

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2013 - 12:00 P.M.  
MEDIA BRIEFING ROOM, CITY HALL**

**Members Present:** Councilmember Elisa Chan, *Chair, District 9*  
Councilmember Diego Bernal, *District 1*  
Councilmember Ray Lopez, *District 6*  
Councilmember Cris Medina, *District 7*

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**Members Absent:** None

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**Staff Present:** Carlos Contreras, *Assistant City Manager*; Rene Dominguez, *Economic Development Director*; Ed Davis, *Economic Development Assistant Director*; Lori Houston, *Center City Development Office Director*; Alex Lopez, *Economic Development Assistant Director*; Robbie Greenblum, *Chief of Staff to the Mayor*; Lisa Lopez, *Office of the City Clerk*

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**Also Present:** Patrick Newman, *Workforce Solutions Alamo*; Eva Esquivel, *Workforce Solutions Alamo*; Rick Garcia, *Workforce Solutions Alamo*; Linda Rivas, *SER*; Ray Flores, *Westside Development Corporation*; Susan Lodge, *AACOG*

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**Call to Order**

Chairperson Chan called the meeting to order.

**1. Citizens to be Heard**

There were no items addressed by Citizens.

**2. Approval of Minutes of the December 4, 2012 Economic and Community Development Council Committee Meeting**

Councilmember Lopez moved to approve the Minutes of the December 4, 2012 Economic and Community Development Council Committee Meeting. Councilmember Bernal seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously by those present.

**3. Action Items:**

**a. Amendments to the Center City Housing Incentive Program (Lori Houston, Director, Center City Development Office)**

Lori Houston, Director of Center City Development Office (CCDO), reported that the City Council adopted the Center City Housing Incentive Policy (CCHIP) in June 2012. She noted that the purpose of the policy was to increase housing density within the downtown area. She stated that they are recommending to reduce the CCHIP Program Boundary to the Community Revitalization Action Group (CRAG) Area. She delineated the benefits offered through CCHIP and the requirements necessary to qualify for minimum incentives.

In response to Chairperson Chan, Ms. Houston stated that they are proposing to limit the CCHIP. She further outlined specific details regarding the boundaries, noting that the proposed changes would allow them to have a greater impact. She highlighted the Targeted Growth Areas in which they are seeking to increase housing. She acknowledged that the boundary would still encompass everything the City Council prioritized as important to the downtown area.

Chairperson Chan stated that it was a good amendment to the boundaries. She cited the limited resources available and emphasized the importance of having a focus.

Councilmember Bernal expressed his support for the amendment. In response to Councilmember Bernal, Ms. Houston stated that they would be willing to facilitate assistance if developers or others are outside of the boundary. However, she noted that it would be more of a discretionary approach.

Councilmember C. Medina stated that this was a continued step in the right direction to increase infill development in the City.

Councilmember Lopez stated that the policy is in-line with the message they are trying to deliver.

Councilmember Lopez moved to forward said item to the full City Council. Councilmember Bernal seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. Briefing Items:**

##### **a. Briefing on Workforce Solutions Alamo Economic Profiles (Patrick Newman, Executive Director, Workforce Solutions Alamo)**

Rene Dominguez informed the Committee that the Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA) Staff suffered the loss of one of their staff members, Francisco Moncivais. He expressed his condolences on behalf of the City.

Patrick Newman, Executive Director of WSA, described the various facets of WSA and the services provided that relate to Economic Development Issues. He cited pilot programs such as the Just in Time Training (JIT) Program and discussed the various forms of data they provide on a continuous basis that supports economic development strategies.

Eva Esquivel, WSA Communications Manager, discussed the various data sources utilized to generate reports. She provided unemployment data and rates throughout the year, and noted how often this information is obtained and released. She spoke of hiring surges and trends in the area and provided a comparison of wages and unemployment rates among other Texas Cities.

Rick Garcia, WSA Workforce Services Specialist, notified the Committee of the software package purchased that allows them to view what industries and occupations are available and in demand.

Chairperson Chan requested information related to the needs and projections of the available workforce, in addition to the jobs that will become available that the City Council has incentivized to create. She commented that it would be good for them to have this analytical view; and it would be ideal for the City to have an idea on what skill sets are available in order to attract businesses.

Mr. Newman stated that it was important to provide alternatives and pathways for individuals to receive better pay. He cited the reduced funding for workforce initiatives and commented that it was important to look in the community for other resources to help find jobs for the unemployed.

Councilmember Bernal stated that there might be an overabundance of people with a certain skill set. He questioned whether the City should more actively pursue the industry that would require these particular workers. Chairperson Chan clarified that it would not mean that they would derail their focus on other industries, but they also want to look at the existing pool of available workers.

Ms. Esquivel discussed the economy overview report. She indicated that they could pull information regarding completion of degree programs. She detailed other websites that provide information related to career planning and exploration as well as those transitioning back into the workforce.

Mr. Newman reported that various meetings were being set up with other entities to discuss the potential for programs similar to JIT.

Chairperson Chan stated that she and Carlos Contreras, Assistant City Manager, had attended the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation (SAEDF) Meeting and requested a copy of the detailed report of the Image Study. She stated that it would be important for them to understand what is important to Corporate America.

**a. Briefing on Small Business Initiatives (Alejandra Lopez, Assistant Director, Economic Development)**

Robbie Greenblum, Office of the Mayor, reported that Mayor Castro sought to create a Small Business Task Force for the purpose of encouraging the development of small businesses. He stated that the main topics that evolved were the need to improve their ability to collaborate all resources available and what could be done to further develop the entrepreneurship culture.

Mr. Dominguez added that it was a structured process. He elaborated on some of the topics covered at each of the meetings. He stated that the Task Force had developed the idea of establishing a Center for Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. He noted that staff conducted extensive research and analyzed best practices.

Alex Lopez discussed the recommendations of the Task Force and what they envisioned the Center for Enterprise and Entrepreneurship should be comprised of. She elaborated on the Ice House Entrepreneurship Program and specific details regarding its curriculum. She noted that communities throughout the country were already utilizing this program, as well as a variety of colleges and universities. She spoke of the U.S. SourceLink System and how it can be customized.

Chairperson Chan inquired of the cost of the software. She stated that they needed to ensure they are able to sustain the program.

Councilmember Bernal commented that the software would not just be available at the center, but is web-based and would be available to anyone.

Ms. Lopez cited the Downtown Library as a possible location for the Center due to its central location. Mr. Dominguez added that as they continue to develop the program, they could possibly satellite it with other libraries.

Chairperson Chan referenced the idea of possibly keeping this program within the City. Mr. Dominguez noted that they wanted to receive feedback on the two programs followed by the release of a RFP.

Chairperson Chan stated that they had done an excellent job. She noted the importance of a two-pronged approach that includes helping existing businesses and entrepreneurship and not replicating what someone may already have.

Councilmember C. Medina emphasized the importance of assisting Veterans in this endeavor.

## **5. Discussion Items:**

### **a. 2012 Economic Development Policy Priorities – Close out report**

Rene Dominguez outlined the Close-Out Report which included a summary of the successes for 2012.

Chairperson Chan encouraged her colleagues to highlight the accomplishments related to economic development. She commented that this Committee has great discussions and holds the staff accountable to produce results.

Councilmember Bernal thanked staff for their work.

## **6. Consideration of items for future meetings**

Chairperson Chan stated that they would consider other items for future meetings.

## **7. Executive Session**

Chairperson Chan recessed the meeting into Executive Session at 1:35 p.m. She reconvened the meeting at 1:55 p.m. and announced that no action had been taken.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

  
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*Elisa Chan, Chairperson*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

  
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*Lisa A. Lopez*  
*Office of the City Clerk*