

OSCAR LEESER  
MAYOR

TOMMY GONZALEZ  
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL  
BRIAN KENNEDY, DISTRICT 1  
JOSH ACEVEDO, DISTRICT 2  
CASSANDRA HERNANDEZ, DISTRICT 3  
JOE MOLINAR, DISTRICT 4  
ISABEL SALCIDO, DISTRICT 5  
ART FIERRO, DISTRICT 6  
HENRY RIVERA, DISTRICT 7  
CHRIS CANALES, DISTRICT 8

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**February 15, 2024**

**Center for Civic Empowerment, 304 Texas Ave., 17th Floor, El Paso TX 79901  
9:00 A.M.**

.....  
The City Council of the City of El Paso met at the above place and date. Meeting was called to order at 9:15 a.m. Mayor Oscar Leeser was present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Brian Kennedy, Josh Acevedo, Joe Molinar, Isabel Salcido, Art Fierro, and Henry Rivera. Late arrivals: Cassandra Hernandez at 9:24 a.m., and Chris Canales at 9:43 a.m.  
.....

**AGENDA**

- .....  
1. **ITEM:** Presentations, discussion and action on an update to the Strategic Plan, including, but not limited to, key short term and longer-term priorities and focus areas.  
.....

Mayor Leeser welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided opening remarks.

Mr. Cary Westin, Interim City Manager, provided an overview and the strategic context of the day's events.

Ms. Juliana Baldwin, Chief Transformation Officer, presented a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file in the City Clerk's Office), which included a recap of Session One and the proposed additions to the Two Year Action Plan, as highlighted and shown below:

**Two Year Action Plan**

<b>What? (Key Focus Area)</b>		<b>Link to 30 by 30</b>	<b>How? Policy and Program Recommendations</b>	<b>Who?</b>
Workforce Focus <i>Recruit + retain employees</i>	6.1, 6.2	10, 28, 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an alternative benefits package</li> <li>Deliver new leadership development opportunities <b>and recognition programs</b></li> <li>Grow in-house capacity and expertise (target specific areas)</li> <li>Celebrating our identity and talent</li> <li><b>Focus on livable wages, training, and capability enhancement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular adjustments to wages tied to cost of living and additional certifications</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Cortinas</li> <li>Araceli Guerra</li> <li>Mary Wiggins</li> </ul>
Customer Experience and Civic Engagement	5.3, 6.4, 8.8	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redesign and reimagine the 311 process through Human Centered Design and new training plan</li> <li>Pilot a One-Stop-Shop for Social Services (BEAST location)</li> <li>Expand and replicate Neighborhood Leadership Academy model (more department interaction, <b>participatory budget process opportunities, training future leaders, engaging youth in civic processes</b>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Cortinas</li> <li>Dionne Mack</li> </ul>

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING FEBRUARY 15, 2024**

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue "Child Friendly City" recognition</li> <li>Virtual seminars and forums to foster community involvement and transparency</li> </ul>	
Partnership Focus	1.7, 6.4	10, 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designate and/or create liaison roles for targeted areas (i.e. education (K-12 and postsecondary), strengthen Fort Bliss focus, special projects, larger economic development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracey Jerome</li> <li>Ian Voglewede</li> </ul>
Budget Process Enhancements	6.6	14, 17, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a multi-year approach                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include grant match funding plan with training</li> <li>Focus on equitable services</li> </ul> </li> <li>Codify funding for critical services (i.e. fleet and facility maintenance repair and replacement plans) incremental funding strategies to address deferred maintenance</li> <li>Planning for future facilities and infrastructure with sustainable practices in mind</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Cortinas</li> <li>Nicole Cote</li> <li>Ellen Smyth</li> <li>Richard Bristol</li> <li>Sam Rodriguez</li> <li>Yvette Hernandez</li> <li>Omar Martinez</li> <li>Joaquin Rodriguez</li> </ul>
Property Tax Exemptions	6.6		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age 65 or older and disabled residence homestead exemptions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Cortinas</li> <li>Nicole Cote</li> </ul>
Economic Development Initiatives	1.1, 1.6	4, 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Larger economic drivers (i.e. Utilities)</li> <li>Refresh economic development policies                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incentives for businesses that support community integration and contribute to the local economy</li> </ul> </li> <li>Business support (i.e. Small Business One-Stop-Shop, Supply El Paso financial literacy programs, attraction of large businesses)</li> <li>Re-launch familiarization tours (economic development and conventions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tracey Jerome</li> <li>Karina Brasgalla</li> <li>Mirella Craig</li> <li>Jose Garcia</li> </ul>
Program Key Maintenance Plans (multi-year)	4.2, 7.2, 7.4	9, 17, 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Streets Focus</li> <li>Facilities Maintenance Program</li> <li>Fleet Replacement Program</li> <li>Park System Repairs and Modernization (including Parks Master Plan Update)</li> <li>Climate and renewable energy initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Cortinas</li> <li>Nicole Cote</li> <li>Ellen Smyth</li> <li>Richard Bristol</li> <li>Victor Morales</li> <li>Emigdio Gonzalez</li> </ul>
Building + Land Inventory Review	7.5, 8.1, 8.2	21, 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Master planning for affordable housing (CoEP+EPW)</li> <li>Identify facilities/buildings to address service coverage and align resident requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ellen Smyth</li> <li>Mary Lou Espinoza</li> <li>Tracey Jerome</li> <li>Ian Voglewede</li> <li>Dionne Mack</li> <li>Nicole Ferrini</li> </ul>
Technology	5.2	16, 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection and sharing</li> <li>Accessible and reliable services</li> <li>AI focus, adopting emerging technologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Cortinas</li> <li>Araceli Guerra</li> <li>Carolyn Patrick</li> <li>Ivan Gris</li> </ul>

After the presentation discussion took place on the different tools that will allow the City to succeed, to include People, Financial, and Infrastructure Tools.

Mayor Leeser Representatives Kennedy, Acevedo, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Fierro, Rivera, and Canales commented.

The following City staff members commented:

- Ms. Nicole Ferrini, Climate and Sustainability Officer
- Ms. Dionne Mack, Deputy City Manager
- Mr. Cary Westin, Interim City Manager
- Ms. Ellen Smyth, Chief Transit and Field Operations Officer
- Mr. Ben Fyffe, Recreation and Cultural Affairs Managing Director

.....  
The meeting was **RECESSED** at 11:34 a.m. to allow participants to engage in group activities during a working lunch.

The meeting was **RECONVENED** at 1:10 p.m.

.....  
The following members of the public commented:

1. Ms. Jenny Solo
2. Ms. Stephanie Ruiz-Alba
3. Mr. Randy Bustamante
4. Ms. Debora Wakefield
5. Mr. Tim White

Mr. Craig Lewis, Global Services Director and US West Practice Group Manager for Placemaking at Arcadis, presented a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file in the City Clerk's Office).

The following City staff members commented:

- Mr. Alex Hoffman, Capital Improvement Assistant Director
- Mr. Robert Cortinas, Chief Financial Officer
- Mr. Ernesto Arriola, Chief Information Security Officer

.....  
The meeting was **RECESSED** at 1:54 p.m.

The meeting was **RECONVENED** at 2:25 p.m.

.....  
Motion made by Representative Canales, seconded by Representative Fierro, and unanimously carried to **ADOPT** the two-year Action Plan, as proposed.

AYES: Representatives Kennedy, Acevedo, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Fierro, Rivera, and Canales  
NAYS: None

.....  
**ADJOURN**

Motion made by Alternate Mayor Pro Tempore Molinar, seconded by Representative Hernandez, and unanimously carried to **ADJOURN** the meeting at 3:21 p.m.

AYES: Representatives Kennedy, Acevedo, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Fierro, Rivera, and Canales  
NAYS: None

.....  
APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura D. Prine, City Clerk