CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF MAYOR GINA ORTIZ JONES
INTERDEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

TO: City Council

FROM: Mayor Gina Ortiz Jones

COPIES TO: Erik Walsh, City Manager; Andy Segovia, City Attorney

SUBJECT: Ready to Work

DATE: July 21, 2026

Colleagues,

Last week, I received an update regarding the budget and our potential bond capacity, and it appears the bond capacity may actually be lower than $600 million as originally assessed.

As you know, $600 million was already well below what our community was expecting, and certainly well short of our community's infrastructure needs.

To that end, I have asked the City Manager and City Attorney to help frame a discussion about potentially redirecting the remaining Ready to Work funds toward priority projects that we originally envisioned funding either in the General Fund or in the 2027 bond. My intent would be that any diversion of funds does not impact those enrolled in the Ready to Work program.

My understanding is a public vote is needed to redirect the Ready to Work funds. The City Attorney is determining the scope of potential projects we could use the funds for under the applicable state law that allowed for the Ready to Work tax.

If the vote were held this November, for example, and the public agreed to divert those funds, we would need to agree upon a date by which those enrolled in the program would be funded through their program completion (i.e., those enrolled by December 1, 2026 will be fully funded). However, after the agreed upon date, the Ready to Work program would no longer accept new applicants and would begin to wind down so the funds may be applied to other projects. For illustration, if the program began winding down at the end of this year, approximately $100 million could be redirected.

Thankfully, our community has additional career-training programs, like the newly established Alamo Technical Institute, to which we may direct those seeking such paths.

As I have shared, raising our neighbors' property taxes during this time is my last resort. Before we pursue such an option—to either close the $158 million budget gap and/or to raise the 2027 bond capacity—we owe it to our neighbors to explain how we have reduced costs and redirected existing funds to higher priority efforts. This recommendation is offered in that vein.

I look forward to discussing the above as we work through the budget process.

Gina Ortiz Jones
Mayor