



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**20-2317

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**Agenda Item Number:** 5.

**Agenda Date:** 3/3/2020

**In Control:** Economic and Workforce Development Committee

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**DEPARTMENT:** Human Services

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Melody Woosley

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:**

Status of Poverty in San Antonio - Report Recommendations

**SUMMARY:**

This item provides a briefing on the findings and recommendations provided in the report “Status of Poverty in San Antonio.” The recommendations of the report will be presented to relevant City Council committees to begin discussions around possible implementation; this item provides the first briefing on the report around relevant economic development, workforce, and human services related recommendations.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

In September 2019, the U.S. Census Bureau released the latest American Community Survey 1-year Estimate data. The data, which was from 2018, provided state and local estimates for factors such as poverty, income, and education. According to the report, among the 25 most populous U.S. Metropolitan Areas, the San Antonio-New Braunfels Metropolitan Area ranks highest for poverty. Since 2013, the overall poverty rate for the City of San Antonio has remained at 18-20%, indicating that about one in five individuals are experiencing poverty, which is one of the most important determinants of health, longevity, and quality of life.

The “Status of Poverty in San Antonio” report, developed by the City of San Antonio’s Human Services Department and Metropolitan Health District, builds on previous reports and community conversations. It also provides recommended strategies included in a recent Asset Funders Network report, to focus investments and increase collaboration around poverty alleviation initiatives. The City’s report is structured around eight major frameworks: Employment and Income, Education and Skills Development, Wealth and Assets, Business Entrepreneurship, Affordable Housing, Homelessness, Physical and Mental Health, and Access to Transportation.

**ISSUE:**

Staff will provide a briefing on key data findings in the report, including population data analysis and a summary of the current funding toward City efforts to alleviate poverty. In addition, staff will review various recommendations of the report, which include:

- Invest in the expansion of programs that offer wrap-around financial supports for single mothers attending nonprofit job-training or higher education programs;
- Invest in workforce training supports that lead to higher-paying and in demand jobs;
- Invest in the expansion of financial coaching/counseling. Support the development of additional partnerships with financial services providers, to connect coaching clients to low-cost financial services to support long-term credit and asset building;
- Expand availability and access to low-cost financial products and services. Coordinate city services with asset-building providers to engage local banks, credit unions and Community Development Financial Institutions to expand low-cost financial products in areas dominated by high-cost subprime services. These products could focus on access to low-cost short-term credit, vehicle loans, credit-building, and building emergency and long-term savings; and
- Nurture the development of innovative and affordable alternatives to tax time loans. Revisit financial services connected with free tax preparation program.

#### **ALTERNATIVES:**

This item is for briefing purposes only.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This item is for briefing purposes only. Fiscal impact will be developed upon recommendations from the community engagement process along with Mayor and City Council input.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

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