

## MEETING SUMMARY

**Meeting:** Eastside Planning Team Meeting #3  
**Date:** May 16th, 2019  
**Time:** 6:00 – 8:00 pm  
**Location:** St. Philip’s College, Campus Center Building, Heritage Room

**Attendees:**

<i>Lillie Webb, Jefferson Heights</i>	<i>Monica Savino, Dignowity Hill</i>	<i>Will Covington, Coliseum Willow Park</i>
<i>Beth Keel, Jefferson Heights</i>	<i>Christine Vina, VIA Metropolitan Transit</i>	<i>James Dickerson, Coliseum Willow Park</i>
<i>Barbara McDonald, Denver Heights, Alamodome Areas</i>	<i>Alan Neff, Denver Heights</i>	<i>Lindsey Logan, SAGE</i>
<i>Matt Sirgo, Government Hill</i>	<i>Arrie Porter, SAHA</i>	<i>Michelle Garza, SARA</i>
<i>Chris Mongeon, Dignowity Hill</i>	<i>Gregory Street</i>	<i>Dyami Luster</i>
<i>Juan Garcia, Dignowity Hill</i>	<i>Cassandra Miller, Harvard Place Eastlawn</i>	<i>Scott Albert, Dignowity Hill</i>

### Meeting Purpose

The third meeting of the Eastside Planning Team aimed to accomplish these objectives: obtain feedback on the draft Vision and Goals and identify focus areas and mixed-use corridors.

### Meeting Format

The meeting began with an update on the planning process, followed by a discussion on the draft Vision and Goals. Then the Planning Team identified potential focus areas and mixed-use corridors, and broke into two groups for more detailed discussion of individual focus area and mixed-use corridor locations. The discussion was recorded on large notepads. Following is a summary of the Planning Team’s discussion.

### Vision and Goals Discussion

Following are themes for improving the draft Vision and Goals:

- Include more on safety and security: although the draft vision and goals speak to transportation safety, crime and security is a prominent concern.
- More emphasis on walking and pedestrian improvements: although the vision and goals speak to improving multimodal transportation options, improving walkability is extraordinarily important.
- Consider higher aspirations for infrastructure than just basic infrastructure: although basic infrastructure such as sidewalks, street trees, and lighting should be improved, going beyond the basics or the minimum infrastructure improvements should be a plan priority.

The discussion included an emphasis on affordable housing, and the challenges and complexities of addressing affordable housing through SA Tomorrow sub-area planning.

### Focus Areas and Mixed-use Corridors Identification

The following areas were identified as potential focus areas and mixed-use corridors:

- Commerce Street from New Braunfels Avenue to Da Foste Avenue

- New Braunfels Avenue throughout the plan area.
- Hayes Street and Gevers Street area
- Houston Street and Gevers Street area
- Aransas Avenue and Pine Street area

The discussion included an emphasis on revitalizing the many small, community-serving commercial nodes that were historically dispersed throughout the Eastside.

### **Individual Focus Areas and Mixed-use Corridors Discussions**

#### ***Commerce Street from New Braunfels Avenue to Da Foste Avenue***

Much of the land that may appear vacant on areal images, south of Commerce Street between Gevers Street and Springdale Boulevard is already committed to uses such as urban farming, public housing, or development that is already planned.

The vacant building at the southeast corner of Commerce Street and Da Foste Avenue is a topic of concern in the Coliseum Willow Park neighborhood as a magnet for crime.

The Echo East Mixed-use Development will be south of Commerce Street, west of Springdale Boulevard.

The cemeteries on either side of Commerce Street represent an opportunity to connect users with history.

#### ***Houston Street throughout the plan area***

Houston Street has multiple character areas that reflect historic uses, for example industrial character near railroad tracks, the suburban shopping center at New Braunfels Avenue, historic commercial nodes, and suburban industrial south of the AT&T Center. New development could differentiate more unique places along Houston Street. Some locations next to Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue may be more appropriate than any other places in the plan area for relatively high density uses and larger buildings, given their proximity to existing and planned premium transit service.

#### ***New Braunfels Avenue throughout the plan area***

South of Commerce Street, the land adjacent to New Braunfels Avenue is mostly used for homes and apartments, except at some nodes such as at Porter Street.

The Transportation and Capital Improvements Department (TCI) is redesigning New Braunfels Avenue from Houston Street to Burleson Street through the 2017 Capital Improvements Bond, and will also improve Martin Luther King Plaza.

On New Braunfels Avenue north of Commerce Street, there is a lot of empty space and surface parking that should be activated for people to use. Similarly, existing buildings would benefit from rehabilitation or façade improvements.

From around Porter Street south to I-10, commercial revitalization could focus on making the area a southern gateway to the eastside.

Development next to New Braunfels Avenue should be human-scaled and pedestrian-oriented.

#### ***Hayes Street and Gevers Street area***

This intersection is close to Wheatley Courts.

Residential or commercial use could be appropriate.



Regarding Gevers Street throughout the plan area, it's more of a local street than Walters, so it might be more suited to smaller businesses or it might be easier to create pedestrian friendly places.

#### ***Houston Street and Gevers Street area***

Small restaurants, a bakery, affordable housing, condos, or apartments might appropriate uses in this area.

#### ***Aransas Avenue and Pine Street area***

This intersection is confusing to navigate and the distances for pedestrians to cross the street are too long.

This area could be part of a larger focus area that includes the intersection of Aransas Avenue and South Hackberry.

The large triangular area with deteriorated asphalt detracts from the area.

#### ***Small commercial nodes throughout the plan area***

There are multiple small commercial nodes, or historically commercial nodes throughout the plan area. There are too many to make each one a focus area, however the plan should enable at least some of these locations to continue to include community serving commercial uses or gathering places in the future. Historically, these locations often included useful stores close to home, like hardware stores or grocers that also served as places for neighbors to encounter each other.

#### ***General Focus Area Recommendations***

Focus areas should support more businesses, including small businesses, restaurants, and offices. Development in focus areas should relate to the history of the area, and historically significant places nearby, potentially using simple tools like plaques and wayfinding signage.

### **Next Steps**

The fourth Planning Team Meeting will be held May 30th 2019. Objectives for this meeting include:

- Introduction to land use planning
- Obtain initial input to inform the land use plan

If you have questions about the Eastside planning project, please contact Project Manager Garrett Phillips, City of San Antonio Department of Planning & Community Development.

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