

**State of Texas  
County of Bexar  
City of San Antonio**



**FINAL  
Meeting Minutes  
City Council B Session**

City Hall Complex  
105 Main Plaza  
San Antonio, Texas 78205

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**Wednesday, May 16, 2018**

**2:00 PM**

**Municipal Plaza Building**

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The City Council of San Antonio convened in the “B” Room of the Municipal Plaza Building. City Clerk Leticia Vacek took the Roll Call noting the following Councilmembers present:

**PRESENT:** 11 - Mayor Nirenberg, Treviño, Shaw, Viagran, Saldaña, Gonzales, Brockhouse, Sandoval, Pelaez, Courage, and Perry

1. Briefing by VIA Metropolitan Transit on the implementation of the City's FY 2018 \$4.3 million investment in VIA to improve bus frequency and travel times and on VIA's Mobility on Demand Request for Proposal. [Jeff Arndt, President/CEO, VIA Metropolitan Transit; Peter Zaroni, Deputy City Manager; Mike Frisbie, Director, Transportation & Capital Improvements]

Keith Hom stated that the City of San Antonio and VIA Partnership aimed to fulfill the need to improve frequency and reduce wait-time while addressing the needs of 1.6 million new residents and 838,000 new jobs as identified by SA Tomorrow and VIA Vision 2040. He noted that the components of the Vision 2040 Plan were a better Bus System, Rapid Transit Corridors, and Smart Transit. He provided an overview of VIA Bus Routes noting planned route improvements to provide immediate relief for riders with 60-minute service times. He noted the reduction of wait time along major routes and the addition of two new Primo Routes. He stated that Phases 1 and 2 of the improvements were completed and Phase 3

would occur in January 2019. He noted a 5% increase in bus hours as a result of Phases 1 and 2 and reported that 14% of riders had an improved riding experience following the changes. He stated that VIA conducted a robust digital campaign to advertise shorter wait times and faster connections and provided an overview of marketing efforts for Phase 1. He added that similar marketing would be performed for Phase 2 improvements.

Mr. Hom stated that ridership on improved routes had dropped 8% from October to December 2017 and increased 4.5% in January to March 2018 following improvements. He noted that ridership had dropped 7.9% on all other unimproved routes from January to March 2018. He presented a video of riders describing their experiences with improvements. He stated that there was a 12.6% ridership increase on improved routes and 4.5% decrease on unimproved routes in April 2018.

Councilmember Saldaña discussed the importance of scientific data to select routes for improvement.

Councilmember Courage stated that he expected more routes with wait times of 15 to 20 minutes and asked why the amount of money across all phases did not have proportional impact on improving routes. Mr. Hom replied that it was due to the annualization of costs across Fiscal Years.

Councilmember Viagran asked for information regarding the selection of shelter sites and bench placement.

Mr. Hom stated that VIA issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Smart Transit Mobility On Demand Program Pilot. He noted that the goal of the service was to provide a user-focused approach to provide choices for areas with lower or emerging ridership demand. He stated that VIA would utilize the program to provide better first and last mile connectivity to the Transit Network; provide coverage and service substitution; and provide a safe, reliable, and cost-effective service.

Mr. Hom provided an overview of the North East Pilot Zone and noted that it had three of the least productive routes in the city. He stated that the RFP was due at the end of May 2018 and proposed a turn-key solution for technology and service delivery through a single contract. He noted that the RFP framework included flexibility for service design and delivery; a technology solution for trip booking and dynamic dispatching; and service hours and span to correspond with transit service. He invited the City of San Antonio to select a participant for the RFP Evaluation Committee. He stated that the Service Plan would be finalized in October 2018 with outreach and marketing in the Fall, 2018 and implementation of service in January 2019.

Councilmember Sandoval asked of the metrics used to determine ridership. Mr. Hom replied that it was based on boardings and passengers per hour. Councilmember Sandoval asked of the cost per ride in the North East Pilot Zone. Mr. Hom replied that it was \$8.00 per passenger and the system average was \$5.00 per passenger. Councilmember Sandoval asked if the RFP included fixed routes or door service. Mr. Hom replied that the RFP was flexible and bidders could propose any service delivery method. Councilmember Sandoval asked of other areas that could be considered for similar upgrades. Mr. Hom replied that they could examine the North West around Alamo Ranch and the East around Kirby, as well as other areas. Councilmember Sandoval asked how the proposal would address wheelchairs. Mr. Hom replied that the contracts were required to have accessible vehicles.

Councilmember Perry asked if the RFP would propose route changes. Mr. Hom replied that the bids likely would not be for fixed routes. Councilmember Perry asked of the length of the contract. Mr. Hom replied that it was a one-year contract with 4, one-year options for renewal. Councilmember Perry asked of plans to increase the user-friendliness of the VIA mobile application. Mr. Hom replied that adjustments were made regularly based on user feedback and needs.

Councilmember Courage asked if the contract would include 24-hour service. Mr. Hom replied that it was to be determined. Councilmember Courage asked if there would be limits on daily trips. Mr. Hom replied that it would be decided with the selected consultant. Councilmember Courage expressed concern that the Mobility On Demand Program would increase the number of cars on the road. Mr. Hom stated that the majority of trips would be to Transit Centers and they would be shared by multiple users.

Mayor Nirenberg thanked Mr. Hom for the presentation.

2. Briefing on autonomous vehicles, including the current state of technology and levels of automation, as well as on a potential Request for Information on testing autonomous vehicles in San Antonio. [Peter Zanoni, Deputy City Manager; Mike Frisbie, Director, Transportation & Capital Improvements]

Art Reinhardt defined autonomous vehicles as systems with no need for direct human interaction with the vehicle. He provided an overview of the levels of automation from zero to five, with no automation at Level 0 and full automation at Level 5. He presented a video of a Level 3 Vehicle from Audi. He noted differences in technology across providers to allow autonomous operation of vehicles under certain conditions.

Mr. Reinhardt stated that there were 40,000 roadway fatalities annually with 94% caused by driver error. He noted that autonomous vehicles could reduce congestion and emissions

and may offer mobility to those who are not currently able to drive. He stated that regulations, cost and time of adoption, liability of automated vehicle systems, and impact on sprawl were unknown. He noted that the Federal Government regulated motor vehicles and equipment and the State Government regulated human drivers and other aspects of motor vehicle operation. He stated that the U.S. Department of Transportation issued voluntary guidance for automated vehicles. He stated that Senate Bill 2205 was passed in Texas in September 2017 requiring automatic vehicles to comply with traffic and motor vehicle laws; contain a manufacturer-installed recording device; comply with federal law; be registered and titled; and be insured for Motor Vehicle Liability. He noted that SB 2205 pre-empted local governments' ability to implement regulations on automated vehicles.

Mr. Reinhardt stated that San Antonio was selected as a Texas Automated Vehicle Proving Ground and released a statewide automated vehicle procurement. He noted that Fredericksburg was selected as a test site for future automated vehicles. He noted the potential for a City Employment Shuttle, City Fleet Integration, and a Joint Base San Antonio point-to-point shuttle.

Mayor Nirenberg thanked Mr. Reinhardt and expressed support for issuance of a competitive RFI.

Councilmember Perry asked of the negatives of a reactive stance. Mr. Reinhardt replied that both courses of action were valid but recommended a proactive stance because the RFI would be non-binding. Councilmember Perry expressed concern with pursuing testing due to the potential for accidents and injury or death but supported a competitive RFI.

Councilmember Treviño discussed the role of autonomous vehicles and future energy strategies.

Councilmember Saldaña asked of expanding the scope to all autonomous machines. Mr. Reinhardt replied that other municipalities were exploring automated services but the majority of staff conversations were of autonomous vehicles. Councilmember Saldaña expressed support for a proactive approach.

Councilmember Sandoval asked of dedicated staff time for investigation of autonomous vehicles and potential costs. Mr. Reinhardt replied that it was a combined effort in addition to normal workload and it was not yet possible to estimate the value of a future RFP without scope. Craig Hopkins expressed the importance of preparing the city for inevitable autonomous machines. Councilmember Sandoval expressed support for pursuing transportation demand management rather than autonomous vehicles.

Councilmember Gonzales stated that she saw roadways fatalities as resulting from

infrastructure design rather than driver error. Mr. Reinhardt stated that statistics provided were based on adherence to existing traffic law. Councilmember Gonzales expressed the importance of pursuing innovative solutions including autonomous vehicles to reduce the dangers associated with driving.

Mayor Nirenberg thanked staff for the presentation.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting into Executive Session at 3:50 pm to discuss the following:

- A. Economic development negotiations pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.087 (economic development).
- B. The purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.072 (real property).
- C. Legal issues related to charter petitions pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- D. Anticipated litigation relating to employment conduct and discipline pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

### **RECONVENED**

Mayor Nirenberg reconvened the meeting at 5:45 pm and announced that no action was taken in Executive Session.

### **CEREMONIALS**

Mayor Nirenberg presented a Proclamation in recognition of Visitor Experience Month. He noted that during the month of May 2018, Visit San Antonio (VSA) and its Community Partners will join the U.S. Travel Association in celebration Visitor Experience Month. It was further noted that the Travel and Tourism Industry will utilize the observance to share the importance of tourism and hospitality, and champion the power of travel.

The Scholarship Committee of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission presented their 2018 Scholarship Recipients. It was noted that the awards were funded by local businesses, community groups, and contributions from City Councilmembers. Mayor Nirenberg presented each recipient with a scholarship award, congratulatory certificate, and commemorative medal.

Mayor Nirenberg presented a Proclamation to the Karate Kids of San Antonio in recognition of the 2018 Winners of their Just Say No! Program. He noted that the local campaign follows the example of the national program created by Former First Lady Nancy Reagan and the city-wide contest invites students to write a letter in which they encourage their friends to “Just Say No!” to drugs, alcohol, and gangs.

### **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD**

Mayor Nirenberg called upon the citizens registered to speak.

Hasan Ali, Yan Yan, and Neil Gandhi spoke on behalf of the Asian-American Alliance of San Antonio to extend an invitation for the organization’s Tricentennial Event on May 19th. They spoke of the history of the Alliance and plans for the event.

Jesse Ramos expressed concern with the lack of available funds for the Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program and asked the City Council to secure additional funds.

Antonia Infante expressed concern with increased property taxes and asked the City Council to deny requests for multi-family housing in Government Hill.

Dr. Mark Homer expressed concern that developments in Government Hill would lead to high property taxes and resident displacement.

Mayor Nirenberg excused himself from the meeting and Mayor Pro Tem Gonzales presided.

Mark Perez expressed concern with corruption, rising costs, and lack of regulations to guarantee public health and safety.

Denise Gutierrez spoke of the importance of Government Hill to the history and culture of San Antonio. She expressed concern with housing developments and rising cost of living.

Cindy Tower expressed concern with developments in Government Hill and noted the importance of protecting the community’s culture.

Todd Mernin expressed concern with gentrification in Government Hill and other San Antonio Neighborhoods.

Brandon Burkhart asked that the Cenotaph remain in place to honor Texas History.

Kerrie Hillyer expressed concern that citizen issues were not being heard by the City Council and asked that the Cenotaph remain in its current location.

Joanne Murillo expressed concern with development and the cost of living in Government Hill.

Krystal Ross spoke of her experiences at the Cenotaph and asked that it remain in place as a memorial.

Vincent Casiano expressed concern with resident displacement resulting from development. He spoke in support of energy deregulation and lowering energy costs in San Antonio.

Charles Massey expressed concern with displacement in Government Hill and asked the City Council to deny zoning applications for multi-family housing in the area.

Arthur Cardenas spoke of Our Lady of Vladimir's Saint Day and asked for prayers to convert Russia to a Christian country.

Lamar Henry expressed concern with influence from non-Texans on the Alamo Master Plan.

Ramon Garza spoke of the Cenotaph as a source of pride and asked that it remain in place to honor Texas History.

Michael Garza spoke of his pride as a Texan and the importance of Texas History.

Lupe Rivera asked that the Cenotaph remain in place to honor The Alamo's History.

Patti Hinkley asked the City Council to preserve the character of Government Hill and consider rezoning requests carefully.

Raul Saucedo expressed concern with developers in Government Hill and noted the importance of preserving Historic Districts.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg adjourned the meeting at 7:43 pm.

APPROVED

RON NIRENBERG  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

LETICIA M. VACEK, TRMC/CMC/MMC  
CITY CLERK