



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:21-4014

Agenda Item Number: 1.

Agenda Date: 6/9/2021

In Control: Housing Commission

DEPARTMENT: Neighborhood & Housing Services Department

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

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUMMARY:

Discussion with San Antonio area Community Housing Development Organizations on the Housing Commission's proposed definition of affordability

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The term 'Affordable Housing' appears several times in City policies and programs. This term is usually based on HUD's calculation of the San Antonio metropolitan area's Area Median Income (AMI) which includes the neighboring cities of New Braunfels and other Bexar County towns and does not accurately reflect the median income levels of households within the City of San Antonio. Currently several programs and policies use the HUD definition when referring to AMI for affordable housing programs including the UDC, Neighborhood Improvements Bond program, Center City Housing Incentive Policy, City Fee Waiver program, City rehabilitation programs, and programs administered through 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 that more specifically reflects income levels within San Antonio.

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 also requested public input on the definition of affordability. Staff published a public intake form that was available for two weeks and comments were presented at small focus groups with

Commissioners.

In February and March of 2021, the Housing Commission was briefed on proposed definitions and participated in small group briefings with staff the week of March 29th, 2021.

On April 28th, 2021, the Commission voted to moved forward with the recommendations from the subcommittee on a new definition for the term “Affordable” to be used for purposes of housing policy within San Antonio.

ISSUE:

The next steps were for staff and other policy making bodies to begin using the new definition approved by the Housing Commission in their strategy development. Staff gave a presentation to the Planning and Land Development Committee of City Council to review the proposed definition as well as to demonstrate how the new definition fits into the City’s Strategic Housing Implementation Plan. However, various members of Community Housing Development organizations felt that their voices were not heard regarding the development of a new definition of “affordable” during the public engagement process and requested an opportunity to meet with the Housing Commission to voice their concerns.

The Housing Commission scheduled this special meeting to allow the CHDO’s to discuss their concerns with the full Commission.

ALTERNATIVES:

None

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

RECOMMENDATION:

None