



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:16-1849

Agenda Item Number: 13.

Agenda Date: 4/7/2016

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Center City Development & Operations

DEPARTMENT HEAD: John Jacks

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT: Brownfield Redevelopment Policy and Program Guidelines

SUMMARY:

This ordinance approves the City of San Antonio Brownfield Redevelopment Policy and Program Guidelines to assist with identification, assessment, cleanup, and development of sites with potential environmental contamination. The City's Brownfield Redevelopment Program aims to revitalize inner city communities, achieve economic development goals, improve human and environmental health, and stimulate infill development.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A brownfield is a property on which expansion, redevelopment, or reuse may be complicated by the possibility of environmental contamination. These sites are usually abandoned, vacant, or underutilized properties. Examples may include abandoned gas stations, dry cleaning facilities, junkyards, old car dealerships, abandoned factories, and other potentially contaminated properties. Brownfield sites present unique development challenges that require a creative and multifaceted approach to address.

The City has been involved in brownfield assessment and redevelopment efforts throughout the past two decades through various programs and funding sources including grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded in 1999 and 2004. More recent activities include the following:

- **2011:** City Council allocated funding in the FY 2012 Budget to the Center City Development Office (CCDO) for a Senior Planner position and directed staff to create a Brownfields Program for the City of San Antonio

- **2012:** CCDO hired a Senior Planner in March to develop the City's Brownfields Program, to guide assessment and cleanup of brownfield sites for redevelopment, and to secure grant funding.
- **2013-2014:** Council allocated \$300,000 from the General Fund through the Inner City Incentive Fund for environmental site assessments and other brownfields activities - \$200,000 from FY 2013 and \$100,000 from FY 2014. This provided initial investment in the early growth of the Brownfields Program. Staff continued to apply for grants as a sustainable source of program funding.
- **2014:** Through a partnership between Metro Health and CCDO, the City of San Antonio was awarded a \$150,000 grant from the Federal Center for Disease Control Brownfield Initiative. \$100,000 of the grant was used to conduct outreach and planning efforts in eight inner-city neighborhoods. The remaining \$50,000 was used to conduct environmental site assessments on six inner-city properties.
- **2015:** The EPA awarded the City of San Antonio a Community-Wide Brownfield Assessment Grant of \$400,000 over 3 years to conduct environmental site assessments on properties with potential contamination from hazardous materials and/or petroleum, including \$200,000 for hazardous materials assessments and \$200,000 for petroleum assessments. In addition, the Brownfields Redevelopment Program was allocated \$500,000 through the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) over five years to provide financial assistance for cleanup on sites with known environmental contamination being considered for redevelopment. Both EPA and CDBG funds were made available on October 1, 2015.

Program Accomplishments to Date

- Identification of and outreach to more than 380 potential brownfields property owners
- 25 sites assisted
- \$3.1 million in added ad valorem tax value
- \$117 million in planned private investment
- 570 planned housing units
- Development of Brownfields Redevelopment Policy and Program Guidelines
- Assistance in developing a City of San Antonio Municipal Designation (MSD) Program

On February 15, 2016, the Neighborhoods and Livability Council Committee approved this item for City Council consideration. Future amendments to the Program Guidelines will be presented to the appropriate City Council committee for review and approval.

ISSUE:

As brownfields sites remain abandoned and unmarketable, they increase inner city blight, decrease property values, hurt local economies, and can threaten community and human health and the environment. CCDO works to remove barriers to redevelopment within the Center City, and the redevelopment of brownfields sites is a key component of this effort. With the infusion of new funding, an official policy and program guidelines are necessary to guide brownfields activities and communicate the public benefits and necessity of a Brownfields Redevelopment Policy and Program. They also better position the City of San Antonio to secure future grant funding for brownfields activities.

The proposed policy outlines the City's commitment to identify, assess, clean-up, and redevelop brownfield sites, and details the public benefits of such activities. The policy also presents the goals, strategic approach, implementation plan, and measures to gauge program performance. The Program Guidelines are an attachment to the Policy and outline the types of assistance available, project eligibility, and the application process and

considerations. Staff has solicited feedback from public and private stakeholders on the proposed Brownfields Redevelopment Program Guidelines. Any future amendments to the guidelines will be brought before the appropriate City Council committee.

Approval of the Brownfields Redevelopment Policy and Program Guidelines will establish the City's commitment to the redevelopment of brownfield sites, provide a standard for which to conduct brownfields activities, and provide a strategic framework from which to continue developing and growing the program. The fully developed program will be an added tool to achieve San Antonio's larger Center City development goals and further demonstrate the City's commitment to brownfields redevelopment and revitalizing our established neighborhoods.

ALTERNATIVES:

Should City Council choose not to approve the proposed Brownfield Redevelopment Policy and Program Guidelines, the program will not have clear policy direction, thereby threatening the efficiency and effectiveness of the program and its long-term success. Lack of an official policy may also negatively affect future grant funding opportunities.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with this item.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed Brownfields Redevelopment Policy and Program Guidelines to assist with the identification, assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of sites with potential environmental contamination.