



## MEETING SUMMARY

**Meeting:** Eastside Planning Team Meeting #6  
**Date:** August 28th, 2019  
**Time:** 4:30 – 6:30 pm  
**Location:** St. Philip's College, Campus Center Building, Heritage Room  
**Attendees:**

*Chris Mongeon, Dignowity Hill*  
*Monica Savino, Dignowity Hill*  
*Lindsey Logan, SAGE*

*Christine Vina, VIA Metropolitan  
Transit*  
*Michelle Garza, SARA*

*Will Covington, Coliseum Willow Park*  
*James Dickerson, Coliseum Willow Park*

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### Meeting Purpose

The sixth meeting of the Eastside Planning Team aimed to obtain input that the Planning Department will use to create the draft Housing and Economic Development Strategies.

### Meeting Format

The meeting began with an update on the planning process, followed by a review of housing, demographic, and economic data. During the presentation, the Planning Team and guests responded to the presentation and discussed the data. Following the presentation, the Planning Team discussed housing and economic development on the Eastside, responding to the following questions:

- What are the attractive/positive attributes about housing in the Eastside Plan Area?
- What housing types are missing?
- What housing challenges exist?
- What are Strength, Opportunities, and Weakness regarding economic development in the area?

Then the Planning Team discussed housing types that would be appropriate in different Eastside locations and contexts, using an interactive mapping activity. The last pages of this summary include photographs of the written recording of the Planning Team's discussion.

### Discussion

*What are the attractive/positive attributes about housing in the Eastside Plan Area?*

- The organization of houses in a grid pattern of blocks. The pattern is human scaled.
- Historic buildings and places and the historic character of neighborhoods are a positive quality of the Eastside's housing context.
- The area's old homes that are still standing used high quality or durable construction techniques.
- Original development patterns included neighborhood serving businesses.
- Predominant development patterns include homes or apartments on lots that leave some room around the edges for large trees to grow.

- Even though there are not abundant employment opportunities within the plan area, proximity to regional centers like Downtown and Ft. Sam Houston place the area's housing in relatively close proximity to employment opportunities.

*What housing types are missing?*

- There should be more duplexes to four-plex types of housing, amongst single family housing.
- There should be more housing that also supports small businesses in live/work arrangements.
- There should be more affordable single family housing. None of the new single family housing is affordable.
- Smaller dwellings require less materials and labor to construct and maintain, so they can be cheaper than larger dwellings. So for example, small homes for lower income elders and small households clustered around a greenspace might be desirable.
- Land is part of the cost of housing, so to the extent that the cost of land can be shared by more people in more dwellings, the cost of each dwelling would be lower.
- Another part of the cost of housing, are transaction costs, professional expertise, and profits for each person involved in creating housing. These costs might be reduced by supporting alternative models of delivering housing that involve fewer "middle-men." For example, historically when eastside neighborhoods were first developed, the first owner of a home was deeply involved in the development of the home. There were fewer professionals required to build dwellings, and fewer or no owners other than the original seller and the first home-owner/occupant.

*What housing challenges exist?*

- Older residents have some unique challenges related to their fixed income and physical ability to perform maintenance and repairs. There are also few alternative housing options in the neighborhood that would enable an older person to downsize while staying in their community.
- People are speculating on the housing market, buying land or run-down houses, and just holding on to them for a while before reselling them at a marked up price.
- Ambiguous titles make it more difficult for owners to maintain, rehabilitate, and/or sell their properties.
- Vacant lots are an opportunity for more housing to be built in the area, without replacing existing housing.

*What are Strength, Opportunities, and Weakness regarding economic development in the area?*

- Proximity to nearby employment and entertainment centers is an economic development asset.
- St. Philip's College is an economic development asset, including for example, the new culinary institute that is being built.
- The transportation network is an asset, including the grid patterns of streets and access to highways.
- Some new residents work nearby in Downtown or Ft. Sam Houston for example, but others commute long distances to other parts of the region, so there are qualities of the Eastside other than proximity to jobs that are drawing people to live there.
- The area has a variety of unique places that can serve as part of the foundation for economic development. Unique places are an economic development asset, in that they are places where people want to live, work, play, and grow businesses.



- The rhythm of built and open spaces is part of what gives Eastside places their uniqueness. This includes the spacing of buildings along a block, and the spacing of buildings from the front to the rear of properties.

### *Housing allocation activity*

The housing allocation activity was intended to identify housing types that are appropriate for the Eastside. The project team presented eight housing types, providing one photograph example of each type, and one icon for each type that would be used in the mapping activity. The Planning Team placed the icons on vacant and underutilized properties identified on the map to indicate where each type would be appropriate.

The results appeared to reflect where different housing types already exist or where new housing projects were recently built or recently permitted, as much as where participants thought that they would be appropriate.

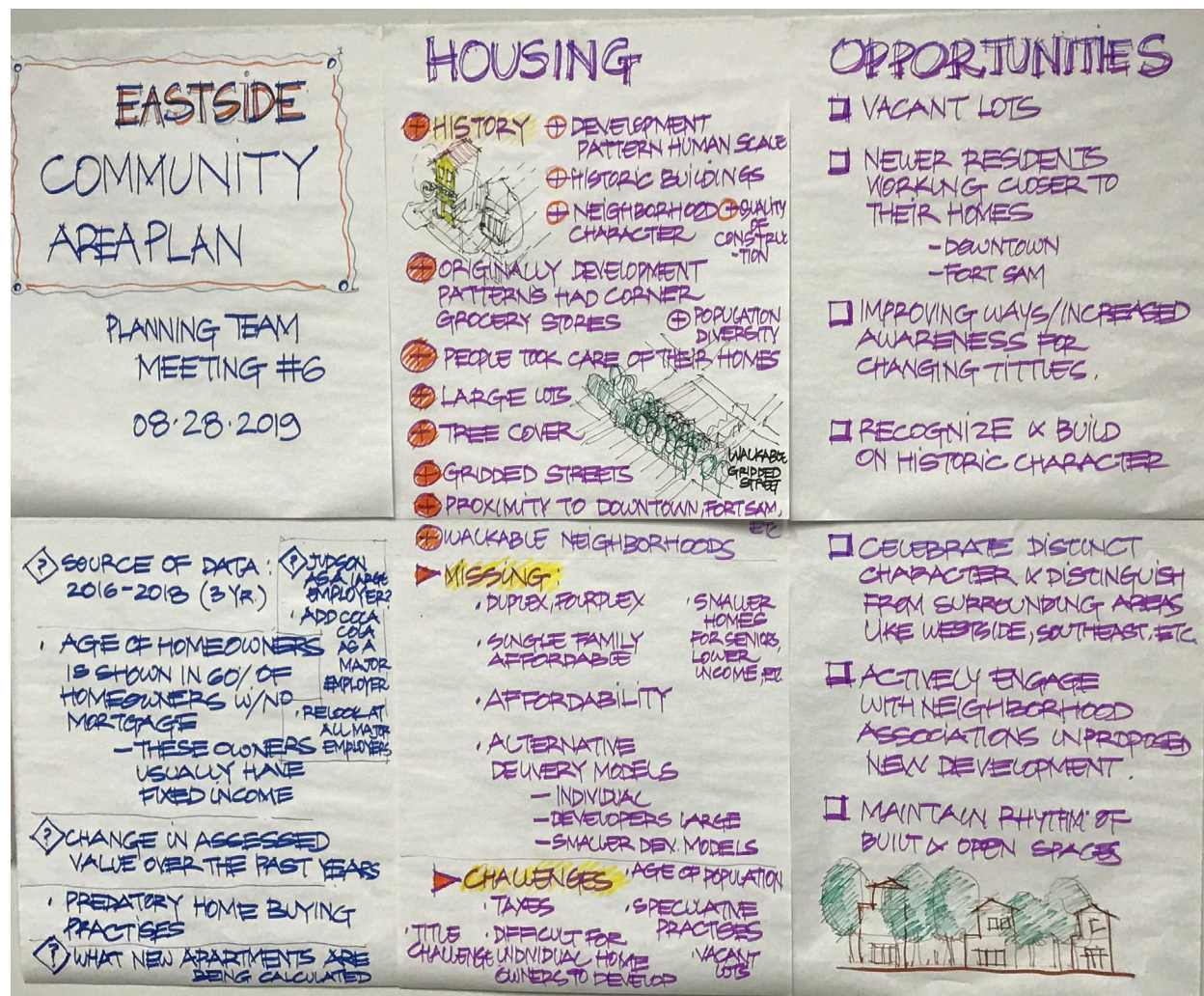
- New housing to complement revitalization of mixed-use nodes would be appropriate, for example near the intersections of Commerce Street with Gevers Street and Walters Street.
- New housing to support students and workers at St. Philip's College would be appropriate, east and west of the campus.
- Mixed-use multifamily housing would be appropriate near the intersection of New Braunfels Avenue and Grayson Street, adjacent to Walters Street, between I-35 and Ft. Sam Houston, across Houston Street from AT&T Center, south of Commerce Street where the Echo East project has been proposed, and at selected locations on Commerce Street west of the cemeteries.
- New housing would be appropriate next to Houston Street, between Hackberry and New Braunfels Avenue, although the identified vacant and underutilized sites did seem appropriate for the mixed-use multifamily housing type, because participants felt that the scale of that kind of development was too large for the small sites identified on the map.
- The discussion revealed that although diverse new housing options are supported, the form of new housing is important to participant's assessments of whether or not it is appropriate. For example, there was some aversion to housing with entrances that are not oriented to the street and housing that doesn't leave room for large trees to grow.
- There was an emphasis on traditional single family housing in the Government Hill neighborhood.

### **Next Steps**

The seventh Planning Team Meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 1. The objective for this meeting is to obtain additional input for Housing and Economic Development Strategies.

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

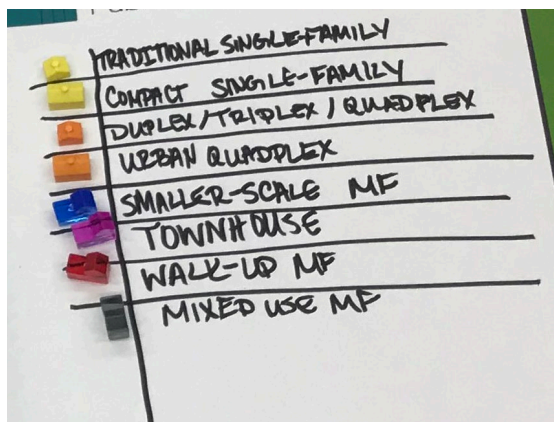
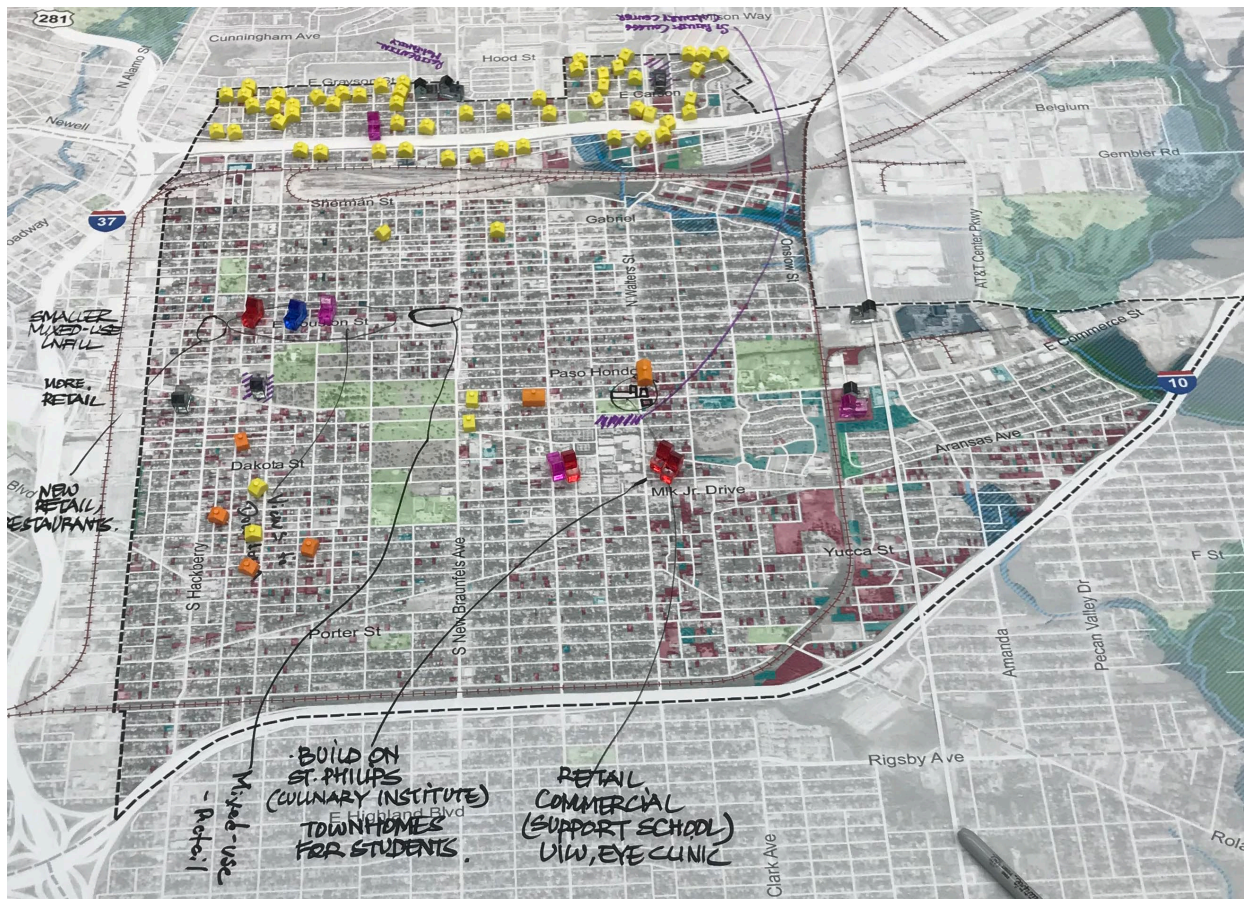




Recording of the Planning Team's discussion of Housing and Economic Development issues.



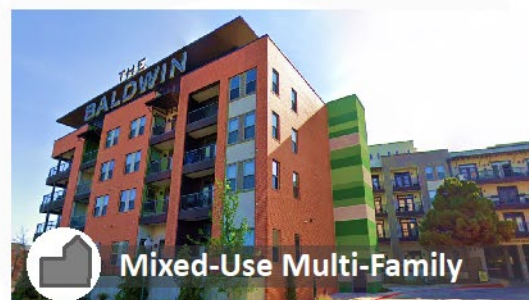




Legend and recording of the Planning Team's housing allocation activity.







*Example images of alternative housing types presented to the Planning Team, corresponding to the legend and icons used in the housing allocation activity.*





## SA Tomorrow Eastside Area Community Plan

### Planning Team Meeting #6

*Wednesday, August 28th, 2019*

*4:30 PM to 6:30 PM*

*St. Philip's College, Campus Center Building, Heritage Room*

### Meeting Agenda

**4:30** Welcome, Introductions, Process Update

**4:45** Housing and Economic Development Discussions

**6:15** Wrap up & Next Steps

**6:30** Meeting Close

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### Meeting #6 Take Home Information to Share

- The draft Eastside Vision and Goals, based on public input, are available on the Eastside Plan webpage (<https://eastside.sacompplan.com>). Additional information on the planning process, including meeting summaries are available on the webpage.
- An initial draft future land use map was created based on the draft Vision and Goals, the Planning Team's Meeting #4 input, prior plans, and Eastside area conditions and trends. The Planning Team provided feedback on the initial draft map at Meeting #5.
- The Planning Department will revise the initial draft future land use map and create draft future land use plan policies based on the Planning Team Meeting #5 discussion, and then ask for additional public input using a public meeting and online questionnaire in fall 2019.
- Planning Team Meetings #6 and #7 are about Housing and Economic Development Strategies.
- In Planning Team Meetings #6 the Planning Team provided initial input to inform the Housing and Economic Development Strategies. The Planning Team will provide feedback on initial draft strategies in Planning Team Meeting #7, and the Planning Department will seek the broader public's feedback using a public meeting and online questionnaire in fall 2019.
- The Eastside Area Community Plan Project Manager, Garrett Phillips, is available to visit a meeting of your neighborhood association or organization, to share information about the planning process.

City of San Antonio  
SA Tomorrow  
Planning Initiatives  
c/o Planning Department

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