



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 1.

Agenda Date: 3/2/2021

In Control: Economic and Workforce Development Committee

DEPARTMENT: Economic Development

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Alejandra Lopez

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: City-wide

SUBJECT:

Briefings on the Train for Jobs SA program, which implements the Workforce Development Pillar within the COVID-19 Community Recovery and Resiliency Plan and implementation planning for the SA: Ready to Work initiative.

SUMMARY:

This item provides an update on the Train for Jobs SA program, which implements the Workforce Development Pillar and associated strategies included in the COVID-19 Community Recovery and Resiliency Plan approved by City Council on June 4, 2020. This item also provides an update on implementation planning for the SA: Ready to Work initiative approved by voters on November 3, 2020.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

City Council approved the COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Plan on June 4, 2020. The strategies associated with this Plan are categorized into four pillars: Workforce Development, Housing Security, Small Business Support, and Digital Inclusion. The Workforce Development Pillar was assigned to the Economic and Workforce Development Committee and staff presented the associated implementation plan on June 19, 2020. The implementation plan included expected outcomes, implementation partners and their associated budgets, program process overview, equity and engagement strategies, and major milestones. The Committee also received implementation updates on August 4, 2020, September 2, 2020, October 6, 2020, October 22, 2020, December 8, 2020, January 12, 2021, and February 2, 2021. In July 2020, San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg appointed a Workforce and Education Leadership Taskforce to reassess community workforce development priorities and to identify strategies beyond the immediate COVID-19 crisis. The taskforce included leaders from education, workforce development, asset-building, business, community organizations, labor, economic development, and philanthropy. The taskforce recommended the "SA: Ready to Work" program, to promote re-entry into the workforce and resident upskilling by improving access to workforce training, 2- and 4-year degree programs, and wraparound services for residents. In November 2020, San Antonio voters overwhelmingly approved the SA: Ready to Work initiative to be funded by a 1/8 cent sales tax.

On December 2, 2021, staff provided an overview of major milestones associated with implementation of the SA: Ready to Work program and on December 17, 2020, City Council approved the creation of the SA: Ready to Work Advisory Board. This Board would provide input on in-demand occupations eligible for tuition assistance; local employers skill needs and alignment with training programs; annual allotment of workforce certificate vs. college degree slots, and types of wraparound support. Board members will also serve as community program ambassadors, promoting resident participation and employer hiring of participants. The Governance Committee interviewed applicants for this board on February 9 and 19, 2021 and full City Council consideration of the recommended appointees is scheduled for March 4, 2021.

ISSUE:

The Train for Jobs SA program is executed through partners, which include Workforce Solutions Alamo, Alamo Colleges, Project QUEST, Family Service, Restore Education, Chrysalis Ministries, and SA Works. Agreements with each of these partners were executed at the inception of the program, with a term concluding in December 2020 and an extension option through September 2021. These terms were designed to allow for necessary adjustments identified through program implementation. Given the initial program ramp up, the contracts with all partners were temporarily extended through February 2021, which allowed for the collection of additional data and participant experiences to inform contract amendments. In addition, on February 18, 2021, City Council approved the redirection of \$4.2 million from on-the-job training support and \$9.8 million in childcare subsidies due to the low interest by participants in accessing these resources. This briefing will describe the amendments in contract scope and budgets with each partner through September 2021. These amendments are based on quantitative and qualitative data collected over the past five months through implementation of the Train for Jobs SA program, which update the projections made in June 2020 when the original implementation plan was presented.

The next major milestone associated with SA: Ready to Work program implementation is the development of program policies. In doing so, staff has incorporated lessons learned from the current Train for Jobs SA workforce recovery program and researched data and various best practices. Staff is also collecting feedback from stakeholders to inform these policies. This briefing will include the preliminary SA: Ready to Work program policies, which are communicated as guiding principles, goals and objectives for the program. The Committee and stakeholder feedback will be incorporated into final program policies to be presented to the full City Council later in March.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only and has not fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

