



PLAN FRAMEWORK

SA TOMORROW SUB-AREA PLANNING: EASTSIDE COMMUNITY AREA PLAN

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT – FEBRUARY 2022

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4 Plan Framework

The Plan Framework comprises the six main topics of the plan: Land Use, Focus Areas, Mobility, Amenities and Public Spaces, Housing, and Economic Development. Detailed background information, maps, illustrations, and recommendations for each of those topics can be found in their respective sections following this overview. Throughout those sections, numerous important recommendations and strategies are identified for achieving the vision and goals of the plan based on existing conditions analysis; research and best practices case studies; collaboration with other City departments and partner agencies and organizations; and many conversations with the Planning Team and the wider Eastside Area community.

While all the recommendations and strategies in the plan are important, this overview highlights those that are either most critical to achieving the plan vision and goals, are more likely to be funded and implemented in the short-term, build upon other existing or ongoing initiatives, or are a necessary first step to provide a foundation for other projects and investments. These Implementation Priorities are presented in two ways: the list below represents the full range of priorities, while the accompanying Plan Framework Map [See **Figure 3**] illustrates all those that can be physically depicted in order to show important overlaps, adjacencies, and mutually supportive relationships. Some Land Use, Housing, Economic Development, and other recommendations and strategies are not easily depicted on the map but are included in the Implementation Priorities list. Together, the Implementation Priorities and Plan Framework Map represent the key strategic concepts and physical improvements that will influence future development of the Eastside Community Area.

Implementation Priorities and Plan Framework Map

Land Use

Strategy 1.1 (Regulatory and Policy)

Rezone areas designated as mixed-use [See **Figure 4 – Future Land Use Map**] in order to provide a mix of uses designed to support pedestrians and transit.

Strategy 2.4 (Regulatory and Policy)

Zoning decisions should permit uses that will make building preservation and rehabilitation financially attractive, such as adding additional dwellings while preserving the original building.

Strategy 3.1 (Regulatory and Policy)

Zoning map amendments and Unified Development Code (UDC) Chapter 35 amendments should implement the following principles for new development in mixed-use centers and corridors: street facing walls should include windows; primary building entrances should face a street, a street corner, or a street-oriented courtyard; and, parking should not be located between streets and buildings.

Focus Areas

Strategy 1.1 (Partnerships / Investments)

To support grassroots and local business in creating pedestrian-oriented community hubs, public investments should include combinations of street trees and landscaping, decorative lighting, public art, seating, street parking, façade revitalization, and building restoration that enhance the experience of walking, spending time, and interacting.

Strategy 3.1 (Partnerships / Investments)

Prioritize the completion and enhancement of sidewalk networks near VIA's Advanced Rapid Transit and Primo services.

Strategy 3.2 (Partnerships / Investments)

Prioritize affordable housing subsidies in the vicinity of VIA's Advanced Rapid Transit and Primo services.

Mobility

Strategy 4.1 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments / Partnerships)

Improve the first/last mile experience of transit riders by enhancing sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks, and bicycle facilities near VIA Metropolitan Transit transfer areas, Primo station areas, and future Advanced Rapid Transit Corridor station areas. Additional improvements to creating inviting, quality public spaces at transit stations include shade, seating, safety lighting, and public art. The location and prioritization of these investments should consider VIA's planned timeline for improving service. Based on current analysis, priority improvements areas are in the vicinity of:

- East Houston Street and Cherry Street;
- East Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue;
- East Houston Street and Walters Street; and
- East Houston Street and Union Pacific Railroad near AT&T Center.

Amenities and Public Space

Strategy 3.1 (Partnerships / Investments)

Use green stormwater infrastructure in public street improvement projects.

Strategy 3.2 (Partnerships / Investments)

Use street trees to complement other necessary improvements for pedestrian safety and comfort when completing street projects.

Housing

Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy/Partnerships)

Identify strategies and financial tools that can help mitigate impacts of escalating property values for lower-income residents.

Economic Development

Strategy 1.1 (Regulatory and Policy / Partnerships)

Support the creation of neighborhood business improvement districts or other public-private partnerships that enable local business owners to act collectively to invest in and improve the physical environment around their establishments.

[See **Figure 3 – Plan Framework Map**]

Plan Framework Map Overview

[See **Figure 3 – Plan Framework Map**]

The Plan Framework map identifies and shows the interrelatedness of key physical concepts and strategies in the plan. These include priority focus areas, mixed-use corridors, recommended streetscape improvements, enhanced trail connections, and priority mobility routes. These recommended physical improvements and investments are complemented by other supportive plan strategies related to housing, economic development, and neighborhoods.

While the Plan Framework Map represents a less detailed overview of the whole Eastside Area Plan, other plan sections, for example Land Use and Mobility, provide more detailed information, recommendations, and implementation strategies.

High Capacity Transit

Transit and pedestrian corridors are envisioned to provide easy and reliable choices for traveling to and from work, school, and key destinations using VIA Metropolitan Transit's (VIA) planned Advanced Rapid Transit and Primo services that will connect existing routes and trail systems to employment centers such as Downtown, neighborhood centers such as the East Houston Street and Gevers Street area, and cultural or natural places such as Hemisfair and Salado Creek. Reliable and frequent transit service amidst a walkable environment improves freedom and choice, offering realistic travel options besides driving, alleviating a primary cause of congestion and placing more jobs and opportunities within reach of more Eastside Area residents. Streets, intersections, and traffic signals greatly influence transit service reliability. Dedicated transit lanes and traffic signal timing can keep transit vehicles moving in times of heavier traffic.

Mobility Hub

Mobility hubs are envisioned as nodes of mobility options, like frequent transit, shared rides, bicycling and micro-mobility. Lighting, shelters, benches, real-time travel information, accessible sidewalks and pedestrian crossings would complement the transportation options to make mobility hubs comfortable and attractive places. A mobility hub is identified at Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue to complement VIA's planned Advanced Rapid Transit service and Primo service.

Target Employment Areas

San Antonio will continue to implement a variety of tools, including economic incentives, workforce development, and strategic partnerships to support existing and new businesses in the community. The

City's Economic Development Department recently modified its [tax abatement program](#) (effective through December 31, 2022) to improve opportunities for community economic development. The City's Economic Development Department will adapt economic development incentives in a way that supports communities of color and areas with high levels of poverty.

To leverage this designation as a priority incentive area, there need to be desirable locations for new businesses to locate and for existing businesses to expand. In addition to areas identified for supporting neighborhood hubs of retail goods, services and food establishments, there are four areas within the Eastside Community Area that should be targeted for public investments and improvements to increase their appeal for attracting and growing businesses that can offer higher wages and better career pathways. These areas are:

- **South of AT&T Center** – The areas designated for Regional Mixed-Use and Business/Innovation Mixed-Use. [See **Figure 4 – Future Land Use Map**]
- **Near Eastside** – The areas designated for Regional Mixed-Use on the western edge of the plan area along East Houston Street and Commerce Street, including the area around Velocity TX's innovation hub.
- **I-35/Railway Corridor** – The Light Industrial and Business/Innovation Mixed-Use areas just south of I-35 in the northern portion of the plan area.
- **St. Philip's College** – The areas in and around St. Philip's College designated for employment and mixed-uses.

Historic and Present Neighborhood Commercial Nodes

The Eastside Area has an abundance of historic neighborhood commercial centers that were, and in some cases still are, home to groceries, restaurants, pharmacies, and other stores where residents accessed daily needs close to home, while having the chance to interact with neighbors. These locations are too numerous and dispersed to identify on the Focus Areas Framework Map, however they none-the-less should be considered priority locations for supporting small businesses and enjoyable public spaces.

As the Eastside Area's population grows back toward historic levels and local entrepreneurs continue investing more in the community, some of these places may be enhanced for the benefit of local residents. The City should support these places by improving their streetscapes and directing revitalization and development related grants and incentives to pedestrian-oriented development and revitalization projects.

Establishing the Plan Framework and Recommendations

The Plan Framework includes recommendations and strategies around future land use; focus areas and mixed-use corridors for development or improvement; pedestrian, bicycle, and street improvements; amenities and public space; and priority areas to encourage mixed-use development. All sections of the Plan Framework are presented and briefly described below.

4.1. Land Use: Land Use is a foundation of this plan. One of the key goals of implementing the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan is to create a future land use map for the entire city. Through carrying out sub-area plans, such as the Eastside Area Community Plan, the Planning Department will eventually create a detailed future land use map for the entire City of San Antonio.

4.2. Focus Areas: Focus areas are key areas where future investments or other improvements are desired. Mixed-use corridors are a type of focus area where different uses within the corridor are encouraged to generate activity. These mixed-use corridors are key places where there should be future improvements that encourage traveling by different modes other than car, such as walking, biking, and public transportation.

Many of the concepts within this plan are long-term and somewhat abstract. The Focus Areas section aims to take particular project ideas and ask: what particular projects could really serve as a good example for the types of developments or improvements this area would like to see in the future? While this section has detailed renderings, the specific style choices are more for illustrative purposes to show potential, rather than prescribe certain aspects of a development.

4.3. Mobility: Getting around in the future is, understandably, a key concern for future growth. This section hopes to suggest strategies and future improvements to help the area thrive in the future, instead of becoming more and more congested.

4.4. Amenities and Public Space: As the city grows, we need to ensure all communities have things that make them not only nice places to live or work, but also places where people enjoy time outdoors, cultural assets, and basic infrastructure. This section describes desired future projects or policies to make that future a reality.

4.6. Housing: In addressing future growth, there has to be a discussion of housing. This section supports the concepts within the future land use section with specific recommendations for housing in the area.

4.7. Economic Development: Future growth will also depend on economic opportunities within an area. This section describes specific recommendations around how to create an area with a thriving economy.

Public Feedback

The Eastside Area Plan Framework was developed through a combination of technical analysis and community input. The Framework illustrates and outlines the overall long-term vision for the Eastside Area, including future land use types, priority areas where new development may be focused, recommendations for key mobility improvements, opportunities for additional trail connections, and other “big moves” or ideas that will shape the future of the area.

At the beginning of the planning process, the project team developed an in-depth study and analysis of the Eastside Area to understand its history, development, and existing conditions. The Planning Team provided their input on the area’s existing assets, challenges and opportunities to develop a better understanding of the area and the community’s priorities and values. City staff also organized and facilitated additional stakeholder input and public outreach to capture a broad range of Eastside Area residents’ considerations. Through a series of facilitated work sessions and interactive exercises, the Planning Team provided input and direction that is reflected in the Plan Framework.

Over several months, project staff and the Planning Team worked collaboratively to build upon the Framework to identify the key priorities, improvements and strategies that will shape the Sub-Area Plan and guide growth, development, and investment in the Eastside Area. A series of draft recommendations on several topics were developed for stakeholder feedback and are reflected in the Plan.

During the second Planning Team meeting, staff presented on existing conditions and the team discussed assets, challenges and opportunities in the Eastside Area. Then the Planning Team discussed concepts for the Eastside Area Plan Vision and Goals.

The Plan Framework was then iteratively developed, based on Planning Team conversations, other public input and analysis on each of the plan sections. Multiple planning team meetings were devoted to each of the topics, allowing for initial feedback and then review of draft recommendations. Specific meetings and other public involvement activities that contributed to the development of each Plan Framework topic are summarized in the documents library of the Eastside Community Area Plan website.

Land Use

The future land use element of the plan was primarily informed by Planning Team input in Planning Team Meetings #4 and #5, and feedback received from the broader public in the 3rd and 4th Community Meetings and associated online questionnaires. Initial public input for the draft vision and goals, and other public input related to housing, economic development, and other sections of the plan also informed the future land use element of the plan.

Focus Areas

The Eastside Area Planning Team identified and discussed potential focus areas in Planning Team Meetings #2 and #3. The Planning Department invited the public to help identify focus areas and recommendations for how to improve focus areas in the 2nd and 3rd community meetings, and in the online questionnaires that served as alternative options to attending the community meetings. Then later in Planning Team Meeting #9, the Planning Team provided additional recommendations to improve focus areas.

Mobility

The Eastside Area Planning Team provided initial direction to inform Mobility recommendations in Planning Team Meeting #8, and reviewed and commented on draft mobility concepts in Planning Team Meeting #10. The broader public provided ideas and answered questions to inform the Mobility recommendation in Community Meeting #3. Public and Planning Team discussions directed at other topics, such as future land use, also informed the Mobility recommendations. During the process, the Planning Department also coordinated with partner agencies such as VIA Metropolitan Transit, the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, the City of San Antonio Transportation Department and City of San Antonio Public Works Department.

Amenities and Public Space

Amenities and public space recommendations were created based on public and Planning Team input received throughout the planning process. Additionally, the 2nd community meeting and Planning Team Meeting #9 included opportunities for participants to share ideas specifically for the Amenities and Public Space section of the plan.

Housing and Economic Development

The Housing recommendations and Economic Development recommendations were primarily informed by Planning Team input in Planning Team Meetings #6 and #7, and feedback received from the broader public in the 3rd and 4th Community Meetings, and associated online questionnaires. Initial public input

for the draft vision and goals, and public input related to other sections of the plan also informed the housing and economic development recommendations and strategies.

Land Use

[See Figure 4 – Future Land Use Map]

Future Land Use

The Eastside Community Area Land Use Plan supports and is intended to implement the [SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, Multimodal Transportation Plan, and Sustainability Plan](#). It also draws on recommendations from the [SA Corridors Strategic Framework Plan](#) and implements the Vision, Goals, and Plan Framework for the Eastside Community Area. The Future Land Use Plan supports neighborhood stability, while providing ample opportunity for additional economic revitalization and a growing and diversifying residential population. The Future Land Use Plan supports the revitalization and emergence of mixed-use neighborhood centers that would offer some retail, service, or entertainment uses within walking distance of residents and that complement transit service and other neighborhood assets.

The following sections describe the general future land use patterns of the Eastside Community Area. Recommendations for implementing the land use plan follow, and the full catalog of land use categories (including descriptions and allowable zoning districts) adopted in the Unified Development Code (UDC) Chapter 35 are found at the bottom of the page.

Residential Areas

Residential neighborhood areas are places primarily for people to reside and carry out neighborhood life. However in neighborhoods west of New Braunfels Avenue, small businesses and live/work uses in pedestrian-oriented buildings are also supported. This plan supports additional diverse housing options in neighborhoods. Medium Density Residential areas provide for slightly greater numbers of people to live near transit service, daily goods and services, and other assets like parks or culturally important places. Examples include blocks near Commerce Street, Houston Street, New Braunfels Avenue, and Hackberry Street.

Mixed-Use Centers and Corridors

Mixed-use centers and corridors are designated on the Future Land Use Map in places where historically there were small businesses and community uses, or near cultural assets, parks, transit service, or an existing mix of goods, services, and public gathering places available to the community. Regional Mixed-Use areas, which are intended to host the most people living, working, and recreating are located near major employment and activity centers, and where VIA Metropolitan Transit (VIA) is planning to provide high capacity transit service, for example around the intersection of Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue. Urban Mixed-Use areas enable more people to live or work near other community assets, for example, where there are currently vacant lots across Commerce Street from Lincoln Park and its associated community and human services centers. Neighborhood Mixed-Use areas are intended to include a mix of smaller scale buildings and uses, for example along Commerce Street between the Historic Eastside Cemeteries and Dawson Park.

Employment Areas

The Employment/Flex Mixed-Use and Business/Innovation Mixed-Use areas are located where there is an existing mix of industrial, commercial and residential uses. They support existing industrial uses, while providing opportunities for innovative or creative businesses to locate in the same area. Examples of these areas can be found between St. Phillip's College and New Braunfels Avenue, near I-35, and southeast of the AT&T Center.

Land Use Recommendations

Three land use recommendations are identified to support the land use plan for the Eastside Community Area. In the Implementation section of the plan, specific strategies are provided for each of the following recommendations.

Land Use Recommendation #1: Support mixed-use centers that complement neighborhoods, transit service, employment opportunities, and cultural assets.

Mixed-use centers and corridors are intended to be hubs of community activity. New housing and businesses can be in mixed-use areas that would otherwise have to locate in neighborhoods, blue-collar job areas, and natural areas. Instead, these mixed-use areas will support high quality transit service, great amenities and public spaces, and housing and economic opportunities for existing neighborhood residents and future generations.

The mixed-use areas allow flexibility for a variety of uses and activities to be located close to one another, close to important community assets, and close to residents who will visit them. The five mixed-use categories, each reflecting different mixes of uses and development intensities, were applied to the Future Land Use Map to be sensitive to the surrounding neighborhood context. As reflected by Figure 5 and Figure 6, buildings of varying sizes, complementary in scale to existing patterns, can mostly be added in areas along major corridors and in centers of activity.

Land Use Recommendation #2: Preserve and revitalize older building stock and traditional uses and development patterns.

Portions of the Eastside Area were originally developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and over 50% of the area's housing stock was built before 1960. Much of the original building stock remains. Many older commercial buildings can still be seen interspersed throughout Eastside neighborhoods where today there are no businesses. Eastside Area communities intend to preserve and restore these traditional building forms and development patterns because they are important to the area's identity and they are the foundation for the unique places that can attract new businesses and employment opportunities. They also provide important sustainability and quality of life functions, for example, by providing space for large trees to grow in neighborhoods. Furthermore, much of San Antonio's and the Eastside Area's naturally occurring affordable housing is in buildings constructed prior to 1960.

Accommodating traditional uses such as live/work buildings or a combination of buildings with residential and commercial uses on the same property requires an understandable permitting process. Residents and entrepreneurs who want to contribute to economic revitalization and historic preservation in the Eastside Area by rehabilitating existing buildings and using their property will depend on a permitting process that is flexible in accommodating historical use patterns and site designs. The City may also support residents and entrepreneurs seeking to preserve older buildings by providing them with flexibility in how to use the buildings, so that preservation is financially more attractive than demolition.

Land Use Recommendation #3: Site designs and land uses should support walking, transit use, and spending time outside in mixed-use centers and corridors.

The land use and design principles that can improve the experience of walking, using transit, and spending time in public places and centers of community activity are not new. Instead they largely reflect the original development patterns of Eastside Area neighborhoods and main streets. Returning to

these principles can improve quality of life for Eastside Area residents and future generations while honoring the area's history.

Although the Eastside Area was originally developed over several decades, housing in Eastside Area neighborhoods shares a handful of basic characteristics that affect how the neighborhoods look and function as historically pedestrian-oriented places. As new infill development occurs, site design and building form should reflect these characteristics, as illustrated by [Figure 7](#) and [Figure 8](#):

- Doors face the street, or they open to a front porch that is facing the street.
- There are windows in the front wall of the dwelling, facing the street.
- Garages or carports are either not included or are located to the rear of the building's front wall.
- There is room for large canopy trees to grow around the front, sides, or back of dwellings.

Regulations that require new development to include a minimum amount of parking do not contribute to achieving the Eastside Community Area Vision and Goals, and minimum parking requirements were not historically a part of what led to Eastside Area's qualities that are valued most by residents today. Although there are small areas of the Eastside where at limited times there may be too many people wanting to park for the number of street spaces available, this not an issue at most times or in most places. Where and when there are imbalances between parking demand and parking supply, the City's interventions should focus on managing demand for parking instead of on requiring residents and entrepreneurs to pay for additional parking supply.

Future Land Use Categories

As described above, the Eastside Community Area Plan includes a range of land use designations that represent the unique character of the area, while encouraging and supporting development patterns that reflect the goals of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan and the preferences of the Eastside Community Area. Listed below is the full list of land use categories adopted by City Council into the Unified Development Code (UDC), Chapter 35, on October 11, 2018. Each category listed includes a description, general guidance on where the land use designation is most appropriate, and a list of allowable zoning districts.

Residential Estate

Residential Estate includes large lot single-family detached houses on individual estate-sized lots or in conservation subdivisions. This form of development should be located away from major arterials, and can include certain nonresidential uses such as schools, places of worship, and parks that are centrally located for convenient neighborhood access. Permitted zoning districts: FR, R-20, RE, and RP.

Typical densities in this land use category would be up to 2 dwelling units per acre.

Low Density Residential

Low Density Residential includes single-family detached houses on individual lots, including manufactured and modular homes. This form of development should not typically be located adjacent to major arterials. This land use category can include certain nonresidential uses such as schools, places of worship, and parks that are centrally located for convenient neighborhood access. Permitted zoning districts: R-4, R-5, R-6, NP-8, NP-10, and NP-15.

Typical densities in this land use category would range from 3 to 12 dwelling units per acre.

IDZ and PUD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Urban Low Density Residential

Urban Low Density Residential includes a range of housing types including single-family attached and detached houses on individual lots, small lot residences, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage homes, manufactured homes, low-rise garden-style apartments, and manufactured home parks. This land use category may also accommodate small scale retail and service uses that are intended to support the adjacent residential uses. Other nonresidential uses, including, but not limited to, schools, places of worship, and parks are appropriate within these areas and should be centrally located to provide easy accessibility. Permitted zoning districts: R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, RM-5, RM-6, MF-18, MH, MHC, MHP, and NC.

Typical densities in this land use category would range from 7 to 18 dwelling units per acre.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, and TOD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Medium Density Residential

Medium Density Residential accommodates a range of housing types including single-family attached and detached houses on individual lots, manufactured and modular homes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and low-rise, garden-style apartments with more than four (4) dwelling units per building. Cottage homes and very small lot single-family houses are also appropriate within this land use category. Higher density multi-family uses, where practical, should be located in proximity to transit facilities. Certain nonresidential uses, including, but not limited to, schools, places of worship, and parks are appropriate within these areas and should be centrally located to provide easy accessibility. Permitted zoning districts: R-3, R-4, RM-4, RM-5, RM-6, MF-18, MF-25, MF-33, MH, MHC, and MHP.

Typical densities in this land use category would range from 13 to 33 dwelling units per acre.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, and TOD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

High Density Residential

High Density Residential includes low-rise to mid-rise buildings with four (4) or more dwelling units in each. High density residential provides for compact development including apartments, condominiums, and assisted living facilities. This form of development is typically located along or near major arterials or collectors. High density multi-family uses should be located in close proximity to transit facilities. Certain nonresidential uses, including, but not limited to schools, places of worship, and parks are appropriate within these areas and should be centrally located to provide easy accessibility. This classification may be used as a transitional buffer between lower density residential uses and nonresidential uses. High density residential uses should be located in a manner that does not route traffic through lower-density residential uses. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, MF-25, MF-33, MF-40, MF-50, MF-65, MH, MHC, and MHP.

Typical densities in this land use category would range from 25 to 50 dwelling units per acre.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, and TOD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood Commercial includes smaller intensity commercial uses such as small-scale retail or offices, professional services, and convenience retail and services that are intended to support the adjacent residential uses. Neighborhood commercial uses should be located within walking distance of neighborhood residential areas. Special consideration should be given to pedestrian and bicycle facilities that connect neighborhoods to commercial nodes. Permitted zoning districts: O-1, NC, and C-1.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD, and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Community Commercial

Community Commercial includes offices, professional services, and retail uses that are accessible to bicyclists and pedestrians and linked to transit facilities. This form of development should be located in proximity to major intersections or where an existing commercial area has been established. Community commercial uses are intended to support multiple neighborhoods, have a larger market draw than neighborhood commercial uses, and attract patrons from the neighboring residential areas. All off-street parking and loading areas adjacent to residential uses should include landscape buffers, lighting and signage controls. Examples of community commercial uses include, but are not limited to, cafes, offices, restaurants, beauty parlors, neighborhood groceries or markets, shoe repair shops and medical clinics. Permitted zoning districts: O-1.5, NC, C-1, and C-2.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD, and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Regional Commercial

Regional Commercial includes high intensity uses that draw customers from both adjacent communities as well as the larger metropolitan region. Regional commercial uses are typically located in general proximity to nodes along expressways or major arterial roadways and incorporate high-capacity transit facilities. Regional Commercial uses should incorporate well-defined entrances, shared internal circulation, limited curb cuts to expressways and arterial streets, sidewalks and shade trees in parking lots, landscaping between the parking lots and roadways, and well- designed monument signage. Examples of regional commercial uses include, but are not limited to, movie theaters, plant nurseries, automotive repair shops, fitness centers, home improvement centers, hotels and motels, mid- to high-rise office buildings, and automobile dealerships. Permitted zoning districts: O-1.5, O-2, C- 2, C-3, L, and BP.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Neighborhood Mixed-Use

Neighborhood Mixed-Use contains a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses at a neighborhood scale. Within mixed-use buildings, residential units located above first floor are encouraged. Typical first floor uses include, but are not limited to, small office spaces, professional services, and small-scale retail establishments and restaurants. The mix of uses may be vertically or horizontally distributed, and there is no requirement that a single building contain more than one use. Live/work housing options are permissible in Neighborhood Mixed-Use area to ensure access to housing options and services within close proximity for the local workforce. Where practical, buildings are

situated close to the public right-of-way, and parking is located behind buildings. Parking requirements may be minimized using a variety of creative methods, such as shared or cooperative parking agreements, to maximize land available for housing and community services. Pedestrian spaces are encouraged to include lighting and signage, and streetscaping should be scaled for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles. Properties classified as Neighborhood Mixed-Use should be located in close proximity to transit facilities. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, RM-5, RM-6, MF-18, O-1, NC, C-1, MH, MHC, MHP, FBZD, AE-1, and AE-2.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Urban Mixed-Use

Urban Mixed-Use contains a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses at a medium level of intensity. Urban Mixed-Use development is typically larger-scale than Neighborhood Mixed-Use and smaller-scale than Regional Mixed-Use, although many of the allowable uses could be the same in all three categories. Building footprints may be block-scale, but could be smaller depending on block configuration and overall development density. Typical first floor uses include, but are not limited to, professional services, offices, institutional uses, restaurants, and retail including grocery stores. The mix of uses may be vertically or horizontally distributed, and there is no requirement that a single building contain more than one use. Live/work housing options are permissible in Urban Mixed-Use areas to ensure access to housing options and services within close proximity for the local workforce. Structured parking is encouraged in Urban Mixed-Use category, but is not required. Parking requirements may be satisfied through shared or cooperative parking agreements, which could include off-site garages or lots. The Urban Mixed-Use category should be located in proximity to transit facilities. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, RM-5, RM-6, MF-18, MF-25, MF-33, MF-40, O-1, O-1.5, C-1, C-2, MH, MHP, MHC, FBZD, AE-1, AE-2, AE-3, and AE-4.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Regional Mixed-Use

Regional Mixed Use contains residential, commercial and institutional uses at high densities. Regional Mixed-Use developments are typically located within regional centers and in close proximity to transit facilities, where mid-rise to high-rise buildings would be appropriate. Typical lower floor uses include, but are not limited to, offices, professional services, institutional uses, restaurants, and retail including grocery stores. The mix of uses may be vertically or horizontally distributed, and there is no requirement that a single building contain more than one use. Live/work housing options are permissible in Regional Mixed-Use areas to ensure access to housing options and services within close proximity for the local workforce. Where feasible, development is ideally built at the block scale, with minimum building setbacks. Parking requirements may be satisfied through shared or cooperative parking agreements, which can include off-site garages or lots. If parking requirements are satisfied on-site, structured parking is encouraged. Pedestrian spaces are encouraged to be generous in width and lighting, with streetscaping and signage scaled to pedestrians. Regional Mixed-Use projects encourage incorporation of transit facilities into development. Permitted zoning districts: MF-33, MF-40, MF-50, MF-65, O-1.5, O-2, C-2, C-3, D, ED, FBZD, AE-1, AE-2, AE-3, and AE-4.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Employment/Flex Mixed-Use

Employment/Flex Mixed-Use provides a flexible live/work environment with an urban mix of residential and light service industrial uses. Uses include smaller-scale office, retail, art studio warehouses, art-oriented fabrication, creative businesses and work spaces, and cottage industrial and fabrication uses. Adaptive uses of vacant or underutilized structures are encouraged to provide residential urban infill and appropriate employment opportunities within or in close proximity to neighborhoods. Buildings have a smaller footprint and can closely resemble campus-like development across multiple sites or with several multi-functioning buildings on one site. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, MF-18, MF-25, MF-33, O-1, O-1.5, C-1, C-2, L, AE-1, AE-2, AE-3, and AE-4.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Business/Innovation Mixed-Use

Business/Innovation Mixed-Use accommodates industrial uses with office, commercial, and residential uses, all within a cohesive setting, on a larger scale and within larger footprints than the Employment/Flex Mixed-Use category. Industrial arts workshops, high tech fabrication, processing and assembly, and other industrial uses are permitted, in addition to commercial uses. Vocational training, technological learning centers, medical campuses, and research/development institutions are also appropriate for these spaces. Additional environmental performance standards should be employed for properties designated as Business/Innovation Mixed-Use, such as hours of activity, loading, noise levels and lighting, to ensure that the intensity of the industrially oriented uses is comparable to that of the other non-residential uses. The mix of uses may be either vertically or horizontally distributed. Live/work housing options are permissible in Business/Innovation Mixed Use areas to ensure access to housing options and services within close proximity of business innovation areas for the local-workforce. Business/Innovation mixed use should incorporate transit and bicycle facilities to serve the training and employment base. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, MF-18, MF-25, O-1.5, O-2, C-2, C-3, L, I-1, MI-1, BP, AE-1, AE-2, AE-3, and AE-4.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Light Industrial

Light Industrial includes a mix of manufacturing uses, business park, and limited retail/service uses that serve the industrial uses. Industrial uses should be screened and buffered from adjoining non-industrial uses. Any outside storage should be under a roof and screened from public view. Examples of light industrial uses include drug laboratories, furniture wholesalers, lumberyards, food production, and warehousing. Permitted zoning districts: L, I-1, MI-1, and BP.

IDZ, TOD, and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

Heavy Industrial

Heavy Industrial includes heavy manufacturing, processing and fabricating businesses. Heavy industrial uses shall be concentrated at arterials, expressways, and railroad lines. This category is not compatible with neighborhood-scaled categories or those that permit residential zoning. Heavy Industrial should be separated from non-industrial uses by an allowable land use or a significant buffer. Examples of heavy industrial uses include auto manufacturing, battery manufacturing, and petro chemical bulk storage. Permitted zoning districts: I-1, I-2, MI-1, MI-2, QD, and SGD.

Agricultural

Agricultural includes crop agriculture, ranching, and related agribusiness practices. Single-family detached houses and detached accessory dwelling units are permitted on agricultural and ranch lands at very low densities or in conservation subdivisions that will not interfere with agricultural operations. Limited commercial uses directly serving agricultural and ranching uses, such as farmers markets, nurseries, stables, bed and breakfasts are permitted. To maintain scenic qualities, natural vegetative buffers, deeper setbacks, increased signage control, earthen drainage channels, and more restrictive access management standards are desired along major scenic corridors. Floodplain protection and buffer zones along creeks and rivers are instrumental in retaining rural character. Permitted zoning districts: RP and FR.

Parks/Open Space

Parks/Open Space may include, but is not limited to, large, linear, or unimproved land where conservation is promoted, and development is not encouraged due to the presence of topographic constraints or institutional uses on the site. Parks/Open Space may include utility corridors and public or private land uses that encourage outdoor passive or active recreation. Examples include city owned and/or operated pocket, regional, or linear parks, as well as private parks associated with subdivisions and neighborhood associations.

City/State/Federal Government

City/State/Federal Government includes areas owned and operated by a federal, state, or city agency. Examples may include government offices, public service facilities such as libraries and police stations, military bases, state colleges, and federal courts. This category does not apply to properties owned by a public agency but leased to and operated by another party.

Focus Areas

[See **Figure 9 – Focus Area Framework Map**]

Focus areas and corridors within the Eastside Area were identified by the Planning Team and the community as areas that have a combination of unique qualities or community assets and the potential to serve as pedestrian-oriented mixed-use centers. While each area is unique, they all present opportunities to fulfill the SA Tomorrow goal of creating compact, walkable places where San Antonio residents can live, work, and play. Four corridors were identified as priorities for focused investment that improve pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use places: Houston Street, Commerce Street, Hackberry Street, and New Braunfels Avenue.

Each of the corridor Focus Areas are a collection of unique places that vary in character over the long distances they cover within the Eastside Area. For example, each one includes street segments lined with primarily single-family homes arranged as they were decades ago, and each has small areas that, at

least historically, were commercial centers serving surrounding neighborhoods. Each of the four corridor focus areas shares some characteristics of opportunity, including:

- Concentrations of commercial and civic activities;
- Historic and unique buildings and public spaces that contribute to distinct place identity;
- Buildings that are or could be retrofitted to be pedestrian-oriented, with small setbacks, and doors and windows facing the street;
- Affordable transportation options in the form of public transit; and
- Vacant and underutilized land and buildings that can accommodate more people living working, shopping, and gathering.

Because the four corridor Focus Areas cover long distances and a variety of situations, this plan provides more detailed recommendations and illustrations for smaller locations within each one that have unique qualities and more potential to serve as great places for more Eastside Area residents, to fulfill the SA Tomorrow goal of creating compact walkable places where San Antonio residents can live, work, and play.

Focus Area #1: Houston Street

[See **Figure 10 – Focus Areas 1 & 2 Improvements Map**]

Houston Street reflects several of San Antonio’s historical values and time periods. West of Cherry Street are a few remaining buildings reflecting that area’s industrial history and history of Black business ownership. Moving east, the area between Cherry Street and Palmetto Street is part of the Dignowity Hill Historic District. Although this section of Houston Street does not include any historic landmarks, there are several homes dating to the 1900s through the 1930s. Here, there are several old stone retaining walls facing the street. A public art project highlighting the stone walls includes stone pavers, mosaic tiles and found objects embedded within the walkways.

Further east, beyond New Braunfels Avenue, there are primarily older homes on originally platted small lots facing the street, with small businesses located around Gevers Street, Walters Street, and Mel Waiters Way. This area was part of the original Jefferson Heights subdivision and was included in a Cultural Heritage District designation for reflecting the historic value of early Black home ownership. The corridor has small scale industrial character between Mel Waiters Way and Onslow Way, before passing the AT&T Center’s parking areas, modern industrial sites, and Salado Creek.

Vision

A primary opportunity in the Houston Street Focus Area is to leverage VIA’s planned Advanced Rapid Transit Service to accommodate more people living and working near an affordable transportation option that connects with other major destinations throughout the city. The increased number of residents, workers and commuters could in turn support more diverse businesses. Adaptively re-using pre-war buildings, preserving historic landscape elements such as the stone walls, and adding additional public art that reflects local culture will help the corridor maintain a recognizable identity that is rooted in history, as Houston Street changes to serve as the Eastside Area’s primary transit corridor.

Figure 10 illustrates general recommendations for Focus Area #1 along Houston Street as well as Focus Area #2 along Commerce Street.

Vacant and underutilized land and expansive surface parking areas near Houston Street’s intersections with Cherry Street and with North New Braunfels Avenue represent opportunities for more people living and working in the area, without having to accommodate as much new development within the traditional lower density residential portions of Eastside neighborhoods. The [Eastpoint Station Area Concept](#) in the [SA Corridors Framework Plan](#) includes recommendations to improve the area around Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue to complement planned Advanced Rapid Transit Service with pedestrian-oriented development, affordable housing, and street improvements to make walking or riding transit safer and more comfortable.

In contrast to those opportunities for larger scale infill development opportunities, Houston Street’s intersections with Gevers Street, Walters Street, and Mel Walters Way include smaller scale revitalization and redevelopment opportunities to support more housing and both existing and additional small businesses providing convenient goods and services to surrounding neighborhoods. **Figure 10** illustrates the specific recommendations focused on the Houston Street segments adjacent to Gevers Street and Mel Walters Way to support these places as neighborhood hubs. These include streetscape improvements, completing sidewalks on adjacent streets, adaptively re-using buildings that have unique character, and supporting some new development.

Transformative Project #1 – Hackberry Street and Houston Street

[See **Figures 11 and 12 – Existing Conditions View & Aspirational Illustration**]

At the intersection of Houston Street and Hackberry Street, there are opportunities to achieve several aspects of the Eastside Area Vision and Goals. This site is located within a few blocks of Dignowity and Lockwood Parks to the north. A bank, restaurant, brewery and other small businesses are serving local residents at the Hackberry Market, and a new two-story event center is scheduled to open one block north on Hackberry Street. The Velocity Texas project will bring more workers to the area over the next several years, and VIA’s Advanced Rapid Transit Service is planned to run on Houston Street, potentially with a stop nearby, drawing more area residents to Houston Street on a regular basis.

Community input in the Eastside Community Area planning process indicated significant concern in Dignowity Hill around housing affordability, along with enthusiasm for recent success in supporting small business growth, historic preservation, home rehabilitation, and transformative improvements to Dignowity and Lockwood Parks. Improving streets for safe and comfortable walking is an outstanding local priority. The sidewalks along Houston Street and Hackberry Street are adjacent to four vehicle travel lanes, and although protected by curbs, leave pedestrians exposed to summer heat uncomfortably close to travelling vehicles.

This site has the potential to serve more people living and working close to affordable transit service and Downtown employment opportunities. Local small retail and dining businesses could benefit from more people living or working very close by as well, and area residents could experience a more vibrant community destination. The intersection includes a vacant lot on the northwest corner, with an alley that could be used for rear accessed parking. An original two-story neighborhood home on the southwest corner gives the intersection a unique identity tied to the area’s history.

Vision

Based on the site conditions and values expressed by local community members, changes to this site should improve the environment for walking and create new opportunities for housing, working, and shopping. Changes should also complement historic built forms and development patterns and feel connected to Dignowity and Lockwood Parks. This place should be a unique and distinguished hub of

community activity that draws visitors from surrounding neighborhoods and nearby employment areas throughout the day and evening. **Figure 11, Figure 12,** and the paragraphs below describe some physical changes that would reflect the vision above, to provoke thought and inspiration in community members, developers, property owners and public officials as they engage with each other in creating the future of this place.

The northern corner lots would host new buildings serving as dwellings, potentially with office or retail space on the 1st floor. The buildings would be set back from both streets to accommodate improved transit stops, seating, lighting, and landscaping while still leaving room for a wide sidewalk. Multi-story buildings would be divided and differentiated along the street to avoid a monotonous or overbearing street wall.

If the site and surrounding area came to serve enough people, the northwest corner development could include pedestrian paseos with commercial storefronts leading to the site's interior. Alternately, they could serve as service alleys or gated pedestrian walkways connecting first floor dwellings with parking areas and the public sidewalks. Shaded rooftop decks would provide additional usable space with views of surrounding neighborhoods, Downtown, and the green eastside ridgeline receding to the southeast.

An adaptive reuse of the building on the northeast corner would be ideal, retaining the building's unique character for the benefit of the whole area. However, if the site were to redevelop, additional building area and height would accommodate more users lending energy and opportunity to the area.

Hackberry Street north of Houston Street is envisioned as a pedestrian-oriented street with wider sidewalks, intersection bulb-outs, and additional street parking to support local businesses. Trees and functional landscaping that manages stormwater flowing down Hackberry Street would make walking more enjoyable and create an intuitive green connection between this neighborhood destination and Dignowity and Lockwood Parks.

In the surrounding blocks, new two-story residences following local architectural norms and the Historic District regulations are shown on vacant lots. The conceptual new buildings shown on these lots are duplexes with a primary entrance oriented to the street rather than to a private alley. More neighbors in the surrounding neighborhood would contribute to making this site a vibrant community place.

Focus Area #2: Commerce Street

[See **Figure 10 – Focus Areas 1 & 2 Improvements Map**]

Commerce Street presents opportunities to improve connections to historic and cultural resources such as the historic Eastside cemeteries, while increasing the variety of goods, services, and public gathering places within walking distance of neighborhoods.

Commerce Street was one of San Antonio's original street car routes, connecting Downtown with neighborhoods as far east as those around Walters Street. Later, it served as a primary connection between Downtown San Antonio and state highway networks connecting San Antonio with Seguin and other communities further east, all the way to Houston.

The segment of Commerce Street between St. Paul's Square and the Historic Eastside Cemeteries was historically a bustling main street and was at one time considered the center of Black owned businesses on the Eastside. It included a variety of services, stores, and entertainment venues. The City has already

invested in streetscape improvements in this area. Future development should complement the existing mixture of both large and small pedestrian-oriented buildings.

Commerce Street passes next to the historic Alamo Masonic Cemetery, historic City Cemeteries, Anchor Lodge Masonic Cemetery, Knights of Pythias Cemetery, and St. Joseph's Cemetery. This plan's Amenities and Public Spaces section includes recommendations to improve connections to the cemeteries so that more people can enjoy them as open space and connect with them as places of historical value and cultural heritage.

East of New Braunfels Avenue, there is a collection of small businesses, many of which occupy original homes from around the turn of the last century and include businesses that may maintain culture or social relations on the Eastside, including a restaurant and a barbershop. Farther East at the corner with Walters Street, just north of St. Philip's College is Dawson Park. Planned in 1890 as part of the East End Subdivision, the park was renamed in honor of the Black aviator, Army Air Corps member, and Phyllis Wheatley High School graduate, Robert A. Dawson.

Vision

Commerce Street between the Historic Cemeteries and Dawson Park is surrounded by neighborhood residential areas and St. Philip's College. Without major public investments, Eastside Area neighborhoods have supported a collection of small businesses in this area. Continued growth in the student population of St. Philip's College, and additional support from the City, surrounding neighborhoods, and entrepreneurs, could make this place play a stronger role as a center of neighborhood life for many Jefferson Heights and Denver Heights residents. **Figure 10** illustrates some of the public investments such as "improved streetscapes," "priority building frontage," and other improvements that would support this vision. The Transformative Project described below and illustrated in **Figure 13** and **Figure 14** focus in more detail on the area immediately surrounding the intersection of Commerce Street and Gevers Street.

East of the Union Pacific Railroad Tracks, there are distressed properties attracting crime near Commerce Street's intersections with Dafoste Avenue and Spriggsdale Boulevard that Coliseum Willow Park residents identified as priority locations for new development. A variety of new residential and commercial uses being developed West of Spriggsdale Boulevard and North of Commerce Street may catalyze improvements in these priority locations.

Transformative Project #2 – Commerce Street and Gevers Street

[See **Figures 13 and 14 – Existing Conditions View & Aspirational Illustration**]

At the intersection of Commerce Street and Gevers Street, there are opportunities to support the Eastside Community Area Vision and Goals, and aspirations identified by Jefferson Heights area residents, including having a few more local establishments like a café or restaurant, a hub of small businesses and dining options located close to home in a walkable environment, and currently vacant lots in the neighborhood occupied by homes for people to live in.

This area is within a block of St. Philip's College's parking lots, but several blocks from the campus' primary buildings. Over time, additional buildings and campus activity may shift in this direction. Most recently, the College is finishing the new Culinary Arts and Hospitality Building a block from Dawson Park. The site is two blocks from the Historic Eastside Cemeteries and a subtle gateway marked by the two-story brick clad building at Commerce Street and New Braunfels Avenue.

The northeast corner of the intersection includes a gas station convenience store and vacant lots. The two-story building on the northwest corner is home to Sam's Barbershop and other leasable commercial space. The southwest corner of the intersection includes two older buildings with some unique character including what appears to be an old filling station. The southeast corner of the site is the Victory Gospel Chapel's flexible gathering, play, and parking space.

Surrounding residential neighborhood blocks include several vacant lots. Recently Jefferson Heights has begun to experience new residential infill development that previously had been occurring only closer to Downtown.

Vision

Based on the site conditions and values expressed by local community members, changes to this site should improve the environment for walking and bicycling and complement the evolving mix of small businesses located immediately west along Commerce Street. This should be a unique place that draws visitors from St. Philip's College and surrounding neighborhoods throughout the day. **Figure 13, Figure 14**, and the paragraphs below describe some physical changes that would reflect the vision above, to provoke thought and inspiration in community members, developers, property owners and public officials as they engage with each other in creating the future of this place.

The northeast corner property could accommodate a new multi-story development with dwellings above first floor retail or office space. It may take longer for this corner of the site to improve than the others. Nearer term improvements could occur on the northwestern corner, with further rehabilitation of the existing building and using some of the existing surface parking area for landscaping or outdoor seating. Buildings on the southwest corner of the intersection could be adaptively reused to preserve their unique qualities, or redeveloped to accommodate more people in larger, more pedestrian-oriented formats that would improve the street environment for walking. On the southeast corner, an area currently used for parking, church gatherings, and markets could be improved and feature food trucks and market stalls, and function as a plaza space, while still facilitating use for parking.

Additional street parking with curb bulbouts on Commerce Street, following the existing pattern of street parking to the west could support small businesses and make pedestrians feel more protected from passing vehicle traffic. Improving the alleys that run parallel to Commerce Street would support rear access parking and gradually over time, enable the restoration of Commerce Street's sidewalk from one that is extensively interrupted by driveways, to one that is more continuous and better for walking. Improving Gevers Street as a priority bicycle connection and completing sidewalk connections on the streets intersecting Commerce Street would reinforce this place as a destination for area residents.

Focus Area #3: Hackberry Street

[See [Figure 15 – Focus Areas 3 & 4 Improvements Map](#)]

Hackberry Street connects some of the Eastside Area's oldest neighborhoods. Several historic landmarks are located along Hackberry Street, including the Carver Community Cultural Center and Douglas Elementary School.

Hackberry Street includes a variety of small businesses, pedestrian-oriented buildings and redevelopment opportunities between I-10 and Aransas Avenue. From there north to Commerce Street, there is a greater proportion of homes situated among businesses alongside the street. Hackberry Street

passes within two blocks of the Pine Street and Iowa Street intersection, that at various times in history was home to Leonard’s Pharmacy, a Pullman Porters Union Headquarters, the original Keyhole Club, a segregated Black theatre, and the local headquarters for the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee.

North of Houston Street, Hackberry Street rises through Dignowity Hill residential areas and Dignowity and Lockwood parks, and terminates at the I-35 frontage road after passing through the industrial area and rail switching yards.

Vision

Many buildings along Hackberry Street were built prior to World War II and are naturally pedestrian-oriented, and many of the lots along Hackberry Street retain their original small sizes and configurations, with short ends at the street, creating a natural opportunity for reusing existing buildings and for new infill development that embraces small scale pedestrian-oriented design.

The Eastside Planning Team identified the intersection of Pine Street with Iowa Street as an important historical and potential future neighborhood hub. At this intersection, future investment should memorialize the history of Black music, business ownership, and civil rights organizing that occurred there.

Further south, at Hackberry Street’s intersection with Aransas Avenue, there is an opportunity to repurpose the triangle as enjoyable public space and to improve walkability. **Figure 16** – Aransas Avenue & Hackberry Street Existing Conditions View, and **Figure 17** – Aransas Avenue & Hackberry Aspirational Illustration illustrates a concept for an urban plaza, and street improvements to complement both existing historical buildings and other properties that could redevelop to accommodate more people living and working. **Figure 15** illustrates additional improvements and priorities to reinforce this area as a community hub such as improving alleys to enable rear parking and uninterrupted sidewalks, and “priority building frontage” segments where any new development should have minimal setbacks and include doors and windows facing the street. Because Hackberry does not cross I-35 its future character and role north of Nolan Street may not be as vehicle oriented as it is today and has the potential for improved streetscapes that prioritize the pedestrian experience. **Figure 15** also illustrates the potential for new businesses and housing around the intersection of Nolan Street and Hackberry Street that may be sparked by the Lockwood and Dignowity Parks redevelopment. Lastly, priority connections for pedestrian and bicycles to the Downtown area are illustrated on Carolina, Florida, Montana, and Burleson Streets. These connections would benefit from improved wayfinding and safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

Focus Area #4: New Braunfels Avenue

[See **Figure 15 – Focus Areas 3 & 4 Improvements Map**]

Sections of New Braunfels Avenue north of Houston Street historically served as a regional connection to the City of New Braunfels and beyond. There are collections of pedestrian-oriented buildings in Government Hill north of Mason Street and in Dignowity Hill between Nolan and Lamar Streets. The City’s 2017 Bond Program projects to improve Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza and to improve sidewalks and other street amenities on New Braunfels Avenue, between Houston Street and Burleson Street, will improve walkability. There are opportunities for infill development projects to contribute to walkability as well with pedestrian-oriented buildings and additional streetscape improvements.

South of Houston Street, New Braunfels Avenue passes the Historic Eastside Cemeteries and another historic landmark, the Greater Corinth Baptist Church. New Braunfels Avenue moving south is lined with primarily single-family homes, to its lowest elevation at Porter Street, where it once again hosts a variety of small businesses in automobile-oriented development formats.

Vision

VIA Metropolitan Transit is planning Primo Service to follow New Braunfels Avenue, which will enhance connections within the Eastside Area, and to destinations and employment areas such as McCreless Shopping Center, Brooks Area Regional Center, and Midtown Area Regional Center. The service will intersect the Advanced Rapid Transit service planned for Houston Street. There are opportunities for new development to provide substantial amounts of housing for people to live adjacent to New Braunfels Avenue where currently there are vacant properties and buildings, or large parking lots serving chain retail stores. This would enable more people to live next to an affordable transportation option that connects with employment opportunities, without having to accommodate so many additional dwellings within traditional neighborhood residential areas.

The SA Corridors Framework Plan [Eastpoint Station Area Concept](#) includes recommendations to improve the area around Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue to complement planned Advanced Rapid Transit Service, with pedestrian-oriented development, affordable housing, and street improvements to make walking or riding transit safer and more comfortable.

As transit service is improved on New Braunfels Avenue, it will be increasingly important to improve walkability as well. There is an opportunity to extend the kinds of streetscape improvements that occur north of Houston Street, to areas between Houston Street and Commerce Street, and to the commercial area south of Porter Street.

There are also opportunities to improve connections to the Historic Eastside Cemeteries, potentially with signage along New Braunfels Avenue identifying cemetery names.

Figure 15 also illustrates recommendations for the sections of New Braunfels Avenue between Houston Street and Paso Hondo Street. The existing Boulevard format of New Braunfels Avenue represents a green connection to the Historic Cemeteries and identifies the place as unique amongst other sections of the street, however the boulevard green space is not usable by pedestrians. In the long term, this space might be reallocated to widen and improve the pedestrian space on either side of the street with seating, landscaping, trees, and other features that would make the place enjoyable for spending time and walking.

Focus Areas Recommendations

Focus Areas Recommendation #1: Invest in culturally rooted placemaking and pedestrian comfort and safety to support neighborhood hubs.

The Eastside Area has an abundance of historic neighborhood commercial centers that were, and in some cases still are, home to groceries, restaurants, pharmacies, and other stores where residents accessed daily needs close to home, while having the chance to interact with neighbors. These locations are too numerous and dispersed to identify on the Focus Areas Framework Map, however they none-the-less should be considered priority locations for supporting small businesses and enjoyable public spaces.

As the Eastside Area’s population grows back toward historic levels and local entrepreneurs continue investing more in the community, some of these places may be enhanced for the benefit of local residents. The City should support these places by improving their streetscapes and directing revitalization and development related grants and incentives to pedestrian-oriented development and revitalization projects.

Focus Areas Recommendation #2: Improve walkability and streetscapes in the areas identified in the Focus Areas Improvements Maps.

The Focus Areas Improvements Maps show the Eastside Planning Team’s recommendations for key improvements and investments needed for selected locations in the Eastside. They represent a package of recommendations for each place that, together with additional investment from local entrepreneurs, would support small businesses and make residents feel more comfortable using these places to dine out, obtain some basic goods or services, or simply go out for a walk in a more vibrant and social environment. The recommendations represent a starting point for City and partner organizations to coordinate improvements in small areas that will provide benefits that are greater than the sum of their parts.

Focus Areas Recommendation #3: Prioritize and coordinate infrastructure investments, housing programs, and development regulations to leverage VIA’s planned Advanced Rapid Transit service.

VIA Metropolitan Transit plans to provide an enhanced Advanced Rapid Transit service along Houston Street, and Primo Bus service along New Braunfels Avenue, enhancing connections between places within the Eastside, Downtown, Brooks Area Regional Center, and other employment, shopping, and entertainment centers. The environment around Houston Street and around New Braunfels Avenue should evolve to improve walkability and to support more people living and working nearby, so that they can use the improved transit service.

Mobility

[See **Figure 18 – Mobility Framework Map**]

Background and Vision

In 2016, the City of San Antonio adopted the [SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan](#), to make our city’s transportation system “sustainable, safe, convenient, efficient, and inclusive of all modes.” The plan adopted by City Council established “a shift in focus from moving vehicles to moving people,” to manage traffic congestion, and improve transportation choices. The plan identified two primary and interdependent methods for managing future traffic congestion:

- Develop a land use pattern and policy to promote local trips
- Provide transportation options — in addition to vehicles — that connect Regional Centers

[The SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan](#) acknowledged that we cannot build our way out of congestion by continuously adding additional lanes and that the Comprehensive Plan, and associated land use plans, are a primary opportunity to improve mobility in San Antonio. By welcoming more people to live, work, and play in urban centers, regional centers, and transit corridors, we can shorten trip lengths, offer more transportation choices, and improve quality of life.

The combined costs of housing and transportation (commonly referred to as H+T) are often a large portion of a household's budget, with experts recommending the combined total not be more than 45% of household income. In the Greater San Antonio Region that total on average is 53%. Walkable communities that provide great transit options can reduce the household transportation costs for the average person. If people have an alternative to driving alone, transportation costs can be stable even when gas prices rise. As some people choose to go to their destination on foot, bicycle or transit, the number of cars on the road will be minimized. This will reduce traffic delays for those people that choose to drive.

The Eastside Area's dense and interconnected street network links historic streetcar neighborhoods, employment areas, and amenities, supporting local quality of life. Early development of blocks and roads between the 1890s and 1940s reflected a time when more shopping, recreation, and work occurred closer to home, often without the use of a car. The transportation system emphasized the streetcar network and neighborhood connections to the local streetcar network and downtown, although the area included roads that connected San Antonio with communities to the east.

Later transportation investments emphasized longer distance travel, optimizing the transportation network for driving cars. Some streets such as New Braunfels Avenue were widened, leaving less room for sidewalks, and local streets that connected neighborhoods with destinations were severed by new interstate highways. Even though the Eastside Area's transportation system is designed to optimize automobile travel, the area has the lowest number of vehicles owned per capita in San Antonio, and with some of the lowest per capita household incomes in the city, area residents on average have the least capacity to afford car ownership. The Eastside Area has the foundation for a great transportation system, including a gridded network of streets and sidewalks, over ten bus routes, and the potential for more people to live closer to their daily destinations. However the area's streets lack complete pedestrian facilities, and although there are several bicycle routes marked by signs, there are few bicycle lanes.

The Eastside Area has a vision that neighbors will feel comfortable and safe when spending time outside, exercising, traveling, walking and engaging with neighbors. This vision is supported by community goals that highlight the importance of creating public gathering places, connecting neighborhoods and providing access to trails, parks and other green spaces. Providing seamless and efficient transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure will promote livability within the Eastside Area.

Eastside Community Area's Mobility Needs

Increasingly, San Antonians not only demand better and more diverse transportation choices but also that streets serve other purposes besides transportation, for example as areas for play, leisure, and gathering. Streets are places around which small businesses grow and neighborhood life is carried out. Fortunately many solutions to improve the experience of walking, bycling, and taking the bus can help streets serve as places too. Key mobility needs identified by Eastside Area residents and stakeholders include the following:

- Improved pedestrian infrastructure connecting neighborhoods with local destinations and bus routes;
- A cycling network connected with Downtown and Salado Creek Greenway;
- High capacity transit connecting to regional centers such as Midtown and the Brooks Area; and
- Enhanced connectivity to Downtown.

This plan includes recommendations to guide future transportation priorities (See [Figure 18 – Mobility Framework Map](#)) and street type and use recommendations, shown in the [Street Types Map \(Figure 19\)](#).

These mapped recommendations are explained in the two sections below.

Eastside Community Area Mobility Framework

The Mobility Framework is a vision for satisfying the mobility needs of the Eastside Area. Each of the paragraphs in the section below relates to a part of the Mobility Framework Map (See [Figure 18](#)), and has principles for ensuring people have the freedom to choose how they want to get from one place to another, safely, conveniently, and affordably.

Modal Priority Corridors

Most streets are used by multiple transportation modes, for example by cars, pedestrians, and freight. The Mobility Framework Map ([Figure 18](#)) symbolizes the area's major streets with a modal priority, indicating which mode should be emphasized for improvement on each street when a major street project is designed in the future. A modal emphasis corridor does not exclude other users but helps guide tradeoff decisions during the design of a specific street. In all cases, street design should balance the priorities of multiple modes and be informed by community conversations and local conditions and context.

Automobile

Automobile corridors are envisioned to support more automobiles. These corridors are often interstates, highways, arterial and primary roadways which provide connections to major destinations and other regions. Corridor improvements to support more automobiles can temporarily relieve traffic congestion and enhance roadway design to increase the safety of motor vehicle travel.

Freight

In the Eastside Area, corridors envisioned to serve higher levels of freight traffic include the interstate highways, Walters Street as a freight connection to Fort Sam Houston, and AT&T Center Parkway as a freight connection to local industrial areas.

Bicycles

Bicycle corridors are envisioned to make biking a convenient, safe, and comfortable option for people of all ages and abilities to recreate or to get from one place to another. Community members identified the need to add more bike lanes to connect the existing bike lane network with more neighborhoods and destinations, particularly with Downtown and the Salado Creek Greenway. Their input and ideas also suggested that the Eastside Area's dense network of streets should be used to provide bicycle improvements on streets that typically have less or slower automobile traffic, for example on Gevers Street instead of on a busier street such as Walters Street.

Transit/Pedestrian

Transit and pedestrian corridors are envisioned to provide easy and reliable choices for traveling to and from work, school, and key destinations using VIA Metropolitan Transit's planned Advanced Rapid Transit and Primo services. Reliable and frequent transit service amidst a walkable environment improves freedom and choice, offering realistic travel options besides driving, alleviating a primary cause of congestion and placing more jobs and opportunities within reach of more Eastside Area residents. Streets, intersections, and traffic signals greatly influence transit service reliability. Dedicated transit lanes and traffic signal timing can keep transit vehicles moving in times of heavier traffic. Priority transit/pedestrian corridors in the Eastside Area include Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue.

Balanced/Multimodal

Balanced/multimodal corridors are envisioned as "complete streets" where despite limited space and resources, the street should safely support all modes of travel for people of all ages and abilities.

Hackberry Street and Commerce Street are examples of streets identified on the Mobility Framework Map as Balanced/Multimodal corridors.

Pedestrian Focus Areas

Pedestrian focus areas are intended to host lots of pedestrian activity, offer better walking experiences, and enhance the economic strength of commercial and mixed-use districts. Large sidewalks with room for people to walk or linger, shaded by street trees or awnings with ample street crossing opportunities are some features that support a better street level experience. The Mobility Framework Map identified pedestrian focus areas in locations where this plan’s future land use recommendations support a future with substantially more people living and working, and where there is also some combination of local pedestrian-oriented buildings or planned transit service improvements.

Intersection / Crossing Enhancements

Intersection and crossing enhancement locations are envisioned as intuitive and predictable crossings for all users where a high level of multimodal activity including pedestrians, bicycles, and cars might otherwise have more potential for conflict or be confusing to users. The Mobility Framework Map typically includes these locations near major bicycle, pedestrian and transit routes, including along Houston, Gevers, and Walters Streets. Intersection enhancements include lowering motor vehicle travel speeds, providing visual cues to ensure drivers see pedestrians and bicyclists, and in some cases using signals to direct traffic.

Mobility Hubs

Mobility hubs are envisioned as nodes of mobility options, like frequent transit, shared rides, bicycling and micro-mobility. Lighting, shelters, benches, real-time travel information, accessible sidewalks and pedestrian crossings would complement the transportation options to make mobility hubs comfortable and attractive places. A mobility hub is identified at Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue to complement VIA’s planned Advanced Rapid Transit service and Primo service.

Eastside Community Area Street Types

As communities evolve and grow, so do the demands on the mobility system. The location and type of growth in an area or along a corridor help determine the demand on the transportation network and the viability of various transportation options. This interdependence makes it crucial to plan for transportation and land use collectively.

As San Antonio and Eastside Area communities continue growing, the area’s streets will need to serve more people moving through them, while also playing an increasingly important role as the places around which neighborhood life and the local economy are built. This requires balancing the role of streets as a network to move through, with the role of streets as places for people. The Street Types Map [See **Figure 19**] expresses this balance, integrating the Eastside Community Area Plan Future Land Use Map with the City’s Major Thoroughfare Plan. Streets are organized not only by role and function from the perspective of mobility but also by their future character and surrounding context. **Figure 20** is a chart that shows how functional street types intersect with various land use contexts, and the “Street Types” that result. The street types are shown on a spectrum that indicates priorities for future street designs, balancing vehicle mobility with placemaking.

Another way to illustrate the Proposed Street Types Map is illustrated in **Figure 21** - Streets for People and Places. This map shows the Community Area Plan's streets classified into the same gradient of intensity between car-focused and people/places-focused. As shown on the map, all of the roadways in the Community Area Plan should have a more people- and places-focused design intent going forward to support the future land use vision, with no street in the area being solely automobile oriented. Major thoroughfares will still move a high-volume of automobiles, but will do so in concert with rapid transit vehicles, bicycles, and other modes of travel. Smaller local and neighborhood streets will continue to be places with a mix of uses offering more ways for residents, workers, and visitors to get around.

[See **Figure 21 – Street Types: Streets for People and Places**]

Relationship between the Street and Buildings

Safe and vibrant streetscapes depend on how buildings integrate with surrounding sidewalks. Minimizing the distance between buildings and sidewalks typically makes a street more comfortable and attractive for walking. Buildings that meet a wide sidewalk with windows and doors are designed for people to encounter them and walk into them from the sidewalk, supporting a more active sidewalk environment, rather than a more active parking lot environment or drive-through environment, for example. Regulations and incentives for new buildings to relate to the street in this way reflects the Eastside Area's history and community priorities.

Vehicle Speeds

Cars need to be able to go faster on Primary Arterials than on local streets because Primary Arterials are meant to accommodate larger numbers of vehicles travelling farther distances. However the need for speed should be balanced with opportunities to support pedestrian-oriented neighborhood places where local conditions offer the opportunity. Sections of New Braunfels Avenue and Commerce Street for example, have a combination of historic, pedestrian-oriented buildings, small businesses, and other features that can serve as the foundation for local economic development, additional historic preservation, and neighborhood-oriented businesses.

Parking and Curb Access

Additional street parking may be appropriate in street types that emphasize people and places, such as those with mixed-use or multi-family contexts. Street parking can help achieve the Eastside Area Vision and Goals by supplanting the need for front end parking and driveways, providing convenient access to local businesses, and creating a sense of separation and protection between travelling vehicles and pedestrians. Some combination of street parking, wider sidewalks, landscaping and green stormwater infrastructure, seating, bike lanes, or loading and pick-up and drop-off zones can meet the diverse needs of local residents and businesses in places where more people will live, work, and recreate in the future.

Lane Width

Vehicle travel lanes in mixed-use areas and on local streets should be narrow, to promote slower vehicle speeds, minimize pedestrian crossing distances, and leave space for other features that will make the streets more comfortable and attractive for walking.

Mobility Recommendations

Mobility Recommendation #1: Continue Implementing the San Antonio Vision Zero Action

Plan.

The City of San Antonio's [Vision Zero](#) initiative aims to achieve zero fatalities on the community's roadways and improve roadway safety for all users, whether driving, bicycling, or walking. The Vision Zero initiative evaluates and makes recommendations to improve safety in Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas (SPIAs), locations where two or more crashes close together have resulted in severe pedestrian injuries. Potential tools for improving pedestrian safety in Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas include leading pedestrian intervals, medians, and pedestrian crossing islands based upon analysis of the unique factors that contribute to crashes in each location and depending upon the results of engineering assessments. Another approach to improve safety involves dedicating more space in the roadway to bicyclists and pedestrians. From new ways to protect bicycle lanes with separated barriers such as bollards, to landscaping and planters, and raised medians, San Antonio has many available tools to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety, including additional tools listed in the City of San Antonio [Vision Zero Action Plan](#).

The Eastside Area has a wealth of opportunities for improving transportation and safety, such as improving crossings and investing in complete streets. In particular, the [2018 San Antonio Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas Report](#) (pages 27-28) identifies Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas (SPIAs) within the Eastside Area that should be priorities for study and investment, including:

- Commerce Street from Mesquite Street to Olive Street;
- Hackberry Street from Iowa Street to Dakota Street; and
- New Braunfels Avenue from Denver Boulevard to Porter Street.

Mobility Recommendation #2: Complete the multimodal mobility network and establish new trail connections.

Improving Eastside Area streets for multiple modes of transportation will offer residents more choices for getting from one place to another, safely, conveniently, and affordably. Project selection and design processes should refer to the Mobility Framework Map.

Balanced/Multimodal Streets

Balanced and multimodal streets, or complete streets are envisioned for the Eastside Area, providing safe road designs for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists alike. The following streets are prioritized segments recommended for the Transportation Department to study for future complete streets improvements:

- Commerce Street from Cherry Street to Palmetto Avenue;
- Commerce Street from New Braunfels Avenue to Salado Creek Greenway; and
- Hackberry Street from Sherman Street through I-10.

Priority Multi-Use Trails

Salado Creek Greenway includes several miles of trails, creek access, and natural areas near the Eastside Area. There are opportunities to improve bicycle network connections between Eastside Area neighborhoods and Salado Creek Greenway access points. Sherman Street is identified as an opportunity to add a bicycle connection connecting multiple important places within the Eastside Area, with bicycle lanes or a separated trail (See Amenities & Public Spaces Recommendation #2).

Preferred Bicycle Routes

Additional bike infrastructure, such as designated lanes, is recommended and shown on the Mobility Framework Map. New bicycle lanes and other bicycle facilities would improve the bicycling experience for experienced riders and would welcome newer, less confident bicyclists that are unaccustomed to riding alongside vehicles. The streets identified in the Mobility Framework Map connect important destinations, typically on lower traffic volume streets.

Mobility Recommendation #3: Manage transportation demand with traffic management plans that prioritize shared rides and transit options during special events.

AT&T Center and Freeman Coliseum events draw visitors and cars to Eastside Area streets. Special events traffic plan strategies should focus on improving the experience for those using transit, shared mobility and micro-mobility, for example by accommodating special event priority lanes for buses, so that more people will consider these transportation options the best choice for them.

Mobility Recommendation #4: Support VIA Metropolitan Transit Advanced Rapid Transit Corridor service by prioritizing transit-supportive policies and infrastructure near transit stations.

A future VIA Metropolitan Transit Advanced Rapid Transit Corridor is anticipated to operate along Houston Street, requiring transit-supportive policies and infrastructure, such as reduced parking requirements, complete sidewalks, crosswalks and curb ramps to provide safe connections to the transit lines. This route corresponds to the priority transit route designation on the Mobility Framework Map. VIA Metropolitan Transit's approach to making a place transit-supportive also includes designing other street improvements for pedestrians and supporting compact, mixed-use developments that provide access to a variety of services reachable on foot.

Most people taking the bus walk to and from bus stops, though some bike, scooter, or get rides in a car. Safe, comfortable, and direct access to transit for people walking will improve their experience as transit riders. Improving last-mile connections between transit and key destinations, such as jobs and public spaces, improves mobility while supporting walkability and safety for all transportation users. These improvements also contribute to the overall quality of neighborhoods and communities.

Amenities and Public Space

[See Figure 22 – Amenities and Public Space Framework Map]

Introduction

Implementing the Amenities and Public Space recommendations will improve connections between neighborhoods and cultural and open space assets. The recommendations also support vibrant public places in neighborhood centers, and leave an improved legacy of tree canopy and responsible stormwater management for future generations.

The recommendations recognize the Eastside Area's strengths, such as the many existing City Community Centers and Recreational Centers, and assets such as Menger Creek Linear Park and the

Historic Eastside Cemeteries, that can serve more residents and contribute to larger community goals as connections to them are improved.

Amenities and Public Space Recommendations

Amenities and Public Space Recommendation #1: Explore the creation of a small grants program for local public space improvement projects completed by community organizations.

The City should explore the creation of a small grants program for community organizations to complete projects that improve public spaces. This program would enable community residents to improve their communities in small but powerful ways, leverage local resources, knowledge, and secondary funding sources, build community capacity and resiliency, and experiment with incremental improvements or pilot projects that could be scaled up depending on their potential for wider impact.

Funded projects should implement recommendations from the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan and Eastside Community Area Plan, while achieving the community's evolving local goals. To build local capacity for making additional improvements, projects should include community members in organizing and implementing the projects, and be located in public spaces or publicly visible places where they can serve as an example and as an actual improvement to public space.

The program coordinator should offer assistance to prospective grantees in conceptualizing and organizing projects, connect them with secondary resources and complementary organizations, and proactively build relationships with and assist prospective grantees representing historically underrepresented groups.

Amenities and Public Space Recommendation #2: Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between Downtown, Eastside Area neighborhoods, and the Salado Creek Greenway to connect the special places in the area.

Downtown San Antonio's abundance of cultural, retail, and park amenities should be more accessible to Eastside residents. Similarly, there are opportunities to improve Eastside Area residents' access to the Salado Creek Greenway. Sherman Street between I-37 and Walters Street, and Menger Creek through the fairgrounds offer unique opportunities to create continuous pedestrian and bicycle trails connecting the Eastside Area with these special places and others such as the Hayes Street Bridge, Lockwood Park, N New Braunfels Avenue businesses, and East Meadows area amenities such as the Bibliotech, Phillis Wheatley Park, and the Greenies Urban Farm. The Amenities and Public Space Framework Map (See [Figure 22](#)) illustrates this conceptual connection and others.

Amenities and Public Space Recommendation #3: Invest in tree canopy and green infrastructure to achieve multiple community goals.

The Eastside Community Area lies across the San Antonio River Watershed and the Salado Creek Watershed boundary, dividing the areas that drain rain water to each stream. Using rain gardens, bioswales, and street trees to slow and clean water before it flows into drainage pipes and streams reduces the cost of managing stormwater, and provides a variety of other community benefits such as:

- Revitalizing and improving the look of streets;
- Reducing extreme summer heat;
- Improving public health;
- Improving fish and wildlife habitat; and
- Extending the useful life of and conserving capacity in existing grey infrastructure.

Amenities and Public Space Recommendation #4: Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections to and through the Historic Eastside Cemeteries, expanding their purpose as public open space amenities and cultural assets.

The Historic Eastside Cemeteries are an important part of San Antonio’s history and cultural legacy. Some historical themes represented here include San Antonio’s ethnic and religious communities, prominent city and Eastside Area leaders, Buffalo Soldiers, and veterans of foreign wars. The cemeteries have the potential to serve more people, as an open space, a concentration of green landscaping amidst the urban environment, and as a place to connect with the city’s history or one’s own cultural heritage.

A 1990s era cemeteries master plan envisioned an expanded role for the cemeteries, as an accessible open space and a cultural heritage destination that would draw visitors to support local businesses. The plan included ambitious recommendations to improve the cemeteries with additional trees and landscaping, decorative lighting, pathways, a visitor center, way finding, and repairs and rehabilitation of grave markers, walls, and gates. Going forward, smaller incremental improvements around the cemeteries’ edges like landscaping, new trees, or walls could help build a sense of community ownership and connection to the cemeteries, increase residents’ access this amenity, and potentially build longer term support for the more ambitious improvements contemplated in the 1990s cemeteries plan. The Amenities and Public Space Framework Map (See [Figure 22](#)) illustrates the concept of improving connections between neighborhoods and the Historic Eastside Cemeteries, and improving connections to other historic places and proposed public space improvements.

Amenities and Public Space Recommendation #5: Create enjoyable outdoor spaces for leisure, gathering, and community projects in small, underutilized public spaces.

Small public spaces that are currently occupied by grass, concrete or asphalt have the potential to serve as urban gardens or plazas, where local residents can enjoy time outside. These places might include features such as trees, public art, seating, historical information, or functional landscaping that serves as green storm water infrastructure. The triangles at Aransas Avenue and Hackberry Street and at Aransas Avenue and Mittman Street are examples of public spaces that could play an enhanced role for the community. In each example there may also be some potential to repurpose some extra street area for on street parking, or for extra pedestrian or gardening spaces.

Improvements at any of these example sites would complement nearby businesses and community uses, support the Eastside Area Plan recommendations to create pedestrian-oriented neighborhood centers, and support small businesses using public space improvements that will draw more potential customers. [Figure 23](#) and [Figure 24](#) show potential improvements to the triangle at Aransas Avenue and Mittman Street. [Figure 16](#) and [Figure 17](#) show potential improvements to the triangle at Aransas Avenue and Hackberry Street. These images are meant to illustrate the potential for implementing similar concepts, tailored to local conditions and neighborhood preferences, in other underutilized public spaces in the Eastside Area. The images also illustrate complementary improvements to surrounding streets and properties, such as completed sidewalks and occupied buildings that relate to the public spaces.

Housing

Housing Snapshot

[See [Figure 25 - Housing Snapshot](#), and [Figure 26 – Cost Burdened Renter Households by Income](#)]

Eastside Area housing is primarily made up of older single-family homes, as over half the housing units in the plan area were built before 1960. There are a large number of rented single-family homes, and naturally occurring affordable housing in single-family and small multi-family formats.

There is increasing housing demand in the Eastside Area, leading to increasing property values and associated opportunities to rehabilitate older housing stock, create new housing, and support economic revitalization. Increasing housing demand and property values are also associated with increasing housing cost burden for existing lower income residents.

In 2018, the population of the Eastside Community Area was approximately 33,400 with 10,800 households. The area experienced a population loss between 2000 and 2010 but from 2010 to 2018 has increased by 2,300 residents, and households have grown by 0.9 percent.

The Eastside Area has the same proportion of family households as the city and is only slightly younger, on average, than the regional population. The average household size (3.04), however is greater than the city average of 2.71. The Eastside Area is more diverse than the region, having historically a higher than average concentration of African American residents and currently having a higher concentration of Hispanic residents.

The Eastside Area population has lower educational attainment than the San Antonio region’s population overall. Of those aged 25 and older, 58% have less than a high school diploma and only 17% have an Associate’s, Bachelor’s, or Graduate/Professional degree. Average household income in the Eastside Area (\$38,600) is lower than the city’s average of \$70,000.

The Eastside Area has a higher proportion of single-family home dwellers and renters than the region. Single-family detached units make up 76% of the area’s housing stock, compared to 64% in the city. Despite the higher concentration of single-family homes, the Eastside Area has a lower proportion of owner-occupied housing units than the region – 46% of units are owner-occupied and 54% are renter-occupied.

Homeowners are older on average – 54% are 55 years old or older, compared to 46% for the city. Although 60% of these homeowners do not have a mortgage, homeowners on a fixed income are vulnerable to displacement related to the costs of maintaining older homes and related to rising property values and the corresponding growth in property taxes.

The Eastside Area also has a higher percent of vacant households (16%) than the city and county averages. There are several hundred (400+) small, undeveloped lots, although some of these are owned and used as side yards by adjacent residents or as parking by adjacent businesses.

Eastside Area housing costs have increased rapidly in the past decade, however they are still on average lower than the rest of the city. The average home price is approximately \$130,000, however home

HOUSING SNAPSHOT

Total Population | 33,423

Total Households | 10,784

Annual Household Growth, 2010-2018 | 0.9% (COSA | 1.2%)

Average Household Size | 3.04 persons (COSA | 2.71)

One-Person Households | 29% (COSA | 29%)

Non-Family Households | 34% (COSA | 35%)

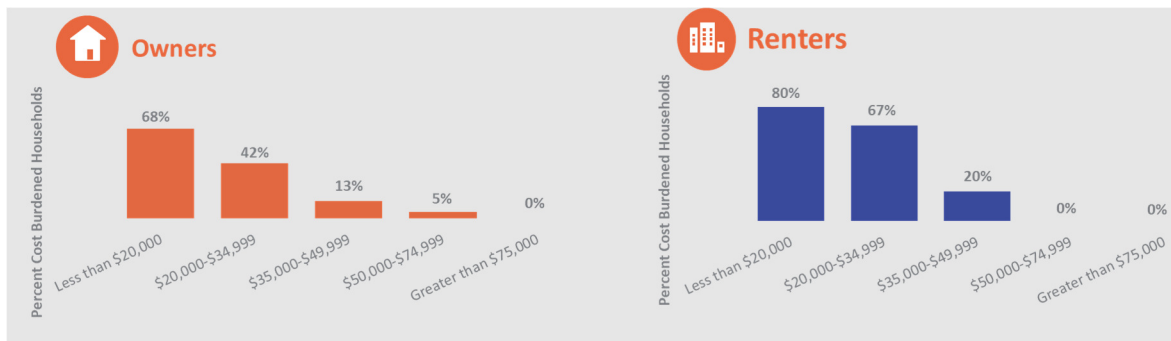
Average Household Income | \$38,600 (COSA | \$70,019)

values vary significantly across the area. Home sale prices between 2016 and 2018 ranged between \$50,000 and \$500,000 or more. The increases in home prices have been most dramatic near Downtown.

The average rental rate for an apartment unit in the Eastside Community Area is \$854 per month or \$0.94 per square foot – less than the county-wide average of \$952 per month or \$1.11 per square foot. There have been seven new apartment projects completed in the area since 2010, two of which were senior housing.

Area housing affordability was assessed based on the percent of households that pay more than 30% of their income on housing, making them cost burdened. Most homeowner households are not cost burdened, as only 24% of homeowners spend more than 30% of their income on housing. Over half (56%) of renter households are cost burdened, representing a 40% increase since 2000. Cost burden is most prevalent in households making less than \$35,000 per year. Recent changes in home prices and household income are not completely reflected in the US Census numbers used here, so the numbers may underestimate the number of cost burdened households.

Eastside Area % of Cost Burdened Households by Income and Tenure, 2017



Housing Challenges in the Eastside Area

The Eastside Area Planning Team identified the area's housing challenges and missing housing types in the two Planning Team meetings devoted to economic development and housing. Eastside Area neighborhoods have attractive features, including historic character, a gridded street pattern, walkable urban environment, and proximity to downtown. These assets have made it an increasingly popular place to live. Three main housing challenges identified in the Eastside Area are:

- **Potential for Involuntary Displacement** – The Eastside Area's concentration of lower income residents, higher proportion of renters, older home owners, and older housing stock, coupled with rising property values creates the potential for existing residents to no longer be able to afford increasing rental rates or afford the costs related to owning a home. The impact on renters is greater considering the large number of single-family homes that are rental households. As the area continues to increase in popularity, these homes may be sold to owners who want to renovate and live in the units, which will decrease the rental unit supply in the area.
- **Compatibility of New Development** – The Eastside Area has experienced an influx of new housing development in recent years. In some cases, the building orientation, elevation, parking configuration, and arrangement of windows and doors in new development differ from historical patterns that encouraged residents to observe the street and sidewalks and interact with neighbors.
- **Vacancy**– The Eastside Area has many vacant homes and undeveloped lots. These undeveloped lots and vacant homes present opportunities to provide new housing, and potentially produce affordable housing options.

Housing Recommendations

Housing recommendations were developed based on the Eastside Area Plan vision and goals to address the challenges identified during the planning process. Specific strategies to implement these recommendations can be found in the Implementation section of the plan.

Housing Recommendation #1: Support diverse infill housing and reinvestment in existing dwellings that reflect historic pedestrian-oriented development patterns.

Eastside Area neighborhoods will continue attracting new residents due to the central location, proximity to Downtown, historical qualities, and increasing local retail, services, and dining options. This renewed interest can create positive benefits for existing residents and businesses, and improve the quality of life for all in the area. However, efforts are needed to ensure this reinvestment in the neighborhoods reflects and celebrates the history and character of the area. Infill development should contribute to the historic and walkable built environment.

Housing Recommendation #2: Empower existing residents to share in the Eastside Area's increasing prosperity.

The Eastside area has been historically less costly to live or operate a business in than many other parts of San Antonio. As property values increase, more residents may require assistance to afford housing, so that they can participate in building wealth as residents, business owners and employees in an area with increasing economic opportunity, and so that they can stay connected to their local institutions, social networks, and cultural landscape. Ultimately, to ensure diverse affordable housing in the Eastside, substantially more housing needs to be built there and throughout San Antonio. Additionally, property

tax relief and expansion of residential repair programs are two opportunities to help ensure existing residents have a fair opportunity to maintain housing stability.

Housing Recommendation #3: Create a community land and housing trust focused on the Eastside.

Community land and housing trusts are organizations that own and manage land and housing, typically with the primary goal of providing affordable housing. They typically involve some local community control, with community members serving on a board of directors, as employees or with ownership stakes. Beyond these basic characteristics, community land and housing trusts take a variety of forms and achieve a broad range of community goals. To have the kind of meaningful impact that other successful community land and housing trusts have had, the trust should be subsidized with capital to start up and acquire property.

Economic Development

Introduction

The Eastside Community Area is bordered by major employment and activity areas including Downtown to the west, Fort Sam Houston to the north, and the AT&T Center and Bexar County Community Arenas, which are home to the San Antonio Spurs and San Antonio Stock Show and Rodeo. The Eastside Area is also home to 6,300 jobs (2018). Educational Services is the largest employment sector, accounting for 16.5% of jobs, and anchored by St. Philip’s College. The next largest employment sectors are Other Services at 15% and Health Care & Social Assistance at 14.5%. Other major employers include Bimbo Bakeries, Unifirst Uniform Services, and Coca-Cola Bottling and Vending.

Most people employed in the Eastside Area do not live there – 96% of workers commute in from other places. Similarly, most people living in the Eastside Area do not work there – only 2.5% of residents are employed in the area.

The most prevalent employment use in the Eastside Area is retail and general commercial space. The Eastside Area has 1.35 million square feet of retail space. The inventory of space has not changed substantially in recent years. Despite low vacancy rates, the average rental rates for commercial space are lower than the county-wide averages. There is also a small presence of office space, with 336,000 square feet in total. The Eastside Area’s 3.1 million square feet of industrial space is concentrated near railroad rights of way, and has a low industrial vacancy rate of 0.6%, compared to the 4.8% County average. The majority of tourism-oriented uses serving downtown are outside of the Eastside Area but there are 11 hotel/motel properties. All but three are less than 20,000 square feet in size.

The Eastside Community Area is within the Eastside Promise Zone that was designated in 2014. The Promise Zone program is a 10-year Federal program designed to test, fund, and implement place-based initiatives to provide “ladders of opportunity” for residents of Promise Zones. This program helped create momentum for efforts to support Eastside Area residents. Subsequently, Federal efforts have shifted towards attracting investment in underserved areas. Portions of the Eastside Area are within the recently designated Eastside Opportunity Zone. Opportunity Zones are a Federal program to incentivize investment into development and business creation/growth within distressed areas. Investors in projects and/or businesses within Opportunity Zones become eligible for capital gains tax deferral and/or reduction.

San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside

San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside (SAGE) was formed in 2008 as an economic development organization focused on creating opportunities for businesses and residents on the Eastside of San Antonio. SAGE is a 501(c)3 non-profit agency and has four guiding principles:

- Advocate for efficient, sustainable growth for San Antonio’s Eastside
- Advance small business development
- Maintain and promote the area’s history and culture
- Provide innovative, progressive solutions to Eastside challenges

SAGE developed a Promise Zone comprehensive economic development strategy in 2016 to guide the agency’s efforts and to help attract investment in the community. The strategy had five priority goals:

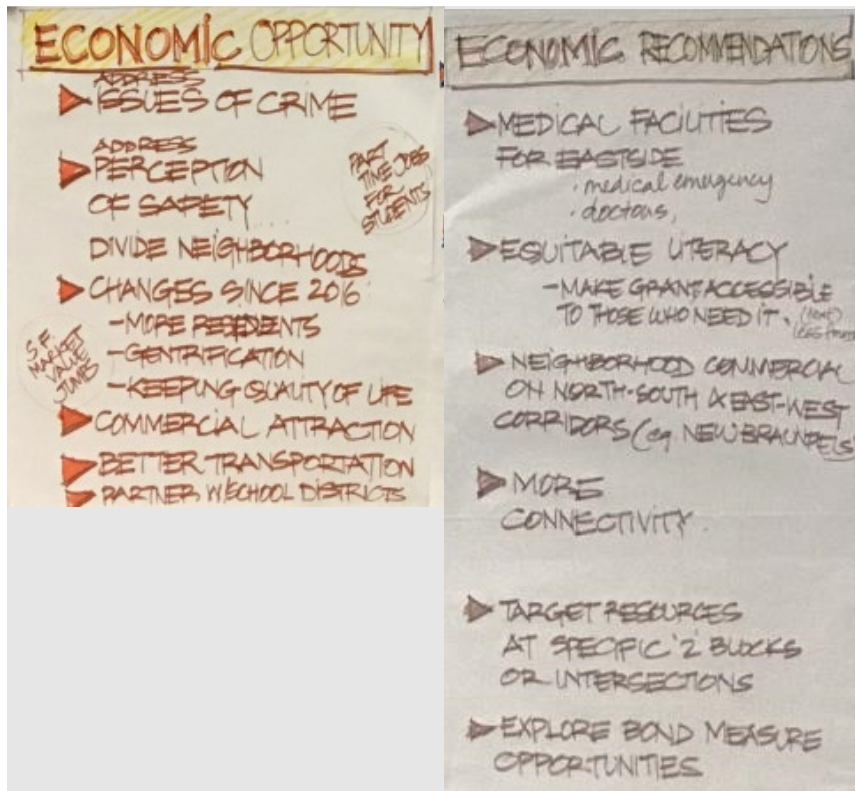
- Attract private investment in commercial real estate and community
- Create jobs for residents
- Increase economic activity
- Increase economic diversity
- Improve standard of living

SAGE’s Promise Zone economic development strategy was partly driven by opportunities related to investment from the downtown area revival that had been occurring just west of the Eastside Promise Zone neighborhoods. Since 2016, the growth and renewed investment in Downtown has started to reach and impact the Eastside Area. Development of new housing and reinvestment in existing homes in the area has brought about some of the strategy’s desired outcomes and has led to significant increases in property values. There has been less investment in—and impact on—commercial properties. However, there is an opportunity to leverage the renewed interest in living in the Eastside Area neighborhoods to support businesses and employment. This economic development strategy reflects the desires and overall guidance of the SAGE strategy but provides supplements and modifications where needed to address changing conditions.

Economic Challenges to Address

The Eastside Area Planning Team developed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOT) analysis during the two Planning Team meetings devoted to economic development and housing.

Eastside Area Planning Team SWOT Analysis



Three main economic challenges were identified for the Eastside Area.

- **Private Investment** – New development, building renovation, and investment in commercial properties and businesses is lagging behind residential investment. This need was a major component of the SAGE strategy and continues to be a priority.
- **Everyday Retail Goods and Services** – The historic disinvestment in the Eastside Area has resulted in a lack of everyday retail goods and services. There is one large grocery, but inadequate access to fresh and healthy foods. Everyday services such as medical services, dining, and entertainment options are also lacking.
- **Connecting Residents to Jobs** – Despite the proximity of major employment centers, connecting Eastside Area residents to quality jobs has been an on-going issue. Efforts are needed to identify opportunities that align with residents’ skills and to provide education and training opportunities to residents to better prepare them for existing opportunities.

Economic Opportunities

The Eastside Community Area has economic assets and strengths including its proximity to major employment centers, access to major transportation routes, and existing institutions (St. Philip’s College), federal designations (Promise Zone and Opportunity Zone), and organizations (SAGE). The economic opportunities for the Eastside Area are:

- **Proximity to Employment Areas** – The plan area is in close proximity to several major employment centers, including Downtown, Fort Sam Houston and the AT&T Center. The area is also somewhat close to and connected with the Brooks Area Regional Center, the Greater Airport Area Regional Center, and the businesses and employers along northeast I-35. Analysis

of the location of jobs of Eastside Area residents indicated many residents worked in these major employment areas. Transportation connectivity to these jobs and job centers needs to be enhanced to leverage this proximity.

- **St. Philip's College** – The education opportunities at St. Philip's are a major component of helping to provide employment opportunities and education for residents.
- **Neighborhood Quality** – The Eastside Area's existing character, aesthetic, and urban form (e.g. small block pattern and pedestrian-oriented buildings) makes the area attractive for residents, and employees, and offers the potential to enhance and create attractive places where people will want to spend time.

Target Employment Areas

San Antonio will continue to implement a variety of tools, including economic incentives, workforce development, and strategic partnership to support existing and new businesses in the community. The City's Economic Development Department recently modified its [tax abatement program](#) to improve opportunities for community economic development. The City's Economic Development Department will adapt economic development incentives in a way that supports communities of color and areas with high levels of poverty.

To leverage this designation as a priority incentive area, there need to be desirable locations for new businesses to locate and for existing businesses to expand. In addition to areas identified for supporting neighborhood hubs of retail goods, services and food establishments, there are four areas within the Eastside Community Area that should be targeted for public investments and improvements to increase their appeal for attracting and growing businesses that can offer higher wages and better career pathways. These areas are:

- **South of AT&T Center** – The areas designated for Regional Mixed-Use and Business/Innovation Mixed-Use. [See **Figure 4 – Future Land Use Map**]
- **Near Eastside** – The areas designated for Regional Mixed-Use on the western edge of the plan area along East Houston Street and Commerce Street, including the area around Velocity TX's innovation hub.
- **I-35/Railway Corridor** – The Light Industrial and Business/Innovation Mixed-Use areas just south of I-35 in the northern portion of the plan area.
- **St. Philip's College** – The areas in and around St. Philip's College designated for employment and mixed-uses.

Economic Development Recommendations

Economic Development Recommendation #1: Create and grow neighborhood commercial districts.

The Eastside Area has lacked investment in existing commercial areas and has struggled to attract retailers and service providers. Specifically needed are new retailers that provide everyday retail goods and services including groceries, healthy foods, and health care services, as well as improved accessibility to existing and future opportunities. Support to maintain the health of neighborhood commercial districts is needed to attract goods and services to the Eastside Area.

Economic Development Recommendation #2: Support the creation and expansion of businesses (start-up, manufacturing, resident services, restaurants/entertainment).

Creating employment opportunities in the Eastside Area will require more than attraction of new businesses but specifically, support of local resident business owners and assistance for the creation of new businesses by Eastside Area residents.

Economic Development Recommendation #3: Connect residents and businesses to employment centers.

The Eastside Area is very close to several major employment centers. Enhanced transportation options and additional job/skill training and employment support services would help residents access jobs in the surrounding employment centers.