



neighborhood

Profile and Priorities

MIDTOWN AREA REGIONAL CENTER PLAN:
MAHNCKE PARK

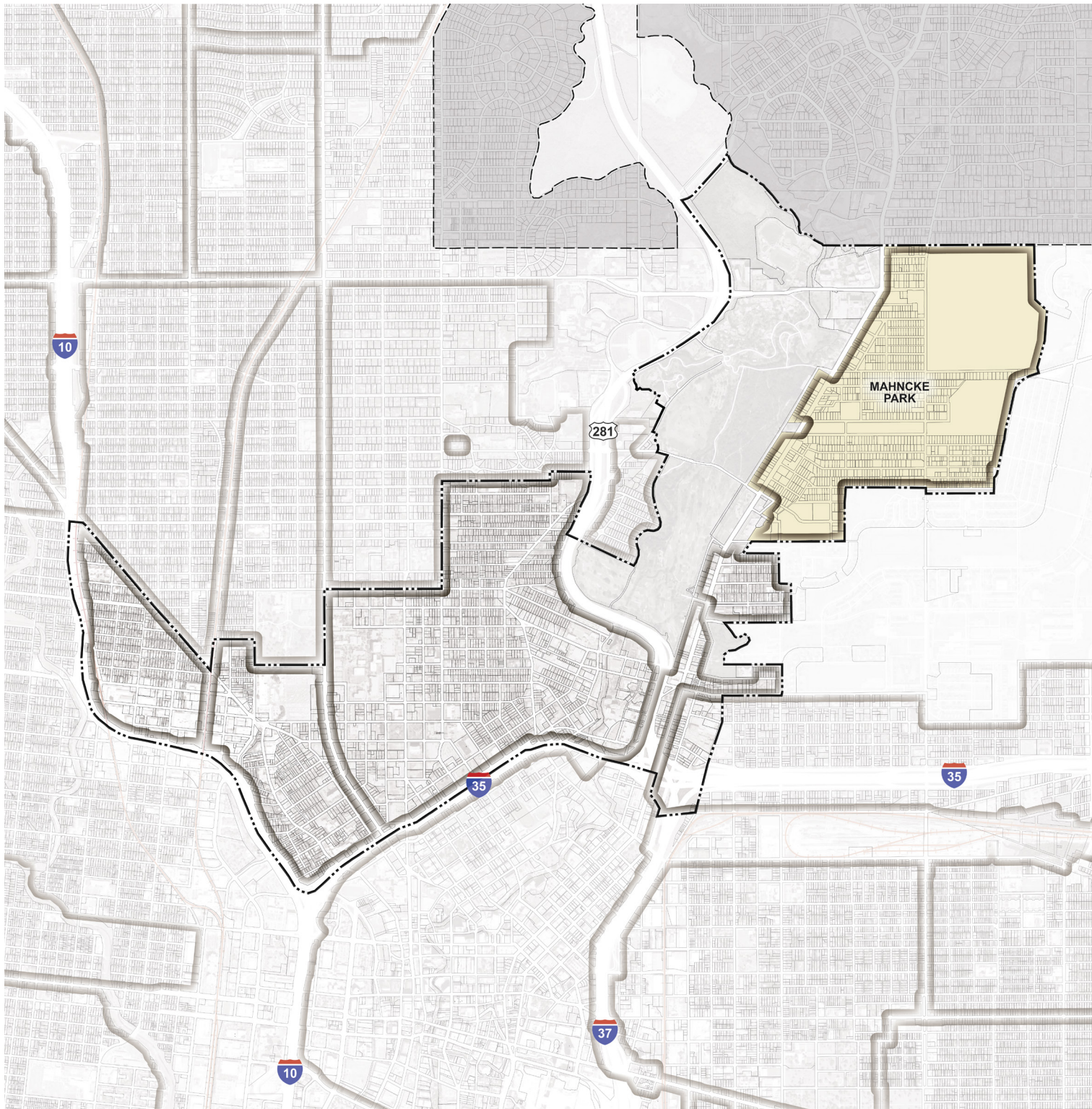
Acknowledgements

Special Thanks to every Midtown resident and stakeholder who spent time and energy speaking with Planning Department staff throughout the Midtown planning process and to the following area residents, neighborhood association board members, and previously adopted plan advisory team members who met with the Planning Department specifically to aid in the creation of this document:

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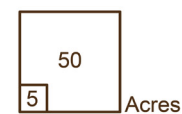


SA Midtown
Regional
Center Area

NEIGHBORHOOD LOCATION

LEGEND

- Midtown Regional Center Area Boundary
- City Boundary
- Parcels
- Neighborhood



Neighborhood Profile and Priorities



What is the Neighborhood Profile and Priorities?

San Antonio is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own unique history, qualities and character. Many neighborhoods throughout the City have developed Neighborhood Plans that reflect local values and priorities. These plans, adopted by the City, have guided local investments and improvements for many years and helped strengthen the relationship between residents and the City.

The City is currently in the process of creating Sub-Area Plans to implement the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. These Sub-Area Plans are intended to provide a more coordinated, efficient and effective structure for neighborhood planning. The Sub-Area Plans are intended to increase equity citywide, by ensuring that all of San Antonio's neighborhoods have a base level of policy guidance, as many neighborhoods within the City lack an existing Neighborhood Plan or a registered neighborhood organization. In this way, each Sub-Area Plan will integrate key elements of existing Neighborhood Plans for those neighborhoods that have a plan, while promoting citywide policy consistency and providing key



recommendations and strategies for those neighborhoods currently lacking that direction.

The Neighborhood Profile and Priorities section of the Sub-Area Plans provides special attention to prior neighborhood planning efforts and recognizes the community groups and individuals who were instrumental in their creation. They summarize specific opportunities, challenges, recommendations and priorities from each participating neighborhood, in an effort to more efficiently direct public and private investment within the City to help these neighborhoods achieve their short-term goals and long-term visions.

How was it developed?

At the outset of the planning process, City of San Antonio planning staff reviewed existing Neighborhood Plans that had a shared geography with the Midtown Plan. Each relevant plan was summarized so that staff would have a sound understanding of neighborhood issues and priorities from the time that each plan was created.

The Neighborhood Profiles and Priorities were created using input from neighborhood residents throughout the Midtown planning process. The Planning Department used input from small group conversations, stakeholder interviews, community meetings, planning team meetings and facilitated conversations in neighborhood association meetings.

Planning staff revisited the Neighborhood Plans to identify major projects, programs or other efforts that had been achieved, and those that have yet to be implemented, so they could be reprioritized in this effort. City planning staff met with members of each original neighborhood plan advisory team and current neighborhood association boards (listed on the Acknowledgements page of this document) to help create this Neighborhood Profiles and Priorities document and provide lasting direction in partnership with each neighborhood.

Neighborhood Snapshot

NEIGHBORHOOD STRENGTHS AND CHARACTER



Mahncke Park neighborhood is amongst one of the inner city's greatest concentration of amenities and public park land. The neighborhood was primarily developed in San Antonio's street-car era and was served by the street car route that connected Downtown with Alamo Heights. The first neighborhood subdivisions occurred between 1890 and 1915. During the same period, much of what is today Brackenridge Park was reserved permanently as open space, and a catholic women's college (now University of the Incarnate Word) was established. The original street grid and the early to mid-20th century housing stock remain well preserved. Bountiful parkland with cultural institutions provides both recreational and educational opportunities for all ages. The century Spanish acequia that paralleled Broadway's eastern side is memorialized with curb medallions, and a continuous

low elevation where stormwater resides following heavier rains. The San Antonio River is accessible west of Broadway. The combination of mature trees and human scale development establishes a pedestrian-friendly environment. The Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan (2001) includes a relatively extensive historical sketch.

The neighborhood includes Craftsman, Folk Victorian, Neoclassical, Prairie, and Spanish Eclectic architectural style buildings. Traditional development patterns include common setbacks and lot widths on each street segment, parking typically located behind the primary building, and buildings one to two and a half stories in height. Following through on recommendations from the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan (2001) the neighborhood and City implemented a neighborhood conservation district to make new development consistent with traditional development patterns. The neighborhood is currently in the process of updating the district regulations to incorporate important lessons learned over the last several years.

There is strong history of residents completing grassroots projects to improve quality of life in the neighborhood.. The Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan, last updated in 2001, includes a thorough history of the area, and many policies and recommendations.

Strengths



There are abundant amenities associated with the Broadway Cultural Corridor and plentiful parks and open space.



There is mature tree canopy, and a history and culture of tree stewardship.



Mahncke Park is a large neighborhood, with unique areas each having predominantly different types of housing than the others. However, within any given block, there tends to be some diversity of housing types and housing tenure.



The neighborhood is not only close to regional amenities like the Broadway Cultural Corridor and Brackenridge Park, but also includes neighborhood-serving businesses such as taverns and restaurants, a pharmacy, and a supermarket.



See the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan (2001), and multiple sections of the Midtown Regional Center Plan for additional information and policy recommendations related to the Mahncke Park neighborhood.

Neighborhood Snapshot

NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Opportunities

- Park spaces can be improved and used more completely by the community. Household and business growth adjacent to Broadway will increase the number of people using the area, bolstering the case for improvements to amenities that serve the neighborhood, such as implementing the design for Mahncke Park trails and landscaping proposed in the 2001 neighborhood plan.
- There are multiple opportunities to continue improving the neighborhood's walking environment.
- Relatively affordable multifamily housing can still be preserved and most new growth can be accommodated adjacent to Broadway, absorbing some housing demand that would otherwise pressure neighborhood residential areas.
- Structured shared parking can be included in Broadway redevelopment, to relieve parking pressure on neighborhood streets and replace surface parking with other uses that serve the neighborhood and visitors.
- See the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan (2001), and multiple sections of the Midtown Regional Center Plan for additional information and policy recommendations related to the Mahncke Park neighborhood.



Neighborhood Snapshot

NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Challenges

- Housing has become less affordable and new development has sometimes been out of character with traditional development patterns. Revitalization of Downtown and Midtown San Antonio has increased demand for housing in the neighborhood, while the supply of new housing in the neighborhood and other inner city neighborhoods has not kept up with the demand, contributing to housing affordability issues.
- The neighborhood conservation district has not been adequately implemented, with loose interpretations, too many variances, lack of enforcement, and inadequate neighborhood communication.
- Some naturally occurring, affordable multifamily housing has been converted to lower density, expensive housing.
- Redevelopment on Broadway will have to transition over a short distance, and not incrementally expand into the neighborhood, in order to be compatible with neighborhood character.
- Accommodating additional people, businesses, and activities on Broadway without impacting neighborhood parking will be a challenge.
- There is too much fast moving cut-through traffic, including trucks, travelling between New Braunfels and Broadway.
- There are outstanding drainage problems on Ira Avenue and Funston Place.
- Neighborhood character preservation, parking, traffic congestion, cut-through traffic, commercial loading, and housing affordability are all challenges.
- More so than is typical in other Midtown neighborhoods, existing MF-33 base zoning south of Mahncke Park allows for more density than currently exists on some street segments. Although the neighborhood conservation district regulations provide some degree of certainty over design and parking outcomes for development in this area, there remains substantial concern among some neighborhood residents that the allowed densities incentivize demolition of naturally occurring affordable housing. There is also concern that additional density would create additional neighborhood impacts such as traffic, or less convenient parking.
- See the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan (2001), and multiple sections of the Midtown Regional Center Plan for additional information and policy recommendations related to the Mahncke Park neighborhood.

Previous Neighborhood Plans

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS



Although some drainage and flooding issues have been improved since 2001, local flooding and standing water occurs after large rain events in areas immediately east of Broadway Street. Additionally, some of these areas are in the 100-year floodplain of the San Antonio River, that arcs from the Witte Museum across Broadway, and south before entering Catalpa Pershing Channel south of Lion's field. The drainage project described in the Amenities and Infrastructure Section, and implementation of local drains and associated low impact development best practices, should be implemented to address this issue.

Maintaining housing affordability and housing choices is a primary concern for the neighborhood. The neighborhood plan called for helping elder residents remain in their homes and exploring alternative housing for elders who want

leave their single family homes but remain in the neighborhood. While this intention remains a priority, currently the neighborhood wants to support housing stability and choices for residents of all ages. Ample affordable housing that is accessible to people with diverse abilities is supported on Broadway Street in close proximity to transit service.

Other housing goals from the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan also remain a priority, such as residential property maintenance and rehabilitation, and ensuring new construction design compatibility with traditional neighborhood development patterns.

Completing the update of the neighborhood conservation district standards and improving implementation and enforcement is a neighborhood priority. Similarly, preventing commercial encroachment into neighborhood residential areas is both a success from the last two decades, and an ongoing priority, as is ensuring street parking for neighborhood residents in the vicinity of Broadway. Additional shared structured parking adjacent to Broadway is supported. The neighborhood plan recommendation to downzone areas that are currently not built to their allowed density was identified as no longer being a priority.

While progress has been made with traffic calming projects on some streets, speeding cut-through traffic between New Braunfels and Broadway is still an outstanding issue on some of the streets that were inventoried and recommended for traffic calming projects in the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan. Similarly, some of the inventoried and recommended sidewalk construction projects from the neighborhood plan are priorities that have not been implemented, along with removing utility poles.

Improving pedestrian crossings at the Broadway and Hildebrand intersection is a neighborhood priority, along with improving pedestrian comfort and safety throughout Broadway Street.

The neighborhood plan included a concept plan for Mahncke Park, including better integration between Brackenridge Park, Mahncke Park, and the Botanical Garden. This recommendation is still a neighborhood priority.

The Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan was amended in 2011 by the Midtown Brackenridge TIRZ Plan, with recommendations primarily for parts of Mahncke Park that are adjacent to Broadway.

Previous Neighborhood Plans

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Land Use and Development

- The Mahncke Park Neighborhood Conservation District was established, and is being updated.
- Commercial encroachment into neighborhood residential areas has mostly been prevented.
- Parking for new commercial development on Broadway is typically to the side and rear rather than in front of businesses.
- UIW has developed student housing instead of expansive surface parking east of Broadway.
- Structured parking was built at the SW Bell property as recommended in the neighborhood plan and AT&T has made surface parking available to area institutions, alleviating neighborhood street parking pressure.
- A residential parking permit program was established.

Housing

- The neighborhood association partnered with Merced Housing to acquire, rehabilitate and protect an affordable housing development.

Transportation and Infrastructure

- All transit stops on Broadway include shelter.
- Bike lanes and routes have been established on New Braunfels, Avenue B, adjacent to Catalpa Pershing Channel, and on Funston Place.
- Traffic calming has been implemented on some recommended streets, such as Eleanor Avenue, among others.
- Sidewalks have been constructed and rehabilitated on some recommended streets, including Pershing Avenue, among others.
- Drainage on Hildebrand Avenue has been improved.

Parks and Amenities

- Access from Broadway Street to San Antonio River trails and Brackenridge Park was opened north of the Witte Museum. Many improvements to Brackenridge Park have been made and will be made through the 2017 bond. Miraflores Garden is being rehabilitated.
- A playground was built at Lion's Field, addressing the plan recommendation for a playground for children who live in the south half of Mahncke Park.

- In Mahncke Park, some planned improvements have been completed, including forest preservation, a wildflower garden, drainage ditch rehabilitation, and realignment of Brackenridge Drive with Funston Place.
- Neighborhood residents completed and are actively using the community garden across Funston Place from Mahncke Park.
- Neighborhood residents memorialized Acequia Madre's historic route with curb medallions, and Witte Museum memorialized the route with decorative pavers, landscaping, and a water feature.

Other

- Lamar Elementary school has improved, and the neighborhood school relationship is improving and stronger than ever. More neighborhood children are attending Lamar Elementary School than did in the past.
- A number of the problem areas and issues identified on the neighborhood plan page 15 map have been corrected.

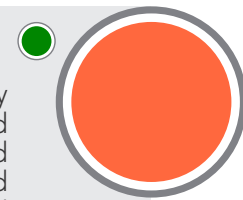
Neighborhood Priorities



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Participation

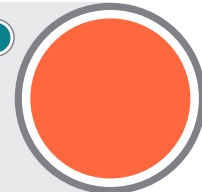
- Continue Mahncke Park's robust participation and advocacy in development and infrastructure issues. The City should notify the neighborhood association board and impacted residents about upcoming public works project decisions and zoning decisions far enough ahead of time for neighborhood residents to weigh in on the decisions before they happen, and there should be clear mechanisms for residents to provide feedback that will inform those decisions.



HOUSING

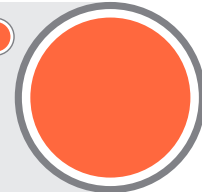
SA's Housing Policy Framework




- Implement the Mayor's Housing Policy Taskforce recommendations, with some particular emphasis on maintaining naturally occurring affordable housing and affordable housing whose affordability provisions will expire.



Neighborhood Conservation

- Preserve and enhance the existing character of the neighborhood. Encourage home ownership and owner occupancy. Existing duplex and higher density rental housing should not be redeveloped into new single-family housing however. Buildings that contribute to neighborhood character, particularly those built prior to the 1940's, and affordable housing should not be demolished.



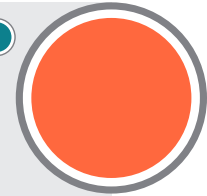
-  Priority from Previous Neighborhood Plan
-  Aligns with Sub-Area Plan Recommendation
-  Aligns with other Neighborhood Action Plan Recommendation

Neighborhood Priorities

Existing Diverse / Affordable Housing



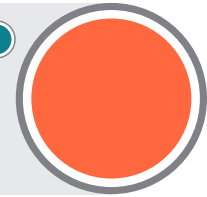
- Improve the quality and condition of housing where there are concentrations of deteriorating buildings that can be rehabilitated. Within the boundaries of safety and health, variety in housing condition contributes to diverse and affordable housing options; however, excessive deterioration in concentrated areas is sometimes followed by rapid change and replacement of the housing stock with new unaffordable housing that undermines neighborhood character. Based on recent examples, duplexes and other house-like apartments south of Mahncke Park and the Botanical Garden could be prone to such changes. The city should use existing tools, such as the neighborhood conservation district and zoning, and potentially new tools, such as rental housing rehabilitation incentives or housing trusts, to guide owners toward maintaining existing buildings while keeping them relatively affordable.



Historic Preservation



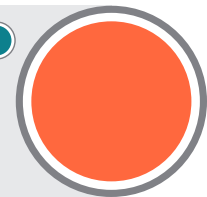
- Recognize and preserve individual properties of historic and cultural significance in the neighborhood by supporting owners who apply to have their properties designated as Historic.



Housing For All Stages of Life



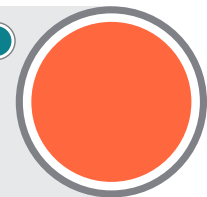
- Support housing for people in all stages of life. Provide housing options for those that cannot or choose not to remain in single family homes yet desire to live in the Mahncke Park Neighborhood.



Housing Adjacent to Broadway

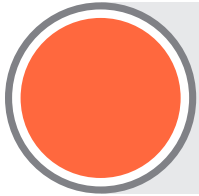


- Support abundant housing development adjacent to Broadway in a manner that is compatible with the neighborhood, in order to support housing supply, support diverse retail and service options, support high quality transit service, and relieve development pressure within in the neighborhood.



Neighborhood Priorities

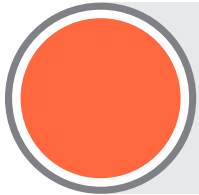
LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN



Prevent Commercial Encroachment



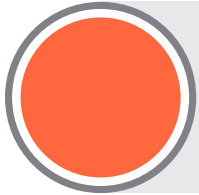
- Prevent the encroachment of commercial uses and parking into neighborhood residential areas.



Broadway Active Ground Floor Uses



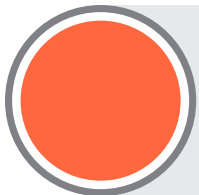
- Multistory office and residential buildings on Broadway should typically include retail uses on the ground floor.



Broadway's Instances of Unique Local Character



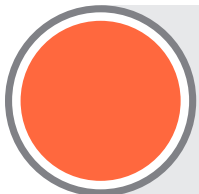
- Some existing buildings on Broadway contribute to unique local character, and should not be replaced.



Building Maintenance



- To prevent buildings that contribute to neighborhood character from being replaced, use city building rehabilitation programs, code enforcement, historic landmarking, and zoning that supports uses and densities that make continued maintenance of existing buildings financially viable.



Neighborhood Forest

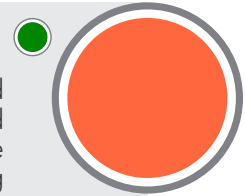


- Enhance neighborhood landscaping, prioritizing street tree planting, potentially through neighborhood organized tree planting.

Neighborhood Priorities

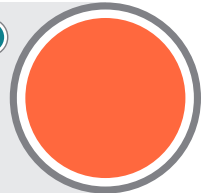
Neighborhood Conservation District

- Complete the current process of updating the neighborhood conservation district standards, and improve practices of interpretation, implementation and enforcement. In current and future updates and implementation, in addition to ensuring that development is consistent with neighborhood character, take care to not inhibit small property owners from being able to creatively contribute to the local housing supply and evolving neighborhood character, and make financially viable use of existing buildings.



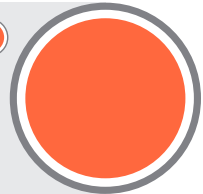
Public Art

- Support public art within the neighborhood, potentially including murals on commercial building walls and artistic painting of other surfaces such as on the Pinckney Street retaining wall as recommended in the neighborhood plan.



Parking

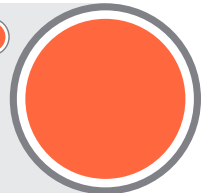
- To prevent parking spillovers from Broadway into neighborhood residential streets, comprehensive solutions may include some combination of shared, structured parking on blocks adjacent to Broadway, neighborhood permit parking, and mobility solutions that encourage visitors to reduce parking demand. Surface parking adjacent to Broadway, east of Broadway, is discouraged.



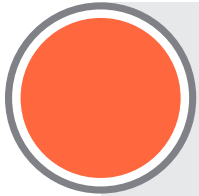
TRANSPORTATION

Rapid Transit Service

- Support improved transit service, connecting the neighborhood and nearby destinations with downtown and the rest of the region. Transit service that is more frequent and reliable, with easy to access information on routes and schedules, that is more responsive to special events, with comfortable and attractive places for transit users to wait, is supported. Shade trees and other pedestrian improvements are an important part of improving transit service. The 2001 Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan emphasized light rail or “bus-way” service on Broadway.



Neighborhood Priorities



Pedestrian Improvements



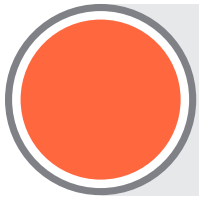
- Expand and enhance the pedestrian circulation system to make it safe and continuous to multiple destinations. The Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan p. 41 documents over three miles of missing or deteriorated sidewalks as of 2001. Some cases documented by the plan have been addressed, such as the south side of Pershing Street on the blocks immediately east of Broadway.



Broadway Street Reconstruction



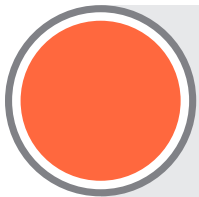
- Leverage redevelopment and bond projects on Broadway to make a complete multimodal transportation system serving neighborhood residents. This includes city investment to improve the right of way with shorter pedestrian crossing distances, wider sidewalks, improved intersections, trees, and slower vehicle speeds, among other improvements. It also includes private redevelopment with pedestrian friendly building and site designs, and fewer driveways crossing the sidewalk. Electrical utility undergrounding or relocation to secondary streets should be included in multimodal Broadway Street reconstruction project. The Broadway-Hildebrand intersection should be improved for pedestrian safety and comfort.



Bicycle Improvements



- Create a continuous bicycle network connecting the neighborhood, area destinations such as Brackenridge Park and the Botanical Garden, and the regional bike network with visible and inviting bicycling facilities that are comfortable for people of all ages and bicycling ability.



Additional Neighborhood Plan Recommendations



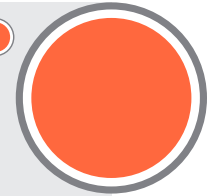
- Increase the safety of local travel by improving key streets and intersections. The Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan (2001) includes recommendations for studying reconstruction or addition of turn lanes, adding sidewalks, and traffic calming for several streets. Traffic calming was especially emphasized, with specific treatments identified for specific locations.

Neighborhood Priorities

PARKS AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

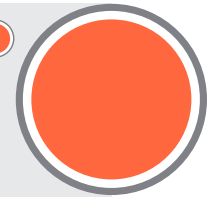
Local Drainage

- A major drainage improvement project associated with Broadway reconstruction should include in its goals correction of local flooding in neighborhood areas east of Broadway. Accordingly, the primary drainage project would be complemented by local drainage improvements and green infrastructure improvements to address local drainage issues.



Mahncke Park

- Mahncke Park should be improved with an upgraded trail connecting Broadway with New Braunfels, complemented by more tree canopy, and featuring the creek. Mahncke Park Fountain and the surrounding park area should be improved, potentially as a focal point for community gathering. The conceptual plan highlighted in the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan should be used to guide improvements. The concept includes relatively natural areas complemented by: the existing prairie tree forest and more tree canopy and native landscaping; featuring the creek/drainage canal or a water feature reproducing the route of Acequia Madre; and offering users the chance to discover the community garden. Broadway and its interface with Mahncke Park should make exploration and connection between Brackenridge Park and Mahncke Park intuitive and comfortable.



Additional Neighborhood Plan Recommendations

- See the Mahncke Park Neighborhood Plan (2001), and multiple sections of the Midtown Regional Center Plan for additional information and policy recommendations related to the Mahncke Park neighborhood.

