



NEAR NORTHWEST

COMMUNITY AREA PLAN

Planning Team Meeting 5 Summary Community Amenities and Public Spaces



PLANNING

PLANNING TEAM MEETING 5 SUMMARY

1. Date, Time, Location

- Date: June 30, 2025
- Time: 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
- Location: Virtual

2. Attendees

Attendees included members of the Near Northwest Community Area Plan Planning Team, staff from the City of San Antonio Planning Department, San Antonio River Authority, and project consultants from MIG. The Planning Team comprises a diverse group of stakeholders from the Near Northwest Community Area, including representatives of neighborhood associations, residents, business owners, community leaders, employers, and major institutions.

PLANNING TEAM

- Diane Duesterhoeft, St. Mary's University
- Dan Rossiter, Thunderbird Hills NA
- Don Rios, Culebra Park NA
- Mike Phillips, Ingram Hills NA
- Nahum Martinez, VIA Metropolitan Transit
- Patricia Jaramillo, St. Mary's University
- Rosita Lira, Sunshine Estates NA
- Thomas Medina, VIA Metropolitan Transit

STAFF

- Sheikh Kenneh, CoSA Planning Department, Project Manager
- Chris Ryerson, CoSA Planning Department, Planning Administrator
- Mikel Wilkins, San Antonio River Authority, Senior Engineer
- Jay Renkens, MIG, Project Consultant
- Marco Hinajosa, MIG, Project Consultant

3. Meeting Purpose & Objectives

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss community amenities and public spaces (CAPS) within the plan area and revisit the designated focus areas in preparation for Planning Team Meeting 6, where these topics will be explored in greater depth. This meeting also featured a presentation from Mikel Wilkens of the San Antonio River Authority on Nature-Based Solutions. It marked the first of two Planning Team meetings dedicated to CAPS.

Objectives

- **San Antonio River Authority Presentation**
- **Overview of Community Amenities and Public Spaces (CAPS)**
- **CAPS Accessibility and Equity Analysis**
- **CAPS Activity**
- **Focus Areas Update**

4. Introduction to Nature Based Solutions (San Antonio River Authority Presentation)

Mikel Wilkens from the San Antonio River Authority delivered a presentation introducing Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), outlining their purpose, potential applications, and relevance to the plan area. He identified key locations within the planning area that the River Authority considers ideal for implementing NBS, supported by example designs and conceptual opportunities.

Planning Team members discussed the proposed Mariposa Park, an approximately 15-acre site envisioned as a nature-focused public space. The park could play a key role in mitigating floodwaters and reducing downstream flooding. Members emphasized the opportunity to minimize impervious cover during future development and proposed that the park serve as an anchor for the future Zarzamora Creek Greenway Project. The Planning Team also asked about opportunities for implementing NBS near St. Mary's University, noting that the institution has access to grant funding and staff interested in participating in such efforts. Mikel responded that the River Authority's current assessment is at a high level, but he acknowledged the potential for collaboration and cited a similar effort with the TAMUSA Regional Center. He committed to following up after conducting a more detailed review of the area.

5. Overview of Community Amenities and Public Spaces (CAPS)/ CAPS Accessibility and Equity Analysis

A project consultant from MIG led a presentation on Community Amenities and Public Spaces (CAPS), introducing the various types of community spaces found throughout the plan area. The presentation emphasized elements of placemaking, comfort, and opportunities for community space enhancements.

- 49% of residents live within walking distance to a park.
- 5% of residents live within walking distance to a supermarket.
- 52.2% of residents are within a 30-minute transit trip to emergency healthcare.
- 51% of residents live in Census Block Groups with relatively low tree coverage (tree coverage score below 5)
- 55% of residents live in areas with a high percentage of impervious surfaces (impervious surface score below 5)
- Only 2% of residents live in Census Block Groups considered low concern for heat vulnerability (heat vulnerability score below 10)

6. Focus Area Update

The Project Manager presented a draft of the focus areas originally introduced and discussed during Planning Team Meeting 2. Each focus area was revisited for further refinement, with comments and suggestions shared by Planning Team members. Below is a summary of the updated feedback and descriptions:

Cincinnati Ave

- Suggested branding the corridor as St. Mary's Gateway District, similar to the UTSA Downtown Innovation Corridor, to reflect its connection to the university and its role as a gateway.

Woodlawn Ave & Bandera Intersection

- Identified as a problematic and unsafe intersection for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- Improvements are needed to enhance traffic flow, safety, and multimodal access.

Future Park (Mariposa)

- Currently vacant land envisioned as a nature park with minimal impervious cover.
- Designed to help mitigate floodwaters and reduce downstream flooding.
- Seen as a potential anchor for the future Zarzamora Creek Greenway Project.

Business Park @ Bandera and Industrial

- The area is currently active and heavily utilized, so it should not be labeled as underutilized.
- Recommended to reimagine the area's future rather than imply disuse.
- Additional green space and open areas could enhance the site.
- A more detailed discussion will take place at the next Planning Team meeting.

Ingham & Callaghan

- Contains a large vacant lot (formerly a 99 Cents Only Store site).
- Interest in diversifying commercial offerings and adding community-oriented amenities.
- Safety improvements are needed at the intersection, particularly due to the proximity of a nearby school.

Future Park (Cielo Vista)

- A Bond-funded project currently in the pre-design phase, with completion anticipated by Fall 2027

7. CAPS Mentimeter Activity

The first activity participants engaged in was a digital poll conducted through the online platform Mentimeter. Planning Team members could access the poll by following a link shared in the meeting chat or by scanning a QR code to participate using a mobile device. Two questions were asked:

- *Rank the community amenities and public space elements that you want to see in your community?*
- *What are some valued and special community amenities and public spaces that already exist in your community?*
- *What are some missing community amenities and public spaces that you would like to see?*

Rank the community amenities and public space elements that you want to see in your community?

1. Nature Based Solutions
2. Community Spaces
3. Placemaking
4. Health
5. Comfort

What are some valued and special community amenities and public spaces that already exist in your community already?

- St. Mary's University
- Forest Hills Library
- Garza Park Community Center
- Joan Price Park
- Joe Ward Park
- Garza Park
- Joe Ward Splash pads are such a hot spot for the area. Woodlawn Park is a public space that we enjoy.
- Jane Dubel Park
- Holmes High School Track

What are some missing community amenities and public spaces that you would like to see in your community?

- Nature Park
- Mariposa Park (listed multiple times, indicating strong community interest)
- Community Garden / Community Meeting Space
- Community Orchard
- Skate Park near schools
- Skate/Bike Park
- Linear Park along all of Zarzamora and Apache Creek with shade on the St. Mary's University campus
- Covered Bus Stops with Wi-Fi
- Senior Centers
- Toddler Park
- Street Trees
- Art

7. CAPS Mapping Activity

The Project Consultant led a mapping activity designed to gather community input around three key questions:

- **Existing:** What existing community amenities and public spaces are valued in your community?
- **Needs Help:** Where do we need additional investment in existing assets?
- **Opportunity:** Where are there gaps in community amenities and public spaces that present a new opportunity?

Planning Team Members comments were inputted directly on a digital map, identifying specific locations that align with each category. Below are images from the activity, with accompanying some comments.

Figure 1:
Needs Help:
Where do we need additional investment in existing assets?

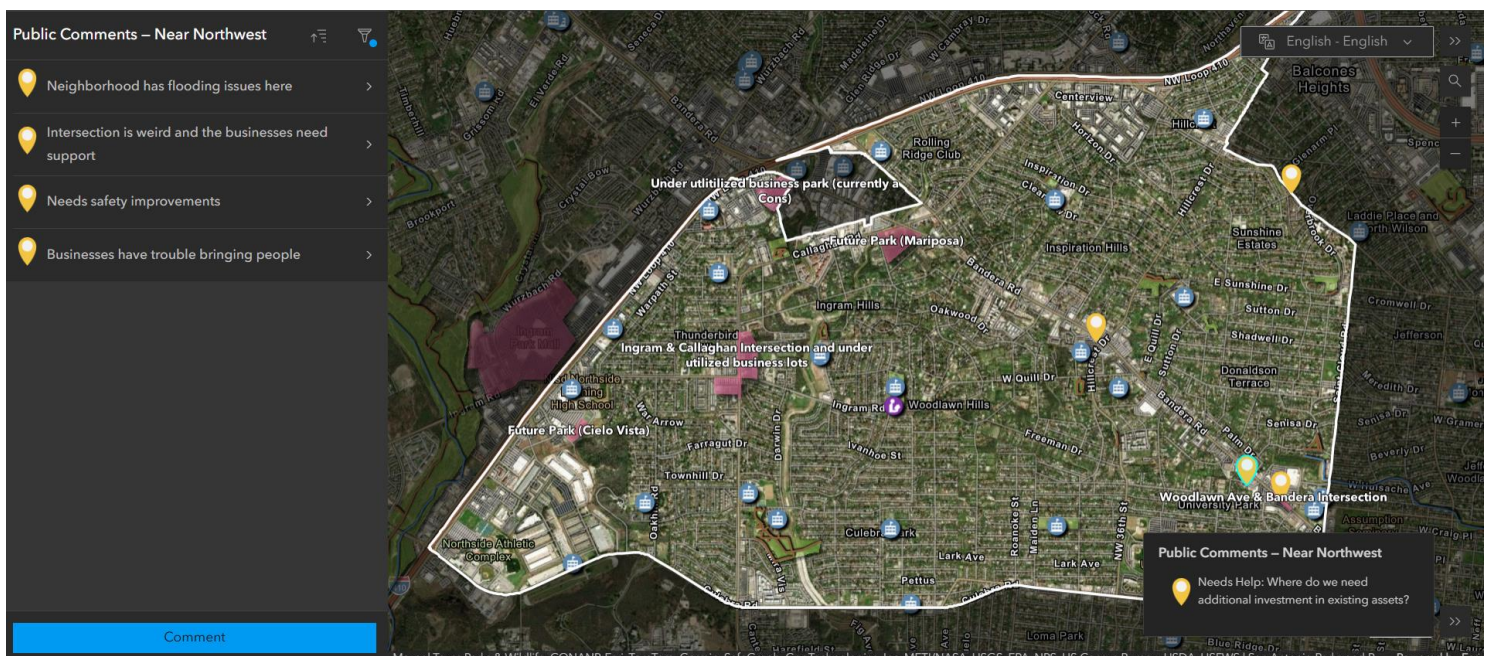
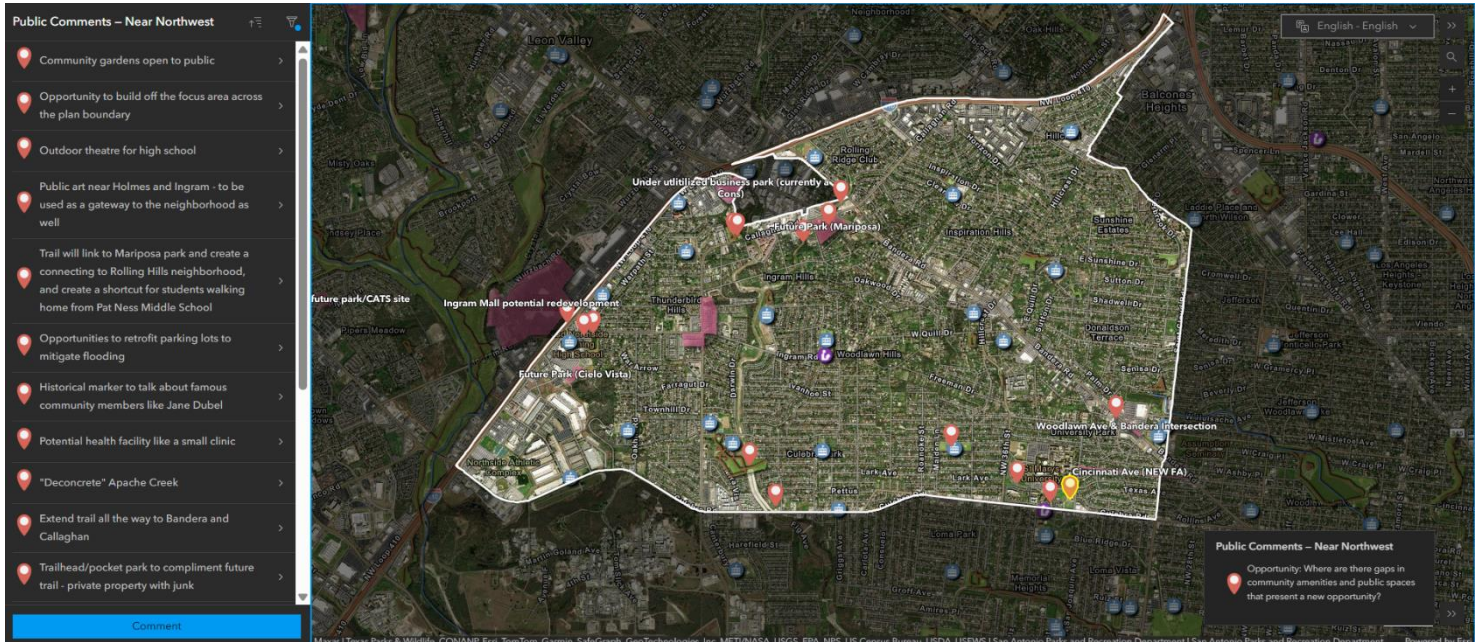


Figure 2:
Opportunity:
 Where are there gaps in community amenities and public spaces that present a new opportunity?



8. Project Manager to Do

- Request to be kept informed on the WNW Ingram Mall Focus Area.
- Extend invitations to interested NNW Planning Team members to participate in WNW Planning Team Meeting 6.
- Re-engage Planning Team members who have not attended recent meetings.

9. Next Steps

- Land Use Workshops
To be determined (Likely August and September)
- Planning Team Meeting #6 | Focus Areas
To be determined (Likely October)

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