



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:14-1663

Agenda Item Number: 4.

Agenda Date: 8/7/2014

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Intergovernmental Relations

ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER: Carlos Contreras

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City Wide

SUBJECT:

Withdrawal of City participation in VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority's streetcar program; redirection of \$32 million previously authorized for the streetcar program to center city projects and programs to be identified at a later date; establishment of a Charter Review Commission; and establishing the requirement for voter approval before participation in a streetcar or light rail program.

SUMMARY:

Consideration of an ordinance withdrawing City participation in VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority's Streetcar and Transit Improvement Plan ("streetcar program"); redirecting \$32,000,000.00 in City funds from the streetcar program to center city projects and programs; establishing a Charter Review Commission to review and recommend revisions to the Charter of the City of San Antonio; and establishing that the City Council will not approve participation in a streetcar or light rail program until that program has been approved by a vote of City residents.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City Council previously considered and approved the City's participation in VIA's streetcar and transit improvement plan through ordinances 2011-10-20-0846 and 2013-01-10-0012. Since that time, an organized effort gathered thousands of signatures for a petition to require a vote on the streetcar program.

The City Council has acknowledged the concerns of the community and the importance of affording San Antonio residents the opportunity to provide input on a new proposal for a streetcar or light rail program, including the requirement for a community-wide vote before City participation in a streetcar or light rail

program.

The City Council will consider an ordinance withdrawing City participation in VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority's streetcar program. This ordinance will include redirecting \$32,000,000.00 in City funds from the streetcar program to center city projects and programs. By this ordinance, the City Council will also establish that the City Council will not approve participation in a streetcar or light rail program until that program has been approved by a vote of City electors.

The City Council will also establish a Charter Review Commission to review and recommend revisions to the Charter of the City of San Antonio. Charter provisions for review by the Commission will include, but not be limited to, the following: addition of a provision in the Charter for a vote by the electors of the City of San Antonio before participation by the City in a streetcar or light rail program; the procedure for filling a vacancy in the office of Mayor; City Council pay; and the revision of other identified provisions that may be in conflict with, or superseded by, changes in state or federal law. Proposed revisions to the City Charter are expected to be presented to the voters for consideration at the May 2015 general election.

ISSUE:

The City Council will consider the actions above in acknowledgement of the concerns of the community and the importance of affording San Antonio residents the opportunity to provide input on a new proposal for a streetcar or light rail program, including the requirement for a vote by City electors before City participation in a streetcar or light rail program.

ALTERNATIVES:

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT:

The costs for a Charter Amendment Election in May 2015 will vary depending on the number of participating entities with items on the ballot.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Ordinance.