

**GOVERNANCE CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020 at 10:00 AM  
VIDEOCONFERENCE**

Committee Present:	Mayor Ron Nirenberg, <i>Chair</i> Councilmember Adriana Rocha Garcia, <i>District 4</i> Councilmember Shirley Gonzales, <i>District 5</i> Councilmember Ana Sandoval, <i>District 7</i> Councilmember John Courage, <i>District 9</i>
Staff Present:	Erik Walsh, <i>City Manager</i> ; Roderick J. Sanchez, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Andy Segovia, <i>City Attorney</i> ; Camila Kunau, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Susan Guinn, <i>Assistant City Attorney</i> ; Tina J. Flores, <i>City Clerk</i> ; Michael Shannon, <i>Director, Development Services Department</i> ; Razi Hosseini, <i>Director, Planning</i> ; Debbie Racca-Sittre, <i>Director, Department of Arts &amp; Culture</i> ; Melissa Ramirez, <i>Assistant Director, Development Services Department</i> ; John Peterek, <i>Assistant to the City Manager</i> ; Lina Rodriguez, <i>Office of the City Clerk</i>
Others Present:	None

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Nirenberg called the meeting to order.

**1. Approval of the minutes from the August 24, 2020 Governance Committee Meeting.**

Councilmember Gonzales moved to approve the minutes from the August 24, 2020 Governance Committee Meeting. Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**2. Briefing and possible action on a Council Consideration Request (CCR) from Councilmember Cabello Havrda, relating to review and possible updates to existing building and trade code and the Unified Development Code, to identify potential barriers to Urban Farms and develop solutions to these barriers. [Roderick J. Sanchez, Assistant City Manager; Michael Shannon, Director, Development Services Department]**

Michael Shannon reported that urban farms served an important community purpose such as environmental services and community food security. He stated that the purpose of the CCR was to examine current code requirements within the Unified Development Code (UDC) and the Building Code (BC), many of which were established in 2015 and made urban farms more available. He added that the Food Policy Council (FPC) helped to develop some of the 2015 UDC requirements, but proper permitting and development criteria needed to be established that would still maintain the safety and intent of zoning codes and building safety concerns. He

noted that the UDC process was currently on hold due to COVID-19 and the next steps would be to create a task force comprised of the FPC, stakeholders, and neighborhood leaders to identify potential barriers and solutions and forward recommendations to the Community Health and Equity Committee for review and approval; and thereafter, to City Council for consideration. Assistant City Manager Roderick Sanchez reported that the FPC identified several broad issues which would require review by several Boards and Commissions such as Zoning, Planning, and the Buildings Standards Board (BSB). He stated that the FPC identified building permit issues that needed to be considered by the BSB. He noted that it would require several steps to fully address all the issues before a recommendation could be forwarded to City Council for approval.

Councilmember Courage asked of some of the barriers or obstacles identified by the FPC. Assistant City Manager Rod Sanchez stated that the FPC pointed out a broad range of issues, such as issues with neighborhood traffic where neighborhood farms would be established and where produce would be sold, the avoidance of having to build additional sidewalks to accommodate urban farming, and relief from permit activity for certain urban farming structures and on-site farming equipment storage. Assistant City Manager Sanchez pointed out the need to hold discussions with neighborhoods that would be impacted by the establishment of urban farms in their communities.

Councilmember Sandoval referenced a 2019 presentation by the FPC and Metro Health regarding urban farming. She stated that the FPC noted some urban farming challenges that would require several code changes and large investments such as water access, impact fees, sewage access, and engineering plans. She asked if the proposed CCR would include agriculture code and public land agriculture code, and asked of the estimated timeline for the project. Mr. Shannon stated that utilities, electricity, and sewer issues could all be addressed under one CCR. Assistant City Manager Sanchez stated that the UDC process would be placed on hold until after the current Legislative Session was recessed due to staff commitments. He noted that impactful discussions with neighborhood communities would be more productive in-person. He estimated that next steps and the formation of a task force could begin in January 2021.

Councilmember Sandoval noted current food insecurity during COVID-19 and the extended timeline of January 2021 for the formation of an Urban Farming Task Force. She recommended further discussion at the Community Health and Equity Committee for interim solutions to facilitate community gardens or urban agriculture.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda stated that time was of the essence given current food insecurity issues during COVID-19. She added that it was important to form a task force as soon as possible and to remain consistent with a full public engagement process and FPC engagement was needed.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to appoint an Urban Farming Task Force. Councilmember Gonzales seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**3. Briefing and possible action on a Council Consideration Request (CCR) from Councilmember Treviño regarding the creation of a Comprehensive Art WORKS Program in San Antonio.** [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Debbie Racca-Sittre, Director, Department of Arts & Culture]

Debbie Racca-Sittre reported that public art was very important during COVID-19 because it remained accessible for people to enjoy during quarantine. She stated that for over 20 years, the City allocated public art funding as part of its capital improvement strategy and established policies and procedures for public art in 2001. She reported that the City allocated 1% of the capital improvement budget for public art in 2011. She added that the proposed CCR would increase the funding for all eligible capital improvement art projects to 2% and included bond projects, the airport, certificates of obligation, and the linear creekway system. She noted that the increased funding would not apply to street maintenance programs, roof replacements or HVAC systems on any buildings. Ms. Racca-Sittre reported that updates would be made to public art administrative policy language and processes to further streamline public art.

Ms. Racca-Sittre reported that the CCR proposed a Design Enhancement Program which would allow for an artist or craftsman to collaborate with project architects, landscape architects, and engineers to integrate and guide the design of a capital project enhanced by artistic elements. She stated that the Department of Arts and Culture worked collaboratively with the Public Works Department on a Design Enhancement Pilot Project. She added that an update on the Pilot Project would be presented to the Culture and Neighborhood Services Council Committee.

Ms. Racca-Sittre reported that the CCR proposed Art in Private Development with the goal of providing enhanced property values and improved appearances of the community through creative and properly maintained privately owned art in public view. She stated that the proposal would provide more economic opportunity for artists. She noted that ample stakeholder and public engagement would be required; therefore, this portion of the policy would only go into effect after emergency COVID-19 orders were lifted. She recommended that the next steps for stakeholder engagement take place in January 2021, along the same timeline as the UDC amendment process. She added that in the interim, community art programs could be developed with proper protocol and policies established. She referenced street art created in Travis Parks by Poet Laureate Andrea “Vocab” Sanderson as an example of community art.

Councilmember Sandoval shared the recommendation from Dr. Kellen McIntyre, Executive Director and Co-founder of Bihl Haus Arts, for equity and accessibility to be included in the proposed CCR as it moved forward, with a comprehensive definition of terms.

Councilmember Sandoval moved to recommend and forward the proposed 2% increase investment in public art support to City Council for consideration, and to recommend and forward the second and third proposals to the Culture and Neighborhood Services Council Committee for further development. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion.

Councilmember Gonzales voiced concern for the increased costs of public projects by added enhancements or design options not previously approved by a public vote. She asked how the Design Enhancement Program would be managed. Ms. Racca-Sittre stated that the Pilot Project

would inform a streamlined process and determine feasibility, with the best interest of the Project as the focus.

Councilmember Gonzales requested that the Mayor reinstate the Planning and Land Development Council Committee so that basic housing issues and UDC amendment issues could be further addressed.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked if a task force could be formed for the Design Enhancement Program and the Art in Private Development Program that could engage stakeholder groups with the same January 2021 timeline as the proposed UDC amendment process. She noted that lumber costs had doubled during COVID-19, and asked how capital improvement arts projects would be affected. Mr. Shannon stated that the UDC process was a broad stakeholder process and construction costs and regulations were a large part of the discussion that included homebuilders, and partnering agencies with stakeholders involvement.

Councilmember Courage expressed concern with the increase of public art funding to 2%. He stated that capital improvement projects such as Senior Centers or parks greatly benefitted the community. He noted that when project costs increased towards their completion due to inflation in materials costs or other unforeseeable factors, it could cause the elimination of necessary features or equipment if a blanket 2% of capital investment funds were to be divested to public art. He made the recommendation that funds from capital improvement projects completed under budget could be divested to supplement the current 1% public art fund.

Councilmember Courage moved to add to the motion that the third proposal of an Art in Private Development Program be forwarded to the Planning and Land Development Council Committee for review. Councilmember Gonzales seconded the addition to the motion.

Councilmember Sandoval moved to recommend and forward the first proposal of a 2% increase investment in public art support to City Council for consideration; and to recommend and forward the second proposal of a Design Enhancement Program to the Culture and Neighborhood Services Council Committee for further development; and to recommend and forward the third proposal of an Art in Private Development Program to the Culture and Neighborhood Services Council Committee, and to the Planning and Land Development Committee, for further development. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia noted that the first proposal was to go before the Culture and Neighborhood Services Council Committee for further development before it was to be forwarded to City Council for consideration.

Councilmember Sandoval reset the motion. She moved to recommend and forward the first proposal of a 2% increase investment in public art support to Culture and Neighborhood Services Council Committee for further development; and to recommend and forward the second proposal of a Design Enhancement Program to the Culture and Neighborhood Services Council Committee for further development; and to recommend and forward the third proposal of an Art in Private Development Program to the Culture and Neighborhood Services Council Committee for further development, and to the Planning and Land Development Committee for further

development. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia noted a name correction to be made to Item 1 for the minutes from the August 24, 2020 Governance Committee Meeting.

Councilmember Courage moved to reconsider Item 1 for the approval of the minutes from the August 24, 2020 Governance Committee Meeting. Councilmember Sandoval seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilmember Courage moved to approve Item 1 with the changes as amended to the minutes from the August 24, 2020 Governance Committee Meeting. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg adjourned the meeting at 11:10 am.

**ATTEST:**

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***Ron Nirenberg, Mayor***

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***Tina J. Flores, LPEC***  
***City Clerk***