



City of Denton

City Hall
215 E. McKinney Street
Denton, Texas
www.cityofdenton.com

AGENDA INFORMATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: City Manager's Office

CM: Sara Hensley

DATE: May 31, 2023

SUBJECT

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction on pending City Council requests for:

- 1) Request for staff to research and prepare an Informal Staff Report (ISR) on Community Benefits Ordinances.
- 2) Request to bring the implementation of a Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance forward for Council consideration during the June 27 City Council meeting.
- 3) Request for a work session on the creation of a Public Health Official position.
[Estimated Presentation/Discussion Time: 30 minutes]

BACKGROUND

During the annual City Council retreat on Saturday, August 21, 2021, the City Council agreed to amend their current ordinance and the process by which they ensure there is a consensus of the City Council regarding the use of staff time when responding to requests from elected officials that anticipate taking more than two hours to complete or if there is a City Council policy decision to be made. The process developed during the retreat was further discussed and formally adopted at the September 28, 2021, City Council meeting (**Exhibit 2**).

Staff will review one outstanding request for information per elected official during each work session. The weekly work session process will include staff introducing the requested topic followed by the requesting elected official having up to two minutes to describe and justify their request. Remaining elected officials will then have up to one minute to provide feedback and indicate their support for the use of staff time to respond to the request. Staff will respond to all requests where a consensus of at least four elected officials is established. To the extent possible, responses will be provided in the requested format including Informal Staff Reports, Legal Status Reports, City Council work session topics, or ordinances and resolutions to be considered on future City Council agendas. The Agenda Committee will assist in scheduling items receiving consensus based upon priority offered by Council Members, work session availability, and readiness of the item depending upon the total number of staff hours needed to develop, and the departments involved.

As guidelines for Council Members to note and offer their priority while supporting an item, the following general categorization could be used to indicate any Council Member's support in order to assist staff and the Agenda Committee. The following takes into consideration the perceived urgency, impact, and/or importance of the item. It is a general framework only to help offer some prioritization, especially in consideration of other scheduled Council priorities, major goals and projects, and scheduled work.

- **High** – Time sensitivity of the item is significant; the item is critical to the community or organization; and/or the item is of such importance that it should take precedence over other scheduled priorities, projects, or items.

- **Moderate** – The item is somewhat time-sensitive; the item has a valuable impact to the community or organization; and/or the item is important but should be integrated into work plans accordingly.
- **Low** – The item is not time-sensitive; the item has an impact, but it is limited; and/or the item should be scheduled into work plans where possible but should not affect or delay other scheduled work.

The following items will be discussed during this work session:

1) Request for staff to research and prepare an Informal Staff Report (ISR) on Community Benefits Ordinances.

- Requestor:** Council Member Meltzer
- Council Member Request:** “With the intense development pressure in Denton, the objective of this pitch is to help sensitive neighborhoods and developers get on the same side and formally agree, with proper successors and assigns language, on how new development will benefit those neighborhoods. In an individual case, it’s called a community benefits agreement, a CBA, and involves the two parties with no role for the city. Sometimes CBAs result in community amenities like preserved green space and trails. Sometimes they result in a percentage of rental units being made affordable, or local training and hiring. It could be an effort to address a food desert. It’s up to the parties.

The concept of a community benefits ordinance, a CBO, would be to require the developers of a project that’s a) above a certain scale and b) in a neighborhood that’s under a small area plan to make good faith efforts to achieve a CBA as part of their process. The other party would be an existing neighborhood association or, if one doesn’t exist, there would be a process to assist an ad hoc association to be formed for that purpose.

CBO’s already exist in other places. My ask is for staff to help us learn what has worked and what hasn’t, under what circumstances, and what the different approaches have been so council can evaluate whether a CBO might be a useful tool to help Denton develop in uniquely Denton ways with the guidance of Denton neighborhoods.”

- Staff information:** If the City Council wishes to move forward with this request, staff will prepare an Informal Staff Report.
- Date Requested:** May 18, 2023
- Format for response:** Informal Staff Report

2) Request to bring the implementation of a Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance forward for Council consideration during the June 27 City Council meeting.

- Requestor:** Council Member McGee
- Council Member Request:** “This is a pitch to bring back the Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance that was drafted and presented to Council on December 6th. I would like this to be put on the Agenda for a vote on the June 27th Council Public Meeting.”
- Staff information:** "On Dec. 6, 2023, the City Council held a work session discussion regarding implementing a citywide Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance. At the work session, an overview of Fair Chance Hiring initiatives and an outline of a potential ordinance structure was presented to the Council (see attached AIS and presentation). Staff did not receive direction to proceed with developing an ordinance. If staff receives direction to bring an ordinance forward for Council consideration on June 27, 2023, the additional considerations detailed in the attached AIS will need to be reviewed as well as any impacts of new legislation on the ordinance's provisions."
- Date Requested:** June 1, 2023
- Format for response:** Ordinance

3) Request for a work session on the creation of a Public Health Official position.

- a. **Requestor:** Mayor Pro Tem Beck
- b. **Council Member Request:** “I am proposing a work session on the creation of a new staff position within our city administration – a Public Health Official. This position will serve as a vital link between various health care institutions, social service organizations, public safety personnel, and other agencies. By coordinating resources and implementing proactive measures, the Public Health Official will enhance community health, address emerging health challenges, and provide essential services to our residents.

Rationale:

Addressing the Lack of Public Health Expertise:

Currently, our city lacks a dedicated staff member trained in public health. The absence of such expertise limits our ability to efficiently respond to health emergencies and proactively address public health concerns. By creating the position of a Public Health Official, we will fill this critical gap and ensure that our city is equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to safeguard the health and well-being of our residents.

Coordinating Health Resources and Reducing Waste:

While there are county and state health officials, currently, there is not an official focused on the SPECIFIC needs of City programs and responsibilities. State law often requires a municipal public health official regulate activities, but the city is forced to rely on county programs. This can result in a lack of coordination between city, county, and state health resources, further resulting in wastage of taxpayer dollars. The Public Health Official would act as a liaison between these entities (including public safety, emergency management, and parks), streamlining communication and resource allocation. This coordination would ensure efficient utilization of funds, prevent duplication of efforts, and maximize the impact of health programs and initiatives. An example of a coordinated activity would include coordination, planning, and outreach for mobile van screenings.

Responding to future infectious disease events:

The recent (and partially on-going) COVID-19 outbreak has demonstrated the urgent need for a strong public health infrastructure. A Public Health Official would play a pivotal role in coordinating efforts to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases, disseminating accurate information to the public, and liaising with local, state, and national health authorities. By having a dedicated expert overseeing our city's response to public health crises, we will be better prepared to protect our residents in the face of future health emergencies.

Supporting the Medical and Mental Health Needs of the Homeless:

Our city has a population of homeless individuals who often face significant medical and mental health challenges. By creating the new position, we can develop targeted initiatives to support their needs before they reach crisis levels and become law enforcement matters. The Public Health Official can collaborate with relevant agencies, healthcare providers, and social service organizations to design and implement effective strategies for improving the well-being of our homeless population.

Addressing Regional Health Challenges:

Our region faces challenges such as poor air quality and ongoing enhancements to regional water projects. A Public Health Official can work in collaboration with local hospital networks, environmental agencies, and community organizations to monitor air quality, assess health risks, and propose preventive measures. By taking a proactive approach to these regional health challenges, we can improve the overall well-being of our residents and create a healthier environment for everyone.

Conclusion:

The creation of a new Public Health Official position is a vital step towards enhancing the health and well-being of our community. By coordinating resources, designing and implementing health service delivery systems, assessing risk reduction actions, educating the leadership team, and providing accurate health information to the media and public, this position will contribute significantly to our city's overall health infrastructure. It is essential that we (like other cities in north Texas with PHOs) invest in the health and future of our residents, ensuring a safe and thriving community for years to come.

- c. ***Staff information:*** If the City Council wishes to move forward with this request, staff will prepare a work session.
- d. ***Date Requested:*** June 1, 2023
- e. ***Format for response:*** Work Session

EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 – Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 2 – Ordinance No. 21-1837

Exhibit 3 – Presentation

Exhibit 4 – Fair Chance Hiring Agenda Information Sheet

Exhibit 5 – Fair Chance Hiring Presentation

Respectfully Submitted:

Monica Benavides

Assistant to the City Manager