



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:17-3731

Agenda Item Number: 2.

Agenda Date: 6/13/2017

In Control: Housing Commission to Protect and Preserve Dynamic and Diverse Neighborhoods

DEPARTMENT: Planning Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Bridgett White

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Briefing and discussion on a relocation assistance policy framework

SUMMARY:

This item will include a staff briefing followed by Subcommittee discussion on a possible policy framework to address relocation for residents in instances in which displacement cannot be avoided.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Mayor's Task Force on Preserving Dynamic & Diverse Neighborhoods was first convened on October 16, 2014, and was established for the purpose of identifying “policies and programs that encourage investment in inner city neighborhoods but minimize or prevent displacement of people or adverse impacts related to history, culture, and quality of life of unique neighborhoods.” The Task Force met with the intent to:

- Review current policies
- Review best practices from other communities
- Identify short-term and long-term recommendations
- Seek community input/educate community on scope of issue
- Be inclusive of varying perspectives

City Council approved the Task Force’s Final Report on May 14, 2015, which included a recommendation that the City “Develop a Relocation Assistance Policy for Circumstances When Displacement Cannot be Avoided.” An excerpt from the Report reads:

“In researching best practices for non-federally funded displacements, the Task Force reviewed programs within the State of Texas and nationally to include Austin, Dallas, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, State of Maryland and Seattle.”

“In cases of displacement either the incoming developer or property owner were responsible for paying relocation assistance to tenants with additional stipends available to senior and/or disabled individuals. In all cases, displaced residents were required a minimum of 90 days written eviction notice. In addition to financial assistance, dislocated individuals received technical assistance and relocation counseling to identify a new residence or benefits available. It was also identified that cities enforced the policies and issued fines and penalties associated with the program.”

“The Task Force recommends that developers or property owners provide relocation assistance for tenants displaced by projects receiving City incentives (i.e. SAWS and City Fee Waivers, Tax Abatements and Refunds, Tax Increment Financing, Inner City Incentive Funds, etc). The Commission should work with stakeholders including private developers, public sector representatives, affected community members, and the community-at-large to determine the appropriate amount of financial assistance.”

Following City Council acceptance of the Task Force’s Final Report in May 2015, the City established the Housing Commission to Protect and Preserve Dynamic and Diverse Neighborhoods, in part, to address the recommendations in the report.

ISSUE:

City staff has initiated a working group from multiple departments to develop an updated recommendation regarding a relocation assistance policy. Staff will present the subcommittee with an update on the staff working group, and a revised policy framework. While the Uniform Relocation Act addresses assistance for tenants displaced by projects receiving federal funds, this proposal would add relocation assistance for tenants displaced by redevelopment.

The staff proposal will address:

- The party or parties responsible for providing the assistance;
- Incentives or other actions that would trigger the requirement to offer assistance;
- Amount offered per tenant/household;
- Eligible income levels of assistance beneficiaries;
- Any extra assistance to be provided for special circumstances;
- Eviction notice requirements;
- Enforcement tools available for non-payment; and
- Other types of assistance.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing and discussion only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing and discussion only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item will include a staff briefing on a possible policy framework to address relocation for residents in instances in which displacement cannot be avoided, followed by Subcommittee discussion.