



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number: 19-7068

Agenda Item Number:

Agenda Date: 9/18/2019

In Control: Governance Committee

DEPARTMENT: Police Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: William P. McManus, Chief of Police

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT: Proposed Student Housing Safety Initiative

SUMMARY:

Discussion of proposed student housing safety initiative as requested by Councilman Pelaez

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On June 12, 2019, Councilman Pelaez submitted a Council Consideration Request (CCR) requesting that City staff develop options to enhance protection and security to tenants at apartment complexes surrounding universities and college campuses. Of particular interest is the coordination of services between the SAPD, university law enforcement and apartment management to reduce the likelihood of criminal activity. The CCR also identifies the creation of minimum standards for apartments related to security cameras and archiving of recorded video, entry gate maintenance and lighting in parking lots and common areas to promote student safety.

SAPD Coordination with UTSA

In late June and July, the SAPD met with UTSA Police Chief Gerald Lewis and representatives from UTSA to discuss concerns associated with criminal activity at the student housing complexes immediately surrounding the 1604 Campus. While the discussion initially focused on the isolated crimes that have occurred, it was determined that the development of a comprehensive strategy between the SAPD, UTSA PD and apartment complex managers would minimize the likelihood of victimization for student tenants and enhance response to reported criminal activity.

It is important to note that area SAPD SAFE officers have been actively working with the UTSA PD, students and area apartment complex management over the last several years to share information on available programs and services designed to promote public safety.

As a result of these meetings SAPD and UTSA agreed to the following three-pronged strategy to ensure student safety throughout the year:

- **Parent/Student Interaction**
 - Move-in Days
 - Roadrunner Days
 - SGA presentation
 - National Night Out

- **Apartment Outreach**
 - Meet with apartment managers/personnel
 - Discuss needs/public safety concerns
 - Schedule seminars, training etc.
 - Establish clear lines of communication

- **SAPD & UTSA PD Coordination**
 - Combined SAPD/UTSA PD call response
 - Information sharing: students- related crimes
 - SAPD access to Live Scan
 - Coordination of COP classes

Building Requirements

The City's current building code - 2018 International Building Code (IBC) - includes minimum lighting requirements such as means of egress illumination along the path of exit travel within the buildings and then to the street. The IBC does not contain security camera requirements. The City's fire code already includes some maintenance requirements for entry gates into apartment complexes that are part of the property's fire lane access.

The San Antonio Apartment Association (SAAA) participated in brief discussions related to the proposed security-related minimum standards identified in the CCR. The SAAA indicated that as an organization does not have the ability to compel apartment complexes to implement such improvements.

RECOMMENDATION:

SAPD Coordination:

SAPD in coordination with UTSA PD will implement and monitor the three-pronged strategy mentioned above. The results of this strategy will be presented to the Public Safety Committee in early 2020. At this time, SAPD will also present a recommendation to expand the strategy coordinated with UTSA to other local colleges and universities based on a crime analysis of multi-family developments within a one mile radius of local colleges and universities to identify areas with high concentrations.

Building Requirements

The Development Services Department recommends expanding the stakeholder group to include members of the development community and neighborhood groups in addition to the SAAA to discuss whether potential code changes could provide improved protection and security to tenants at apartment complexes surrounding university and college campuses. Any potential building code related amendments would be presented to the Planning and Community Development Committee and possibly incorporated in the 2020 building code update process.