

## MEETING SUMMARY

### Southeast Community Area Plan: Planning Team Meeting #2

**Meeting Date:** Monday, March 18, 2019

**Time:** 5:30PM-7:30PM

**Location:** Schaefer Library, 6322 US Hwy 87 E, San Antonio, TX 78222

**Attendees:**

*Jose Martinez, Highland Park*

*Ian Palacios, Foster Meadows*

*Allan Houck, Foster Meadows*

*Bea Imkin, Jupe Manor*

*Maria Delagarza, Eastern Triangle*

*Mario Gutierrez, NHSD*

*Christina Castano, VIA*

*Yulanee McKnight, Pecan Valley*

*Linda Cavazos, ECISD*

*Dan Martinez, East San Antonio Crime Coalition*

*Krystin Ramirez, MIG*

*Mukul Malhotra, MIG*

*Sara Mendiola, SARA*

*Chris Dawkins, B.E.S.T.*

*Gilbert Campbell, Lakeside*

*Alicia Campbell, Lakeside*

*Dr. D. Anthony Miles*

*Shepard Beamon, Project Manager*

**Meeting Objectives:**

The purpose of Planning Team Meeting #2 was to 1) provide an overview of the existing conditions of the Southeast Community Area and 2) discuss the plan area's assets, challenges, opportunities and draft a vision that will assist in developing goals further in the planning process for the plan area.

**Meeting Format**

The Southeast Community Plan Project Manager, Shepard Beamon, presented an update on the planning process. Krystin Ramirez of MIG then presented the existing conditions detailed in the atlas, to the group. The group was provided copies of the existing conditions atlas and encouraged to provide comments, corrections or edits to the project manager so the document could be updated. The document also contained several maps that described the existing conditions for the area. The maps were used as reference during the discussion. The discussion was followed by a brief presentation, by the project manager, on the results from the Southeast Community Vision and Goals Questionnaire. The last hour of the meeting was dedicated to an open group discussion on the area's assets, challenges, opportunities and vision for the future of the plan area. Responses from Planning Team members were recorded on wall graphic paper.

**Existing Conditions**

The Southeast Community Plan area has mix of land uses. Over a third of the area is residential use. There are large amounts of vacant parcels and agricultural land uses, nearly fifty percent of the Southeast Area. The area features limited institutional, industrial, and commercial uses. The area also features natural systems, including the Salado Creek and Tributary, Rosillo Creek, and New Sulphur Springs Creek. Civic amenities include an abundance of private and public schools, and places of worship. Other civic amenities include the James Bode Center, Southside Lions Community and Senior Center, and Schaefer Library. The primary parks in the Southeast area are Southside Lions Park, Milam Tealer Park, Covington and Comanche Parks, Highland Park, and the Salado Creek Greenway. Planning Team recommendations included adding the 500 year floodplain, flood crossings, and impervious cover on the Natural Systems map, and including pocket parks on the Amenities and Access map.

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### **Initial Survey and Community Input Results**

A brief survey titled “Vision and Goals Questionnaire-Southeast” was made available on-line on January 15<sup>th</sup>. At the first Southeast community meeting, held on February 28<sup>th</sup>, participants were encouraged to fill out the survey. During the community meeting, attendees were also encouraged to provide input to questions similar to the survey questions.

The survey asked a series of questions: *What do you like most about the area?* Quiet neighborhoods Housing quality and character, family-oriented, convenience and access to highways and downtown, light traffic congestion, Salado Creek Greenway, Southside Lions Park/facilities, feeling of safety, mild police presence, close to retail and food options, and large lots/parcels. *What is missing from the area?* Police station, better animal control, recreational/fitness amenities in parks, sidewalk improvements, stormwater management/flood control, community clean-up, more quality restaurants/dining, better law enforcement monitoring for drug use/prostitution, more community programming, and more opportunities for retail/commercial development. *What about the community would you like to see different?* Reduce crime, police department, better maintenance of property, demolition or rehabilitation of abandoned/unsafe properties, repair/improve sidewalks and streets, commercial development and investment, homeless initiative/shelter, community garden/farmer's market, and community activities/events. *What is your vision or “big ideas” for the area?* New/emerging businesses, more youth oriented recreation/amenities, clean neighborhoods, street/sidewalks/bike lane improvements, safe/drug free community, more retail/shopping/dining options, medical services, public art, and homeless assistance.

The team generally agreed with the summary of the survey results. Team members agreed to continue promoting the questionnaire and getting it out to their organizations. The project manager will follow up with the team members and provide the link to the survey. The survey will close on March 31, 2019.

### **Assets, Challenges, Opportunities, and Vision**

The last hour of the meeting was dedicated to a group discussion on the areas assets, challenges, opportunities and vision. Planning Team members were asked to think and provide commentary on the following questions: *What are the assets of the area we need to protect and need to build from? What are the challenges in the area? What are the opportunities for change/improvements to make the area better? What is your vision or what would you like the Southeast area to be like 20 years from now?* Mukul Malhotra, of MIG, wrote down the ideas and responses from the Planning Team on a wall graphic in the room. A photo of the wall graphic is provided at the end of this summary.

The team identified the H-E-B Distribution Center, locally owned businesses and restaurants, the Valor Club, Schaefer Development, the East Central ISD Leadership Academy, accessibility to downtown and highways, and political involvement, as assets to the Southeast Community. Natural assets included green spaces, Rosillo Creek, Salado Creek Greenway, Southside Lions Park and Lake, and Lake Verda, located near the Lakeside neighborhood. These parks and greenspaces serve as good locations for recreational activity, such as the San Antonio Road Runners running group, and for future potential public events. Although just outside the plan boundary, St. Phillip’s College was also identified as an asset.

The team then identified challenges to the plan area. In terms of infrastructure and amenities, there is a lack of adequate shading and comfort at transit stops, gaps in sidewalks, and no full service hospital. The



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team identified a lack in community involvement and events. While discussing challenges, some team members identified crime and safety as a challenge. Although the Southeast Community has some of the lowest crime rates in the City, there is still criminal activity occurring and SAPD needs to have more of presence.

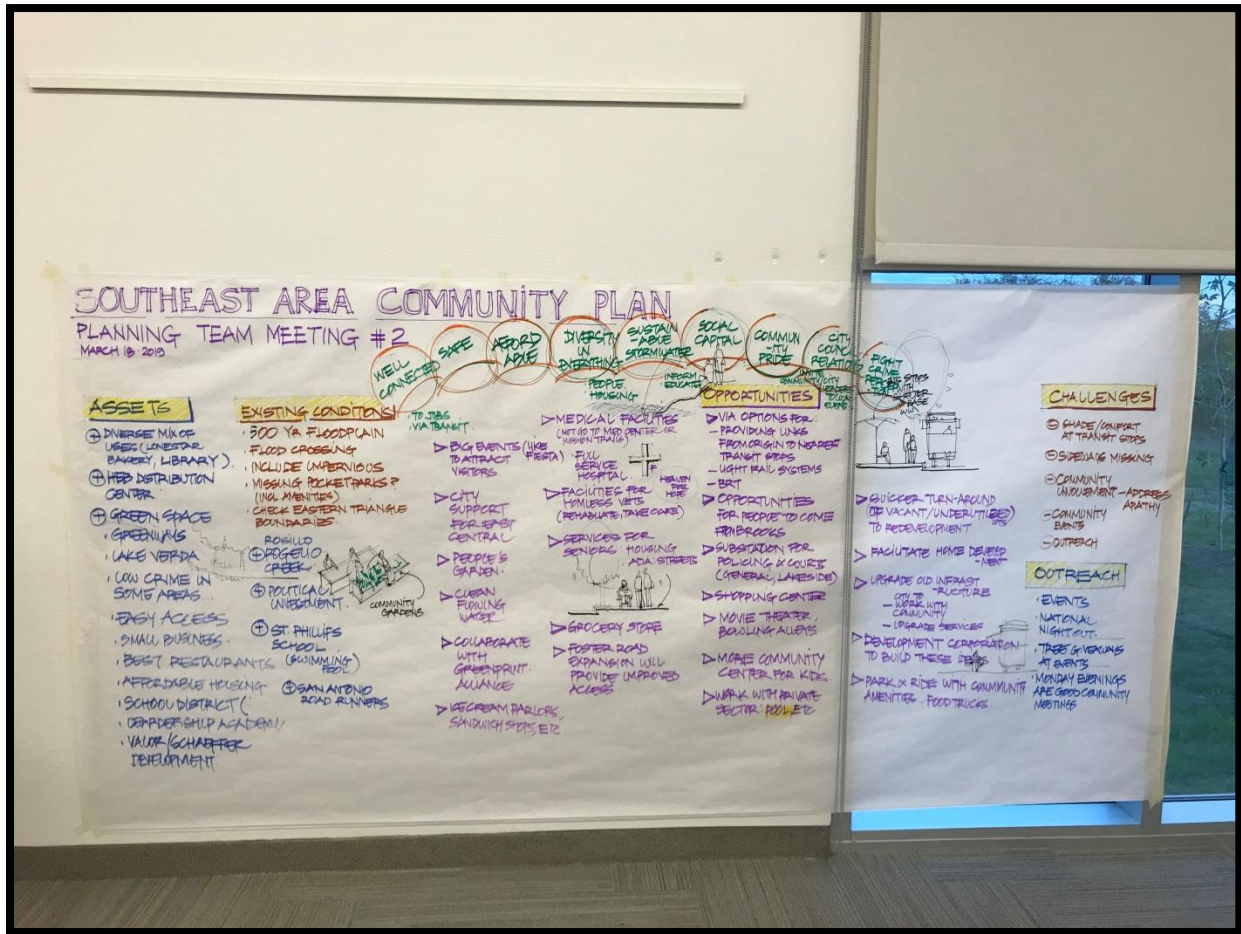
After discussing the challenges and assets to the area, the group began brainstorming and identified several opportunities. Some of the assets and challenges served as a foundation for opportunities for improvement in the future. For example, several planning team members felt there is a lack of community involvement, pride, and events. The Planning Team then looked at other communities in the City that have successful annual events and how they can build ideas from those, such as an annual Fiesta event that highlights some of the area's assets and attracts visitors to the Southeast area. The close proximity to Downtown and Brooks could make the Southeast area ideal for people to visit if there are Southeast specific destinations and events to come to. Other planning team members suggested there is an opportunity for more support and collaboration between the City of San Antonio and the East Central ISD. There is opportunity to also collaborate with Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas and establish a community garden. Team members expressed an opportunity for a full service hospital within the Southeast area, to avoid having to long travel times to Mission Trails Hospital or the South Texas Medical Center. There is also opportunity for more retail, such as restaurants, a grocery store, movie theater, bowling alley, and shopping center. There were several opportunities for transportation and mobility improvements, including the expansion of Foster Road, which could increase access, bus rapid transit services, and park-and-ride center with community amenities. Other opportunities include a police substation to address the challenge of crime, improvement of water quality, infrastructure upgrades, more City facilitation for home development and remediation, more senior services and housing, facilities for the homeless, quicker turnaround of vacant and underutilized lots for redevelopment, and establishment of a development corporation to help build these ideas.

From the feedback received, there were several common themes that were important to the team and could be used for a community vision. The team generally agreed that the area should be a community with more programming, events, and activities for all ages and all residents stay informed and have pride in their community. The area should be attractive and become a destination for other parts of the City to visit. The perception and reality of crime in the Southeast area needs to be improved. There is abundance of space and vacant parcels in the area that could support more commercial uses and provide more amenities to residents. The area has a good existing quality of housing that needs to be preserved and unsafe properties need to be remedied. The Southeast area could accommodate more diversity in people, housing, and jobs. The Southeast area should also include safe, walkable sidewalks, more access to recreational amenities, sustainable stormwater management, and a useful and comfortable public transit network. Lastly, there should be a push to build more social capital, to create a more cohesive community.

Overall, the meeting and discussion was very productive with a lot of useful and meaningful comments. Before leaving, team members were asked to take a short survey about the overall meeting format. Almost all who took the survey strongly agreed the time and location were easily accessible, the information was useful, and they were able to share their ideas. Input from this meeting and the online survey will be used to create a draft Southeast Area community vision and goals, which will be available at the next community meeting for additional review and feedback. A photo of the final wall graphic is provided on the next page.



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### NEXT STEPS:

**Community Meeting #2** Monday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019 (tentative)

**Planning Team Meeting #3** Week of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019

**Planning Team Meeting #4:** Week of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019

Meeting summaries and presentations will be available on the sub area plan website:

<https://southeast.sacomplan.com/documents/>

If you have any questions about the Southeast Community Area Plan, please contact Project Manager: Shepard Beamon, City of San Antonio Planning Department.

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