



PRESS RELEASE

COPS/Metro to Mayor and City Council: You passed developer welfare, now protect their neighbors

DECEMBER 13, 2018 – This afternoon, the San Antonio City Council voted to approve new versions of the Center City Housing Incentive Program (CCHIP) and the Inner City Reinvestment and Infill Policy (ICRIP). These policies represent the transfer of property tax revenue to developers while raising taxes for their neighbors.

COPS/Metro commends Councilman Rey Saldaña and Councilwoman Ana Sandoval for their votes against the proposal, and for their desire to create more transparency and affordability for everyone in San Antonio.

From the beginning, COPS/Metro's concern was that CCHIP used public dollars to build high-end housing while displacing low- and moderate-income families. Nothing about the new policy will change that. **If the policy works as anticipated, CCHIP will cut taxes for developers and raise property taxes for nearby homeowners.** The City-funded NALCAB study, published in January, proves that fact.

The new CCHIP does nothing about the displacement of neighbors when property values and taxes go up. For homeowners whose taxes were already high, this means having to leave their homes because their income does not keep up with the taxes.

It is not enough that the Mayor and City Council give taxpayers their “word,” as we heard yesterday, to prevent indirect displacement. Mayor Nirenberg and City Council must take action immediately on the following items, with complete transparency and opportunity for true public input:

- A study tracking the actual rise in property taxes and indirect displacement of residents near the first CCHIP areas;
- A plan for tracking actual rise in property taxes and indirect displacement in new CCHIP areas;
- Specific guidelines for CCHIP's Affordable Housing Fund, spelling out who will use the money, for what, using which City financing mechanisms;
- Real-time reporting of new CCHIP and ICRIP applications, their cost to taxpayers, and their affordability.

The Mayor's staff has told us he wants quarterly updates on the CCHIP program. We will expect those to be transparent and public.

Economic development is not a bad thing. Nor is market rate housing. But when our elected representatives pass policies that put taxpayer money directly into the pockets of developers, we cannot settle for “good enough.” No homeowner should be asked to pay for their own displacement.

Contact: Linda Davila, St. Timothy COPS/Metro Leader (210) 393-5491

###

