



## NEAR NORTHWEST COMMUNITY AREA PLAN PLANNING TEAM MEETING #1 SUMMARY

**Topic:** PT1: Plan Kickoff & Orientation; Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities  
**Date:** Thursday, July 11, 2024  
**Time:** 5:30 – 7:30 pm  
**Location:** Whitley Event Center, 285 Oblate Drive, SATX 78216

### Attendees:

Attendees consisted of City of San Antonio staff and Near Northwest (NNW) Planning Team members. Planning Teams consist of a wide variety of stakeholders from the NNW area including neighborhood associations, residents, business owners, community leaders, employers, and major institutions.

- Mia Trevino, COSA Project Manager
- Marco Hinojosa, MIG Project Consultant
- Mike Phillips, Ingram Hills NA
- Pete Araiza, Ingram Hills NA
- Diane Duesterhoeft, St. Mary's University
- Grace Villarreal, Sunshine Estates NA
- Nathan Mabery, Inspiration Hills NA
- Carmen Castillo, Hillcrest HOA
- Dan Rossiter, Thunderbird Hills NA
- Dr. Amanda Villarreal, Ride Connect Texas
- Veronica Ibarra, VIA
- Thomas Medina, VIA

### I. MEETING PURPOSE & AGENDA

The **purpose** of Planning Team Meeting #1 was to kick off Phase 4 of the SA Tomorrow Sub-Area planning process. The Near Northwest Community Area Plan is one of six Sub-Area Plans being developed as part of Phase 4. The agenda for the meeting included:

- 5:00 – 5:30 PM: Optional “meet and greet” for members of all six Planning Teams
- 5:30 – 6:00 PM: Opening plenary session for all six Planning Teams with introductory and contextual information about SA Tomorrow and Sub-Area Planning
- 6:00 – 7:30 PM: Break-out sessions for each Sub-Area Planning Team

### II. SUMMARY OF PLENARY SESSION CONTENT

The plenary session started with introductions of all City of San Antonio Planning Department and consultant project staff. Project staff then provided background information on the SA Tomorrow initiative and described how Sub-Area planning shapes San Antonio's future. A timeline for the Sub-Area planning process was discussed as were the roles and responsibilities of Planning Team members.

#### SA Tomorrow and Sub-Area Plan Background

**SA Tomorrow** is the umbrella term for the city's three-pronged approach to guide the city in smart, sustainable growth over the next twenty years. The SA Tomorrow effort began in 2014 and its purpose was to plan for the 1.1 million new residents the city is expecting to add by the year 2040. A growing city

requires expanded infrastructure, city services, jobs, and housing –all while protecting the natural and cultural resources that make San Antonio an attractive, healthy place to live.

- Three plans were developed and adopted as part of the SA Tomorrow umbrella:
  - **Multimodal Transportation Plan**- multimodal transportation strategy and method for prioritizing projects through 2040
  - **Sustainability Plan** – focuses on economic, environmental, and social sustainability
  - **Comprehensive Plan** – The Comprehensive Plan is the city’s overarching long-range planning document that provides a roadmap for how the city manages growth and development. **The Comprehensive Plan addresses a range of topics from land use, urban design, transportation, housing, cultural and historic resources, etc.**
- A key implementation goal of the Comprehensive Plan is the development of **Sub-Area Plans (like the Near Northwest Community Area Plan)** for each part of the city. Sub-Area Plans cover the same topics as the Comprehensive Plan but at a much greater level of detail. Sub-Areas are categorized as either Regional Centers or Community Areas, depending on whether they are areas of employment or more residential in nature. The five main topics addressed in Sub-Area Plans are **Land Use, Mobility, Housing, Economic Development, and Community Amenities and Public Spaces**. Sub-Area Plans are developed through an intentional, iterative community-based process and result in recommendations and strategies for each of the five main topic areas. Recommendations and strategies are based on community priorities and are policy, investment, and/or partnership-based.

#### Process and Timeline for Sub-Area Planning

Each Sub-Area Plan (like the Near Northwest Community Area Plan) is developed over the course of 18-24 months and includes 12 Planning Team Meetings and 4 Community Meetings. The planning process begins with examining existing conditions in the plan area and working with the community to establish their vision and goals for the area’s future as related to each of the Sub-Area Plan’s five main topics - Land Use, Mobility, Economic Development, Housing, and Community Amenities and Public Spaces. Recommendations and strategies for achieving community vision, goals, and priorities are then developed for each topic. Maps, graphics, and other illustrations are also developed as part of the Sub-Area Plan. The entire draft Sub-Area Plan is then made available for public comment and edits are made to the draft plan based on feedback. The draft plan then progresses to the Planning Commission and, finally, to the City Council for consideration and adoption.

#### Roles & Responsibilities of Planning Team Members

The Planning Team represents multiple stakeholders in the community (neighborhoods, businesses, institutions, community groups, etc.). The team acts as a steering committee throughout the planning process, providing more frequent, in-depth, and consistent guidance. Planning Team members facilitate two-way communications with their stakeholder organization. Planning Team members are asked to abide by the following rules of decorum:

- Meetings begin and end at announced times
- Unanticipated alternative topics typically wait for the next meeting
- Open for public attendance but designed as a work session
- Approach other Planning Team members with an attitude of mutual respect, empathy, and learning
- Communicate any ideas and concerns first with your Project Manager

### III. SUMMARY OF NEAR NORTHWEST BREAK-OUT SESSION CONTENT

After the plenary session, individual break-out sessions were held for each Planning Team. The NNW Community Area Plan project manager facilitated around-the-room introductions; Planning Team members were asked to share their name, the organization they represent, and one thing they like about living or working in the NNW area. A folder containing a welcome letter, a list of Planning Team roles and responsibilities, a plan area boundary map, a tentative meeting schedule, and an NNW “quickfacts” sheet was distributed to each Planning Team member.

After introductions, the project manager reviewed the projected timeline and sequence of NNW Planning Team and Community Meetings. The project manager provided a high-level summary of **existing conditions** in the NNW plan area related to demographics, housing, economics, land use, and transportation. Major landmarks, institutions, and mobility connections in the plan area were highlighted. Maps showing the equity of the area in terms of food access, healthcare access, and transit access were also presented. The project manager informed the Planning Team that an Existing Conditions Atlas with detailed information on the current status of demographic, economic, environmental (natural and built), and equity conditions of the NNW area will be shared in the near future. The Existing Conditions Atlas will be used for reference throughout the NNW Community Area planning process.

The majority of the break-out session was a facilitated discussion to capture what Planning Team members feel are the NNW area’s greatest **assets, challenges, and opportunities**. The project manager explained that this exercise will be repeated at the first community meeting and the combined input will be used to determine an overall vision and set of goals for the NNW area. The vision and goals will guide discussions on land use, mobility, housing, economic development, and amenities throughout the planning process.

Outcomes of Assets, Challenges, and Opportunities Discussion (expanded notes on the following page)



Assets, Challenges, and Opportunities Discussion (expanded notes)

ASSETS	CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation opportunities such as the Joe Ward Center and Gilbert Garza Community Center</li> <li>• Amount of Parks</li> <li>• Mid-Century Modern Homes</li> <li>• Large lots and architecturally unique homes</li> <li>• St. Mary’s University and adjacency to Southwest Research Institute</li> <li>• History and Culture</li> <li>• Access to Downtown</li> <li>• Quality Senior Centers and Housing</li> <li>• Forest Hills Library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aging and missing infrastructure including sidewalks</li> <li>• Stray animals preventing access and mobility to amenities</li> <li>• Fatalities and general safety concerns along Culebra, Bandera, and Callaghan Roads</li> <li>• Homes with too many cars</li> <li>• Flooding</li> <li>• Homeless population in certain areas</li> <li>• Mystery properties and lack of code enforcement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentives for small businesses</li> <li>• High Frequency Transit along Callaghan Road</li> <li>• Increase Tree Canopy both Privately and Publicly, using native species</li> <li>• Encourage infill development and assist with high costs of utility connections</li> <li>• Transportation for the elderly</li> <li>• Provide resources that are not only digital</li> <li>• More community meeting and gathering spaces</li> <li>• Secure funding for corridor improvements</li> <li>• Make it simpler to spay and neuter animals and tap into funding from private agencies</li> <li>• Regular Code Enforcement</li> </ul>
<p><b>General Feedback and Common Themes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse, Community, Infrastructure, Access, Safety, Support Aging Population, Support Small Businesses</li> <li>• Independent and local grocery stores have been pushed out; there is a desire to better understand and support the Healthy Corner Stores Program in the Near Northwest</li> </ul>		

**IV. NEXT STEPS**

- **The Near Northwest Community Area project website** will be used to post Planning Team and Community Meeting resources, communicate dates for public engagement opportunities, and draft plan content. Near Northwest Community Area link: <https://nearnorthwest.sacompplan.com/>
- **Questionnaire** – Vision and Goals. A Questionnaire will be released in August for community input to help prepare draft Vision and Goals statements for the Near Northwest Community.
- **Near Northwest Community Meeting #1** is scheduled for early 2025. Notification will be sent once details are confirmed.

**Contact Information**

Mia Trevino, Project Manager  
 San Antonio Planning Department  
 Email: [Mia.Trevino@sanantonio.gov](mailto:Mia.Trevino@sanantonio.gov)

Phone: (210) 207-5452