity Advisory Board in Houston is to seek private sector assistance in easing difficulties that may be encountered by MWBEs (Minority and Women Owned Enterprise) and small businesses in accessing City contracts and to improve communication among small businesses, MWBEs, non-MWBEs and the City. Lastly, in Dallas the Economic Development Department ensures the involvement of qualified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (M/WBEs) to the greatest extent feasible in the City's construction, professional services, and procurement programs.

Although these boards focus on contracts and procurement practices, the need for a commission that allows a forum for small businesses to work with City Staff to have a representative voice in policies affecting small businesses.

Submitted for Council consideration by:

Choose an item. Councilwoman Adriana Rocha Garcia, District 4

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Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures (4 only)

District

1.

Wesley

3

2.

Car

10

3.

Jade Andrews-Sullivan

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4.

[Signature]

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References

¹ *Small Business Office FY2018 Annual Report*, City of San Antonio Economic Development Department

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