



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:20-1766

Agenda Item Number: 3.

Agenda Date: 2/11/2020

In Control: Economic and Workforce Development Committee

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Alejandra Lopez

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT: Briefing and possible action on “#GoSATX - A Day in San Antonio for International Business Leaders and Entrepreneurs”.

SUMMARY:

As part of the South by Southwest Festival (SXSW) that takes place annually in Austin, Texas, the Economic Development Department (EDD) will be hosting “#GoSATX - A Day in San Antonio for International Business Leaders and Entrepreneurs” on March 13 to foster relationships with international visitors who plan to attend SXSW.

BACKGROUND:

SXSW is an annual music, film, and interactive festival that takes place in Austin, Texas and attracts large audiences with interest in innovation, entrepreneurship, technology, arts, and culture. Due to the festival’s large international attendance, alignment in interests, and proximity, the festival is a prime opportunity to showcase San Antonio to global entrepreneurs.

During 2016-2017, the City supported different community organizations to facilitate a San Antonio presence at SXSW with varying outcomes. In preparation for SXSW 2018, EDD engaged stakeholders including Tech Bloc, the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation (SAEDF), Visit San Antonio (VSA), Bexar County, Geekdom, San Antonio Chamber, and the Office of Innovation to gather feedback on past and future SXSW activations. The stakeholders determined that a phased-in approach to a San Antonio presence at SXSW would be most effective.

In 2018, based on community feedback, San Antonio sponsored a booth at the SXSW Job Market, organized by Tech Bloc. In 2019, the City sponsored two initiatives: (1) a booth at the SXSW Job Market organized by Tech Bloc, wherein Tech Bloc collected resumes from job seekers and sold and promoted San Antonio as a city of choice for tech employment and investment; and (2) a pre-SXSW Startup Day event in San Antonio for international businesses aimed at showcasing San Antonio as a soft-landing destination. More than 80 SXSW attendees actively engaged at the Job Market booth and 50 delegates from Brazil, Chile, Spain, Denmark and

Germany traveled to San Antonio for the Start-Up Day.

ISSUE:

In 2020, the City will continue supporting and orchestrating a pre-SXSW event that welcomes international businesses to San Antonio. On March 13, EDD will host an event entitled, “#GoSATX - A Day in San Antonio for International Business Leaders and Entrepreneurs.” The event takes place on the first day of the festival and will highlight San Antonio assets such as the Pearl Brewery, the Riverwalk, the Alamo, the Houston Street Tech District, and the San Antonio startup ecosystem. The anchor “Speed Pitch” event will conclude the day’s activities allowing for international entrepreneurs to present to local investors.

As part of the larger international economic development strategy, EDD is leveraging this event to promote San Antonio’s growing and innovative tech sector. EDD is taking the following steps in alignment with our Metro Priority Plan (as informed by the Brookings Institution’s Global Cities Initiative): (1) enhance existing relationships by re-engaging with prior participants; (2) collaborate with San Antonio trade offices in Mexico and in Japan; (3) research and connect with new partners in priority countries; and (4) engage with City departments and with VSA to promote San Antonio. To date, EDD has invited over 400 potential participants and country liaisons, such as leaders of incubators and accelerators in our priority cities and diplomatic partners. Representatives will attend from Canada, Mexico, Germany, Colombia, South Africa, England and Korea, among other countries.

FISCAL IMPACT:

While this item is for briefing purposes only, up to \$10,000 from EDD’s FY 2020 General Fund Budget has been allocated for the event.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff will present a briefing on this item subject to possible action by the Committee.