City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:19-8114

Agenda Item Number: 2.

Agenda Date: 11/5/2019

In Control: Economic and Workforce Development Committee

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Alejandra Lopez

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT:

An overview of the "Metro Priority Plan", San Antonio's proposed international economic development strategy as informed by the Brookings Global Cities Initiative and the Brookings Metro Prioritization Exercise.

SUMMARY:

The Economic Workforce and Development Committee will receive an overview of the City's proposed Metro Priority Plan, which describes San Antonio's international strategy (1) to focus efforts on key global markets based on data-driven research, (2) to increase San Antonio's access to the outside world through business, diplomatic, cultural and educational connections, and (3) to elevate San Antonio's reputation as a global leader through targeted tactics based on stage of market relationship.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Since 2013, the San Antonio community has made a concerted effort to better understand its assets and channel its limited resources with respect to international economic development. The Brookings Institution and JPMorgan Chase supported these efforts as part of the Global Cities Initiative.

Between 2014 and 2015, San Antonio published its Export, Trade and Foreign Direct Investment Strategies. These reports highlighted thirteen countries as target markets.

Between 2017 and 2019, the City participated in the Brookings Market Prioritization Exercise, through which it narrowed the focus to five priority metros using a data-driven approach. During this exercise, the City took the following steps:

- Defined San Antonio's world-leading industry specializations;
- Identified markets that show potential for economic linkages with its industries;
- Assessed foreign markets based on macroeconomic, political, educational, and cultural factors;
- Compiled the data to sort priority cities by target industry; and
- Solicited industry and community feedback to validate the data.

ISSUE:

As a result of the Metro Prioritization Exercise, the City identified the following cities on which to focus international economic development efforts: Tokyo, Seoul, Toronto, Frankfurt, and Mexico City. The City will continue to leverage existing relationships with San Antonio's international Sister and Friendship Cities.

San Antonio will tailor specific tactics to the prioritized metros, using business, diplomatic, cultural, and educational connections. Among the strategies are identifying and expanding local and global influencers by category, country and city (San Antonio's global network); creating a shared communication hub for this network; developing an international leadership program focused on these markets; hiring lead-generation firms in target markets; preparing specific marketing collateral in local languages; and leveraging the UNESCO global networks. Based on the framework outlined in the plan, our relationships with priority cities will move from introductory, to intermediate, to advanced stages, each with specific outcomes measures and ultimately furthering opportunities for trade and foreign direct investment.

ALTERNATIVES:

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

N/A