



## MEETING SUMMARY

**Meeting:** Midtown Planning Team Meeting #2  
**Date:** August 1, 2017  
**Time:** 6:30 – 8:30 pm  
**Location:** San Antonio College, Nursing & Allied Health Complex, Room 208

**Attendees:**

<i>Homer Hayes, Mahncke Park NA</i>	<i>Richard Farias, SA College</i>	<i>Jeanette Honermann</i>
<i>Joe Bravo, Westfort Alliance</i>	<i>Armando Saliba, University of the</i>	<i>Lou Fox</i>
<i>Lauro Garza, Five Points NA</i>	<i>Incarnate Word</i>	<i>Mayra Juarez</i>
<i>Larkin O'Hern, Tobin Hill CA</i>	<i>Jason Rodriguez, VIA</i>	<i>Rebel Mariposa, Tobin Hill</i>
<i>Kim Biffle, Witte Museum</i>	<i>Graciela Sanchez, Esperanza</i>	<i>Business Association</i>
<i>Suzanne Scott, SA River Authority</i>	<i>Peace and Justice Center</i>	<i>Max Woodward, FRED + Uptown NA</i>

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### Meeting Purpose

The second meeting of the Midtown Planning Team aimed to accomplish these objectives: present existing conditions; continue the Plan Team Meeting #1 discussion of assets, challenges, and opportunities; identify elements of a vision for the Midtown Plan Area; and identify areas to enhance.

### Meeting Format

Garrett Phillips, City of San Antonio Project Manager for the SA Tomorrow Midtown Regional Center Project, presented an overview of the planning process, facilitated an activity for Planning Team members to learn about each other, and presented existing conditions information about Midtown. MIG, Inc. Principal Jay Renkens described the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan that was adopted by the City in 2016, and then facilitated a group discussion. MIG, Inc. Project Manager Jill Eulate recorded comments on a large wall graphic and flip chart sheets (see photo reduction at end of summary). This memo provides highlights of the meeting discussion organized into sections that reflect these primary discussion topics:

- Assets
- Opportunities
- Opportunity/Enhancement Areas
- Challenges
- Vision Themes
- Other Comments/Process Suggestions
- Next Steps

## Assets

Building on the discussion from Planning Team Meeting #1, participants highlighted these additional qualities and features they appreciate about Midtown.

- San Pedro Springs Creek from the headwater springs to I-35
- Large old trees, heritage trees, and mature tree canopy
- History of Brackenridge Park
- Fishing areas in north Brackenridge Park on tributary stream or channel to San Antonio River
- Diverse housing stock
- Housing for elders and people with disabilities
- Recent Martinez Creek Trail improvements

## Opportunities

Building on the discussion from Plan Team Meeting #1, participants identified these additional opportunities for improvement.

- San Pedro Springs Creek as a publicly accessible amenity (Five Points neighborhood)
- Make the Flores Street underpass connection to Downtown more inviting and connective, and create a well-lighted and safe pedestrian connection between the Five Points neighborhood and the San Pedro Springs Creek improvements being constructed south of I-35
- Enhance, and make accessible to the public, San Pedro Springs Creek between headwater springs and the improved San Pedro Springs Creek Trail to downtown
- Deal with creeks more broadly
- Integrate San Pedro Springs Park with surrounding areas
- Make San Pedro safer and more comfortable for walking, potentially with sidewalk improvements, traffic calming, and trees
- Improve river access and accessibility for people on both sides of I-10, to San Pedro Springs Creek and Martinez Creek
- Make Saint Mary's more walkable and pedestrian friendly
- Support family-friendly and senior-friendly improvements
- Retain diversity and livability
- Preserve Brackenridge historic assets
- Make connection to the museum through Brackenridge Park and golf course
- Improve watershed management for all creeks for multiple benefits
- Address flooding/improve stormwater management on and around Broadway
- Build on centrality of the Plan Area and existing transit network to improve connections between people and places
- Make transportation network family friendly and safe/comfortable for all ages
- Make healthy affordable food more available
- Conserve affordable housing and make new housing more affordable for Plan Area students and employees, among others
- Keep the housing stock diverse and fill in gaps in diversity, for example affordable homes in 1,200 to 1,600 square foot range
- Relieve local parking shortages through shared parking or parking that generates revenue for neighborhoods



## Opportunity/Enhancement Areas

Building on the discussion from Plan Team Meeting #1 and this meeting's discussion of opportunities, participants identified the following potential areas for enhancement.

- East-west mobility on Cincinnati/Ashby/Josephine
- East-west mobility on Cypress or Laurel
- Make St. Mary's safer and more comfortable for walking
- St. Anne's neighborhood
- Areas near San Pedro
- Every part of the Plan Area west of San Pedro

## Challenges

Participants identified the following challenges related to planning in Midtown.

- Maintaining diversity—don't want to lose diversity
- Potential displacement from gentrification
- Directing public investment to areas that have received less (e.g., west of Main and San Pedro)
- Unbalanced development attention; some areas/people seem ignored such as Martinez Creek and working class brown people near I-10
- Considering tradeoffs in how limited park land is used, e.g., Brackenridge golf course, which seems to serve few people relative to the population as a whole
- Don't replace housing with parking
- Homeless people get pushed around the city and Midtown to places that don't have the resources that they need
- North-south pedestrian and bicycle connections from Mulberry to south of US 281 is an ongoing challenge with neighborhood concerns and golf course conflicts
- Considering tradeoffs in how public investment and space is used for parking, multiple transportation modes, and walkable environments
- Accommodating automobiles, given that cars are part of life here and people want to use them
- Inconvenient bus routes and transfer connections
- Unsafe/uncomfortable walking environment, and lack of shade makes transit an uncomfortable option
- Encouraging housing for all ages and abilities
- Meeting millennial preferences for smaller, more sustainable homes that have, or are close to, green spaces
- Preserving and enabling new housing that is affordable to students and lower incomes
- San Pedro has some important assets to build from, but few compared with other areas
- Encouraging/attracting healthy, small-scale affordable food retailer
- Opportunities and challenges associated with rumored AAA baseball stadium locations
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety and comfort are challenges throughout the Plan Area
- Floodplain on Broadway impacts ability to grow
- Traffic congestion on Broadway
- Parking congestion in neighborhoods east of Broadway



## Vision Themes

During the discussion of assets, opportunities, and challenges, and when directly prompted to reflect on a vision for the future of Midtown, the following themes emerged from the discussion.

- Diverse and eclectic community
- Family friendly, age friendly, human scaled
- Enduring neighborhood character
- Complete connected neighborhoods—safe connections to local amenities including parks and small-scale retail such as affordable markets
- Strong social capital
- Preserved historic value—Midtown history and stories
- Responsive to future needs with sustainable: health, environment, food, and culture
- Nearby nature—preserved experience of “green” close to work and home (land, parks, trees, waterways)

## Other Comments/Process Suggestions

- Engage diverse student populations
- Find out if San Antonio has employed any parking programs that generate revenue for local neighborhoods in return for their assistance with parking solutions
- Find common terms and definitions for housing affordability
- Share more background information on the citywide growth forecast
- Look at the number of vehicle-pedestrian crashes on maps
- Strive to better align programs and organizations working to make improvements in the area
- At the beginning of meetings, announce emergency exit procedure

## Next Steps

The third Planning Team Meeting will be held September 11<sup>th</sup>. Preliminary objectives for this meeting include:

- Review input from the community workshop and intercepts/focus groups held to date
- Confirm preliminary vision and goals
- Discuss initial Plan framework and map key elements
- Further discuss public and private opportunity and focus areas
- Identify place types that may be appropriate within certain focus areas

A Midtown community-wide workshop is planned for Wednesday August 23<sup>rd</sup>. The purpose of the workshop will be to garner broader public input that will be used to create the Midtown Area Plan. The workshop will include an introduction to the planning process, a presentation of existing conditions, and an opportunity to gather input on vision and goals for the Midtown Plan Area. Over the coming months, the Department of City and Regional Planning will also be engaging the public through intercepts and focus groups to further inform the Midtown Area Plan.

If you have questions about the Midtown planning project, please contact Project Manager Garrett Phillips, City of San Antonio Department of City and Regional Planning.

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