



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 3.

Agenda Date: 4/26/2021

In Control: Planning and Land Development Committee

DEPARTMENT: Neighborhood & Housing Services Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Verónica R. Soto, FAICP, Neighborhood & Housing Services Department Director

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUMMARY:

Briefing on the Housing Commission's Annual Retreat held on April 7, 2021

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Housing Commission held their 2021 Annual Retreat on April 7th, 2021. The meeting was held in person at the Phil Hardberger Park Urban Ecology Center. Due to COVID restrictions, the meeting was live streamed for public view and comments were taken virtually. The primary items of focus for the retreat were finalizing the Definition of Affordability for the SHIP and establishing a subcommittee structure.

The Commission also focused on creating a structure for their organization, starting with the set-up of subcommittees that would assist in implementing their Charge.

With the acceptance of San Antonio's Housing Policy Framework on September 6, 2018, City Council recommended the Housing Commission become the oversight commission for the Framework implementation.

Per Ordinance 2018-11-15-0919, passed and approved November 15, 2018, Section 9: In order to support its work, the Commission may also seek voluntary technical or specific professional assistance from individuals in the community representing certain technical disciplines or areas of special expertise.

On April 7, 2021, the Housing Commissioners elected to create the following subcommittees to support the Commission's Charge:

- Public Engagement and Outreach Committee

- Dashboard and Annual Report

Many city boards and commissions adopt codes of conduct or by-laws to govern the rules and procedures that govern the board/commission. Within these documents the structure not only of the commission, but of the subcommittees to support the commission is laid out. These items will be discussed during the April 28th Housing Commission meeting.

ISSUE:

During the 2021 Annual Retreat, the Housing Commission focused on finalizing the details of the Definition of Affordable Housing they have worked on through 2020.

The term ‘Affordable Housing’ appears several times in City policies and programs however does not have one standard definition. Currently several programs and policies contain a definition of affordable housing including the UDC, Neighborhood Improvements Bond program, Center City Housing Incentive Policy, City Fee Waiver program, City rehabilitation programs, and administered federal funding sources.

On February 26th, 2020, the Housing Commission was asked by the Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing Committee to discuss the creation of a singular definition for affordable housing. Since that time the Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP) stakeholders began work to recalibrate the 10-year housing goals and create implementation strategies for the Housing Policy Framework (HPF), also known as the Mayor’s Housing Policy Taskforce Report. The Housing Commission selected Chair Jessica O. Guerrero to serve as the Housing Commission representative on the SHIP. Commissioner Alanis also serves on the SHIP in his professional capacity as Executive Director of the San Antonio Housing Trust. In addition to the new housing goals and strategies the SHIP will also be the document that contains the definition of City’s definition of affordable housing.

From September through December 2020, Commissioners heard presentations from the Office of Innovation on the digital divide, and VIA Metropolitan Transit, San Antonio Water System (SAWS) and City Public Service (CPS) on the average households’ utility and public transportation costs.

The Housing Commission requested public input on the definition of affordability. Staff published a public intake form that was available for two weeks; comments were presented at small group briefings of the Commissioners the week of March 29th prior to the retreat.

At the retreat the Commissioners agreed on a working definition of affordable housing, shown in the matrix below.

Housing Commission’s Definition of Affordable Housing:

AMI Level Served	Rental Development & Preservation Programs	Home Ownership Development & Preservation Programs
0-15% AMI	Critically Affordable	Deeply Affordable
16-30% AMI	Deeply Affordable	
31-50% AMI	Fairly Affordable	
51-60% AMI	Affordable	
61-80% AMI	Moderate Rate	Affordable
81-100% AMI	Median Rate	
Up to 120%	Market Rate	

In addition, the Commissioners initiated conversation on the development of a letter to convey their intent, shared values, and goals for the use of this definition to the public and policy makers. Commissioners will review a draft of the statement they have prepared during their April 28th meeting.

During the retreat, the commission also created the two new subcommittees to support the Commission's Charge:

- Public Engagement and Outreach Committee
 - This committee will consider alternative meeting structures and public engagement methods and support the Commission's participation in the Housing Summit
- Dashboard and Annual Report
 - This committee will help curate materials for reporting on the Housing Policy Framework implementation progress.

The next step in the development of the subcommittees is for the Housing Commission to determine details such as:

- The number of members in each subcommittee
- Whether the subcommittee will have non-commission members on the subcommittee
- The purpose and charge of each subcommittee
- Whether appointments to the subcommittees will be made by commissioners or the chair

The structure and functions of the subcommittees will determine the applicability of the Open Meetings Act. The City Attorney's Office will provide guidance on these restrictions.

During the April 28th Housing Commission meeting, the Commissioners will be presented this information and staff will recommend the creation of a time-limited working group to create the bylaws and guidance that will present at the following Commission meeting.

ALTERNATIVES:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This item is for briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

This item is for briefing purposes only.