

# City of San Antonio



## Neighborhood Improvements Bond Committee Meeting Minutes

San Antonio Public Library  
Central Branch  
600 Soledad St.

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**Thursday, November 17, 2016**

**6:00 PM**

**600 Soledad St.**

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### Bond Committee Members

A majority of appointive members, other than ex officio, shall constitute a quorum.

### **6:07 P.M. – Call to Order, Board Room**

Co-Chair Jackie Gorman called the meeting to order. Co-Chair Ms. Gorman introduced Co-Chair Jim Leonard.

- Attendance of Committee Members
- Head count of general attendance: 25
- Katherine de la Vega, World Wide Translators, was present.

### **I. Opening Comments and Meeting Agenda Overview by Committee Co-Chairs**

Opening remarks were made by Co-Chair Ms. Gorman. Ms. Gorman made opening remarks including meeting agenda, translation services, and a notice about upcoming meetings with neighborhood leadership. She then turned the floor over to staff to begin the presentations.

### **II. Staff Presentation on Neighborhood Improvements**

Peter Zanoni, Deputy City Manager, provided a general overview of the timeline and action items for the Bond Program prior to the May Bond Election, including calendar, committee responsibilities, and election information. He noted that there will be two additional meeting for neighborhood association leadership at the end of the month that will be optional for the committee members.

Mr. Zanoni introduced Richard Keith, Assistant Planning Director, to brief the committee on follow-up from the previous meeting, including revised and consolidated maps, adding a 16<sup>th</sup> area at Culebra and Callaghan, expanding area 11, and the noted proposed District 7 site did not meet state criteria. Mr. Keith walked the committee through these handouts and presented on the proposed sites.

District 2: James Dickerson noted that her presentation did not have the same numbering system as the presentation. Mr. Keith provided him with a new packet.

Mr. Keith noted that there are responses to the questions asked the previous meeting.

### **III. Review of Committee Survey Results & Discussion**

Mr. Keith gave an overview of the area numbering system, noting that these were numbered for reference only. He noted that there were 26 of 32 committee members who responded to the survey, and asked that anyone not receiving email communications to let staff know. Mr. Keith added that a second follow-up survey may be sent.

Mr. Keith gave an overview of the results of the two survey questions. The first question asked committee members to rank the 15 proposed neighborhood improvement areas in priority order. Mr. Keith stated that the highest ranked areas were Site 1: Near West-Five Point, Site 3: Lincoln Park-Arena, Site 2: Near East, and Site 10: West Side. He added that the lowest ranked area was Site 12: Northwest IH10 at Loop 410. The second question asked for areas that should not be included. Mr. Keith noted that 20 of the 26 respondents answered this question, and 75% answered Site 12: Northwest IH10 and 50% answered Site 14: Blanco at West. Mr. Keith continued that these results are meant to aid the committee discussion in ranking and selecting areas to include in their recommendations.

District 10: Ricardo Jimenez asked for staff to send the full list of survey results and rankings to the committee. Mr. Keith stated that this would be provided in a list format, but that it was available to them in a graphic format.

Mr. Keith turned the meeting back over to the Co-Chairs for committee discussion.

### **IV. Committee Discussion Leading to Final List of Committee Recommended Neighborhood Improvement Areas**

Co-Chair Jim Leonard opened the floor for committee discussion.

District 6: Lauro DeLeon stated that he was in favor of excluding all areas but the West side, and mentioned that he knew that this was not possible. He presented an article that described the Westside being far behind all other parts of the City. He cited examples of housing funding in other cities, including Austin.

Mr. DeLeon suggested splitting the funding evenly between the 10 districts so that each district receives \$2 million. He asked for the committee to vote to see if there was support for this idea.

Co-Chair Mr. Leonard reminded the committee that in order to put it to a vote, there needs to be a motion and a second.

Peggy Sue Wilson, District 10, motioned and Ricardo Jimenez, District 10, seconded the motion. Co-Chair Jackie Gorman asked that before there was discussion, she would like staff to advise if this is feasible with the language that is required for this proposition.

Mr. Zaroni reminded the committee that the allocation was recommended by the City Council to provide more work-force housing, and the charter does not allow the use of bonds for housing so the Urban Renewal Agency will use bonds for housing in this limited way. He added that the state requirements include defining geographic areas and creating an Urban Renewal Plan. He stated that the first step is the public hearing in January to identify the areas, once the areas are selected and the bond has passed, then the Urban Renewal Agency can begin acquiring properties. He noted that the divide by ten methodology is not recommended by staff due to the unknown of property acquisition prices and it would put more constraints on property selection and getting a best-value purchase. Mr. Zaroni added that the staff will be working on a set of criteria for the City Council Housing Committee to use to weigh in on housing recommendations. He stated that the divide by ten methodology could tie the City's hands and prevent getting the best value.

Edward Guzman, with the City Attorney's Office, gave an overview of the Urban Renewal Law and the requirements of that law. Mr. Guzman noted that the geographical areas must be laid out in the Urban Renewal Plan to receive funding. Therefore, if there is no site identified in a district, then that district cannot receive bond funding for housing.

Co-Chair Mr. Leonard reminded the committee that the prices of the properties are unknown so Renew SA may have issues acquiring some properties if there is a funding limit. He added that some committee members had suggested a big bang methodology and acquire fewer properties at a higher level, therefore possibly requiring more than \$2 million per property. He reminded the committee that some of the areas were low ranked and if areas were removed, there would be no funding for those areas.

Co-Chair Jackie Gorman reminded the committee that this program is a revolving fund, and the funding is not a fixed \$20 million.

District 10: Connie Marszalek stated she understands where Mr. DeLeon is coming from, and added that it will be hard to sell this bond to the public. She stated that all districts have blight, and their responsibility was to find where \$20 million could be spent—not \$2 million.

District 10: Ricardo Jimenez stated that this is a pilot program, analogizing it to the lottery, stating that if you buy a lottery ticket you have a low chance of winning. He stated that he believes the public will support this funding if they believe their community will be impacted in a positive way. He added that Mr. Zaroni stated that there is nothing in the state statute that prevents the committee from dividing the funding ten ways.

District 2: Joy McGhee showed opposition for dividing the funding ten ways, adding that \$2 million is not enough to make an investment in an area. She showed support for

looking at properties on a singular basis to maximize purchasing power. She added that this will show voters that this funding makes a difference.

District 10: Peggy Sue Wilson said she was happy that the committee was deliberating on this idea and that could go either way. She reminded the committee that the City started with \$1.5 million and was able to make an impact. She added that she would like to make an impact, and suggested limiting the number of projects.

District 7: Michael Taylor stated opposition for the \$2 million per district methodology, adding that it would likely not be enough if there were needs for title change, environmental cleanup, or other major work. He mentioned there may be some concern about the process after the voters agree to give the money in the bond. He asked staff to explain the process the City would go through in acquiring properties.

Mr. Keith stated that after the voters approve the bond measure, the City would look very carefully at the areas that have been included in the Urban Renewal Plan, create a strategy based on this plan, then go out to find properties to acquire based on that strategy. He stated that the City would focus their energy on the prioritized areas, while keeping options open to other areas included in the plan. He reminded the committee that the City is not planning to use eminent domain or acquire any properties that would cause displacement. He added that if the community was aware of the top three, causing land speculation and price increase, then the City could adjust the strategy to take areas lower on the list because they were easier to acquire. He continued that after the properties were acquired, the City would issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to developers laying out the guidelines and expectations that would be included in the contract with the developer. Based on the responses from the developers, the City would choose the best project based on price, project type, and design, in order to secure the best possible investment for the community.

Mr. Taylor said that this was helpful, and asked who would be making the final decision. Mr. Zaroni answered that the City Council will decide on which properties to purchase and contracts to award. He added that the staff will be the group to recommend to the City Housing Committee, which will then go to the full City Council for vote. He stated that the Urban Renewal Agency will not be the decision-making body, but will implement what the City Council approves.

District 2: Beverly Watts Davis asked about the neighborhood and community plans, and if the City would make sure that these did not trump the neighborhood plans. Mr. Zaroni responded that this would be part of staff analysis, and staff will look at how the plans are compatible with their existing plans. He added that this dialogue will begin with the upcoming meetings with neighborhood leadership.

Ms. Watts Davis stated the impact of funding will not be equal to all districts. She added that she hopes this committee will decide to invest in places that will make any area of town a great place to live. She urged the committee to decide on the best value and to have the best bang for the buck.

Co-Chair Ms. Gorman described the Office of Urban Redevelopment's board structure, noting that it is comprised of seven members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council for staggered two-year terms.

District 9: Sylvia Lopez-Gaona walked the committee through maps 15, 16, and 18 describing the public transportation routes and housing options near job-site areas, and suggested the committee look at the gaps and where workforce demands are located.

District 8: Coda Rayo-Garza showed opposition for the divide by ten methodology and reminded the committee that \$2 million is a small amount to do a lot with. She asked if the goal of homeownership was something that was a focus for the bond. Co-Chair Jackie Gorman reminded the committee that homeownership and home repair programs are not allowed under the Urban Renewal legislation. Ms. Gorman added that this law is very specific about what can and cannot be done.

Ms. Rayo-Garza stated that she would like the City to examine the resources that are already available.

District 10: Ricardo Jimenez reminded the committee that this is a pilot program, and if it is not approved by voters and is not changed in the charter, it may never be done again. He stated that he could see the argument for not diverting the funding to all ten areas, but suggested limiting the number of areas. He stated that by limiting the number of areas and combining with other bond funding, the City can make a bigger and better investment.

District 6: Lauro DeLeon reminded the community to think about their communities when they are deciding these areas. He stated that \$2 million will do more than the potential zero funding that some districts could see. Mr. DeLeon described what he would like to do with the \$2 million in his district.

District 7: Michael Taylor stated that while the funding cannot be used for down payment assistance, the funds can be used to reduce the cost of home ownership. He added that there are other programs that help with home repairs.

District 9: Colleen Waguespack described the City's environmental health and stated that the committee needs to take a close look at where job centers are and be strategic about which areas the committee selects to keep cars and buses off the roads. She stated that the voters may not support this initiative because the strategy of not displacing residents may not always eliminate the source of the blight.

Co-Chair Ms. Gorman reminded Co-Chair Mr. Leonard that there is a motion and second on the floor, and she would like to call the question. Mr. Leonard described the Roberts Rules of Order and asked for a motion. Michael Taylor, District 7, motioned. Connie Marszalek seconded the motion. The question to go to a vote on the first motion was called. The motioned carried and the question was called. The motion failed with a clear majority voted "nay" to the original motion of dividing the \$20 million by ten.

Co-Chair Ms. Gorman reminded the committee that there are some areas ranked low and asked if these should be eliminated. Ms. Gorman reminded the committee that putting an area in the plan does not guarantee that an area will get funding, however, removing an area from the Urban Renewal Plan will guarantee that the area will receive no funding.

District 9: Colleen Waguespack motioned to eliminate Blanco at West. Motion seconded.

District 9: Sylvia Lopez-Gaona reminded the committee that 50% of the survey respondents recommended removing the area.

Co-Chair Jackie Gorman asked for any other discussion. With no further discussion the committee unanimously removed Area 14 from consideration.

District 6: Dominick Dina motioned to remove Area 12: Northwest IH10 at Loop 410 from consideration. He added that this was the highest recommended location for removal. Motion seconded. The committee voted unanimously to remove the area.

District 10: Peggy Sue Wilson motioned to remove Area 15: Naco Perrin from consideration. Ms. Wilson noted that there are several businesses moving into the area, with interest in other affordable housing developments. Akeem Brown, District 2, seconded the motion. Co-Chair Ms. Gorman opened the floor to discussion. With no discussion, the area was unanimously removed from consideration.

Co-Chair Mr. Leonard asked if there were any motions to keep areas in consideration. Co-Chair Ms. Gorman noted that the Former Fire Academy was rated very low.

District 5: Tinker Mass stated that she had spoken to her Councilwoman about this area and that there were plans for commercial and housing. She added that the price of the cleanup at \$3-\$5 million may be prohibitive. Mr. Zanoni noted that the Walmart deal fell through and the cleanup is estimated closer to \$3 million.

District 6: Bill McDonough noted that the handout provided by staff estimated the cleanup around \$5 a couple of weeks ago. Mr. Zanoni noted that the Transportation and Capital Improvements are estimating the cleanup closer to \$3 million. Mr. McDonough showed concern for use of site given its potential environmental issues, and suggested this site could be a controversy to the community.

Mr. McDonough motioned to remove the Area 9: Former Fire Academy site from consideration. Akeem Brown, District 2, seconded the motion.

Co-Chair Jim Leonard asked for clarification of the site. Mr. Zanoni noted that the area was primarily the fire academy structure and storage area, with some surrounding land.

Co-Chair Ms. Gorman asked if there was any discussion on this item.

District 10: Peggy Sue Wilson asked if the site was not included in the plan, would still be eligible for Brownfield matching funding. Mr. Zanoni responded that the site would still be eligible for Brownfield and other funding. He noted that by removing the site from the Urban Renewal Plan, it was only excluded from bond funding.

District 6: Dominick Dina stated that he has an issue with this being a City-owned property, and there are other pots of money that the City could use to make it saleable.

District 8: Coda Rayo-Garza asked if an area could be substituted in its place. Co-Chair Ms. Gorman stated that if there was an area proposed, the committee could consider that.

With no further discussion, an overwhelming majority voted to remove Area 9: Former Fire Academy from consideration.

District 10: Ricardo Jimenez asked for clarification on the number of areas that the committee could add and subtract from. Mr. Zanoni noted that a sixteenth area had been proposed, and the committee should discuss. He added that staff recommends the committee complete an additional survey to prioritize the remaining areas.

Co-Chair Ms. Gorman described Area 16: Culebra at Callaghan, noting that she believes there is opportunity for improvement there.

Co-Chair Ms. Gorman opened the floor for other areas the committee would like to discuss, including Area 16.

District 5: Tinker Mass asked for the committee to consider District 5 in their recommendations, noting that the Westside would benefit greatly from this type of program.

Co-Chair Mr. Leonard echoed Ms. Mass's comments, and stated his support for keeping Area 10: West Side on the list.

District 7: Ana Sandoval stated the Near Five Points area straddles the freeway, and noted that people who live near freeways are at greater risk of respiratory issues, cardiovascular disease, and premature death due to exposure to pollution. She showed concern for building houses for lower income families so close to a freeway and putting them at greater risk for disease. She gave examples of particle pollution around town and described her background in epidemiology. She asked if the area could be modified to create a buffer to protect public health. Mr. Zanoni responded that staff will carve areas off the freeways and provide updated maps at the next meeting.

District 3: Yulanee McKnight stated that Southeast area is a beautiful property, and asked who owned the property. Mr. Zanoni responded that the majority of the property is owned by the State, with Brooks having purchased a portion of it. Mr. Zanoni pointed out a piece of the area that is owned by the City. Ms. McKnight asked if the State was easy to work with. Mr. Zanoni responded that the City works with the State and noted several pieces of the property have for sale signs on them, which encouraged this area for staff recommendations.

District 9: Colleen Waguespack asked which area Mr. DeLeon was advocating for and if it was included in the bus tour. Mr. DeLeon responded that he did not believe it was viewed on the tour. Ms. Waguespack asked the committee to try and go by Area 6: Edgewood because she does not think a decision should be made if it has not been viewed. Mr. Keith encouraged the committee to drive by this area. Mr. Zanoni noted that

pictures of this area were shared during the third meeting and additional pictures could be taken if the committee would like.

District 6: Lauro DeLeon described Area 6, noting major roads near the area, and other investments being made in the area. He asked that this area receive high priority.

District 6: Bill McDonough stated that he is very familiar with the area. He noted the community resources in the area, including Pre-K for SA, San Antonio Food Bank, Animal Care Services, and noted there are several vacant lots that could be developed for multi-use. Mr. Keith noted that this Area 6 had been ranked in the top five.

District 4: Rodolpho Carrizales advocated for Area 8: Pearsall, and reminded the committee of the developer that came to discuss potential development opportunities on that property.

District 2: Beverly Watts Davis thanked her colleagues for their knowledge of the areas, especially Ms. Sandoval for her public health knowledge. She proposed a motion to move forward with all remaining areas on the list for inclusion unless there is further information, including Area 16. Motion was seconded by Colleen Waguespack, District 9.

Co-Chair Ms. Gorman opened the floor for discussion.

District 2: Akeem Brown suggested removing Area 13: Wurzbach from the list as it is ranked third on the list to remove. He asked committee members from that area to advocate for why it should be included.

Co-Chair Ms. Gorman suggested it should remain included to make sure that there is affordable housing in the Medical District so that the people that work there will not be priced out. She stated that when she was in the hospital, the orderly that pushed her stretcher was unable to afford to live in the Medical Center area.

Co-Chair Mr. Leonard added that in addition to the medical personnel, there are support businesses, such as restaurants and dry-cleaners, surrounding the hospitals. He added that this program would allow developers to purchase the high value land at a discount.

Mr. Brown stated that he was not advocating for the area's removal, but was asking why it was ranked high for removal. He asked for those who voted against it to explain their reasoning.

District 10: Ricardo Jimenez asked the committee to turn to page 25 of their packets and described the map that includes the overlay of other bond projects that are in a half-mile radius of the areas. He recognized the need for housing in the Medical District and stated that this is a pilot program, not a way to redo housing in the entire city. He added that by having a successful pilot program, this could be used in future bonds. He suggested to remove more areas to maximize the investment and eliminate blight in the areas. He stated he was happy that Areas 12, 14, and 15 were removed, and suggested removing Wurzbach due to the lack of investment from other parts of the bond.

Co-Chair Mr. Leonard reminded the committee that there was a motion to include all of the remaining areas moving forward, and asked if there was a second. Motion seconded. Mr. Leonard asked if for any discussion.

District 10: Peggy Sue Wilson said she asked about the getting matching funds for park land in the Wurzbach area at the last meeting, and stated that there are already several apartments in the area. She showed opposition for removing the Wurzbach location as there had not been a response for the possibility of matching funds.

District 4: Karla Gomez asked the committee to discuss the Citizens to be Heard comments opposing the funding in their areas. She noted there were no citizen comments from her district, but recognized the resident near the Missions that came to speak. Dr. Deidre Stokelin, District 3, responded that she attended a neighborhood meeting, and it was not that the woman did not want the funding, she wanted to expand it to the Campbell building. Co-Chair Mr. Leonard added that the Missions being a World Heritage Site protects the area from certain uses. Mr. Keith responded that he spoke to this resident and she expressed concern for her house being taken if it was included in the areas. Mr. Keith told her that the City does not plan to use eminent domain or displace any residents with this program.

Ms. Gomez asked if the Missions received other funding. Mr. Zanoni responded that the Missions are proposed to receive funding in facilities for a visitor center, parks, and roadways. He added that the annual budget process and other funding may be available in the coming years.

Co-Chair Ms. Gorman reminded the committee that it was getting close to time and reminded the committee that this is not the final vote, this is only to move the areas to the next meeting, and there would be additional opportunities to remove areas next week.

District 2: Akeem Brown called the question. Ann-Jinette Hess, District 1, seconded. With one “nay,” the majority carried the calling of the question.

District 2: Beverly Watts Davis restated her motioned to move forward with Areas 13, 5, 6, 7, 8, 4, 11, 2, 3, 10, 1, and 16 for discussion at the next meeting. Motion seconded by Akeem Brown, District 2. Committee unanimously agreed to keep these areas on the list for consideration.

Mr. Zanoni said a survey will be going out to the committee to rank the areas again, and asked the committee to complete their ranking by November 23, 2016.

## **V. V. Staff Overview of Nov. 29 & 30 Meetings with Neighborhood Association Leadership**

Mr. Zanoni reviewed the schedule of the meetings and stated that the meetings are optional for committee members. He stated these meetings are to familiarize the neighborhood leadership with the bond proposal.

**VI. Next Steps for Community Bond Committee Process**

Co-Chair Mr. Leonard reminded the committee that the final meeting is on Thursday, December 8, 2016 and the City Council B-Session is December 14, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.

District 1: Tom Heger thanked the Co-Chairs and staff for adding the two additional meetings. He asked that they meet with staff to keep in the loop regarding the process going forward and find a way for the committee to stay involved in the future. Co-Chair Mr. Leonard responded that they would take that on, and there have been discussions already.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 p.m.