

City of San Antonio



City Council Special Session

City Hall Complex
105 Main Plaza
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Friday, June 25, 2021

9:00 AM

**Henry B. Gonzalez Convention
Center, 900 E. Market**

The City Council of San Antonio convened in the Stars at Night Ballroom in the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, 900 East Market, San Antonio, Texas 78205.

ROLL CALL

The City Council convened in a Special Meeting. City Clerk Tina J. Flores took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Councilmembers present:

PRESENT: 11 - Mayor Nirenberg, Bravo, McKee-Rodriguez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Cabello Havrda, Sandoval, Pelaez, Courage, and Perry

1. City Council Budget Goal Setting Session establishing budget policy direction that will guide the development of service priorities for the FY 2022 Proposed Budget and the FY 2023 Budget Plan to include possible action on matters presented and discussed. [Maria Villagomez, Deputy City Manager; Scott Huizenga, Director, Management and Budget]

OPENING REMARKS

Mayor Nirenberg announced that the purpose of the Budget Goal Setting Session was to set the community's priorities in the City's FY2022 and FY2023 Budget. He reported that the City was required statutorily to pass a balanced budget. He noted the challenges faced by City leadership and staff associated with the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Recovery efforts.

City Manager Erik Walsh stated that staff had prepared Budget presentations to address the Mayor's and City Council priorities which included continued support of COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency efforts, street and transportation infrastructure improvements, and affordable housing.

Summary of City Council Discussion Outcomes

- Affordable Housing including kennel services at homeless shelter
- Transportation Infrastructure to include drainage, streets, sidewalks, and in particular Vision Zero investments
- Health Strategic Growth Plan and specifically within the plan Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and domestic violence prevention.
- Public Safety to include policing and policing services
- Animal Care Services specifically targeted Council District resources
- Other priorities included the lighting plan, senior services, resiliency, and pay increase for civilian employees
- City's Financial Policies

The Budget Session resulted in agreed upon guidelines for working together and key priorities. The following key priorities were identified by the Mayor and Councilmembers to guide staff in development of the FY 2022 Budget and FY 2023 Plan:

- Financial Policies
- Health Strategic Growth Plan
- Police Services Review Project
- Streets, Sidewalks, and Mobility
- Affordable Housing

BUDGET DISCUSSION – POLICY AREAS

City Staff presented on the following topics:

- Financial Policies and Community Input
- Metro Health Strategic Growth Plan
- Update on Police Services Review
- Affordable Housing
- Streets, Sidewalks, and Mobility

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Mayor Nirenberg and City Council supported the following proposed Financial Policies:

- Maintain a minimum General Fund ending balance of 15%.
- Maintain Public Safety below 66% of the General Fund.
- Manage structural balance in the General Fund.
- Maintain a \$1 Million contingency in the General Fund and \$3 Million in the Capital Budget.
- Address Internal Fund deficits within 3 to 5 years.
- Annually review the impact of the State imposed 3.5% Property Tax Cap on service delivery and provide a recommendation on whether to adjust the Property Tax Rate.
- Annually review property tax relief with a focus on homeowners.
- Annually review and periodically adjust fees and charges to provide for cost recovery, inflation, consumer relief, and/or alignment with policy goals.

HEALTH STRATEGIC GROWTH PLAN

Mayor Nirenberg and City Council supported the following proposed Health Strategic Growth Plan and funding for FY 2022:

- Mental Health
- Health Justice
- Access to Care
- Technology and Infrastructure

Additional Budget Requests Related to Health Strategic Growth Plan:

1. As part of the discussion in the Fall regarding prioritization of the use of the American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds incorporate discussions with the County for strategic investments in mental health.
2. Report back to the City Council about investments made as part of the Strategic Growth Plan within City departments and outside the City with the many partners that will be part of the implementation of the plan.
3. Explore the possibility of using Economic Development Incentives in retail area with the goal of having more healthy food stores, shopping, and healthcare facilities available in areas of the city where need exists.
4. Explore environmental impact somewhere in the Strategic Plan as well as climate health impact.
5. Evaluate reducing the City's hazmat fee for small convenience store retailers if they were to install electric vehicle charges and/or be part of the Healthy Corner Store Initiative.

POLICE SERVICES REVIEW PROJECT

City Council expressed general consensus of the recommendations' framework outlined in the Police Services Review Project:

- Alternative responses to strengthen the Police response to mental health, domestic violence, and homeless calls.
- Enhance transparency. Improve SAPD website and add interactive data tools, disaggregate data within existing reports, and improve timeliness of information.
- Review calls that could be addressed by non-sworn personnel including animal related calls, fireworks, and property found.
- Enhance relationships with the community through SAFFE program, community based, and educating community on SAPD programs, and continue to engage stakeholder groups.
- Work to incorporate recommendations from the Community Health and Equity Committee regarding mental health, gender, and racial equity.

Additional Budget Requests Related to Police Services Review Project:

1. Explore the creation of a street lighting index where streets were assigned a grade based on how well lit currently and then layer crime data to prioritize areas for funding. This could be a strategy to determine which areas are to be funded for additional streetlights.

2. Evaluate crime in the City with the goal of making strategic recommendations to deter crime and address its root causes.
3. Provide quarterly reports on crime statistics to all Councilmembers by Council District.
4. Develop some measures to evaluate and determine if achieving desired results as it relates alternative responses to calls.

STREETS, SIDEWALKS AND MOBILITY

City Council was supportive of the recommendations outlined in the Transportation Plan.

- Develop a safe and connected network of bicycle infrastructure.
- Eliminate and reduce traffic fatalities and severe injuries through continuing the City Bike Plan and Vision Zero strategies.
- Providing for targeted pedestrian safety projects.

City Council favored additional funding for sidewalks.

- Overall funding in Trial Budget of \$11.1 million for sidewalks that included \$6.1 million in 2017 Bond and \$5.0 million operating funds (ATD funds). The \$5 million in ATD funds would be allocated based 50% on equity atlas and 50% on sidewalk distressed miles.

City Council expressed support for recommended funding for the street maintenance program and approach to allocate funding in FY 2022.

- \$55 million allocated based on size of district's network.
- \$55 million allocated based on condition of district's network.

City Council supported a strategy for the 2022 Bond Program that would keep the Annual Street Maintenance Program funded at \$110 million with \$90 million from the Annual Budget and \$20 million from the 2022 Bond Program. This strategy would allow to invest \$20 million for Vision Zero improvements from the Annual Budget.

Additional Budget Requests Related to Streets, Sidewalks, and Transportation:

1. Study a future fee like the fee-in-lieu of on-site detention (FILO) for sidewalks. This would have to be part of a future Unified Development Code (UDC) update.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

City Council was supportive for the continuation of investments in Affordable Housing of \$28.3 million in the Trial Budget to include the Under One Roof Program, minor repair, and owner-occupied rehabilitation programs.

Additional Budget Requests Related to Affordable Housing:

1. Prepare an update on City's progress on the ten-year affordable Housing Implementation Plan metrics. Also provide a report over the last few years of number of affordable units that had been built or identified in the City, tax incentives provided to developers for affordable housing, and incentives provided to residents to become homeowners.

2. Continue to monitor the Title Clearance Program to ensure applicants take advantage of affordable housing programs.
3. Continue to develop programs that preserve affordable housing stock.

Budget Prioritization Discussion:

The City Council noted the following priority items were of significant interest by individual Councilmembers (no consensus similar to the “Summary of City Council Discussion Outcomes” section):

Infrastructure

- Increase Neighborhood and Mobility Program (NAMP) allocation.
- Support for park improvements including restrooms and shade structures.

Metro Health Strategic Growth Plan

- Additional Healthy Corner Store in Council District 6.
- Support violence prevention and gun safety.

Affordable Housing

- Advocate for education program to assist homeowners to apply for homestead exemption.

Public Safety

- Additional Police Officers.
- Support for SAFE Program.
- Support for continued diversity training and sensitivity training for Police Officers.
- Support for the Good Sam App to address mental health calls.
- Office of Crime Prevention and Recidivism.

Other Priority Comments

- Elimination of the \$20 Property Room Fee
- Examine potential use of Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) funds for infrastructure and affordable housing
- Support for K-9 for Warriors
- Support for Digital Inclusion which could include be extending check-outs of tablets and laptops from the Library
- Maintain funding support to VisitSA at \$15 million and monitor how hotels and VisitSA can work together to fill the Convention Center
- Support for the WETC and Mexican Civil Rights Institute
- Property Tax Relief
- Increase Council support staff to 8 full-time equivalents (FTEs)
- Support community education about code violations
- Suggest that new 311 representatives are housed at Council Field Offices
- Support for small business

- Advocate for business incentives in Council District 7 such as Northeast Corridor Program
- Encourage investment to serve the non-English speaking community
- Provide childcare at Board and Commission meetings

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg adjourned the meeting at 5:00 PM.

APPROVED

RON NIRENBERG
Mayor

Attest:

TINA J. FLORES
City Clerk