



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Date: 1/21/2021

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Office of Sustainability

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Douglas Melnick, AICP, ISSP-SA, CNU-A

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: All

SUBJECT:

Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc. and the City of San Antonio in support of the American Cities Climate Challenge to extend the support from December 31, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

SUMMARY:

Ordinance approving an Amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding which established the terms and conditions for the working agreement between the Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc. and the City of San Antonio in support of the American Cities Climate Challenge by Ordinance 2019-06-20-0561. The amendment to the MOU extends the term for 6 months from December 31, 2020 to June 30, 2021. There is no fiscal impact to the City for this initiative, however American Cities Climate Challenge initiatives may have a fiscal impact that will require approval from City Council prior to implementation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City of San Antonio was selected as a Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge (ACCC) City, which was open to the 100 most populous cities in America. Twenty-five cities were selected to receive technical assistance and support packages over a two-year period valued at up to \$2.5 million per city to work on buildings and transportation-related initiatives aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Office of Sustainability is coordinating with the Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc. (NRDC) who was selected by Bloomberg Philanthropies to serve as the core partner supporting cities on overall project strategy, outreach and education, stakeholder engagement, advocacy, and coordination of best-in-class technical assistance from a variety of national organizations with expertise in buildings and transportation.

While San Antonio continues work on SA Climate Ready's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, many of the strategies identified in the ACCC initiative are found within the SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan that was adopted by City Council in August 2016 with the goals of improving air quality, reducing energy consumption, increasing local energy security, and increasing transportation options.

Focused on the transportation and building energy sectors, many of these initiatives are already underway and include:

- Meeting municipal electricity demand with renewable energy;
- Deep Energy Retrofits and Zero Net Energy Policy (ZNE) for municipal buildings.
- Benchmarking, audit, and retro-commissioning (RCx) policies for existing buildings;
- New financing programs for energy efficiency, renewables, and infrastructure;
- Electric vehicle and solar readiness;
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure;
- Commuter incentives;
- Improving public transit speed, reliability and user experience;
- Define and expand the high-frequency public transit network to achieve significant ridership increases.

Participation in the Challenge has also led to an injection of foundation funding to local non-profits for the establishment of the Mayor's Youth Engagement Council for Climate Initiatives and equity training for City of San Antonio staff and SA Climate Ready Advisory Committees. Additionally, a multi-pronged training platform to augment organizational cross-collaboration for delivery of climate action policies has been funded and launched as a result of participation in the Challenge. These initiatives fall under the essential SA Climate Ready strategy of "educating and empowering" all residents to reach our climate action goals collectively.

The Memorandum of Understanding was approved by City Council through Ordinance 2019-06-0561. Originally set to be completed at the end of 2020, in December 2020 NRDC confirmed that support for cities participating in the American Cities Climate Challenge would be extended 6 months through June 30, 2021.

ISSUE:

While San Antonio has not received direct financial support as a selected participant in the American Cities Climate Challenge, The City has received:

- Two City Advisor Contract Employees housed within the Office of Sustainability to facilitate the development and implementation of high-impact actions;
- Data, design, and innovation resources from national experts;
- Leadership development support for city officials;
- Implementation coaching to drive results;
- Citizen education and outreach support to maximize community engagement;
- Stakeholder engagement strategy;

- Polling and communications support to build momentum and amplify the city's progress against goals; and,
- Robust peer-to-peer learning and networking to ensure the learnings are scaled and cities support each other's ambitions.
- Access to grant opportunities matching funders with local non-profits enhancing youth engagement, climate equity, and environmental justice work.

The term of the challenge is extended to June 30, 2021. Office of Sustainability staff will continue to work with NRDC to periodically communicate progress made on the identified initiatives. The attached Amendment to the MOU outlines full terms of the agreement.

ALTERNATIVES:

Should the Amendment to the MOU not be approved, the City will not be able to continue work-in-progress related to the American Cities Climate Challenge.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact to the City to participate in this initiative.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this Ordinance to Amend the Memorandum of Understanding with the NRDC to provide and extension of six months and ongoing support to meet the City's participation in the American Cities Climate Challenge through June 30, 2021.