INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2020
2:00 PM
VIDEOCONFERENCE

Members Present:	Councilmember Many Pelaez, 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*
Members Absent:	None
Staff Present:	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);* John Rodriguez, *Assistant Director, Infrastructure, ITSD;* Candeleria Mendoza, *Smart City Coordinator, Office of Innovation;* Nancy Cano, *Office of the City Clerk*
Others Present:	None

Call to Order

1. **Approval of the February 25, 2020 Innovation and Technology Committee Meeting Minutes.**

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan moved to approve the Minutes from the February 25, 2020 Innovation and Technology Committee Meeting. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The Motion carried unanimously by those present.

2. **Briefing on the City of San Antonio's Digital Inclusion Survey and Assessment (DISA) as well as the Digital Pillar of the Recovery and Resiliency Plan.** [John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager; Brian Dillard, Chief Innovation Officer, Office of Innovation]

Chief Innovation Officer Brian Dillard reported that City Council approved the COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Plan on June 4, 2020 which was developed around five Guiding Principles: 1) Public Health and Safety; 2) Equity; 3) Braided Funding; 4) Community Resiliency; and 5) Well-being. He noted that the Digital Inclusion (DI) was allocated a $27.3 million budget from the City's General Fund.

Chief Innovation Officer Dillard explained that DI ensured all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, would have access to and use of information and communication technology through broadband internet access, access to devices, and digital literacy. He reported that the Digital Equity Action Plan Phase 1 began in December 2019 when

the City, led by the Office of Innovation, partnered with Bexar County and UTSA to develop and deploy the Digital Inclusion Survey and Assessment (DISA). He stated that the DISA closed in February 2020 and DISA data provided a gap analysis that determined the current state of internet availability communitywide. He added that a DI Task Force focused on COVID-19 was assembled through collaboration efforts with approximately 40 partner agencies. He stated that the DI Task Force assessed available funding resources, manpower resources, available assets and centralized all available assets.

Chief Innovation Officer Dillard reported that the DISA received 6,048 completed survey responses, averaging 500 responses per Council District, and data was gleaned from 65 in-person interviews or through various live City events and took over 200 staff hours to complete. He stated that overall, respondents reflected a knowledge of the value of digital connectivity and recognized that internet access provided education and income opportunities. He noted that the DISA data identified existent DI disparities and reflected and confirmed racial and income inequities tied to education, income, and by area. He reported that the DISA identified four DI barriers: Affordability, access to technical devices, unreliable internet connectivity and safe/privacy concerns.

Chief Innovation Officer Dillard reported on DISA Citywide Broadband Internet Access findings. He stated that an average 81% of residents had in-home, broadband internet access which included 82%-94% of residents in Council Districts 6-10 and 62%-77% of residents in Council Districts 1-5.

Chief Innovation Officer Dillard reported on DISA Citywide Access to Devices findings. He stated that an average of 97% of residents had access to smartphones, 90% had access to desktop/laptop devices. He added that 93%-96% of residents in Council Districts 6-10 had desktop/laptop access and 75%-88% Council Districts 1-5 had desktop/laptop access. He emphasized that 59% of households with children were sharing desktops and laptops for their distance learning and it was this statistic and COVID-19 that accelerated the Digital Equity Action Phase 2 Plan into action.

Chief Innovation Officer Dillard reported on DISA Digital Literacy findings. He stated that an average of 83% residents were identified as digitally competent. He added that 82%-91% of residents in Council Districts 6-10 were digitally competent and 77%-84% Council Districts 1-5 were digitally competent. He noted that the DISA highlighted the social impact of digital inequality and stated that embracing the goal of universal internet access was necessary to improve longstanding inequities in communities that endured gaps in income, education, employment, housing and health. He stated that the DISA included Digital Inclusion Report Cards that graded the City and each Council District by internet connectivity, access to devices, and digital literacy, with the City scoring an overall "B" grade of 84%. He emphasized that all Council Districts scores were the collaborative responsibility of all DI stakeholders in a DI approach.

Chief Innovation Officer Dillard presented the Connected Beyond the Classroom Initiative which proposed to expand fiber capability and student access to mitigate digital divide issues, specifically for underserved student populations K-12, colleges and universities. He reported that a collaborative, citywide, multi-government agency network between the City and other governmental entities would develop a flexible distance learning network to provide in-home school system access for up to 20,000 students within priority neighborhoods.

Chief Innovation Officer Dillard reported that the DI Task Force was identifying capabilities and assets in each target neighborhood and applicable technology solutions: mobile wireless internet access, wired internet access, or citywide fixed, wireless broadband deployment. He stated the focus would be on 50 priority neighborhoods as identified by CoSA Equity Atlas Maps (based on race and income), DISA, American Communities Survey, and DI Stakeholder feedback: SAISD (24), Edgewood (8), Harlandale (2), South San (3), Southwest (4), Judson (1), North East (3), and Northside (5).

Chief Innovation Officer Dillard reported that activation of Phase 1 was underway through the Westside Pilot Program and included six neighborhoods within the Lanier High School feeder pattern. He stated that Phase 2 would include the expansion of the technology and the inclusion of more neighborhoods and more school districts until full deployment was achieved by the goal timeline of December 2021. He clarified that the City would allow school districts to utilize the City's CoSANet broadband internet infrastructure so a student would log into the internet directly through their school district and access the internet in accordance with school district access regulations and firewall protections.

Citizen Committee Member Will Garrett stated that providing DI internet access and devices for school children within the City's most vulnerable neighborhoods was tremendously impactful. He noted the insightfulness of the Innovation Department and the Information & Technology Services Department for having conducted the DISA and securing Federal funding prior to COVID-19.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan referenced Port San Antonio and VelocityTx as local innovation and technology industry leaders and asked if their resources were leveraged within the local communities they were centered in. Chief Innovation Officer Dillard reported that staff engaged in outreach with both organizations and looked forward to a stronger partnership. John Peterek stated that staff would continue further outreach.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan asked how the DI Digital Equity Action Plan would be implemented on San Antonio Housing Authority public housing properties. Craig Hopkins stated the Plan would be implemented at SAHA properties located within the 50 priority neighborhoods.

Councilmember John Courage referenced households surveyed that stated they had access to devices. He requested further clarification if their access to devices were only through the workplace or if they had devices within the home. He recommended following up with school districts to obtain current information on students that did not have access to devices. He recommended partnering with corporate internet service providers to provide internet access to families and students for access to public information and resources and distance learning during COVID-19. Chief Innovation Officer Dillard stated that he would provide further information on DISA data regarding access to devices. Mr. Peterek acknowledged that some areas within the top 50 priority neighborhoods did not have broadband infrastructure and partnering with corporate internet service providers would be critical to establish internet access.

Citizen Committee Member Dirk Elmendorf noted the need for established broadband internet access to the priority neighborhoods was crucial as the new school year approached. He asked if there were any opportunities to accelerate and expand the pilot program. John Rodriguez acknowledged that the Plan could be deployed quicker if commercial broadband access was determined to be the best option and if infrastructure was readily available. He noted that SAISD was 79 square miles in size with approximately 50,000 students which made it difficult to deploy

the Plan faster. He explained that if emerging technology was deployed, it would require vertical assets such as towers and it would take 22-24 weeks to obtain steel structures. Mr. Peterek added that if early success was found in the pilot program, staff would expedite any efforts.

Councilmember Treviño asked if the DISA provided data on renters. He asked if renters were more or less likely to have internet access or digital literacy. He asked of opportunities to take advantage of renter proximity to create community computer labs. Mr. Hopkins stated he would provide home census demographics over the top 50 priority neighborhoods to provide a sizing of homeowners and renters. He noted that the Plan would be inclusive of all students regardless if they resided with homeowners or renters.

Citizen Member Cuellar stated that the Digital Equity Action Plan was a dream come true and a huge effort. She noted that DI was more important than ever during COVID-19 and was a health equity issue, not just a racial equity issue. She stated that achieving digital inclusion during COVID-19 was most important for the City to become resilient before school began in the fall.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan asked of job and workforce development opportunities within the DI Plan framework. Mr. Peterek stated there was a workforce link tied to the Alamo Area College District that those students would be able to access. Mr. Hopkins noted that the $27 million DI Budget was to build broadband infrastructure where it did not exist and all funds would be spent locally which would create jobs and workforce development. He stated that the immediate need was to use the funding to connect students with remote learning.

Councilmember Pelaez noted that the $27 million DI Budget was a large fund. He requested that outside counsel be retained to review the Digital Equity Action Plan to ensure assessments were correct.

Adjourn

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:01 p.m.

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Manny Pelaez, Chairman

Respectfully Submitted,

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Nancy Cano
Office of the City Clerk