

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL, ON
FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 1975.

* * * *

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 A. M. by the presiding officer, Mayor Charles L. Becker, with the following members present: COCKRELL, SAN MARTIN, BECKER, LACY, MORTON, O'CONNELL; Absent: BLACK, PADILLA.

75-6

PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A BUDGET
FOR FISCAL YEAR 1975-76 FOR
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT FUNDS

The following discussion took place:

MR. CIPRIANO GUERRA: The matter we're dealing with this morning is Title I of the Housing and Community Development Bill. I think it's important to know what the Bill is not - what Title I does not cover. That might help you in your judgments of what we're going to cover this morning. It is not a Health, Education and Welfare act. It is not intended to primarily provide social services. It is not a bill - at least not Title I - that provides housing for the very, very poor. That's covered under other Titles of the Act - mainly with public and assisted housing. The Bill does require - it is not General Revenue Sharing - this one has some very tight strings attached to it and many conditions we have to meet with regard to the environment, with regard to citizen participation, with regard to the need for a housing plan. We received many requests - 193 requests for a total of \$154 million. That means that one out of four proposals had to be turned down, and it means that one out of nine dollars had to be turned down. This is part of the problem we're facing.

MAYOR CHARLES L. BECKER: What's the total of the amount of requests?

MR. GUERRA: 193 requests for a total of \$154 million. I gave you that backwards yesterday, I said \$193 million, I meant 193 items.

MAYOR BECKER: 194 requests and \$153 million.

MR. GUERRA: 193 requests and \$154 million.

MAYOR BECKER: \$154 million. All right.

MR. GUERRA: The primary objective of the Bill, right out of the Title, is the development of a viable urban community by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income. The definition of low and moderate income had to be done by law by census tracts, and Mr. Montez will cover that in a minute. So, the money has to be spent principally in those areas. There are about 32 different Federal regulations, we were given a list of, that we had to adhere to, to manage this money properly and not get into audit exceptions. As you know, right now, we're still carrying audit exceptions under some older programs that are running the City. They cost the City hundreds of thousands of dollars, because of errors we made before. It is a brand new Bill. We are just beginning to learn that there is going to be a lot of court interpretations with regard to the Bill.

January 24, 1975

-1-

ky

We tried to select projects that we feel clearly meet the requirement of this law, rather than get into fuzzy areas where we may have to reprogram or have to reimburse the Federal government or lose the money if we don't submit it.

This hearing is one of two hearings required by the Act, which says we have to have at least two public hearings. The next one will be February 6, 1975. So, this is one of the two.

With that introduction, I would like to turn it over to Mr. Roy Montez, who was recently appointed Assistant Director for Community Development, who will summarize very quickly for you the items we have covered in our package to you. Before you is a summary of the items we are proposing. There have been some changes since we gave you an advance copy on December 19th. They are summarized on the first page. Mr. Montez has additional copies of what the Council has in its possession and available for the citizens.

MAYOR BECKER: Is this the one? January 23rd, second draft.

MR. ROY MONTEZ: Yes, sir, that's it, Mr. Mayor. Good morning. Let me briefly explain to you, so that the audience will also know that we have the same document in hand. The first sheet is a map that outlines in a heavier line those census tracts that are in the low and moderate income categories. As Mr. Guerra has mentioned, this is where the principal impact has to be directed. That's a requirement of law. We have identified those census tracts on every occasion at the public hearings. We have had maps that displayed that in this fashion. Our purpose, of course, was to try to treat all of these programs in such a manner that they would be identified with those areas of low and moderate income. That's the change.

The committee that was working on this particular program, Mr. Mayor, felt very inclined to shotgun all of these activities throughout this area would have seen no impact. I think next year we could have said, "What happened to all the money?" We have attempted, as much as allowance is provided us, to do some concentrations of the activities in areas that we could hopefully see some improvement, not only in the environment, but also in the physical aspects of housing and things of that sort.

We have prepared for you a 43 item list here. The package you have before you is not really the application. This is a summary for your purposes of being able to discuss these activities. We have been very succinct in the abbreviations here and the descriptions. I will try to assist you as much as I can on each one of them. At the end of each section we have a sub-total for that category and with your indulgence, Mr. Mayor, there are 43 of them and I'll try to run it through. We hope then that the citizens will speak, if they desire, to a specific item. I think we can all follow the discussion better. So, if we can proceed then, we'll go with the first item.

(At this point, Mr. Montez went thru the 43 item preliminary budget and read each item. A copy of the preliminary budget is included with the papers of this meeting.)

DR. JOSE SAN MARTIN: Mayor, I think we should hear the citizens. We're going to need a little bit more time than just now to start asking questions. I've made some notes here, but maybe they'll be clarified as we go along anyway.

MAYOR BECKER: All right. Thank you, Roy. All right, then, let's start with Mrs. Vivian Hamlin, please.

MRS. VIVIAN HAMLIN: Mayor Becker and members of the City Council. First I want to say, Mayor Becker, that I'd certainly have to agree with you, after seeing the crowding of this Council Chamber this morning, that we need a new City Hall and perhaps we should add that to the Bi-Centennial Horizons Program.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much. I appreciate that. This happens quite often down here, Mrs. Hamlin.

MRS. HAMLIN: I'm sure that it does, but I want to talk to you about plazas this morning, in particularly Alamo Plaza, but also about Main Plaza, Military Plaza and HemisFair Plaza. I think there's no doubt about the fact that we see the wisdom in making the most of such assets as these plazas, because few cities in the United States can boast of such assets. The Bi-Centennial Committee has presented to the City Planning Development staff a proposal for the redevelopment of the plaza area adjacent to the Alamo, now that we know that the Governor isn't going to give it to the Chief of Saudi Arabia. The main focus of this is the enhancement of the shrine itself and a visitors' information center on the site of the present bandstand. These plans have been prepared through the good offices of Emmet R. Tuggle, a past President of the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Dean Charles Burnett University of Texas Tech Architecture and students under the direction of Bob Copeland. I have noticed a proposal, item 38 for Community Development Funds to include this one, CBD Pedestrian Linkage Project, described as a project which would improve accessibility between Alamo Plaza and the Paseo Del Rio and form the initial stage for Alamo Plaza development. I submit that beautification of the Plaza and creation of a visitors' information center should be included in the initial stages of such development. It is estimated that the number of visitors to our City during 1976, our Bi-Centennial year, will increase two-fold. This will be due as part to the publicity given to our program of activities by the National Revolution Administration network, which is being set up as a mandate of the United States Congress. Tourism, as we all know, is vital to San Antonio's economy and as we also know, it accounts for one-fifth of the City's income and those attractions which bring tourists to our City are the Alamo, our plazas and historic sites. Also, I would like to make a special request for consideration of the rehabilitation of Beethoven Hall on HemisFair Plaza. Many adapted uses have been suggested for this building, including that by the University of Texas continuing education program. This might well serve as a catalyst for the redevelopment of HemisFair Plaza. I think if we could move quickly toward completion of these projects, we certainly would have reasons to celebrate in 1976. Thank you very much.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you, Mrs. Hamlin. Edith McAllister.

MRS. EDITH MC ALLISTER: Good morning, Mayor Becker, members of the City Council. I'm Edith McAllister. I'm Walter, Jr.'s wife, and I've come to address myself specifically to Title I, Number 7, in the Act, which has to do with the restoration and preservation of properties of special value for historic, architectural or aesthetic reasons. I would like to specifically compliment the Council on having left, in the package in the division of funds, a small amount for historic preservation, and I would like to urge very strongly that this amount be increased as far as possible, because we all know that this money is seed money for the one industry that is second only to the military

in bringing new dollars into this community and that industry as mentioned by Mrs. Hamlin is tourism. Without what has been done and is continuing to be done in historic preservation, San Antonio would be just another city, but thanks to your vision, as shown here today, and the vision of your predecessors and the visions of those who developed the River Corridor, San Antonio is not just another city. It has a unique charm and quality that brings visitors by the thousands, tourists and convention groups, and they bring in new dollars and create new jobs.

To use these funds as seed money to plan and restore more attractions is immensely important to our economy, and I would like now, if I may, for one moment to address myself to a specific need in historic preservation and that is the old Ursuline Academy of 300 Augusta Street. It is in the central City, it's on the River Corridor, it's one of our oldest landmarks. Architecturally, it is important as the largest example of what is called rammed earth construction. It's the only example left in Texas and has always been very unusual in that it's the only two-story example of this particular kind of construction. All of this complex is owned by the Southwest Craft Center, a non-profit organization whom I represent, and the other buildings are being purchased by the Craft Center from the Conservation Society, which purchase will be completed within a matter of weeks. The Craft Center school is a downtown people place. We have from 3 to 5 hundred students per quarter in our classes and half of these classes are held at night, which brings people back to the center City after 5 o'clock. Our classes are listed in the bulletin of St. Phillip's College, which is the eastside campus of the San Antonio College, and St. Phillip's students get college credit for our courses. Some of the UTSA art classes are held in the old Ursuline pending completion of their own facilities. We have a free program for underprivileged children called, Saturday Morning Discovery, which was written up in the last Health, Education and Welfare, HEW, publication, four pages, and we've had inquiries from 12 states and several neighboring countries and islands since that article. We train volunteers in the classroom for the San Antonio Independent School District. We're starting a course - a training for your City Recreation Department personnel, tailored to their needs in the Recreation Department. We have VA students in career training and two students from the State of Maine, who came through last summer as tourists, saw this historic building, came back and are taking a total of 13 classes and living in their car. They don't pay the hotel tax, but they do buy those groceries.

MAYOR BECKER: They're living in their car?

MRS. MC ALLISTER: Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to point out that this is optimum adaptive use of a historic structure. We're not just sitting there charging admission to see this beautiful old landmark, but we are a living, breathing, people generator in the central City, but we also have problems. The heavy rains of a year ago have done in our roof and caused extreme deterioration to the chalkstone wall, foundation and wooden joint structure of this old historic building. It's settled on its caliche base and caused the mortar to crumple and several stone wall sections are partially dislodged. There's settling of first floor joist. Anyhow, these things are of great interest to the whole community. We've solved a good many of our problems, but we earnestly request your help with this important historic structure. Thank you very much.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much. Questions? Yes.

MR. CLIFFORD MORTON: Mrs. McAllister, I wondered if you had any estimates of cost.

MRS. MC ALLISTER: The roof and stabilizing the old structure will cost about \$50,000.

MR. MORTON: Those are really the two things that you're asking for, is that right?

MRS. MC ALLISTER: Those are really the two things we're asking for. The old dormitory building, which is now used for classrooms, has been completely restored. The EDA money that is being spent on the complexes is being spent on the other buildings, not on this particular building, which is completely restored and completely filled with classrooms. We have solved the drainage problem by a wall and some very extensive grating and tying into an underground sewer, but we have not had the funds to repair the damage. Any other questions? Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you. Reverend R. A. Callies, Sr.

DR. SAN MARTIN: He had to leave, Mr. Mayor, but he left his request with Mr. Guerra, if you want to mention it. The Reverend Callies - yes, he was here talking to me.

MR. GUERRA: He.....(inaudible).....to me, Doctor.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Oh, well, I told him to leave it with you.

MR. GUERRA:(Inaudible).....

DR. SAN MARTIN: Martin Luther King Plaza. Okay. He said he was going to leave the material with you.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, where was he.....

DR. SAN MARTIN: He was here with me, Mayor, standing here.....

MAYOR BECKER: I mean, where was he desiring that this be created, did he say?

MR. GUERRA: No, I think it's on the.....

MAYOR BECKER: Well, I'm sorry that he had to leave. Mrs. Norva Hill.

MRS. NORVA HILL: Mr. Mayor, Council. I'm Norva Hill, Director of U.C.P.P.O.C. I had a project submitted on the priority list and it has been taken off of that list and I would like to ask them to reconsider it. Here's my reason. We have worked through our agency extensively with various groups and offices of the City to control the delinquency problem and to prevent problems in the area. This is not a recent history with U.C.P.P.O.C. We've done an extensive amount of investigation of agencies and their needs and even your City agency does not have what we have proposed in our proposals - a 24-hour residency for pre-delinquent prevention services. We have young people that come to us that have problems within their homes, within the school or on the street, that they are afraid to talk to anyone about those problems. They know not where to go or who to turn to. Often we take children into our homes and keep them overnight until we can serve and get to the parents of these children and try to get them back into the home. We have a lot of counselors that have problems

with children that they are very much aware of that cannot go through the school system. For one reason, or another, there are laws and rules that prevent them from doing what is necessary to be done for that child. So, we take it upon ourselves to help with the child to get him back into the home or wherever is necessary. A child of this kind is usually, if he comes before the authorities, has to be taken to the juvenile detention center where he is exposed to other children that have committed crimes or for one reason or another, they are being held there.

So, what we're asking is for old Fannin School. We're not asking you to provide for the program. We have approached the agencies, the proper agencies, for the program money. We have also asked the City, and we have a letter of intent within the City for the old Fannin School. This comprises about a year and a half of actual footwork that we've been doing. The old Fannin School is there deteriorating and eyesight - it meets all of the criteria for this type of prevention services. We have gone to the Criminal Justice. We've had several reviews, and they have said to us and assigned to us, persons to work with this project. Now, this project will not just serve the eastside, it's going to serve the total community. And we sincerely feel that someone has misjudged the idea of what we're trying to do. It's a needed project. Our hearts are in it. Our program, in every sense of the word, works with people, and I think if I should ask my people to stand and voice their opinion about it, you could hear most of the people in here say that we need it. All of the agencies, the City agencies, the State agencies and those agencies that do not belong in that category, have worked with us, have given us letters that this is a needed project. So, in order for you to help us, we've asked you to go and sit down with the San Antonio Independent School District on a swap-out. I've even located the land for you to swap out. We are asking you to approve \$322,000 renovation. This proposal is written for that location, and I'm only asking that you consider that. I think it's marvelous that we're putting in all of the recreation centers that we're putting in, but they aren't worth ten cents if you're going to have to deal with the kind of children that we are going to be dealing with in this program. Thank you. I'm sorry my five minutes are up.

MAYOR BECKER: Mrs. Hill, all I can say to you is don't lose heart. There are several programs.....

MRS. HILL: My kidney stones, Reverend, uh, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR BECKER:that are not represented in this list, that we have an interest in, so, we're hearing about it today though, you see.

MRS. HILL: All right. I'll be back with you.

MR. MORTON: Mrs. Hill, before you leave, you peaked my curiosity when you said you located the land that you wanted us to swap out. Would you mind telling me which parcel that is?

MRS. HILL: I'll tell you, but I'll tell you in private.

MR. MORTON: Okay.

MRS. HILL: All right. Thank you.

MR. MORTON: It wouldn't be City Hall, would it?

MAYOR BECKER: I don't think that would qualify. Mr. Karl Wurz.

MR. KARL WURZ: Good morning, Mayor and Council. I reside at 820 Florida. Perhaps I might be the only dissenting voice here and I hate to be negative about some things, because there's so much that can be done positively. I have to question whether it is proper for a Councilman or woman to interject priorities in the program prior to citizens having their final so-called opportunity to present their views and recommendations. I will not try to make a second class citizen of any Council person, because you all have the same rights as I, and you are entitled to your views and to the protection of those views, even as I would like to see my own views protected. However, as a Council person, you have an obligation to satisfy and to perform accordingly to the dictates of that office and the constituents which make the office possible, so that you should try and say, not my will be done, but your will. Not the will of the local bureaucracy, but the will of the citizens who had wanted to participate, but, who in the past, have been shut out. When will these walls be destroyed, when will the doors truly be opened? I hope that citizen participation will truly be forthcoming and be a thing established here in San Antonio, that everybody can work together. I have come to object to some of the Urban Renewal programs, mainly Items 8, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 41.

MAYOR BECKER: Would you mind repeating that list again? 8, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 41.

MR. WURZ: I think Apache Creek Project should have been turned over a long time ago to the City of San Antonio. Urban Renewal Agency has been working on this for four or five years. I think the Parks and Recreation Department would be more capable in handling this operation. I think some of these other operations would be handled better by the City than by Urban Renewal. I believe that the CBD Parking Project should not take place at this time, because there are conflicting interests with the carpooling and with the transportation, mass transportation programs. I'm opposed to the CBD Pedestrian Linkage Project, because I believe that private investment should go into this - that private investors should be the ones to develop this. I remember the old theatre that used to be down there, the Palace Theatre. It used to have a little tunnel going from that street right in back of there going all the way through Alamo Plaza and when anybody wanted to go through there, they were welcome to, because the theatre management never hindered them in this, in doing this, and it also helped their business. I'm opposed to the East Commerce redevelopment project. I think that the priorities should be to housing on the eastside and to drainage. I'm opposed to the historical restoration revolving loan fund, because it says here that it will stimulate the facade restoration. But I'm asking, are these buildings vacant? Is that all that it's going to be, just the facade? If you restore the facades, in six months they will deteriorate, because of vandalism or other reasons and these are my reasons for which I oppose these items, and I want to ask also, how much of the \$17 million will be for administrative costs, specifically for staff payroll? Mr. Guerra.

MR. GUERRA:(Inaudible).....

MR. WURZ: No, I mean the \$17 - the total \$17 million, how much of that is going to go for staff payroll for the whole operating.....

MR. GUERRA: I don't have the total figure. The only figure I have is.....

MR. WURZ: Is the new staff total of \$400,000 for the.....

MR. GUERRA:(Inaudible).....

MR. WURZ: Well, it is new staff, as far as the program is concerned. I'm sorry.

MR. GUERRA: The money we have allocated here is to cover the current staff we have. It may include very few people. In fact, we had only proposed about three or four monitors for the overall program, because we've been doing all the work we've done, so far, with current staff. What's happened though is that the funding that was originally - that has been used in the past - for this department, is now being cut off and is being included in this 7-01 funds being cut, and is now being replaced by these funds here. It will pick up the additional duties of doing some of the planning for some of the projects we've turned down. It had to be looked at again. Now, with regard to the administrative costs of some of the other projects, for example, the demolition work, part of the costs you see here is part of the administrative staff. It does involve additional people. It represents additional people. Some of the Urban Renewal money includes the administration for those projects. I don't have that breakdown with me.

MR. WURZ: In other words, right here after the item it says project and activity description, it says operating agency, that is the agency that will administrate the program right?

MR. GUERRA: The over view of the total program will lie with the City and specifically, the management of the total program lies with the City and at this time it lies with my department.

MR. WURZ: You haven't answered my question. Operating agency, Urban Renewal it says, does that mean that it will administer this particular item?

MR. GUERRA: No.

MR. WURZ: Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you. Gilbert Denman.

MR. GILBERT DENMAN: My name is Gilbert Denman. I'm a trustee of the San Antonio Museum Association. There are 15 of us here from the Board of the Association. I'll name them off, and they've asked me to speak on behalf of all of them. Sam Maclin, Baker Duncan, Clifton Bolner, Doctor T. R. Williams, General Sam Maddoz, Louis Tarver, Pat Reagan, Mrs. Alfred Negloy, Mrs. Adair Sutherland, Mrs. Walter McAllister, Jr., Fred Oppenheimer, Mrs. Gilard Kargl, Philip Bauman and Ms. Maria Watson. We are asking - I'm almost ashamed to ask for such a small amount of money when I heard that 150 some odd million dollars was in the cards this morning, but we're asking for some funds to be spent under the open spaces project. I noticed with some amusement that virtually all of the money that the City staff has suggested be spent on open spaces was for building new buildings in what's now an open space and we're - we have what we think is perhaps closer to the congressional intent in this matter.

In 1972, the San Antonio Museum Association which you all know operates the Witee Museum and the Transportation Museum, purchased with privately donated funds for the sum of \$372,000, the bulk of the Lone Star Brewery complex on Jones Avenue. The buildings are included in the national register for historic places and eligible for all rights under the historical preservation Act of 1966 and that would be included, as I understand it, in the open space and historic restoration and beautification of this law that we're talking about. Included in this purchase is two and a quarter acres along the San Antonio River with 1500 feet of river frontage. The plans are to develop this building - these buildings as a complex to include an art museum, a community center for the surrounding area, a restaurant and appropriate education facilities that are usually included in such a complex, and an open space will be an integral length of park land along the river corridor. Use in this way the complex will have activities during the day and night and will be a focal point for a revitalized land improvement in this depressed part of our City and at the same time saving a historic, industrial landmark. In addition to purchase price and before any construct and expense we will spend by July, 1975 additional \$151,000 of privately donated funds. We are obviously committed to the success of this project.

Now, what we've come to ask you to spend some of these public funds on to enable us to help preserve this complex. We ask you to consider the allocation of \$27,500 of the Community Development funds in two areas which we think need urgent attention this year.

First of these is to build a retaining wall along 80 feet of our river frontage at an estimated cost of \$12,500. The river bank has eroded to the foundation of the old Hopps House which is a part of the complex under the protection of the historic preservation act.

January 24, 1975
lm

Further erosion will cause damage that could make later restoration of this important building much more costly or impossible. In fact, should there be heavy flooding, there is danger of losing the building entirely. The prevention of deterioration of river frontage will not be in conflict with future flood control measures or with plans for the riverwalk. In the River Corridor study, the Corps of Engineers recommends that the loop up into the river from the Brewery site should be protected by roller gates at the north and south ends with an underground by-pass for flood control. We are fortunate that this area of the river can be improved now as outlined within the Corps of Engineers' study. Such an allocation is clearly within the guidelines of the Community Development act.

Our second request is for \$15,000 to purchase, clean up and landscape a triangle of land between Jones Avenue, the River and the Museum Association's property. This piece of land adjoins property which will be used as an open area by the Museum Association and its plans. It's a crucial access to this block and for the riverwalk from the Jones Avenue bridge.

MR. MORTON: How many square feet are in the triangle?

MR. DENMAN: There are 18 - 1982 square feet and there's a sub-standard, unsafe, and unsightly house occupied by a single person who has offered to sell it.

MR. MORTON: 1,982 square feet of land.

MR. DENMAN: Yes.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, now how much do you think you have in there? Now you mentioned something about \$351 in private donations and \$150 something in other private donations, what do you have about a half a million.....

MR. DENMAN: We've spent about a half a million so far, and we've raised about a million of the total of the approximately four million will be needed for the project.

MAYOR BECKER: I see. Okay, fine. Thank you. All right. C. M. Myers.

MR. C. M. MYERS: Mr. Mayor, members of the City Council, my name is C. M. Myers, Executive Director of the San Antonio Association for Retarded Citizens. I am representing Bexar County Mental Health Mental Retardation, United Cerebral Palsy, Association for Retarded Citizens, Goodwill, Muscular Dystrophy, Epilepsy, San Antonio Association for Camping of the Handicapped and the Citizens Advocacy Program in San Antonio. I'd like to address my remarks to item 43 planning and management development project. I have in front of me, section 104 of the public law 93383 which states, in effect, that in order for the City to be eligible for these funds, it must accurately survey the conditions of the housing stock of the community and assess the housing assistance needs of the lower income persons including elderly and handicapped persons. May I urge you to include in Section 43, this mandatory section of the law. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you, sir. William Boyd.

MR. WILLIAM BOYD: Mr. Mayor, Council members, my name is William Boyd and I am the acting chairperson of ROB. For those who do not know about us, we are a community improvement organization to the east side of San Antonio. ROB stands for Residents Organized for Better and Beautiful Environment Development. We are composed of civic, social, religious, educational, and other groups who are committed to work actively for justice in the Public Works, Housing, Employment, Community

January 24, 1975

lm

Development, Poverty, Law Enforcement and Consumer Affairs. Justice is the reason why we are here. On January the third, we held a meeting at W. I. Rector Hall, where all Council members were invited to come and help us with our particular situation in regarding to the CDA selection of neighborhoods. The only Council member to attend was Mrs. Lila Cockrell, and we thank Mrs. Cockrell very much for joining us. Doctor San Martin was the first to respond and said he could not be there because of prior illness, but did offer to meet with us at a later time. Mr. Padilla responded and said he could not be there. Mr. O'Connell responded by mail and said he could not make it. Reverend Black did not respond, but we learned of his illness at the time of the meeting. Mr. Becker and Mr. Morton and Mr. Lacy did not respond at all to our invitation. We have assumed you are not serving the 13,000 people in the census tracts we will be talking about today and that we talked about on the night of the January 3rd meeting.

The package I would like to give to you is material that has been presented to the CDA Committee and material that says our neighborhood is in the worst condition than those areas selected for the eastside - City Planning's own data will prove it. I'd like for the Council to have - members to have a copy of these please. We are here today to protest the Community Development Act Committee's recommendations to the Council. We are of the opinion that the City's Committee has not followed HUD's outlines in their formulation of their proposal to HUD. We see many contradictions in the recommendations from staff and if this proposal is submitted to HUD without our inclusion, we are prepared to contact Washington. You have, before you, Council members, a copy of our submitted proposal to the CD Committee. Since our presentation to the CD Committee, we have added three maps from the City's Planning Department to prove our point. This proposal was submitted on December 5th, 1974, at Sam Houston High School. We were told that this was the last citizens' meeting for recommendations of needed projects. At this meeting, on the eastside, another organization, Ella Austin Community Center, made recommendations to this Committee. Our observation is that neither proposal has been included in this report. Could it be that the Committee has already made up its mind about the projects on the eastside, to be on HUD's CDF package? We hope not, Council. Because City Planning's own data clearly shows that the two census tracts, 1304 and 1311, are of much worse in need of both census tracts in neighborhoods selected for improvement projects on the eastside. There is a big contradiction in the area selected for improvement and the area left out. Another thing, no one has answered the question, "What criteria was used for selecting the CDA areas?" In the Federal Register, Volume 39, Number 220, dated Wednesday, November 13, 1974, it was clearly stated that the Secretary reserves the right, however, to consider substantial evidence, which contradicts or challenges the certification of significant facts and evidence, which contradicts or challenges certification of facts and data. Further it reads, the Secretary will approve the application unless, on the basis of significant facts and data generally available, where the published data accessible to both the applicant and the Secretary, where the published data or other data available to applicants and Secretary are such of local area wide and state comprehensive planning data and pertaining to community and housing needs and objectives, the Secretary determines that the applicant's description of such needs and objectives is plainly inconsistent with such facts or data. Our understanding to the CD Act is that these monies to be used for elimination and prevention of deteriorated blight and slum conditions that will benefit the low and moderate income families, especially those conditions that are detrimental to health and safety and welfare. This is why we are protesting the use of CDA monies for pedestrian links between Alamo Plaza and Paseo Del Rio. Is this a blighted or slum area? Will this benefit the low and moderate income families? We say no. One million one hundred seventy-eight thousand three hundred dollars (\$1,178,300). We demand that you place these monies in the unsafe and unhealthy areas of the eastside. Downtown parking lots for whom? We say (inaudible) can come downtown for it - three hundred and seven thousand dollars. East Commerce Street commercial development

January 24, 1975

lm

-11-

for whom will it benefit? Low or moderate income families? What is the plan? Who will benefit? We say no to one million fifty-seven thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars (\$1,057,750). Botanical Gardens, no - two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000). Council, you can believe, we have reverence for the dead, but our concern is the living. So, what is the fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) for cemetery improvements? Please get these monies from your General Fund, which I notice has been taken from the latest proposal. The Federal assistance, made available through this program, not to be utilized to reduce the amount of local financial support for the Community Development activities. So, why are we spending four hundred thousand (\$400,000) for the first year for replacement of water lines and a total of two million dollars (\$2,000,000), over a period of five years, for a project that the City should be doing from its regular fund? We come up with the total of three million one hundred sixty-eight thousand one hundred and fifty dollars (\$3,168,150) or five million dollars (\$5,000,000), if we include all the water line replacement monies that could be used for the well-being of our low and moderate income citizens. Because of these contradictions that we see, we are asking that you, this Council, and staff, give us in writing the criteria used for selecting neighborhoods - criteria and rationale for using CDA monies for parking lots, river linkage and Botanical Gardens - justification for using CDA monies for replacement of water lines - criteria used for selecting East Commerce commercial development and what exactly has it done for them. A comparative analysis of submitted requests by citizens of neighborhoods selected for improvement by need against those not selected from our own available data and planning reports. Our data says, neighborhoods selected on the eastside for the CDA is not in as bad a shape as the neighborhoods left out and if you don't believe us, read the Eastside Planning District booklet or the Reporter. Interpretations Land Use and Neighborhood Analysis. We are quite sure the Secretary is interested in this same information. Compare census tract 1304 and 1311 against those selected. When you give us this information, will you please send copies to Congressman Henry G. Gonzalez and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Our only concern is justice. We only want the City to live up to its own data and information. Thank you. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Do you want to say something?

MR. MORTON: Yes, I do Mr. Boyd. I want to apologize to you for not responding to your request for my being there. I would like to say this, though, I think it's somewhat of a cheat shot on your part-- I did go to the meeting that was scheduled by the City staff on the eastside to listen, and I would think that that would be a very appropriate time for you to make your views known. In addition to that, I believe that there's one member of the City staff who can verify that I met with a group of private citizens in the home of Representative Sutton to, again, hear various things that were wanted on the eastside and I'm quite sure that your group was included as part of the group that was there that night. Am I right? So, now, I don't know what else you would like for me as a \$20 a week Councilman do, but I feel that plus coming down here should offer you a pretty good degree of input.

MR. BOYD: Well, Mr. Morton, when you have a meeting in a private home, there's no way for other persons living in the area to know what is going on and who decides what is going on. We need to know this, and we need these monies in a more critical area than what was selected.

MR. MORTON: Okay, Mr. Boyd, this Council has not taken any action whatsoever on this list.

MR. BOYD: That's why I'm here today.

MR. MORTON: This list represents strictly staff recommendations. Council has not deliberated on any one item here, but again I ask you, why couldn't you have made your views known at one of the two meetings that the staff had on the eastside or.....

MR. BOYD: They have been made and I think that Mr. Cipriano Guerra can tell you we have - and also these views were made there when Mrs. Cockrell came out and we gave her the necessary information.....

MR. MORTON: You still haven't answered my question, sir.

MR. BOYD: What is that, sir?

MR. MORTON: We had two meetings that were scheduled on the eastside. Now, what was there about this format that was inadequate for you to present your views?

MR. BOYD: I was at the Sam Houston High School, when these meetings were made. We made these proposals at the time at Sam Houston High School, I think, Mr. Guerra will adhere to that.

MR. GUERRA: Let me clarify a couple of points. Councilman Morton has attended more of our citizens meeting than any of the other Councilmen, and I'm not saying that to be critical of the other Councilmen but only to state the fact about his participation. He did not attend the meeting at which you presented your views which was the last of the series before we went to the single meeting at the Municipal Auditorium. So, it was a legitimate request submitted at that time to us.

MR. BOYD: If Mr. Morton did attend, I apologize publicly and from now on I will know Mr. Morton when I see him.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, I'd like to say this additionally, Mr. Boyd.

MR. BOYD: Yes, sir.

MAYOR BECKER: I don't think it does one bit of good to come down here and excoriate anybody on this City Council for having or having not attended any meetings. Now, that's not why we're here today. Now, we've taken up valuable time discussing things that to me are not pertinent to these issues that we're discussing today. While you're feeling sorry for yourself that some of your projects have not been included in this list that's been furnished us this morning by the staff, I can only say to you that some of the projects that I have a very direct interest in are not represented on that list, also. So, I haven't been exactly heard either, you see, and I happen to spend quite a lot of time down here at City Hall. Now, Mr. Morton said that this list was not final. It has not been accepted. This is merely the first presentation, both of the list and also of a meeting of this type to hear the acceptance or rejections of the items on this list. I don't think that you have,

many people on this Council that totally disregard your rights in this matter. We're merely going through the formality today of having the list presented to us, and we'll take some of these other things into account as we meet as a Council, that I can assure you. So, all isn't lost, believe me, all isn't lost, believe me, all isn't lost. Now, do you have anything further to say, Cliff?

MR. MORTON: No, the only thing I want to say is this. We ran over that twice the allotted time and if we do that I think we'll be here until midnight based on all the members we've got signed up.

MAYOR BECKER: How well, I know. Okay, Mrs. Santiago, looks like Padilla, I think.

MRS. SANTIAGO PADILLA: Mayor Becker, City Councilmen, good morning. I am happy to be able to be here to participate in one of our fundamental democratic processes. I am Mrs. Santiago Padilla, President of Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School PTA and Registration Chairman for the City Council of Parents and Teachers. I am here on behalf of both of those organizations to give them my full support for the proposal feasibly submitted by Mrs. Larry Travis, Chairman of Citizens' Liaison Committee in Area I of the San Antonio Independent School District which you have been given. As pointed out by Mrs. Travis, this would be a private, priceless asset to our community and to the students of Fox Tech High School. It would offer park and recreational facilities to both groups, for instance, presently the facilities do not exist in the area related to the proposal. I would like to further suggest that the proposal could support the City's application to HUD under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to qualify for extra money under the Act II a percent. This - excuse me, I can't pronounce this word too well - this dis...

DR. SAN MARTIN: Disqualifies?

MRS. PADILLA: No, no, it's a - this, excuse me, this personal fund, I'm sorry, this personal fund under this section of the act extra money is awarded to the cities who develop unique and innovated community development projects. The proposal would also enhance the current of re-development projects which are now being carried on by San Antonio Development Agencies such as Rosa Verde and Vista Verde projects, Santa Rosa Hospital, the National Bank of Commerce, the Bank of San Antonio, the Gill Company and other businesses in the area related to the proposal. Rather than take up any unnecessary amount of your valuable time on the detailed information and statistics related to the proposal, I will ask you to refer to your copy of Mrs. Larry Travis' proposal. I humbly request in behalf of the concerned parents who are also here this morning, that the Council seriously consider our proposal. Thank you very much.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you, madam.

DR. SAN MARTIN: May I ask just one question? Mrs. Padilla, have you checked this with the San Antonio Independent School District other than the maintenance, the maintenance doesn't seem to be a big item, we work with all the school districts in sharing recreational facilities especially during the summer when the schools are vacant. Has the PTA or any school organization from Fox Tech actually made a presentation to the school board?

MRS. PADILLA: No, we haven't really gone to the school board yet, but I'm sure that they'll.....

DR. SAN MARTIN: You see, we have this proposal in its final form. Yesterday, Mr. Felix Trevino brought it here yesterday in its final form.

MRS. PADILLA: Yes, well, I myself - I was there yesterday at the School Board but I'm sure it will go....

DR. SAN MARTIN: I'm not questioning the project, I think it's a beautiful project. I think it's an excellent use of the land in that area and certainly much needed and I wouldn't say that it could all be done in one year. It will probably take two, three, four years to develop. But it seems to me that it should have the complete support of the Independent School District Board of Trustees, in other words, if it's going to be a joint effort, it should be pushed jointly.

MRS. PADILLA: Oh, yes, I'm sorry, I must have misunderstood your question at first. Yes, it has been, I mean, by the School Board.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Do we have anything in writing here, Mr. Guerra, saying that the School District fully supports this project?

MR. GUERRA: No, sir, I don't have anything. No, sir, I'm not aware that they've submitted anything to us.....

MRS. PADILLA: You don't have anything from the School Board.

MR. W. J. "BILL" O'CONNELL: Doctor, I have reviewed this before, I do not know that it does have School Board approval, whether in writing or not, but you notice that it is a two-year - two-page rather than one page, it certainly would give some, if nothing else, they give some actually some trees and grass to Fox Tech down there, otherwise they've have nothing out there except concrete, but I do know for a fact that the School Board is vitally interested in this.

MAYOR BECKER: All right.

MRS. PADILLA: Thank you.

MRS. LILA COCKRELL: I think that proposal would certainly provide some beautiful open space that would benefit not only the school, but also downtown.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you, madam. Mrs. Delores Ratliff.

MRS. DELORES RATLIFF: Good morning. My name is Delores Ratliff. I'm the Director of Ella Austin Community Center. The reason I'm here again this morning is because in reviewing the staff recommendations for funding under the CDA project, we find again that our two programs that we were proposing are not included, and we're particularly concerned about this, because we feel in reviewing the Act and also in the preparation of our proposals, that they very clearly carry out the intent of the Housing and Urban Development Act. One, it provides counseling to people who are experiencing difficulty in meeting their mortgage payments. The other is a new version of new facilities for the neighborhood facilities portion of the original HUD Act, wherein we are able to provide multi-purpose service to the neighborhood residents. Now, the problem that we're encountering in regard to the second is that we're presently housing a building that we're leasing from the School District. This building is being put up for bid and if it is bid upon and it's purchased, it means that we have no facility out of which we can operate. So, we are prevailing upon

the staff and the Council to re-include these two very vital and these two very needed projects.

Now, we understand that there were two concerns expressed by the staff in regards to our program. With both of them we have projected a certain amount of money, and I want to make it very clear that these are top amounts of money. In fact, it could be done for much less, it could be staggered over the three-year period and there are many ways that the total figure could be cut down, as Mrs. Hill suggested, in terms of a crime facility you might even be able to swap out with the School District, I don't know, but the amount of money that we're requesting for both projects can be geared down, based upon the availability of money. Another very important point that I'd like to mention is the fact that we are providing these services, the operating money is already there, we're just asking upon you, particularly, for the facility purchase to keep the building there, so that we can continue to provide these very needed services that have only been there now for six years and we've gotten very accustomed to them, the area residents have gotten used to them. They really realize the great need for maintaining them there, and we must keep them there. Thank you very much.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Mr. Mayor, just one question. After I met with you some time back, we got the whole thing going, did the whole meeting procedure move off dead center the way it was? I talked to Dr. Nielsen here and he assured me that all the citizens of the review committee have been finished, is that correct?

MRS. RATLIFF: Yes, the School District has now opened all their properties for bid. So, it's really imperative that some quick action be taken on the part of our Council, so that we can keep this facility.

MAYOR BECKER: It's being worked on by some members of the City staff, Mrs. Ratliff.

DR. SAN MARTIN: What I was trying to get is, as far as the problem that you brought to my attention, that the School District is now finished with its end of the program, I mean for bidding and everything.....

MRS. RATLIFF: That's right and it's also our understanding that the City would not have to bid on this, that it can be a direct purchase. Are there any other questions?

MAYOR BECKER: No, I don't think so, thank you very much. All right. Rachel Rodriguez. Ron Crane. How long is that microphone cord over there on the wall behind you, Raul?

MRS. RACHEL RODRIGUEZ: My name is Rachel Rodriguez. I'm here to represent a small group of handicapped citizens. We have long been asleep, and we have let other people try to get things accomplished for us, but we have decided to try it on our own, because it seems that the people that have been working for us and have our interests in mind, they still did not comprehend to the extent our needs. So, we're here, not only to gripe, but to point out some needs for the handicapped that have been - really, it amazes me that the City hasn't really seen our needs, not only in rehabilitation. We have been provided rehabilitation. Not only in curbs - I mean there are some ramps, but that is not all the needs of the handicapped - curbs and rehabilitation. We need transportation and we need housing. Two very important things for the handicapped. A lot of people have come in here today

saying the beauty of the City and housing needs - renovation of housing. We don't ask for renovation, we ask for accessibility to the housing that is now. We need transportation, and we have presented a proposal to the Community Development. I have talked to Mr. Cipriano Guerra and as far as I'm concerned, I think highly of him, as much as I think of all the City officials. To me they're intelligent people, and I admire them for their intelligence and their desire to do whatever is best for the City. I know it's a struggle, and I understand you're human, you have your problems, so I understand that. But also with your intelligence, I feel that you should open your mind a little bit more to the needs of the handicapped. We are citizens also. We can do things. We want to do - we want a partake of what is now, and there are a lot of barriers here in the City that, for example, the gyms are being built bigger, where it's unaccessible to us. Now, all this - I could go on through all the barriers that face us, really, but our main problems are transportation and housing. As I said before, we presented a proposal. Dr. San Martin received the proposal and Mr. Cipriano Guerra at that time, we attended two meetings of the Community Development Committee. We're a small group. We're just getting out. We're new at it. I mean I've seen a lot of people with prepared speeches, but this is impromptu - I believe this is what we feel.....

DR. SAN MARTIN: You're doing very well - you're doing very well.

MRS. RODRIGUEZ: So, we have a group here, I mean it's, I, we really, we have a meeting, a group called Fighters Against Barriers, and at first I thought, well, we're Fighters Against Barriers, a very fine sounding word - fighting. But how are we fighting? Are we really fighting? I mean we're just not fighting, I mean just like that, I mean fighting is not so easy. We have to go out there and really - and actually it makes me sad to think that we have to call ourselves fighters, really, because I don't think it's necessary for people to really have to fight now, not in the America, not the way it's right for human beings, all right, now, the way we've progressed so much. So, I feel, I feel sad that we do have to call ourselves fighters, it's just, you know, it's that you have to. I don't want to fight you, I don't want to fight City Hall, I don't want to fight anybody. I just - we're fighting to really, to get across our feelings and our needs to people.

MAYOR BECKER: Rachel, may I ask you a question? You mentioned the gyms.....

MRS. RODRIGUEZ: Yes.

MAYOR BECKER:and you said that we're building gyms, but they're inaccessible. Exactly how do you mean that they're inaccessible to you? I'd like.....

MRS. RODRIGUEZ: No ramps, nothing - inaccessible.

MAYOR BECKER: But the rest of it is accessible, it's just.....

MR. GUERRA: Restrooms. The restrooms are not accessible.

MAYOR BECKER: The restrooms are not.

MR. GUERRA: Mayor, again, without reacting to each speaker, I think this case, if you'll give me a moment, I'd like to react to it.

MAYOR BECKER: All right.

MR. GUERRA: Quite often we deal with the request, you know, for the spiritually weak and the community's trying to help them. In this case, we're dealing with some people who are spiritually, mentally, very strong, but physically handicapped. And, we are trying to do some things for them. In several of those nine items you saw, there was the construction of materials money, for example. We'll address some of those barriers she's talking about. The emergency employment people will be addressing some of those barriers. Mr. Sueltenfuss and I have again reviewed the State Law on public buildings now that applies to some of the constraints that we have to meet, some of the conditions we have to meet now with our buildings. We're going to pay more attention to them. We're focusing back on these problems. In the housing area, under Title II, I said earlier this Title I addresses - does not address all housing. Title II, we're asking for two hundred units for the handicapped, as a beginning, in this area. So, I'd like to assure Rachel that we are working in that area. There was a request earlier for a study of the handicapped. That survey is already in our work program that we've informally submitted to HUD under another - under our old planning grant monies. So, we are focusing back on the problems of the handicapped.

MRS. COCKRELL: May I ask one other thing? On the transportation request, have we had any liaison with the San Antonio Transit Authority on this one? I know there are still some capital grant funds available that I think we have not utilized completely, and it seems to me that it might be possible to look at that for a capital grant.

MR. GUERRA: I have not personally checked on it. I'll have to check with Mr. Fischer and see how much work we are doing in that area.

MRS. COCKRELL: Fine. It's another thought of.....

MR. GUERRA: Yes, ma'am.

MRS. COCKRELL:how to get additional funds.

MRS. RODRIGUEZ: Mrs. Cockrell, I, actually at the time I attended the meetings of Community Developing Committees, I, to me, it seemed like some of the items, that some of them were not adequate for our proposal and I requested, I talked to Mr. Roy Montez and Mr. Cipriano Guerra and I requested that if I was wrong in submitting that proposal to the Community Development Committee and it was not, the funds were not appropriated for them to guide me to which or how. That's all I needed. So, that's the reason why we're here today.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, Rachel, you know, we're not unmindful of your needs. Chances are that, as a group of people, generally speaking throughout the country, those of us who have the fortunate facility of the use of our extremities, able to have the fantastic mobility that some of us have, are perhaps not as aware of the difficulties of others.

MRS. RODRIGUEZ: Well, I feel like every human is capable of sympathy.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, we, as Mr. Guerra said, there are certain elements of, in this grant that addresses itself to some of the problems that you are seeking a remedy to. So, please understand that we're with you. We're with you.

MRS. RODRIGUEZ: Well, I surely hope to see the results. I mean, you said you're with us and now what we need is results.

MAYOR BECKER: I realize that.

MRS. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much, Rachel. Mr. Crane.

MR. RON CRANE: I think I can make myself heard. Mayor Becker, Council persons, Mr. Guerra up there I'm very familiar with - I haven't had the pleasure of meeting any of you yet. I feel that, I am, you notice I said Council persons, therefore.....(inaudible)..... My name is Ron Crane. I'm Co-Chairman of FAB, of the FAB meetings, of the FAB organization, I should say. Rachel made a comment there that kind of staggered me for a moment. She said we represent a small minority, and I don't think it's small, I think it's closer to 80,000 people, handicapped people in the greater San Antonio area. We only represent, we don't represent just people in wheelchairs, we represent every facet of the disabilities there is, and this is something that's very important and I think it should be taken into consideration by the Council and by the City Planning Commission. I brought to Mr. Montez'.....to his attention while ago, that under the directive of HUD, from HUD, by HUD, that the word elderly and physically handicapped, I believe it says, is included in this statement and yet, I have yet to see any place, with the exception of, I think it was 13, in Section 13, where the term for the handicapped, you know, was being provided, services for funding for that. I have yet to see some place in housing, transportation, again I'm repeating what I think Rachel Rodriguez said, and I think it says, I feel though it's important though that it gets back to you and get across to this point that should this plan be taken into note, and I'm not trying to dictate to this City Council or to the staff, in other words, anything, but should the word handicapped be included in this thing or less we might lose our grant in totality. And, with that, I will take my group and leave. With your permission. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much for appearing here today. We appreciate your providing us with this valuable information. Thank you. Mrs. Alfred Negley.

MR. CRANE: If I might impose upon the Council for a brief exit there.

MAYOR BECKER: All right.

MRS. NANCY NEGLEY: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, Council persons. My name is Nancy Negley and I feel especially good this morning and hope you all do because I'm here to talk with you about beauty. The preservation of the beauty that surrounds us in this great City of ours and its importance to all of us, socially, historically, emotionally and last, perhaps most importantly, economically. It is a privilege to start the day this way. As President of the San Antonio Legacy, Incorporated, a non-profit organization, dedicated to the revitalization of the Central City, I represent concerned citizens focusing in on the real heart of this old and noble City. We request that you allocate substantial sums to Legacy's first project, the rehabilitation of Main and Military Plazas, the oldest civil settlement in Texas founded in the early 18th century. I don't have to remind you that since 1731 this area has been and still is the center of local governments. It's still the center of our vast banking and financial community. It's still the center of religious life with San Fernando Cathedral. The heavy traffic of local people, as well as the tourists, is apparent. You understand the vital importance of protecting our principal tourist attracting, attracting resource, our romantic, historic heritage from the indignity of neglect. You above all understand that our historic uniqueness means - what our historic uniqueness means in terms of the tourist dollar, as well as local pride. I feel sure your political experience and sagacity recognizes that the better is often the enemy of the good. It is not necessary to point out to you the important opportunity to accomplish visible, lasting, virtually needed with these CD fund allocations, if monies are expended on our historic plazas for landscaping and the encouragement it would give to the private sector. It is also not necessary for me to question the proposed allocation of CD funds in the much needed public works category because you know that these have traditionally been funded by municipal bonds. We know you are as concerned as we are with the enormous responsibility of these funds and what the increased amenities, such as more appropriate signage, trees, benches, the use of small land spaces for pocket parks, could mean to the general public. You are also and we feel certainly, looking for ways to improve inner-City transportation, exploring the restructuring of the police force City-wide. You most likely are looking also for more imaginative use of existing bus facilities, of revitalizing or repealing certain obsolete City ordinances, studying the programs which would seek the cooperation of property owners involved. We agree with you that the revitalization of the central core of this City is essential and we applaud your deep respect for our valuable heritage, which few cities in this United States can match. In the next eleven months before our Bicentennial, there is much to be done and we are confident of your dedication to seeing that this revitalization is accomplished. Let us together preserve that which God first gave to us, that our ancestors left as our unique heritage. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Just one question, Nancy. Mr. Mayor, just one question.

MAYOR BECKER: Yes, sir.

DR. SAN MARTIN: You said substantial sums - what's the dollar figure for substantial sums?

MRS. NEGLEY: It would be difficult for me to give you one.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Well.....

MRS. NEGLEY: Because of what, how it would be spent, but I would say that in round figures, quarter of a million would go a very long way. We would probably be satisfied with a great deal less.

DR. SAN MARTIN: A figure is not very significant unless you specify project and figures.

MRS. NEGLEY: I can come up with specific.....

DR. SAN MARTIN: Well, then, you'll turn them in to Mr. Guerra.

MRS. NEGLEY: Yes, sir, I will. Thank you.

MR. GLENN LACY: Mr. Mayor, I'd like to ask Nancy one question. Nancy, may I ask you one question?

MRS. NEGLEY: Yes, sir.

MR. LACY: We're not letting you go too fast. I think you said something about some of our City ordinances may be hindering us in some way. Did you...

MRS. NEGLEY: Well, there are....

MR. LACY: In mind that should be, you know, done away with?

MRS. NEGLEY: Well, people - it's just one succinct ordinance, that of hailing taxis. If a person, and we like people to walk these days, wants to hail a taxi to get into another part of the City, it is a fine of \$200 and this is still in the City ordinance. There's a few things that, you know, along these lines that probably should be reviewed. This is my understanding.

MR. LACY: If you'd list them, that's one thing that won't cost us any money and we'll be.....

MR. GUERRA: Right now you're opposed to phone. I just found out - found this out Tuesday night that we have such an ordinance in the books.

DR. SAN MARTIN: What year is it, 1890?

MR. GUERRA: Well, let me - let Tom address it, he knows more about the ordinance.

MR. TOM FINLAY: Somebody called me on that just yesterday and I wondered where it came from and now I know.

MRS. NEGLEY: I'm sorry.

MR. FINLAY: That's not the - it's just an ordinance that prohibits taxis from cruising. I mean, they're supposed to stay in their garage and wait for a call. They're not supposed to be going around cruising, soliciting business. It's not the person on the sidewalk that hails the cab that's going to get in trouble, it's the person driving the cab, going around soliciting.

MR. LACY: Well, if we have things that hinder us, at least (inaudible) we can fix that.

MR. GUERRA: What seems to be the problem is that most tourists are used to being able to hail a cab.

MAYOR BECKER: Why, of course.

MR. GUERRA: And they come here and they stand around and they stand around and, of course, you never see a cab.

MRS. NEGLEY: They can't find cabs. They don't know where sometimes to go to find them.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Mr. Guerra, will you put it on the "B" session as soon as possible.

MR. GUERRA: All right. Yes, sir.

MAYOR BECKER: It's the only way you can get one in certain cities is to hail it. Thank you for pointing that out to us (inaudible). It's most interesting. Ernesto Gomez.

MR. ERNESTO GOMEZ: Mr. Mayor and Council members. My name is Ernesto Gomez, Director of El Centro Del Barrio, one of the few social service agencies located in South San Antonio. I come before you to ask for your support in establishing a student services project in the Columbia Heights area of South San Antonio and to address other concerns regarding the Housing and Community Development proposal. First of all, all of you have received a copy of our proposal for a student services project. As you will recall, several pages in the proposal addressed the need for such a project, as we offered some statistics regarding the drop-out rate, the disciplinary problems that the teachers are having in the schools, the truancy rate and, of course, the low income statistics regarding the Columbia Heights area. In the essence of time, I would like to take a couple of minutes to highlight some of the items in the project proposal as you received it. The project is designed to provide counseling and guidance services for potential problematic students in the Columbia Heights barrio and the Harlandale Independent School District. This project is intended to respond to the School District, excuse me, this project is intended to respond to a list of major problems confronting public schools as presented at the November 1974 Harlandale Board of Trustees meeting. Attachment 2 in the proposal you received is a copy of this document submitted to the Board. First on that list is the lack of discipline followed by stealing, vandalism, gang fights and the use of drugs on the campus. Much concern was expressed by parents and teachers as they communicated to the Board their state of being at a loss in knowing how to deal with students who constantly refuse to obey rules. I suggest to you that mere recreational activities as are being proposed through some of the problem areas that the school district is facing. Our agency has spent much time and effort in conceptualizing the proposed project as we enlisted the involvement of several Harlandale Independent School District administrators, trustees and parents. Unlike other services available, this project will work with students referred by school administrators and teachers before students become involved with police or probation officers. Our conversations with Mr. Arrellano with the Youth Services indicate that there need not be a duplication of services to youths in this area, rather the project as we have designed it will augment his staff efforts. During the last year and a half, our agency has received more referrals from Mr. Arrellano's staff than we can handle. Additionally, the school district recognizes the need for such a project, but apparently is trapped by not having sufficient funds to finance a systemized effort to respond to the need and claims that the teachers cannot carry additional responsibilities since it would take away from their teaching efforts. We ask for your favorable consideration of our request to fund this project.

To address to other concerns, I'd like to hand out copies of the letter I mailed to the Council members on January 13th and if the Council will please read with me, starting on the third paragraph on the first page, "Additionally, we have enclosed a table of recommended projects compiled from data provided by Mr. Guerra's recommended allocations for first year Community Development block rent programs. To substantiate our concern regarding an unequal distribution of Housing and Community Development Act funds and the allocation of funds for projects in middle income areas in South San Antonio." First the table shows and I will indicate to the Council that the third sheet on the document you have before you is the table, first the table shows that the east and west parts of town are scheduled to receive 10 basic projects while the south is designated five. In dollar figures, this represents Eastside - \$600,000; Westside - \$600,000; Southside - \$300,000. In projects other than drainage and basic projects, the unequal distribution is even greater. The Eastside has 11 projects for \$2,000,200; Westside has seven projects for \$2,000,800 and Southside has five projects for \$900,000.

Here we see that South San Antonio is appropriated less than half the amount scheduled for other parts of town. Secondly, of the \$900,000 for other projects in South San Antonio, \$950,000 are for projects located primarily in middle income areas. The Normoyle park, gym and swimming pool is in the east Kelly area which would service census tract 1604 who has a medium family income of \$7,800 and census tract 1609 who has a family medium income of \$6,000. The Palm Heights improvement project in census tract 1609 has a medium income level of \$7,500. These medium income levels are considerably higher than other census tracts in South San Antonio. The Columbia Heights area, as most of us are familiar with, has a much lower income level of families living there. I suggest to you that there are other areas in South San Antonio that are, perhaps, more needy for redevelopment projects than the ones that are being proposed here. One other concern I might mention to the Council just briefly is that as I review the application that was handed out today, all projects that are being proposed are to be administered by City offices and as a social worker I must come forward and communicate our concern for being able to survive or maintain a viable involvement in the communities that we've been working in for many, many years. There are several social service agencies that have been in our communities for many years who are, perhaps, in just a good situation to offer some of the services that are being prepared, that are being proposed. We're not given that opportunity since all the funds are being channeled through City offices. Thank you.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Mr. Mayor, I just have one question that I have discussed with Mr. Gomez in my office several times and this was the question of the Normoyle Park. I asked Mr. Guerra to do a little research and I don't know if he's ready for it.

MR. GUERRA: Yes, sir, we are. In the case of the park, the park we feel will principally serve eligible areas even though it's not entirely within the eligible area, but it's surrounded by eligible areas. With regard to the split in the dollars, I haven't checked this addition or the accuracy of the figures, but assuming that they are correct, the allocation - there's no attempt being made to allocate money equally east, west, south, in any particular direction. If you look at the map, I'll turn around so you can see it, that shows the distribution by income of where people live and you'll see that the blue is very low income, the green is low income and yellow is modern income. So there's a higher concentration of poor in low income in the east and west side and that's how we got the money. That was one of the basis for the City receiving the money so I think you would naturally expect to see more money in the east and west side rather than the south side.

MAYOR BECKER: Cipriano, how many census tract areas are there approximately within the City limits of San Antonio? A 150 or what?

MR. GUERRA: I'll have to ask someone else. Roy?

MR. MONTEZ: About a 150 at least.

MAYOR BECKER: About a 150. Of course you know, the reason I mentioned this is because previous to your remarks, Mr. Gomez, mention was also made of the census tract areas, and I think it goes without saying that if you try to put something in each and every census tract area you wouldn't get anywhere with the money, you know. You'd be passing out nickels and dimes, so to speak. The fact, of course, and I don't have to explain to you that if a swimming pool or a health care center or a day care center or whatever goes in a certain area, there's a certain amount of peripheral accessibility to that installation that it makes it possible for many people to come to it, you know, from other census tract areas, let's say, so I don't think that in all due respect of the Planning Department and the various people of the staff that have made these recommendations that they were trying to address themselves specifically to census tract areas. It would be almost impossible to do anything worthwhile on that basis. I just make that observation in case you haven't thought of it. I'm sure you probably have.

DR. SAN MARTIN: There's only one question I would like to ask Ernesto. In the census tracts that you mentioned, which are, perhaps, more eligible because they're in the lower income category, would it be possible to find land available and the facilities which would make this a more reasonable, less costly project or would going to Normoyle to be taking advantage of facilities that are already there and, therefore, would be less costly and more easily developed. I mean I'm asking for information, if we go to the census tracts that you mentioned where we would put this swimming pool and stuff like that, outside of having to buy land, demolition and stuff like that.

MR. GOMEZ: Dr. San Martin, you would have to involve yourself in purchasing of land, tearing down of buildings already on that piece of property, but only to add that Columbia Heights area is, perhaps, the most dilapidated neighborhood in all of south San Antonio and my thinking suggests that as we've talked about redevelopment that we were to go and, perhaps, tear down some of the dilapidated conditions that are presently there and replace with others to redevelop the neighborhood. I would like to, if I may, talk about social boundaries and talk about natural boundaries in the areas.

MAYOR BECKER: Could I point out something before you get into that though, sir?

MR. GOMEZ: Yes, sir.

MAYOR BECKER: It's a rather bitter fact of life that when you go out and try to buy some of these dilapidated houses, the scrap value of them is probably, in some instances, total amount may be 100 to 150 dollars for plumbing facilities and window frames or something like that. I know, because I've done it. We've bought some of those things on a 50 foot lot by 75 feet deep to remove for store facilities and paid 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 thousand dollars for those houses sometimes. Now, the point being that the monies that we have, we're trying to spread as far as we possibly can and if we spend too much of the money in acquisition of land and old dilapidated houses, we have nothing then left to do the actual physical improvements with, you see.

MR. GOMEZ: I understand, and Mr. Mayor, I don't mean to argue the point, but only to say that my experience has been that residents in the Columbia Heights area for the most part do not attend the Normoyle Park or the Palm Heights Park, because there are social boundaries and the park is right next to the East Kelly area, and it's totally removed from, you know, there are natural barriers that do not allow people to make contact with those facilities. Just wanted to point that out to the Council.

MR. LACY: Mr. Mayor, let me just ask Mr. Gomez one question. I understood you to say that by building more swimming pools and gyms and things of that nature wasn't necessarily going to be the factor that is going to keep these boys from developing into being juvenile delinquents and later penitentiary material, which has been showed, and youngsters even in grade schools, the teacher can't shellac them even if she had the time, because of the new law - they restricted a teacher even touching a child and so that curtails that. They're overly protected. The teacher takes them to the principal and the principal can't do anything, because of the same laws. ... (Inaudible)take them to counseling, so what is the primary thing where we're going to spend this money, what was your idea of the thing that is really going to really keep these boys from going on - one in particular I know was about seven or eight years old and I read where he shot a

policeman and killed him; that same boy that my wife taught when he was in the second grade. She saw that coming on, right then, but she couldn't touch him, the principal couldn't touch him. What is your idea?

MR. GOMEZ: Well, we are, by proposing this program, or attempting to.....

MR. LACY: How is the program built? How are you going to deter these.....

MR. GOMEZ: Well, we're talking about involving teams of two social workers in each of the six schools identified in the District.

MR. LACY: Are you going to talk to them and counsel them and that.....

MR. GOMEZ: That's the main focus to hold activities with those youngsters that have been identified as problematic or potentially problematic to offer them counseling service, guidance service and perhaps to assist them and give the teachers some support in the....excuse me.

MR. LACY: Do you think these youngsters will get the message in that manner? Is that a method of talking?

MR. GOMEZ: See, one of the problems being that teachers don't have, in their work day, enough time to give individualized attention to the problematic youngster and, as a result, he is usually not given any attention, because he is a problematic youngster. He spends most of this time going to the principal's office and things of this nature. So, what we're talking about doing is establishing professional staff that will give support to the teachers and administrators in working with these type of youngsters to give them the attention that they need.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Let me ask just one question, Mr. Mayor. I discussed this with Mr. Gomez at length and there is some question in the mind of the staff and myself as to how much of this the school districts ought to be doing themselves and how much they actually want you to do for them. Now, I have been involved in educational institutions for many, many years, either PTA's, school boards, Board of Regents, Southern Region Education Board in Atlanta, the International Institute of Education, and I find a reluctance on the part of school districts, but mostly school principals, Ernesto, for anybody from the outside to come in and try to do something for them, if they can't do it themselves, because they don't have the money or because they don't have the facilities, they would rather not have it done at all, rather than have an outside agency come in and try to tell them what to do. Now, is there any way that you have checked this out with the principals around the area that you work with?

MR. GOMEZ: Yes, we have. We have had discussions with most of the principals. In fact, one of the proposals - in the proposal we do have a letter of support from one of the Vice-Principals in the school.

MR. GUERRA: Dr. San Martin, if you would allow me a moment, I might save you some time. This is a good point to bring up. With regard to social service proposals, one of the requirements of the regs, as I pointed out, this is not intended to be a social service funding source, it only funds those projects which are tied in to other Community Development projects. Even in that regard, it calls for specific proof that you've applied to other agencies for funding and that you'd been rejected or that the money was not available. That is one of the

reasons that we've gone with only the City-funded activities, because we have them well documented, they are on-going, and we have statistics on which to base decisions to whether to fund them or not. The trouble with a lot of the other proposals that we've received is that we're having trouble getting evidence that we feel is acceptable, that they've previously applied for funding and were rejected by the proper department, whether it be the Texas Community Development Department or the Health, Education and Welfare Department and that's the reason we've taken this approach. The other one is this tremendous amount of overlap in social service programs. The managers recognize that and set up the social service task force, which is right now in the middle of trying to weigh all these conflicting overlapping social service activities and seeing if we can sort them out, so we can come back to Council with a well integrated social service program, and it gets the City the maximum return of a dollar. This particular proposal has a lot of good arguments for it, but the package itself is not very clear, as to just exactly what they're going to do and how the money will be spent. That's one of the problems we had.

MR. GOMEZ: We'd be glad to provide, Mr. Guerra, any additional information he might need. This is the first time that those things have been pointed out to me. Had I known prior to this meeting, I would have been able to present it to the Council.

DR. SAN MARTIN: I, myself, wasn't sure as to exactly what I was going to comment on this, but I feel that within the next two weeks, we can bring this type of information to Mr. Guerra's office, please.

MR. GOMEZ: We certainly can. Thank you.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you, sir. We have three more names on the first sheet. It's 12:20 P. M. The second sheet is almost just as numerous as the first sheet. Now, what I want to suggest, if I may, asking you ladies and gentlemen out there to register approval or disapproval. We'll finish the first sheet, with these last three names on it, and recess for say, whatever you say, 45 minutes or whatever, go to lunch, come back and start in on the second sheet. We should be able to finish that one up by, let's say 3:30 P. M., something like that.

MR. GUERRA: There's a third sheet.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, where is it? I don't know.

MR. GUERRA: People are still signing it outside, sir. But so far, I think we only have one name on it.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, is that right? Well, okay.

SOMEONE IN AUDIENCE: There are three names on that sheet.....
(inaudible).....

MAYOR BECKER: Well, the next person on the list is - does that sound reasonable? Okay. All right. The next person on the list, then, is Ciro Rodriguez.

MR. CIRO RODRIGUEZ: City Councilmen, I'm Ciro Rodriguez. I'm a Board member for the Harlandale Independent School District and I'm here to speak in behalf of the student service project proposal that was just submitted by the Centro Del Barrio. Personally, I have no objections

with the bricks and cements project that has been presented, because we definitely need them, but I also feel that we should invest in developing in our greatest asset, which are our youth. Unfortunately, recent polls and surveys in our community show that our major problems, confronting our schools, deal directly or indirectly with disciplinary situations. A professional personnel main concern is that they are spending more time with disciplinary problems than with teaching. We, therefore, see the need to develop the means to resolve such problems. It is important that the youth learn problem-solving techniques in a manner which fosters cooperation and participation. The student service project addresses the problem that we are facing. I feel that the student service project offers a positive alternative to deal with the complex individual and social problems of our youth in the Columbia Heights area. Furthermore, I am familiar with the types of services being provided by Centro Del Barrio and, as a resident of the southside and as a member of the Harlandale Board of Trustees, I would hope that you would consider the project. There was some questions that were brought up in regards to the responsibility of the District. Financially, Harlandale, right now, ranks eighth poorest in the State, and we've had to cut back on aids. We've had - our teachers are at a State minimum, which means we don't pay them anything, the State pays them and we don't have the funds. We're under \$17,000,000 deficit and we feel.....

MAYOR BECKER: Are you, excuse me, when you say you're eighth poorest in the State, do you mean you're eighth from the bottom of the list?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Right, in terms of, right, correct, in terms of taxable wealth that we're receiving. And, I would hope that you would consider the proposal that was submitted. We have talked to some of the principals and I think Mr. Gomez has gotten the letters, and we've talked to the Superintendent and I think you've even received some letters from some of the other Board members, and I hope you would consider - these six schools are located in - approximately - the majority - five of them I know, are in census tract 1505 and the sixth is Harlandale High School, which is a little bit outside, but the majority of them live within that area, that attend that school, and there are elementary schools, a middle school and a high school that will be affected, and I'd like to thank you for giving me the time.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you. Mr. Harry V. Burns.

MR. HARRY V. BURNS: Mayor Becker and to the members of the City Council, I am Harry V. Burns, the Vice-Chairman of the Eastside Project Area Committee. We are pleased to know that the Eastside Neighborhood Development Program requests are a part of the San Antonio Community Development plan and support staff in their inclusion. I'd like to take this opportunity to say a simple thank you. We appreciate your awareness of the two years of time, energy, planning, the inter-agency cooperation that went into the development of a representative package. Further, we appreciate your consistent support of the Eastside Neighborhood Development Project efforts that's exemplified by the Council's actions endorsing the San Antonio Development Agencies Eastside Neighborhood Development application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as the.....(inaudible).....resolution favoring the Eastside Neighborhood Development Project request for consideration as a Community Development area. We'll be most pleased to respond to questions of concern from you or your representative on any of the

items in the package. I'd like to say that while we've faired fairly well in the recommendations that have been made to you by the staff, we are - this does not mean that we are not sympathetic to the proposals that have been submitted by some of the other groups also. Thank you very much.

MAYOR BECKER: Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Burns. J. W. Erler. Jerry Erler.

MR. JERRY W. ERLER: Mr. Mayor, gentlemen of the Council.....

MAYOR BECKER: Jerry, young Jerry Erler.

MR. ERLER: I thought you were going to say thin Jerry Erler.

MAYOR BECKER: Oh, well, all right, young, thin Jerry Erler, then.

MR. ERLER: I am President of Downtown, Incorporated, and as I tend to give a speech when I am not held down, in the essence of time I'd like to read this statement. I think it'll be.....

MAYOR BECKER: How many hours long is it, Jerry?

MR. ERLER: It's very short.

MAYOR BECKER: Okay. All right.

MR. ERLER: That's why I'm going to read it.

MAYOR BECKER: Okay.

MR. ERLER: The Downtown Association asks that you give consideration to certain projects in the central City area to be funded for the Community Development monies to be available in the fiscal year of 1975. These recommendations are a part of the overall action program recommended by the Downtown Association. Some items of which were conveyed to you in October of 1974, and which I will speak of later. There is general agreement among those concerned with central City area problems that an indispensable first ingredient is to attract individuals and families to once more take up residence in or near the central City area. Downtown San Antonio is fortunate in having several ideal locations with this type of housing, which should contain a proper mix of low, medium and high income facilities. One such area is that bounded by Navarro, Martin and the San Antonio River. The major portion of this land is now devoted to surface parking. It brings the total tax revenue to the City of \$803,000 annually. We recommend that the Council designate this area as an Urban Renewal Project and that its reuse be designated for mixed private residential and commercial facilities. The approximate cost of acquiring the land would be in the neighborhood of \$3.9 million with a probable disposition value of \$1.1 million. This would be a net investment of \$2.8 million in the Community Development funds by the City. Comparing the present tax structure of the \$803,000 and the potential tax of \$1.6 million, after residential development, the \$2.8 million would be recouped in a little over three years by the increase in taxes of the present tax of \$803,000 annually. Even more importantly, the success of such a venture would act as an unexcelled stimulus to further residential-commercial development, particularly in certain types of assistance that can be provided for additional projects.

A second project, which we think merits your attention, is that monies are now under consideration to be used for funding the plan for HemisFair Plaza reuse, which was unanimously approved by you several months ago.

Third, let me now refresh your memories concerning the Downtown Association's request conveyed to you in October of '74. In that request we asked that you utilize the \$6 million approved in the 1969 Bond Election for streets and drainage projects for the following projects: (1) Extension of Pecan Street from Main Avenue to connect with the south three lanes of Martin Street - San Pedro Creek. (2) Extension of Pecan Street to connect with Third Street. (3) Elimination of traffic problems in the Romana Plaza, Main Avenue, San Pedro area and Interstate 35. I might say, a great deal has been done on this, but it has never been finished. We urge that a consultant be hired to review the plans of the City Traffic and Transportation Department and upon completion, that immediate steps be taken to correct the problems.

We recommend that a combination of bond funds and other funds be used for the following projects: (1) Construction of an underground parking garage at the Municipal Auditorium, which could be used for parking or for exhibits, as needed. (2) Channelization of traffic at street level and beautification of the circle. Finally, we recommend that funds be obtained to accomplish the following: (1) Renovate and repair the Municipal Auditorium. I understand that some of that is presently being done. (2) Beautify Jefferson Street from the Municipal Auditorium to Travis Park. (3) Totally renovate Travis Park to encourage increased utilization by local citizens and visitors. We are delighted to learn you've already undertaken several of these projects, such as the re-roofing of the Auditorium. At this time we urge you to utilize some of the Community Development monies to get underway the implementation of our recommendations, which require a mixture of bond and non-bond money and these recommendations that required non-bond monies. All of these recommendations - housing, HemisFair Plaza, Auditorium area - will bring real enlarged benefits to all the citizens of San Antonio. We recommend their approval, as you see fit. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Jerry, let me ask you a question, and I'm not directing my remarks towards you, but - and it's - I'm not trying to take a bank shot at you either, but you deal with the downtowners and so forth. Let me just ask, what if the City, and all these other different agencies, the Federal government and everybody, and all this money we're talking about, were willing to actually take a real interest in the redevelopment of the downtown area - now I mean by the matter of actually appropriating \$5 million, \$10 million a year, scheduling it for five consecutive years to where it would be a substantial amount of money.....

MAYOR BECKER: What type of involvement do you think we could get the downtown property owners committed to? Now, you know, it's a dirty thing that I'm asking and it's a question that isn't very popular in some quarters, but be that as it may, I think it must be asked and it's something that people are going to have to sit down and discuss, because there's no reason, in my mind at least, and I don't think there is in your's either, because your company's not used to large..(inaudible)..or whatever you know from pie-in-the-sky sort of stuff. You're rooked out the hard way - usually out of profits or sales of bonds or securities or whatever. What are these people expected to do, that own this property downtown? Are they expected and what are they expecting others to do for them? Are they expecting the taxpayers, both the Federal government - we're all taxpayers to the Federal government - are they expecting the taxpayers to the City of San Antonio, to Bexar County and all that, to take care of all their problems. You see, this is the thing that, really, I have a hang-up about and we've discussed it before, you know, and.....

January 24, 1975

-29-

kvr

MR. ERLER: It's a question that should be asked, and I appreciate it. I feel this way, that downtown redevelopment cannot be left just to the City. It can't be left to any group. It's the people that own the land downtown and in many respects we represent businessmen, many of which don't own land that are renters.

MAYOR BECKER: Yes, sir.

MR. ERLER: If downtown people owning land are not willing to take part in it, then certainly there's nothing the City can do that I - what I really am addressing myself to is the fact that a tremendous amount has already been done downtown. I've been in town, as you know, only 12 years. In the last ten years, if you've photographed what downtown - the total areas was 12 years ago and what it is today, there's been a tremendous lot done both by the City and by individuals in the development. The total area of HemisFair and the change that's taken place. The total area of the Santa Rosa Hospital and what's taking place with federal, with City, with private investment in that area. The total area in the northside, around the Methodist, Baptist Hospital, is a completely changed area with one of the finest high schools just opened last week in the City probably. With the addition to the hospital, the addition of the doctors' offices, the banks that have made changes already and built new buildings, the NBC, the Frost Bank, the new development that's going in just been announced in the Alamo Bank. The other banks that have developed in the inner City. So, there's nothing - it's not a fact that nothing's been done downtown. I have great hopes for downtown. I think the future downtown probably is greater today than it's ever been in the past 30 years.

MAYOR BECKER: I agree with that.

MR. ERLER: Downtown originally was a shopping center for a whole community.

MAYOR BECKER: Right.

MR. ERLER: And it developed that way. Today it's not. It's one more shopping center. I look at downtown as an area perhaps three miles in radius from the center of downtown and as the energy gets tighter, other things get tighter. People are going to have to live downtown if they work downtown. And we're not trying to say the people are going to come from all over the City to buy downtown. There's probably too much retail space available in the downtown now. But there's a need for a strong, highly developed downtown not just for retail, I think it's a minor part of it, but for all of the services of the City. And I think that the areas we're talking about are the things that are basically the areas that only the City, only the government can do. Now, if they're going to do them then through ordinance, through whatever it takes, the people who own the property downtown and must be a part of that and must be willing to put their two cents in (inaudible) gamble of the future. I think that housing must be downtown. There's no way that downtown can exist on bringing people from all over town, either because of transportation, because of the ecology of the future, because of the energy of the future, we're going to have segments living within their own areas. They'll work, they'll play, they'll shop, within those areas because I think we've seen the passing of the long 8, 10, 15, 20 mile trips of car after car with one person in it, two and three and four times a day. I don't think I've answered specifically your question, I'm merely saying that we in downtown feel exactly the same way you do, if we cannot get cooperation of the landowners, if they're not willing to cooperate in this, then both we and you, in the City Council are wasting your time.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, the reason I'm posing this question to you this morning is that I'm hopeful that if we mention this enough that they'll finally dawn on certain people that they're also a part of this problem, and they also could be part of the solution to the problem, you know. Now, how do you generate - how do you create this flow of electricity, let's say, that finally these people say, well, you know, I'm going to

become a part of this thing, and I'm not going to let somebody else do my work for me because corporations have generally done the very things that you're talking about that have been done down here. Now, all these lands are not owned by corporations. Not all these properties are occupied by corporations. There are landowners involved and that's the ones I'm addressing right now.

MR. ERLER: Right or wrong, I think that the thing that it needs and what I'm trying to say is we've done a lot of capital improvements in the inner - in downtown.

MAYOR BECKER: Yes, sir.

MR. ERLER: Over the past 10, 12 years. That none of that has been really channeled towards the one area that I think is the future of downtown and that is of people of all classes living in the downtown area. And I don't mean right down the center of town but that becomes their center the same as Wonderland is the center of a community of shoppers and workers and other things that have developed, the same as Central Park and many other places. Downtown is another one of those places. I believe that the development and I think it must take some government action, whether it's City or federal, and here I think we're talking about two to make it possible for downtown to get that initial start in development of an all-over living project. Maybe a very small one but where you have the upper class, the middle class, the lower class, operating not just a development of one class. And, because of the cost of land and because of the problems that you are aware of and certainly some of the members of the Council, the developer has to depend on a great number of the amount of loan money to do the job. They cannot pay for land anywhere near what land is worth, yet it's, to me, would enhance the - from the City's standpoint, the City government's standpoint, the fact that if this can get started with tax help of whatever it may be, then the tax returns will pay for it, it's not something that will be dissipated and disappears once it's been spent.

MAYOR BECKER: The reason I asked you this question is because you've lived all over the world, I say all over, but in a great many parts of it and I've known you for quite a while, and I think you have one of the finest minds that's ever come to the City of San Antonio, and I just hope we never lose you through any reason or another and you have the ability to be a tremendous force in advocating and trying to disseminate this philosophy, that if we're going to do something in San Antonio, all of us are going to have to get in and get in the harness. Some can't be sitting upon the haystack, you know, and watching all the work go on below them. Everybody's going to have to involve themselves in it, if nothing else but from a sense of fairness, you know. There are many people that are being expected to make fantastic sacrifices here and we heard some of them this morning that on a daily basis make tremendous sacrifices. They would like some of this money too, you know. And I think they need it badly. So, let's just kind of get everybody caught up in this thing.

MR. ERLER: We're in complete agreement, I'm sure, on that.

MAYOR BECKER: And if you could bring these matters to the attention of some of the meetings that you attend at the Downtowners' and so forth, little by little that drop of water will finally begin to, yes, you know. We might have a whole dam built here before it's overwith.

MR. ERLER: I would like to make one other suggestion - I couldn't agree more, it must be a - something that's taken place by all the people and by the people that own property downtown, people that are working downtown as well as the rest of the City. I would suggest that a great deal of thought or study be given and I am certainly no expert in the area but to the total problems that restrictions to actual building of homes of residential area in the near downtown areas. I think there's a real need of the review of the tax structures. Number one, you and I both know and every member of the Council that if you're looking at land

and if you had to pick a hundred thousand square foot in one area of town to another and get a return on it, you wouldn't look to land in much of downtown today. Also, the building codes per se and again, I am speaking in an area I have no expertise but I believe most of these building codes are based on insurance, fire basis, I question that they've been reviewed to see the density of population in some of these areas now versus what they were at the time they were passed and that a great deal of building that could take place. Renovation of present buildings could be done but can't be done because they're not economic because of some of the regulations that are enforced today. I don't know what would be found, I think it needs a strong study. I think every segment must work towards this because if we don't have people living in the downtown areas using this as another cell of a great San Antonio, then we're in serious trouble in the future. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much, Jim, thank you. Well, let's recess for lunch and we'll be back about a quarter of one and let's try and be back, say around 1:30 P. M. or something like that.

75-6 The meeting recessed for lunch at 12:45 P. M. and reconvened at 2:10 P. M.

* * * * *

MAYOR BECKER: I think it's Pocano.

MRS. JOE H. CASTILLO: Polanco.

MAYOR BECKER: Polanco?

MRS. CASTILLO: He's left, sir.

MAYOR BECKER: Oh, he's left. Well, I'm sorry. All right, then, Odie Davis.

MRS. CASTILLO: He just left.

MAYOR BECKER: And him, too. All right, Mrs. Joe H. Castillo.

MRS. CASTILLO: That's me.

MAYOR BECKER: Okay. Fine.

MRS. CASTILLO: My name is Mrs. Joe H. Castillo and I thank you so very much for the opportunity of being here, Mayor Becker and Council members.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, thank you for spending your day here with us.

MRS. CASTILLO: I'm so glad that you've had lunch and we can be a little more receptive.

MAYOR BECKER: Right.

MRS. CASTILLO: I've had lunch, too. I was starving.

MAYOR BECKER: Good.

MRS. CASTILLO: My name is Mrs. Joe H. Castillo. I'm a past President PTA President of Kelly Elementary, Lowell Middle School and Burbank High School, and also am presently serving in the capacity of Area III Vice-President on the San Antonio Council of PTA Level.

In our by-laws, our first priority, a portion of our objects on the national and state level is to promote the welfare for children and youths in the home, school, church and the community. And because we the parents have committed ourselves to the most important job and because our children are the most precious possessions God has entrusted upon us, we are here to present this proposal of a pedestrian overpass over Frio City Road and the Missouri Pacific tracks for your reconsideration so that all the children may safely walk to school. Our children

in our community have had to build their own patch to get access to Zarzamora Street. They have **torn** down the fences that guard their safety on Frio City Road and crawl under the trains to get to Zarzamora Street, rather than cope with the traffic traveling south on Zarzamora. We, the parents from this community, plead with you today to help our children get properly educated and in doing so, stay alive. This bridge would service more than 1,800 elementary and junior high school students. In view of the fatality, which happened Wednesday night at that location, we are hoping your reconsideration on this proposal. This is not the first person that has been killed at this intersection. Ten years ago, a student and my nephew were walking home and the student got killed. My nephew was fortunate, he survived but he was thrown a distance of 20 feet. He was hurt but he survived. Since then a number of people have been killed at this intersection. May we urge the Council members to please reconsider our proposal. And, I believe, sir, you have a copy of our proposal.

MAYOR BECKER: Yes, ma'am. All right.

MRS. CASTILLO: And, again, I'd like to thank you, sir, for giving me this opportunity. I know you have a busy schedule, and I know how it is when you do volunteer work. We've been there.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, we.....

MRS. CASTILLO: We don't get paid, but, boy, we sure get it.

MAYOR BECKER: We're indebted to you and all of you, Mrs. Castillo, for being so patient with us.

MRS. CASTILLO: Thank you, sir, and I hope that you can reconsider or look at our proposal.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much.

MRS. CASTILLO: Thank you so very much.

MR. W.J. O'CONNELL: Mrs. Castillo, may I ask you a question, please?

MRS. CASTILLO: Yes.

MR. O'CONNELL: Was this presented in advance of today, I mean, is this the first time?

MRS. CASTILLO: Yes, in this place right here.

MR. O'CONNELL: What time?

MR. GUERRA: Yes, Mr. O'Connell, that was presented to us at one of the citizens' meetings.

MR. O'CONNELL: Okay, fine, thank you.

MRS. CASTILLO: But being with the PTA, of course, being a parent, is not very easy job but getting the parents together, to guard our children, is not easier, so, therefore, we did not have a majority coming to the meetings like some other radical movements but nevertheless, the need is here. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you, ma'am. I see Mr. **Ciro Rodriguez** listed again. Now, he spoke this morning so I have to assume that he didn't intend to speak twice. **Walter Embrey, Jr.** and **Odie Davis** signed up again. Then, **Carmen Guerrero**.

MRS. CARMEN GUERRERO: My name is **Carmen Guerrero** and I represent the **Youth Guidance Program** in **San Antonio**. **Mayor Becker**, members of the **City Council**, I represent one of the **193 recommendations** that were made for the allocation of funds from the **Housing and Community Development Act**. Unfortunately, we're one of the ones that were not chosen

and at this point, I sincerely am feeling that, unless our organization is in some way connected with the City, my request is rather futile. In the area of services to youth...Is it over?

MAYOR BECKER: No, no, sorry. That's hardly fair, is it?

MRS. GUERRERO: The Youth Services Project, which is a part of the Human Services, was chosen to receive funds and this is good because it's a good organization and it's a very needed area. The Youth Services Project is attempting, according to the research that I have done to provide a service to the community, which will significantly reduce and prevent incidents of serious juvenile crime, as well as to avoid future criminal behavior by providing personally gratifying and socially successful roles. And this is good, but they can't do it alone. And it's an organization like Youth Guidance that makes it possible for them to have a place to send these kids once they release them. They may keep them out of jail, they may get them off the streets and the kid does not end up with a record but they need someplace to refer them to in order for the counseling and the help that they intend for them to have to occur. And this is where we can be of service. And it isn't a matter of overlapping or duplicating or wanting to do something that they're doing but offering our services to enhance and to supplement what they're trying to do. But, in order to continue, we too need funds. So, as you value the costs of projects, such as the Botanical Gardens, the central business district pedestrian linkage and the central business district parking area, I really would plead that you also weigh what you're saying no to. By way of lives, lives of over 14,000 of our young people in the San Antonio Housing Projects, who incidentally are tomorrow's adults. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much.

MR. GUERRA: Mrs. Guerrero, what organization are you?

MRS. GUERRERO: Youth Guidance.

MR. GUERRA: Youth Guidance. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: All right. I see some people that have returned and maybe I skipped over their names, thinking they were gone. Odie Davis. Walter Embrey, Jr. Apparently not. All right. Ida Kenny.

MRS. IDA KENNY: Yes, sir.

MAYOR BECKER: Okay.

MRS. IDA KENNY: I'm Ida Kenny and I'm Executive Director of the Bexar County Senior Citizens. I'm also - work with Texas Senior citizens. The reason that I'm here today, and one of the things that is very bad, is in this lovely City of San Antonio you have public facilities for the physically active, you have swimming pools and tennis courts, you have football fields and baseball diamonds, you can call it a field, horseback riding trails, hiking trails, handball courts, you have gymnasiums and on and on, but you, in the entire City, you have no specific center for the elderly. Now, we're not talking about your housing centers for the elderly that have their own meeting rooms, because they are designed for just those that live in the center and can't do much for the other 95,000 senior citizens you have in the area. In the past our 13,000 member senior citizen organization has been grateful to the Granada Apartments for giving us an office and facilities to issue bus cards and I. D. cards. We've helped with the unemployment of the elderly and the needs of the elderly and we have between 100 and 600 attend the monthly meetings, but the residents of the apartment no longer wish to have their lobby filled with all the senior citizens that come in seeking help and they have been patient a long time. We're grateful to them but now the elderly don't have any place to turn to for help or for aid with the social security, welfare and bus cards. It's going to be up to you.

You have a park facility that a feasibility study made by the City says that it's only suited for senior citizens center. It was given to you by the federal government to be used only for parks and recreational facilities. It's not being used now. It is ideally situated. It is historically desirable and can become not only functional but in doing so you can preserve a historical natural monument that is over a hundred years old and it has been designated by your national government as a national historical site. Its original design which is Italian as Victorian is such that it lends itself perfectly to the activity suggested. The huge screen porches surround it on each side of both stories, the lovely grassy lawns and the trees, the fountains and the benches are ideally situated where it would be convenient for the elderly with bus transportation to the front door. You have safety from purse snatching, mugging, robbing and rape because it has a six foot high fence all the way around it and barbed wire on top of that.

We're living in a highly mobile society and I want to tell you briefly about the conversation I had with your Traffic Coordinator, Chief Bichsel. He was concerned with the number of elderly pedestrian deaths in the City, and he thought that perhaps we should have a safety program to instruct them but I told the Chief that I didn't think that they were accidents. I told him that if he could just listen to the number that tell me that they have nothing any longer to live for. They actually turn their face to the wall and they die. The reason they die, and I have to tell you this, you know, the saying that never judge your fellow man until you've walked a mile in his moccasins. Let me tell you briefly what they tell me. They wake up at 4 o'clock in the morning because they go to bed at 8 o'clock the night before because there's nothing to do. They lose their sight and their hearing and they can't watch television and they can't read the paper. They wait in the morning for the morning paper to come because that's the first break in the monotony and then after the paper comes they say, "Oh my God, what is their to look forward to." There's nothing. They can't go anywhere. Their legs are too weak to take them anywhere. They can't visit with anyone and the reason I mentioned about our mobile society is that most of the children live in other cities or have gone their way. Our housing centers are limited. We're only able to take care of, well, I would say at the most 5,000 out of your 95,000. Our nutrition program is limited. We serve 2,200 a day in San Antonio to serve the elderly, but we could serve a lot more if we had either the money or the place. Now, when the federal government turned it over to you, you had an architectural study done on it, and they estimated it took approximately \$198,000 to divide it into offices. I'm speaking of the commanding officers home in the personal property. It took another \$21,000 for

January 24, 1975
msv

-35-

architectural fees, and it took approximately another \$15,000 minimum for air conditioning. Our senior citizens don't want air conditioning, and they don't want offices and they feel - I've had two contractors come out and look it over for an estimate of what it would cost to fix it up.

I'll talk now for the Texas Senior Citizens because they're interested in it, then I'll go to AACOG. Our Senior Advisory Board of the AACOG, Alamo Area Council of Governments, unanimously supports this request. They were told of it, we have a unanimous vote on it that we should try and secure it for a senior center. Now, the main repairs that I see that need to be done at present is repairing the screen porches and repairing the screens, repairing the porches interior work that needs to be done. I believe that it can be done at a minimum of \$150,000 and I think that's generous because you now have the program with the federal government that implies the elderly along with your work program that these people can work in there and be delighted to work in it. The Governor of Pennsylvania was so distressed that they had no senior citizen center in his capital state, in the capital city, that he converted the ground floor of his brand new Governor's Mansion for a senior citizens center. He was so concerned.

Now, the huge screen porches they furnish a cool place for them to rock and to take instructions. We can have art exhibits there. I have a group that is very interested in the geriatrics clinic and may I deviate at the moment from this to tell you that this fills every single category. I have checked it, I have read the law, I have checked the instructions of my beloved husband who puts up with this, is also an attorney and he has checked it out. We have made an application for our senior center before, we were turned down by the Governor's Committee on Aging. But while sitting on the Governor's Committee on Aging for two years when I was on the board we have funded hundreds of thousands of dollars to centers just exactly like this where they had furnished not only silver, well, I say silver, plateware, they fed the elderly, they furnish them lounge chairs, rocking chairs, equipment. I could go on indefinitely with what we have furnished the elderly in other cities over Texas. So, by making this one grant on this one piece of property you make it possible then for other hundreds of thousands of dollars to come into the elderly through this particular site. I know exactly what I'm talking about because I've checked these grants over and pass on them.

Now, let's go to one more thing. In addition to using this as a park recreation center for the elderly, you included a large fee for personnel to handle it. We have unlimited personnel to manage and to run such a center. I'm on the board of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. We are at the present time running an employment program for the elderly to find places for them to work. We have dozens that can qualify to come down and to run the center for the City. The house at this moment is being ruined, and I point out again, that this is a historical site. I was in it six months ago when I checked it over for the first time. The floors were beautiful, you have hardwood floors throughout, you have beautiful fireplaces in the rooms. I was there yesterday - I'm sorry, Friday, there are sacks of lime being stored on the hardwood floor. The rooms are filled from wall to wall and side to side, I won't say junk, but I will say that all the residue of the parks has been stored in cabinets and stored in these rooms all around and it isn't helping it at all. The bathrooms were in working order, you have nice fluorescent lights throughout. I think that with the very minimum that it could be restored as a natural, nationally registered historical site for the elderly and this money will bring you ten times more. Now, I think you know our friend, John Poerner, who was our representative from Bexar County. He is now executive director of the department of Aging for the State of Texas and he is well aware of our problem, too. I wish you would very definitely reconsider. We need this more than anything I know for the elderly in the City of San Antonio. It's also in the River Corridor or you'll qualify for funds there. There is a special project under the Community Development Act that will allow money in addition to what the City furnishes for special centers. They particularly look for the health of the elderly

so I think it would qualify in every category. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much, Mrs. Kenny. There's one thing we can do and that is find out what's being stored over there and why. If the lime is going to ruin the floor, which I unquestionably - I guess it would, it should be taken out and put somewhere else.

MRS. KENNY: I think the reason in the summer that it was in such excellent condition was nothing was stored. But when you shut the parks down for the summer this material - their handballs, tennis court, croquet mallets, all of these things have to be gathered up and stored somewhere and that's what it's being used for.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, I doubt it if those kind of things would damage the building but lime, I imagine.....

MRS. KENNY: It's the cabinets that they're stored in that are dragged across. Oh, I'm sorry, in addition that small building there on the ground is easily adaptable to a geriatrics clinic and we have spoken to some of the auxiliary member of the Texas Medical Association and they're very interested in preventative medicine for the elderly on your cancer, glaucoma and high blood pressure and heart. This could easily be worked in with it with no problem and no cost to the City.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much. Thank you, madam. All right, Reverend R. E. or S. E. Stewart? Well, I don't know what he was here for, I know what he comes down for. I guess that's

DR. SAN MARTIN: An eastside project.

MAYOR BECKER: I guess he - well, if he comes back in, we'll - David Garza or it looks like - or Gloria Cabrera. Neither one of those here. Eddie Alejandro? Raul Rodriguez?

MR. RAUL RODRIGUEZ: I'm just going to speak in general terms. I know you're tired, I really admire you for your patience. You deserve high praise and those lousy citizens who voted down the raise in salary and all, they sure are ungrateful, they don't deserve any consideration from you. I admire you for your forbearance. I don't think I could match you.

MAYOR BECKER: They probably think we're over paid as it is, Raul.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Yes, that's right. I have a recurring nightmare every so often. I dream that the City Council is full of people hollering and screaming that they want this and the other protesting and all, and I saw you get up, the heck with it, we'll all go home and we get up and walk out and leave the City leaderless.

MAYOR BECKER: We think those things sometimes, too.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Everybody criticizing you. That would be a good lesson because so many people speak from ignorance and for malice and debating all of you, speak ill of you and it hurts when those of us know how hard you work and how dedicated you are and the malice that you're rewarded with, it's a shame. I'm ashamed of particularly the newspapers not the reporters, I love the reporters, I like the reporters, but the editors of the newspapers are guilty of really what constitutes a crime - keeping people in ignorance.

Now, I just want to make two points because I know you're tired and just to generalize - that's another time I'll spend making some extended remarks. First is Urban Renewal, I oppose - and I oppose to giving of any money to Urban Renewal or to any project or things that Mr. Martin has anything to do with it. I have good reasons for it but I will not bore you with them now. That is the first point.

The second one is rat with a meaning in the offensive. If this City Council really and truly wants to have the \$750,000,000 under 33

additional million dollars coming to the City of San Antonio in an intelligent, efficient, equitable and honest manner. It should never had appointed Roy Montez to have any part in it. In the past in three different occasions, I asked the City Council to fire him. I have made documented charges, I have presented my reasons and I was really surprised to receive as a Christmas gift the notice that Mr. Montez had been approved unanimously. In my opinion, this whole project from the beginning is fatally lost when people who have ruined projects like Model Cities by their lack of honesty, lack of fairness, in the conduct of such an important project or placed in a position of authority and power ... (inaudible) ... project. I sincerely hope that you will reconsider and appoint somebody else. We need people like Mrs. Kenny who are public-spirited, who deny themselves of being with their families and attend to their own personal problems and sacrifice so much time and so much effort for the benefit of the whole community. These are the kind of persons that we need.

Sometime ago, I learned that there were many people who had relatives in prison, who hadn't seen their relatives for as much as seven years because they couldn't go to Huntsville because they didn't have the money to pay for the bus fare, for the train fare, for the car. Sometimes they paid as much as a hundred dollars to the traveling agencies and there were many there who just hungered for the sight of their children and for years and years they never knew about them, they never saw them. All right, so I try through the House of Neighborly Service for people they knew - I know you'll excuse me, I hope you will anyway - to transport people to the jail, to have the women, who are on welfare, to have half way homes when they got back, so they can get used to the sight of women and children and families and try to organize projects, like filling stations for ex-cons, have a painter, paint gangs, to paint houses, maybe restaurants, they say well, son pintos, pintos are men who went to the penitentiary. All right and the.. (inaudible).. could come to work when they got out of the pen and they won't have to go back to crime, see. So, anyway this project was killed through jealousy, through envy of other people who worked at the House of Neighborly Service.

A marvelous person, Charles Sullivan, heard of my failure. He took it up, him and his wife. They took it up and made it go for two years. They transported about 12,000 people to the jail to Huntsville, (inaudible) all over creation at a rate of 250 miles around Houston and they got \$25 a week to work their hearts out. Finally, the project - we couldn't keep it up, because of lack of money and these are the kind of projects that is worthwhile and the people who run these projects are the kind of people that we need to run projects like this, like Model Cities. People who want to serve, not people who are interested in fine clothes and making a lot of money and who's motives are highly suspect, because otherwise no matter how much is done, I see nothing but a failure, suspicions, and if we choose the right kind of person to run them, we have a much better chance of succeeding, having something worthwhile come from them. Another time I'll present more reasons, so that you can judge whether my comments are justified or not. I want to apologize to you for the stupidity of the voters. They are people that really don't deserve citizenship, don't deserve the right to vote, they are millstones in the neck of the community and they're not all in the westside, they're in the northside too. They vote their hate, they vote their racism and they vote their class privilege to protect themselves and this is ruining the City. Downtown is dying because people are..... (inaudible), they rent houses from people who live downtown. You have the buildings on the outside - business - inside are residences. People live..... (inaudible) in downtown. Everywhere that you went to, there were people any hour of the day or night. (Inaudible) It was beautiful. Now, it's dead, because of greed, and that's what's killing this City. We continue to get worse and worse. I hope that somehow you'll feel a little better and see what..... (inaudible) the gratitude of the public - I have suffered too. I know what it is. You don't have to - you like what you're doing or what you're..... (inaudible) and I sincerely thank you for it. Thank you.

January 24, 1975
ky

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much, Raul. We appreciate your kind thoughts. Mrs. V. L. Lockett. Veronica Martinez. Maria Garcia.

MRS. KENNY: Mayor Becker.

MAYOR BECKER: Yes, ma'am.

MRS. KENNY: I am very remiss in my duties. I have - my senior citizens' group asked me to read these four lines to the Council and I left and then I came back and they said, please, this is the Beatitudes for the Friends of the Aged, but they wanted the last four read and it says: Blessed are they who make it known that I am loved and not left alone, and blessed are they who know the loss of strength I need to bear the cross; blessed are they who ease the days of my journey home in so many loving ways. Thank you.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much, Mrs. Kenny. Beautiful thoughts. Louis Viramontes.

MR. LOUIS VIRAMONTES: I have some copies of my statement here. I left some of these with the City Clerk.

MAYOR BECKER: Yes, sir, and I think they're up here.

MR. VIRAMONTES: I have some more copies here, in case..... My name is Louis Viramontes. I am an architect and I live at 301 Skyview Drive West. I am appearing before you today to object to the appropriation of any Federal funds to demolish any more buildings in my City. I am specifically referring to Project Items, Numbers 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10 and 21. It is my intention that we do not spend one more penny for demolition, particularly in our central City.

Over the past 15 years, nearly 2,500 dwelling units have disappeared by actions of Urban Renewal and not one central City dwelling has been replaced. Families have vanished and complete neighborhoods have totally disappeared. It would seem central Hanoi fared better as a city than central San Antonio under the barrage of Federal funds. Further demolition is a wasteful and totally unacceptable use of funds designated for community development. Reuse of existing structures and the recycling of the present community residential structures is much less costly, much less disruptive of family life, and much more supportive of existing neighborhood relationships.

Number 26, which is the renovation of the San Fernando Gymnasium exemplified this concept. This building, which had been choreographed for demolition will be an asset to the City for less than \$100,000. Such a facility would probably cost more than \$1,000,000 to reconstruct today.

The above items total almost \$2.7 million and while I fully realize that not all these funds are scheduled for demolition, these neighborhoods would best be served by making financing available there, through a local mortgage insurance plan or re-insurance plan. Such a proposal might well make available several times this amount, this original amount of \$2.7 million by using local lending institutions or by use of a guaranty fund or simply the purchase of insurance to indemnify the lending institutions against loss.

In summary, no more public funds should be used to destroy existing structures, unless such structures are unsafe and constitute a health hazard. If the building is a hazard, the owner should be compelled to pay the cost of demolition and not the public.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Mayor, may I ask - I don't think that you'll ever see this Council pass an ordinance demolishing anything but an unsafe structure. usually one that's full of vermin and people that use it for undesirable purposes. Now, in Urban Renewal, certainly we have demolished some, perhaps, for Hemisfair and all that. Now, I'm going to ask Mr. Guerra, the demolition of these structures, this is strictly within the framework of unsafe, health hazards or when citizens complain about

youngsters using that for undesirable purposes - is that all you're going to do or is there actual demolition of buildings which ordinarily would be rehabilitated?

MR. GUERRA: No, sir, it's demolition of unsafe structures. Any other demolition that might occur would be if there was some intended reuse to the property.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Right away?

MR. GUERRA: Yes, sir. But otherwise we wouldn't - I know of no project in here that intentionally clears land just to clear it, you know. The demolition monies we've identified are for getting rid of unsafe structures and usually they're banned and unsafe structures because even some of the unsafe structures that we have now are being used by people and they got to be somewhere, you know, if we can't replace the housing, you still have to leave what there is for them.

MRS. COCKRELL: May I just mention to Mr. Viramontes, I understand your great personal concern for rehabilitation, which I share. The problem that we have on this type structure is that so often neighbors come to us, in fact several of the neighborhood groups in the southwest that have been meeting recently come to us and they say, we are trying to clean up our neighborhood and this particular structure is here, it's delapidated, it's falling down, our children are getting into it, it's a real hazard to our neighborhood and can't you do something about it. Frequently, it's very, very difficult when we track down out-of-town owners, and we have to try to process and serve them notice and we finally get to the point where the only alternative is either that the City is going to have to tear it down or it's just not going to be torn down. So, this is why we're programming some funds.

Now, I know that some of us have been talking about why we can't put a lien against the property or something like that and in the long run it, very likely, would be possible, it just takes a long time before you ever would get enough back to consider it kind of a revolving fund situation and so, I think all of us would say we certainly don't want to tear down anything that can possibly be rehabilitated, but I think this type of thing in trying to help and encourage the other neighbors to clean up and fix up their properties is really what we were trying to get at in this program.

DR. SAN MARTIN: I think also the question of locating the owners, Louis, sometimes they leave out of town and you can't locate them. You can't get them to remove it at their own expense.

MR. VIRAMONTES: Yes, I'm fully aware of some of the demolition that occurs and, of course, there are abandoned structures, but I'm looking at relocations, acquisition of land for multi-family. I am looking at any number of what appears from the information I have that they are not only the structures that you're talking about, and as I say in my statement, that more than 2,500 dwelling units were destroyed in our City, and it's extremely difficult to replace them. It's strictly by private enterprises.

MAYOR BECKER: It's very costly, too. I think there's going to be less and less buildings destroyed as we go along with this inflation and what not, because, as was pointed out in your article here, this San Fernando Gymnasium, that's a perfectly good building. It's a blessing that it was saved.

MR. VIRAMONTES: Yes, sir. It was two weeks away from being demolished ... (inaudible) ... \$5,000 ... (inaudible) ... at the agency and that's why I'm rather reluctant to release - unleash, really, almost three million dollars to the agency with the record that it has.

MAYOR BECKER: I imagine that building today is at least 25 to 30 dollars a square foot.

MR. VIRAMONTES: I would well imagine that it would cost a million dollars to replace it, sir.

MAYOR BECKER: At least.

MR. VIRAMONTES: It would be dust, because there was nothing that could be recycled from the materials.

DR. SAN MARTIN: I have just one more comment, Mr. Mayor, and you said here, Louis, that such a proposal might well make available several times this original amount of \$2.7 million by using local lending institutions, and I doubt if our local lending institutions would want to go into some of these areas and.....

MR. VIRAMONTES: This is, Doctor, precisely - this is the catalytic approach that might be used with these types of development funds and it's precisely because of local lending institutions.....

DR. SAN MARTIN: That question of insurance indemnify the lending institutions against loss - some of these items certainly are business-like approaches to the problem. I'm not questioning the - I'm just questioning the availability of these institutions who want to do that much.

MR. VIRAMONTES: They need to be made the responsible members of this community, by making funds available in areas where they traditionally have not been lending, and I think it would behoove the City Council to either sit down with the lenders and point out that they are secure, that they can - the traditional - they do have, of course, they have to preserve funds.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Let me ask, Roy, didn't we have a....I wasn't on the Council at that time. I understand that we did have some problem during the Model Cities operation where the lending institutions would not come forth and do anything, Roy?

MR. MONTEZ: That's correct. Yes, it was, Mr. Councilman. We always heard, and I mentioned this to Luis just yesterday afternoon, we always heard expressions that private capital is ready to come, ready to help, ready to do, and it never did come up.

MR. GUERRA: The nearest thing you have right now that is about to-if it's going to work at all is that joint project we have with the Mexican Unity Council, near Buena Vista and Trinity Street where we spent some money on the streets and sidewalks and...inaudible...small funds being provided by the Ford Foundation and the old Officers Economic Opportunity.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Is that the Mexican-American Unity Council?

MR. GUERRA: Yes, sir. That's the closest thing we have now to show as an experiment to see if this rehab program of trying to combine public monies with private financial institutions monies would work and there's a lot being said about trying to bring in the money but quite often it doesn't show.

MR. VIRAMONTES: But Mr. Guerra, this is precisely my point that it takes the Ford Foundation based in New York City to do the job that we here in town could do for ourselves. I almost resent having to go through the Ford Foundation.....

MR. GUERRA: Let me correct you on that, Louis. Up until now we had no authority to create a fund like this. This new act is the first time we have an opportunity to create a fund of this sort. We haven't had that opportunity now.

MR. VIRAMONTES: The Community Development Act?

MR. GUERRA: To create a high risk fund of this sort, that's correct.

MR. VIRAMONTES: This is precisely what I'm asking the Council to do with these high risk areas. While I want to make it perfectly clear that I do not resent the funds being spent in those particular areas that it could have a multiplying effect if it were spent differently. There is lending institutions we have now land for housing in downtown San Antonio that has gone up to 75¢ a foot which is about a tenth of what it costs to package and assemble in lending institutions because there is no experience they can protect their investment with, will not go in there and I am just urging you to look at that - at the way that money is being spent and that it could be spent more productively - that's my own...only point.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you, sir.

MR. GUERRA: I'd like to point out that what you - all the items we have on the list today are simply part of an overall plan we will submit, an application. Each one of these major items have to come before this Council for actual authority to spend that money and each one of these cases you're going to have to see a budget and see how the money will be spent. We're not talking about a blanket approval of any of these 43 items in this package today.

MAYOR BECKER: Okay, Mrs. Beverly Blount? Celina Garcia? While you're getting ready there, Reverend Black, we'll have to wait until the girls come back, if they're going to before I read that. Go right ahead, please.

MRS. CELINA GARCIA: Thank you. Mayor Becker and members of the City Council. I hope we're still addressing the proposals on the Community Development Act because I left for a while and just now returned. I'm Celina Garcia and I'm here representing the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and I have only a few brief remarks to make at this time to express the Chamber's position on this issue on question and that is simply to say that we feel these funds should be spent only on clearly identified community needs. It would seem that certain of the projects that are being proposed should rely on funding under the Community Development Act whereas others probably better qualify under Federal Revenue Sharing and still others could be funded by a bond issue. We urge that the City consider this in its deliberation. We suggest that steps be taken to coordinate activities to develop a comprehensive plan whereby the various types of funding could be best utilized to begin to solve San Antonio's most pressing problems for the betterment of the entire community. Thank you, very much.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you, very much. I just wanted to say that Reverend Black called in to the office, City Council office, and expressed his regret that he could not be here today to attend this meeting but due to illness, health problems he's unable to do so. As you know, he's been ill now for, what, two, three weeks, so we hope to have him back soon. He wanted to be here today and he'd like to express his feelings.

MRS. COCKRELL: I haven't talked to Mr. Granata and I was wondering how he is doing.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, he's at home.

MRS. COCKRELL: I knew he was at home. I was going to go visit him at the hospital the day he was dismissed.

MAYOR BECKER: He seems to be doing much better.

MR. GUERRA: He's at home and I understand he's to see the Doctor, again in the middle of next week. He seems to be progressing satisfactory.

MAYOR BECKER: He's taking it easy, little by little. Lou Rosenberg?

MR. LOU ROSENBERG: Thank you for the opportunity to be here Mr. Mayor and members of the Council. I'd like to address my very brief remarks.... audible....you get your....inaudible.....going, not so much to the Community Development funds that you're trying to sort out between the various competing interest of the community but a little bit more directly to the downtown. It seems like there's about five areas that need some attention in this area and how much Community Development funds should be used in downtown I leave to your good discretion, however, I am concerned since I did do some work for the City indirectly some two years ago in connection with your historic structures to be saved and preserved and I did make an appearance here about a year ago in connection with an ordinance to preserve some old structures. Last night to my dismay I learned that there are plans underway and imminent to tear down of yet another building, the Gunter Building, to be turned into a parking lot. Whether that's true or not I don't know and I classify that as rumor. The concern I have is that in the scheme of your general activity as a Council, whether you use

community revenue sharing funds, general revenue sharing funds or what have you, you do have some capacity to deal with some of the problems of downtown and I'd like to suggest the following areas as suitable areas for some attention.

Number one, there is or was a proposed fund allocation for a parking facility. That is one in addition to the one that is under construction now. As I recall, two years ago this Council went to the State Legislature and specifically asked for authority to put into operation a City sponsored parking facility agency and you have, through that agency authorized by the legislature a revenue generating bond sale type device that might be more appropriate to finance parking facilities than community development funds - a suggestion only.

Secondly, as to a point that Mr. Viramontes made, since he and I are partners on attempting to do something with these four old buildings across the way here, I think it might be appropriate at this time, and I say this partially in response to Mr. Guerra, is we do need some type of state agency and probably a clear ruling from the attorney general that the City can use community development funds as a guarantee device or as a repository to guarantee some kinds of investments in downtown San Antonio. Some other states have created state agencies for this purpose. I think, as a lawyer, there is some question about whether or not you can use the full faith and credit of the City or the credit of the state to guarantee a private venture. I know Crawford Reeder has addressed you on that from time to time. I suspect that you at least need a clear ruling from the Attorney General that the Community Development funds because they're federal in origin either override that principle in the State Constitution or you need some legislation to override it if these funds are state and state law applies. What I'm suggesting is that you may, since it's now legislation time, need to address your state legislative delegation to do something like you did with reference to the parking facility and that's to get some kind of agency created to provide the kind of guarantees that your mortgage and lending institutions apparently are going to demand before they come back into your central city.

Number three, somewhat to our dismay when we purchased or attempted to purchase the Vogel Belt complex, we have an acute flood control problem in our backyard, namely, San Pedro Creek. There's about three blocks of San Pedro Creek which are now acting as a bottleneck, to wit, the present basement of the Frost National Bank building. If a 100 year flood were to occur, it would be filled with water. Now, this is kind of an awesome statistic, when Frost found out about it after a very substantial investment. We're faced with the option now of either buying flood insurance in order to guarantee to a federally insured mortgage institution at some \$40,000 a year for insurance or redesign an entire structure or abandoning the basement. Anyone of which alone may make our project totally infeasible. So I suggest to you that before downtown development will occur, at least in the near western part of the City, San Pedro Creek flooding problems must be addressed and they are substantial.

Fourthly, as to the problems of security that keeps coming up time and time again, I would like to suggest the Council consider, as they have on the river, a specialized downtown police force. I know there's within the police administration some theory that says you shouldn't have specially identified cops. I'm using that term complimentarily. I think that in terms of creating a sense of security for the downtown business community and for the downtown shoppers, you are going to have to return to the day when Irishman O'Kelley was on the beat, he knew your beat, he knew your business. It might cost you a pickle now and then or the use of your restroom facilities, but you knew he was there and he was making the beat and your customer could feel relatively secure that they weren't going to be molested on the street. I do believe that your river police

or your river patrol, run by the Parks Department, has had a very, very significant, in fact, in making business happen on the river and from talking to out of town visitors, they feel very comfortable with your brown-shirted, especially identified Park Rangers on the river. I think that's probably one of the major reasons that that River Corridor functions as it does.

Finally, the final two points, in terms of ordinances that presently restrict downtown development, there's been a lot of talk about trying to get downtown residential to occur. We all know that there are a few hearty souls, Margaret Cousins and a few others that live downtown, but they live downtown in spite of the fact, for example, that you cannot develop downtown residential without on-site parking. Now, if this were a requirement in other cities, take for example, Baltimore, Boston, Washington, D. C., there would be no downtown residential. I'm not yet convinced that a man can't park his car on the street and live in the adjacent structure. Likewise, as I understand it, your present ordinances make it illegal and punishable up to \$200 fine to hail a cab and I've yet to understand why it should be illegal to hail a cab. I'm subject to correction on that, if that ordinance has been changed. So, I suggest that in terms of some of the outmoded ordinances, which shouldn't cost a lot of money, that there ought to be a way to look at how you might do some things for downtown without spending any money.

Finally, I'd like to echo the point that's been made several times today, I think, and that is before we tear down any more structures with public money, I'd like to be assured, personally, as a taxpayer, that we can do something to replace those blank spaces that now exist and if they do exist by virtue of the tax structure, as it is presently structured, then we should do something about the tax structure. But we have most of Vista Verde, most of Rosa Verde and a lot of other holes in downtown where there is presently no tax-paying property, other than the daily collection of cars. That's not a very efficient use of the existing public investment in downtown San Antonio. Thank you very much.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much, Lou.

MR. MORTON: Lou, would you be a little bit more specific on the location of this bottleneck on San Pedro Creek. I think I know where it is, but I just want to make sure.

MR. ROSENBERG: Well, it's approximately parallel to San Fernando Gym, well, no, excuse me, it's further up than that, it's apparently at Cameron Street, where Cameron makes the bend there at the intersection of Cameron and the freeway, roughly. On down to, I'd say a block past the police station. It's a well-identified area, in terms of agencies involved - the Urban Renewal Agency, the River Authority, the City Public Works Department. They've been meeting on this, the Corps of Engineers, but they may need a little of the Mayor's prodding or some assistance...and some money.

MRS. COCKRELL: It's the San Pedro bypass, part of that, isn't it?

MR. ROSENBERG: Yes.

MRS. COCKRELL: It's been a project that's been under review and under review. We've been pushing all of the agencies and they keep changing the plan and that's why they keep feeding all these alternate plans on the bypass to the river.

MAYOR BECKER: Who is they?

MRS. COCKRELL: The agencies involved. Particularly, the San Antonio River Authority and the Corps of Engineers, the people involved.

MR. ROSENBERG: Well, the concern I have is that I originally was told, when we bought this structure or made our bid, that in the Rosa Verde project fund, there was money set aside to do the Creek improvement and so we didn't make a very particular job of scrutinizing bid documents. We couldn't change them anyway. It's come to my attention now that it's questionable whether the Rosa Verde project close-out funds - now, that's separate from your CD funds we're discussing today, whether they include sufficient funds to do the work that's necessary to be done to solve that bottleneck. I have kidded Max Penner to be very responsive to your question. I think Max Penner's store there is probably the dam from whence the water will spread in this part of the City and that gives you pretty much an identification of where we're talking about.

MRS. COCKRELL: If I may just add one other thing to this. I think one of the reasons it's been slow, as I have been told at least, is that there had been these alternate proposals back in the area of the Olmos Dam. First, they were doing that feasibility study of the structure of the dam and now there is a proposal to create a holding basin below the dam and that depending upon how that is accepted, it will affect the flood control down river from that point. So, a lot of these proposals have been hung up, finding what happens to that flood control deal.

MAYOR BECKER: None of us are going to live long enough to see these things happen.

MRS. COCKRELL: I know it.

MR. ROSENBERG: Mr. Mayor, I do want to address this one problem. There's about three people in the audience here today, Mel Sueltenfuss is one, Roy Montez is another, and I know I'm the third, we started in '68 with the first Model Cities' funds, trying to figure out a solution for Apache Creek and I think you all are about to pay the last bill. That's '68 through '75, seven years. When I first, on behalf of the River Authority, at that time, had to tell the citizens that we could expect a project to be completed in no sooner than five years, I just about got thrown out of the room. The construction work, at least, is now under way and what you're to do is the beautification and the amenities, but on this project, I think, you'll probably, Mel could correct this, talking about a five-year time-frame again and all I'm asking is that we make sure the money's there. If the money's there, the planners can do their tricks.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, of course, you know this money thing, the game that you have played on you is one of the cruelest games of all. They've got that carrot out there but it's hooked up on a stick and the faster you run, the faster the carrot goes. You never catch up with the carrot, you know.

MR. ROSENBERG: Well, the reasons.....

MAYOR BECKER: And it's a lot of horsing around and promises and blue sky and all that sort of thing that the federal government plays with the public. Now, let's face it, let's really get down to where the whole thing is and you know and I know this has been going on since time and is mollified, it is pacified, it has contained the people of this nation for a long, long time. The question that I ask myself is though how much longer is it going to work because I think the people are running out of string and by string, I mean patience. They realize the falaciousness, the deceit, and the hypocrisy of a lot of this trash that we've all been putting up with. I think she's just about at the point of, you know, and one more little bitty stick or one little cube of something on the pile and she's going to get out of control.

MR. ROSENBERG: If I might respond, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR BECKER: I watched this thing last night, if you'll pardon me just a second and you know you brought up something here Lou, I watched - you'll never do it again, I know.

MR. MORTON: You didn't go to the movies two nights in a row, did you?

MAYOR BECKER: I was watching tv last night, I don't have enough sense to know how to read anything, I have to watch pictures but this guy Reynaldo Rivera was on the Channel 12 last night and he had this about Harlem there. Half a million heroin addicts in the United States according to the government. Half of that half a million are in New York and half of a quarter of a million live in Harlem and he was interviewing them, you know, he was interviewing the people and all. And the trash and the filth and the garbage and the rubble and the wreckage and everything else piled up around these people. My God, this looks like Berlin or Hamburg or you know, any of those places that got the treatment you know in the second war. It's incredible and I was through there in a cab the other day. These people have been promised and promised and promised and I think that's maybe one of the reasons some of them turned to some of this sort of thing because it's the only thing they have to do. It's the only out, at least in their mind because they've been promised by this guy and that guy and the next one and everybody else wooing them around through all these years and they finally said, look, I can't buy any more of this jazz, you know. It's all over for me and they just don't give a hoot and they turn them loose, you know.

MR. ROSENBERG: Well, could I sort of pass that aside.

MAYOR BECKER: Yes, sir, you can do whatever you care to do with it except don't put it back on me.

MR. ROSENBERG: My only point of the six points I tried to touch on if I could respond to what you're saying about the carrot being dangled out in front is this. The parking facility legislation was passed. It's something the Council can do without Uncle Sugar's benefit except that municipal bonds often need to be approved by the IRS.

MAYOR BECKER: When are you going to need a parking facility though when all the structures where people come to are being....

MR. ROSENBERG: Being demolished, right. But my point was this to you is that the parking facility is something we can do under state law. The state agency if we have to have one to guarantee inner City loans is something the state legislature can do. The flood control problem basically is something we can do locally and Congressman Gonzalez everytime I

know of, has seen to it that the Corps has done their bit. The special police force again is still a local responsibility to identify. The review of local ordinances, how you regulate your cabs, how you run your transportation system, that's still your prerogative. To tear down the structures, you all issue permits indirectly through your Department of Building and Inspections on how you tear down structures and through your regulation of Urban Renewal have allowed a good deal of federal money to go into tear down the structures in the Rosa Verde and Vista Verde. I'm not trying to fault anybody, all I'm saying is that I think the control in the point of doing things about downtown problems really lies locally enough to where we can deal with them.

MAYOR BECKER: I think that's what we're going to have to do.

MR. ROSENBERG: If I were urging you to do something today that would be really dramatic, I'd urge you to put a six months moratorium or tear down the structure until we find out where we're going downtown.

MAYOR BECKER: Well, you know where we're going right now, don't you?

MR. ROSENBERG: I don't want to comment.

MAYOR BECKER: You know, well, now then how do you pull it out of a dye and get it to start climbing again.

MR. ROSENBERG: That's the point and I don't think tearing down more structures gets us out of the dye.

MAYOR BECKER: I grant you that.

MR. ROSENBERG: And that's my concern. I think some of our legislators and I have - I must confess I've talked to some of them privately about this and your counterpart in Houston has now got some specific legislation on this - are talking about devising a mechanism that will make it attractive for the bankers to put their money in downtown. Houston has got a very similar problem in large areas where there are vast areas that are open. They didn't have it through the benefit of Urban Renewal, it just happened naturally and they want to bring the bankers and their mortgage money back downtown. All I'm saying is that if it takes a state enabling act to do it if that's within the state jurisdiction, let's ask them to do it and do something without waiting for Uncle Sugar.

MAYOR BECKER: I buy that.

MRS. COCKRELL: I just wanted to add a couple of comments to Mr. Rosenberg and that is, first of all, that property across the street here are two that I'm very, very interested in and I really applaud their efforts at trying to remodel them or trying to put them to adaptive use. I'm hopeful that the City staff in surveying the needs of the City for additional office space which we are going to need may be coming in with a recommendation about the possibility of lease space there that would make their proposal viable because I think this is the kind of thing that we need to have as a catalyst. Also, I wanted to say on the subject of downtown renewal that as you all know, I have put in a proposal for the appointment of a downtown renewals committee and the Council has been considering this and has expressed interest but they also said something that I think is very, very pertinent and that is that the City had to put its money, in effect, where it's mouth was and not just appoint a committee but come up with funds. From that point of view, I have an additional proposal to submit to the Council. I think we do need to look at putting up funds in the downtown area, not specifically out of community development but I'm hoping for a bond issue to address these things.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Let me just enlarge Mrs. Cockrell, I think you were gone when Mr. Jerry Ehler was here, a representative of Downtown, Inc.

MRS. COCKRELL: Yes, I was out.

DR. SAN MARTIN: You were out and I think Mayor Becker made this point perfectly clear and also during lunchtime he pursued it a little bit further and I think we know what you're talking about.

MAYOR BECKER: You know, the thing is - I don't know where I've been in all my 55 years, I don't think I've been very far really, when you stop and think about the whole proposition. The only one thing I can do is look back on all the advice that I've had now, well, almost since I can remember anything and that is that everybody told me that anything I wanted to do was impossible...it couldn't be accomplished. I've had all kinds of people tell me this, and it wasn't in the cards and that it was a crazy idea and the ratios weren't right and all this stuff. I don't mind telling you, I guess I've been out on thin ice now and then but I guess a lot of us do that accomplish anything. The way I feel about this whole proposition is that the City of San Antonio is going to have to bite the bullet if we're going to do it. This is what Lila's talking about. We can wish and we can pray and we can do rain dances and we can do all these things but nothing's going to happen down here until we make it happen. It is not going to happen of its own free will and volition, I'm convinced of that. And that gets into the risk factors involved, you know, the seed money that's necessary to start any type of business venture and that's what we're engaging in here when we talk about the recreation of the downtown area of San Antonio. It's a business venture. I'd like to think that it would always stay in that category because if it does then I could foresee where someday it would be a successful one perhaps, you know. If it gets off into some of these other areas, I don't know where we'd finally wind up but if the people of the City have a willingness to grab this challenge, take it and make it work and you're going to have to have "X" amount of dollars for, if you'll pardon the expression, crap shooting money. That's what it amounts to, front money. And it's going to have to be done over a five year period of time or whatever. And you win or you lose. As long as you win more times than you lose, you're okay. Not all things are successful. But we're going to sit here and watch this whole downtown area crumble around us and totally collapse before it's finished, until we see any change unless the public of this town will endorse a movement to get behind this thing and say okay. Here's a committee that Lila's talking about; it is composed of 5, 10, 15, 20, whatever, honest people. Now, I think there's still that many honest people in this world. These people that have motivated out of dedication, honesty, sincerity and all those kind of things, and they're going to be entrusted to make this thing work and they're going to be given "X" amount of dollars every year to help start and commence and fund some of these beginnings. This is what it's going to take. Waiting for the federal government because, and I wasn't taking you on, Lou, of when I was talking about those projects and all, but the minute you get all this stuff worked out according to their wishes, as you well know, they change all the rules on you and you have to start all over again. I read in the paper that somewhere the other day where the Corps of Engineers had some projects it had been working on 50 years or something like that and finally the United States Congress said forget them because we don't have any money for them anyway. Now, believe me, 50 years. I guess you saw that in the paper some place. 50 years people have put in a lot of time and effort and frustration and all this business, heartbreak and all, and they drag them out and drag them out and drag them through the knothole, to where they finally get to the point where they can't even crawl anymore, and then you just say well, forget it, drop dead, there isn't going to be any money for them anyway. You know, that's a hell of a note, really. If you'll pardon my French. Terrible way to run a railroad. And, yet, that's what's going on every day in this nation of ours with the public and it's going to have to change some day. People are getting fed up with it. I think we all are. I'm just not talking about the impoverished. I'm talking about all of us. We're all getting fed up with this waltz that we've been going through, you know. We've been getting the minuet in "G" but good, you know. And I could say other things, except that there are ladies present.

DR. SAN MARTIN: Well, you know, it took the Coast Guard almost five years just to okay a second bridge across the river in Laredo, Texas.

January 24, 1975
el

MAYOR BECKER: They worked on it, I think, longer than that, didn't they?

DR. SAN MARTIN: Well, the Coast Guard had it five years, other agencies had it, too.

MAYOR BECKER: Now, what in the devil did the Coast Guard have to do with it anyway?

DR. SAN MARTIN: It's a navigable waterway.

MAYOR BECKER: How often?

DR. SAN MARTIN: Once every - well, there's a lot of bath tubs coming from one side of the river to the other. You navigate from south up north sometimes.

MR. LACY: The tax structure is one of the big things. You have, as an example, Kallison. Well, you have some of the buildings I know that the tax structure is so high they can't make it and so then they say, well, we'll just tear it down then. And on the other hand, you'll have some buildings that they say, that is such a horrible building, it should be destroyed and demolished and at the same time go over and look at Charlie Davis and see what he's got on his books and the tax bill he gets and he says, it's a beautiful building, it's worth a whole jillion dollars. So, you have one agency saying, it's no good, and the other saying it's worth a whole lot of money. When it gets so it isn't viable, like Cincinnati, Ohio and New York, St. Louis, all these big buildings there, some of them repossessed, and pigeons flying in and out of the windows.

MAYOR BECKER: There was a thing in the paper the other day, and I can't remember where it was, but it was talking about the treasurer or somebody of the State of New York was saying or the City of New York, whichever it was, was saying that the only way New York City was going to make it was to declare bankruptcy and start all over. Now, I'm not being facetious. It was actually in the paper up there in New York.

MR. ROSENBERG: I don't think you're eligible for the Bankruptcy Act, though, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR BECKER: Who, me?

MR. ROSENBERG: The City of San Antonio.

MAYOR BECKER: Oh, I was going to say, I'll be if I keep staying around here, I'll be eligible.

MR. ROSENBERG: Could I suggest in response to your colloquy here between the members of the Council and so forth, that it might be appropriate if you agree with any need for a state agency or the need to exercise your parking facility authority or these flood controls or any of the areas that I've identified or those that Mrs. Cockrell suggests that maybe a schedule be set I'm concerned about this. It's been a habit of most agencies to say, well, we can't solve certain problems until the next legislative session and so the problem's conveniently put off on the state delegation. And, you know, they are due their share of blame, but, you're now at the commencement point of a legislative session. You've got pre-entry bills for, I think, 30 days or 60 days. We've got a legislative delegation, I think, that's fairly responsive and I would suggest, if I might respectfully, that some of the problems, if you happen to agree with them, that I've identified, be put into some kind of a time schedule with a task force to address them and those parts of which need legislative attention. Specifically, on your guarantee funds whether you're using it for the small homeowner to guarantee his repair or whether you're using it for guaranteeing downtown funds, that you either get the Attorney General's opinion or you get the legislation changed and that you do it posthaste and set a schedule on it, otherwise we'll be talking about it this time next year.

MAYOR BECKER: Right. I'll buy that. Okay, that's a good idea, Lou. Now, Mrs. Beverly Blount.

MRS. BEVERLY BLOUNT: Mayor, members of the City Council.....

DR. SAN MARTIN: You almost didn't make it back here.

MRS. BLOUNT: I beg your pardon.

DR. SAN MARTIN: You almost did not make it back here.

MRS. BLOUNT: Almost did not and I apologize for being late. If you'll bear with me while I read this. I certainly wouldn't want to leave anything out.

Once again, the San Antonio Conservation Society is very pleased to appear before you in support of a program that will help with the revitalization of downtown, as well as those residential areas close in to the center City. We are grateful that community development monies will afford the City of San Antonio the opportunity to make a public commitment that will encourage the private dollar toward further redevelopment of our central City.

We welcome the opportunity that the community development funds provide to rejuvenate old structures, as well as old sections of our City, to bring these into compatible and complementary use by the contemporary community.

We have had the opportunity to only briefly review suggestions made to you by the City staff. We basically support these suggestions and urge your consideration of others.

We are pleased with the opportunities afforded for rehabilitation work in various neighborhoods, including Montana Street, Utah Street, and Nolan Street. These are areas long neglected by the City...areas that have great potential, as their rehabilitation will lead to the revitalization of the immediate East Side. The work to be done on Commerce Street, around the Southern Pacific Station, should serve as the gateway to the East Side, just as the work that is now taking place in the market area will serve as the gateway to the West Side.

We are pleased to see the child care centers and programs for the elderly are included. We believe that some of our old buildings in San Antonio would lend themselves beautifully for adaptive use as both day care centers and centers for senior citizens. The City was recently given the Arsenal property by the United States government. This is an excellent example of an area suitable for development of a day care center and facilities for senior citizens. Both day care centers and senior citizen centers should have ample room for the attendees to enjoy the outdoors, as well as inside activity areas. The Arsenal and the Missouri Pacific Railroad Station are good examples of properties throughout the City that might be available for such programs.

These sites have ample space for sewing equipment, shop equipment, hobby rooms for the arts and crafts, garden facilities, and other recreational activities both indoors and out. They are also located toward the center of the City where bus transportation could very easily be provided to sports events, musicals, or other types of entertainment.

We note that the staff recommends a linkage from the Alamo to the River. It is our hope that other sections of our City could be linked by similar means. Particularly, we have in mind a linkage from the River through Main and Military Plazas to the market area. Additionally, we would like to see the development of Presa Street as the pedestrian linkage from the River, through the La Villita district, to the King William Street area. Both Presa Street and the King William District are in dire need of improved sidewalks and lighting to accommodate the ever-increasing number of tourists. These linkages would fall in line with the plans developed by the River Corridor Committee and could serve as stimuli for additional redevelopment in these areas.

It has been our understanding that community development funds are to be used in projects that are not supportable through traditional methods of local funding. If this is the case, then we must raise the question of the validity of certain other projects that are included in the recommendations.

While we agree with the necessity and urgency of street repairs and storm drainage, we believe that these can be accomplished through the wise spending of revenues already available to the City. We would urge the immediate expenditure of bond monies that have already been committed to these projects as well as additional general revenue that should be committed to these projects.

Along these same lines, we note that there are funds allocated for the replacement of water lines. It has been our understanding that a portion of the water bill that each of us pays monthly is allocated toward the maintenance of the water facilities. Again, we must study our priorities and urge that these funds be expended for replacement.

We believe that individual property owners should accept the responsibility of the maintenance of vacant lots and abandoned property. Any expenditure in these areas should be for the enforcement of existing City codes and for the study of new codes that will give the City the legal authority to work with the owners to assure that buildings are brought up to standard. In other areas, public monies are being made available to underwrite the loans of owners who cannot afford to repair their property and, in some cities, and this is given with notice, by the way, the municipal government have actually gone so far as to repair the property when building violations have been ignored by the owner, and then place a lien on the property.

This might be one way to fight the slum and absentee landlords, who so often realize very sizable income from properties but who put absolutely no money into the properties.

We recognize the responsibility of the Council to administer these funds. We see great opportunity for these funds to be used for public seed monies that will encourage private redevelopment. We see in these funds a rare potential for the rehabilitation of the central City and the areas that surround it.

We believe that if these funds are administered within the spirit of the law as it was written--that is, if these funds are used to develop projects that are not supportable through traditional methods of local funding, these funds may have an impact on the City of San Antonio that will last beyond our greatest expectations. We urge an innovative look at the community development funds so they will be used to the greatest advantage in the revitalization of San Antonio for the benefit of our total community. Thank you very much.

MAYOR BECKER: Thank you very much. Thank you so much. Well, that concludes the hearing today and I appreciate everyone being here. Thank you for your patience.

75-6 There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 P. M.

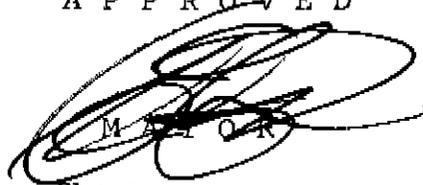
* * * *

Attest: 
C i t y C l e r k

January 24, 1975
el

-52-

A P P R O V E D


M A Y O R
Charles L. Becker