SA TOMORROW

Southwest Community Area

Planning Team Meeting #5
Community Amenities and Public Spaces

Planning Team Attendees:

Debra Ponce, Community Member
Isabel Ann Castro, Harlandale-McCollum Community Member
Nahum Martinez, VIA Metropolitan Transit
Peter Onofre, New Life Christian Center
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Project Staff:

Debora Gonzalez, Planning Department (Project Manager)
Chris Ryerson, Planning Department
Marcia Boyle, MIG
Marco Hinojosa, MIG
Zachary Field, MIG

Other Attendees:

Michelle E. Garza, San Antonio River Authority (SARA)

Vision

The Southwest Community Area supports multigenerational households, families, and businesses thrive by restoring strong community relationships, fostering local economic development, and promoting education that empowers residents to make healthy, informed decisions. The community offers accessible and fun destinations and gathering places, celebrates its historical character, prioritizes high maintenance standards, strengthens resiliency, and safely connects residents to a wide range of amenities.

Goals

Goal 1: Improve mobility infrastructure throughout the Southwest Area to provide safe and accessible connections for all modes of transportation.

Goal 2: Support inclusive housing opportunities for people of all ages and income levels by promoting a diverse mix of context-sensitive housing types and price points. Implement proactive strategies to prevent displacement, and ensure access to services and resources that allow residents to age in place and remain connected to their community.

Goal 3: Better plan and organize land uses throughout the area and incorporate strategies to address and redevelop adjacent incompatible uses, vacant buildings, and underutilized properties.

Goal 4: Expand access to meaningful green spaces—such as gardens, walking trails, and shaded areas with tree canopies—by improving connections to existing parks and leveraging opportunities to create new ones.

Goal 5: Address infrastructure needs like sidewalk gaps, safe crossings, and covered bus stops to ensure all community members can comfortably and safely reach destinations in the area.

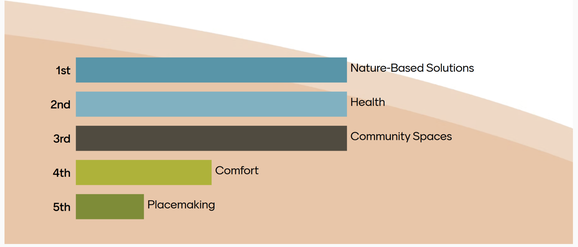
Goal 6: Increase the range of recreational opportunities, cultural and arts programming, and outdoor amenities throughout the area, especially for young families.

Goal 7: Ensure the area is business-friendly by providing resources and support to assist existing local businesses and encouraging new ones to locate in the Southwest Area.

Goal 8: Address environmental threats throughout the area including contaminants and brownfield sites, to mitigate negative impacts on existing residents and residential property.

Group Mentimeter Exercise

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



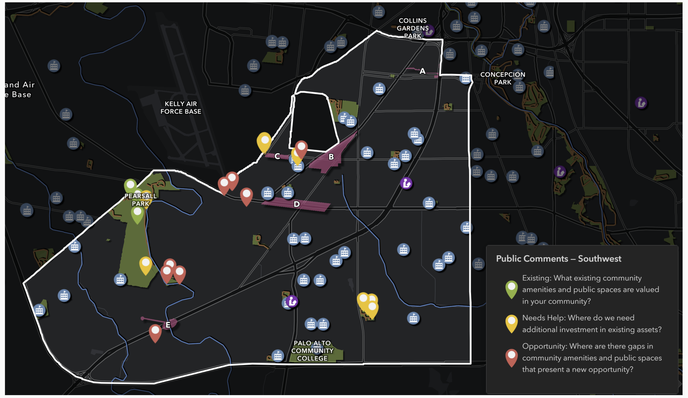
What are some **valued and special** community amenities and public spaces that **already exist** in your community?

- Pearsal Park is all we have.

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

- A real Library w books and Librarians.
- Third space areas
- Splash pad w walking trails for parents.
- Free community meeting places for gathering and information gathering.
- Senior living apartments
- Community center where physical fitness can occur
- youth centers
- A fishing space at Leon Creek
- AirPort and train viewing space

Mapping Exercise



General Comments

- SE of Quintana and New Laredo Hwy area - Leon Creek - very polluted area → CPS plant where they are adding batteries → Near New Laredo, a lot of industrial, auto/metal recycling properties → Lamier(St) completely underwater during last flood.
- Quintana/ Carmel Ave / SW Military - vacant lot. May be contaminated? → Great spot to watch airplanes land and to watch trains! → May need remediation (I was the start of the toxic triangle. Could be a great spot in 10 years...
- Is SARA's LID Tech Design Guidance Manual available to or useful for the general public? → Yes - Michelle from SARA provided the link in the Zoom Chat.
- LID should be encouraged more in all/existing neighborhoods, not just in the RIO zones.
- just south of SW Military - does the City own some land? → SW doesn't have an official cooling zone? → Salvation Army owns more land - may use for multiple uses - could be a cooling center?
- Concern that more community/ neighborhood members did not join the meeting. Technology is a barrier for some.
- There are not really any Third Spaces in our community.
- Athens Elementary on Quintana corridor closed and could be a resilience hub / community center → Environmental support, youth programs, econ development, health education, etc.
- Cotez Library very small. Some go to Pan American Library.
- Palo Alto indoor pool is closed - not sure when it will reopen? → Something happened that they are reducing from Olympic size. → Was great because it was open year round...
- Grocery / Pharmacy is needed → also smaller health services locations in / closer to neighborhoods → not always just along SW Military
- There is a Bibloteach on Pleasanton Road. But - only digital and we have a technology/ digital divide.
- Library needed. Mybe in former South San schools that closed - especially close to Fits B and C.
- Especially need libraries that are walkable - takes tos long to take VIA buses to get to Palo Alto library.
- 30 libraries in the City, but only six on the south side?

Additional CAPS Analysis

- PT members fouds the aerial imagery easier to view on teh map compared to the dark background
- Pearsal Park well used - walking trails, dog park, cool playgrounds, etc.
- space for baseball and softball diamonds - need funding → I live close to Arnold Park, but would rather go to Pearsal Park
- Arnold Park - walking trail, gym, community space for heath events, great mural → small parking lot, picnic tables not in shaded areas
- Not much for younger children/ parents
- South San Community Center really needs to be expanded. Highly used.
- NO SHADE is the issue in almost all our parks! No shade and materials that absorb heat...
- We need more trees. Grass really dies once summer is in full swing. → Need more drought-resistant plants and for the parks to actually be watered.
- Most parks don't have water available. Or sometimes bathroom facilities.
- People drive across town for good bike trails.
- Debra/Peter have already shared ideas about South San Antonio Park → Splash Pad, used to have a pool but it was taken away withour explanation. → Playground, sport court, picnic tables need SHADE!
- Need better bike racks in safe locations.

Remaining Questions

- Salvation Army - a great place to have a meeting!
- Fishing opportunities on Leon Creek? - Pearsal is currently the only place with safe access. → Other areas along Leon Creek feel too dangerous - not good lighting. → Also - Leon Creek has significant water quality challneges.
- Leon Creek - near New Laredo Hwy - used ot be indigenous land - we need to learn from them.
- Society of Native Nations - Indigenous education and history.
- Despite the pollutant plume, the water in the area could be improved with careful mitigation and care.