



IMPLEMENTATION

SA TOMORROW SUB-AREA PLANNING: EASTSIDE COMMUNITY AREA PLAN

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Plan Purpose

This Plan proposes a medium-term vision, recommendations, and strategies for improving and developing the Eastside Area Community Plan over the next ten years. The Plan is an implementation component of the City of San Antonio's [SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan](#). Adopted in 2016, the Comprehensive Plan is the City's long-range land use and policy plan that is intended to be a blueprint for future growth and development through the year 2040. In addition to implementing the Comprehensive Plan, the Eastside Area Community Plan aims to improve quality of life for San Antonio residents and guide growth and development to accommodate projected housing and employment increases. The Eastside Area Community Plan provides an equitable path for all neighborhoods to participate in planning, to create priorities, and to advocate for implementing their priorities in the future.

Intent of the Plan

The Eastside Area Community Plan will be the essential tool to guide future development and City investment in the plan area. The community based planning process resulted in achievable recommendations and strategies that will be used by City Departments, partner agencies, private entities, and community partners to support livable, complete neighborhoods.

How to Use This Plan

The vision for the Eastside Area Community Plan can be realized through implementation of the Plan Framework and Implementation Priorities, with recommendations and strategies related to the following topics: Land Use, Focus Areas, Mobility, Amenities and Public Space, Housing, and Economic Development. These recommendations and strategies include policy and regulatory matters, partnerships, and investments. Plan recommendations are written to provide actionable specificity while still allowing the flexibility needed to adapt to unforeseen challenges or opportunities.

Coordination with Adopted Plans

The City of San Antonio adopted several plans in recent decades for individual neighborhoods or parts of the Eastside Area Community Plan. Each of these plans is described in the Eastside Area Community Plan. Some specific recommendations from these plans are directly referenced as complementary to achieving the Eastside Area Community Plan Vision and Goals. Each of the plans was used as a foundational element for creating the Eastside Area Community Plan. The previously adopted plans include important historical information, policies reflecting the values of participants at the time of their adoption, detailed information and recommendations for specific places and issues such as for a single neighborhood, and topics not addressed by the Eastside Area Community Plan in the realms of social services, law enforcement, and organizational strategies for neighborhood associations and other organizations that created the plans. These plans include but are not limited to:

- *Alamodome Neighborhood Plan*
- *Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Plan*
- *Downtown Neighborhood Plan*
- *Government Hill Neighborhood Plan*
- *Arena District / Eastside Community Plan*
- *Eastside Promise Zone Economic Development Strategy*
- *Eastside Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan*
- *St. Phillip's College Master Plan*
- *The Old San Antonio City Cemeteries Historic District Master Plan*

The Eastside Area Community Plan was also developed to complement and contribute to the implementation of the following regional and citywide plans:

- *SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan*
- *SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan*
- *VIA's Vision 2040 Plan*
- *SA Corridors Strategic Framework Plan*
- *San Antonio's Housing Policy Framework*

In implementing the Eastside Area Community Plan, further consideration should be given to the recommendations of emerging and ongoing planning processes, including but not limited to:

- *VIA's Rapid Transit Corridors planning*
- *SA Climate Ready*
- *San Antonio's Housing Policy Framework implementation programs*
- *San Antonio Parks System Strategic Plan*
- *San Antonio Sidewalk Master Plan*
- *Vision Zero San Antonio initiative*
- *ConnectSA*

Statutory Requirements

Once adopted by City Council, the Eastside Area Community Plan becomes a component of the City's SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. Where a previously adopted neighborhood or community land use plan is contained within or partially overlaps the Eastside Area Community Plan, the Eastside Area Community Plan will be the plan of reference for land use designations. Similarly, where a previous plan and the Eastside Area Community Plan have conflicting policies or priorities within the adopted boundary of the Eastside Area Community Plan, the Eastside Area Community Plan will be City policy.

By virtue of the plan adoption process, all proposed projects must be found to be consistent with the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, and as such, the Eastside Area Community Plan must be consulted when proposing a public investment or a land use project that requires deviation from current entitlements.

Implementation – Land Use

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

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 1.2 (Regulatory and Policy)

Where the Future Land Use Map designates mixed-uses adjacent to existing residential properties, encourage and, where feasible, incentivize upper floors to be stepped back or limit building heights to be within 1 story of the allowed height of adjacent residential properties.

Strategy 1.3 (Regulatory and Policy)

Discourage “D” zoning districts within the Eastside Community Area.

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

Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy)

In existing neighborhoods, require future development to complement existing residential development patterns in terms of massing, orientation, setbacks, and building heights.

Strategy 2.2 (Regulatory and Policy)

Encourage and accommodate live/work uses in neighborhoods. Review existing standards and permitting processes and improve them, if needed, to ensure that there is a clear and feasible pathway for applicants to establish live/work uses in Eastside Area development contexts. The review should at least address setback and density limitations associated with live/work uses.

Strategy 2.3 (Regulatory and Policy)

In neighborhoods west of New Braunfels Avenue, where the form of proposed development complements surrounding development patterns, support zoning allowances such as conditional rezoning with uses permitted in the Neighborhood Commercial Zoning district and residential zoning districts, to allow:

- Live/work buildings with more than one dwelling
- A combination of residential and commercial uses in detached structures
- Commercial uses

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.

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

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.

Strategy 3.2 (Regulatory and Policy)

Allow temporary and auxiliary uses in public spaces and underused properties that serve pedestrians and transit riders, such as street vendors, pop-up displays, temporary signs, seating and food trucks.

Strategy 3.3 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments / Partnerships)

Reduce or eliminate regulations that require minimum amounts of parking, and where needed, instead of mandating minimum parking supply, manage parking demand.

Implementation – Focus Areas

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

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 1.2 (Partnerships / Investments)

Focus streetscape improvements and development grants and incentives in locations that already possess other ingredients to serve as pedestrian-oriented community hubs, such as where there are existing small scale pedestrian-oriented commercial buildings.

Strategy 1.3 (Regulatory and Policy)

City initiated rezoning should include neighborhood hubs as priority locations to align the zoning map with the goal of supporting pedestrian-oriented mixed-use places. Zoning decisions in surrounding areas should allow for a resident population large enough to support local businesses in neighborhood hubs.

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

Strategy 2.1 (Partnerships / Investments)

The Focus Areas Improvements Maps “Improved Streetscape” areas should be priority locations for using Bond Program funding to improve local mixed-use main streets and neighborhood hubs.

Strategy 2.2 (Regulatory and Policy)

The Focus Areas Improvements Maps “Priority Building Frontage” areas should be priority locations for city initiated rezoning to ensure that future development is pedestrian-oriented, with buildings oriented to and located close to the sidewalk.

Strategy 2.3 (Partnerships / Investments)

In the Focus Areas Improvements Maps “Improved Streetscape” areas and “Priority Building Frontage” areas, the city should facilitate parking solutions that will reduce curb cuts and eliminate the need for parking between buildings and the primary street. This may include declining to vacate unimproved alleys and instead investing in alley improvements to support rear accessed parking. It also may include allocating right of way for metered on-street parking.

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

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.

Strategy 3.3 (Regulatory and Policy)

City-initiated rezoning should include the areas around VIA’s Advanced Rapid Transit and Primo service as priority locations to align the zoning map with the goal of supporting transit-oriented communities. Zoning decisions in surrounding areas should support a larger resident population that would benefit from the transit service.

Implementation – Mobility

Mobility Recommendation #1: Continue implementing the San Antonio Vision Zero Action Plan.

Strategy 1.1 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments)

Continue evaluating and implementing proven strategies and best practices improvements, potentially including traffic calming and complete streets principles, which improve pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic safety to achieve San Antonio’s Vision Zero goals. The highest priority areas are the Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas (SPIAs) identified in the most recent SPIA Report:

- 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.

Additional analysis of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle crash data, and community input, also identified areas around the following intersections to consider evaluating for pedestrian safety improvements:

- Hays Street and New Braunfels Avenue;
- Gevers Street and Houston Street;
- New Braunfels Avenue and Aransas Avenue; and
- Walters Street and Virginia Boulevard.

Strategy 1.2 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments)

In anticipation of more people living, working, and using particular areas, invest in improved crossings that incorporate best practices for safety and placemaking at the intersections of:

- New Braunfels Avenue and Carson Street;
- Hays Street and Walters Avenue;
- Houston Street and Hackberry Street;
- Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue;
- Houston Street and Mel Walters Way;
- Commerce Street and Gevers Street;
- Commerce Street and Hackberry Street;
- Hackberry Street and Iowa Street;
- Hackberry and Aransas Avenue; and
- New Braunfels Avenue and Porter Street.

Strategy 1.3 (Investments / Partnerships)

Partner with residents, business owners, and CPS Energy to identify opportunities to install additional pedestrian-scaled lighting to improve the visibility of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles.

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

Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy)

Update street design standards to be consistent with SA Tomorrow goals for safety, economic growth, development, and city form, and to reflect the relationship between buildings and the streetscape. Street design standards should consider pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

Strategy 2.2 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments / Partnerships)

Conduct a complete streets study to find opportunities to reduce pedestrian crossing time, increase pedestrian crossing opportunities, and reduce vehicle speeds. The following street segments are ideal for study and implementation:

- 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.

Strategy 2.3 (Investments)

Implement on-road infrastructure and wayfinding projects to improve connectivity to Salado Creek Greenway access points on Houston Street, Commerce Street, and Aransas Avenue. The Mobility Framework Map (See Figure 18) identifies existing access points, priority bicycle routes, and priority balanced/multimodal streets where on-road infrastructure improvements should be considered.

Strategy 2.4 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments / Partnerships)

Continue to complete the bicycle and sidewalk network by implementing priority projects and adding facilities as streets are repaved or reconstructed. The Mobility Framework Map shows priority locations to implement this strategy.

Gevers Street from East Meadows to Aransas Avenue is a priority route for improving bicycle infrastructure. It was identified in the Eastside Choice Neighborhood Plan, and it connects multiple existing and planned community destinations on a lower traffic street. Homes adjacent to Gevers Street typically are on corner lots, so street parking is available on the intersecting streets, allowing more space on Gevers Street to be used for bicycling. Several sections of Gevers Street are scheduled for street maintenance and improvement projects in the coming years, presenting an opportunity to implement improvements for bicycles simultaneously. These street sections include the following:

- Gevers Street from Gabriel to Nolan Street;
- Gevers Street from Maryland Street to Nevada; and
- Gevers Street from Martin Luther King Drive to Iowa Street.

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

Strategy 3.1 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments / Partnerships)

Partner with the special event venues to create additional off-site parking and shuttle services as well as coordinate with and leverage existing VIA service.

Strategy 3.2 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments / Partnerships)

Continue to increase and improve designated ride share pick-up zones and transit service, and partner with the venues, Transportation Network Companies (e.g. Uber or Lyft), and transportation mapping applications to provide transportation information to visitors through event ticketing or mobile applications to help manage special event automobile traffic congestion.

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

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 create 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.

Strategy 4.2 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments / Partnerships)

When VIA designates Advanced Rapid Transit Corridor Stations, the Planning Department should implement zoning to support Transit Oriented Development using VIA's guidelines for development near transit stations and the following principles:

- Density – Increased neighborhood amenities and destinations near stations and stops influence the type of transit services offered in an area. Transit frequency is directly dependent on density – the more people and jobs within an area, the more transit frequency is justified.
- Design – Buildings designed for the pedestrian; placed and oriented along the front of the street with parking on-street, placed behind or structured, and with direct access to first-floor building activities are vital components of transit-supportive design.
- Mix of Uses – Providing a mix of residential, employment, and retail uses within walking distance of a transit stop or transit station is beneficial to the community and makes walking and riding transit more efficient choices for meeting daily needs.
- Walkability – In addition to infrastructure that makes walking safe, walkable places typically include a collection of actively used, pedestrian-oriented buildings fronting the street, and some combination of streetscape amenities such as seating, lighting, landscaping, and shade.

Implementation – Amenities and Public Space

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

Strategy 1.1 (Partnerships)

Organize an advisory committee of community representatives and create a formal proposal to guide grant program establishment and implementation.

Strategy 1.2 (Partnerships / Investments)

Explore establishment of the grant program within a City department in collaboration with the Planning Department. Establish program guidelines/ applications/ procedures, and fund the grant program.

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.

Strategy 2.1 (Partnerships / Investments)

Create a safe and comfortable pedestrian and bicycle connection between Downtown and Menger Creek Linear Park, potentially using a separated pathway on the north side of Sherman Street.

Strategy 2.2 (Partnerships / Investments)

Restore ecological functions and create a bicycle and pedestrian path along Menger Creek between the Eastern end of the Menger Creek Linear Park and Salado Creek Greenway.

Strategy 2.3 (Investments)

Enhance bicycle and pedestrian connections between adjacent neighborhoods and retail areas such as Wheatley Courts and North New Braunfels Avenue, and the Downtown to Salado Creek improvements, with enhanced bicycle facilities and complete sidewalk networks.

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

Strategy 3.1 (Partnerships / Investments)

Use green 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.

Strategy 3.3 (Regulatory and Policy)

Increase incentives for using green infrastructure in private construction projects.

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.

Strategy 4.1 (Partnerships)

Support grassroots and cemetery owners' projects to enhance landscaping, plant trees, or restore street facing structures such as fences, gates, and walls.

Strategy 4.2 (Investments)

Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between the cemeteries and surrounding neighborhoods, community assets, and the bicycle network.

Strategy 4.3 (Partnerships / Investments)

Incorporate the cemeteries into larger bicycle and pedestrian routes featuring Eastside Area historic resources.

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

Strategy 5.1 (Partnerships)

Work with neighborhood residents and community organizations to identify a priority location where this recommendation would be implemented first, and to collaboratively design the project.

Strategy 5.2 (Investments)

Provide opportunities for local residents to tangibly contribute to the project, for example with volunteer work parties to apply mulch and install plants to part of the landscape. If possible, allow local community organizations to take an even stronger role in building and maintaining portions of the landscape.

Strategy 5.3 (Partnerships / Investments)

Support grantees of the proposed grant program identified in Amenities and Public Space Recommendation #1 in piloting improvement projects that will complement or demonstrate the value of larger public projects that may be completed later. Examples of temporary or complementary improvements that could be used to build community ownership and participation in a future project include but are not limited to:

- tree planting and gardening;
- small stormwater management projects;
- painting blank walls, asphalt or other hardscapes; and
- pop up installation events with seating, food, and community activities.

Implementation – Housing

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

Strategy 1.1 (Regulatory and Policy)

Utilize Unified Development Code (UDC) Chapter 35 updates or inner city neighborhood design guidelines to encourage diverse housing options that are pedestrian-oriented. The UDC amendments or guidelines do not need to replace or preclude the opportunity for neighborhoods to establish historic districts and neighborhood conservation districts, but would free neighborhoods from having to use those resource intensive tools to support pedestrian-oriented residential development.

Strategy 1.2 (Regulatory and Policy)

Support new and expanded historic districts in eligible areas, so that historic buildings receive additional regulatory protection, and owners receive incentives to rehabilitate historic buildings.

Strategy 1.3 (Regulatory and Policy)

Allow additional dwellings or secondary uses on lots with existing buildings, to support the preservation of the existing buildings.

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

Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy)

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

Strategy 2.2 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments)

Explore expansion of homeowner assistance programs, such as home repair and remediation programs, homeowner education and resource sharing, home buyer down payment assistance, and additional programs to subsidize HVAC and sustainable energy efficiency retrofits in existing dwellings.

Strategy 2.3 (Partnership)

Work with housing development partners to identify potential locations for senior-oriented housing projects, including projects with affordable units for older adults.

Strategy 2.4 (Regulatory and Policy)

Identify strategies to assist rightful property owners to establish clean titles to their property.

Strategy 2.5 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments)

Encourage adding accessory dwelling units to existing residences as a means to build wealth for households with low incomes and support aging in place for older residents.

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

Strategy 3.1 (Investments / Partnerships)

Investigate alternative land and housing trust models, and work with community stakeholders to identify a preferred approach to creating and funding a community land and housing trust.

Strategy 3.2 (Investments / Partnerships)

Identify seed funding to support an initial trust startup, so that it can have a meaningful impact and sustain itself in the long term. Work with City and area partners to identify an organization (city or non-profit) with the resources and capacity to manage the trust over the long term.

Implementation – Economic Development

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

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.

Strategy 1.2 (Partnerships / Investments)

Continue to support San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside's (SAGE's) Store Front Grant program to aid property and business owners in investing in existing commercial buildings.

Strategy 1.3 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments)

Invest in and support streetscape improvements to create attractive places where people will want to spend time working, recreating, and shopping.

Strategy 1.4 (Partnerships)

Support businesses that improve residents' access to daily retail goods and services. Identify opportunities for flexible and/or temporary locations and spaces that offer lower risk or other costs for businesses to experiment. (e.g. public open spaces, vacant commercial and industrial buildings, parking lots).

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

Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments / Partnerships)

Support efforts and provide resources to address cleanliness and safety perceptions for commercial and employment areas.

Strategy 2.2 (Investments / Partnerships)

Actively promote and market employment-oriented development sites in the Eastside Area to prospective businesses, site selectors, and economic development entities to attract additional employers to the areas with the Business/Innovation Mixed-Use, Regional Mixed-Use, Light Industrial, and Employment/Flex Mixed-Use future land use designations [See **Figure 4 – Future Land Use Map**]. These areas can support more employment with higher wages and better career pathways than that provided in typical retail and food establishment businesses.

Strategy 2.3 (Investments / Partnerships)

Continue to support SAGE’s Equity Fund and Grow Eastside Fund programs to aid in providing access to equity for businesses and incentives for small businesses to locate and grow in the Eastside Area.

Strategy 2.4 (Partnership)

Partner with economic development and educational organizations such as SAGE, LiftFund, and the UTSA Small Business Development Center to promote free or low-cost services to aspiring entrepreneurs and small businesses to guide and strengthen their business development plans and strategies.

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

Strategy 3.1 (Partnerships)

Work with partners, including SAGE, St. Philip’s College, and schools in the Eastside Area, to create opportunities and programs for job skill education and training and workforce education.

Strategy 3.2 (Regulatory and Policy / Investments / Partnerships)

Invest in enhanced transportation and transit connections — including VIA Metropolitan Transit’s Advanced Rapid Transit system — to the Eastside Area to improve access to employment centers for area residents.