



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number: 18-3924

Agenda Item Number: 32.

Agenda Date: 6/21/2018

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: City Auditor's Office

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Kevin Barthold, City Auditor

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: All

SUBJECT:

Proposed amendments to the Ethics Code and Municipal Campaign Finance Code

SUMMARY:

This item amends Article III "Code of Ethics" and Article VII "Campaign Finance Regulations", Chapter 2 "Administration" of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas. Changes include increased disclosure for zoning applicants and those seeking support for housing tax credits, provisions for waivers of Ethics Code and Municipal Campaign Finance Code, increased frequency of Campaign Finance reports, including entertainment limitations for elected officials, and requiring all complaints to be forwarded to chair and Vice-Chair of Ethics Review Board for review.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Ethics Review Board has evaluated proposed changes to the Ethics Code and Municipal Campaign Finance Code. As part of this process, the ERB has considered input from City staff, evaluated 3 Council Consideration Requests submitted by City Councilmembers, sought input from a local ethics research expert, and performed a thorough review of both Codes.

The recommended changes increase transparency through additional disclosures, clarify sections of the Code, and codify current practices.

The ERB Chair discussed the proposed amendments with the Governance Committee on September 20, 2017 and February 28, 2018. Discussions were held with Council at B sessions on November 8, 2017 and June 13,

2018.

In March 2018, the Mayor created a Campaign Finance Task Force which reviewed disclosures on campaign finance reports and discussed contribution limits. This Task Force will report its recommendations to the Governance Committee on June 20, 2018.

ISSUE:

The ERB is recommending changes to the Ethics Code and the Municipal Campaign Finance Code.

The Campaign Finance Task Force will present its recommendations to the Governance Committee on June 20, 2018.

Only City Council can amend City Code.

ALTERNATIVES:

Council can approve, modify, or deny the proposed recommendations.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends consideration and approval of the proposed amendments to the Ethics Code and Municipal Campaign Finance Code.