

OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

Far East Community Area Plan Open House #3

Meeting Date: May 23, 2023

Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

Location: Copernicus Community Center

Planning Staff & Consultant Team

David Powell, Project Manager

Chris Ryerson, AICP, Planning Administrator

Ana Villareal, Senior Planner

Debora Gonzalez, Senior Planner

Debora Gonzalez, Senior Planner

Ana Villareal, Senior Planner

Zeke Solis, Planning Manager

Heather Yost, Senior Planner

Debora Gonzalez, Senior Planner

Jessica Relucio, Senior Planner

Channary Gould, Planning Coordinator

Sidra Schimelpfening, Senior Planner

Planning Team Members & Other City Staff

Development Services Department

Tina Beecham, Black Girls Do Bike, SA Pedal TX

Economic Development Department

Maria de la Garza, Hein Orchard NA President

LeReta Gatlin-McDavid, District 2 Council Office

Transportation Department

Dwayne Robinson, MLK Commissioner

Workforce Development Office Christine Vina, VIA
Mike Ramsey, Workforce Development Director Jessica Sifuentes, VIA

Meeting Objective

The purpose of the third open house was to gather input from the public, to refine the community's draft recommendations and strategies for land use, housing, and economic development, and collect feedback regarding mobility, focus areas, and amenities and public spaces. 45 attendees signed in at the sign-in table, and several engagement activities, facilitated by Planning staff, were available for participants to record their feedback. The Project Manager was also conversing with attendees, at various stations, throughout the meeting and provided an overview halfway through the open house.

Meeting Format

The meeting was formatted as an open house with three separate stations across the Copernicus Community Center gymnasium to gather community feedback. At 6:00 PM the Project Manager provided a brief overview of the planning process as well as the intent of the open house and the type of feedback that is needed towards the Far East Community Area Plan. At the entrance to the gymnasium, a sign-in table was set up where attendees were encouraged to sign in and sign up for updates related to future public meetings, as well as general infographics related to the plan area and SA Tomorrow

planning process. The gym was also organized with stations to collect input and ideas from attendees, for the future of the area, which, flowed from left to right. The following stations were in order:

- 1. Draft recommendations and strategies for land Use, housing, and economic development
- 2. Mobility
- 3. Amenities and public spaces and focus areas

The Project Manager also invited various city departments and agencies to attend the meeting to provide additional information to residents. The following departments and agencies were in attendance:

- Development Services Department
- Economic Development Department
- Neighborhood Housing Services Department
- Transportation Department
- Workforce Development Office
- SAGE (San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside)

Draft Recommendations and Strategies

The first station displayed draft recommendations and strategies for land use, housing, and economic development. The initial recommendations and strategies were crafted based on previous community input received from past open houses, Planning Team meetings, and community-wide surveys. The intent of the recommendations and strategies is to provide guidance towards future programming, project, and policy implementation over the next 3-20 years within the plan area. Participants were asked to rank and provide comment regarding the initial draft recommendations and strategies. Please note that the recommendations and strategies listed below are in draft form and are subject to change based on community feedback received throughout the remainder of the planning process.

Draft Land Recommendations and Strategies: Land Use

Land Use Recommendation #1: Expand housing options and promote neighborhood stability.

Strategy 1.1

Encourage rehabilitation of older neighborhoods to prevent outmigration of multi-generational households and to help with housing demand for a growing workforce.

Strategy 1.2

For redevelopment and infill projects, preserve existing block patterns, general scale of development, and compatible uses in and around established neighborhoods to strengthen neighborhood identity and promote neighborhood stability. Infill and redevelopment within established single-family neighborhoods should be consistent with existing single-family houses in terms of massing, orientation, setbacks, and building heights.

Strategy 1.3

Initiate and support rezoning requests to allow for multiplex housing, townhouses, bungalow courts, and small-lot single-family houses where such zoning and uses are consistent with the Future Land Use Map. These residential uses function well as a transition between commercial areas and existing single-family neighborhoods, provide more attainable housing options for first-time home buyers, and give older adults options for downsizing without leaving their community.

Strategy 1.4

Initiate and support rezoning requests near the I-10 and Loop 1604 intersection to ensure that middle to higher density residential development is allowed, in keeping with the Future Land Use Map and military overlay zoning districts.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

Comments Received:

• Keep the character of each neighborhood and not allow eye sore houses to be built.

Land Use Recommendation #2: Stimulate commercial development to serve the existing residents and workforce of the area, with uses and densities consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

Strategy 2.1

Evaluate parking, setback, lighting, and sidewalk requirements for properties near transit facilities in the area, particularly along East Houston Street, to determine whether existing entitlements and regulations constrain transit-supportive redevelopment. A few design best practices that will more effectively integrate transit facilities with surrounding uses include:

- Relaxing parking minimums
- Relocating parking to the sides or rear of lots
- Improved lighting
- Encouraging activated first floor retail uses
- Multi-family development

Strategy 2.2

Facilitate the development of uses that are currently lacking in this area, particularly grocers and medical care facilities.

Strategy 2.3

Promote a mix of uses along primary and secondary arterials, particularly South WW White Road and East Houston Street, that provides appropriate transitional uses between higher intensity development and residential areas. Initiate and support rezoning requests along these roadways to ensure consistency with the Future Land Use Map.

Strateay 2.4

Consider City-initiated rezoning of distressed, vacant, or underperforming properties inside of Loop 410 to mixed-use districts to incentivize redevelopment, especially along corridors such as East Houston Street and South WW White Road, as well as in neighborhood-centric nodes.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	1	0	0	4

Comments Received:

No comments received.

Land Use Recommendation #3: Ensure that development along the I-10 corridor serves not only interstate traffic but also the growing residential population in the area.

Strategy 3.1

Avoid additional auto-oriented uses, such as auto supply shops, repair shops, and truck stops, adjacent to residential areas, consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

Strategy 3.2

Ensure the continued commercial viability of sites impacted by TxDOT's improvements to the I-10/Loop 410 interchange. Support rezoning requests and explore potential City-initiated rezoning of such properties to align with the Future Land Use Map.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	0	4

Comments Received:

No comments received.

Land Use Recommendation #4: Ensure continued industrial growth in the Far East Community Area, while minimizing negative impacts on residents and environmental systems.

Strategy 4.1

Support rezoning requests and explore potential City-initiated rezoning of properties designated Business/Innovation Mixed-Use on the Future Land Use Map to ensure that innovation hubs, industries that provide jobs for a specialized workforce, and campus-oriented mixed-use development are allowed in these areas.

Strategy 4.2

For industrial properties where floodplain or drainage areas are present onsite or directly adjacent to the property, consider requiring an easement for watershed protection or increasing building setbacks from these sensitive areas, since freight movement and impervious cover have a significant impact on watershed health. New development along the Rosillo Creek should be a key focus of this effort.

Strategy 4.3

Preserve areas for industrial use that have rail and freeway access.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	3

Comments Received:

No comments received.

Land Use Recommendation #5: Continue to support Martindale Army Heliport's mission and mitigate the impact of the heliport field operations on surrounding properties.

Strategy 5.1 (Regulatory and Policy)

Restrict new residential development near Martindale Army Heliport and near industrial uses to minimize conflicts related to noise, air quality, lighting, height, and other potential impacts of the military mission.

Strategy 5.2 (Regulatory and Policy)

Restrict height of structures from new development in and near the Martindale Army Heliport flight path and hazard zone to ensure the viability of Martindale's mission.

- Analyze height restriction measures for new developments in the area.
- Explore rezoning of properties in these areas to minimize conflicts related to height.

Strategy 5.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships)

Ensure that all new development near Martindale Army Heliport is a compatible use as identified in the Joint Base San Antonio Regional Compatible Use Plan.

Strategy 5.4 (Regulatory and Policy)

Continue enforcement of all applicable airport and military overlay zoning districts near Martindale Army Heliport.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	3

Comments Received:

No comments received.

Economic Development Recommendation #1: Plan for the development of additional industrial uses around the Martindale Army Heliport, southeast of the I-10 and Loop 410 intersection.

Strategy 1.1

Support the annexation of properties on the edge of the city that are requesting annexation to facilitate employment uses.

Strategy 1.2

Identify strategies that allow the City to partner with businesses and developers to build out needed infrastructure to support industrial development.

 Assess the existing roadway network surrounding the area southeast of the intersection of I-10 and Loop 410 to gauge vehicle sight visibility, turn lanes, and road widths to improve the current network for freight traffic.

Strategy 1.3

Work with the City's Economic Development Department and greater:SATX to actively promote and market employment-oriented development sites along I-10 and Loop 410, site selectors, and economic development entities.

Strategy 1.4

Work with partners, including San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside (SAGE), St. Philip's College, and the City's Workforce Development Office, to create opportunities and programs for job skill education and training and workforce education.

Support the SA Ready to Work program to promote workforce development.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	0	0	1	1

Comments Received:

• Consider targeting specific demographics for job readiness (Strategy 1.4)

Economic Development Recommendation #2: Attract development and businesses to mixed-use designated areas at the I-10/Loop 1604 and Loop 410/East Houston Street interchanges.

Strategy 2.1 (Partnerships)

Work with community stakeholders to solicit interest in, and investigate the potential for, attracting health services and a healthcare facility to the greater eastside of San Antonio in the Eastside, Southeast, and/or Far East Community Areas along Loop 410.

Strategy 2.2 (Regulatory and Policy)

Explore the creation of a new City-initiated Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) to support desired development patterns and needed infrastructure near East Houston Street and Loop 410 (see Focus Area 1) and near I-10 and Loop 1604 (see Focus Area 6).

Strategy 2.3 (Partnerships)

Partner with the City's Workforce Development Office to explore youth job training and employment opportunities in these areas.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	0	0	1	2

Comments Received:

• Need policy regarding access to health care services for residents to implement a goal identified within the Eastern Triangle Plan.

Economic Development Recommendation #3: Attract new grocery and food options to the area.

Strategy 3.1

Work with local partner agencies and organizations to study the availability of fresh food in the area, identify food deserts, develop strategies for filling gaps in grocery services, and identifying potential locations to grocery providers.

Strategy 3.2

Partner with City departments and other city-wide agencies to identify small-scale vacant or underutilized properties and study the potential of establishing community gardens and other urban agricultural opportunities in the area.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	3

Comments Received:

• Make HEB a 2-story grocer

Economic Development Recommendation #4: Support the growth of small neighborhood commercial nodes in the western portion of the Far East Community Area.

Strategy 4.1

Identify and engage businesses along the commercial corridors to assess their interest in participating in the City's Economic Development Department programs, such as the Corridor Program Pilot.

Strategy 4.2

Continue to support SAGE's Store Front Grant program to aid property and business owners in investing in existing commercial buildings.

Strategy 4.3

Explore options to waive impact fees for new or incubator businesses or non-profits and support local economic development, wealth, and ownership.

Strategy 4.4

Support education and engage established small businesses within these areas to obtain certifications through South Central Texas Regional Certification Agency to gain access into the Economic Development Department's Small Business Economic Development Advocacy Program.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	2

Comments Received:

- Specifically, along Pecan Valley between Amanda and Comanche Park.
- Change language to reflect future opportunities corridor pilot program has already accepted applications.

Housing Recommendation #1: Encourage infill housing development along East Houston Street and South WW White Road to promote reinvestment in older or underutilized commercial centers.

Strategy 1.1

Encourage the development of multi-family housing along mixed-use corridors identified in the Future Land Use Map. Support rezoning requests and other efforts that provide multi-family housing on suitable mixed-use sites.

Strategy 1.2

Implement community-centered principles and incentives into the infill development process. (SHIP Strategy CHS6)

- Explore tax incentives for affordable infill development and rebates or other supports to offset tax increases for homeowners near developments.
- Strengthen neighborhood outreach as infill housing projects develop.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	1	3

Comments Received:

No comments received

Housing Recommendation #2: Provide a greater diversity of housing options in the Far East Community Area to suit the needs of current and future residents.

Strategy 2.1

Encourage higher-density housing options in areas with access to major arterials, highways, and transit service to reduce impacts on existing neighborhoods, especially near the East Houston Street/Loop 410 and Loop 1604/I-10 intersections.

Strategy 2.2

Work with housing development partners to identify potential locations for older adult housing projects, including projects with affordable units.

Strategy 2.3

Advance Universal Design and visitability standards to promote accessibility in new housing projects and update current building practices. (SHIP Strategy HPRP4)

Strategy 2.4

Support a range of missing middle housing types that promote a greater diversity of neighborhood-compatible housing product types including more compact attached and detached single-family options, affordable lower-density multi-family units, and older adult housing. The following areas are most suitable for this type of housing:

- Between Loop 410 and South WW White Road
- Between Pecan Valley Drive and I-10
- Between South Foster Road and Loop 410
- Within Focus Areas 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 (See Focus Areas)

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	3

Comments Received:

- Define "affordable housing"
- Range field between WW White Rd. and Semlinger, and Lord and Glen Oak wondering about plans, prefer not apartments

Housing Recommendation #3: Provide support to existing homeowners within older neighborhoods to allow them to reinvest in and maintain their homes.

Strategy 3.1

Stabilize residents and preserve homes by mitigating displacement pressures related to code enforcement through increased funds for repair programs. (See also SHIP Strategy CIH3)

Raise awareness and market expansion of homeowner assistance programs, such as minor repairs programs and homebuyer down payment assistance programs through the City's Neighborhood Housing Services Department (NHSD) and SAGE to increase use of these programs.

Strategy 3.2

Encourage adding accessory dwelling units to existing residences as a means to build wealth for households with low incomes and support additional housing options for older adults. (See also SHIP Strategy HPRP3)

Strategy 3.3

Continue to support the use of the Office of Historic Preservation's Vacant Building Program (VBP) where it applies within the Far East Community Area. (See also SHIP Strategy HPRP5)

- Identify opportunities to expand the program service area outside of the existing boundaries.
- Identify how the program can also address vacant lots in the area that may not fit into the criteria for the program (e.g., vacant structure or code compliance issues) to identify opportunities for sales or reinvestment in these sites.

Strategy 3.4

Establish a Demolition Prevention and Mitigation Program. (SHIP Strategy PPN1)

Preserve existing older housing stock for affordable housing and anti-displacement.

Strategy 3.5

Identify strategies to assist rightful property owners to establish clear titles to their property. (See also SHIP Strategy PPN6)

Strategy 3.6

Investigate the potential for a community land trust that can support the growth of the Far East Community Area. Work with community stakeholders to identify a preferred approach to creating a trust. Work with City and area partners to identify an organization (public or non-profit) with the resources and capacity to manage the trust over the long term. (See also SHIP Strategies CIH5 and CIH7)

Strategy 3.7

Establish a multi-family rental rehabilitation program. (SHIP Strategy HPRP 1)

 Preserve existing older multi-family stock and minimize negative impacts on overall community character.

Likert Scale Results:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	1	4

Comments Received:

No comments received

Mobility

The Mobility station showcased 8 identified corridor areas based on previous input received from the community. These corridor areas include:

- S WW White Rd. from Rigsby Ave. to I-10
- Intersection of Loop 410 and Rigsby Ave.
- E Houston St. (E of 410; FM 1346) from Loop 410 to S. Foster Rd.
- MLK Dr. from WW White Rd. to I-10
- Pecan Valley from Rigsby Ave. to I-10
- Rice Rd. from WW White Rd. to Brooksdale
- Diane Ave. from Rice to Rigsby
- Rigsby Ave. from Holmgreen to Semlinger

Comments and feedback was received for each of the 8 identified corridors, in addition, gathering input from residents on if any other roadways should be considered. The feedback provided by residents gauged the priority of each corridor (pedestrian, freight, car, transit, bike) and what future enhancements could be made to these areas. A summary of input received includes:

S WW White Rd. from Rigsby Ave. to I-10

- Crosswalks needed along roadway to promote pedestrian accessibility and connectivity
- Install medians to better control traffic and accidents
- On-street parking along WW White Rd.
- The following enhancements were identified by community members:
 - Cycling lighting improvements
 - Cycling safety improvements
 - Cycling new facilities
 - Cars safety improvements
 - Pedestrian safety improvements
 - Pedestrian accessibility improvements
 - Pedestrian public art improvements (more inviting to the area)
 - Micro-Mobility accessibility improvements

Intersection of Loop 410 and Rigsby Ave.

- Need for pedestrian accessibility at intersection
- Get turnaround installed on Loop 410
- Group transportation
- The following enhancements were identified by community members:
 - Pedestrian accessibility improvements
 - Cars safety improvements
 - Pedestrian safety improvements

E Houston St. (E of 410; FM 1346) from Loop 410 to S. Foster Rd.

- The following enhancements were identified by community members:
 - Pedestrian accessibility
 - Transit improvements

MLK Dr. from WW White Rd. to I-10

- The following enhancements were identified by community members:
 - Transit lighting improvements
 - Transit general improvements
 - Cycling wayfinding improvements
 - Cycling lighting improvements
 - Cycling new facility improvements
 - o Pedestrian lighting improvements
 - Pedestrian safety improvements
 - Pedestrian accessibility improvements
 - Micro-Mobility accessibility improvements

Pecan Valley from Rigsby Ave. to I-10

• The following enhancements were identified by community members:

- o Micro-Mobility lighting improvements
- Cycling public art improvements
- Pedestrian accessibility improvements

Rice Rd. from WW White Rd. to Brooksdale

- The following enhancements were identified by community members:
 - Pedestrian accessibility

Diane Ave. from Rice to Rigsby

- The following enhancements were identified by community members:
 - Pedestrian accessibility

Rigsby Ave. from Holmgreen to Semlinger

- WW White and Rigsby bad traffic going north.
- The following enhancements were identified by community members:
 - Pedestrian accessibility
 - Cars congestion improvements
 - o Pedestrian lighting improvements

Amenities & Public Spaces

The third and final station of the open house gathered feedback from residents regarding amenities and public space enhancements pertaining to the entire study area as well as each previously identified focus areas. Feedback received included asking participants where future enhancements of amenities and public space elements could potentially go and where. These elements include:

- Public Art
- Parks
- Plazas
- Priority Connections
- Trails
- Trail heads

- Green Infrastructure
- Improved Lighting
- Pedestrian Crossings
- Signage and Wayfinding
- Character Defining Features

The following comments were received for the entirety of the plan area:

- Signage needed at Rigsby Ave. and WW White Rd.
- Priority connections added within neighborhoods along I-10
- Public Art under overpasses along I-10
- Lighting improvements at Copernicus Community Center
- Character defining feature along Foster Rd.

The following comments were received for each specific focus area:

Focus Area #1 (E Houston St.):

- Streetlights along the corridor
- A mini park for children

Focus Area #2 (Old WW White Elementary School):

- Streetlighting and protected bike lanes along WW White Rd.
- Mini parks within this area
- Pocket parks and community center in this area
- No mixed-use space, support entrepreneurial group of creators and builders from the community to implement their dreams for the area
- Green space development
- Protected bike lanes and streetlights

Focus Area #3 (Old Municipal Landfill Site):

- Skateboard and BMX park, reference Pearsall Park
- Dog park at Old Municipal Landfill Site
- Streetlighting along WW White Rd.
- Park space at Old Municipal Landfill Site

Focus Area #4 (Wheatley Heights):

More recreational fields and parking

Focus Area #5 (East Loop 410):

- Please consider signage along bike/hike trail to direct riders and walkers
- More commercial spaces vs. industrial spaces

Focus Area #6 (Loop 1604 & I-10):

• No comments received

Survey

A survey will be created and posted to the sub area website, SA Speak Up and the Planning Department's social media in the coming weeks. A link to the survey will be located here: https://fareast.sacompplan.com/

Next Steps

Staff will review feedback from the community meeting and the survey results (after the survey closes) to further refine the draft recommendations and strategies for land use, housing, and economic development, and to craft plan content for focus areas, amenities & public spaces, and mobility.

This meeting summary, along with all previous meeting summaries can be found on the sub area page's resource page: https://fareast.sacompplan.com/documents/?active=community-meetings

The fourth community open house is tentatively scheduled for February 2024.

Project Manager: Dave Powell, City of San Antonio Planning Department

Email: David.Powell@sanantonio.gov

Phone: (210) 207-0244

Photos from the Open House



































