

#### WESTSIDE COMMUNITY AREA PLAN PLANNING TEAM #2 MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting:Virtual Planning Team Meeting #2Date:April 18th, 2022Time:6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom

#### Attendees:

Planning Department: Chris Ryerson, Planning Administrator; Ana Villarreal, Senior Planner

Facilitators: Linda Ximenes, Ximenes & Associates, Inc.

<u>Planning Team</u>: The Planning Department sent out invitations for the virtual Planning Team Meeting #2 to the 47 community members confirmed to participate in the development of the Westside Community Area Plan. This group is composed of leaders of registered Neighborhood Associations, key business owners, community activists, and stakeholders in the area.

<u>Planning Team Attendees:</u> 25 planning team members signed on for the virtual Planning Team Meeting.

<u>City Council Offices</u>: The offices of Council Districts 5 and 6 were invited to the virtual Planning Team meeting. The office of District 5 had Derek Tulowitzky present at the meeting as the Director of Zoning and Planning for Councilwoman Teri Castillo.

#### Background

In preparation for Planning Team meeting #2, all planning team members were asked to provide ahead of the meeting their top five priorities to focus on during the development of the plan. All answers were collected, summarized, and presented to the Planning Team at the beginning of the meeting on April 18<sup>th</sup>. A list of all compiled answers is provided at the end of this document.

#### **Meeting Purpose**

The main objectives for the second Planning Team meeting were to identify the five most important things this plan should address, revise the draft Vision and Goals, and discuss the upcoming schedule for working on the rest of the plan. The meeting agenda included the following:

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Meeting Objectives, Procedures and Agenda
- III. Summary of feedback on the five most important things this plan should address
- IV. Review preliminary WCAP Vision and Goals
- V. Next Steps
- VI. Meeting Evaluation

#### **Meeting Format**

The meeting began with introductions of the Planning Department staff, lead facilitator Linda Ximenes of Ximenes & Associates, and all planning team members, followed by a warm-up activity where all meeting attendees shared a personal story of what was good and new in their life. Then, Linda Ximenes explained the objectives of the meeting, discussed the proposed meeting rules with the group, and shared the meeting agenda.

Next participants received a brief presentation from Planning staff on the draft Vision and Goals statements developed by the planning team earlier in the process. After reviewing all statements and goals individually, there was a group discussion facilitated by Linda Ximenes to ensure all wishes and desires were captured, including those new to the process.

As the group reviewed each vision statement and draft goals, Linda Ximenes asked participants to share the following:

- What stands out for you about the vision statement?
- What pleases you about it?
- What is unsatisfactory about it?
- What do we want to keep?
- What do we want to add or remove from it?

After an extensive discussion to finalize the Westside Area Plan Vision and Goals, the group was invited to rethink the planning and engagement process for the Plan moving forward. Planning Department staff took a poll to indicate what type of additional community engagement events would be most helpful for the planning team.

The results of the interactive poll presented to Planning Team members are as follows:





 $\Box$   $\times$ 

### Supplemental Information/work sessions

Poll | 1 question | 19 of 22 (86%) participated

1. What supplemental information/work sessions would you find most helpful? Pick three. (Multiple Choice) \*

19/19 (100%) answered



Lastly, a meeting evaluation was conducted to understand what meeting improvements are needed to effectively communicate information and facilitate an effective discussion between City Staff and all planning team members involved in this planning process.

#### Meeting Evaluation Plusses

- Wish to shorten introductions
- Ground work is
  good
- Chris listened
  closely
- Keep Linda as the moderator

• There's a lot of work left to do

#### Wishes

- Wish to shorten introductions
- Would like to transition to in person meetings
- Would like hybrid meetings
- At a minimum have hybrid meetings
- Difficult to have vision and goals on different slides
- Sending the most important slides ahead of time

#### **Group Discussion**

All comments provided during the group discussion, including those shared on the chat, were compiled by Ana Villarreal on a live document where Planning Team members could see additions and request changes in real time. The full transcription of comments can be found at the end of this document. Following is a summary of the main themes and recurring comments from the group.



#### Summary of recurring important themes for the WCAP to focus on

- Housing
- Mobility
- Infrastructure
- Safety
- Revitalization of Green Spaces
- New Businesses
- Health/Wellness
- Digital Infrastructure
- Land Use
- Educational Opportunities
- Recreational
- Creation of Special Districts
- Equity
- Poverty
- Develop Partnerships

#### Summary of new ideas to incorporate in the WCAP

- Housing:
  - Role of public housing / SAHA to seek federal funds to create a Master Plan to replace older SAHA housing
  - Bexar County to create a partnership with Habitat for Humanity to implement a program for the construction of infill housing on proprieties that are being sold by the county due to back taxes due
  - Housing Protections (having clear titles, homestead and over 65 exemptions, protesting appraisals, applying for rehab grants, correct zoning, etc.)
  - Homeownership, especially including multifamily/condos
  - Community Development Trust / Community Land Trust
- Mobility
  - Improved access to freeways (Hwy 90 & Zarzamora)
  - Converting Commerce and Buena Vista from one-way into two-way streets
- Infrastructure
  - All development plans should be informed and encouraged based on equity and health and wellness and should be targeted towards young families
- Safety
  - Add <u>devices to mitigate crime (lighting, cameras...etc)</u>
  - o <u>Vacant lots</u>
  - Maintain, improve, and light <u>alleys</u>
- Green Spaces



- Sustainability (Elmendorf birds and Bird Island, Preservation of natural environment, Reduce heat island effect, improve water quality, public gathering spaces, awareness of medicinal "matitas" and "hierbas", ...)
- Tree Canopy
- New Business
  - More businesses and renovations to store fronts
  - More Taxable business
  - Provide Tech, Medical jobs as opposed to service industry
- Health/Wellness
  - Medical services
  - Partner with Bexar County, U.T. Health System for essential and preventive health services and facilities
  - Provide local clinics (Audiology, Diabetes, Physical therapy)
  - Provide Physical Therapy and Water therapy, clinics, pools
- Digital Divide
  - Address the digital divide
- Land Use
  - Large area rezoning
  - o Identify areas best suited for growth and density

#### • Educational Opportunities

- Large area rezoning
- Areas best suited for growth and density
- Special Districts
  - Arts and Culture District
  - o Commercial Districts (along Hwy 90, I-35, Commerce, Gen McMullen)
- Equity
  - All development plans should be informed and encouraged based on equity and health and wellness and should be targeted towards young families

#### • Recreational opportunities

- Youth Centers
- o Community/recreational state of the art Senior Center
- Partnerships
  - All development plans should be informed and encouraged based on equity and health and wellness and should be targeted towards young families



#### <u>Top Five Things the WCAP should address</u> (Full Transcription)

#### VIA- Christine B. Viña

1. Integrate the E/W Advanced Rapid Transit (ART) corridor into **Mobility** planning.

2. Evaluate ART parallel corridors that can serve as <u>bicycle routes</u> for increased **connectivity**.

3. Integrate **public art** opportunities at <u>transit stops</u>.

4. Identify areas along the ART corridor that offer the most opportunity for **Transit Oriented Development**.

5. Research options for **Community Development Trusts** to address Westside redevelopment, for the purpose of using <u>revenue to benefit Westside</u> <u>residents/business</u> owners.

- 6. Create new housing products to accommodate:
  - 1. Extended family households

2. Multi-generation, non-related households (an option where younger, working folks can reduce expenses by living with solo elders in exchange for household assistance)

- 3. Quad or pod style apt living for non-college, working singles
- 4. On-site day care

7. Strive to be known as one of the best pedestrian and bicycle connected neighborhoods in city.

#### **HNS- Sandra Morales**

1. **Homeless population** – not all individuals without a home are a threat to the community; however, many of the neighborhoods are now facing the issue of encampments in close proximity to their homes. This does not appear to be a problem in other parts of town that are considered more affluent.

2. **Housing** – affordable to keep individuals, families and seniors in the community; also protecting those who reside on the Westside from investors looking to offer



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below market value buyout.

3. Infrastructure- Street repairs and sidewalks

4. Lack of new restaurants and/or major stores or renovations of existing businesses and/or storefronts (i.e. HEB on W. Commerce and Las Palmas)

5. **Abandoned buildings and lots/property** – holding owners accountable for deplorable conditions of building and/or property

#### Madonna Neighborhood Center- Roger Caballero

1. Create one or more <u>business corridors</u> – i.e., Gen. McMullen, Guadalupe/Castroville, Commerce

- 2. Preserve and develop affordable housing
- 3. Enhance existing <u>"green spaces</u>" Cuellar Park, Monterey Park, etc.

4. All development plans should be informed and encouraged based on <u>equity and</u> <u>health and wellness</u> and should be targeted towards young families

5. Develop an aggressive upkeep and maintenance plan for existing physical infrastructure (streets, drainage, sidewalks)

6. Develop a progressive <u>digital infrastructure</u> (internet WiFi access)

#### Active Community Member- Geremy Landin

1. Revitalization of our west side parks

2. Improved access and notability of West Side <u>libraries</u> - more direct outreach to neighbors

3. <u>Collaboration between local landowners/developers and neighborhood</u> <u>associations.</u> John Hernden, James Lifshutz, etc.

4. <u>West Side branding</u>. Can we consider the development of an organic brand in the near West Side that can help with organic growth of our arts and culture district. This could be comparable to a place like Barrio Logan in San Diego,



Calif. https://www.sandiego.org/articles/downtown/barrio-logan.aspx

5. Address mass <u>zoning issues</u>. i.e. large residential areas zoned as MF-33 or C-class zoning rather than R zoning.

#### Avenida Guadalupe- Gabriel Velasquez

1. <u>Poverty</u> and the consequences of zero-sum market dominance.

2. High-standard development (Public Works) verses neighborhood-standard improvements paradigm.

3. Crime and infrastructure designed to mitigate crime (lighting, cameras, etc.).

4. Transportation amenities suited and located for continual, contiguous, accessible, travel and access (pedestrian) (lighted pathways, station seating, ramping, walk widths).

5. Area specific (Public Works) traffic control systems and design infrastructure.

#### Active Community Member- Gabe Gonzales

1) Redevelopment of Commercial District Hubs:

1. The Produce Market on Zarzamora Street needs better traffic access to our major freeways.

2. University Hospital needs to expand the campus at the University health Diabetes (Zarzamora St)

3. How to attract professional type business and services into our existing hubs

4. Work with Port SA to encourage supporting business to build outside the Port SA

5. Campus Encourage development along Hwy 90, I-35, Commerce, Gen McMullen etc.

#### 2) Improve transportation network

- 1. Improve access into the freeways (Hwy 90 & Zarzarmora)
- 2. Guadalupe Bridge has very limited pedestrian access



3. Commerce Bridge & Buena Vista Bridge have very limited pedestrian access.

4. Improve the Pedestrian/Network through the study area to our parks and commercial Hubs.

#### 3) Improve the quality of neighborhood housing.

1. Encourage SAHA to seek federal funds to create a Master Plan to replace the existing older SAHA housing such as Cassino Homes, Villa Vedmendi Homes and also to create senior living housing units

2. Invite and encourage have a meeting with Habitat for Humanity of SA, Bexar County, CoSA to consider on creating a program to do infill housing on proprieties that are being sold by the county due to back taxes due. By using Habitat for Humanity, the housing would be more affordable than the private sector developer.

#### 4) Improve and Expand Neighborhood Parks.

1. Walkable Neighborhood Parks are critical due to the lower income level in this community

2. We get lots of organized sports groups that create and encourage our kids to join organized sports, thus they learn structure, teamwork, respect for others, but most of all a sense of belonging.

3. Bike and Pedestrian Trail network are also a key element for exercise and quick access to key hubs

#### 5) Educational Hubs.

1. Project Quest, Our Lady of the Lake University are key educational facilities in the neighborhood.

2. We need to expand some of these educational elements into the individual neighborhood with programs that can encourage our kids from Pre School to high school and beyond.

3. We already have neighborhood center like the Good Samaritan Center, Guadalupe community Center, Madonna Neighborhood Center, etc. We need to partner with the major Educational Hubs and bring them down to the local neighborhood level



#### Prosper West- Ramiro Gonzalez

1. Areas best suited for growth and density

2. Areas for high wage/low educational attainment <u>workforce</u> development opportunities (advanced manufacturing, logistics, etc.)

3. Mechanisms for capturing growth from redevelopment for <u>reinvestment back</u> into neighborhoods and businesses

4. Areas of opportunity to <u>create "destinations"</u> on the Westside to attract visitors and customers

5. The impact and economic/walkability potential of converting <u>Commerce and</u> <u>Buena Vista</u> from one-way into two-way streets (even though recent light improvements may negate this).

#### Friends of Las Palmas Library- Delia Trimble

1. <u>Housing "protections"</u>: having clear titles, homestead and over 65 exemptions, protesting appraisals, applying for rehab grants, correct zoning, etc.

2. Addressing the <u>digital divide</u>: digital literacy/access, tech training

3. <u>Jobs in the Westside targeted for Westside folks</u> (includes entry level with growth potential, apprentice and intern programs, OJT

4. <u>Educational opportunities</u>, Westside focus among this area's resources: EISD, SAISD, ACCD satellite, OLLU, UTSA downtown campus

5. <u>Safety</u> emphasis in neighborhoods, parks, public facilities

#### Loma Vista NA- Eiginio Rodriguez

1. Apart from considering our Utility, water and gas available resources. Avoidance of <u>people losing their homes</u>. Thanks to recent property value increases we must plan considering the not so obvious positive and negative cause and effect scenarios from encouraged development.

2. <u>Public Safety</u>: Bike trails/lanes should be encouraged one street or more parallel



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to and away from heavy traffic streets.

3. <u>Traffic flow</u>/public safety: Being traffic is getting worse, multi-lane arteries should have medians removed to allow IOWA time tested Left turn left turn middle lanes that can help emergency vehicles safely bypass traffic congestion. Plus, can help non-involved vehicles have a lane to safely keep traffic moving. Major arteries such as Culebra Rd, General McMullen and other such major streets can with such lane more quickly evacuate traffic from a dangerous cargo situation or other evacuation requiring scenario.

4. Equal right for grievance: That layered future land uses recommended be in line with what is already there. Thereby avoiding the potential of muting the 200-foot radius directly impacted community concerns. Especially knowing that astute applicant representatives do at times mention that the community plan created by community members agreed with such land use. This will also avoid past experiences when hidden agendas were in play to greenlight and silence opposition.

5. Knowing that development elsewhere affects us and others in different ways. Such as with increasing flood waters. Plus witnessing or finding area stormwater channel land movement clues due to non-properly fortified creek channel walls. Emergency response and evacuation plans might have to be in place in the event the new trees, sidewalk and small wall failures occur in my area creek now <u>flood/stormwater channel.</u> I have witnessed debris block stormwater flow under bridges plus still remember the Missions Trails Creek Zachry improvements failures. That blocked a smaller tributary downstream thereby causing the flooding of several homes.

6. Just saw this at OLLU Elmendorf Commerce Street Pedestrian flashing signal light crosswalk that seems to be on a timer going from yellow to red. Making drivers hesitate to move for waiting to see a green light. An accident waiting to happen. Further west on Commerce a median in front of the mall keeps getting its signs destroyed by cars hitting it on a continuous basis. Even police cars have almost hit such median. The crosswalk median near General McMullen same area has had several misses of people that walk-in front of the bus (stopped at bus stop) and people turning from General McMullen Whataburger side quickly end up left side of stopped bus. Break and cars behind the too on turn brake. <u>Street</u> engineers need to be allowed to do their job for the good of all.

#### Westwood Square NA- Velma Pena

1. Taxable business/to many not profits in my area



2. Main corridors General McMllen / Castroville Rd, 36th street

3. <u>Safety</u>, better lighting, beautification, cross walks, artwork on overpasses on General McMullen, 36th street, walk cross bridge on Castroville Rd.

- 4. Large area <u>rezoning</u>
- 5. Pocket parks

#### Los Jardines NA- Erik Estrada

1. <u>Affordable Housing</u> for everyone. More single family, duplex, triplex etc. vs apartments.

2. Minimize the <u>Gentrification</u> Effect.

3. Increase direct link <u>public transit</u> options. Minimize or eliminate number of transfers needed to get from point A to point B.

4. Beautify and maintain <u>main corridors</u> and sidewalks. Acme Rd, Old 90/EMB, Castroville Rd., 36th St.

5. Increase street lighting for <u>safety</u> while working with the MLOD limitations. Many dark streets in the neighborhood

6. Attract businesses lacking in the area to setup shop. This will also help with creating local neighborhood jobs

7. Medical services / or other  $\underline{services}$  the westside community can benefit at Port SA

#### Good Samaritan- Simon Salas

- 1. <u>Safety</u> of Neighborhoods
- 2. Gentrification
- 3. Transportation
- 4. Utilization of <u>vacant land</u> for single family homes



5. Role of public <u>housing</u>

#### Memorial Heights NA- Richard Garcia

1. A SAPD/DEA substation in our area

2. A VIA bus line/route from NW 36th from Port San Antonio to Crossroads/[Wonderland of the Americas] Mall (Fredericksburg Road)

**3**. A Community/recreational state of the art Senior Center similar to Normoyle on the Southside of CoSA

- 4. Spay & Neuter Clinic dire need in the area
- 5. Dry Cleaners

#### LISC- Lori Hall

I think it is important to map out all of the neighborhood's assets, major crime areas, neighborhoods, Bus pick up spots, etc. and use that in conjunction with the neighborhood's feedback on barriers, assets, etc. It is important to locate where neighbors gather – live, work, and play.

#### Westside Neighborhood Associations Coalition

#### 1. Gentrification and Displacement

- Our communities are under stress and have been adversely impacted by overly aggressive and incompatible development resulting in displacement of current residents.
- Promote compatible development in size, character and style.

#### 2. Affordable Housing

- Provide truly affordable housing based on 30% AMI
- Maximize underutilized parcels in high traffic corridors
- Provide a variety of housing options, Senior Centers, low-rise garden style apartments, empty nester homes, starter homes.
- Promote traffic corridors and major arterials with higher density housing,



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pedestrian friendly retail, and service uses for residents.

#### 3. Transportation/Infrastructure

• Streets and sidewalks, improve maintenance, lighting, drainage

• Improve Access and Transit facilities. Provide amenities such as bus shelters, direct bus routes, better lighting, benches

- Maintain, improve, and light alleys
- Bicycle paths, improve safety, signage and access
- Landscape and improve connections to green trails
- Improve Guadalupe bridge

#### 4. Opportunity, Growth, Education

- Increase local jobs that provide training and better than minimum wages
- Partner with Port S.A.
- Address the digital divide and internet accessibility
- Provide Tech, Medical jobs as opposed to service industry

#### 5. <u>Health/Medical Support</u>

- Partner with Bexar County, U.T. Health System for essential and preventive health services and facilities
- Provide local clinics, such as Audiology, Diabetes, Physical therapy
- Provide area Physical Therapy and Water therapy, clinics, pools

#### 6 Environmental/ Sustainability

- Save the Elmendorf birds and Bird Island
- Instead of Restoration we should begin with Preservation of our natural environment
- Sustain and enrich life by improving water quality, ecosystem
- Enhance existing and create new public gathering places for recreational use and health activities,
- Improve and incorporate public art, by local artists
- Promote cultural awareness of medicinal, "matitas", and "hierbas", regional flora and fauna
- Reduce Heat Island effect of paved areas, and provide more permeable paving

#### Collins Garden Neighborhood Association- Karen Speer

1. Public Safety



- 2. Affordable single-family homes
- 3. Better streets and sidewalks
- 4. Youth centers
- 5. Equity

#### COUNCILMAN BRAVO

- 1. Homeownership, especially including multifamily/condos
- 2. Walkability
- 3. Protected Bike Lanes
- 4. Tree canopy
- 5. Preservation of historic and cultural resources



Monday, April 18, 2022



# Westside Community Area Plan Planning Team Meeting #2

## Attendees:

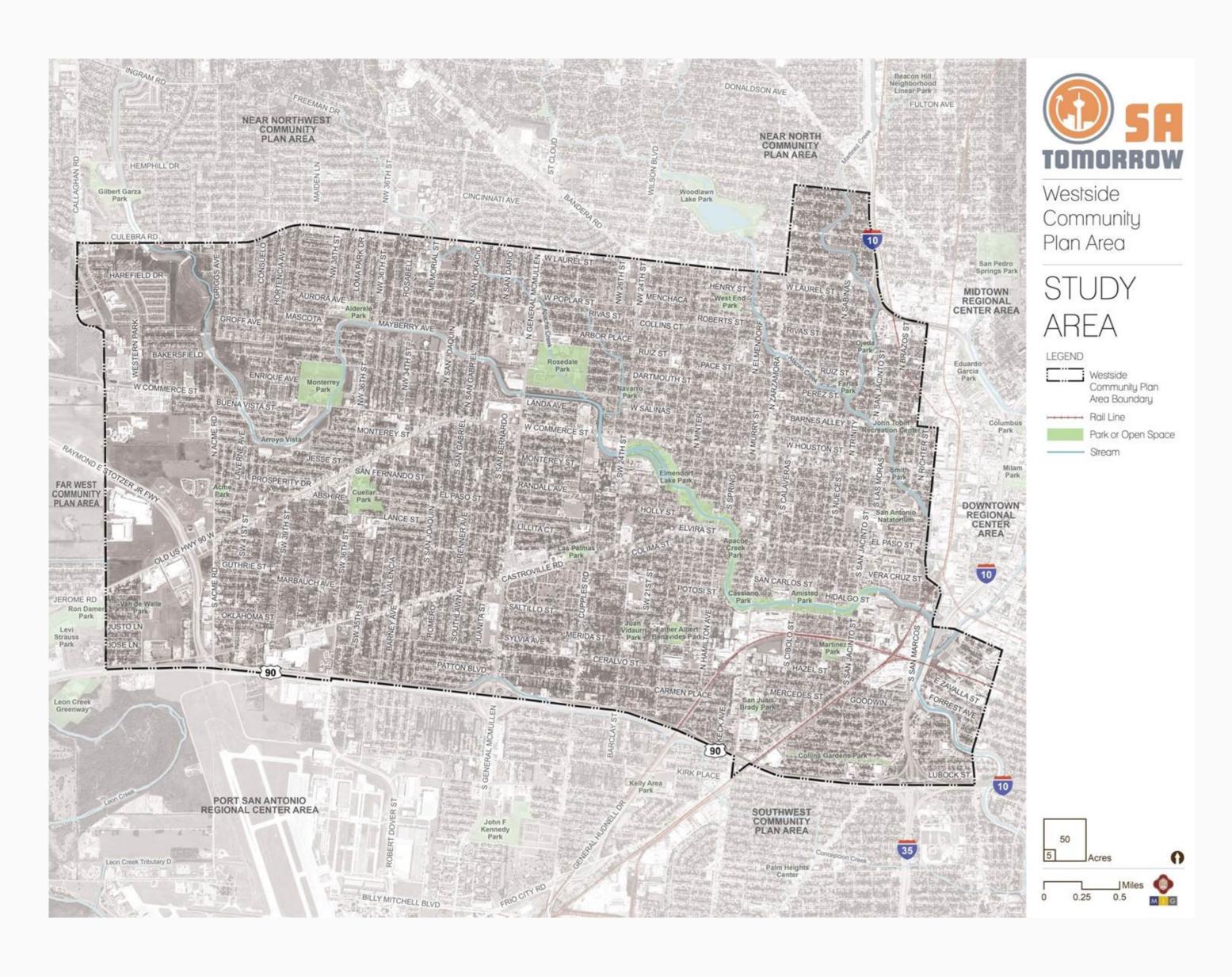
Derek Tulowitzky **Robert Acosta** Gabriel D. **Delia Trimble Geremy Landin** Karen Speer Simon Salas **Stacy Jones Anthony Gres** 

**Richard Garcia** Rudy Lopez Velma Pena **Robert Caballero Ray Morales** Charisma Soriano **Gloria Hernandez** Joey Cipriano Darrell Glasscock

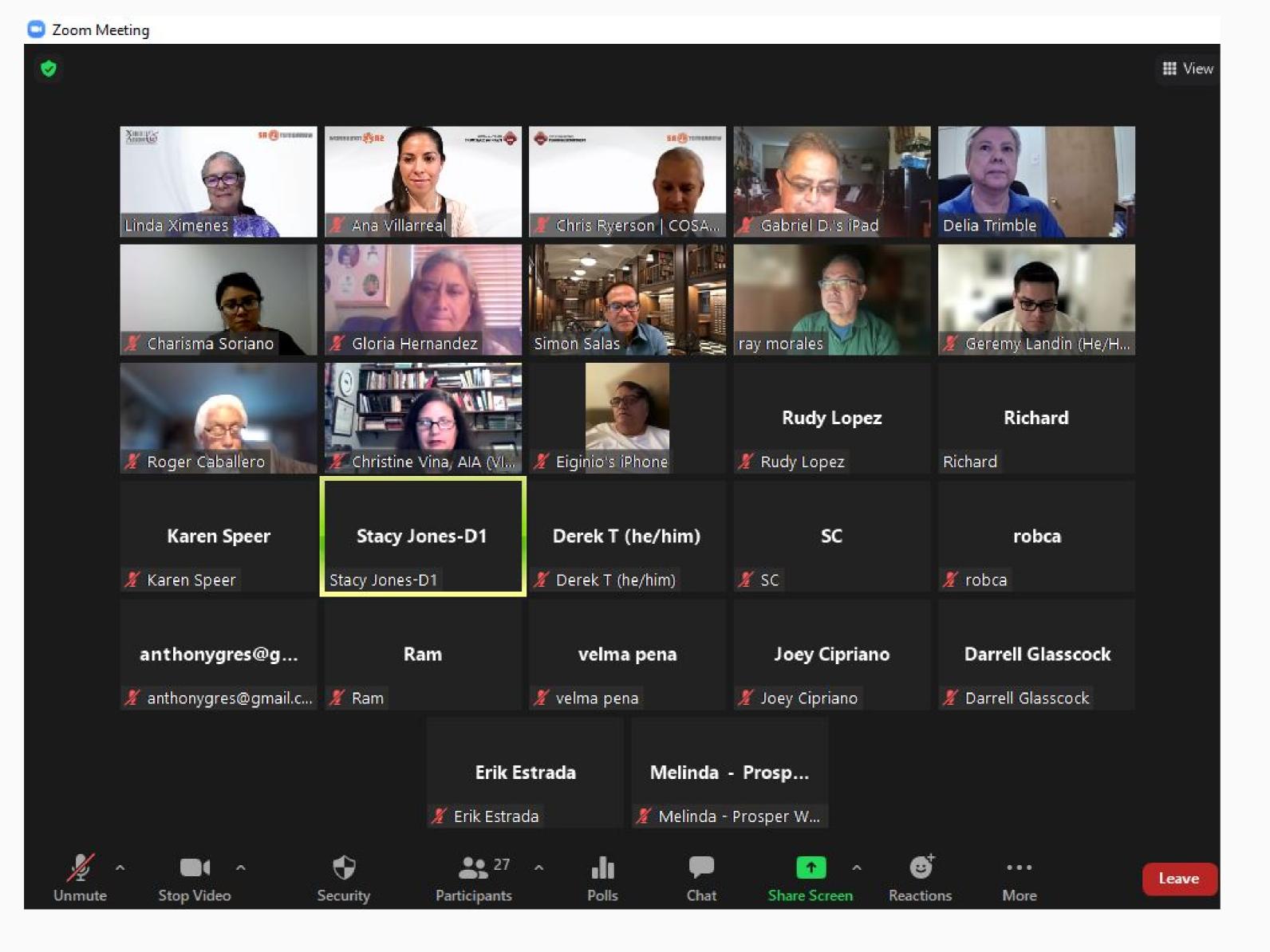
**Christine Vina Eiginio Rodriguez Ramiro Gonzalez** Melinda Gonzalez Erik Estrada **Dora Gomez Graciela Sanchez** Linda Ximenes

**Ana Villarreal** Chris Ryerson





## Planning Team



Wish to shorten introductions	Ground work is good	Sending the most important slides ahead of time			
Would like to transition to in person meetings	Difficult to have vision and goals on different slides	Keep Linda as the moderator			
Would like hybrid meetings	There's a lot of work left to do	Chris listened closely			

Plusses/Wishes:



How were the
boundaries
established? Ana
will schedule a
meeting to share
basics of the plan

Do we need to do anything prior to the meeting?









						Other Comments:					Poll:		
										Polls			
This area is Welcoming area for all ages	The Westside has always been an area of opportunity	The vision should find a way of including the real strength of the Westside: its people.	Emphasize connection to Port SA (job opportunities)	Your either have to be low income or high income to live here. The middle class is left out.	When Commissioners look at the plan it should be tight and understandable	We should make sure to create a living plan that can be updated	Demolitions- One area with well kept generational homes from the 1800's sadly did not fit someone else's agenda and were torn down.	Making the area	Paseo por el Wetside announcement by Graciela	Supplemental Inform sessions Poll   1 question   19 of 22 (86%) partic 1. What supplemental information/work helpful? Pick three. (Multiple Choice) *	pated		
oad range of	Authentic cultural heritage- this identifies and defines this area	Many businesses have been here since the 1930s	Focus on the coordination of the ecosystem of the Westside	Subcontractors in the area are the heart of the Westside	Developers need to consider appropriateness and impact of development	Homeowners challenged with Gentrification and displacement		Marketing the area to the right people. "Young people want to stay here"	Other option for the poll: might go with focus group. look into an unbiased comprehensive plan.	19/19 (100%) answered Focus Groups Geography Groups Walk & Talk Opportunities	(12/19) 63 (11/19) 58 (13/19) 68		
fight for in the	Emphasize the people and capitalize the Westside	text	Self-employed (contractors, etc.) are part of the heart of the Westside - but somewhat invisible	Look at how property values affect housing and displacement	We definitely need a Trauma Level 1 Hospital.	View everything with a health/ equity lens	Bridging the digital divide. So many people simply do not have access to Wi-Fi/ secure broadband and use their own data	Mailer surveys might be able to fill the gaps of public feedback		Office Hours Other	(3/19) 16 (4/19) 21		

Support Keep

Replace the

Create a Digital accoss Combine Revise Goal #3 Address the fear North to south

East-West connections are There are

balance growth goal is good	Transportation Goal- it is a major issue	text	text	text	word "amenities" for cultural spaces	better image for the area	Digital access should be a goal	Combine Goals #2 and #6	Transportation options "and access"	that some people have about the Westside	connections are getting congested	generally still easier (Martin, Poplar, Commerce, Guadalupe)	different needs in different parts of the Westside	text	text
All jobs should be well paid (not just those at Port SA)	Cultural Heritage is very unique	Tangible and intangible cultural heritage	text	text	Define "barriers" that separate Westside from the rest of the city	Add the health component	Need to add education	Support balanced growth and compatible development	Need to make our neighborhoods walkable	stereotypes	Homeless in the area are a major economic barrier	Re: Transit - the #68 used to be a very busy route, but people need better options to not waste time	have UTSA's downtown campus, ACCD is expanding, there are 4 libraries in this area - all 4 are older ones but have been or are	text	text
Gentrification was and is still a concern	Quality, established neighborhoods = walkable for all ages	Being a pedestrian is the best way to have a relationship with the community	text	#5: "Provide Housing Choices for a Diverse Population that ensures that current residents are not displaced"	Instead of amenities add "resources"	Add to Goal #5: Protect current residents from displacement	Expand on Goal #2 - needs to mention Compatible Development	Revise Goal #6 to define "those"	Define "balance growth" goal	How do we involve businesses? Small businesses used to be more prevalent inside neighborhoods	Tax abatements can/should be used to entice quality employers	Our children are moving out of the community and selling their parents homes to the developers because they don't see anything here.	Rise in property values are a major issues	text	text