



City of San Marcos

630 East Hopkins
San Marcos, TX 78666

Workshop Meeting Minutes City Council

Thursday, January 13, 2022

8:30 AM

Virtual Meeting

City Council Visioning - Day 1

I. Call To Order

With a quorum present, Day One of the Vision Workshop of the San Marcos City Council was called to order by Mayor Hughson at 8:31 a.m. Thursday, January 13, 2022. The meeting was held in-person and online.

II. Roll Call

Present: 7 - Mayor Jane Hughson, Council Member Maxfield Baker, Council Member Saul Gonzales, Mayor Pro Tem Shane Scott, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Alyssa Garza, Council Member Jude Prather and Mayor Mark Gleason

III. 30 Minute Citizen Comment Period

None.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Hold discussion and participate in Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Visioning Workshop, topics discussed may or may not include or be limited to: growth, quality of life, economic development policies, transportation, community partners, outreach, future infrastructure and facility needs, beautification and community enhancement, enhancement of core services including future staffing and personnel needs, flood mitigation strategies, and provide direction to Staff.

Bert Lumbreras, City Manager, provided a welcome and update. He stated the beginning of the year is a good time to look back on what has been completed and to look at what we want to accomplish and to get Council's perspective on goals for the next 12 to 18 months. The Strategic Initiatives Plan was approved last February and they include the following areas: Workforce Housing, Workforce Development, Downtown Vitality, Sustainability, Covid Response, and Homelessness was added as an additional area of focus. Mr. Lumbreras noted that numerous challenges were encountered this year including the continued effects of COVID-19, Winter Storm Uri, and budget constraints, but a lot of progress was made on initiatives over the past year.

Mr. Lumbreras introduced Joe Pantalione, Assistant City Manager, to review the workforce housing initiative. The key highlights included:

A. Update, consolidate and communicate housing policies and action plans.

- The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) application is on our website along with an interactive map of all LIHTC projects in San Marcos.**
- Links to file direct complaints with the San Marcos Housing Authority have been provided on City site.**
- Staff is working to provide direct links to lease application forms for local apartment complexes.**

B. Develop dedicated housing and revenue sources that meet goals.

- Establishing a Land Bank is on hold pending adoption of the Strategic Housing Action Plan**
- Nine homes will be constructed using CDBG-DR Funding. Five City-owned lots were donated to the program by approval of Council in April 2021. One will be re-zoned and re-platted to yield a total of 6 lots.**
- Negotiating consultant contract for entitlement of multiple properties, including the five noted above.**
- Coordinating with developers and Habitat for Humanity in newer neighborhoods such as Whisper and Trace.**

C. Implement land use and zoning regulations that support diverse, mixed income communities in all areas of the City.

- Currently completing the Comprehensive Plan project.**
- One infill project has been approved since the 2018 Development Code Rewrite(Bishop & Marlton)**

The key next steps for the Workforce Housing include implementation of Phase Three Code Amendments, continue to seek additional lots and complete construction on additional homes on City-owned lots, and implement Housing Rehabilitation Program beginning in 2022.

Mr. Pantalione reviewed the Workforce Development initiative. The key highlights included:

A. Leverage and Partner with the Community.

- Participated in all facets of Pathways to Prosperity program by assisting with consortium for people experiencing homelessness.**
- Provided HVAC classes in partnership with ACC, Community Action, and San Marcos Public Library. Resumed ESL, GED, CNA, and college preparation courses.**
- Added Opportunities Zones to the City webpage & included an interactive map where business prospects can identify eligible areas.**

B. Facilitate opportunities for Training and Programming.

- Established a new GSMP agreement to include four educational events per fiscal year that focus on the needs of small businesses, microbusinesses, woman and minority owned businesses, and entrepreneurs. Promote and engage community via Facebook. `
- Identified model cities and included their best practices in our economic development incentive policy.
- Researched examples of educational initiatives included in model cities' economic incentive policies to determine best practices to implement in San Marcos.

The key next steps for Workforce Development include continuing to work with Community Action and Texas Workforce Solutions to provide target occupation and high demand job training resources, continue partnerships with Easter Seals, Goodwill and ARCIL to provide job referrals for longstanding, unemployed individuals and support new and existing entrepreneurs through the Greater San Marcos Partnership (GSMP) and 1 Million Cups Greater SMTX.

Stephanie Reyes, Assistant City Manager, reviewed the Downtown Vitality initiative. The key highlights included:

A. Support diversified business activity.

- Downtown Master Plan is being incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan process.

- Economic Development and Main Street staff worked with the Communications team to develop outreach materials to inform businesses of ARP-funded grants through the BIG Grant program in English and Spanish.

B. Take measures to improve downtown quality of place.

- Kissing Alley Design Reconstruction scheduled for completion in 2023.
- Prioritized downtown lighting improvements and pedestrian safety.
- Pedestrian lighting along Guadalupe between MLK & RR tracks being installed with Guadalupe project.

C. Accessibility to and within the downtown.

- Implementing electric cab circulator pilot program.
- Partnered with Texas State to select a micro-mobility vendor and co-implement the program.

The key next steps for Downtown Vitality include coordination with Economic Development and Planning & Development Services to implement Legacy Business Program, implementation of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Programs funded by City Council: Small Business Counseling Program, Minority Business Stabilization, Business Retention and Expansion,

professional development for business support services, Downtown CoMarketing Grant, BIG Grant for Public Health and downtown events which encourage tourism, coordination with Capital Improvements Program (CIP) on public outreach for Kissing Alley reconstruction project, identify and implement pedestrian safety and comfort improvements, and lastly bring back events which drive visitor traffic to downtown.

Mrs. Reyes reviewed the Sustainability initiative. The key highlights included:

A. Develop a baseline of sustainability performance measures.

Staff researched model communities who have implemented sustainability programs.

Resource Recovery Program Manager conducted a November Lunch and Learn on related topics.

Director of Utilities scheduled to present on renewable credit program in early 2022.

B. Promote Sustainability Practices throughout the community.

Implemented “Growing Up Wild” children’s program on preserving and respecting natural resources

Installed a seed library in the children’s courtyard to educate on gardening.

Human Resources department incorporated sustainability training into the on boarding training for all new employees.

C. Determine strategies to incorporate sustainability into City construction and operations.

Developing design guidelines and pattern book of sustainable solutions.

Incorporated sustainable and energy efficient elements for our new Public Service Center and 2017

Bond projects like the new Fire Stations, Police and Library expansions.

D. Determine economic development and procurement policies to encourage sustainability for businesses that work with the City.

Proposed a reimbursement grant to promote sustainable business practices

The key next steps for Sustainability include further reducing/diversing waste at City athletic complexes and events, working with Finance on policy to purchase recycled content products, develop weatherization or energy efficiency incentive programs for the community, continue offering and promotion of conservation and efficiency rebates for homes and businesses.

Chase Stapp, Director of Public Safety, reviewed the Covid Response initiative.

The key highlights included:

A. Assess needs and distribute up-to-date, accurate information to the public

Continuously updated community resource information with testing and

vaccination information for distribution across facilities, community centers, and City website.

- ☐ Videos recorded and publicized by a nationally renowned group, the Kaiser Foundation, were added to the cable channel lineup and answer frequently asked questions in both English and Spanish.**
- ☐ Implemented COVID-19 Taskforce consisting of various City department staff.**

B. Continue search for resources and collaboration with local partners to address community needs.

- ☐ Hosted multiple events that included vaccination clinics to target at risk and underserved populations.**
- ☐ Staff physically visited many businesses to hang flyers and worked with transportation to set up traffic signs in high-trafficked areas and low-income neighborhoods with an emphasis on equitable/inclusive outreach.**

The key next steps for Covid Response include monitoring and reporting on the changing nature of the pandemic in order to provide best guidance to staff and public, continue utilizing digital & traditional platforms in order to support vaccination/testing outreach and accessibility, continue evaluating methods to reduce the spread in our workforce, including the use of rapid tests, and finalize plans for a panel discussion with industry experts to increase awareness about vaccination, variants, and general COVID related concerns.

Mr. Stapp reviewed progress of the homelessness area of focus. He stated a Needs Assessment proposal with the University was conducted. Work was completed with the homeless coalition to finalize the Homeless Management Information System program and process. There has been increased exposure of local organizations that provide services to those experiencing homelessness. The key next steps include the following:

- ☐ Point in Time count scheduled for Thursday, January 27.**
- ☐ Present Needs Assessment to Council and develop implementation plan for recommendations.**
- ☐ Finalize HMIS program and process (Local Homeless Coalition effort).**

Mr. Lumbreras provided an update on budget accomplishments, bond project accomplishments and other special accomplishments.

2021-22 balanced budget adopted Sept. 2021

- ☐ Fund balances maintained above financial policy requirements**
- ☐ Tax rate increased by \$0.01 to support critical public safety positions**

including three traffic officers and four 911 telecommunicators

- ☐ HOT taxes as well as sales tax revenue rebounding even without Best Buy**
- ☐ Use of General Fund's fund balance to support \$2.5M in capital outlay purchases**
- ☐ Rate model reinforced rate increases needed to support operating and infrastructure needs**
- ☐ Implemented bilingual program and enhanced utilities communication outreach**
- ☐ Brought veterinary services in house**
- ☐ 2021-2022 CIP funded \$50.7M in requested projects**
- ☐ COVID funding including CRF, ARP, DOT and FAA funds**
- ☐ 2020-2021 General Fund fiscal year end estimates \$7M addition to fund balance due to conservative spending and revenues such as sales tax and permit fees outperforming revenue estimates**

Accomplishments - Bond Projects

- ☐ Fire Station #2 (La Cima) – Grand opening May 2021**
- ☐ Library expansion – Grand opening June 2021**
- ☐ SM Police Station remodel – Underway**
- ☐ New Fire Training Facility – Underway**
- ☐ Fire Station #6 Trace – Underway**
- ☐ New Public Service Center – Grand opening November 2021 (Utility Revenue Bond Funded)**

Major Project Accomplishments

- Enhanced town and gown effort by drafting an interlocal agreement between City and University regarding Transit Partnership**
- Completed Wonderworld & Hunter Road intersection improvements**
- Completed Hopkins Shared Use Path from CM Allen to Thorpe**
- Reclaimed water system expansion**
- Installed shade structures at Children's Park**
- Improved field lighting at Gary Softball Complex**
- ADA access ramp to San Marcos River in Rio Vista & City Park**
- Installed solar lighting at Ken Copeland Memorial Park, River Ridge Roller Derby Track, and added additional lights at Dog Park**
- Completed 1.2 miles of sidewalk construction and 23 lane miles of pavement rehabilitation across the City**
- Numerous CIP/ Transportation Master Plan projects:**
 - Bike/Thoroughfare Plan Amendments**
 - Completed Airport Master Plan**
 - Began construction of Guadalupe Street Improvements**

- **Developed TIRZ 5 project budgets**
- **Finalized FY 2022-2031 10 Year CIP in preparation for Planning & Zoning Commission**

Other Accomplishments - Special Projects

Homelessness Committee

- **Outlined a Homeless Needs Assessment Proposal**
- **Point in Time Survey will be conducted on January 27**

Criminal Justice Reform Committee

- **Focused on mental health services in San Marcos**
- **Supported Police Chief's creation of Behavioral Advisory Team to inform public policy**
- **Supported future adoption of tele-crisis services at time of 911 calls**

Sustainability Committee

- **Anti-idling campaign is in early stage of educational outreach**
- **Researching & enhancing infrastructure to promote safe & equitable mobility**

Legislative Committee

- **San Marcos designated as Mermaid Capital**

Council held a thorough discussion and proposed the following 2022-2023

Strategic Initiatives:

- Workforce Housing (includes housing affordability)**
- Sustainability**
- Covid Response**
- Community Safety (includes Criminal Justice and Homelessness)**
- Economic Development (includes Workforce Development and Downtown Vitality)**
- Community Assistance (Initial Assessment)**
- **Develop Equity Policy (includes Diversity and Inclusion)**

The current Strategic initiatives are outlined below, those with the word (ADDED) are proposed additions by Council. These are to be discussed and finalized during the second day of visioning.

Workforce Housing

- 1. Need a static LIHTC map on the website that matches the interactive map; also link associated documents on history of each of the projects (additional request)**
- 2. Needs assessment including updated vacancy rate for apartments, Housing Authority and number of vacant lots (additional request)**
- 3. Legislative Committee see if there is anything we can do about AMI**

(additional request)

4. Incentives or removing barriers to help developers build condos (ADDED)
5. More missing middle housing, townhomes, infill development (Comp Plan)
6. Elevate housing rehabilitation program as a specific strategy (ADDED)
7. Adhere to public safety risk assessment for where density should go (Comp Plan?)
8. Investigate CUP to go above occupancy restrictions (ADDED)
9. Research if there are ways to require LIHTC/Housing Authority properties to accept housing vouchers (ADDED)
10. Identify housing barriers and how they may be overcome (ADDED)
11. Work with Neighborhood Commission to address multifamily substandard conditions – outreach to apartments; look at Commission membership (ADDED)

Workforce Development

1. Investigate if City's contracted services can be brought in-house (ADDED)
2. Investigate additional opportunities to enhance/promote childcare/eldercare services (ADDED)
3. Continue partnerships with Texas State University, ACC, Community Action, Chamber and GSMP to provide additional resources in the community, including outreach for job fairs and other employment opportunities (ADDED)
4. Fiber expansion as a possible way to provide additional jobs (ADDED)
5. Investigate ways to provide more services on the east side – possibly take resources provided by the Library to the neighborhood periodically, also look at school facilities and churches (ADDED)
6. Reports (including demographics, completion rates) of classes we offer in partnership with community partners (additional request)
7. Investigate ways to publicize and incentivize residents to take workforce development classes (ADDED)
8. Research working with Health Alliance for Austin Musicians (HAAM) (ADDED)
9. Requiring businesses to have internship opportunities for SMCISD students in Chapter 380 agreements (ADDED)

Downtown Vitality

1. Consider adding Security as a strategic initiative (ADDED)
2. Share Downtown TIRZ meeting link with Council (additional request)
3. Include Zoom link for Downtown meeting with Chief since it is during a pandemic (additional request)
4. Would like a write up on Minority Business Stabilization (additional

request)

5. Investigate why Downtown spaces are not filling up like other places in town and determine solutions to get them filled (ADDED)
6. Promote Downtown Mobility HUB and Parklet Program (ADDED)
7. Encourage Greenspace in Downtown alleys/park; let's tie Downtown to the river (ADDED)
8. Leverage resources with the University to monitor Downtown cameras (ADDED)
9. Downtown Association concerns including: parking, streetscape and maintenance, lighting, incentives and permitting, addressing vacant buildings, connectivity to the river, coworking assistance, art and culture, broadband (ADDED)
10. Addressing businesses' COVID-19 needs (ADDED)

Sustainability

1. Incentives, education to promote farming (ADDED)
2. Focus on air quality (ADDED)
3. Better sidewalk mapping and ADA accessibility (ADDED)
4. Renewable energy opportunities for City facilities to provide reliable power in times of disaster – community solar, microgrid? (ADDED)
5. Require developers to include sustainable practices if they pursue public improvement districts (ADDED)
6. Research cost/benefit of renewable power from existing infrastructure, e.g. Spring Lake and wastewater discharge (ADDED)
7. Increase education of river litter in order to reduce/eliminate (ADDED)
8. Investigate wind power at utility- and individual-house scale (ADDED)
9. Work with Texas State to stay abreast of renewable power innovation (ADDED)
10. Report on program to reduce water loss and water conservation (additional request) (ADDED)

COVID Response

1. Focus on education dissemination (ADDED)
2. Monitor COVID-mitigation supply availability and consider funding sources for COVID response supplies after current funding is expended (ADDED)
3. More frequent communication with the County, School District, Texas State, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) (ADDED)
4. Ensure Covid information is current (additional request)
5. More frequent coordination with the County Health Department to offer assistance (ADDED)

6. Identify possible barriers to assistance and remove them if possible (ADDED)

Homelessness (area of focus)

- 1. Improve/expand sheltering capacity (ADDED)**
- 2. Identify sources or methods to establish mailing addresses for homeless residents (ADDED)**
- 3. Promote veteran housing vouchers (ADDED)**
- 4. Determine if there are ways to prevent apartments not being ready for students to move into (ADDED)**
- 5. Number of evictions by month in San Marcos since March 2020 (additional request)**
- 6. Reach out to County to see what we can do to assist in promoting rental assistance and determine barriers to successful applications (ADDED)**
- 7. Additional resources from the Tenant's Council to tenants (ADDED)**
- 8. Study redlining behaviors that keep people homeless (ADDED)**

Council proposed additional Strategic initiatives. These are to be discussed and finalized during the second day of visioning and are outlined below:

Community Safety (includes Criminal Justice and Homelessness)

- 1. Mental Health services need increased resources and collaborative strategies**
- 2. Review Campaign Zero Policies to help enhance trust in our local police and consider those applicable**
- 3. Committee for Police oversight**
- 4. Survey community on safety**
- 5. Support adding telephonic crisis consultations dispatch option when calling 911**
- 6. Review decriminalization of marijuana**
- 7. Research meet and confer to identify community concerns with law enforcement policies – future Council briefing**
- 8. University involvement in community safety programs**
- 9. Implement process for after action report and improvement plans for major disasters**
- 10. Address all stakeholder concerns - victims, families, those who perpetrate the crime**
- 11. Work with community stakeholders to reduce violent crime by 5%**
- 12. Clarity of Chapter 143 to restore trust in Police**
- 13. Emergency preparedness**
- 14. Implementing Community Risk Assessment Standards of Cover, including additional fire stations/equipment**

- 15. Signage – alcohol, trafficking**
- 16. Safety across the city, especially Downtown**
- 17. Increase personnel for Police and Fire**

Mayor Hughson stated the following items would be discussed in detail tomorrow during day two of visioning:

Economic Development (Includes Workforce Development and Downtown Vitality)

Community Assistance (Initial Assessment)

The development of an Equity Policy. This includes the following elements:

- 1. Develop a shared understanding of equity**
- 2. Invest in training to build our knowledge to remove disparities**
- 3. Complete an equity survey**

IV. Question and Answer Session with Press and Public.

None.

V. Adjournment.

Mayor Hughson adjourned the Visioning Workshop of the San Marcos City Council at 4:42 p.m.

Tammy K. Cook, City Clerk

Jane Hughson, Mayor