




Community Services Department Memorandum

DATE: March 9, 2017

TO: Honorable Mayor and Council

THROUGH: Kevin R. Phelps, City Manager

FROM:  Elaine Adamczyk, Interim Director, Community Services Department

SUBJECT: Response to Council Item of Special Interest Additional Funding for the Sonorita Neighborhood

This memorandum is in response to a Council Item of Special Interest (CIOSI), raised by Councilmember Aldama at the August 16, 2016 Council Workshop regarding a request for staff to research whether alternative City funding is available for the Sonorita neighborhood, since the neighborhood is exempt from federal CDBG funding for residential rehabilitation activities. During this Council Workshop, Councilmember Aldama stated he would like Council to consider City monies to mimic the CDBG funding, allowed for other locations within the City.

During a meeting with staff on August 31, 2016, Councilmember Aldama determined that it would be best to hold a community meeting for the Sonorita neighborhood, allowing residents to discuss what they see as neighborhood needs, before moving forward with a budget request for City funds for home improvements (residential rehabilitation) specifically for this community.

This is to inform you that the community meeting was held on February 17, 2017, and was attended by staff from the Departments of Public Works, Planning, Fire, Police, Code Compliance, Community Services, and the City Manager's Office. Residents and staff discussed federal funds for residential rehabilitation, and that the residences in the community did not qualify for these funds, based on federal environmental requirements, including the proximity of the community to the railroad and neighboring businesses, as well as the existing M-1, Light Industrial zoning. There was no further request for federal or City funds for residential rehabilitation of existing homes in the community.

The residents agreed they would like to have a zoning overlay for their community. Staff discussed how that would assist them to improve their homes, and that the residents would have to agree and voluntarily request the overlay district. The overlay district, if created, would not be forced on the neighborhood.

Additional City services, such as uncontained trash collection, and services to alleys, as well as homelessness, and noise complaints were discussed with attending residents.

The process for the overlay district will be addressed in a future action by the Planning Department. Another community meeting will be held at a future date to discuss the overlay district.

As there were no additional requests for federal rehabilitation funds or information regarding those funds, this CIOSI is now closed.

If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at 623-930-3701.