

Community + Human Development



MAYOR

Dee Margo

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CITY MANAGER

Tommy Gonzalez

CITY OF EL PASO

FAIR HOUSING TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 13, 2020

1. A meeting of the Fair Housing Task Force was held virtually on Microsoft Teams +1 915-213-4096 United States, El Paso (Toll) Conference ID: 355 525 495# and was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Vice Chair, Bill Schlesinger.

Regular Board Member	Present	Absent	Excused	Not Excused
Mauricio Felix	X			
Anibal Olague		X		✓
Jonathan Macias	X			
Miguel Hernandez	X			
Rosa I. Estrada		X		✓
Kimberly Cook-McDaniel		X		✓
Bill Schlesinger	X			
Marcella Carrillo	X			
Andy Farias		X	✓	
Alternate Board Member				
Christine Gallegos		X		✓
Marc A. Salazar		X		✓
Robert Fernandez		X		
Luis Yañez		X		✓

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City staff present: Mark Weber; Nickole Rodriguez; Sandra Pellegrini; Sarah Ortiz; Nicholas Muñiz; Clarissa Cervantes

Public present: List of attendees available upon request.

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2. Discussion and Action on the Request to Excuse Absent Members

Absent Members: Anibal Olague, Rosa I. Estrada, Kimberly Cook Mc-Daniel and Andy Farias

Members with prior notification: Andy Farias

Motion by Vice Chair, Bill Schlesinger to move item to the end of the meeting and seconded by Jonathan Macias.

Ayes: Mauricio Felix, Jonathan Macias, Miguel Hernandez, and Marcella Carrillo

Objection: None.

3. Approval of Minutes from September 8, 2020 Meeting

Motion by Miguel Hernandez to approve by and seconded by Jonathan Macias to approve minutes.

Ayes: Mauricio Felix, Bill Schlesinger and Marcella Carrillo

Objection: None.

4. Discussion on Analysis of Impediments Plan of Action

Taking Item to City Council on October 27th

*Screen shared— *City of El Paso AI – Goals and Plan of Action**

Analysis of Impediments: purpose of the AI is to eliminate racial and ethnic segregation, illegal barriers to persons with disabilities, and other discriminatory practices in housing.

Formerly, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) required that presiding jurisdictions conduct a fair housing equity assessment **at least once every 5 years.**

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While this is no longer a requirement, the City of El Paso recognizes the importance of **fair housing equity** and completed the 2020 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice.

Chronology

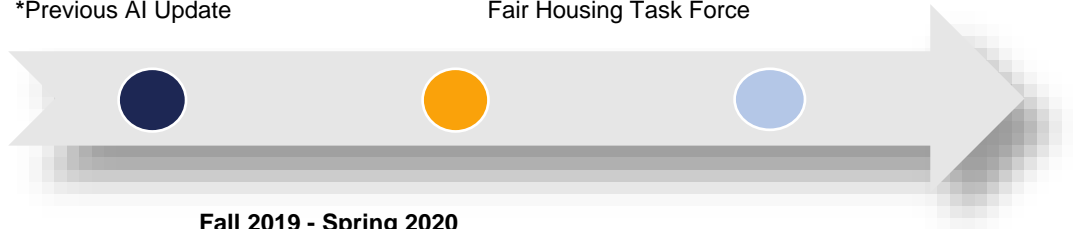
2016

*Previous AI Update

Summer 2020

*Approval of 5-Year Consolidated Plan

*Drafting of 2020 AI in partnership with the Fair Housing Task Force



Fall 2019 - Spring 2020

*Public outreach via community surveys and town hall meetings. (664 responses in English and Spanish)

*Agency feedback forms received from over 40 local agencies.

*Conversations with the Fair Housing Task Force

Fair Housing Goals

Awareness + Outreach

- Increase the public's awareness of their rights under the Fair Housing Act and how to report housing discrimination.

2) Process Improvement

- Enhance the City's process for tracking and reporting fair housing complaints.

3) Discrimination Protections

- Ensure that all El Pasoans are protected against housing discrimination.

4) Affordable Housing

- Increase affordable housing choice for all El Pasoans.

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Plan of Action

1) Increase the public's awareness of their rights under the Fair Housing Act and how to report housing discrimination.

- Restructure fair housing outreach to reach broader population
- Engage key community partners and service providers that understand the needs of marginalized populations
- Marketing strategy will include messaging on predatory lending and high cost loans

2) Enhance the City's process for tracking and reporting fair housing complaints.

- Update process for tracking fair housing complaints to include nature of complaints
- Invest in technology/software supportive of enhanced tracking process and reporting
- Track results of investigations and report to FHTF on a quarterly basis
- Make information available to the community at-large through a Fair Housing Dashboard

3) Ensure that *all* El Pasoans are protected against housing discrimination.

- Establish a Cross Functional Team (CFT) to create a Housing Equity Ordinance that *includes* protections for LGBTQ persons.
- CFT may include: City Attorney, Community Development, ADA Coordinator, FHTF members, community advocates, and elected officials

4) Increase affordable housing choice for all El Pasoans.

○ Resilient El Paso

Create a *comprehensive housing strategy* with capacity to align public and private investments toward a common vision for quality of life, sustainability and equity for neighborhoods across El Paso.

○ El Paso Regional Housing Plan

Develop *small area plans* for priority areas to guide neighborhood revitalization and coordinate public and private investments. *LIHTC process updated to target key areas.*

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Financial Empowerment Blueprint

The *El Paso Community Housing Trust* is intended to supplement initiatives such as down payment assistance and homeownership, financial counseling, gap financing for affordable housing, rental subsidies and preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing.

Other actions

- Combat NIMBYism - Messaging and marketing strategy should include information about the benefits of living in mixed-income neighborhoods and the potential for well-developed affordable housing to increase overall property values in the immediate area.
- Establish a regular schedule to review the Fair Housing Ordinance every 5 years.

Questions/Comments:

Jonathan Macias—

What is going to be placed on the Community + Human Development website? Can we place a status of the actions that are being brought forward, the outcomes in real time or frequency so there is public transparency on what we set out to do?

RE: Nick Muniz— The FHTF had wanted an update on the complaints that were submitted. We would provide that information and something to consider is that we are not able to post cases that are ongoing or currently being investigated however, we can provide cases that have reached successful reconciliation.

RE: Mark Weber— Really good suggestion, that could be the heart of the dashboard itself to track these four goals and plan of action.

Bill Schlesinger—

When looking at a public relations company, would like to include a peer input system where we would have people from each of the priority sectors: addressing/designing part of the message. Run focus groups on different topics, ask that be considered as part as a contractual arrangement with whoever the marketing group is.

5. Public Comment

Irma Avila— 20 presentations with people driving by to pick up food boxes at Project Vida.

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Revisiting Item #2 on agenda: Discussion and Action on the Request to Excuse Absent Members

Those with prior notification: Andy Farias

Jonathan Macias moves to have absent members with prior notification excused and seconded by Miguel Hernandez

Ayes: Mauricio Felix, Bill Schlesinger and Marcella Carrillo

Objection: None.

Reviewed Board Member Attendance.

6. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Prepared by: Clarissa Cervantes

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