



PLANNING TEAM MEETING #6 SUMMARY

Greater Airport Area Regional Center Plan Planning Team Meeting #6

Meeting Date: February 9, 2023
Time: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Location: Virtual

PLANNING TEAM ATTENDEES:

- Christina Castaño, VIA Metropolitan Transit
- Marco Barros, Bluffview Resident
- Justin Cruger, VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority
- Libby Day, Shearer Hills / Ridgeview Neighborhood Association
- Jeff Fair, SA Chamber of Commerce
- Gary Gibbons, Greater Harmony Hills Neighborhood Association
- Ryan Hall, Aviation Department
- Josh Heiss, Aviation Department
- Marilyn Jowdy, Blossom Park Neighborhood Association
- Donna Thompson, Bluffview of Camino Real Neighborhood

**Other Planning Team members may have been in attendance.*

PROJECT STAFF:

- Jacob Howard, City of San Antonio Planning Department (Project Manager)
- Jay Renkens, Principle MIG
- Hannah Santiago, Cambridge Systematics
- Krystin Ramirez, Project Manager MIG

MEETING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the sixth Planning Team Meeting was to cover mobility in the sub-area for the first time, additionally edits to the Vision and Goals were presented along with statements relating to mobility.

MEETING AGENDA

- 1) Introductions
 - a) Icebreaker: How Do You Get Around
 - b) Vision & Goals
- 2) Mobility
 - a) Mobility Overview: Assets and Challenges
 - b) Mobility Opportunities
- 3) Next Steps



1) INTRODUCTIONS

Project Staff was introduced.

a) Icebreaker: “How do you get around the area?”

Planning Team Members were asked, “How do you get around the area?” Of the 15 Planning Team Members who responded, 14 reported driving as their primary mode of transportation and 1 reported using Public Transportation including VIA’s Para-trans service, in addition to walking and taking rideshares. Some Planning Team Members noted Wurzbach Parkway as a major improvement that benefits the area, but noted the lack of an interchange with US 281 as missing improvement that could benefit drivers. Some Planning Team Members noted that the area has an extensive trails system that is a multimodal benefit although no Planning Team Member used the trails network as their primary way of getting around the area. One Planning Team Member stated that they do bike in the area, but not as their primary mode of transport, stating the lack of cycling infrastructure and unsafe conditions as an impediment to potential users. The representative for North Star Mall noted that customers and employees of the mall and its tenants use a range of transportation options, the representative for the hotel and lodging association noted that same, adding that the North Star Transit Center was particularly important for local workers, and hotels will use their shuttle to pick-up / drop-off employees from the center. Similarly, Airport staff highlighted that Airport Employees use a diversity of modes including transit. Rideshares were noted as critical for Airport Passengers that is a relatively new development that should be considered in the process.

b) Vision and Goals

Vision and Goals were re-presented to the Planning Team with edits. The vision was edited to include a statement the area “Develops Sustainably,” The statement about streets was edited to remove the word comfortable, and add the word connected. Mobility related sections of the Vision and Goal include those highlighted below and edits are shown in red.

Draft Vision

The Greater Airport Area Regional Center is a successful employment center with a variety of small and large businesses, including shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues, that serve the area’s diverse and safe, neighborhoods, the City, and are compatible with Airport operations. The area develops sustainably. Residents and visitors enjoy a well-distributed and maintained parks, open space, and trail system, in addition to complete streets with safe, comfortable and connected pedestrian, bicycle and transit options.

Draft Goals (1/2)

1. Create safe and vibrant destinations with a diversity of strategically located and high-quality housing, employment, and mixed-use developments that respects existing neighborhoods, avoid conflict with, and support the Airport.
2. Improve existing streets and create new connections that are truly multimodal, aesthetically pleasing and provide sustainable stormwater benefits.
3. Increase equitable access to parks, open space, and trails and recreational amenities throughout the Regional Center.
4. Address safety concerns and barriers created by transportation infrastructure of all types throughout the Regional Center.

Draft Goals (2/2)

5. Improve comfort, safety and aesthetics throughout the Regional Center with trees, other urban greening, and integration of sustainable infrastructure.
6. Enhance transit connections to amenities within the Greater Airport Regional Center, to Downtown, and to other Regional Centers in and outside of San Antonio for residents, employees and visitors.
7. Promote quality infill development and redevelopment within neighborhoods and commercial areas that are compatible with existing homes and provides more housing options for existing and new residents.



2) MOBILITY

a) **Mobility Overview: Assets and Challenges**

Additionally, a list of Sub-area Mobility “Assets and Challenges” developed by staff was also presented to the Planning Team (listed below.) This list is meant to reflect themes that have been identified by the public, or issues that may be contributing to issues raised by the community.

Assets:

- Access to other parts of the City
- Central location
- Trail network
- San Antonio International Airport
- North Star Transit Center

Challenges:

- Connectivity withing the sub-area
- Limited pedestrian and bicyclist amenities, such as sidewalks and protected bike lanes challenge multi-modal connectivity
- Roadways that are stressful environments for people biking & walking
- Large blocks

Mobility Challenges

A Brief overview of general mobility issues to consider during the planning process was presented to the Planning Team along with a short explanation as to how preliminary priority sites for mobility intervention were selected. A short “icebreaker” exercise then followed, where Planning Team Members were asked to consider and rank the following mobility related issues:

1. Rising household transportation costs
2. Providing more comfortable spaces for walking and biking
3. Capacity on roadways and bridges for vehicles
4. Providing more transit options
5. Aging population
6. Aging and deteriorating roads and bridges
7. Handling more trucks
8. Safe travel
9. Intro. of self-driving vehicles
10. Money to maintain and improve the transportation system.
11. Increasing traffic/congestion delays
12. Protecting cultural, historic, and natural resources
13. Providing connections between modes
14. Bouncing back from extreme weather events
15. Increase in electric and alternative fuel vehicles



b) Mobility Opportunities

To help collect input from the Planning Team on which sites in the area need mobility investments, Cambridge Systematics presented a map of street that included information on which sites have, potential funding sources, safety issues like crashes between cars and with pedestrians and/or maintenance issues. Planning Team Members were asked to consider the area and their needs along with data relating to the mapping activity and help ID sites that should be called out in the plan for additional investments.

- Pedestrian Infrastructure and access around San Pedro
- Connectivity for Bicycles across Loop 410 especially to Blanco which has existing bike lanes from Eisenhower to 410
- Connecting McAllister Park to the region with cycling infrastructure
- Include bike lanes on McCullough.
- On West Ave. sidewalks are improving, but issues with drainage where bike-lanes and sidewalks flood.
- Opportunity to address street-level flooding by adding bioswale, stormwater bump out, and street tree well construction along the contributing streets.
- Competing interests around McAllister Park between cyclists and driver opportunity for special connection for cyclist directly to bike lanes
- Bus stops on Blanco are being upgraded but passengers must cross up-to 5 lanes of traffic in places.



3) NEXT STEPS

Upcoming Meetings

- **PLANNING TEAM MEETING #7**
Planning Team Meeting #7 will be held virtually on Thursday, March 9th from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM
- **DIGITAL DESIGN CHARRETTE (DDC)**
The Digital Design Charrette will be held virtually on Thursday, April 6th from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM
- **COMMUNITY MEETING #3**
Community Meeting #3 will be held at the Piper-Bass Memorial Student Center on Tuesday, May 9th from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Project Manager: Jacob Howard, City of San Antonio Planning Department

Email: jacob.howard@sanantonio.gov

Phone: (210) 207-5441





Greater Airport Regional Center Planning Team

Meeting #6

February 9th, 2023

Zoom

2:00 – 4:00 PM



Cambridge Systematics, Inc.
Bowtie
Economic & Planning Systems, Inc.
Auxiliary Marketing Services
Mosaic Planning and Development Services
SJPA

Greater Airport Area Project Team



City of San Antonio, Planning Department

Jacob Howard, Project Manager



MIG

Jay Renkens, Principal

Krystin Ramirez, Project Manager



Cambridge Systematics

Hannah Santiago, Senior Associate

Timeline of Meetings



Meeting Objectives

1. Mobility Overview

Assets and challenges

2. Define Mobility Needs

Identify the most pressing problems for moving people & goods

3. Prioritize Mobility Opportunities

Envisioning the streets of the future





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Mobility Overview

Draft Vision

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Draft Goals (2/2)

5. *Improve comfort, safety and aesthetics throughout the Regional Center with trees, other urban greening, and integration of sustainable infrastructure.*
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What We've Been Hearing

Mobility Themes

Large number of pedestrian fatalities in the area, desire to make streets more walkable

Loop 410 is a major barrier for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity

Limited crossing opportunities risk safety for transit riders and pedestrians

Close to many amenities, especially for drivers

Excellent Trails System

Too much space is wasted for parking, contributing to the heat island effect

US 281 at Bitters is a barrier for connectivity for those walking & cycling

Wayfinding and bicycle connectivity

Overview of Mobility Assets & Challenges

ASSETS

- Access to Rest of the City
- Central Location
- Trails Network
- San Antonio International Airport
- North Star Transit Center

CHALLENGES

- Connectivity withing the area
- Limited pedestrian and bicyclist amenities, such as sidewalks and protected bike lanes challenge multi-modal connectivity
- Roadways that are stressful environments for people biking & walking
- Large blocks

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Mobility Challenges



Mobility Challenges

Fast Facts



DANGEROUS BY DESIGN

People of color, older adults, and low-income populations are disproportionately burdened by pedestrian injuries and deaths.



TRAFFIC CRASHES ARE A LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN CHILDREN

In the US in 2020, traffic crashes resulted in the deaths of 608 children and injuries in over 91,000 children.



TRANSPORTATION CONTRIBUTES TO GREENHOUSE GASES

38% of San Antonio's Greenhouse Gas Emissions come from passenger cars, light trucks and heavy trucks

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, SA Climate Ready.

Initial Identification of Needs

ISSUES LIMITING MOVING PEOPLE

- Areas where **people riding bikes and people walking have been injured or died**
- Areas with **missing sidewalks**
- Areas with **unreliable transit**
- Areas served by **low-frequency transit**

ISSUES CONSTRAINING MOVING GOODS

- Areas with significant potholes and **pavement in poor condition**
- Area of potential **railroad-roadway conflicts**
- Streets **prone to flooding** during storm events
- Problem areas **reported by neighbors to 311**

Ranking Exercise

1) Capacity on roadways and bridges for vehicles

2) Providing more transit options

3) Aging population

4) Providing more comfortable spaces for walking and biking

5) Aging and deteriorating roads and bridges

6) Handling more trucks

7) Safe travel

8) Intro. of self-driving vehicles

9) Money to maintain and improve the transportation system

10) Increasing traffic/congestion delays

11) Rising household transportation costs

12) Protecting cultural, historic and natural resources

13) Providing connections between modes

14) Bouncing back from extreme weather events

15) Increase in electric and alternative fuel vehicles

16) Other

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Prioritizing Mobility Opportunities



Opportunities for Mobility Investments

HISTORICAL LEVELS OF FUNDING

Funding directed towards local governments with the latest transportation bill passed by congress

LOCAL SUPPORT

Successful track record of transportation bond supported by residents

EQUITABLE MAINTENANCE STRATEGY

Equitable distribution of maintenance funding to keep streets in a good state of repair



Prioritizing Areas of Opportunity

READY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Which areas align with funding priorities of those delivering projects?

PROVIDE ACCESS

Which areas will have future mobility demands & provide critical access to transit stops, libraries, schools, senior centers, community centers?

EQUITY

Which transportation assets provide areas of historically marginalized communities and areas of persistent poverty?

SIGNIFICANT NEEDS

Where are the most urgent issues challenging the movement of people and goods?

Understanding the Needs

EXERCISE #1

- **STEP 1: Map Mark Up – Where are the mobility needs?**
 - Review the subarea map of needs.
 - Mark the map with other areas of mobility needs that have not been identified.

SAFETY

TRANSIT ACCESS

MULTIMODAL

Understanding the Needs

EXERCISE #1

- **STEP 2: Group Discussion**
 - Which mobility needs are the most urgent/pressing needs?
 - Which needs present the biggest barriers for achieving our mobility-related goals?

SAFETY

TRANSIT ACCESS

MULTIMODAL

Prioritizing Areas of Opportunity

EXERCISE #2

- **STEP 1: Group Discussion – Which locations are priority?**
 - Which locations provide an opportunity to make an impact on our goals?
 - As a group, select up to 3 priority locations.

PEOPLE

FREIGHT

*NEEDS/
MAINTENANCE*

*NEEDS/
DISCRETIONARY*

Prioritizing Areas of Opportunity

EXERCISE #2

- **STEP 2: Group Discussion – What is the vision for our priority locations?**
 - How do you envision people using this existing street?
 - How are people/freight using the street now?
 - Which problems are most important to resolve to achieve our goals for this area?

PEOPLE

FREIGHT

*NEEDS/
MAINTENANCE*

*NEEDS/
DISCRETIONARY*

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Next Steps



Next Steps

NEXT PLANNING TEAM MEETING(S):

- MARCH 9th – Planning Team Meeting #7
- APRIL 6th - Digital Design Workshop
- MAY 9th – Community Meeting #3
- JUNE 15th – Planning Team Meeting #8

QUESTIONS?

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