



BEXAR COUNTY COMMUNITY TOWN HALL REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS

MARCH 5, 2025



**Tommy Calvert
Bexar County Commissioner
Precinct 4**



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Executive Summary of Townhalls



Executive Summary

Over 375 people participated in two town halls on January 25 and February 1, 2025, to brainstorm whether and how taxpayers repurpose the over \$300 million dollars they have invested at the Coliseum and Frost Bank Center grounds should voters approve a new Spurs arena downtown in Hemisfair Park.

The community also was given the opportunity to comment on other venues and uses for the venue tax that have received funding in the past such as soccer, baseball, parks, river projects, and other community venues that may be eligible for funding that renovates buildings voters have previously approved across Bexar County in venue tax elections.

The policy recommendations from the community took place with over 6 hours of oral, written, online, and in-person testimony and the meetings did not end until everyone who wanted to speak was finished with their comments.

Presentations were provided to empower the community on the following:

- Freeman Coliseum/Frost Bank Maintenance Needs
- The Negative Impact of Traffic Cones on Eastside Businesses
- Obstacles for Small Businesses Obtaining Contracts for New and Renovated Arenas
- River East/Arena District Improvement Proposals
- Understanding the Venue Tax
- Alternative Use of Venue Tax Funds Other Than Arenas

Bexar County's venue tax, which is funded through a 1.75% hotel/motel occupancy tax and a 5% rental car tax, has historically been utilized for improvements to the San Antonio River, community sports facilities, cultural landmarks, performing arts centers, and more. On February 4, 2025, County Manager David Smith provided a detailed financial analysis of the venue tax's revenue-generating capacity. Depending on the structure of the debt issuance, the County could generate between \$313 million and \$448 million for new projects, with a portion of those funds inevitably required to maintain and upgrade the Frost Bank Center.

After 25 years of incorrect expectations that the Spurs would economically develop the area around the Frost Bank Center, Commissioner Calvert pushed the community to hold the City and County economic development staff and elected officials accountable for working on economic development around the Coliseum grounds.

A special section in this report is devoted to King William and downtown residents who have yet to be heard over parking concerns, issues with the unhoused, criminal activity, and a myriad of other issues affecting residents near a proposed location at the Hemisfair Park.

25 years ago, an 18-member committee was assembled by the County, City and the Spurs to create an economic development plan for the arena district but; unfortunately, a lack of communication to elected officials led to the suggestions of the 18-member committee being unrealized. Today, Representative Barbara Gervin Hawkins and County Judge Peter Sakai have

created a new 18-member committee that has had roughly three meetings at the time of the printing of this community report.

Arenas nationwide have had varying plans implemented and there are few original initiatives in the world of publicly financed arenas. It is up to the local community to do their homework to determine if the deal negotiated is a win for the community as voters, not elected officials, will likely be given the task of voting for or against an arena and other community venues proposals.

On Tuesday, February 25, 2025, the Bexar County Commissioners Court received a study from a consultant consortium hired by the Coliseum and led by Venue Solutions Group with seven other firms, including Gensler, SSR, VDA, MTD, Walter P Moore, WJHW, and Bigelow. The consortium told the Commissioners Court that for the next 20 years the Frost Bank Center needed \$244,661,807 dollars in maintenance. This number does not include the Coliseum building, which is 75 years old, nor does it account for the property's Expo Halls, which could require at least \$7-8 million in renovations.

The study looked at architectural & interiors, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, & fire protection, structure, technology, roofs & facade, food service and retail, and vertical transportation. The community has to determine whether the venue tax election will cover the next 30-40 years of maintenance and whether another \$100 million or more will be needed from the venue tax for the full term of a venue tax bond election, which may be 30-40 years rather than only 20 years that the consultant study reviewed.

On January 11, 2025, about 20 District 2 neighborhood presidents heard Commissioner Calvert's plan to redevelop Willow Springs Golf Course with workforce housing for 30-70 percent AMI, parking garages, hotels, baby petting zoo, restaurants, 9-18 hole golf course, flood control drainage, veterinary school, and other improvements. None of the neighborhood presidents objected, but Councilman McKee-Rodriguez has indicated he does not want any development on the golf course, where residents must pay \$31-\$55 dollars to play a round of golf.

Community Recommendations



Community Recommendations Provided at January 25th Town Hall

- ★ **Protect Eastside homeowners**
- ★ **Convert SAISD Closed Schools to housing, mental health facilities, medical facilities, and homeless shelters**
- ★ **Citizens Review Committee for Arena and Project Marvel**
- ★ **Stop Non-Disclosure Agreements**
- ★ **Implement River East with \$80 million dollar tunnel to take Willow Springs Golf Course out of the flood plain so that development can take place with restaurants, housing, hotels, parking garages, offices, attractions, etc.**
- ★ **Create an Entertainment District that makes the Coliseum Fair Grounds & Frost Bank Center the center of a district that goes from New Braunfels Avenue to IH-10 and IH-35**
- ★ **Incorporate Willow Springs Golf Course into a future County opportunity to develop 400 acres**
- ★ **Parking lots converted to parking garages and other buildings such as housing, new gathering places, community facilities, and park spaces**
- ★ **Retain part of the golf course but with areas out of the flood plain enhance the land use to places to eat, housing, gathering places, etc.**
- ★ **Restaurant and Bar Accelerator that pays for half rent for restaurants and creates a food court of 4-6 restaurants**
- ★ **Texas A&M Veterinary School with housing**
- ★ **Baby zoo for raising animals so that families can come see them**
- ★ **Bring governmental entities together to create things that work for the area and build a partnership for a unified vision**
- ★ **If you don't live in the area, you should not be making decisions about the future of the area. Before anything happens on the Frost Bank Center grounds, notify the neighborhood to be a part of the decisions.**
- ★ **Respect the United Homeowners Improvement Association by bringing them into the process**

- ★ **Maintain Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in everything you do in your hiring, construction of housing, and businesses**
- ★ **Ensure the facilities are all accessible for those with special needs and disabilities**
- ★ **Provide County funding for the Urban Farm Event Center**
- ★ **When choosing any community oversight boards, have leaders that live in the neighborhood**
- ★ **Remove traffic cones that have hurt small businesses**
- ★ **Include local businesses in the future plans, particularly those that have been hurt because of traffic cones preventing patrons from going to their business**
- ★ **Refurbish the arena similarly to other cities to have a water theme, beautiful windows, inside a park, apartments, senior living, college student living, restaurants, sidewalk cafes, concourse remade into a running track, keeping some facade to maintain the historical aspect of the arena, leave the floor logo for historical purposes and at entrances**
- ★ **Create a place where Eastsiders can host Fiesta events like the Taste of New Orleans and other festivals**
- ★ **Workforce housing at 30-70% AMI**
- ★ **Parking garages with housing and additional Rodeo and multipurpose halls on the roof tops, ground floors with restaurants, shops and offices**
- ★ **Create railroad over or underpasses so that traffic can flow better**
- ★ **Create shops, restaurants, offices, greenery, water and other aesthetic improvements**
- ★ **Have places soothing for seniors**
- ★ **Create senior housing where people can down-size**
- ★ **Create spaces where educational and trade learning can be taught on the Coliseum Grounds**
- ★ **Have a place to help the homeless**

- ★ **Use venue tax to expand Division I NCAA Fencing at the UIW Fencing Center to attract bigger regional and national events**
- ★ **Stop investing in entertainment and invest in the people. We need hospitals, community gardens, and education centers. We need to put the people first. Build infrastructure that supports people**
- ★ **De-bundle contracting opportunities**
- ★ **Our tax money is better spent on what the Eastside needs. More green spaces, workforce development, opportunities for affordable housing and access to healthcare facilities. If the owners want to build a new stadium, they need to do what we do: spend their own money**
- ★ **Invests in people**
- ★ **Stop Gun Violence**
- ★ **Stop Gang Violence**
- ★ **Stop Domestic Violence**
- ★ **Stop hunger**
- ★ **Partner with people already in the community working on violence and people's issues to improve the economic and human development of the**
- ★ **Build a Bexar County Military and Veterans Museum**
- ★ **Build an indoor pickleball facility similar to "Chicken & Pickle" with a restaurant, indoor and outdoor pickleball courts**
- ★ **Build a Veterans Business Park**
- ★ **Spurs should split cost of a new arena by at least 50 percent**
- ★ **Keep the ability to play golf at Willow Springs Golf Course**
- ★ **Youth Athletic Parks**
- ★ **Give the County, City & Citizens equity/ownership in the Spurs for the contribution to the arena like the Green Bay Packers**
- ★ **Preserve land along Salado Creek for nature—it doesn't have to be developed**

- ★ Democratize the RFP process to allow companies to offer ideas
- ★ Create Affordable Housing
- ★ Silver Line is too far away from the center—move it over about 800 feet so that people can get to the ground floor of the center
- ★ The community should not finance the Spurs stadium because it does not bring economic development
- ★ If we finance a stadium, there needs to be equity or liquidated damages at least the amount that the citizens put into the stadium to get back what the community invested if the Spurs move from San Antonio
- ★ If the Spurs move, get a lead tenant that will create organic growth—move a university like UTSA to this land and have a campus that needs some of the athletic facilities, build dorms, shops, restaurants, music venues, and housing to support a university community
- ★ Redevelop the arena property for mixed use. The Spurs can stay here just fine with soccer, the Rodeo, and any number of other sports. There is enough space along with three or four parking garages, residential opportunities, and ways to bring in private investment
- ★ Develop a strategic plan & oversight committee from the community so that the promises continue into the additional decades as well as a master plan for this specific property
- ★ Do not approve any funding for Project Marvel's stadium or anything in Hemisfair Park because Hemisfair Park is the people's park. It is where people, residents, as well as visitors to our city go for a park public experience, not a private experience. From an urban design standpoint, putting that kind of intensity down there doesn't make sense when we have perfect place here on the Eastside.
- ★ The Commissioners Court and the City Council or other governmental bodies like the college district who are involved in the development of the Coliseum Grounds have to have quarterly updates in open session or updates every six months come to an open public meeting to report out on the progress because having a citizen committee of 18 failed to get promises done 25 years ago.

- ★ Utilize the Venue Tax to the full extent of the statute to cover streets, drainage, infrastructure, rivers, zoo properties for the Frost Bank/Coliseum Grounds.
- ★ Trail rides with some horses on Salado Creek that will not just be there for the tourists or the people that live here, but underprivileged kids that are growing up in a bad situation and need equine therapy. People that are formerly incarcerated could benefit also
- ★ River East, Affordable Housing
- ★ The rodeo needs more small business people to participate in it. We need to make the rodeo help people here in the community to give them an opportunity to set up a booth so they can make a little money for themselves. Make sure that you get the community that lives here into the picture and benefitting from it. Otherwise, it'll be like the Spurs, like you said, they come in to see game, and they take off
- ★ Use the arena buildings to provide education, substance abuse treatment, housing, a business center in there to help the small business owners. We can put in educational entities to teach people how to develop their own neighborhoods, how to lead, how to become educated
- ★ Please invite SAWS and CPS at some point to reveal what they project their costs would be to modify, demolish, change and rebuild unseen infrastructure that is underground at the Institute of Texan Cultures. And when we examine, if you have a citizens committee examine the return on investment, maybe the money that would have been spent for that would better be applied to things in this area around the Coliseum and the Frost Bank Center.
- ★ Assist the American GI Forum with additional building space
- ★ The County can work with groups like the SA Area Foundation to have a nonprofit accelerator just like we do a small business accelerator to help nonprofits
- ★ Provide a county animal hospital and animal shelter
- ★ Explore a Super PID
- ★ Prepare Housing Development Agreements with fee in lieu of taxes

- ★ **Strong MOU to hold accountable those doing development**
- ★ **Look at Atlanta and Battery Park's Arena—there have been a lot of new community millionaires that have been made out of those agreements, and we need to look at those agreements and empower this community message is for the citizens of San Antonio**
- ★ **The oligarchy in San Antonio is real and what is needed is more private sector competition that will advocate for the movement of what needs to happen at the city level. There needs to be a mayor that is willing to put their neck out and negotiate for what the citizens need**
- ★ **We need higher growth sectors that will produce jobs that will help families pay for their expenses to be in the city**
- ★ **Put in policies that protect small businesses**
- ★ **Emphasize equity in the deal. Everybody must benefit. Hold elected officials feet to the fire**
- ★ **We should make sure we have some black-owned contractors and businesses, black and brown people who are millionaires at the end of this**
- ★ **Create a waterpark**
- ★ **Get that level of care and planning that's going around the convention center, that is going around the Alamodome, that is going around the highway. That level of planning and care needs to happen at the Coliseum and Frost Bank Center**

Community Recommendations Provided at February 1st Town Hall

- ★ If you do not live in the community, you shouldn't be making decisions for the community
- ★ Spurs should pay for their own arena
- ★ Citizens want the suggestions at the two townhall meetings not to be lost in the negotiations with the Spurs
- ★ Assure the community that Commissioner Tommy Calvert will be representing the community at the negotiating meetings
- ★ Provide \$250 million for major rehab
- ★ Make the taxpayers equity partner in the Spurs revenue
- ★ Keep Hemisfair Park a Public Park for Public Use not Private Arena Use
- ★ Put Mr. Calvert on negotiating team for the arena
- ★ Do not give county venue tax to build a third arena for the Spurs
Owners/Oppose Project Marvel
- ★ Provide a detailed cost estimate, get a detailed arena plan and no blank checks for an arena
- ★ No non-disclosure agreements
- ★ Citizens should decide how to use the venue tax
- ★ Make Spurs owners not charge the County and City for renting the arena for a public health crisis
- ★ Ensure taxpayers get rent from Spurs
- ★ Provide long-term investment to the Eastside
- ★ Combat the high rates of violence on the Eastside
- ★ Have the Spurs engage in community giving with the Eastside Community
- ★ Spurs owners have provided a lack of transparency and the community is a victim of it

- ★ **Invest in jobs that a family can survive on—not just parking lot attendants and ushers**
- ★ **Hold the Spurs and County responsible for funds including investing in food deserts, crime, economic growth of restaurants, retail, offices**
- ★ **Improve the Quality of life for all Bexar County Residents and the Eastside through housing, the environment, emotional well-being, social support, crime prevention & gun violence intervention, and work**
- ★ **Have citizens heard and demand Commissioner Calvert be at the negotiating table and Councilman Jalen McKee-Rodriguez to be a part of that negotiating. We elected them to serve us and they must be the ones who are the stewards of the Eastside.**
- ★ **Eliminate traffic cones at Frost Bank Center so traffic can go to nearby restaurants and bars**
- ★ **Take a field trip to study how other arenas do traffic control to improve the coning-off of the local Eastside restaurants and bars from economic opportunity and patrons**
- ★ **If the Spurs have to move, they should figure out their move themselves as schools, museums, businesses, and non-profits have to—Spurs should stay at the Frost Bank Center**
- ★ **Send the Spurs back to the Alamodome**
- ★ **Take the dollars the Spurs want for the new arena and use those taxpayer dollars for development between the Frost Bank Center and the Alamodome with the Venue tax and redirect revenue to businesses in the area**
- ★ **Spurs do not participate with small, minority and women owned businesses and refuse to provide information about their small business spending and should change that**
- ★ **Spurs should ask Frost Bank for a loan for a new arena**
- ★ **Increase the mobilization money for small businesses building on the Coliseum grounds and new arena**
- ★ **Implement the County’s small business bonding assistance program to grow small business capacity and not big business capacity**

- ★ Assist small businesses with retaining and attracting skilled labor
- ★ Create stronger partnerships for small businesses with vocational schools
- ★ Simplify the bidding process for small businesses looking to get contracts on the arena construction
- ★ Create consistency and transparency with City and County inspectors on construction jobs so that different inspectors do not create different sets of directions for permits and inspections
- ★ Assist small business contractors who may bid on Frost Bank Center & Arena work with advanced technology, improvements to project management, internal development, mobilization funds, getting paid on time, cash-flow management, how to not penalize subcontractors from getting paid when the prime contractor hasn't done work or has inspection issues, and other resources and workshop to be successful
- ★ Pay subcontractors and small businesses doing work on the arena within 11-22 days
- ★ Consider a small business accelerator program to help subcontractors getting work on the arena rehab and new construction
- ★ Have County and City Economic Development staff work month by month to assist in economic development around the Frost Bank Center
- ★ Ensure any 18-member committee created by the County Judge & State Representative doesn't make the mistakes of the 1999 18-member committee
- ★ Have the 18-member committee give updates to Commissioners Court and City council twice a year so that the elected leadership and staff can assist with the follow through of the arena discussions
- ★ Fund a summer jobs program for Eastside businesses between the Frost Bank Center and downtown for youth so that it keeps youth out of trouble and fights crime
- ★ Create a fund to pay for extracurricular activities for at-risk children on the Eastside such as Pop Warner football, band and arts programs, robotics and computer programs, field trips, and other financial needs for families to keep them away from violence and help them stay on track in life

- ★ Support community-based programs like Ball Hogs Restaurant at-risk program from Hubert Brown working with children to keep them away from drugs and violence
- ★ Spurs Give Program needs to care more about the Eastside
- ★ Individuals who do not reside in the area or who stand to profit from possible development should not steer arena discussions and those on the committees should fully disclose potential conflicts of interests. They should include their employers and their residency
- ★ Bring UTSA to the table. They own the land the new arena is proposed on and who has signed an NDA.
- ★ UTSA should stop demolition of the Institute of Texan Cultures because it's not a "sure-thing" that the Spurs will get a new arena on that site
- ★ Re-use the Institute of Texan Cultures building, which is in good condition according to Raba Kistner Engineers
- ★ Bring CPS and SAWS to the town halls to ask of the impacts of a new arena to their operations
- ★ Provide a transportation solution to the traffic problems caused by an event at the Alamodome, a new arena, and a downtown convention
- ★ Invest in children—trade schools, repurposing closing schools
- ★ Spurs can afford to build the arena themselves
- ★ Have CPS replace lights in Denver Heights, the energy company does not come out to do it
- ★ Build a new grocery store, shops, and restaurants
- ★ Look at how Crypto Center and United Center were privately financed
- ★ Taxpayers need a return on investment if paying for new arenas
- ★ Use funds for restaurants, retail, and solving the homeless issues
- ★ Keep the Coliseum a quality building with quality programs
- ★ Get innovative about transportation options

- ★ Put a bike rack in front of the Coliseum
- ★ Do something about the panhandlers, cleanup under the state's IH-35
- ★ Where is the logic in narrowing the lanes for the Silver and Green lines for VIA
- ★ Partner with the Spurs for an equity position for the public taxpayers
- ★ Diversity, Equity and Inclusions should be a part of the construction of the future developments
- ★ Repurpose the Frost bank Center and Coliseum with a concept called Texposition—a tech accelerator that serves as a World's Fair
- ★ Don't forget that non-profits are big business downtown and in District 2 and include them and engage them to create jobs
- ★ Work with the railroads and bond committees on getting the overpasses and underpasses needed for traffic to flow better
- ★ Focus funding on housing and raising wages
- ★ Build office space for veterans, including for mental health, non-profits, and small businesses
- ★ Build a veterinarian school with Texas A&M to help the Rodeo, County and City
- ★ Build a multi-use indoor sports and other use facility to help the community stay active. Include Pickle Ball
- ★ Repurpose the Frost Bank Center for healthcare
- ★ Develop Youth Services and work with non-profits that provide services to youth
- ★ Create a SUPER Public Infrastructure District
- ★ Develop partnerships and mentorships for Black developers to build up the Eastside
- ★ Increase restaurants in the area

- ★ **Don't put \$900,000 county dollars for an ad campaign to end gun violence, help organizations that have Community Violence Interveners assist in creating public safety that leads to economic development**
- ★ **Look at moving the Coca-Cola factory to another location**
- ★ **Give \$5 million dollars for scholarships to the Community of Churches for Social Action**
- ★ **Get a hotel and convention space expanded along Salado Creek, and the Willow Springs Golf Course**
- ★ **Help homeowners stay on the Eastside through home repair funds and tax assistance**

Commissioner's Recommendations



February 28, 2025

To the people of Bexar County:

It is my recommendation that the city give the county Willow Springs Golf Course to allow for 400 acres of community venue space when you combine the nearly 200 acres of the Freeman Coliseum/Frost Bank Center Grounds with the nearly 200 acres of the golf course.

My vision is to have Texas A&M develop a graduate school of veterinary medicine along with an animal services kennel. We would take the parking area and build parking garages with housing for graduate students, seniors, professionals and workforce housing for 30% to 70% AMI income on the Coliseum grounds with additional expo halls for the rodeo at the top and bottom of those garages.

On the golf course, I would invest in an \$80 million flood tunnel that would remove it from the flood plain so that we could preserve the natural beauty and develop housing, hotels, restaurants, and a baby animal breeding zoo where families could visit the baby animals in partnership with the vet school and the zoo. These would also work well in conjunction with the \$14 million the County has invested next door in a 10-acre urban farm behind Young Men's Leadership Academy.

The Expo Halls of the Coliseum need a modern facelift and should have a food hall. While renovations are taking place, the County should take the \$500,000 already allocated in its budget for a restaurant and bar accelerator at the Andy and offer half-rent and construction finish out to Eastside businesses who have been unable to benefit from the traffic from the Frost Bank Center and/or businesses who will hire at least fifty percent of the workforce from the Eastside.

Athletic facilities would be a natural fit for the Coliseum grounds as would energizing our Expo Halls with a County exhibit where our veteran and county history can be displayed throughout the halls as a year-round attraction.

Pedestrian bridges should be built to assist with traffic control. The orange traffic cones, which have prevented restaurants and bars near the Frost Bank Center from having customers, should be removed, so that the area develops as other major arenas have developed.

A Super Public Infrastructure District should be created from New Braunfels Street to 410 to help fund improvements, including widening roads, creating railroad overpasses and greater multi-modal transportation options.

Derrick Howard, the current Executive Director of the county-owned Freeman Coliseum, would manage the Frost Bank Center and Coliseum grounds year-round with improvements to the digital billboards, park space of the grounds, and buildings.

The partnership with the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo would continue to grow with greater inclusion of Eastside businesses in the small business opportunities of the rodeo, while the overall development of housing, hotels, shops, and additional expo space for the rodeo would keep elevating the rodeo as one of the most successful and dynamic rodeos in the nation.

To create economic development around the arena, a Precinct 4 foundation will be created to help pay for extracurricular activities and summer jobs for youth and young adults to keep them from gun violence and crime. A focus on public safety for the area with the active recruitment of additional businesses and new housing restoration will create the economic development that complements Ft. Sam Houston's consolidation of the military medicine for the entire armed forces, which is Bexar County's largest economic development project. Efforts to attract the nurses, medics, scientists, teachers, doctors, and military personnel back to housing on the Eastside will be a critical economic development initiative to bring the middle class back, leading to the return of the types of restaurants and shops Eastside residents want.

Small businesses and nonprofits from the Eastside and the community should be assisted with a business accelerator that helps them be successful with terms for prompt payment, increases to mobilization, bonding, and other technical assistance to facilitate a win-win for the community's progress.

Yours for positive change,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tommy Calvert". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Tommy Calvert, Jr.
Bexar County Commissioner, Precinct 4

Rodeo Considerations



Rodeo Considerations

Transcript: Cody Davenport, CEO of the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo, January 25th Town Hall

Commissioner Calvert, thank you for putting this together, on behalf of San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo. It is long overdue. We get to know some of y'all, but we are way overdue to get to know our neighbors and I say our neighbors because I spend more time with that office there than I do at home. And that is my place there. We reside here, we've been here since 1949, since the Coliseum first started. We have been your loyal tenant to the County. We're the ones that have never wavered in our commitment on what we will do and what we will do in residing here. We have never once come in and said, we're looking for a new home. This is our home.

I know we have some differences. I get it. But I want to commit to you guys and know I came in as CEO, what it's been seven years now, and our Stock Show & Rodeos are a slow ship to turn folks, but my generation, the people that are in here with me, we are making turns and we're turning in the direction that my generation and your generation deserves. And what I want to talk about is first of all is way above my pay grade to talk about golf course filling in and drainage and all this stuff. I don't know any of that guys, but what I do know is this that I trust our leadership here and what they come up with, the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo is going to grow with it and it's going to adapt with it. What we are offering to you guys in our county is that we are ready to expand.

Now before y'all get terrified, I know the parking situation of the traffic, when I say expand, I'm not talking about what you're seeing right now year round. That's not what I'm talking about. What I'm talking about is a commitment to take our industry if you will, but expand it into the Escaramuzas, the Charreadas, all these types of things that we can do and do them in the Coliseum on a year-round basis. So it's not the flood of traffic and stuff like that. But what we will give you is people down here and the people that come here, guys, I live in a trailer over here on the grounds. I get to listen to the train blow by and shake my entire trailer every night. It takes about three nights to get used to it. I'm sleeping good now. But what I will tell you is that I sit there on that porch in the evenings, and I watch our public come in and go to a Spurs game or a concert and I watch them get out as fast as they can.

You know what? The people that come in here with horses and stuff like that do. You may not care about horses and stuff like that, but you do care about the fact that those people that come in here, our economic impact study shows that they're here on an average three days. They need somewhere to eat, they need somewhere to sleep, they need somewhere to shop. They need that stuff, right? You guys saw the mess when you drove in here that

we're dealing with right now set up. We got 1.5 million people that are about to come here just in the month of February. If we can lighten that load and expand it year-round. Tommy, I can give you people for your restaurants and your hotels and these things. You've been trying to push the east side for years. We can give you the people to support that.

This is not Cody Davenport sitting here just talking. Take a look at our neighbors up north in Fort Worth. Alright? I don't know if y'all ever gone up there and seen it, Google it, whatever, however you want to look at it. The stockyards up there, this was a heavy industrial area, a rundown area. They took a little arena there like the size of the coliseum. They activated it on a regular basis and guess what? That whole strip there is full of restaurants and hotels and the stuff that I've listened to our commissioners dream about for years, it has happened. This is not me dreaming this up. We have witnessed it up north. If they can do it up there in Fort Worth, we sure as hell can do it right here in San Antonio.

The last thing I want to talk to y'all about and the most important thing to me and why I wanted to be in front of y'all here, I haven't had the opportunity to do this since we have come in. We have been committed to figure out how to get kids right here involved in our show. We go out there and we brag about the fact that we touch every single county in the state of Texas. And that is a good thing because I'll go back to their staying here. They're dumping money and all that kind of stuff. But what is just as important is how do we get kids right here because there's an apartment complex right over there off Ler Road and we were passing out passes and a mama came down to me and she said, you know what, my kid loves rodeo.

And I was like, oh my gosh, you're not mad over the traffic. You actually are nice about it. She goes, I am nice about it because my son, he sits there and looks out the window and watches all those horses go by in the trailers and he just loves watching them go by. And I was like, that is so awesome. And then I woke up in the middle of the night and I said, that is so horrible. That is horrible that that child sits there and watches this parade of horses go by in a trailer in his neighborhood. He can throw a softball to this stuff and he's watching the parade go by. Pardon my French. If I said bullshit, we're going to change it. And you know what we did? We flew out to Los Angeles Compton. Los Angeles because we found an equine program in Compton, Los Angeles, in the middle of the inner city.

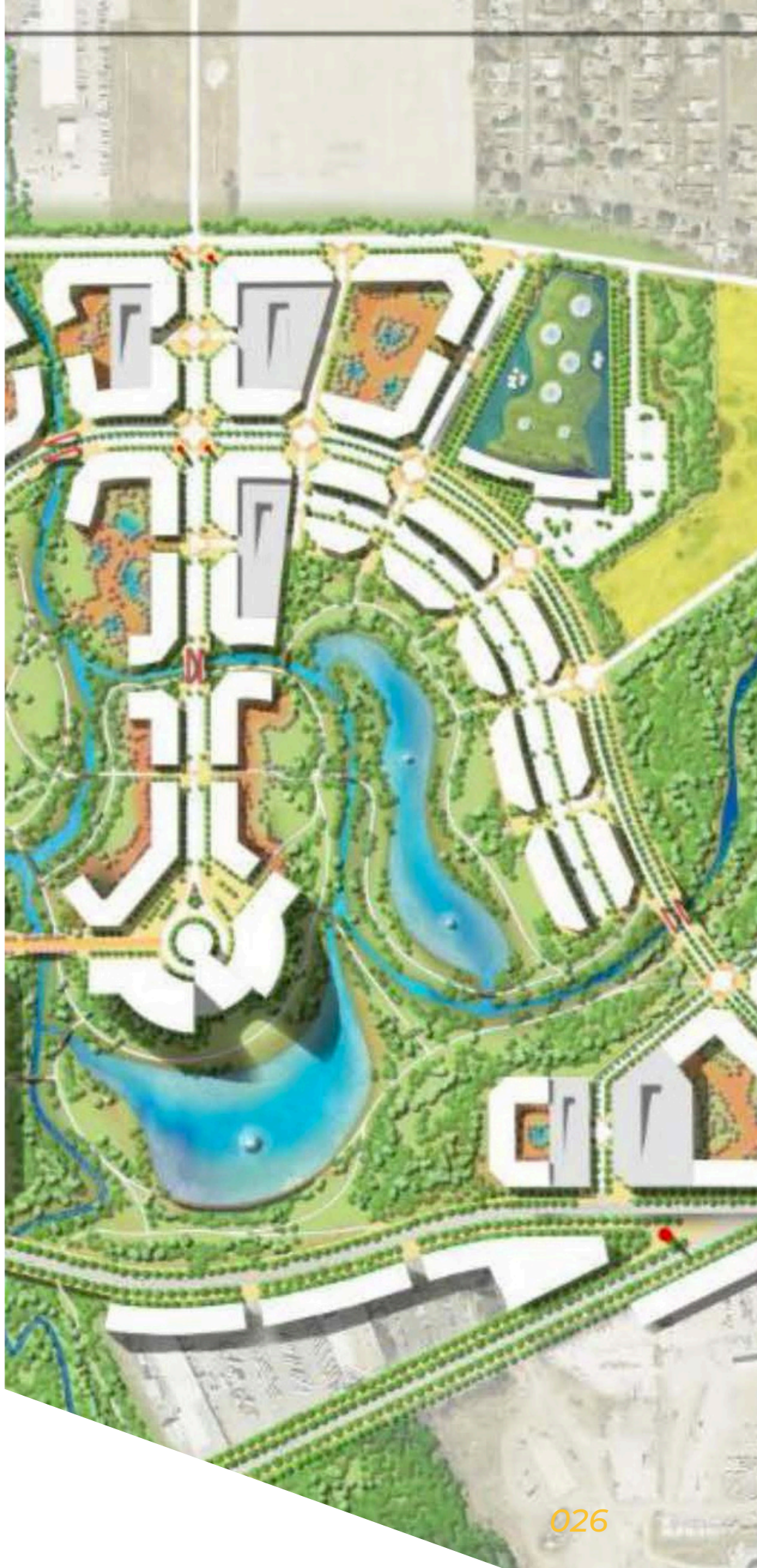
We found a riding program in there where they were taking kids and they were bringing them to 'em. And a horse is one thing a kid loves you will very rarely find a kid that does not love a horse. They might hide it but eventually they want to touch it, pet it. They want to be around it and they're using these horses as a way to get to these kids. So, I hope when you guys drive out of here and you go by our offices right up here to the north and you look across the street to the right and I made this commitment right here, not quite a year ago, but you'll

see that we have taken that piece of ground directly across the street. We are building an arena. You'll see the dirt filled up there right now we're building paddocks out there.

We have six horses currently. I have a team of volunteers dedicated to build a riding program and that riding program is going to be built for kids right here in our neighborhood. Alright? That's not even the best part. Teaching a kid to ride a horse around here, what is that going to do for their future? Absolutely nothing, right? But what I do have and what we have now worked on is 50 programs that we have that these kids can compete with us and win scholarships to further their education where they want to go into trades, whatever they want to do. We have 50 programs that we can get them involved in now in the San Antonio Stock Show. It does not require an animal or anything like that. They're skillathons, the robotics, there's public speaking. There's all these things that these kids can do.

So my goal is to hook 'em with a horse and then I want more. I want to show 'em how to get in our programs. I want to get to know 'em. I want to push 'em in the same manner that we have done kids from the previous generation across our state. Right here in our neighborhood, right in your neighborhood. Because we're here for good guys. We're not going anywhere. Whatever happens, I can assure you the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo is going to be here with these grounds. We started here. We're not going anywhere. Alright, I think you have q and a with later. Alright, thanks Tommy.

River East



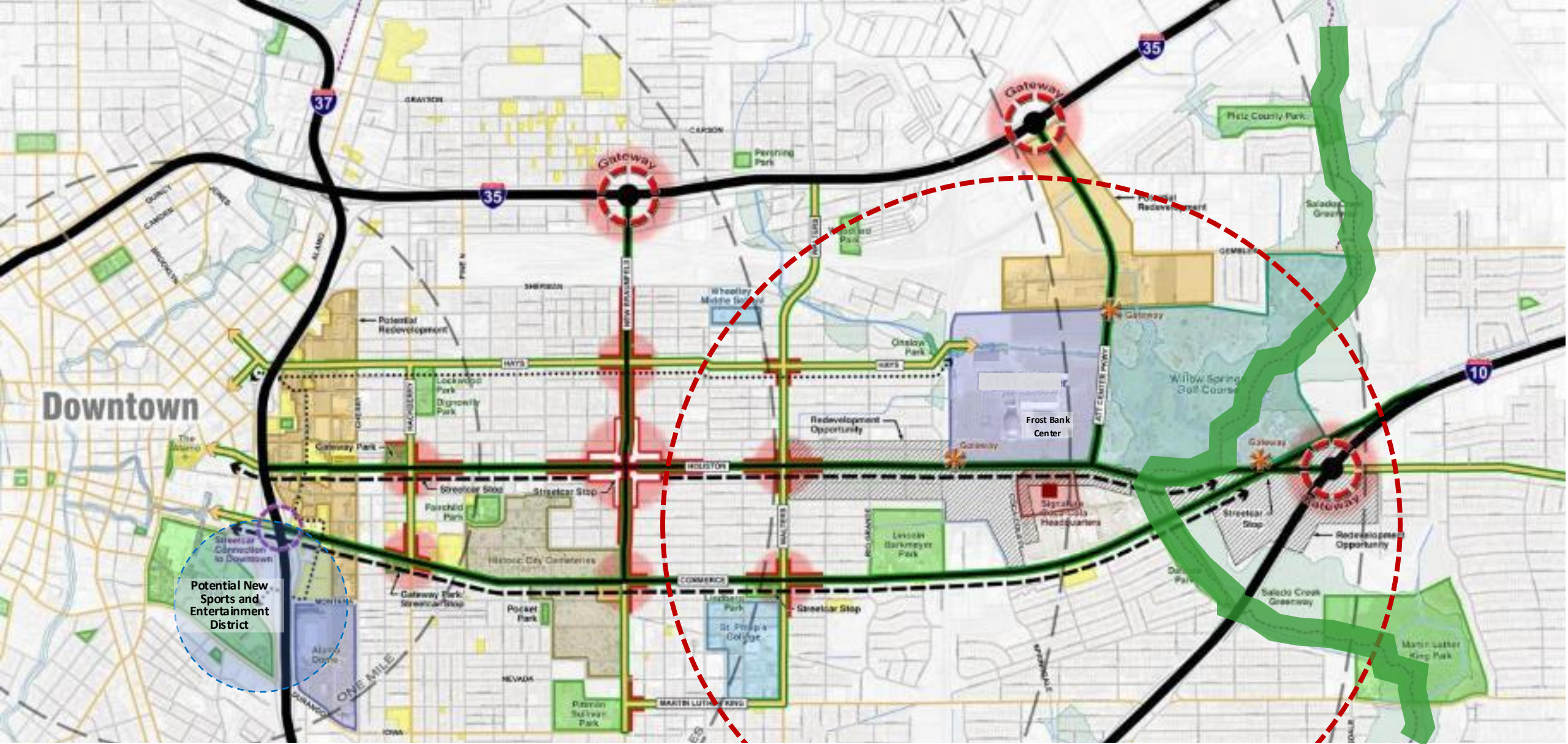


A New Vision for the “River East” District?



Image source: Google Earth

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Potential New Sports and Entertainment District

Proximity to Downtown, area community assets, excellent access, and the Salado Creek create a framework for the district





Image from GoogleEarth

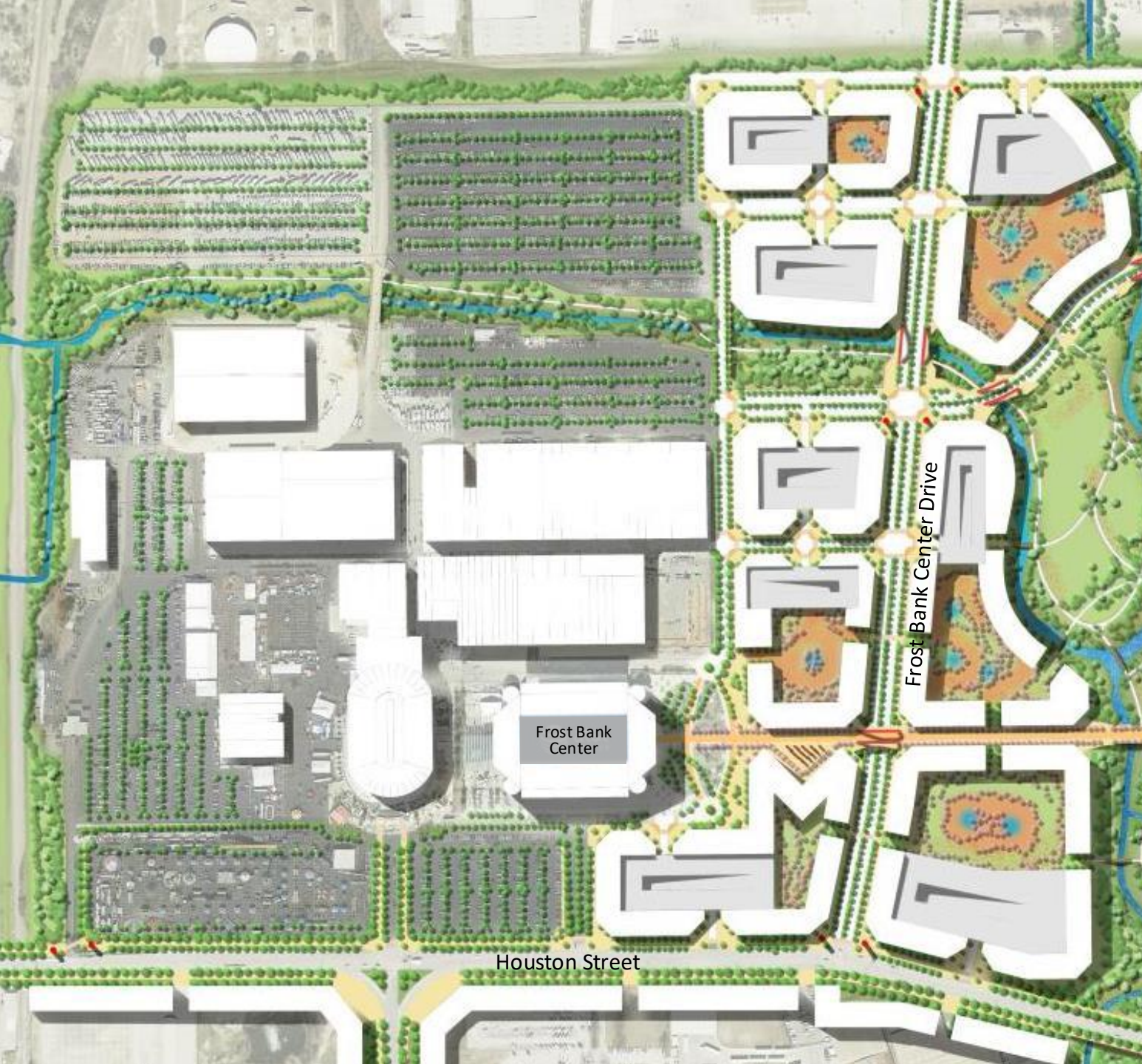
Potential to transform surrounding properties





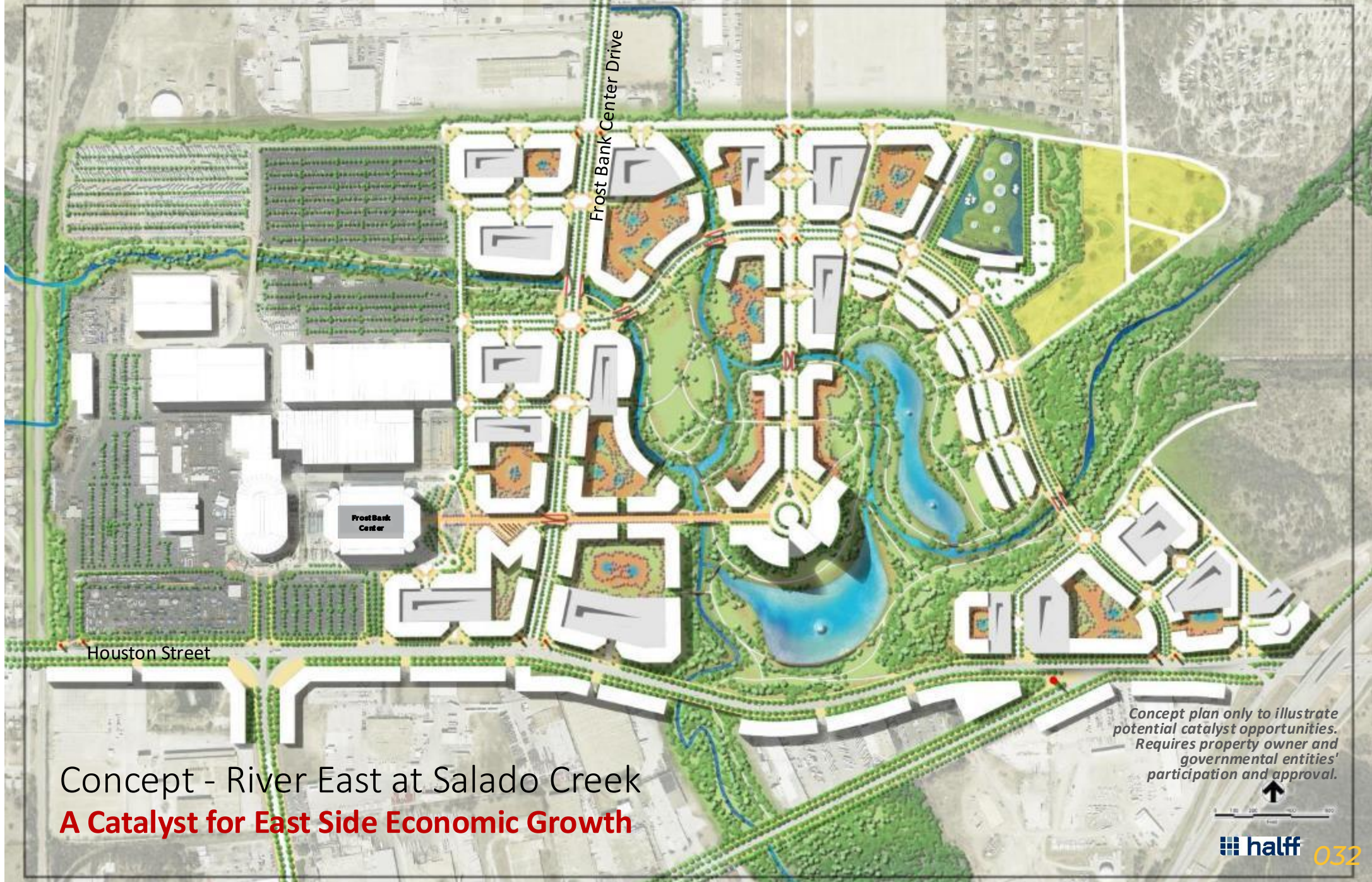
Willow Springs Golf Course – Role as catalyst?





Create a vision that enhances the overall fairgrounds





Concept - River East at Salado Creek
A Catalyst for East Side Economic Growth

Concept plan only to illustrate potential catalyst opportunities. Requires property owner and governmental entities' participation and approval.



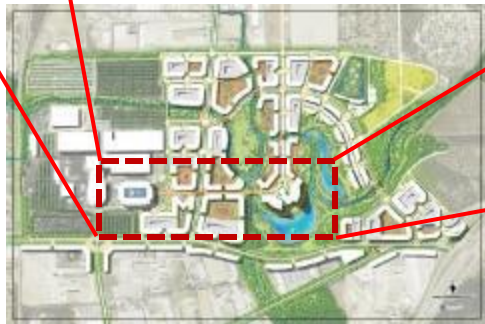


Concept - River East at Salado Creek (preserving 9 hole Golf)

A Catalyst for East Side Economic Growth

Concept plan only to illustrate potential catalyst opportunities. Requires property owner and governmental entities' participation and approval.





A Central Spine to Link East and West Sectors



Vitruvian Bridge, Addison





New Gathering Spaces

Link between AT&T Center and new anchor center (24/7 hour mixed use)





Create a Vibrant New Center for the Eastside
Link between AT&T Center and new anchor center (24/7 hour mixed use)

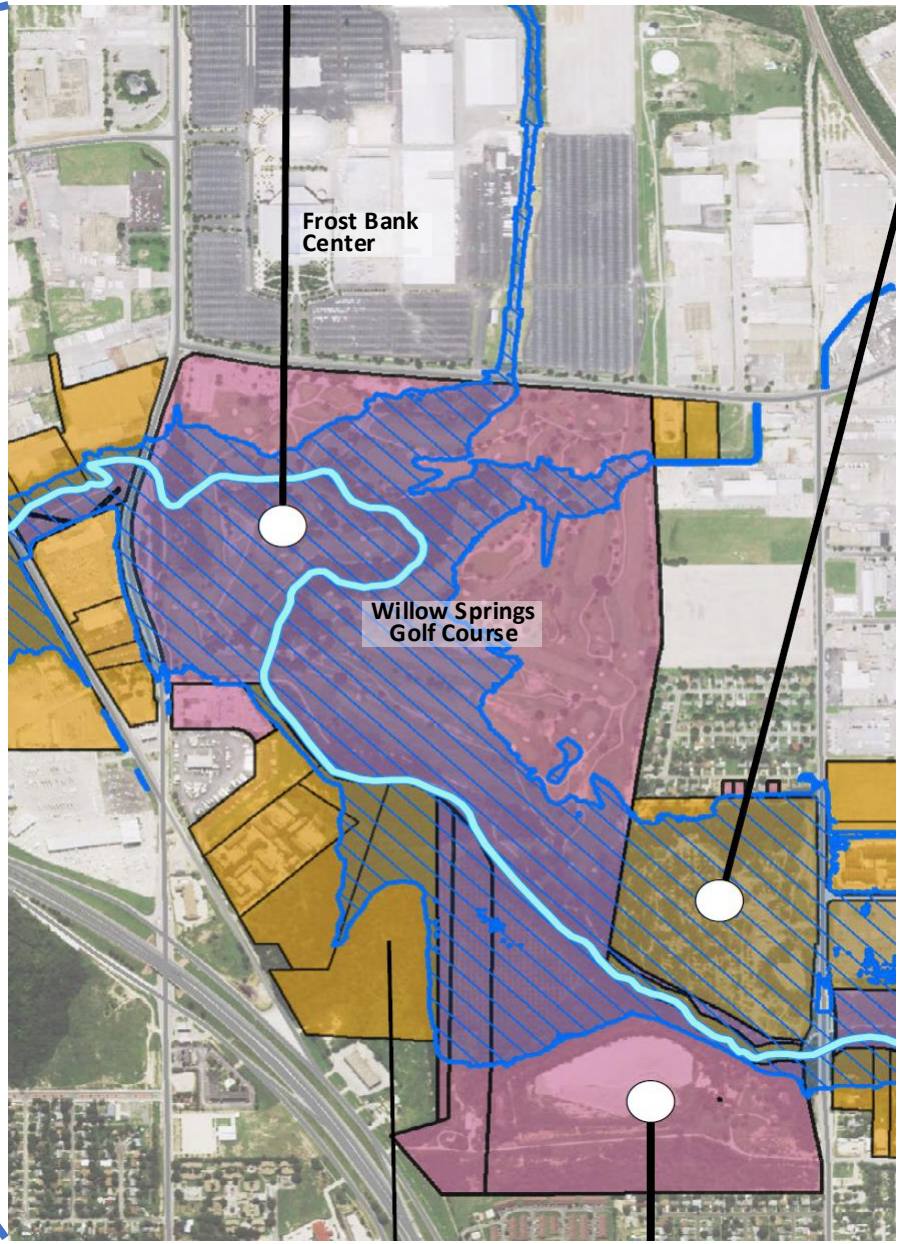
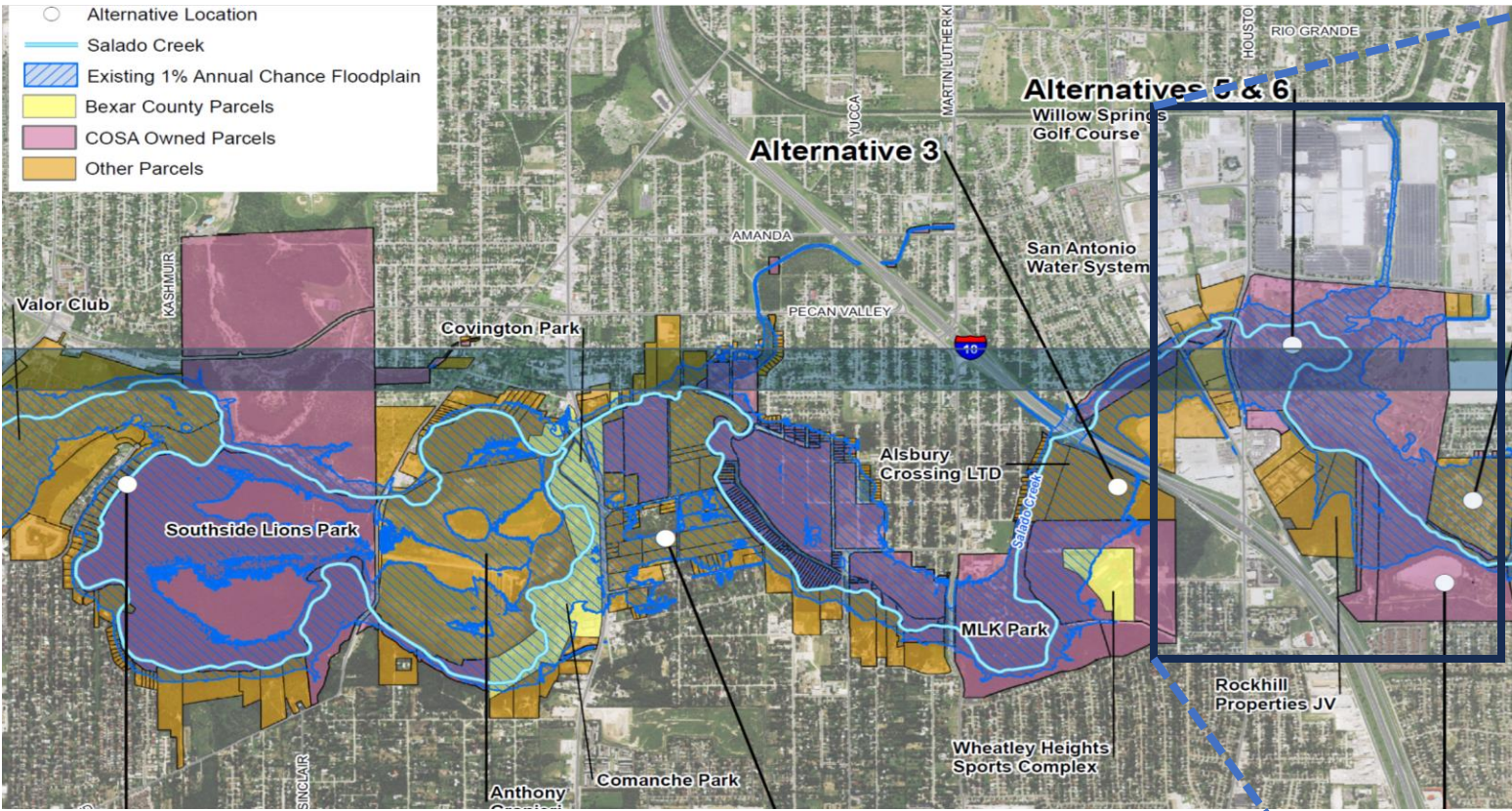




Goal: Strengthen community nodes throughout River East

Example: New Braunfels Avenue at Houston Street





Potential to reduce flood potential on some corridor areas



Explore and build partnerships
**Create a vision that builds on the goals of multiple partners
 already working to grow the Eastside**



Goals:



Identify potential partners, their concerns and long-term plans, and how their plans can be united into a common vision



Help create a unified vision for the area to serve as a catalyst for Eastside redevelopment



Help identify infrastructure & drainage improvements to leverage to foster redevelopment



Provide tools and visuals to build a case for future City/County Bond propositions



Pursue Funding to accelerate the vision (TIRZ, Bonds, Venue tax, County Flood Control, P3's, etc.)





A New Beginning

Transcript: Jim Carillo, Halff Associates, January 25th Town Hall

Thank you, Commissioner, and thank you all for coming here this morning. Great to see you. I'm going to take us back a little bit to some great ideas that Commissioner Calvert had almost a decade ago now, but that are still very much in the forefront and even more so now. Some of this is looking a little bit back, but I think what I want you to do is it's just a sort of a trigger to begin to think about your imaginations, about this whole area that we're in now and especially what happens to the arena and the area, really the area around the arena. So back then, and probably still now, it was called River East with the idea that the Salado Creek was this sort of eastern river that connects this part of the city, ultimately connects into the San Antonio River, but it gives it a brand or a name, whether that's the name that stays or there's other names.

But the whole idea of this is an entire district, that whole area that encompasses much of the East Side, but also then focuses on what's here in this area right here. So, this image just gives you a little sense of the connectivity. So, on the right side of the screen with that big circle, we're right in the middle of all of that. We're here at near the Coliseum, the fairgrounds, the center, the Frost Bank Center that's here. But then there's really close proximity to the downtown, but there's everything in between and all the connections that can be made in between and so many assets that are in this area that give it an incredible vibrancy and the sense that it can be so much onto itself. So with that, we looked at the areas around it, and again, this goes back a few years, but we look at the industrial areas and some of the other facilities that are adjacent to what the county counties properties are here.

We look at the golf course and the golf course and all these things coming together and how can you look at these together in a way that then makes them greater than just individual. But the sum of all of them becomes even that much greater with some sort of a vision that pulls them together. And that's the question for you and the question that the Commissioner and the Court will be thinking about is, again, how does this vision come together? What is it and what does it mean in terms of both specifically the Frost Bank Center, but then everything that's around it. So it's kind of broader than just that one building or a few buildings in it. So let me give you a sense of the idea, and again, this is from a few years back, but it begins to sort of give you a sense of what could be.

And one key thing is of course, that the fairgrounds and the rodeo are an incredible asset to the entire area. And that anything that happens needs to make sure that it respects that and works with that. And even more so enhances everything that the rodeo does because it means so much to the community here. It means so much to the broader city. It means so

much to the region. So all of this has to work together. So the idea kind of was, well maybe there's this sort of sense of you pull the golf course, which is right in the middle where you see those lakes and you see the Frost Bank Center in the middle and all of the rodeo grounds around it. How do you take some of that and maybe some of those parking lots becomes something other than parking lots. I heard the commissioner talk a little bit about, well, what do we do with the parking?

Can we do some structured parking? Can we do other kinds of buildings and many other things that then enhance this and add value not only for the month-long rodeo events or the other events that take place at the Coliseum or may take place in the Frost Bank Center, but all the time so that you have a lot of vibrancy here. And it's probably a lot of it could be housing, much needed housing, some of it could be new parks, new gathering places, new community facilities. There's places there, there's land there that perhaps there's other opportunities to use that. And this takes that boulevard that runs down the Frost Bank Center and looks at that and then a boulevard that goes across all of that and connects those different pieces together. So again, it's just sort of a starting place for imagination. What could all of this be and what does it mean for you as a community?

Another version of it takes part of the golf course and retains the golf course. The golf course could be an important part of what remains there, but as the Commissioner said, perhaps looks at pulling some portions of the golf course more out of the floodplain so that then you have additional areas where you can think about those in terms of what might happen there and how that might enhance the whole area around it. And there's this sort of boulevard it could go across. Again, this is sort of just ideas and things that that have possibilities, but there are many other kinds of ideas that enhance the whole area around it. Become this attraction, become this community center that builds on everything that's happening already in the area. And that whole sense of coming together. There's places where you can gather, perhaps there's new places to eat, there's housing, all kinds of different things that could happen there.

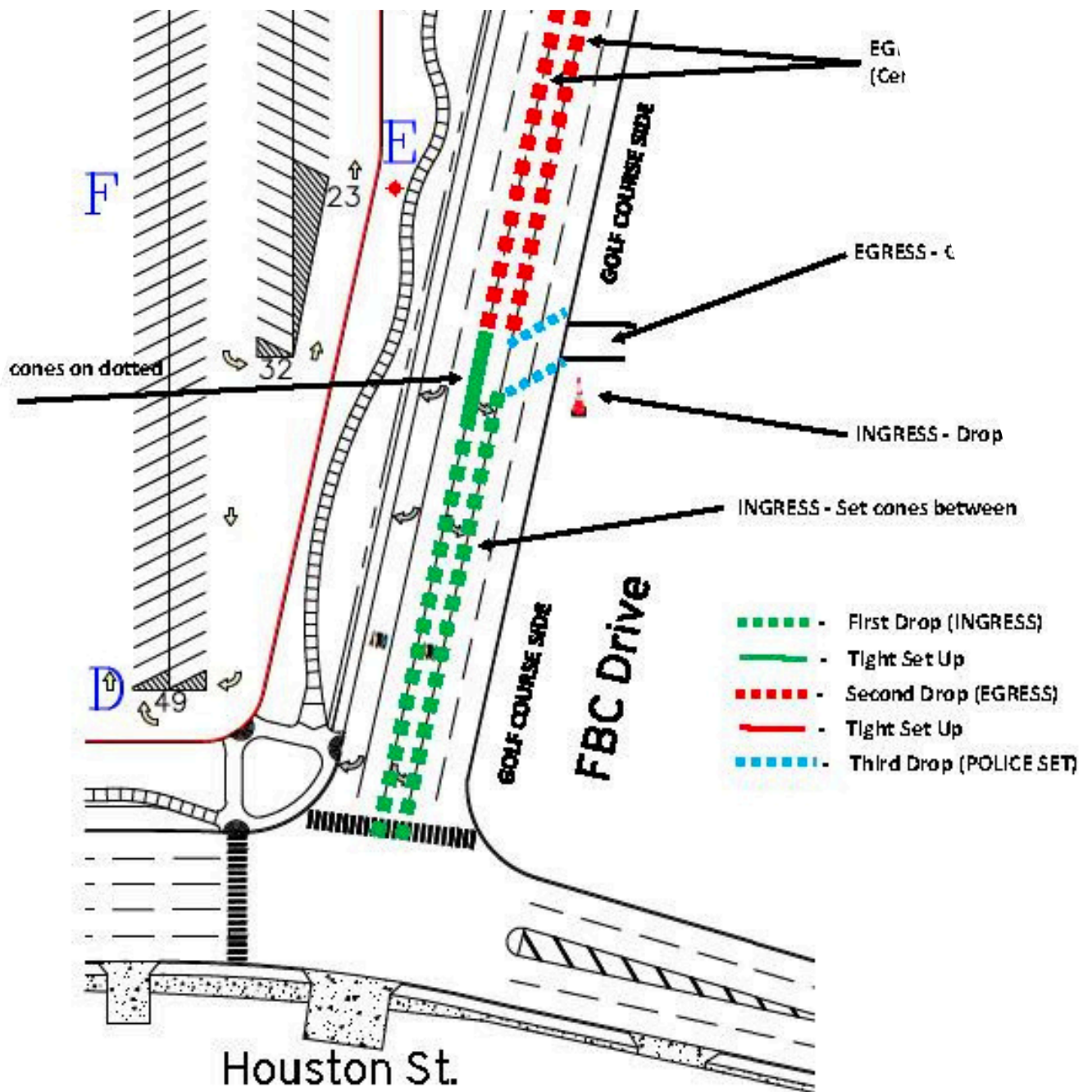
One key part that I think Commissioner Calvert emphasized and continues to emphasize is that this needs to spread out from just the fairgrounds. It's a much broader community around it. What other kinds of enhancements, what other kinds of things could be built into this that enhance the community around it that make it even a better place to live and a better place to be? So many kinds of things, maybe some of it is new parks, new streetscapes, new places, community places, all of those kinds of, so I want just a second on some of the floodplain ideas that were talked about, and these are a few years ago, but there were a whole series of types of alternatives. And as the Commissioner said, a couple of them really focused on the golf course and could you take some portions of the golf

course and make them more developable? And those are certainly doable with some investments in flood structures around that. So a lot of possibilities of things that could happen in the area. So freeze here.

There we go. So one thing I just wanted to emphasize, and again Commissioner Calvert hit on that and it's so key to something like this. It's partnerships, it's everyone coming together sort of building this common goal, this common vision for what needs to happen at the beginning. There's a lot of ideas, a lot of different ways to look at things. At some point those come together and you have different investments, you have different participants, different people coming together and making all of this happen. It depends on you, a lot of your feedback and then all of the governmental entities coming together and coming up with something that works specifically for this area. So that idea of partnership is a fundamental part of this. So that idea of partnerships, a unified vision, whatever that vision is, something that says this is where we want to go.

And sometimes a vision is a picture like I showed you. Sometimes a vision is an idea and both of those are right, they have to work together, but sometimes we get sort of this idea and that's what we want to do. And that idea may have many different kinds of pictures that bring it together, but at the end of the day, that idea that we want to accomplish is a thing that stays with us and we build it and we adjust it and we mold it over time because nothing stays exactly, exactly, the way we originally thought about it, but we work towards that idea that sits there and this is what we want to have happened. And all of course of this then depends on funding. And so funding is so important, such a critical part of this and having the right kinds of investment to make these kinds of things happen. So I just call this and I said, this is a new beginning. There's a lot of possibilities here and look forward to talking a little bit more about this, but think of this as a slate that you can work on now. Thank you.

Traffic Cones



Traffic Cones

Transcript: Discussion between Commissioner Tommy Calvert, Chief Raul Garza, and Lt. Raymond Pollard, February 1st Town Hall

Commissioner Tommy Calvert:

Thank you very much. We're going to very quickly be at a point where we have the line not stop, so don't worry we're just doing this, but I want to get the video ready and queued up. We have a very, very important visual when you watch this video about the traffic cones. Notice there's not a single cone in Los Angeles and it is more density, more people around, more apartments, more housing, and there's not a single cone in Dallas. Roll the video tape and then we're going to go into a conversation.

(VIDEO ON TRAFFIC CONES AT FBC PLAYS)

Commissioner Tommy Calvert:

Okay, well, we need to have a conversation to understand both sides. So we wanted to, this predates Lieutenant Pollard. This issue I think goes back frankly, even to former Mayor Howard Peak when that time was originally designing these kinds of traffic patterns. But we do want to hear, there is a study that was commissioned and we do want to understand the history of why these cones are here and not another arenas and how we can move forward. We don't want to beat up on Lieutenant. He's a great guy and we're excited that he's here. Please give your time and attention to Lieutenant Pollard. Thank you very much.

Lt. Raymond Pollard, BCSO:

So yes, we have cones, but I'm here with my counterpart, Lieutenant Freveletti and my chief who also runs the security for the Frost Bank Center and who does the traffic enforcement when we have events here. So why do we have cones? First and foremost, we have an ITS system. You don't know what that is. When you look at your lanes and you look up above you, you're going to see little arrows that are going to tell you which lanes are open and which ones are not. The other problem that we have too is that we are in an area where the streets are not as wide and it's kind of a congested area. So what are our main traffic flow venues that we have? We have IH 35, we have IH 10.

What we have to do, the reason why we have cones, because if we did not control the access or the entrance egress of traffic, we would have chaos. Everybody would be wanting to go in certain directions. They want to go in a certain way. We controlled the flow of traffic and we do that by cones. We tell people, you exit out of Delta gate, you're going to turn here.

That's because we can get, when you have 16,000 to 18,000 people in this arena, you have to deal with the cars. We also have what now? We have Ubers and Lyft, so now we have to control where they go. If we don't control it, then they'll park in front of all the other gates and they'll park everywhere else and they stop traffic. The Spurs, okay? When we have a Spurs game, we have season ticket holders.

So, they learn, so they know where to go. Our biggest problem is concerts because what do we have? Everybody wants to be dropped off. They don't want to pay for the parking, they want to be dropped off. That's fine. The problem is they interfere with the flow of traffic. So with all this congestion coming in, we have to control the chaos that's coming into this arena. So that's why we have the cones. What we try to do when we have that big of a crowd, when the arena is sold out, we usually can get these vehicles and we're talking possibly around 10 to 12 thousand vehicles. We can get them out of here within 45 minutes. That's about our average time. Am I correct? About 45 minutes. We have about 30 to 35 officers directing traffic. Those officers know to keep traffic from without them, we would have people coming out of Charlie Gate, we'd have people coming out of Delta Gate.

They'd be going whatever way they wanted to. By us controlling it, and by using cones, we're telling people, here's how we want you to go. Some venues probably don't have that, but they have better traffic control, better signage. We have no signage. We can't tell people where to go because we don't have a way of communicating with these people. Uber drivers and Lyft drivers are supposed to get an email from their companies that are telling them, when you pick up and drop off, you go to a certain area. You go in through Golf Gate, bring all that traffic in, get 'em out through Echo Gate, and at the end when we get most of the traffic out of these areas, then allow them to go through Bravo Gate. So that means we have to utilize Coca-Cola, utilize Houston Street, utilize Frost Bank Center. The previous plan, and that was a big complaint, is I've been with this working Spurs and when it was SBC, AT&T and now Frost Bank, I've been here since day one and on the inside, been on the outside.

Originally when we had the original traffic plan, we diverted traffic going down Gemblor Road. That became a problem for the people in the neighborhood because we get to their houses, and again, there was cones down there trying to get people to 410 to 35 to 90 off of Walters. But that changed. Covid hit, changed the traffic plan. So now we have two lanes going out to 35. It takes a little bit longer, yes, but we're not taking up all that traffic on Gemblor Road. So those, we try not to inconvenience the folks that live around here, but sometimes we have to because of the congestion that we have. That's a lot of cars that you have in one area. So we have to get this traffic done in a timely manner. Where could we get

'em out the quicker we get the roads open? Like I said, the biggest problem that we have, people come in, want to get into the gates right away.

It's not our problem. Pardon. It's not our fault. When people don't get here in a timely manner, they know what time the game starts. So they should get here in a timely manner, but they want to get here when the game starts at seven o'clock and expect to be here at 6:45 along with another seven or 8,000 people that want to get here at the same time. The other problem that they had in the few past was taking money because people have to pay for the parking. Parking is not free. So it takes time to exchange money or give out change or to get their credit card. So that takes time. So that backs up our traffic. So while they're taking somebody's money, next car behind him, got to wait until that transaction's done before the next car flows. So that's backing up some of our traffic. So I'm going to go ahead and let my chief speak on behalf of some of this other stuff that he has probably better knowledge of because he gets to meet with us first. So he probably has a little bit more than I do. But I just wanted to give you a basic idea that the reason why we have traffic cones that we control traffic flow, get 'em in. We get 'em out sooner. We get 'em out sooner. We get the cones picked up. Thank you.

Chief Raul Garza, BCSO:

Good morning everybody. It's so awesome to see the community involved and to see all of y'all come out on a Saturday morning. Thank you Commissioner for continuing to have the Sheriff's Office be a part of these community engagements and community talks. I've been with the Sheriff's Office almost 33 years now. I have a lot of pride in serving the community here in Bexar County. I grew up on the west side. I'm from the housing projects, so I understand the needs of the community and I serve with great pride because of my service where I grew up at. And I'm an Air Force veteran and I've come back home and I've been with the Sheriff's Office ever since. I currently serve as the Chief of Staff for Sheriff Salazar, and I wanted to follow up on a couple of things that Lieutenant Pollard said. First, I want to let everybody know that we do work with the Spurs.

We have made some changes. We don't impact the traffic off Gembler Road anymore. In fact, we control that traffic light out there to prevent folks from having to go down that way. All of traffic flows towards 35. We've made some changes to the way we do the exits at each gate, so that way we get the folks out of here as quick as possible. I do like to brag a little bit on the work that we have Lieutenant Freveletti here in the audience too, along with Lieutenant Potter. Both of these service, my traffic commanders out here at every event, we're able to get Spurs game emptied out of here. We're able to dump this place in under 30 minutes most times, and that's because of the quality of work that you have deputies out here, plus the cones. I understand the cones have had some impact in the past.

Every time we've received a complaint, I get a complaint in my office, I reach out and I want to work with individuals. How can we lessen the impact? What else can we do moving forward to help prevent the cones from being a further issue? I know we scaled back the cones on Houston Street. We scaled back the cones on Frost and over on Coca-Cola. However, we're open for more suggestions. The Spurs put some money in the traffic plan. They're the ones to get it approved through the City. It is not just something that would come out and put together. And I also want you to know that we realize the impact to the neighborhood. We want to get in and out of here as quick as possible. So we do not let the bus services get impacted. We make room for the bus if the bus is coming down Frost.

If the bus is coming down Houston, we're going to move those cones out of the way for the bus. We also know that if there's any emergency in the area, we're not going to impact or delay those first responders getting to you. If those first responders need to travel down Houston or Frost, everybody's got a radio. We're in constant communication with each other. We're going to open up the roadways to allow for that traffic to flow. Another thing the Spurs have done is they've invested in a drone. I don't know if you guys have seen that drone flying around at night. So with that drone, there is a command center inside the Frost Bank Center that the Sheriff's Office has a seat at that we can actually see the traffic live through the drone and we're able to make adjustments on the fly, so to speak, as needed at every event. So I am here, we'll be here afterwards today. If anybody's got any specific questions or anybody that would like to sit and talk to me, I'll be here afterwards. Okay. Thank you all. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert:

Alright, I'm going to say a couple of things on this. Complimentary, number one, for 10 years I've been trying to pinpoint who is in charge of this. And there was a previous Sheriff who said it was the City and then I called the police chief, he said it's the County. And then someone said, it's the Spurs. And so I said, well I need all three of y'all in the room together. So first of all, it's a landmark that we have clarity now. Okay? So thank you for that. But here's my humble observation of that. That is a north side traffic plan, meaning get people back to the north side and out. If Ms. Gloria Ray and I want to go to Tucker's or want to go across the street to the Andy to have a drink or to have something to eat after the game, or if I want to go to my house, it is harder for me to go, which I live in Willow Woods off of Gemblar.

It is harder for me to get to my house because of this plan. There's no favor that I'm getting. And that is the economic development that we have to begin to change the mindset. So couple things, County Manager isn't here today, but I think it is in order to set aside a little money for both a zoom and a field trip to some of these other places, to see the difference

and to bring the Spurs with us to see the difference and to bring the community with us to see the difference in order that we can have some peace and economic development. Because economic development, that brings more stability in terms of crime and joblessness and all kinds of other things. When the Iceman, George Gervin, who built the Spurs, he had the Willow Springs Golf Club as a restaurant bar. He told me, Tommy, nobody could get to my restaurant and bar because of the cones.

That is an economic development that isn't the promise that we have. So you saw it somehow. There's no chaos in Los Angeles, Dallas, United Center, Chicago, Washington, dc It's okay for people from the north side to hang out on the east side. We welcome them, we welcome them. We're just as nice and friendly and you might even have a little bit more fun hanging out with us if you get a chance to know us. And so let's begin to break bread, break some barbecue, break some enchiladas on the East Side. How about them? Let's go. Alright, my humble observation.

Presenter Transcripts & Powerpoints

Financing Sports and Community Approved Venue Projects

UNDER CHAPTER 334 TEXAS LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CODE, AS AMENDED (“CHAPTER 334”)

William T. Avila, Partner

The background of the slide is a photograph of the Texas State Capitol building in Austin, Texas. The building is a grand, classical-style structure with a prominent central dome and multiple stories of arched windows and columns. The scene is captured during the "golden hour" of late afternoon, with warm sunlight casting long shadows and highlighting the architectural details. A semi-transparent yellow rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the main text.

Financing Sports and Community Approved Venue Projects

UNDER CHAPTER 334 TEXAS LOCAL GOVERNMENT
CODE, AS AMENDED (“CHAPTER 334”)

William T. Avila, Partner

Legal Authority and Eligible Projects

County is authorized to use Chapter 334 to:

- a) provide for planning, acquisition, establishment, development, construction or renovation of an approved “venue project”, and
- b) designate each method of financing each “approved venue project”



Resolution Authorizing Projects

Calling the Election

- County must adopt Resolution providing for planning, acquiring, establishing, developing, constructing, renovating venue project
- Resolution must designate:
 - each venue project
 - each method, one or more, of financing that County wants to use to finance each project
- Before calling the election, County must:
 - submit the Resolution to Comptroller for its analysis
 - wait at least 15 days for reply from Comptroller's performance of its analysis about if implementation will have significant negative fiscal impact on state revenues

Resolution Authorizing Projects (cont.)

Calling the Election

- If no response from Comptroller after 30 days, Comptroller is considered to have approved the Resolution
- If Comptroller approves, then County may call an election on the question of approving and implementing the Resolution
- Order Calling the Election must include the following:
 - allow voters to vote separately on each venue project
 - designate each venue project
 - designate each method of financing that county wants to use to finance each project and maximum rate of each method
 - allow voters to vote in same proposition or separate propositions on each method of financing that the County wants to use to finance each project

Approved Venue Project – Venue Project Approved by Voters

“**Venue**” means any of the following, plus “related infrastructure” (see slide 7):

- area, coliseum, stadium, or other type of or facility that is used or is planned for use for one or more professional or amateur sports events, community events, or other sports events, including rodeos, livestock shows, agricultural expositions, promotional events, and other civic or charitable events, however, venue cannot be primarily used for community, civic, and charitable events attended only by residents
- convention center, a convention center facility or a related improvement such as a civic center hotel, theater, opera house, music hall, rehearsal hall, park, zoological park, museum, aquarium, or plaza located in the vicinity of a convention center or facility owned by County
- tourist development area
- a watershed protection and preservation project; a recharge, recharge area, or recharge feature protection project; a conservation easement; or an open-space preservation program intended to protect water

Approved Venue Project – Venue Project Approved by Voters (cont.)

Venue means any of the following (cont.):

- project authorized by Section 4A or 4B, Devel. Corp. Act of 1979 in existence on 09-01-1997 – including land, buildings, equipment, facilities, and improvements required or suitable for:
 - 4A – promotion of development and expansion of manufacturing and industrial facilities, transportation facilities (including but not limited to airports, ports, mass commuting facilities, and parking facilities), sewage or solid waste disposal facilities, recycling facilities, air or water pollution control facilities, facilities for the furnishing of water to general public, distribution centers, and small warehouse facilities capable of serving as decentralized storage and distribution centers
 - 4B – use for professional and amateur (including children's) sports, athletic, entertainment, tourist, convention, and public park purposes and events, including stadiums, ball parks, auditoriums, amphitheaters, concert halls, learning centers, parks and park facilities, open space improvements, municipal buildings, museums, exhibition facilities, and related store, restaurant, concession, and automobile parking facilities, related area transportation facilities, and related roads, streets, and water and sewer facilities, and other related improvements that enhance any of those items, and
 - 4B – to promote or develop new or expanded business enterprises, including a project to provide public safety facilities, streets and roads, drainage and related improvements, demolition of existing structures, general municipally owned improvements, as well as any improvements or facilities that are related to any of those projects and any other project that determined to promote or develop new or expanded business enterprises

Approved Venue Project – Venue Project Approved by Voters (cont.)

“related infrastructure” includes any of the following: store, store, restaurant, on-site hotel, concession, automobile parking facility, area transportation facility, road, street, water or sewer facility, park, or other on-site or off-site improvement that relates to and enhances the use, value, or appeal of a venue, including areas adjacent to the venue, and any other expenditure reasonably necessary to construct, improve, renovate, or expand a venue, including an expenditure for environmental remediation

Thank you for your time



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Bexar County's Venue Tax

Transcript: William Avila, Attorney, Bracewell LLP, January 25th Town Hall

Good morning. As Commissioner Calvert said, my name's Bill Avila. I'm an attorney at Bracewell and, just for the record, I was born and raised in San Antonio and wound up under a desegregation order from the Justice Department going to Brackenridge High School. And it was the best thing that happened in my life.

And so, I've been out here running around since at least high school, and TC Calvert and I were on the football team at Brackenridge. That's my claim to fame on the East Side. And my other relationship, I hear Owen Davis whose father ran OMCA and I were best friends and we met at Brackenridge Ridge and we hang out together. We still talk together and I'm my godfather, his daughter who was a pediatrician in Atlanta. But all that aside, after Brackenridge, I went to Notre Dame and stayed there for six years and then went to George Washington for law school and then came home to practice law. And Henry Cisneros had just been elected mayor and Jane Macon hired me in the city attorney's office and that's how I got into public law and municipal bonds and handling bond elections, governmental projects. That's kind of like the background where I'm from and why I'm here.

And I appreciate the Commissioner inviting me to talk about this. The firm I'm at, we're the bond attorneys for the County. So we represent the County when it's going to borrow money through a bond issue or other certificates of obligation and other forms of debt to finance county facilities. And one of the types of projects is the venue projects, the, and just a little bit of background, the first project in the state that was financed with the sale tax was the Alamodome and that was--Henry Cisneros came up with a plan to work with the Via Transit Authority to design and build a regional economic development facility that would be countywide within transportation district. And that allowed or basically a countywide sales tax. The Alamodome was paid off in five years and then the city and Cia put an agreement together for the city to run the Alamodome.

After that, everybody else noticed that. And then George Bush wound up running for governor, but before that he was one of the owners of the Texas Rangers and they wanted a new stadium. They got a legislature to approve an economic development sales tax for a city that's located in two counties. And there was one named Arlington, Texas and they built a stadium after they built that. Then everybody else said, oh wait a minute. Then they passed. It was the primer bill, but it is now that is located in chapter 334 of the Texas Local Government Code and that's what's referred to as the venue statute and that's the statute that all venue tax elections have been held in all of the major metropolitan areas for the

finance sports facilities, but not just professional but amateur and a whole host of things. And now I'll get into that. So here's what the law says.

Yes sir. Oh, next slide. It is chapter 334, the Texas Local Government Code and it allows the county to provide for the planning, the acquisition, the establishment, the development, the construction or renovation of an approved venue project. And it allows the county to designate each method of financing for each approved venue project. Next slide. And before we go through that, the statute, and I'll get into it, defines what's a venue project and then it says an approved venue project is a project that's been approved by the voters. You have to hold an election to vote. What's an approved venue project and how are you going to pay for that? The statute also provides what the County has to go through to be able to call the election city statute, right? Yes. Under chapter 334, either a city or a county can hold the venue tax election. And yes, and the taxes are different for each one. They each have the ability to impose a tax if it's approved by the voters, there is provision in there for sales tax, but that's maxed out under the tax code. And in Bexar County, the sales taxes is already maxed out, so the sales taxes is not available right now without an election to take it away from somebody else.

Commissioner Calvert:

But the point I'm making is that the City of San Antonio isn't using its venue tax—hasn't called for an election—so they could potentially raise it for hotel and rental. Am I correct?

Bill Avila, Bracewell:

Yes. Well, one of the projects has been used by the city for Edwards Aquifer recharge projects and that expires and I think there's a job training program that's running and then that'll end in 2026. VIA will take over that tax and so it's maxed out, but yes, the city's not using it or any of the venues that the city has. But to call the election before it can call the election, the County has to adopt the resolution. And in the resolution, it should identify each venue project or set of projects that it wants the voters to consider. And then it must also include in the resolution each method of financing for any of those projects. And the statute also requires you to submit the projects for each project separately to the voters. So that's why in the last election, I think there are four different propositions because they all had to be voted separately. And in each proposition that identifies each of the projects, you have to identify what kind of tax and the rate you're going to levy for that tax.

Once the Commissioners Court adopts that resolution, it submits it to the state comptroller and the County has to wait at least 15 days for the comptroller to do an analysis on whether that resolution and those taxes would impact the state revenues

negatively. And if they do, they cannot approve the election go forward. If they don't, the County has a right to appeal and there's some appeal process. But if 30 days runs and the comptroller's office has not responded, then that resolution is considered by law to have been approved by the comptroller. So you can wait 30 days or before that 30 days is up, the comptroller can approve it. After you get that, then the County can call the election. And part of what was going on the last time is the election can only be held on a uniform election date. Well, that's either in May in the mail election or the November election. And the deadline in 2025 to call for a mail election was February 14. So the court had to consider a resolution, pass it, send it to the comptroller and wait 30 days before it could call the election. And so that didn't happen. It's too late. And so the election will not happen in May, but that gives you time to see how the County wants to consider using the statute and those taxes to identify or to approve venue projects it would like to submit to the voters.

Next slide. All right, so like I said, you wait 30 days, you can call the election and then call the election. The county has to allow the voters to vote separately on each venue project. It'll designate each venue project and it'll designate the method of financing each venue project in the resolution. And it will allow the voters to vote on each separately on each project. Like I said, it has to be a uniform election date. Okay, now next slide. Next slide please. Oh, okay. Alright. No, they're doing fine. So here's, here's for the meat. I think this is what would be really helpful. What is a venue under this statute that's eligible to be considered by voters? A venue includes an arena, a coliseum, a stadium, or any other type of facility that's used or planned for use for one or more professional or amateur sports, sporting events or community events or any other sports events such as rodeos, livestock shows, agricultural expositions, promotional events, and other civic and charitable events. However, the community events or the civic centers cannot be just for local use. The statute is designed to attract visitors to the county.

Another set of venue use is a convention center, a convention center facility and related improvements such as a civic center hotel, a theater, an opera house, a music hall, a rehearsal hall, a park, a zoological park, a museum, an aquarium or plaza located in the vicinity of any of those types of facilities. The next type is a tourist development area. This was added after the 2008 election in 2008. This was originally called improvements along an inland waterway. And so that's how the Museum Reach and the missionary projects got financed because there are improvements along in waterway. After that, that was changed to be a tourist development area. So conceivably that would still include improvements along an inland waterway, but it is expanded to be more than that and you get to decide what's a tourist development area, for example.

And then the lastly, a watershed protection and preservation project, which is what the city was using for the Edwards Aquifer stuff, projects and the recharge, a recharge area and projects for conservation easements and open space facilities. But the statute also includes two other next slide, sorry, the other kinds. It also says a project as defined in section four A and four B of the Development Corporation Act of 1979 as that law existed on September 1st, 1997. Well, you have to go back and pull up the old 97 statute. It has since been amended and that statute is now in chapters 501, 504 and 505 of a local government code. But you have to go back to the 97 statute to see what's included in four A. Those are projects that would attract businesses to the community, but it is, you're going to attract and develop manufacturing, industrial and transportation facilities to the community. And that includes airports, ports, mass community facilities including the parking facilities, air water, pollution control facilities and water and distribution facilities for water to the general public and four B that includes facilities for use for professional and amateur athletic events including youth in children's sports, entertainment, tourists, convention, public park purposes, events, stadiums, ballparks, auditoriums, amphitheaters, concert halls, earnings centers, parks and parking facilities. And then four B includes another set of projects which is drainage, demolition of existing structures and any of the facilities related to any of those things.

The statute. Okay, the next slide. Okay, the next slide is the statute allows for related infrastructure and so related infrastructure. So, it's the infrastructure related to any of those types of projects that I mentioned before. But that would include stores, restaurants, onsite hotels, concessions, parking, transportation, facilities, roads, street water and sewer facilities apart, other and offsite facilities related to or enhancing the value of any of those facilities and environmental remediation. So that's like the range of projects that you can contemplate. It could be used by the venue tax program.

Frost Bank Center's Needs

Transcript: Derrick Howard, Executive Director of the Freeman Coliseum, February 1st, Town Hall

First of all, I thank everyone, Commissioner, for your leadership and everyone for taking the time out to come out today. I want to start on a little bit of a high note and then we'll dig into numbers and information and all the challenging positions that we have going forward as a community to try to make sure that as long as we are here with these facilities on this side, on this east side, we have the least disruption for our community and the most progressive support for additional economic development and other opportunities for this community as well. So you would have a video that I'll run and this one is just to kind of get everyone set on what we do around here. Our business is a business of entertaining. Our business is a business of keeping people happy, educating people and members. So I have a quick video I'll share and

That video actually was meant to set up exactly what we tried to do with assets. That video is actually a culmination of many activities that have gone on over the past years for many members of our community have been able to come out and enjoy the entertainment and all the success that we've been able to host here on the grounds. Obviously that video couldn't have happened without funding and support for these projects. And so as you think about the cost of these facilities anymore, nothing is cheap but I want to be real clear about it. In this business, in these arenas or in these expedition halls or in these Frost Bank Centers, nothing is cheap. So one of the things as you look at the Frost Bank building, we have a building that's turning 25 years old just like your house, just like your car, that little light comes on and it says it's time to change the oil or that little light comes on and your roofer says, "Hey, it's time to change the roof."

That little light comes on in and your IT guy comes and says, "Hey, you don't have enough bandwidth to make sure that you have the appropriate support for what you need." Every one of those issues that come up is a *chaching* and a *chaching* and a *chaching*. And so from that perspective, I want to make sure that everyone is clear that as we're moving forward and as the Commissioner is negotiating with the Spurs and others for the County, we will definitely have to make sure that we, what I call, cover home base first. So, we have assets here, we have the Freeman, we have the Frost Bank Center. So those buildings would definitely have to be sure that we keep those buildings in a what we call quality arena standard. So my job effectively is to make sure that we are continuing to make sure that the buildings manage and operate in a quality arena standard.

I will say this, I've given the Spurs some credit. They have done a pretty good job over the years in maintaining the building. However, they're just expenses like AC units when they turn 25 years old, no one can stop 25 years from happening. No one can stop a 25-year-old roof from happening. No one can stop a 25-year-old data and digital center. And so those are going to be the costs associated with what we will be experiencing next. Commissioner also mentioned doing things to help promote for more accessibility and ease of access for the site. So we've been looking at potential plans and ways to bring in what we call street bridges or crossover. And so many of you know that when you come to a Spurs game, everything is done on the street level. So many venues around the country created these crossover bridges that allow for people to go up and over and it's less disruption for the community.

So one of the things that you'll find about that, kind of getting back to the Commissioner's point, I'm sure he'll show you more later, is that every second that you're having to stop is a second that gets pushed back into being late for the not getting there on time, being frustrated. All those things are part of where we're trying to fix and we're looking at. One thing I want to speak about specifically is technology. Everybody—I didn't bring my phone—everybody has a cell phone and I would imagine that you probably replace your cell phone at least every three to four years. And so it's no different than with all of our technology or video boards. Our televisions inside both the ATT center and the Freeman that these components, they also have an end of life. So, the moment these things kind of run into their cycle of being used to a degree that it's time to replace it, and what's happening in many cases, and this is just a fact, we replaced the video board in the Frost Bank Center about 10 years ago when we did the second layer of funding.

10 years later the company that actually made those centers no longer is making the product that actually supports both the back of house as well as the front of house as well as the video monitors that that will keep those video monitors working. And so there will be an ongoing cost associated with continuing to make sure that we do everything we can figure out how to keep that building operating at a high level. There's also an assumption that between now and the next five years, I don't want to get too far into it and obviously once there's a deal that'll be made, it takes about 36 months or so to build the building. It takes about a year or so to negotiate the terms and so there's still four years into the process. So with that four years being kind of a guarantee, there still has to be some funds spent in that building as well as this building to make sure that we get through the next 15 years. So more of that will be coming. Anything else, commissioner?

Commissioner Tommy Calvert:

The cost, give us numbers.

Derrick Howard, Freeman Coliseum:

So, the unique thing about cost is that there are several buildings in the country right now that are having these conversations. You guys may have heard about Oklahoma City. Oklahoma City went through a scenario whereby they were looking to either rebuild their arena, renovate it or build a new one. So they decided to rebuild their arena or build a new one I should say that's going to be at the cost for them at about a billion dollars. The Cleveland Cavaliers, they decided to go a different route. They decided to go in and do a major rehab to their facility, get it up to speed. That cost came in at about \$250 million if I'm not mistaken. And so the price is anywhere from I would say 175 to 250 on reno. Obviously a billion to 1.4 billion to build an arena.

Opportunities for Small Businesses

Transcript: Joe Monroe, President of the Black Contractors Association of San Antonio, February 1st Town Hall

Good morning, everyone. Can y'all go ahead and stand up real quick just to get your blood flowing? And I know we've been sitting here. It's getting a little humid in here. Where the sprayers at? Can we turn up the air? Let's go. Alright, thank you. Thank you. Good morning. Our esteemed, elected officials, our colleagues and community stakeholders, glad to see you in the house today and the overwhelming turnout that we had. First, thank you, Commissioner Calvert, for putting this together and everything and everybody that showed up, all the leaders. But one thing I wanted to say, I know I got this whole spiel laid out, but as I sit here and I listen to everyone and the thought process just changed all of a sudden. And one thing I want to say is that Mr. Calvert and the second district councilman, they are advocating for us.

But one thing I would like to put out is that when they have the Commissioners Court and stuff like that, we need to be there. We need to support him, we need to stand behind him, let everybody else see that, hey, what he's saying, we are supporting it. So that would help that to move on a little bit faster hopefully. So again, my name is Joe Monroe. I'm a proud owner of CISA Minority construction company, been serving the City of San Antonio for the past 18 years. I'm also the President of the Black Contractors Association of San Antonio, a nonprofit organization with the vision to help other minority firms grow. Today, I stand before you, not just as a contractor, but as a representative of countless small business owners navigating both opportunities and challenges in our industry. Do we have any of the BCA members in the house today?

Could you please stand if you would? Yes, yes. Thank you. Thank you all for coming out. Okay. And guys, we are open. We are accepting membership. Okay, I had to throw that plug in there. So Ms. Ika, she's our treasurer, so if y'all want to talk about it, Dr. Bolden is in the back. Please talk with them and find out more about the organization. So while we build bridges and roads and buildings that support the growth of our community, it is time that we address foundational issues that within our own organizations issues like if left unchecked, they will undermine the very progress that we're trying to make here. One of the things that, and I was glad when I got the invite to talk about the small businesses, some of the plight that we've been going through as business, trying to get contracts with the City, with Bexar County, with the Spurs, with other private organizations, CPS, the whole nine yards. We go through a lot of issues just trying to even navigate that and we don't have a roadmap. We're trying to get a roadmap thanks to Ms. Renée Watson who started the Bear County Mentorship Program, but only so many people can fit in a class. I went through the

class. That was very educational. Our workforce development, our biggest challenge is attracting and retaining labor. Skilled labor should I say, we can get anybody off the street, but what is that going to do for us but give us a bad name because the work, the quality is not there. And the other thing, we need a stronger partnership of vocational schools with the vocational schools, the local unions and city programs to create a pipeline not only to bring in talent, but to nurture it. After we bring it in, the Commissioner, he's spearheading the second chance opportunities.

Well, maybe we need to go back up a step further, not when they get out, but have them to develop some type of skills before they come to us because we're left with trying to train, trying to hold your hand. And so now guess what? I can't go out and BD business development and bring in new work because I'm too busy trying to hold hands and make sure people are doing what they're supposed to do on a daily basis. So a lot of times I get stuck at home at night till one, two o'clock in the morning just trying to work on a computer doing invoicing and applying for new solicitations because I'm out all day holding people's hands and don't have the skillset, equality and equity and contract opportunity. While the City and the County has made strides in promoting diversity, many minority-owned firms still struggle to compete for larger contracts.

The barriers are not just about qualifications. We can do the work. They're about the access to communication, the mentorship and resources. I urge the City to simplify the bidding process, provide more workshops on navigating procurement systems and ensure that minority contractors have a fair shot at growth. Not to mention when we get the project after we do get a project and then once we get to certain stages of the project, well we got to get inspected by city officials and when they send the inspectors out, they might send one person one time and someone different the second time. Well, they're the inconsistencies and now we're doing what the first gentleman told us to do, a lady told us to do. And then when the next person come out, oh, you're doing it wrong, you need to tear it out and redo it. Well here we go.

I'm a small business owner so I got to pay to redo it because someone else told me something different. So those are some of the challenges. And then even when we're trying to do the permitting process, it takes almost an act of Congress just to get through the permitting process. Even if you just want to do a small sidewalk in the front of your house, we almost got to get engineer drawings about five or \$600 just to get a stamped engineer drawing. So we just need to look at all of this stuff and to try to better the small businesses and as business owners, the internal organizational challenges as business owners, we also have to look inward. My company, like many others, have faced issues with project management, lack of advanced technology adaptation and gaps in leadership

development. These are not just operational hiccups. They affect our ability to deliver quality work on time and within budget we are committed. One thing I can say, we are committed to investing in training, adopting better project management tools and fostering leadership from within. But we can do more with the City and Bexar County's support through grants, workshops and shared resources. Okay, funding how, I'm glad y'all asked. How do we get the funding to support large contracts?

Can somebody ask that again? How do we get funding to support large contracts? Okay, well our challenge are long lead times getting paid. Even if we get the contract, we only can submit a pay voucher once a month and it's usually the 25th of the month. Well, we got to work the whole month in order to do something in order to submit for a percentage of the work completed. So once we submit on the 25th, well there's another two or three weeks sometime longer before we get a paycheck cut. So now that boils down to us ending up funding the larger company's contracts because our workers got to get paid every week because they got families to feed. We can't say, hey, well we can't pay you until we get paid. Although in our contract with the larger companies, you get paid when we get paid.

So now if there's a hiccup, even though my portion of the project maybe it's only a month long and I'm already completed, done, paid my vendors, paid my workers, I'm still waiting to get reimbursed as a small business owner because the larger contractor, they have several scopes of work going on. So if they're not completed on something else or get a bad review from the inspectors, and so they're going to hold up their pay for that month. So if they hold up their pay, then if we can't get paid until they get paid, I mean it's not rocket science. So how can a small business owner continue to grow and prosper with those type of hiccups down the way? So those are some of the things I would like for us to take a look at, Commissioner, and see what we can do. I know there's a way, just like when we're taught construction 101 that we have to have working capital in order to sustain for two to three months without getting paid.

Well, shouldn't the larger contractors be held to the same 101? Because if I'm paying out my pocket, again, I'm small, I don't have that big wallet. So those are some of the things that I've talked to the other small contractors of the BCA and we put together some questions and some of the stuff that we're faced with and those are the things that we came up with, sir. So in closing, I want to emphasize that these challenges are not roadblocks. There are opportunities for growth. We're builders after all, we don't shy away from the tough projects. We roll up our sleeves and we get to work. Okay? And that's what we want to do. Give us the opportunity.



Transcripts

Town Hall Transcripts

Timestamps refer to livestreamed videos

Transcript of First Town Hall – January 25, 2025

Commissioner Calvert ([00:09:14](#)):

Well, we're going to just ask that they turn the music down. It is 10:00 AM. Thank you all so much for coming on a Saturday morning. It is great for you all to be here. Thank you so much all who have come taking the time to be here. I want to thank every elected official who is gathered today. There are many, and you'll see placards for them. They will introduce themselves throughout the program, every presenter and every person who has helped to get this town hall together. Thank you so much for everything that everyone's done to make this place comfortable here at the Freeman Coliseum. We're going to stick to the agenda. We have about three hours time, but we think we'll be done a little before that just depends on how the conversation goes. But I want to add one agenda item. Our County Judge is here this morning, and so I'd like to ask him to just make some introductory welcome comments. County Judge Sakai.

County Judge Peter Sakai ([00:10:19](#)):

Good morning. Thank you, Commissioner. Obviously, this is one of the most important events, meetings, sessions, communication. That's the bottom line today. As you know, we're all here for a particular reason. There are many things that are perhaps going to happen. I just want to let you know that at our last Commissioners Court meeting, Commissioner Calvert and I came out after the last meeting and we basically said that we needed more information or we could call for an election in regards to what's called our county venue tax, which is a statutory, it's a designated tax that can only be used for specific reasons. And so these conversations today, these communications, these opinions, whether they're for or against or you're here to learn more, is very, very important because at that time, after that meeting, we said we were not prepared to move forward, at least from Bexar County perspective.

([00:11:26](#)):

And so what we want to do today is we want to have that communication. Hopefully from that communication then we can go into collaboration with all the stakeholders, the stakeholders being the City of San Antonio, the San Antonio Spurs, the San Antonio Rodeo, and anybody connected because one of the things I've said for the very first time that I heard that the Spurs could possibly leave the Frost Bank Center was not to say, well, yeah,

well do I support that or not. My immediate reaction is what are we going to do for the community? What do we have to do for the neighborhood? What's most important and what it is, is we have, as far as I'm concerned, a Frost Bank Center, formerly known as the at and t. It is a premier facility. It is a very good facility, and the Spurs have a contract to 2032.

[\(00:12:25\)](#):

So I expect the contract to be abided by, but we understand there are business decisions that need to be made. The Spurs are a business. They have to decide what's best for them. And the City of San Antonio has to decide what's best for the city. And the county has to do what's best for its interest. Its interest is right here. You're standing sitting in it right now. It's a Frost Bank Center. It's the Coliseum ground and it's the Freeman. And so one of the things I want to discuss, Commissioner, is how are we going to preserve this valuable piece of property knowing that the San Antonio Spurs obviously are the major tenant along with the San Antonio Rodeo. And I'll give a shout out to Cody Davenport who has led the San Antonio Rodeo because it's already kicked off. tThe cowboy breakfast has kicked off the rodeo.

[\(00:13:25\)](#):

We know that the San Antonio Rodeo runs a premier rodeo program, but it's only for one month. And so I want to be respectful to make sure that whatever decisions are made, we must make Frost Bank Center viable. We have to make sure that the Freeman and the Coliseum grounds are viable for a business plan that will make this piece of valuable property even more valuable. So I'm looking at perhaps a public-private partnership. I'm looking at what investments can be made. I'm also looking at how we partner with our stakeholders, the City of San Antonio, the San Antonio Spurs, the San Antonio Rodeo of what they will do to invest in this community. And as we look out how they can commit to this part of town that we know has not fulfilled the promises made in the past. And as your County Judge, that is what I put on the table. Now today, I'll be real blunt with you. You tell me, Judge, what's the plan? I said, no, we need public input. And that's what we're kicking off. Now, understand, everybody may have specific plans, specific agendas, specific investments, but what we have to do is what's good for our community, for the people that live in this neighborhood.

[\(00:14:55\)](#):

I'm going to apologize to the group and commissioner, I appreciate that you put this together. I see some of our county team here, so I'm sure they'll at least be listening if not providing some input. And I will take your input, the report you give me, I unfortunately have

to get to another event. So I want to wish you well, but it's my intent, it's my commitment that we take care of the east side first. Let's make Frost better, Frost Bank Center, viable, sustainable. It cannot, cannot be the next Astrodome. You guys get it. So you have to understand, we got to invest on what is our most valuable piece of property here. And it's my hope that we will have a redevelopment plan that will expand for the entire Precinct Four, namely the East Side. I wish you will. God bless. Thank you all very much. Good luck to you. Commissioner.

Commissioner Calvert (00:15:53):

Before you go, Judge, I just want to let the community know that the Judge's leadership put the brakes on this too. Get the information. I am very appreciative that you stood out there to say that we need more information in terms of how much this costs and what's going to be our plan here. And so, when he had his press conference, I stood with you because I felt it was important as the leader of this area to stand with the Judge. In this effort, we're going to continue to work together and stand together to do the right thing by the community. So I just want to thank the Judge publicly because it could have gone a different way. It could have already been on a fast track to May. So thank you, Judge. I appreciate you. We put the brakes on.

Alright, we're going to have a real town hall today where citizens actually get to talk on the microphone.

(00:16:46):

Yeah, actually get to be heard. There are some ground rules that Ramon Chapa is going to lay out momentarily, but they're common sense. You can say what you want, keep it from becoming a filibuster, but be courteous. Okay? That's the basic essence of them. As you can read from your agenda, it's designed to go in between citizens and presentations. We didn't want to give you 40 minutes of presentations. And then you finally get to talk. We're going to do some citizen kickoff in just a moment and then a presentation, then more citizens, and then some more presentation, and then citizens. So we're going to disperse this. Okay? So we'll take a few questions or statements between presenters and at the end of presentations go completely two citizen comments. Okay? So I will be here till one o'clock to hear every citizen comment. It is being video recorded multiple cameras here today so that we have full video of your comments.

(00:17:46):

Okay? Are y'all walking with me on this? All right, so this is a town hall so that we can make preparations in the event the Spurs get the citizens to vote in favor of moving downtown if

the Commissioners Court allows for a vote of the people. But you can also tell me other things about other issues that you think the County should spend money on because sometimes those issues that you're bringing in, we can make a little sausage, meaning they can be part of the Coliseum grounds. If you're here to talk about homelessness, yeah, there's maybe a way for us to work in homelessness into the plans of the 400 acres around here. Alright, are you walking with me on this? So we will have that citizen input today and we will make preparations based upon your comments. I personally needed, since this was moving down the track in December, I needed to hear from this community about what you want.

[\(00:18:54\)](#):

I hadn't had a chance to get this feedback and that's why it's important. So yes, you can say we think they should stay. They don't need a new thing. But then if you feel that there is some additional things in the event, the voters around the county approve it. This is the time to say that. Okay, so it's not necessarily an either or. It's kind of like an all on conversation. There's so much to go over in terms of the development agreement that was passed in 2000 and before, as well as the operator's agreement that this is going to take at least two extended town halls at three hours. There is so much detail to go over in terms of what I want to hear from you for negotiating in any kind of new agreement. If it happens and what we put on the ballot, we'll have another meeting with an agenda different than this one next Saturday.

[\(00:19:52\)](#):

It won't be in this room, it'll be just above the Coliseum. There's a room upstairs, the Legends Room that we will be in next week. But the meeting will have a different agenda than we will have today. And it'll include hearing about how much the future renovations to things like the HVAC system, plumbing system fixtures, and other systems in the Frost Bank Center. And the Coliseum will take every 10 years and we will seek to address the traffic conning off our economic opportunity and pedestrian bridges that might be necessary to get rid of the cones. So before I go to my seat and turn things to the community and presenters, I've been asked to start this brainstorming this morning, I apologize, it's very dark where I'm at. I would normally be able to see a little bit better, but I'm having to look down because it's very dark where I'm standing right now.

[\(00:20:44\)](#):

But I've been asked to start the brainstorming this morning. So, the first thing to understand about the arena conversation is that it has been rumored that the City of San Antonio may give Willow Springs Golf Course—the golf course across the street—to the county. Now

most of the golf course is in the floodplain unless you create drainage to take it out of the floodplain. I put this program together because again, the Spurs were moving this conversation down the road and I needed to hear from my constituents what you would want me to fight for in order to get on the ballot if the spurs were to leave the community with an aging facility In the past, in the past, in elections, we had a chicken in every pot, if you will, all around Bexar County. And we'll have people from organizations all around Bexar County here today as well.

[\(00:21:48\):](#)

And what I mean by that is every part of town had projects that received venue tax funding. McAllister Park had improvements to the baseball and soccer fields. So did the Museum Reach, the Tobin, the soccer fields by Morgan's Wonderland, Mission County Park, the Northside Athletic Center, St Mary's University, UTSA, the Coliseum Mission Baseball Academy, USA Fencing Center, Culebra Creek Soccer Fields, Southeast Skyline Stadium, the Briscoe Museum. I could go on and on. You get the point. We had venues all over the county and it might make some sense to evaluate what community venues might need updates and infrastructure nearly 20 years later. So we've asked some of those groups to be here tonight and for next week in the weeks ahead from the start.

[\(00:22:42\):](#)

I don't want a dead carcass like the Astrodome. I think that means that there needs to be funds set aside to either make plans to sunset and demolish the arena if the Spurs leave or keep updating for a certain amount of decades, which requires tens of millions of dollars that should be set aside now, both the Frost Bank Center and at the Coliseum and potentially at Willow Springs Golf Course if the City puts it in writing and gives it to us. So my vision would be to give the Coliseum an update like was done to the Tobin. I would partner with a local university to create a graduate school that blends well with the rodeo and creates a partnership with the zoo and rodeo for a baby animal nursery where families could see the baby animals year round and create jobs, education and repopulate endangered species.

[\(00:23:49\):](#)

My vision also includes taking Willow Springs Golf Course out of the floodplain so that we can develop workforce housing, 70% AMI to 30% AMI by using an \$80 million drainage tunnel pipeline designed by one of our next presenters, Half Associates that takes Salado Creek and the golf course and makes it a place where you can develop workforce housing and a marquee convention and expo hotels and restaurant experience. In my dreams, the Coliseum would have parking garages from Willow Springs Golf Course and on the Frost

Bank Center Coliseum grounds with expo halls with views of downtown for the county, the community, the rodeo on top and offices and housing and retail and restaurants to the bottom and the top.

[\(00:24:55\)](#):

In these new structures, the County would have business accelerators where the east side restaurants that have been coned off by the orange traffic cones would be given half rent for several years because we would have more parking. I would expand the trees and the green spaces across the County Coliseum grounds and what might then be 175 acres of Colosseum grounds and another 200 acres of the Willow Springs Golf Course, a total of about 400 acres of land that would allow for more park benches and along Salado Creek and pick up on the Greco Roman architecture of our first building, the coliseum for those park spaces to help build up the new facilities. I would update our expo halls with new facades. I think we may have a slide that we can throw up there if my staff can find it. To help us build this.

[\(00:25:54\)](#):

I would target the high unemployment census tracts within a four mile radius with construction trade programs where we put people or skilled trade programs in construction, plumbing, electrical, carpentry, and other trades. But we have to support, we have to have the support for higher adult literacy. Many people have not been doing these trade programs because they cannot read. We have 25% of our adult population that reads at a fifth grade level. So you've got to help them understand how to read, then they can get the construction trade and you've got to make sure that they have a scholarship, a stipend for their housing costs or their food costs and their childcare costs at a bare minimum in order to get the enrollment in these kinds of trade programs and increase enrollment. I also want small businesses to get contracts to build these facilities. So we would expand the bonding assistance program, the businesses on the east side that can participate.

[\(00:26:54\)](#):

We got to debundle, these contracts give them an opportunity. If we create vitality in this area, we should look at getting TxDOT, the Texas Department of Transportation to create a connector ramp for additional ingress and egress and pedestrian bridges so that we can get rid of the cones. And I believe that sums up my vision. So let's go next on the agenda. I think we were looking for Pastor Garner from the Community of Churches of Social Action. If he's not here to give us an invocation, I'll ask anyone from the Community of Churches of Social Action to give us a quick invocation. And thank you so much, pastor. Come on down and we will begin to follow the agenda from here forward. Thank you so much,

Reverend ([00:27:52](#)):

Shall we bow. Heavenly Father, as we gather today for this county town hall meeting, we humbly ask for your guidance and your wisdom in our deliberations. May our discussions be marked with respect, understanding, and a commitment to serving the best interest of our community. Grant us the clarity of thought, courage to make difficult decisions and a spirit of collaboration as we work together to shape the future for Precinct Four and all those surrounding precincts, we pray for the future of our county. We pray that you would grant us this opportunity to serve and we pray your blessings over those leaders that you have placed before us. In Jesus name we pray, thank God. Amen.

Commissioner Calvert ([00:28:51](#)):

Beautiful prayer. Thank you, Pastor. Ramon Chapa is going to come up and lay down the ground rules and then we'll open up to two participants who will each have 60 seconds and then we'll go into presentations. Ramon Chapa, where are you? Oh, right behind me. Thank you very much.

Ramon Chapa ([00:29:05](#)):

Alright. First I want to thank each and every one of y'all for having taking the time to be here with us today. My name is Ramon Chapa Jr. Director of Committee Engagement and Security for Commissioner Calvert. So let me let down the ground rules for you guys. One, participate with intention. I would like to encourage you to pay attention to what this meeting was designed to address. Listen to what is discussed and ask questions to help you understand when it's your turn to speak. Share what you think in a constructive manner, speak your mind and from your heart, leaving anything unsaid is not helping anyone. Meetings are convened to accomplish specific objectives and we are eager to hear your best thinking about how to accomplish those objectives. Two, appreciate the diversity of perspectives. Everyone brings kernels wisdom based on their own unique history and experiences.

([00:29:56](#)):

We cannot understand what someone else thinks unless we listen to them. We cannot have a full picture until everyone has had a chance to contribute. All perspectives are valid. When someone says something that challenges your thinking, listen to understand why they think as they do. This Town hall style meeting was not designed to support an argument. It was designed to support learning together and the creation of a shared understanding of how we collectively see the topic. Three, maintain a respectful space. It will be my job to maintain a respectful space, but then that job is much easier. If we ask the

participants that health to help everyone is deserving of respect. That means that we all need to treat each other with kindness and respect. It also means that we will need to avoid distractions. Please don't do anything that would prevent others from hearing whatever is speaking. In addition, please silence your mobile phones if you can. Better yet turn them off your technology and focus your attention in the room and the topics at hand. So we invite all of y'all to agree to comply and thank you for helping us in enforcing these rules. God bless y'all. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert ([00:31:13](#)):

Alright. Alright. So I will have our sergeant of arms, Ramon Chapa, as well as Jonathon Holler next to these microphones. Pull out the timer. 60 seconds. Each citizen, we're going with two citizens and then we're going into a presentation. They have a time limit on their presentations as well. So, Molly, you have the floor.

Molly ([00:31:38](#)):

Thank you, Commissioner Calvert for the last second invitation. So what I want to just go ahead and provide highlight is the protection of all East Side homeowners. You have the opportunity with not only this structure right here, but also 15 SASD closed schools that have sit empty, which you can alleviate the suffering of your homeowners in the east side by creating mental health hospitals and shelters to get people that are homeless off the streets, out of your neighborhoods and into shelters and into hospitals. With this structure right here and also the 15 SAISD schools, I provided this to Mr. Holler. I'm waiting for Ms. Price to schedule that appointment. I hope to get it Monday or Tuesday next week. But that is your solution to alleviate the problems because you're East Side homeowners in this neighborhood have been plagued with so many problems, so many problems in this neighborhood. You don't want to keep having them experience homelessness right in their front yard. You have solutions to eliminate homelessness to zero. Thank you so much.

Commissioner Calvert ([00:32:52](#)):

Awesome comment. Thank you. Alright. I can't quite, is that Betty there? Betty, good to see you. Can you help Betty with the micro—Ramon and Jonathon, can you help her with the microphone? Betty, good to see you. Betty Bueché, our former Bexar County Facilities Director and head of Bexar County Heritage. Thank you so much for being here.

Betty Bueché ([00:33:07](#)):

Well, thank you Commissioner for calling the town hall meeting and the operative word is retired.

Commissioner Calvert (00:33:13):

Sure.

Betty Bueché (00:33:15):

I'm here as a citizen. I am asking that you and the state representatives and federal representatives all join together and appoint a Citizens Review Committee, not just for this project but for Project Marvel because they're inextricably linked by two things, not just the Spurs, but they are also linked by the fact that we, the taxpayers pay taxes to City, County, State, and Federal Government. And we should have the opportunity to participate, get rid of the non-disclosure agreements and have the Citizens Oversight Committee start. Now don't pause any projects, just do a reset. In the past when there has been a joint bond of 500 million, there was a Citizens Oversight committee, we're talking about 4 billion plus. So please ask if your fellow government officials would set up such a committee.

Commissioner Calvert (00:34:27):

I love it. Great, great, great. Okay, so what we can do, I'll have Jonathon and Ramon see if you can grab some chairs for those people who are lined up, we're going into presentation, grab some chairs. You can keep your spot in the aisle. Sorry, it's going to get a little raggedy, but we're going to make impromptu Clyde glad. Grab some seats so people can stay in their order. And we get the PowerPoint queued up for our next speaker is Jim, and he comes from Halff Associates, the engineers who gave us some high-level brainstorming. Here we go, Jim, take it away.

Jim Carillo, Halff Associates (00:34:59):

Thank you, Commissioner, and thank you all for coming here this morning. Great to see you. I'm going to take us back a little bit to some great ideas that Commissioner Calvert had almost a decade ago now, but that are still very much in the forefront and even more so now. Some of this is looking a little bit back, but I think what I want you to do is it's just a sort of a trigger to begin to think about your imaginations, about this whole area that we're in now and especially what happens to the arena and the area, really the area around the arena. So back then, and probably still now, it was called River East with the idea that the Salado Creek was this sort of eastern river that connects this part of the city, ultimately connects into the San Antonio River, but it gives it a brand or a name, whether that's the name that stays or there's other names.

(00:35:52):

But the whole idea of this is an entire district, that whole area that encompasses much of the East Side, but also then focuses on what's here in this area right here. So this image just gives you a little sense of the connectivity. So on the right side of the screen with that big circle, we're right in the middle of all of that. We're here at near the Coliseum, the fairgrounds, the center, the Frost Bank Center that's here. But then there's really close proximity to the downtown, but there's everything in between and all the connections that can be made in between and so many assets that are in this area that give it an incredible vibrancy and the sense that it can be so much onto itself. So with that, we looked at the areas around it, and again, this goes back a few years, but we look at the industrial areas and some of the other facilities that are adjacent to what the county counties properties are here.

[\(00:36:57\)](#):

We look at the golf course and the golf course and all these things coming together and how can you look at these together in a way that then makes them greater than just individual. But the sum of all of them becomes even that much greater with some sort of a vision that pulls them together. And that's the question for you and the question that the Commissioner and the Court will be thinking about is, again, how does this vision come together? What is it and what does it mean in terms of both specifically the Frost Bank Center, but then everything that's around it. So it's kind of broader than just that one building or a few buildings in it. So let me give you a sense of the idea, and again, this is from a few years back, but it begins to sort of give you a sense of what could be.

[\(00:37:47\)](#):

And one key thing is of course, that the fairgrounds and the rodeo are an incredible asset to the entire area. And that anything that happens needs to make sure that it respects that and works with that. And even more so enhances everything that the rodeo does because it means so much to the community here. It means so much to the broader city. It means so much to the region. So all of this has to work together. So the idea kind of was, well maybe there's this sort of sense of you pull the golf course, which is right in the middle where you see those lakes and you see the Frost Bank Center in the middle and all of the rodeo grounds around it. How do you take some of that and maybe some of those parking lots becomes something other than parking lots. I heard the commissioner talk a little bit about, well, what do we do with the parking?

[\(00:38:40\)](#):

Can we do some structured parking? Can we do other kinds of buildings and many other things that then enhance this and add value not only for the month long rodeo events or the

other events that take place at the Coliseum or may take place in the Frost Bank Center, but all the time so that you have a lot of vibrancy here. And it's probably a lot of it could be housing, much needed housing, some of it could be new parks, new gathering places, new community facilities. There's places there, there's land there that perhaps there's other opportunities to use that. And this takes that boulevard that runs down the Frost Bank Center and looks at that and then a boulevard that goes across all of that and connects those different pieces together. So again, it's just sort of a starting place for imagination. What could all of this be and what does it mean for you as a community?

[\(00:39:38\)](#):

Another version of it takes part of the golf course and retains the golf course. The golf course could be an important part of what remains there, but as the Commissioner said, perhaps looks at pulling some portions of the golf course more out of the floodplain so that then you have additional areas where you can think about those in terms of what might happen there and how that might enhance the whole area around it. And there's this sort of boulevard it could go across. Again, this is sort of just ideas and things that that have possibilities, but there are many other kinds of ideas that enhance the whole area around it. Become this attraction, become this community center that builds on everything that's happening already in the area. And that whole sense of coming together. There's places where you can gather, perhaps there's new places to eat, there's housing, all kinds of different things that could happen there.

[\(00:40:37\)](#):

One key part that I think Commissioner Calvert emphasized and continues to emphasize is that this needs to spread out from just the fairgrounds. It's a much broader community around it. What other kinds of enhancements, what other kinds of things could be built into this that enhance the community around it that make it even a better place to live and a better place to be? So many kinds of things, maybe some of it is new parks, new streetscapes, new places, community places, all of those kinds of, so I want just a second on some of the floodplain ideas that were talked about, and these are a few years ago, but there were a whole series of types of alternatives. And as the Commissioner said, a couple of them really focused on the golf course and could you take some portions of the golf course and make them more developable? And those are certainly doable with some investments in flood structures around that. So a lot of possibilities of things that could happen in the area. So freeze here.

[\(00:42:00\)](#):

There we go. So one thing I just wanted to emphasize, and again Commissioner Calvert hit on that and it's so key to something like this. It's partnerships, it's everyone coming together sort of building this common goal, this common vision for what needs to happen at the beginning. There's a lot of ideas, a lot of different ways to look at things. At some point those come together and you have different investments, you have different participants, different people coming together and making all of this happen. It depends on you, a lot of your feedback and then all of the governmental entities coming together and coming up with something that works specifically for this area. So that idea of partnership is a fundamental part of this. So that idea of partnerships, a unified vision, whatever that vision is, something that says this is where we want to go.

[\(00:42:57\)](#):

And sometimes a vision is a picture like I showed you. Sometimes a vision is an idea and both of those are right, they have to work together, but sometimes we get sort of this idea and that's what we want to do. And that idea may have many different kinds of pictures that bring it together, but at the end of the day, that idea that we want to accomplish is a thing that stays with us and we build it and we adjust it and we mold it over time because nothing stays exactly, exactly, the way we originally thought about it, but we work towards that idea that sits there and this is what we want to have happened. And all of course of this then depends on funding. And so funding is so important, such a critical part of this and having the right kinds of investment to make these kinds of things happen. So I just call this and I said, this is a new beginning. There's a lot of possibilities here and look forward to talking a little bit more about this, but think of this as a slate that you can work on now. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert [\(00:44:02\)](#):

Very good. The State Rep has a question. Thank you for joining us, Barbara Gervin-Hawkins, please.

Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins [\(00:44:07\)](#):

Hello. Hi. Thank you. I may be the only one naive in this room, but what you said was all nice, but I didn't understand any of it. I'm trying to figure out, am I the only one? Alright, so let's talk about the area. I'm putting my educator hat on for us to go down this journey and fully understand it. When we talk about River East, are we talking about underground, are we talking about on top of ground, are we talking about a river going through—what streets are we talking about?

Commissioner Calvert [\(00:44:44\)](#):

I think I can clarify quickly. We're talking about Salado Creek and we're talking about allowing Salado Creek's peripheral properties not to be in the floodplain.

Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins
(Muffled question)

Commissioner Calvert

No, well I mean I don't know what you mean but it is in the ground, but I'm talking about the linear parkway, the Howard Peak Linear Parkway. So that runs from, well it runs all the way almost to the Gulf, but it connects with San Antonio River, but it goes from here near Willow Woods down past southeast skyline. We might need to take you on a golf course because golf cart, because if you've never been on it, it's kind of hidden. But it is a jewel that runs next to Wheatley Heights Sports Complex next to Martin Luther King Park over all throughout, just on the other side of the golf course, it runs by the KOA campgrounds and through the plans you could even have Menger Creek, which runs along the back half of the drainage of this parking lot where it's under construction. If you've seen the County has some stabilizing walls that look like a ditch that's actually Menger Creek and it could actually connect with Salado over Frost Bank Parkway. And so that would allow for housing if you take it out of the flood plain office, restaurant, whatever you wanted along Salado Creek

Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins ([00:46:20](#)):

That way.

Commissioner Calvert ([00:46:26](#)):

Gloria Ray.

Gloria Ray, Alamo Colleges Trustee ([00:46:27](#)):

Gloria Ray. My name is Gloria Ray and I represent District Two in the Alamo Community College District. But most importantly, I have been in this community all of my natural life. I rode my bike around here, I lived around here. I raised my kids all the way from near downtown San Antonio. So I know about all this place over here, but there's a lot to be seen because it's never been developed and I think that's why we're here so that the citizens who live around here and have lived around here want to see something happen big. What we're here for is opportunity for the future. We and the citizens are here to vision what it is we like, what we'd like to see on all of these many, many, many acres that surround this property that has never been developed and we have never got any attention over here. And there's

so much potential. I don't want us to get bogged down in minutiae. I want to hear what the citizens have to say and then we can go from there because we've got another meeting coming up next week. I plan to be here. Very good.

Commissioner Calvert ([00:47:48](#)):

So we'll do this, we'll go to the mics, we'll go back to the mics. I dunno if people kept their places in. We're just doing two, so if you want to sit down, we're just doing two and then we're going back into presentation. We're going to keep this moving so that we can get you back on the mic. So it's just going to be the first two here. So if you got in a huge line, you may want to go ahead and just keep your place. Go ahead. We will take your comment.

Unknown ([00:48:09](#)):

First of all, I wanted to, I was, I'll let them change before my time starts. Can I just thank people, Cody from the rodeo, thank you for respecting our United Homeowners Association. We were the first ones here before anybody, before anybody. So before anything happens, we would like to be notified. If you don't live in the area, you shouldn't be making decisions. Our people should be making the decisions. That's just one thing I say. But the rodeo has been amazing. They kept their promise, they kept the signs. Last year they showed up to my house with 300 tickets gave to our community. They are the role model of what we want in our area.

([00:48:57](#)):

I approached two other business and they said they don't care for the area they live in Stone Oak that they don't, don't want to contribute to the area or nothing. Thank you to Tommy Calvert. You invested in our, well you were a huge reason why we got the things for our park and that's what we want. We want quality. If we are tired of dealing with the nuisance, like with the porta-potties that we would dealt with years. Sorry for my language. Smelling shit in our neighborhood for Christmas, Thanksgiving, everything that needs to stop, give all the power back to our community. If you do not live in our area, do not make decisions of our area. So that's the only thing I have to say is please respect the United Homeowner Association, have us involved with everything because we're tired. So much stuff was promised to the East Side and nothing was done. And we have the covenants, the pets, everything for it. So that's the only thing I say. Just give us the respect back involved, the community and the citizens on everything. So that's the only thing. Respected.

Commissioner Calvert ([00:50:04](#)):

Well said that we receive it.

Unknown ([00:50:05](#)):

Okay,

Commissioner Calvert ([00:50:07](#)):

Our next comment

Willie Mac Clay ([00:50:14](#)):

Right here sir.

Commissioner Calvert ([00:50:18](#)):

I have a light in front of me. I can't see

Willie Mac Clay ([00:50:20](#)):

A turn.

Commissioner Calvert ([00:50:20](#)):

It is on.

Willie Mac Clay ([00:50:21](#)):

Can't you see me?

Commissioner Calvert ([00:50:23](#)):

I really can't. I'm going to move.

Willie Mac Clay ([00:50:24](#)):

I think you'll be able to hear me. My name is Willie Mac Clay and I've been a resident of Bexar County for the last 46 years. I'm from the East Coast, but Texas is my home. For some of you who do not know me, my reputation is that to deal with accessibility matters. But I'm here today to express my concern about what will happen with people in general because I'm a people person after the election, the idea on the national level, they're dealing with this idea of DEI. My concern is that this idea of diversity and inclusion and equity or equality should be maintained in everything that you do in your hiring and construction of housing and businesses and whatever. I'd like to keep this idea of DEI in your planning.

([00:51:54](#)):

And lastly, I want to say that whatever you do, please make sure that the facilities and all of the amenities are accessible. For example, when I came in today, all these seats were connected. Oh, it looks so nice, but here I'm in a mobility device and I needed to somehow come in. I brought it to the attention of the staff here and they somehow made a little cutaway so I was able to participate. This was an easy fix. So as you prepare and plan, make sure that whatever you do, what all your programming and all of your construction is accessible to persons with disabilities. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Commissioner Calvert ([00:52:43](#)):

Appreciate that. So we can get some more comments. I'm going to ask Cody from the Rodeo to come up and just talk about the Rodeo's vision going forward. I want to thank them and he's a busy guy at this time of year. So thank you Cody for being here. We appreciate your presence and we'll get right back to Q&A. Okay, thank you.

Cody Davenport, CEO of the Rodeo ([00:53:06](#)):

Commissioner Calvert, thank you for putting this together, on behalf of San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo. It is long overdue. We get to know some of y'all, but we are way overdue to get to know our neighbors and I say our neighbors because I spend more time with that office there than I do at home. And that is my place there. We reside here, we've been here since 1949, since the Coliseum first started. We have been your loyal tenant to the County. We're the ones that have never wavered in our commitment on what we will do and what we will do in residing here. We have never once come in and said, we're looking for a new home. This is our home.

([00:53:53](#)):

I know we have some differences. I get it. But I want to commit to you guys and know I came in as CEO, what it's been seven years now, and our Stock Show & Rodeos are a slow ship to turn folks, but my generation, the people that are in here with me, we are making turns and we're turning in the direction that my generation and your generation deserves. And what I want to talk about is first of all is way above my pay grade to talk about golf course filling in and drainage and all this stuff. I don't know any of that guys, but what I do know is this that I trust our leadership here and what they come up with, the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo is going to grow with it and it's going to adapt with it. What we are offering to you guys in our county is that we are ready to expand.

([00:54:50](#)):

Now before y'all get terrified, I know the parking situation of the traffic, when I say expand, I'm not talking about what you're seeing right now year round. That's not what I'm talking about. What I'm talking about is a commitment to take our industry if you will, but expand it into the Escaramuzas, the Charreadas, all these types of things that we can do and do them in the Coliseum on a year-round basis. So it's not the flood of traffic and stuff like that. But what we will give you is people down here and the people that come here, guys, I live in a trailer over here on the grounds. I get to listen to the train blow by and shake my entire trailer every night. It takes about three nights to get used to it. I'm sleeping good now. But what I will tell you is that I sit there on that porch in the evenings and I watch our public come in and go to a Spurs game or a concert and I watch them get out as fast as they can.

[\(00:55:49\)](#):

You know what? The people that come in here with horses and stuff like that do. You may not care about horses and stuff like that, but you do care about the fact that those people that come in here, our economic impact study shows that they're here on an average three days. They need somewhere to eat, they need somewhere to sleep, they need somewhere to shop. They need that stuff, right? You guys saw the mess when you drove in here that we're dealing with right now set up. We got 1.5 million people that are about to come here just in the month of February. If we can lighten that load and expand it year round. Tommy, I can give you people for your restaurants and your hotels and these things. You've been trying to push the East Side for years. We can give you the people to support that.

[\(00:56:37\)](#):

This is not Cody Davenport sitting here just talking. Take a look at our neighbors up north in Fort Worth. Alright? I don't know if y'all ever gone up there and seen it, Google it, whatever, however you want to look at it. The stockyards up there, this was a heavy industrial area, a rundown area. They took a little arena there like the size of the coliseum. They activated it on a regular basis and guess what? That whole strip there is full of restaurants and hotels and the stuff that I've listened to our commissioners dream about for years, it has happened. This is not me dreaming this up. We have witnessed it up north. If they can do it up there in Fort Worth, we sure as hell can do it right here in San Antonio.

[\(00:57:20\)](#):

The last thing I want to talk to y'all about and the most important thing to me and why I wanted to be in front of y'all here, I haven't had the opportunity to do this since we have come in. We have been committed to figure out how to get kids right here involved in our show. We go out there and we brag about the fact that we touch every single county in the state of Texas. And that is a good thing because I'll go back to their staying here. They're

dumping money and all that kind of stuff. But what is just as important is how do we get kids right here because there's an apartment complex right over there off Ler Road and we were passing out passes and a mama came down to me and she said, you know what, my kid loves rodeo.

[\(00:58:00\)](#):

And I was like, oh my gosh, you're not mad over the traffic. You actually are nice about it. She goes, I am nice about it because my son, he sits there and looks out the window and watches all those horses go by in the trailers and he just loves watching them go by. And I was like, that is so awesome. And then I woke up in the middle of the night and I said, that is so horrible. That is horrible that that child sits there and watches this parade of horses go by in a trailer in his neighborhood. He can throw a softball to this stuff and he's watching the parade go by. Pardon my French. If I said bullshit, we're going to change it. And you know what we did? We flew out to Los Angeles Compton. Los Angeles because we found an equine program in Compton, Los Angeles, in the middle of the inner city.

[\(00:58:47\)](#):

We found a riding program in there where they were taking kids and they were bringing them to 'em. And a horse is one thing a kid loves you will very rarely find a kid that does not love a horse. They might hide it but eventually they want to touch it, pet it. They want to be around it and they're using these horses as a way to get to these kids. So I hope when you guys drive out of here and you go by our offices right up here to the north and you look across the street to the right and I made this commitment right here, not quite a year ago, but you'll see that we have taken that piece of ground directly across the street. We are building an arena. You'll see the dirt filled up there right now we're building paddocks out there.

[\(00:59:31\)](#):

We have six horses currently. I have a team of volunteers dedicated to build a riding program and that riding program is going to be built for kids right here in our neighborhood. Alright? That's not even the best part. Teaching a kid to ride a horse around here, what is that going to do for their future? Absolutely nothing, right? But what I do have and what we have now worked on is 50 programs that we have that these kids can compete with us and win scholarships to further their education where they want to go into trades, whatever they want to do. We have 50 programs that we can get them involved in now in the San Antonio Stock Show. It does not require an animal or anything like that. They're skillathons, the robotics, there's public speaking. There's all these things that these kids can do.

[\(01:00:19\)](#):

So my goal is to hook 'em with a horse and then I want more. I want to show 'em how to get in our programs. I want to get to know 'em. I want to push 'em in the same manner that we have done kids from the previous generation across our state. Right here in our neighborhood, right in your neighborhood. Because we're here for good guys. We're not going anywhere. Whatever happens, I can assure you the San Antonio Stock Show & Rodeo is going to be here with these grounds. We started here. We're not going anywhere. Alright, I think you have q and a with later. Alright, thanks Tommy.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:00:55](#)):

Thank you Cody. Well, Cody, you've spoken with heart and is seeing a new day. Give Cody another big round of applause. That's historic. That's historic, what he said and how he said it. We're going back to the two and then we're going to go move this program along. I will say parenthetically, we do have the urban farm that is under construction, but the Commissioners Court has been blocking the funding for the event center and that event center would help us do scholarship banquets. We need to have farm animals on that. So we've got to work together to get that finished and get that done. So we'll address that in the next meeting on February 1st. Alright, we're going to move on and get two citizen participants. Rose Hill, I see you here and then we'll keep going. The next two here.

Rose Hill ([01:01:46](#)):

My name is Rose Hill, I'm President of Government Hill Neighborhood Association. First of all, I want to thank you Commissioner and everybody for being here today and giving us an opportunity for us as community leaders to voice our opinion. I think it's way overdue. There's a lot of projects that happen here on the East Side and sometimes we, the community and the leaders, we don't have a say. It's done in backdoor deals and things are done. So I thank you for that. I hope that when we do get this committee going that you take serious consideration again for the community leaders that live in the neighborhood, the neighborhood leaders that are in constant communication with the community, have them on there so that there is transparency, there's an open line of communication and there's unity. And with those components together, I think that we can come together and make a better East Side because as many know, we were promised a lot of things when the olive dome happened and the Spurs came and I love the Spurs.

([01:02:43](#)):

But then they came here, here and then there were promises that were made to our neighborhood leaders, to communities, to the businesses, our small businesses on Commerce Street, our small businesses on East Houston. They were forgotten. They were

pushed underneath the rug. There were cones put out there that hurt those businesses. So ultimately what we want to do is we want to make sure that hopefully that when this plan does take off that we do not forget those businesses. We do not forget those neighborhood leaders that live in the area and we do not forget about the input that comes from the community promises. We can say everything, but action speaks louder than words. So we need to make sure that we bring all the parties and all the entities to the table if we are going to succeed and make the east side be what it should be. Because a lot of times what happens, the north side gets a lot. I'm not saying that they, but East Side a lot of times we're thrown the end of the crumbs and it's time that the east side be just as good as the north side. So I just want to say that. Commissioner, thank you very much.

Dr. Eva Mason ([01:03:48](#)):

Good morning. Thank you. Thank you Commissioner Calvert for hosting this. My name is Dr. Eva Mason. I grew up 2,500 block of East Houston Street. Grew up on the east side the majority of my life. From third grade on when the Prospect Center was originally built, we had a forum like this. They wanted community input. Not one thing we said mattered. They did exactly what they wanted to do to Houston Street so that there was no parking and people that had small driveways were now parking across their lawns, which is aesthetically not pleasing to most people. What I did last night, I sat and I said, what would I want to repurpose that Frost Bank Center too? Because unfortunately we know the Spurs are moving. They're not going to be like the LA Clippers owner who financed the building of a new arena in Inglewood and helped to furnish it by doing a 23-year lease for the name rights. That's what I'm trying to say. The name rights to the stadium that they built for the LA Clippers. They did not use taxpayer money. They did not use hotel revenue, money rental, car tax. The owner financed that our spurs are worth 3.8 billion with the B dollars. We as a county have already spent 75 million refurbishing the Frost Bank Center. My thoughts on refurbishing, I have a lot of 'em, but time does not permit

Commissioner Calvert ([01:05:24](#)):

Let, I'm going to – a point of personal privilege—I want you to be able to put those actions-- I want to, I need to hear that. What we're negotiating for,

Dr. Eva Mason ([01:05:31](#)):

Well first of all, I was looking at arenas that had been refurbished. There was one, I can't remember where it was. They stripped the bottom part down to the skeleton. They had all these beautiful windows and inside they had a park. They had a water theme in there. Up top, they had a lofts, studio, apartments, one bedroom, two bedroom, senior living.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:05:57](#)):

I like that.

Dr. Eva Mason ([01:05:58](#)):

My thought was college student living because I just helped this niece move to a studio. But she has to be on the northeast side because there's nothing here. She goes to St. Philip's. So the office spaces, restaurants, they have beautiful restaurants in this venue I was looking at, they had sidewalk, sidewalk cafes. This is all indoors inside the old arena. The concourse was made into a running track. They kept some of the facade to maintain the historical aspect of that arena. I thought about the logo on the floor of the arena. They took the logo for that NBA team and they used it at the entrance to maintain some of the history of like the Spurs logo. They kept the suites for the owners and they made that some use, but they also kept like the Waterberg could stay in there because that's in Erie, but find the restaurants. When I want to go to find a restaurant, I can't go to one on the east side. You have to go to the north side. And so we travel and someone mentioned it a minute ago when they put those cones up on the night of a Spurs game, where did they direct that traffic? My husband and I used to talk about it. They're directing so they can get out here as quickly as they can.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:07:20](#)):

It's like we're at a hazmat event.

Dr. Eva Mason ([01:07:22](#)):

Yes, yes.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:07:23](#)):

It's terrible.

Dr. Eva Mason ([01:07:24](#)):

The other thing too, so many things. I thought about the Taste of New Orleans. I said they need a bigger venue. We're down in a hole at Sunken Garden. If it is hot and humid, you're sweating. So it has to be someplace here back on the east side. They started out in St. Paul Square, so back on the east side where we could host a fiesta event like Taste of New Orleans

([01:07:51](#)):

And also their festivals. What's happened to the Folklife Festival? Where is that? Where do we have that? Okay, they're tearing down the Institute of Texan Cultures, which is where the Spur Arena is supposed to go. They're going to build a land bridge across from the hemisphere to the Alamodome across 37. So why can't we build a bridge across that railroad track that it stops me all the time and I have to back up, go around. You can't go on 35 because there's another track. So you have to go under—I'm going to date myself—Commerce Street Bridge to go around. So we need to think about that. The traffic flow. You mentioned that. I like the idea of renovating Willow Springs and improving that, but we need to have shops, we need to have restaurants, we need to have offices, we need to have eateries, we need to have aesthetics. We need to have greenery, we need to have water. Things that are pleasing and soothing and in a place for seniors like me who may one day want to downsize. Everybody's moving to Park Lane or the Army Residences. That's not on the east side, it's in district two. But why do we have to go that far when we can have something right here for seniors, college students and I'm, I have a lot of thoughts, but I'm going to yield. Thank you so much,

Commissioner Calvert ([01:09:15](#)):

John. Thank you Dr. Mason. Very constructive. You've just earned yourself a spot on the oversight committee. How about them apples?

Jonathon Holler ([01:09:26](#)):

Commissioner, I believe COPS/Metro had a statement that they wanted to read.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:09:28](#)):

Okay, well they're on the agenda so we're going to keep going. Okay, thank you very kindly. Alright, so we are going to keep it moving so that we can understand what are the uses of this venue tax. There are other funds that we're going to talk about in the next meeting that are available in a super PID with the legislation that the State of Texas gave 3.25% cell tax to the city and it includes a three mile radius, which would touch these grounds. We'll talk about all those kinds of things in the next meeting, but let me turn it over to Bill Avila. Attorney at Bracewell, thank you very much. Pull up his PowerPoint if you would please. Thank you.

Bill Avila, Bracewell ([01:10:15](#)):

Good morning. As Commissioner Calvert said, my name's Bill Avila. I'm an attorney at Bracewell and, just for the record, I was born and raised in San Antonio and wound up

under a desegregation order from the Justice Department going to Brackenridge High School. And it was the best thing that happened in my life.

[\(01:10:38\)](#):

And so I've been out here running around since at least high school, and TC Calvert and I were on the football team at Brackenridge. That's my claim to fame on the East Side. And my other relationship, I hear Owen Davis whose father ran OMCA and I were best friends and we met Rack Ridge and we hang out together. We still talk together and I'm my godfather, his daughter who was a pediatrician in Atlanta. But all that aside, after Brackenridge, I went to Notre Dame and stayed there for six years and then went to George Washington for law school and then came home to practice law. And Henry Cisneros had just been elected mayor and Jane Macon hired me in the city attorney's office and that's how I got into public law and municipal bonds and handling bond elections, governmental projects. That's kind of like the background where I'm from and why I'm here.

[\(01:11:44\)](#):

And I appreciate the Commissioner inviting me to talk about this. The firm I'm at, we're the bond attorneys for the County. So we represent the County when it's going to borrow money through a bond issue or other certificates of obligation and other forms of debt to finance county facilities. And one of the types of projects is the venue projects, the, and just a little bit of background, the first project in the state that was financed with the sale tax was the Alamodome and that was--Henry Cisneros came up with a plan to work with the Via Transit Authority to design and build a regional economic development facility that would be countywide within transportation district. And that allowed or basically a countywide sales tax. The Alamodome was paid off in five years and then the city and Cia put an agreement together for the city to run the Alamodome.

[\(01:12:53\)](#):

After that, everybody else noticed that. And then George Bush wound up running for governor, but before that he was one of the owners of the Texas Rangers and they wanted a new stadium. They got a legislature to approve an economic development sales tax for a city that's located in two counties. And there was one named Arlington, Texas and they built a stadium after they built that. Then everybody else said, oh wait a minute. Then they passed. It was the primer bill, but it is now that is located in chapter 334 of the Texas Local Government Code and that's what's referred to as the venue statute and that's the statute that all venue tax elections have been held in all of the major metropolitan areas for the finance sports facilities, but not just professional but amateur and a whole host of things. And now I'll get into that. So here's what the law says.

[\(01:13:59\)](#):

Yes sir. Oh, next slide. It is chapter 3 34, the Texas Local Government Code and it allows the county to provide for the planning, the acquisition, the establishment, the development, the construction or renovation of an approved venue project. And it allows the county to designate each method of financing for each approved venue project. Next slide. And before we go through that, the statute, and I'll get into it, defines what's a venue project and then it says an approved venue project is a project that's been approved by the voters. You have to hold an election to vote. What's an approved venue project and how are you going to pay for that? The statute also provides what the County has to go through to be able to call the election city statute, right? Yes. Under chapter 3 34, either a city or a county can hold the venue tax election. And yes, and the taxes are different for each one. They each have the ability to impose a tax if it's approved by the voters, there is provision in there for sales tax, but that's maxed out under the tax code. And in Bexar County, the sales taxes is already maxed out, so the sales taxes is not available right now without an election to take it away from somebody else.

Commissioner Calvert [\(01:15:40\)](#):

But the point I'm making is that the City of San Antonio isn't using its venue tax—hasn't called for an election—so they could potentially raise it for hotel and rental. Am I correct?

Bill Avila, Bracewell [\(01:15:53\)](#):

Yes. Well, one of the projects has been used by the city for Edwards Aquifer recharge projects and that expires and I think there's a job training program that's running and then that'll end in 2026. VIA will take over that tax and so it's maxed out, but yes, the city's not using it or any of the venues that the city has. But to call the election before it can call the election, the County has to adopt the resolution. And in the resolution, it should identify each venue project or set of projects that it wants the voters to consider. And then it must also include in the resolution each method of financing for any of those projects. And the statute also requires you to submit the projects for each project separately to the voters. So that's why in the last election, I think there are four different propositions because they all had to be voted separately. And in each proposition that identifies each of the projects, you have to identify what kind of tax and the rate you're going to levy for that tax.

[\(01:17:22\)](#):

Once the Commissioners Court adopts that resolution, it submits it to the state comptroller and the County has to wait at least 15 days for the comptroller to do an analysis on whether that resolution and those taxes would impact the state revenues

negatively. And if they do, they cannot approve the election go forward. If they don't, the County has a right to appeal and there's some appeal process. But if 30 days runs and the comptroller's office has not responded, then that resolution is considered by law to have been approved by the comptroller. So you can wait 30 days or before that 30 days is up, the comptroller can approve it. After you get that, then the County can call the election. And part of what was going on the last time is the election can only be held on a uniform election date. Well, that's either in May in the mail election or the November election. And the deadline in 2025 to call for a mail election was February 14. So the court had to consider a resolution, pass it, send it to the comptroller and wait 30 days before it could call the election. And so that didn't happen. It's too late. And so the election will not happen in May, but that gives you time to see how the County wants to consider using the statute and those taxes to identify or to approve venue projects it would like to submit to the voters.

[\(01:19:13\)](#):

Next slide. All right, so like I said, you wait 30 days, you can call the election and then call the election. The county has to allow the voters to vote separately on each venue project. It'll designate each venue project and it'll designate the method of financing each venue project in the resolution. And it will allow the voters to vote on each separately on each project. Like I said, it has to be a uniform election date. Okay, now next slide. Next slide please. Oh, okay. Alright. No, they're doing fine. So here's, here's for the meat. I think this is what would be really helpful. What is a venue under this statute that's eligible to be considered by voters? A venue includes an arena, a coliseum, a stadium, or any other type of facility that's used or planned for use for one or more professional or amateur sports, sporting events or community events or any other sports events such as rodeos, livestock shows, agricultural expositions, promotional events, and other civic and charitable events. However, the community events or the civic centers cannot be just for local use. The statute is designed to attract visitors to the county.

[\(01:21:01\)](#):

Another set of venue use is a convention center, a convention center facility and related improvements such as a civic center hotel, a theater, an opera house, a music hall, a rehearsal hall, a park, a zoological park, a museum, an aquarium or plaza located in the vicinity of any of those types of facilities. The next type is a tourist development area. This was added after the 2008 election in 2008. This was originally called improvements along an inland waterway. And so that's how the Museum Reach and the missionary projects got financed because there are improvements along in waterway. After that, that was changed to be a tourist development area. So conceivably that would still include improvements

along an inland waterway, but it is expanded to be more than that and you get to decide what's a tourist development area, for example.

[\(01:22:18\)](#):

And then the lastly, a watershed protection and preservation project, which is what the city was using for the Edwards Aquifer stuff, projects and the recharge, a recharge area and projects for conservation easements and open space facilities. But the statute also includes two other next slide, sorry, the other kinds. It also says a project as defined in section four A and four B of the Development Corporation Act of 1979 as that law existed on September 1st, 1997. Well, you have to go back and pull up the old 97 statute. It has since been amended and that statute is now in chapters 5 0 1, 5 0 4 and 5 0 5 of a local government code. But you have to go back to the 97 statute to see what's included in four A. Those are projects that would attract businesses to the community, but it is, you're going to attract and develop manufacturing, industrial and transportation facilities to the community. And that includes airports, ports, mass community facilities including the parking facilities, air water, pollution control facilities and water and distribution facilities for water to the general public and four B that includes facilities for use for professional and amateur athletic events including youth in children's sports, entertainment, tourists, convention, public park purposes, events, stadiums, ballparks, auditoriums, amphitheaters, concert halls, earnings centers, parks and parking facilities. And then four B includes another set of projects which is drainage, demolition of existing structures and any of the facilities related to any of those things.

[\(01:24:54\)](#):

The statute. Okay, the next slide. Okay, the next slide is the statute allows for related infrastructure and so related infrastructure. So it's the infrastructure related to any of those types of projects that I mentioned before. But that would include stores, restaurants, onsite hotels, concessions, parking, transportation, facilities, roads, street water and sewer facilities apart, other and offsite facilities related to or enhancing the value of any of those facilities and environmental remediation. So that's like the range of projects that you can contemplate. It could be used by the venue tax program.

Commissioner Calvert [\(01:25:58\)](#):

Okay, good. Great job. Thank you. So good representative. You want to have a comment or question or something and then we're going back into participants and then we're going to COPS Metro and we're opening up.

Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins [\(01:26:15\)](#):

All right. Good morning everybody. Good morning. I need to hear a little bit loud. Good morning. All right. Okay. First I want to start by saying this is the time to celebrate. One of the things I want us to really embellish is that change is good and I know we love our Spurs, but what they're doing is what urban communities are doing across the country, that is creating the sports and entertainment industry. That's not a negative, that's a positive because we're moving into that next century of how the models across the country are working. But guess what? It opens a great opportunity for us here on East Side. Alright, so when we think about our footprint, I always want to share the positive things about the east side because it is so important. Think about the accessibility in terms of freeways. Think about the land space on the arena site, this site, the golf course, I mean the River East project, all those things.

[\(01:27:23\)](#):

How we can begin to reimagine these areas in such a positive manner. Well, we have to be realistic. We have to understand the timeline is involved. This is going to take time. We're talking here today, but I don't see anything really happening for three to five years, really seeing some efforts come out of the ground. So this commitment today is a long-term commitment, not just thinking, oh, next year we're going to see something. I want us to be realistic. It's still in the planning stages, we're still in the idea of how things are going to happen and the roles everybody going to play. So I want to share with y'all today the State's role and why this is so important. You heard about all the statutes you heard about the four A and the four B and all of that. Those things not only through the local government code but also through our state legislator.

[\(01:28:19\)](#):

Our role is to develop those financing tools, those opportunities to be able to make some of these things happen. Also, I've led today that I'm going to stay connected to what we need to do from our state budget commissioner to be able to get some money down here to help this project. Our lieutenant gov's is putting 450 million into the Alamodome. And so yeah, yeah, I'm not—I'm sorry Alamo, which we all need because when we think of the Alamo right now, we see one building crumbling and it needs some help. Think about 450 million being put into that footprint, buying up about six blocks. And really the vision is to recreate the original footprint. The original footprint. So again, I want us to celebrate the things that we're going to have being realistic on the timeline. Nothing will come out of the ground until what to years, right?

[\(01:29:18\)](#):

Okay. Also to look at our long-term sustainability, how we as a community can benefit and also sustain it over time because we don't want another Astrodome that a building becomes vacant and nothing is happening. But also being realistic, we have to talk about what we need to do, our role as a community in terms of building the capacity to be able to do the things we've talked about. Without capacity, it can't happen. What do I mean when I say capacity? Well, folks who want contracting opportunity, if we don't have the capacity now, what do we need to do? Start developing and identifying that capacity and maybe partnering with other people to make sure that we have capacity to take advantage of some of these contracting opportunities. Building capacity, open up a restaurant is one thing. Sustain it and maintaining something different. Okay, so let's be realistic also through this whole process.

[\(01:30:23\)](#):

And that's why I'm so glad so many folks are here and we want to expand it for the next one is that when we talk about attracting businesses, there's going to be feasibility studies done, which is going to look at income, going to look at rooftops and going to look at those things that will work and what don't work. We want to make sure that we are realistic, and we have realistic expectations, not pie in the sky. And I think that's so important. And finally what I want us to do is to continue to stay connected. You've got the City, you've got the County, you've got the State, you've got the school district, Alamo Community College District, you have a leadership here, okay? We want to stay, connect and make sure we're working in a lockstep to ensure the things that the community want can be a reality.

[\(01:31:20\)](#):

But we can't do it by ourselves. We need you and we need you to number one, come listen, learn understanding your role in all of this. A lot of people say, Barbara, you need to do this, you need to do that. I say, no, we need to do, we need to do okay. And so having the elected officials and the community working together is powerful and that's so important. So there's no blame game, no, "You made false promises," or any of that. Finally, community, listen, let's be victors in that, not victims, all right? And we're only going to be victors when we have a positive outlook, and we are working together to make it all happen. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert [\(01:32:11\)](#):

Senator Menendez and you passed a piece of legislation that would allow the city attorney to get the state sales tax within the three mile radius, that includes the Frost Bank Center, is that correct?

Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins [\(01:32:19\)](#):

Correct.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:32:20](#)):

Okay. So do you want to explain anything about plans or thoughts about that revenue helping the transition if it is passed by voters?

Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins ([01:32:28](#)):

Okay, so Senate Bill 2220 first, I got to tell you the journey for that. So that's the bill that allows the convention center and other facilities around it to be expanded. So that Bill sat on the desk and became too late for the legislative of last time to pass. So it was brought to my attention that, I'm on the Ways and Means Committee, that they would not pass that bill. So I went to work and I went to work by working with my committee members, mainly my chairman, and said, "Listen, I need this to pass." "Oh Barbara, we've done some things already for San Antonio and it was too late and it can't happen." I said, "Look here, Joe."

([01:33:14](#)):

I said, "We need this to happen. I've been a good soldier on this committee. I've worked with you. I passed the things that you wanted for Dallas and Houston and guess what? I need you to do this." And he said, "Well, okay Barbara." We passed the bill that day and hurried out a committee and sent it to the floor of the House that day, when normally we'd run out time. So I want to share with y'all that this bill is critical in terms of raising money to be able to make what happens that the Alamodome happen. We want to do the same thing here on the east side. One of my promises to you and I talked to Rodeo about it is we were looking at a youth sports village. A youth sports village. We got to get our kids off the street.

([01:34:03](#)):

We got to get our kids busy. When we talk about youth crime, a lot of it is because our kids are busy and it is not just about sports, it's about arts, it's about education, it's about robotics. All of those things that we can do. That's why I'm saying this is a great opportunity for us to really reimagine our community in a way and creating those financing tools like we did at the Alamodome and also on this site as we began to build up and those tax incremental monies come, how do we sustain our nonprofits, our development entities so we can address all the issues that we are talking about that we need. And that's my role as a state legislator is to continue to identify and craft those financing tools that allow us to do the things we want to do. And also key is sustaining it not so choice.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:35:02](#)):

So bottom line, part of that money could also be used in this area because of the geographic. We're not incorrect in that. Right?

Rep. Barbara Gervin-Hawkins ([01:35:08](#)):

You are not incorrect. And not only that, here, here's the deal. If we can't, we are going to create another financing opportunity. So for me, failure is never an option. It is not. No. It's how I want y'all to remember that it is never "no." It is "how" right? And that's our mindset.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:35:33](#)):

Very good information. You've got a mic. Let me get to the citizens here. We're going to go to COPS/Metro. So I don't know who came first, but Gordon, I see you. Go ahead. Whoever would like go first. Go ahead.

Gordon Benjamin ([01:35:46](#)):

Alright. My name is Gordon Benjamin and I'm Vice President of the Denver Heights Neighborhood Association and I'm a 67 year resident of San Antonio. The rodeo came to San Antonio when I was born. I didn't arrive until 14 years later. So one of the things that I see is the golf course renovation. There are holes behind on the other side of Salado Creek I think where, number one, the substation is something that the city promised to put something there. I think it was a theater. And I reiterate what Dr. Mason said about the kinds of things that should go on this property. I'm also in support of what Mr. Cody Davenport said about bringing things here, not just to learn about horses, but to give kids an opportunity as Representative Hawkins said, to learn something. The Buildings and Trades Council sits over here on Belgium Lane.

([01:36:41](#)):

They don't have enough space, they don't have enough students and building and trades makes as much money as some attorneys. So therefore if you get kids at the age 14, 15 and 16 and put them in an entity where they can identify with the benefit of obtaining these types of skills, then you have a future that they can look at and it becomes brighter and brighter as they go along. Now the theaters, it might not be something might conflict with the rodeo, but again the restaurants, small business opportunities to be developed around this particular property. It gives this community a better opportunity to thrive than you have traffic homes that sends customers out of the area rather than have a place to populate and enjoy the city of San Antonio. And as Cody said, if they could do it in Fort Worth, we dang sure could do it in San Antonio.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:37:36](#)):

Yeah, very good. We'll look to have the Sheriff and the Chief of Police come and talk about the traffic cones in the next meeting. Go ahead. I can't see because it's lights I can't see. So people,

Doreen Abrams ([01:37:44](#)):

Good morning. I'm Doreen Abrams. I'm one of the ministers at in the neighborhood and this is my first time at a meeting, so I hope that I am following the proper protocol. I was listening to Ms. Hawkins and I was listening to Mr. Calvert. Everything y'all say makes sense. One of the things that Ms. Hawkins said, the connection we have to pull together. I can't grab Mr. Calvert's hand and pull him away that he doesn't want to go. We must stay connected in order to make all of this come together because the vision and the mission is very good. Now, me being a minister in the area, of course my heart falls toward the homeless now when Covid came in, people lost a lot of things. They lost homes, they lost jobs. And we've already talked about that. There would be a wonderful thing to put here for the homeless people.

([01:38:35](#)):

We know that all of 'em don't choose to be homeless, but some of them couldn't have it. So thinking about everybody in our committee, in our area, they need help. The saddest thing I've ever seen is when I'm on my way to church or back and somebody got a little tent sitting on the side of the road, that's sad that people have to live like that. And I think that what you guys are implementing here will help eliminate some of that. Just like you're trying to redo the parking thing to make that work out for everybody to something here will be able to work out for the homeless people. So I think that is a good project, a good mission and a good vision to have. And I have great-grandchildren and you were talking about the schools. Okay, now that the schools are closing, my great-grandchildren have to go somewhere else, but if we get everything refurbished, as Mrs. Hawkins said, then they can be back in their schools. This is our community. Like Ms. Hawkins said, we got to take control, we have to stay connected and prayer helps the connection stay together. We can't make a connection without prayer.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:39:45](#)):

You did a great job. Tommi's got, I think you're going out of country, so I'm going to give him a quick minute and then we'll get into the Cops/Metro. Thank you so much, Tommi for coming.

Tommi Hurme ([01:39:54](#)):

Yes, thank you so much Commissioner. So my name's Tommi Hurme. I wanted to just talk briefly about the venue tax and how my organization has benefited from this wonderful community program. So I run a fencing club out of the UIW Fencing Center. So this is a purpose-built facility for fencing. It's one of the nicest in the country. We were able to secure funding from the County and the City about 10 years ago and it was also matched by the University of Incarnate Word, this enabled incarnate word to bring in a varsity fencing team. This is one of the first new programs in the country for NCAA fencing. So we have a division one fencing team in San Antonio. I don't know if anyone knew that I operate adjacent to them. So I run a club and we cater to fencers from ages four years old to 74 years old or older.

([01:40:43](#)):

We use the facility every night. There's actually a practice happening right now. My fencers are training, they go to national tournaments. I recently had a fencer placed top eight nationally in the 17 and hundred division. One of our fencers just got accepted to Duke University. So we're helping people in the community quite a bit. We run tournaments and we're actually hoping to run a larger regional tournament at the expo hall here. So it's trying to tie it all together and we hope that we can secure that venue tax for the future, future, expand the facility and expand for bigger facilities that we can attract bigger regional and national events. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:41:17](#)):

Tommy. Weren't you an Olympian or something like that?

Tommi Hurme ([01:41:19](#)):

My dad was an Olympian. Your dad

Commissioner Calvert ([01:41:21](#)):

Your dad was an Olympian. All right, there we go. A lot of history. Thanks very much. Alright, we are going to come back to participants and we won't do any more presentations. So the Cops/Metro Alliance leaders are in the house, Rena Oden and Sonya Rodriguez. I would ask them to come and they have some presentation and then we'll just open it up and we'll be here until one o'clock. Thank you all so much for coming. Cops Metro, give 'em round.

Dorias Lamel ([01:41:53](#)):

I am Dorias Lamel, COPS/Metro leader, that is Communities Organizing for Public Service in Metros Alliance. I am a member of St. Paul United Methodist on the east side and I'm the CEO of Illustrate Records. The east side has become the home of gentrification and food deserts. I don't see no hospitals, no healthcare facilities, and no economic opportunities. Why are we building a new Spurs stadium?

[\(01:42:26\)](#):

We've heard this story many times before the Hemisfair Park, the Alamodome 32 years ago, Frost Bank Center, 23 years ago, I'm 26 y'all. And now they want to build a new baseball stadium that will displace over 300 families. We trying to build new stadiums when we can't fill up the old ones and we want to build it with taxpayer money. Y'all saw it coming in and you could see it around any stadium parking lots and abandoned buildings. We were told there would be jobs for the communities, hotels, restaurants, stores, empty promises that we see leaders continue to allow these developers to take our tax dollars for private investment. I say no more, no more, no more, no more. On the east side. A 17,000 seat arena ain't helping us as someone in the entertainment industry. Lemme say it loud and clear. Stop investing in entertainment and invest in the people. We need hospitals, community gardens, education centers. We need to put the people first. I don't want to hear about related infrastructure. I want to hear about infrastructure that prioritizes the people.

Stewart Blanton [\(01:44:03\)](#):

Thank you Mr. Lamel. And I am Stewart Blanton, COPS/Metro leader and member of Greater Joy Temple Church of God in Christ. And I am the board chair for Ella Austin Community Center on the east side 127 year legacy still in the making on December the eighth, COPS/Metro last year brought 1200 people together at St. Mary's University for an action that had a lot of the community and City Council and County and state representatives there to make a stance, I'm sorry, against Project Marvel and the use of any public funds for private developers. Our tax money is better spent on what the east side needs. More green spaces, workforce development and opportunities and affordable housing and access to healthcare facilities and quality healthcare. If the owners who want to build a new stadium, they need to do what we do spend our own money on doing and buying what we want. Cops Metro Alliance has been in the San Antonio community for over 50 years representing the people of San Antonio and we make a commitment today to Commissioner Calvert, the council, the City cCouncil, the County and you the residents of the east side that we will make sure that whatever happens is for your benefit and not the benefit of those who own and develop the community of San Antonio. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:45:50](#)):

Now that's what you call a real town hall, ain't it? Alright, we're opening it up to your comments. There are no more presentations. If you have questions of the presenters, you more than are welcome to have them. Please go ahead. You've got one minute. Let's

Unknown ([01:46:06](#)):

Go. Alright, good afternoon everyone. Mine is not a comment or a question to the presenters. I listen to everybody, but I heard everybody, majority people talk about the beautification, what this should be used for. That's just a part of it. Beauty is a part of it, but if we don't build up our people, I'm a part of a Super Bowl Sunday shooting in 2021 and we formed a movement called Stop those acronyms mean stop traumatizing, terrorizing our people. Stop gun violence, stop gang violence, stop domestic violence and so much more. Stop hunger. So what we would like to see if it does happen that the spurs of move, let's partner with the people that's already on the grounds doing the work to make changes in people's lives because we need good will, we need great people and continuous hope for our people. So we going to do anything with some of these things, with this property, give with the people that are already working and assist them in the visions that's already going on because it's working. We get in there, we fight for our own and make these changes because we can have all the businesses and everything, but we don't have the people to support it, to patronize it, then we have nothing. I'm in District Two and there are sore eyes all around. Not saying that people are not doing great works, but we can do better works. So I thank you for listening, but that's my pitch.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:47:59](#)):

Bishop for human capital, investments in human capital.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:48:03](#)):

Colonel.

Larry Romo ([01:48:05](#)):

Good morning. My name is Larry Ramo. I'm a proud product of the East side. Went to Highland High School Air Force Academy and my last boss was President Barack Obama for seven years and one month. Thank you dear Commissioner Tommy Calvert, wholehearted appreciation for your town hall meeting today. I have one thought for you to consider. I suggest you consider having a building in the Frost Bank Arena and Coliseum area as a Bexar County Military and Veterans Museum, which we do not have today. This

would be to recognize the contributions of Bexar County military and veteran residents' contributions. Since the birth of our county, we have a Buffalo Soldiers Park on the east side in an under-recognized gym of a cemetery, the San Antonio National Cemetery, which is really a mini honor to national cemetery of historic significance of Apostle Honda Boulevard. Fort Sam Houston's right next door. You would get ample military artifacts from our military and veterans in the area. I would have the museum open every day other than a Christmas and maybe a few other holidays. The museum could be a gym of organized initially properly and then marked and then marketed properly. Appreciate your consideration and thanks for the opportunity to listen to the people this certainly the Honorable Lawrence Guzman Romo. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:49:09](#)):

Well, that's great suggestions.

Larry Romo ([01:49:10](#)):

You get Howard T Ray and Gordon Danger's uniform, so it'd be a great museum. Howard t Ray. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:49:17](#)):

And that's why we don't want to have these conversations behind closed doors. The people have great answers. Yes, go ahead. I can't see who it is, but go ahead.

Deedee Smith ([01:49:25](#)):

DD Smith from Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Association and San Antonio Pickleball Association. So what I'd like to see is an indoor pickleball facility similar to Chicken and Pickle if you've ever been there. They have a restaurant, they have indoor courts and outdoor courts. You have corporate corporations going there, having their events. You have a restaurant and they have fundraising events there. Over at Fairchild here on the east side, we have 18 courts and if you go over there after five for two parking lots are full and three bike radius is full because people are coming from Bernie, south side, east side, all over the city and all over the county as well. You have pickleball, courts coming up all over, all throughout the city, indoor courts because it gets so scorching hot, rainy, and cold. And with being a baby boomer myself and I know there's many here and we are out there, we're the largest population probably. We are like our grandmothers. We are active, so we want to get out there and exercise. So I'm advocating for that. And the black population, we need to, that's one of my missions to get more of us involved because we're way behind the

curve and it's the fastest growing sport in the country. So we need it on the east side, so we can get some more folks involved.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:50:53](#)):

Thank you Dee. I just realized that I hadn't let you all know we do have our Public Works Director also here, so that's a good engineering mind. And Dave Wegman, one of our chiefs over there is also here from Public Works. So those are good minds to help put these ideas into plans. Thank you. Go ahead Richard.

Richard Gonzalez ([01:51:12](#)):

Commissioner, Richard Gonzalez. I'm the National Vice Commander for American GI Forum. Thank you for having this town hall meeting. I think two minutes is not sufficient enough time to go into all the points that I wanted to address, but I wanted to make sure that you all know that this is Military City USA. Alright, so the point that I wanted to make is that thank you for slowing down this process. I know that there was a big rush to get this before the taxpayers was out. All the information, I don't know how much money we're talking about. We were talking about billions of dollars or millions of dollars. I really don't know. But thank you for making that point. You and the judge deserve a lot of credit for making that happen. But anyway, I've been a season two.

Commissioner Calvert ([01:52:00](#)):

Hold on one second. We're being disrespectful by having these sidebar conversations. Please give everyone the respect to be heard. We don't want to start a new meeting. If you've got a conversation that's going to be active, please take it to the back of the room so that you can have that conversation in a whisper voice. But let's give the respect to everyone so that all of us can hear who's speaking. Okay, thank you very much. And Richard, I will give you some extended time. Okay, appreciate it. But let's just try to bullet. Alright, thank very constructive.

Richard Gonzalez ([01:52:32](#)):

Thank you very much. I just want to say that I have been a season ticket holder for the Spurs for seven years. Also a season ticket holder for the Rodeo. I think it brings a lot of people here to San Antonio. So I was one of the original voters of the Alamodome. I voted for this facility to be built here. But I think that now, I think it's time for the Spurs to ante up and any commitment that goes forward, they need to at least be 50% on whatever cost is generated. I think well at least 50% because they've been getting a free ride most of the time. One of the things that I also agree was Larry Romo, he was a former national

commander for the American GI Forum. I think that we also need the Veterans Business Park here in the Willow Springs.

[\(01:53:23\)](#):

I'm a golfer. I really don't support taking away Willow Springs. I think it brings a lot of people out here to this area, but I think that a business park for all the veteran organizations would be a key development in this area. Anything that we do, I heard somebody saying about Youth Park here in this area, as you know that we have the Mission Conception, the facilities out there. Well our kids are not being able to attend those sessions because people come in and they generate a lot of money for themselves and our kids are having to pay a lot of money to use those facilities. And I talked to you about that before. But anyway, I could go on and on, but I appreciate the consideration. Richard Gonzalez, again, thank you very much.

Commissioner Calvert [\(01:54:12\)](#):

Thank you very much, Richard. Okay, go ahead.

Monica Cruz [\(01:54:14\)](#):

Hello, commissioner Calvert. My name is Monica Cruz and I'm a community researcher and housing justice advocate here in San Antonio. I just wanted to take a moment also to recognize the work and the research that some of our journalists in the city have done around San Antonio Express news as well as Greg Jefferson because there was, if you all read the paper last week on the 19th on Sunday there, Molly Smith from the Express News did a whole article on the front page, talked about all the research, and I'm just going to quote a couple of things. "Decades of research however, have shown that public funding for new football stadiums, basketball arenas and ballparks is not worth the investment. Meaning they don't generate the economic activity needed to recoup the hundreds of millions of tax dollars that help build them." There's so much research and I think oftentimes in policymaking policy makers, I think we fail sometimes to not really do the research that's been out there across the country.

[\(01:55:19\)](#):

There's model research programs that have looked, did this investment really work? Was it really worth it? So I think there's been a lot of amazing ideas shared today. I hope that the community will come again and propel these great ideas to continue to follow through on the promises that have not been fulfilled in this community, in this part of town. We also have to keep in mind, we have a mayoral election coming up. We have a lot of candidates.

The hope is that the community will come together to put pressure on those candidates to really come back and make good on those promises for this community. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert (01:55:55):

Thank you for coming. Go ahead. Good to see you, Gabriel.

Gabriel

Good to see you Mr. Commissioner. I want to thank you for the work that you do, but I have to stand in solidarity with cops in Metro. If you just wanted the young lady, Mrs. Cruz was mentioning, the research is done. You can just take a look at the Spurs Stadium right here in this community. We're the restaurants, where's the revenue? So it's time and time again that we get cheated. Let's remember the dome dirt. Let's remember that what they did to our communities the last time that we spent money to build these stadiums. I like all the ideas too. I'd love to have living instead of we're going to do these things, let's do it the correct way that's going to benefit our community. I want to also mention Mr. Romo's, also our National LULAC veterans member.

(01:56:41):

I'm also the state director. LULAC is here to stand ready to continue to expose some of the things that have been continued to go on. And we have to work together with the African-American community, the white community, so that we can all have and benefit from the infrastructure because you keep building land bridges and our communities are going without, I grew up right here on the east side. I went to Pole Middle school and so we have been cheated. And so this, I mean look, we got to have more transparency. I want to thank you for doing that Moving forward, let's do things more people. First I stand in solidarity and then that LA Clippers idea, amazing. That's what the spurs Mr. Buford can do to give back to this community is build his own stadium. We buy enough tickets. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert (01:57:30):

It's very healthy conversation.

(01:57:32):

Go ahead

Adrian Flores

Tommy. I called you on the night that I saw the newscast about the Spurs dome and facility that they need. They want, and I also called Peter at the same time right after you. It's about time. If they want a billion dollar thing. I don't know the County, the City or both, alright. But we need to be part of that ownership of the Spurs. Okay? It's been two time long. We've had the Spurs here. Barbara's brother built the Spurs, the foundation. I was there. I was a ball boy. I went to school downtown in St. Mary's. So however, this thing with it, we cannot lose the Spurs period. We're going to have to figure it out. But how other cities have done it. We had somebody testify here, the City, the County. We need to be a part of that partnership like some other cities, it's not good enough.

[\(01:58:32\)](#):

The revenue from the liquor and for the hotel and whatever tax money falls on our way. It's kind of like throw it up in the air, see what we catch. No, we need to be part of that ownership and we need to start those talks now because what I understand, the Spurs have a contract here at the ATT Center until 33. 32. 32, okay. But like Barbara said, it's going to come that time. We need to start those talks now, but we need to be part, we need a piece of that pie if we're going to put up that dome because the taxpayers are not going to go for it.

Commissioner Calvert [\(01:59:09\)](#):

So, I hear the Green Bay Packers, they have, their community has an ownership interest. And so I think what I'm hearing you say, if you ask the voters for a billion dollars, that's an equity position. Okay, go ahead.

TD Eigelhart III [\(01:59:19\)](#):

I'm TD Eigelhart III and I'm a multiple property owner. I belong to 14 HOAs and four neighborhood associations around San Antonio. I've been in this valley forever. I was here when they put the fill dirt from the Astrodome in police pond and suddenly we're a flood district. Okay. This area has always been a multi-purpose area. We enjoy the rodeo. The Rodeo has a marquee in one of my properties to mark that the rodeo exists in this valley. It's always been a multi venue. If we add a baseball stadium or expand this to where it can accommodate, that will not hurt the golf course. I learned to play golf on that. I sold rodeo tickets back in the day. I sold the wrestling tickets for Joe Freeman Coliseum. This is a beautiful area. The idea is who we bring in and money, but I put my money into San Antonio and anywhere I own a property or a house, I'm involved. It's not a matter of changing, it's what we add to what's already here. The golf course is beautiful though. There are lands along the golf course that can be as expanded. The Salado Creek, which I both swam and

fished in, is a beautiful creek. It doesn't have to be developed. We're currently working on better sewage in this area and drainage, which should have been here long ago. Simply that, okay, it's not a matter of who wants to come in here, they have to play with us. Period. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Calvert

Okay, next.

Unknown ([02:01:00](#)):

Good morning. Thank you. I came behind the right person. What I wanted to do is talk with you for a moment about what it's like living in this community. I grew up here. I was born here, and I want to tap into your imaginations for a moment. If you remember growing up here, we used to be able to go outside and play. We had outside, we had streets and we had neighbors. We could talk to one another. We had a pool. And if you remember, we had businesses everywhere. We may not have owned them, but do you all remember TG and Y? Do you remember Hot Zig? Do you remember Kentucky? Kentucky Fried Chicken? You remember Church's Chicken? It's still there. Do you remember GW Juniors? We had businesses here, but back then we lived amongst many different people. There were Caucasians here, there were Germans here.

([02:01:50](#)):

But then as soon as they left, guess what went with them? And so now we live in an area where we have been deprived so long that now we're standing here before our leaders asking for them to help us revive our community. So I want to talk with you for a moment because we need to do it ourselves. In our community, we have people who have great ideas, we are creative people, are we not? Oh yeah. We have dreams and we have interests. And so I'm going to ask each of you to open your calendars and let us meet with you. We do not want to exist in silos any longer. We want to collaborate with you, we want to work with you. We want to work with each other and make this community something that we could be proud to live in, work in own businesses in, and then introduce others to come in as tourists. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert ([02:02:47](#)):

Please go ahead.

Colby Guillory

Hello, my name is Colby Guillory. I'm a young developer in San Antonio at the beginning of my career. And what I've come to ask of this project today is to democratize it. I'd like you guys to make the RFQs and RFPs available to local companies that are on the up and up, not national companies coming in from California or New York. I'd like these projects to be restricted from having absentee landowner or landlords in algorithmic price fixing. So the rents are kept too high that people can't afford to live in it because it's based off of their corporation's profit structure of a reit. Also, I'd like to compliment Mr. Carillo's plan, but for my criticism of it, I see that the VIA, I'm sorry, the VIA Silver Line Connection is too far away from the center. I'd like you guys to move that over about 800 feet so that people can get off those buses and get straight into the Commerce area and be able to live in an apartment, get down to the ground floor, walk 50 feet to the bus and go off to work. Otherwise, thank you guys for what y'all are doing for the city and God bless.

Commissioner Calvert ([02:03:52](#)):

Thank you very much for coming. Yes, ma'am.

Susan Strawn ([02:03:53](#)):

Hi, my name is Susan Strawn. I'm from the River Road neighborhood and I want to thank you for having this town hall and thank you also for stopping this project in order to hear our views. I have two points. One is about the financing of a new Spurs stadium and second is my vision. So I hope I can get to both. First point, I agree with those who have said that we should not be financing the Spurs stadium. The studies have shown that it doesn't bring economic development, but if we do finance any part of it, there needs to be those golden handcuffs. There needs to be either equity or there needs to be liquidated damages of at least the amount that we put into that stadium that we get back if the spurs up and move. Okay. So that's my view on that. If they move, they move.

([02:04:40](#)):

Second. My vision if they do move is this is an incredible opportunity. It's 175 acres in the heart of the city, plus potentially more plus undeveloped land all around. You need a tenant that will bring in organic growth, not planned growth, organic growth, restaurants, shops, salons, all of that because the planned growth just doesn't work. You need organic growth, but you also need a tenant that's going to do its own maintenance. The County is very famous and the city is very famous for building all of these projects all over the place and watching them fall apart until the next bond comes around. So my view is move UTSA to

this land and have a campus that already has a stadium, a basketball stadium, it has a volleyball stadium, it has lots of land to build dorms, colleges bring in shops, they bring in restaurants, they bring in music venues, they bring in jobs, they bring in housing all around.

[\(02:05:46\)](#):

The kids can bike downtown, they can go to their games at the Alamodome. They can bike to this downtown campus that they're building. And you would have a growth center right here in the heart of the east side. Second, what happens to UTSA? UTSA has about 5,000 beds, 5,000 beds in dorms that range from single occupancy to apartment style housing. They've got buildings that you could have training facilities, all of that. So you have transitional housing already at the ready sell off what you don't need. But you could have that as a center to have homelessness and transitional low-income housing for a lot of the community. That's my grand vision.

Commissioner Calvert [\(02:06:34\)](#):

Very constructive. Thank you very much. And I would add our Alamo Colleges could be part of that college campus as well as our Texas A&M, an Antonio. Okay, go ahead. Good to see you, Tony.

Antonio Diaz [\(02:06:47\)](#):

Yes. My name's Antonio Diaz and I am the spokesperson of Texas Indigenous Council. We are the original people of Texas, of Bexar County, of Yana, which is what we call this area. We are the first and original people that were displaced from our homes. And time and time again through all the development residents are displaced. That's what I see now. This is coming right on the shirt, tail or back tail of the baseball, the minor league baseball being approved as well to displace more people from their homes. The developers enrich themselves. The residents lose. That's why I agree with a young man from Metro Alliance. Everything that occurs is for the rich to get richer for the people of this area to continue to be displaced and lose the east side, south side and west side. I am from the city. I've always been here.

[\(02:08:05\)](#):

My bloodlines goes thousands of years here. So as a child, I've seen poverty. I grew up in the west side and the east side and the south side from time to time bouncing around as a migrant worker. So I know what poverty is and I keep seeing it. It doesn't change. Instead, I see richness, but we're not available to it. We have no access to it. And when I say I graduated from St. Philip's College just right down the street here as a nurse, because I

wanted to help my community physically, not metaphorically, but physically put my hands on people and try to help them. So I continue to try to do this for my people because we're not even recognized in the state of Texas. We're not. But thanks to Commissioner Calvert and people such as himself, at least we have Indigenous People's Day recognized in Bexar County and San Antonio. But it took me 20 years of going before these elected officials. Before it was that's how poor we are recognized and we are the original people, but I fight for my whole area, for all the people, all the working class people, all the poor people. All those poor people that are living in those tents and those cardboard houses by the street and under the highways.

[\(02:09:36\)](#):

When is there going to be revenue created to help them? What kind of venue do we need to put before legislators so that they can help them? Or is there a loss for the state that cannot be talked about? Only when there's profits to be made for the rich. Please consider the residents that are here now, the ones that are suffering to maintain their homes. If you raise their property values, you'll probably move them out. They will be displaced. I see you, Ramon. Thank you for your time. Thank you for holding these meetings. But they should not be just a dog and pony show. It should have some meat for the residents. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Calvert [\(02:10:18\)](#):

Go ahead.

Cliff [\(02:10:19\)](#):

Good morning everybody. My name is Cliff and I live in this neighborhood. I was born and raised on the east side. I graduated from Fox Tech High School in the year in 1999. So I know and I remember what the east side was. I heard stories from my grandfather. He owned a house on Pine and Hackberry, so that is where I grew up. I know what the east side used to be. I would love to see the east side come back. There was businesses, there was a lot of richness in this area, but it was because like other people said, when the Germans lived here, when there was actually other white people living in this neighborhood was when this neighborhood actually flourished. When they all left, the investment stopped here. And that is the truth. We've seen it go down. I've seen this, my grandma's neighborhood turn into a really rough neighborhood.

[\(02:11:14\)](#):

It's made a big turnaround, but guess what? It is displaced a lot of people. So when you ask us what do we want in this area? We want what the city promises us. We want what the Spurs promise us when they say they want tax incentives because they want to come and do business here and they promise a flourish of development. That is false promise. They're not held to be responsible for any of that. And who gets to pay for all that? We do. And then if you look around here, I live right here in Willow Wood Estates, right in the same neighborhood as the Commissioner. We have a beautiful neighborhood. We do not want to see this neighborhood go down. What happens to the Frost Bank Center? I don't know, but am I in favor of the Spurs getting another arena downtown for their benefit again? No, I don't think they deserve it. They have not done enough to give to the east side like they have promised.

Commissioner Calvert ([02:12:17](#)):

Yes ma'am.

Monica Sabino ([02:12:19](#)):

Thank you Commissioner Calvert for bringing us all together. This is so, so very important. Thank you to everybody sitting at the table. My name is Monica Sabino. I'm a property owner on the east side, D2 and in your precinct for about 15 years. I live in Dignowity Hill Historic District. I'm an advocate, first of all, I want to say I'm an advocate for the community, for neighborhood, and for historic preservation. It's through the community, our individual neighborhoods and people's stories, property owners, businesses that tell the story of this area. And this is what helps define the character and the traditions of our area. And this is what we need going forward. In this significant project, I have one comment and two asks. The one comment is that large mixed-use projects require time. They require decades and generations of work. As we see the promises broken from various entities and jurisdictions and were left with large parking lots.

([02:13:22](#)):

That is in one way, it's a shame right now it's a promise to do more. It's the ability to have underutilized properties. It's the parking, the surface parking that allows us here to do wonderful things. I think this is prime real estate. I wholeheartedly support redeveloping, continue, continue. It's not starting, continuing to redevelop the arena property for mixed use. It is large enough to accommodate not just one professional sports. Spurs can stay here just fine. Soccer, rodeo, any number of other sports. There's enough space, three, four parking garages, residential, a number of things and ways to bring in private investment. My two asks are I agree with an earlier speaker, Ms. Bueché commenting on a board or a

commission or a task force to create from members of the community. To address this, I recommend, I strongly suggest that we develop a strategic plan so that the promises continue into the additional decades as well as a master plan for this specific property. My second ask is that you please not approve any funding for the Project Marvel Stadium or anything in Hemisfair because Hemisfair Park is the People's Park. It's where people, residents, as well as visitors to our city go for a park public experience, not a private experience. From an urban design standpoint, putting that kind of intensity down there doesn't make sense when we have perfect place here on the east side. Thank you so much.

Commissioner Calvert ([02:15:10](#)):

Let me thank you real quick. One of the things, I read the economic arena district study from 25 years ago, and we will go over some of it in the next meeting. But one of the failures there was an 18-member committee. A committee in and of itself will not be enough to make sure that those things are followed through in order to have economic development happen. The light of day has to be shown on it, and that means that the Commissioners Court and the City Council or other governmental bodies like the college district who are involved in the development of things around the area, they have to have quarterly or every six months come to an open public meeting to report out on the progress. So that's one thing I want to put on the radar of the community. A committee in and of itself, an oversight committee, will not be able to hold the electeds accountable if they're not talking to the electeds in their open meetings. Does that make sense? We got to do that too. Go ahead, sir.

Greg Ribs ([02:16:06](#)):

Okay. Thank you. First of all, thank you Commissioner for having this forum. My name is Greg Ribs. I am a longtime resident of Highland Park, which is either east side or south side, depending on the news reporter on the ground, Southeast. Southeast. I'm 74 and I feel like I've heard this all before. So thank you COPS/Metro for stating that. And it started actually with Hemisfair and Alamodome and the Wolff Stadium and horse race tracks. And now the center, which we now know is the Frost Bank Center. I think we have spent enough taxpayer money on entertainment venues. I think the sports, if the Spurs generate enough money, they should pay for it themselves. I want to make one point that, first of all, we think, okay, this is going to be people in and they say that, of course these are venues designed to attract visitors, but the hotel occupancy tax has to go back into entertainment venues. So it's circular. It will not pay for your streets, your drainage, your sidewalks, and other things throughout the city. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert (02:17:38):

Well, lemme just make one quick point. Remember the statute that Mr. Avila pointed out that some of the infrastructure can be covered for your streets and drainage and infrastructure. So the smart thing for us to do is to stretch the extent of the law to help the neighborhoods. And that's what I'll help do. Go ahead. We're going to be real quick, Adrian, because you just spoke real quick, real quick,

Adrian (02:18:00):

Real quick,

Commissioner Calvert (02:18:00):

Real quick. Real,

Adrian (02:18:01):

Real quick. Cody, glad you're here. Stock Show & Rodeo. Thank you for putting on the show every year back to being part of coming back to the community, I'd like to see a trail ride. Some horses down here in Salado Creek, that will not just be there for the tourists or the people that live here, but underprivileged kids that are growing up in a bad situation. People that formerly incarcerated like to see them work with the horses too. So I think it'd be a real good thing for our community and help out a lot of different people in our community. But I'd like to see some horses down there. If you go to the south side on Sundays, those Latinos down there, they're mostly Mexican nationals or from somewhere else down here. They have a trail ride down there on the south side on 1604. They make their own trail ride. You didn't have to tell them anything. They ride on the side of the trail there. So yeah, this town is about horses. We got horses downtown. They're about to do away with the horses, but I think if we do away with the horses downtown, I think we need to get some horses here on Salado Creek. I would love to have the horses and do that.

Commissioner Calvert (02:19:19):

Great point. We're going to keep going and I'll let Cody and you talk about that afterwards. Go ahead Liz. Let's keep it going.

Liz Franklin (02:19:23):

Thank you. I hope I can keep it under 20 minutes. Liz Franklin, community advocate. I live over on Dignowity Hill. Two minutes, 22 minutes? Okay. Alright, you win. All right. I'm going to try and keep it brief. I haven't been here except to hear the horror stories of what didn't

happen. There's a couple of things that really bring a warm spot to my heart is Tommy, once again, you know how to throw a party and you got two of our best friends. That would be you, councilman and rep representative. I always get it wrong. I'm just going to call her Barbara. Everybody knows it, right? And that gives us all some hope, right? Because we see our leadership coming together looking for a solution that may not have worked last time. So there's two things that I'd like to say that I've heard already again and again is absolutely critical in my opinion is a leadership.

[\(02:20:23\)](#):

No, not the neighborhood association that's got 12 people. Although we love you, we want the other 88 people that don't go to neighborhood associations but come to a venue like here to state what they care about. There's a lot of ideas that floated around. Cody, I want to sit next to you. Since 1949, they've been our partner. When was the last time we used them for anything other than the rodeo? So having said that, maybe a steering committee, somebody needs oversight. I come out to bear witness, not just to stand in line to talk, although I like that part too. But I come out to bear witness because I feel like that's my job as a community member. But we have one more chance to get this right. That didn't work 20, 30 years ago. And that means members of the business community, members of the indigenous community, the homeless community, anybody that thinks they have an idea, there's plenty of space here and I think Tommy could find space for a lot of it and Barbara can find money and Jaylen's going to turn around and smooth things over at that other entity that has a lot of money that never seems to help the east side.

[\(02:21:40\)](#):

I'm just saying thank you for the opportunity.

Commissioner Calvert

Ernest, thank you for being here

Ernest Martinez [\(02:21:46\)](#):

Yes, good afternoon. My name is Ernest Martinez. I serve as chairman of the Cesar Chavez Legacy and Educational Foundation and also serve on the National Board of the Chavez Foundation based in California where housing education are at the forefront as well as lending our voices on many issues in the community. I came with a long list of things. I'm going to be brief and be gone, brother Tommy. I know one of the things that I think collectively we're all thinking about is improving our community. And so when you think

about what's in front of us, the one thing that comes to mind today, I come as a taxpayer. I come as a father, a grandfather, and a small business owner as well. And when I saw the slides today and I see the beautiful renderings and things, the ideas that are surfacing, we've got to embrace the mindset of return on investment because there is unfinished business.

[\(02:22:39\)](#):

I remember the Saddles and Spurs campaign and that was a beautiful thing for the Spurs a home, but there's unfinished business. I'll never forget your presentation commissioner when you showed the renderings of the proposed ideas around this area. I can't think of a better idea than to continue to embrace and push. But we got to think again. The return on investment is what we heard it earlier today. It is affordable housing, it is senior citizens, it is the kids that play in our playgrounds. And I got to tell you, Mr. Davenport, I don't attend the rodeo. I can't remember last time I attended, but I got to tell you, I really was impressed with your words today because you're doing things in this community that people don't know about. And when we think about others being of service to others, that's what you're doing. And I'll close and I'll close with this. I'm reminded of a quote from Cesar Chavez. He once said, we cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others for their sakes and for our own. I think in full Sea Boy the spirit, we're going to come together, see great things happen in this community. Thank you Commissioner. Thank you representative. Thank you Councilman and all members of the panel. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert [\(02:24:05\)](#):

Let me just say this before Nick, and we are holding our electeds here, but years ago, 25 years ago, when the press conference was held, and I'm going to stand and say this, when the press conference was held with the Commissioners and the Spurs, there was a commissioner who came out and said that the Spurs were going to create economic development and the county would build the arena. That is not how economic development happens in these arena cases and that's why it didn't happen. The Spurs are a private business and they have a team to run. It is up to the elected officials to create economic development. That is our challenge, that is in our mandate statutorily. We have an economic development department. The Spurs don't have an economic development department, but the city and the county do. And so we are conveners as elected officials.

[\(02:24:55\)](#):

It is our job to bring forward the development community, the community, the human resource community, the nonprofit community, the whole community. It is our job to bring you together and march forward a plan. And so just because the leadership failed decades ago doesn't mean that I'm going to fail. I have read the plans of 25 years ago. Some of the things are actually in place. I will tell you that and I can be very specific. I actually read the plans, but there's a tremendous amount of work to do for things that were not met. So let's understand that, that some people, if they allowed the backroom deals to happen, then we wouldn't be able to forge forward accountability on an operational plan designating how much money do we want for something? Who's responsible for it and by when do we want to see it? And that's how we have to march forward together. Sol let me just say that, Nick, you have the floor.

Nick Peña ([02:25:52](#)):

Thank you commissioner. My name is Nick Peña. I'm a small businessman here in the community at the Mercado. I'm also a member of the American Jet Forum and the Tejano Democrats. But you have to think about one big plan, Commissioner. That's Project 2025. Now that's going to be the big test for us, but I like to be like Barbara is. We want to celebrate this occasion and think of great things. We know what happens when the promises are made, promises are made lots of, and then they're not kept. A lot of people know that now you have a lot of good people here before you to speak to you. You have very important people there listening. Also, you know that the biggest venue here in San Antonio, and we look forward at the Mecado all the time because that's what brings people together is the Rodeo.

([02:26:55](#)):

The Rodeo is a big venue that brings lots and lots of people and a lot of money to the table. But do you know how many small business people participate in that? None whatsoever. To get in the rodeo as a vendor, you have to go through a process and I have not seen that gentleman there anymore. But it is very difficult and it doesn't involve the community. Barbara. Somehow or another, we need to make the rodeo part of the venue to help people here in the community to involve 'em and give them an opportunity to set up a booth there so they can make a little money to themselves. It is a lot of money to be made, but it's only kept by a certain people.

([02:27:41](#)):

And I as a small businessman at the Mecado, when we started 45 years ago, 45 years ago, it was something like this. Everybody was biting for a bone they threw at us, but we fought and fought and finally we got the city council to recognize that we were not stepchildren,

that we were small business people that wanted an opportunity. So many efforts were tried to take over the Mercado by different people and we succeeded in blocking them. Today the Mercado is a flourishing place that's helping small business flourish. So I would like to see this happen here somehow or another. You got to make sure that you get the community that lives here into the picture and benefit from it. Otherwise it'll be like the Spurs, like you said, they come in to see game, they see Wemby, and pow! they take off and that is what we need to do. You have also one big, big attraction and that's Wemby. He can bring—if he comes here walking into this area and you tell 'em, you have a lot of people around here, so use the Spurs as much as you can. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

Commissioner Calvert ([02:29:05](#)):

Thank you. Give him a big round. Nick, I'm glad you brought that up. And I want to take a moment to pause and say that that is a concern of mine, that the small business people from the community are included in the rodeo. And trust me when I say that one of the goals as a person is to get more of our small business people selling jelly, selling, wood carving, selling whatever they have, barbacoa, whatever it is, barbecue, whatever it is, and as vendors so that they can have the dollar circulate there. And I think Cody will work with us on that. So we agree and we have to move that forward,

Nick Peña ([02:29:43](#)):

Do that and then you have succeeded in what you're doing.

Judge Rosie Speedlin-Gonzalez ([02:29:52](#)):

Good morning. Buenos dias, Rosie Speedlin-Gonzalez, here as a citizen and resident today. And Barbara Gervin-Hawkins, State Representative, is correct. This is an opportunity. Liz Franklin is correct to get it right and we can have all the economic development in the world, but it will not succeed without people power because people create that profit. And I sit front and center commissioner every day Monday through Friday and I watch every defendant that comes before me, a homeless person, an addicted person, a traumatized person, an unemployed person, an uneducated person. And they are filling up our courtrooms and our jails. And this community cannot go forward until we fix what is broken. We have a beautiful community. I will be living in this community 40 years this fall. I came here when I was 20 years old. I love this community and we want to see it flourish and we want it to be that beacon on a hill for the whole state of Texas and for the whole country.

[\(02:31:05\)](#):

But we can't move forward if you're not giving proper attention to what ails us. We can use this building for all of those things. We can provide education, we can provide treatment, we can provide housing, we can put a business center in there to help the small business owners. We can put in educational entities to teach people how to develop their own neighborhoods, how to lead, how to become educated. This is an opportunity and we can get it right, but we have to shift our priorities. Money doesn't make people happy. Just watch that documentary on all those millionaire lottery winners and see where they ended up. We have to be healthy in heart and mind. And without that, this community will continue to spiral downward. So please, Commissioner, reprioritize what's important, please State Rep, let's go to Austin and let them know we're here. We're not going anywhere. Remember we're from here and we have skin in this game. And to allow outsiders to come in and steer this to benefit them would be quite a travesty and a tragedy for Bexar County and San Antonio.

Commissioner Calvert ([02:32:29](#)):

Judge, judge, I want to thank you for that. To the point, as much as we hate to admit it, San Antonio has been run as an oligarchy forever. And that is why the poverty is so behind because the special interests have had their agenda taken care of while the poor working class have not. And so when I talk about what's in the core bailiwick of the county and having housing where justice involved people can live because they do struggle to have a place to live and sustain themselves. And every healthcare, mental healthcare and economic indicator says when someone is stabilized with a place to live, they have better educational attainment, they have lower crime, there's all kinds of things that happen as a benefit and the county can bring resources to those housing facilities that help keep the neighborhood right and safe and the people moving forward in their lives.

[\(02:33:33\)](#):

Those are the kinds of creative things that the oligarchy doesn't care about. They only care about making the highest market rate. I could have put 41 million to River East several years ago, but I chose not to because the county had no policy to help our neighborhood people with market rate, excuse me, with workforce housing and affordable housing. And I didn't want to gentrify the east side by putting River East in motion without the City and the County having a conversation about how do we keep people's property taxes in check? How do we help people who are existing not have the kind of burden of forcing out? So this too is on us as a challenge to take the core fundamental things the county should be doing, investing in people, keeping 'em out of their jail, right? Our jail is getting too full. So I really

appreciate you as a jurist coming to us and bringing us a reality because you're working yourself to the bone with a caseload that has thousands of people in it and we've got to get the rebalance, the equalization from the oligarchs to the people and I'm committed to that. Alright, let's go to the mayor.

Unknown ([02:34:48](#)):

With your permission, I have an urgent matter that I will ask that you and state Representative Hawkins please address. UTSA is as we speak, demolishing the interior of the Institute of Texan Cultures, which is now a state antiquities landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In Project Marvel, UTSA proposes to build a brand new hotel to host their program for students to learn the hospitality industry. That hotel is proposed to be built on land owned by saws where underground there is extraordinarily extensive and very expensive infrastructure. First of all, why does U-T-S-A-A university need a hotel that is located immediately adjacent to multiple other privately owned hotels that already are challenged by their occupancies? Why not reutilize the UTSA owned Institute of Texan Cultures building to begin their program teaching students about the hospitality industry? And also please invite SAS and CPS at some point to reveal what they project their costs would be to modify demolish, change and rebuild unseen infrastructure that is underground. And when we examine, if you have a citizens committee examine the return on investment, maybe the money that would have been spent for that would better be applied to things in this area around the Coliseum and the Frost Bank Center.

Commissioner Calvert ([02:36:53](#)):

Thank you. We can follow up on that. Thank you. Next speaker. Go ahead.

Jose Solan ([02:37:01](#)):

My name is Jose Solan. A lot of you people know me as CC'S dad. Okay? I was born in San Antonio on the west side. I left for 22 years while I served my country in the Navy where I finally retired. And it really hurt me to see when I came back that the west side of San Antonio is still at square one. Okay? We haven't moved. Okay. Besides being the commander of the local American GI Forum, Miguel Hernandez Junior Chapter, I also established a nonprofit. We started serving homeless veterans. We started in 1999 with a 501 C3. And we quickly expanded to serve the community, all the community. We quickly found out that veterans did not come alone. They had families, they had wives, they had children living out in the street. Well, we finally were granted a little community center at an apartment complex right next to Port SA.

[\(02:38:09\)](#):

Those residents, those residents are mainly migrants. And this kind of apartments are run by slumlords. They're run by slumlords and not only in Precinct one, but precinct two, precinct three, precinct four, and so forth. Okay? And that little community center, that little community center is right in the heart of Edgewood ISD. When we talk about small business, economic development, small nonprofits, you need to also consider the policies and the barriers that prevent this. Small nonprofits, small for-profit businesses to get certified. I don't know how many of you folks have gone through the Bexar County certification process, but it's a cluster. If you apply or for the city of San Antonio for a grant, you ought to see that ESAP system. It's slow as molasses. Okay? Now we played by the rules. We played by the rules and we also went to school. I graduated from St.

[\(02:39:23\)](#):

Mary's with the Vietnam GI Bill, but I've tried to retire, but I can't because there's always a need. There's always someone who is hungry and it really hurts me, especially when they're a veteran, especially a Vietnam veteran, which I am. And nothing is being done as the American GI Forum and Herme of San Antonio 501 (C)3. We collaborate as to how we can better service the community. For three years, we have been going before Commissioners Court, City Council, let us have a building. You talk about this Frost Bank being abandoned, drive up and down, General McMullen, nothing's being done. Commissioner's Court does not move. City Council does not move. And also on another note, I see that my time is right out for the Rodeo. I love what you said, born and raised here. I'm seventy-three years old. I've been to the rodeo one time. Why? It does nothing for me. I don't see any small vendors. And if you go out there, it costs you a good \$30 to buy a hamburger and a soda. So it doesn't make any sense. I'm saying go back to basics. Go back to basics. Ms. Hawkins, we need you up there to address veterans' issues. Okay? Not enough is being done on veterans' issues, homelessness, job markets and so forth. Okay? We need you to help swap businesses by breaking down all those complicated, not user friendly policies. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert [\(02:41:04\)](#):

Yeah, and I heard you're the second one who's talked about that. And I do believe from a solution standpoint, the county can work with groups like the Area Foundation to have a nonprofit accelerator just like we do a small business accelerator to help these niche nonprofits. And you've got to understand the County has had only a million dollars for nonprofits for 50 years and we've grown so much. We've got to be bigger than that. I'm sorry, go ahead. Go ahead.

Denise Gutierrez-Homer ([02:41:32](#)):

Thank you all for providing us an opportunity to speak to you. My name is Denise Gutierrez-Homer. I do live in District 2 and I do have a business in District 3 providing medical services to our furry family members. And one of the things I wanted to mention is I'm also a member of the board of Infuse SA, which we love to do our research on both City and County politics and our accounting and our expenditures regarding your taxes. And I'm saying your taxes because we're here in this district right now that are really concerned about where this possibly can go. We're talking about it as being a done deal. We need to go out and vote because the reality is that right now the Spurs has already proven to ourselves and to the community. Just a couple of years ago, they asked for more money from the city to build a gym on the north side, not in District 2 where they have their stadium, they're proving their worth.

([02:42:29](#)):

The fact is right now that we actually have more concerns regarding Mr. Avila not giving us all the information about who that marquee is, which is Frost Bank. Frost Bank is the second highest lien owner or bond issuer for Bexar County. Of course they're going to go ahead and put their marquee there on the stadium. They want to make sure they got their investment back. But when you think about it, one of the major influencers and corporations is San Antonio's HEB. They didn't even bother making a deal for that marquee. Why is that? We know that we're not the big players. And I'll tell you this because the reality is just in April of 2024, Missouri voters did not vote for two different stadiums. One for the Kansas Royals nor the NFL champions, the Kansas City chief, which hopefully they'll make it to the Super Bowl, but they voted down their two stadiums with the owners giving a billion dollars of their portion to help build the stadiums and the voters still voted it down.

([02:43:32](#)):

Those are major franchises. Those are winning teams right now. Those bring dollars to the community. What have the Spurs brought to us? We have nothing to show for it. And Cody, I do appreciate everything that you're doing. I love the history. I do go down to the west side to visit the ESAs. I love the Escaramuzas. That's my history. But we also know Texas history and unfortunately we're dealing with a lot of politics here in San Antonio that are trying to go ahead and remove part of that history with our agriculture and our horses. Right now we are looking at a situation that we're losing an opportunity right now because we are talking about housing, affordable housing. How many of you know the 100 labor right across the street on Durango from the Institute of Cultures, that San Antonio Housing Trust project has over a dozen investors right now using the affordable housing units for Airbnbs.

[\(02:44:38\)](#):

That's just one facility, one complex that we're funding with free taxes. Is that supposed to be going to residents? To the working families of San Antonio? Why is it that many of these complexes only built up to two bedrooms? That's a new family. Most are roommates, most actually might have an elderly parent living with them. But the reality is that we're not being truthful to our community because we know separately. Right now, I'm going to go into a little thing because I'm involved with the animal community because we have a hospital. Why is it that the county is not looking at the grounds of this facility where we host the rodeo to provide the county hospital instead of in Kirby? We're right next door to Kirby. We have plenty of land. We can have the county hospital here for animal services also facilitate the needs of the members of the community that our rodeo that might need them. We've actually housed some of those animals on my complex because there's an emergency. We provide services that close, but I'm pretty sure the Rodeo would appreciate to have some medical services and some more areas to go ahead and board some of their smaller animals on the premises of this county facility. So there's so much more and if you are going to include a committee, include all of us. I agree. And not just one side of the table.

So we would love to provide you more information because the reality is that we need to make sure that Mr. Avila shares all the information about our debt. Because a hotel tax and rental car tax that you're expecting to pay for this will literally draw people to Kendall County and to Comal County for cheaper hotel rates, for cheaper car rental rates. Don't expect us to cover it all because when that economy goes north, we will be left holding the bag.

Commissioner Calvert [\(02:46:31\)](#):

Thank you. Let me just say that in defense of Mr. Avila, that he's not our financial advisor at the county. He's bond counsel. So I have been asking our financial advisors how much is in the venue tax fund and I've been asking the County Manager that since November or December and I can't get an answer and that doesn't make any sense to me because if the bond rating agencies give us a AAA rating, they know Brother Martinez how much capacity we have to pay our debt and how much debt we have. So there's some weird thing going on where they will not tell me how much available capital is in the venue tax going forward for the next couple of decades. But we will bore into that like a pit bull, I promise you that. Alright, go ahead. Okay,

Washington Navarro [\(02:47:21\)](#):

Good. Good morning, good afternoon. At this time, my name is Washington and I live in the community. I live in district two. So a couple of things. I have three points. One is accountability, right? It is very easy to come to this microphone, embark to all of you. But I want to see all of you that in this size, in all the meetings and in all the different situations that happen across the city, because this doesn't take one meeting or two meetings that you very nicely put it together. It takes more. So we need to do our part and that comes accountability from your part and from our part. Then second is the leadership part. This is not about what I need. This is about what the community need. And the reason is because I'm very blessed that we go to another country is when the community work together and they have one vision.

[\(02:48:15\)](#):

And that vision is the people that live there because I'm tired of people's thinking that they need to save us. We work, we make money, we're retiring, we study, we produce, but then we go to expand our money on 1604 in other places we don't have the money to expand over here. So with that, I want to say that we should, in all the economic improving that you're trying to create, it should be major. How our way of living is improving because I am in the meetings, it's all about dollars. And the reason that works that way because that's what they ask you, I get it. But it also should be like, look, we are impacting this many people. These people are getting this many jobs. These people are open this many jobs. I don't want, and this is what I hear, I hear one side or the other one, we need the businesses.

[\(02:49:11\)](#):

You want to know how the economic development is going to work, live you life. You wake up, you brush your teeth where you buy that dental paste, you go to HEB, you need a supermarket, right? Then you have breakfast and you have coffee and then you spend money, then you go to work. Where do you work? Where you drive, you put gas, that's the money right there. All those little steps create money. So it's not one thing or another one, it's a community that we can rebuild, that we can rebuild. We're very blessed that we have a blank canvas right now. So from that part, I expect from all of you to have that leadership to take us there because if there's problems, that's what you get paid for. It's your job, but it's also our job and that's a part of accountability to tell you what we want, what we need and be part of it.

[\(02:50:02\)](#):

We cannot just come over here and complain about it and then go home and watch the Wheel of Fortune. This is about participating, volunteering, and say, this is what I need. No,

I'm serious about it. I see the progress in all the places you want to see it go to. Oh Brooks. Somebody had a vision, put it together. I don't understand how. And that's the part why we need to be part of this. We don't understand they're in front of line, the experts, but it's also our contribution to have these kinds of conversations. And that's what I want to say. Thank you very much. Very

Commissioner Calvert ([02:50:39](#)):

Good. And I think that the Brooks model is one that can be carved out in a super PID for this area, the super public improvement district is where we capture all the taxes from an area. Now the key is the land that's owned by the city and the county, the golf course and the coliseum that is not taxable. So we have to put into place lease agreements that in lieu of taxes, I want to keep the property owned by the county that the developer would have to pay the county a tax fee if you will. So in event, that's kind of where Brooks went on that. So let's go to the next person. I can't see who you are, but go ahead.

Dr. Cynthia McIntyre ([02:51:19](#)):

That's alright. I'm Dr. Cynthia McIntyre and I'm a landowner on the east side as well as on the northeast side. Born here in San Antonio, but I've worked extensively in Washington, DC Last position was at the Council on Competitiveness. I'd like for you to consider that when you formulate the request for proposals for the developers to respond to that, there be an explicit statement in there about the need for the developers to show partnerships here in San Antonio that have economic benefit for the community explicitly, and that they not just list organizations. I know this one and this one. That's not meaningful. There needs to be a memorandum of understanding between that developer or developers and the organizations with whom they have engaged in discussion about how things will move forward. So a memorandum of understanding can help to keep the developers feet to the fire, helps the partners, community organizations, churches, educational institution, business organizations have a way of saying, this is what you agreed to do with us and hold the developer's feet to the party. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert ([02:52:53](#)):

Well said. That's teeth in action. And I will say we'll look at in future meetings other communities. Look, we're not the first community to have an arena conversation. Atlanta and Battery Park is a good one. There's been a lot of new community millionaires that have been made out of those agreements and we need to look at those agreements and empower this community with how those follow through commitments. But your point is very well taken. Thank you Mau. Good to see you. How are you?

Mauricio Sanchez ([02:53:21](#)):

Good to see you. I'm doing well. My name is Mauricio "Mau" Sanchez. I'm actually in the race to become mayor this coming year. I know I'm limited on time. My messages isn't for Mr. Calvert--Commissioner Calver, I know your heart. This message is for the citizens of San Antonio. Everything that you guys are speaking, nobody has talked about throughout this whole campaign race. I joined the race late. I'm an investment advisor, but I've been analyzing economic and financial markets for the past 14 years of my career. San Antonio is dealing with an issue that can't be fought alone. We need to stand up and vote, but most of all, what's going on? Commissioner Calver talked about the oligarchy. It's very real and it's very prevalent in San Antonio. The truth is corporations have a fiduciary duty to their shareholders, not to people, not to citizens. Our City Council and our City Hall has a fiduciary duty for our citizens. The only way that this changes is if we bring strong leadership who understands the issue here. And I'll give you what the solution is, more private sector competition that will advocate for the movement of what needs to happen at the city level. There needs to be a mayor that is willing to put their neck out and negotiate for what the citizens need.

([02:54:44](#)):

We're the second biggest city in all of Texas by population and land mass, but we are the lowest income earners. I ask you to do a simple Google search or a simple chat GPT search of the Texas Metropolitan Cities and who is last? This is an issue. This is an economic issue. Guys. I need you to vote with your heart this coming year. I need you to dissect who is actually running, who has had the opportunity to change things in San Antonio but have refused to have those conversations. It's the most important part of where we're at as a city. If 2025 doesn't change economically, we will fail. And we've seen that because we absorb all the bust of the economy. Inflation still affects you all. But we never absorb and benefit the entire booms of the US economy because our economy is only diversified across five sectors.

([02:55:37](#)):

We need higher growth sectors that will produce jobs that will at the end of the day, help families pay for their expenses to be in the city. And from that, the backbone of our economy being small business will benefit as well. And there's policies that you could put in place at City Hall to protect that. That's what I represent. I hope you research me. I hope you look me up, Mau for mayor, MAU for mayor.com. Please take the time and try to make this as simple as possible through these videos, but please inform yourself on what's

happening here economically because this is an economic issue. Thank you Mr. Calvert. Alright,

Commissioner Calvert ([02:56:13](#)):

Thank you Mau. The next mayor is very important. That is true. Pastor, good to see you.

Rev. Herman Price ([02:56:20](#)):

Good morning to everybody. Morning to our elected officials and community. I'm Reverend Price. I've been pastoring in San Antonio for now 30 years, almost 31 years. I've given leadership to the Community of Churches for Social Action. I see they were on the prayer today. And so for 10 years with that group, I served as the vice chairman, seven years as the chairman. So in that 25 year existence, I've been in leadership. My mind goes back to ATT, when we built that thing. We were part of that conversation back then. Back then there was no real conversation about development on the east side. But out of that relationship, talking with the Spurs and being a part of that conversation, a number of our kids, black kids have benefited. The Rodeo, the livestock have given our community scholarships. Hundreds of kids have finished college and now have graduate degrees because of that relationship.

([02:57:24](#)):

And so I'm here to emphasize equity. Equity. We talk about a lot of things here today, but we don't make sure is that everybody benefit. Everybody must benefit. And we must hold our elected officials feet to the fire accountable when it don't happen. This just one of many meetings you guys have already had. So it's probably 10 o'clock we just getting here. Y'all had a number of meetings before you come to the public. And so it is a nice start. But we want to see in your plan where you make sure there's equity where we not just, it shouldn't be mystical. We should make sure we have some black owned contractors and businesses, black and brown people who are millionaires at the end of this. But that needs to be in your plan this morning, right? I don't need pickleball. I am doing okay. I can go there and do that myself. But what I want to see is our people really benefit. That's what I really want to see.

Commissioner Calvert ([02:58:42](#)):

Amen. Amen. I say amen. Pass the hat. How about that? Pass the plate. Alright, go ahead.

David Sherman ([02:58:49](#)):

Good afternoon everyone. My name is David Sherman. I'm a member of the San Antonio branch NAACP, where I serve as the Armed Services and Veteran Affairs Chair. Also, I am a marine retiree. I've been here for about almost 18 years now. And so I want to make a suggestion if it hasn't already been stated. I have some grandchildren and we used to love these, the Splashtown Waterpark and it had been here for so many years, way before our time, about 37 years. And we're talking about this space that may be available for some new economic for the city may be able to help this area here. But also I work on JBSA, Fort Sam Houston as a financial counselor. And I look at the different military folks who have to go to, what is it, SeaWorld, Six Flags. And so the kids in this area haven't got a chance to experience what I have.

[\(02:59:57\)](#):

And so I have to take my grandkids. There is a nice little splash pad over there by the Claude Black Center. But we used to really love the Splashtown I know some people got hurt, but this could be a very safe park. And it looks like that we may have some space. So I'm making an appeal for the children, also for the military folks that are in this area, apartments are going up everywhere. And in those apartments you've got families there. And so they want to take their kids somewhere close by and hopefully that this will be a suggestion that'll be looked at seriously and it could bring in some revenue to the area. So I am excited to see that land, maybe the golf course of these parking lots or whatever, have some type of water park for not just kids, maybe people like myself. That's a half a hundred. Alright, thank you.

Commissioner Calvert [\(03:00:50\)](#):

Thank you very much for coming and all your comments too. Councilman, we are very grateful to have you here, Councilman. Thank you so much for your leadership and we'll turn the floor over to you. We started on time and we will end either on time or early. I'm going to just say this parenthetically, I'm going to need my team to get me out the door because I've got to moderate a program with Nelson Mandela's jail guard in just a few minutes. So I cannot talk afterwards. Like everybody wants to run up and ask me for things. I've got to get out of here. So go ahead, Councilman.

Councilman Jalen Mckee-Rodriguez [\(03:01:20\)](#):

Thank you so much, Commissioner and thank you for organizing this and thank you all for being here. I know it's a Saturday morning the afternoon and you all have been here patient and listening, and I've been very inspired to hear the challenges that you've given us and also to hear your ideas and hear your feedback. I think it's very important. It's critical. I think

back to the groundbreaking of the now Frost Bank Center, and I was a five-year-old child and I hear about the promises that were made and the promises that have been broken since that—sorry, I'm losing my voice—that's an ongoing thing that we, we've talked about for years is that every stadium, every arena, how many arenas, how many stadiums can we have and how many times can we hear that they're going to bring this and do that? And they don't. We know the research, and it was said earlier, the research is done. This happens in every other major city in the country. The research shows that the stadiums alone, the arenas alone, are not going to bring revitalization of communities. We have how many here?

[\(03:02:25\)](#):

Three? We have four? And it's not doing anything anywhere. And so one thing I've learned, and I think one of the reasons why those promises that were made have fallen through, is that you cannot force people who do not care about you to invest in you. And I'm going to say it again because we're talking about private interests. We're talking about private developers. We're asking them to bring restaurants and shops and amenities that they've never done before. You cannot force people who do not care about you to invest in you. And so when we talk about back when the community was thriving and there were businesses and there were folks from Germany and it was a more mixed community and it wasn't as black as it is now, those folk leave. So do the businesses. You cannot force people to invest where they do not care.

[\(03:03:18\)](#):

And so any promises that are made have to come with immediate—It has to be immediate. I need to see the plan. I need to see what money are you going to put in right now to make that happen? And I want to say the Spurs, it does hurt. I imagine it hurts them to hear, oh, the Spurs have done nothing for me. We've seen the basketball court at Davis Middle School, we've seen the tickets they give away. They do some, but this is a billion dollar company, billion dollar company. And I think that by now, the community expects a lot. We're owed it a lot. And so when the Rock at La Cantera was proposed, I was the only council member who voted no for this development. And we're looking at now the Missions Stadium, and I was one of two council members I believe who voted against.

[\(03:04:11\)](#):

And what I want to convey is that when you're a perpetual no, so I'm going to, I hope Representative Hawkins likes this. What I've learned is when you are perpetual, immediate, no, people don't want to give you what you, they're not going to compromise with you. You're a no. They're going to get their votes on. And so I want to get to the point where this vision, this idea, this thing that we saw at Project Marvel, I remember the first time I saw the

presentation and I said, man, it really, it's beautiful and it really hurts and it sucks. And I can't imagine what it's going to be like when we show the community for the first time. Because why is it that it takes this to get this level of thought and care and planning? Why did we never get this around the Frost Bank Center? And so any vote that we take oligarchs, right? And so anything that happens, my expectation is we get that level of care and planning that's going around the convention center, that's going around the Alamodome, that's going around the highway. That level of planning and care needs to happen right here

[\(03:05:26\)](#):

We can't expect the private interests who do not care about us to do it for us. We can't bring another arena. We can't bring another stadium and expect that something magical was going to happen when we have evidence that that magic does not exist. And so what you have for me is a commitment. I'm not going to be a perpetual no, but I hope you're reading between the lines. We have high expectations here for what's going to happen. This is a lot of money we're talking about. And again, I hope, I don't mean to preach, and I don't mean to stand up here for too long, but when we have this past budget cycle, we are talking about a deficit. Where are we going to cut money from? And there's not enough money to get a CS animal care services, the resources they need to respond to a hundred percent of calls to get the stray and roaming animals off of our street. There's not enough resources to get the housing and resource and outreach to support the people who are living on the street right now, endless money to sweep 'em away until they come back and sweep 'em away again. Like garbage. Endless money for that. And it's a shame

[\(03:06:39\)](#):

Not enough. At one point we had 77 miles of failing streets in District 2. The most of any council district, 17% of our streets failing. And we don't have enough money to deal with that, to deal with, to do the drainage projects that are needed to protect our, and preserve our streets, streets to rehabilitate them. We don't have the money for that. But magically, whenever there is a stadium, an arena, some sort of major development that could happen, we have ideas. We have ideas of where this money can come from and it's always going to be on the backs of our constituents. And I reject that. And I know listening to all of you, you reject that as well. I think we can get something fantastic out of this. I think we have an opportunity to rectify and get justice for a situation that we have been wronged and we've been perpetually wronged.

[\(03:07:29\)](#):

And so while I will not be a perpetual "no," I will be hard and my standards are as high as yours if not higher. And so I want to thank y'all so much for being here. I've really enjoyed

listening to you all. It's been really affirming. I can't tell you how crazy I feel sometimes on council when I'm the only, it feels like I'm the only person saying these things. And I come here and you are all saying it and that my heart is full right now. So thank y'all. Please carry this fight forward. And I'm here.

Commissioner Calvert ([03:08:02](#)):

Listen, I want the Councilman to stay up with me real quick because we have to work together and we have to work with you and you have to back us up and we'll back you up. Now, let me give you some hope. Some of y'all I'm hearing out in the community are saying this is a done deal. Let me remind this community of your history. There was an Alamo College District bond that you voted down, you sent back and you got it right. You remember that? Well, I was one of the little campaign managers for that working with State Rep. Ruth McClendon, Constable Blunt and Commissioner Atkinson and Joy McGee and Netty Hinton. And you know what we did? We went to the north side to District nine Neighborhood Alliance. We went to District 10, Northeast Neighborhood Alliance and District eight. And we made common calls and we said that you invest where you have infrastructure, where you've already built your schools at San Antonio College and St.

[\(03:08:55\)](#):

Phillips, and where you already have hundreds of millions of bond projects that have gone forward and you improve on the investments you've already made. And the whole district eight, nine, and 10 voted with us. So the calculation today is that if we just keep this an east side thing, we'll just roll you over and we'll get what we want. But we actually have done this before. CCSA, Reverend Thurman Walker, TC Calvert Senior, we've actually done this before. So I know that playbook and you know that playbook. So we should be able to walk in with confidence that when the community asks for things and doesn't see the follow through this time we do have leverage. It's not a done deal. So just remember that I'm on my way out. I think we should adjourn and thank all of our speakers. Thank yourselves for a very constructive real town hall. How about that in San Antonio, about time. We'll have to go next week. There's a lot to go over next week. I won't tell you the whole agenda, but we will email everyone the whole agenda. I hope you signed in because there's a lot more things to go over in this contract. Thank you very much.

Transcript of Second Town Hall – February 1, 2025

Commissioner Tommy Calvert (00:02:23):

Good morning. You have an agenda. Thank you brother. Let's have them turn that music down. Very good. Well good morning everyone. Thank you so much for coming. We plan to start on time and it is 10 o'clock, so thank you for coming to the second town hall. For those of you who were not able to come to the first town hall, it is on the Tommy Calvert for County Commissioner's Social media. You can see the entire three hours and the comments from the community yourself about what exactly would like to see if the Spurs move and this town hall is an opportunity to talk about general issues. If you feel that money should be used on other things, it is okay to say that as well. We will hear all of that because sometimes it's possible to incorporate those ideas into the future of the Frost Bank Center.

(00:03:19):

I'm Tommy Calvert, Bexar County Commissioner for Precinct Four, which includes the Frost Bank Center and the downtown area where a potential proposed site for a new arena is. We have a bevy of very good presentations, but our format will follow the same that we did last week where we will start after our invocation with two citizens to give their comments. We will allow a point of personal privilege. If you're on a roll being substantive, we will extend that time because your input is very important. But we do have a three hour time period. We're here till one o'clock. We want to make sure everyone is heard. So with that, I want to give an important update on Tuesday. This Tuesday, the Commissioners Court, the County Judge has asked that he be given the power to negotiate with the Spurs on the new arena. So that agenda item is actually coming very fast.

(00:04:22):

So it is important to hear that your recommendations will be provided in a report with policy recommendations to the Commissioners Court, to the Spurs, and I will operate in the same way. I have that as the representative of this community. I will make sure that your issues are heard. And so we're going to start off with an invocation from Bishop Rosa Wilson. I wanted Bishop Rosa Wilson to come and give us an invocation because she really talked to us about the most important thing and that's investing in each other last week. And I think prayer to help ensure that our greatest resource come up on up, coming up to the top and come right up to the mic that our people are invested in, not just buildings. Thank you Bishop Rosa Wilson. Give her a big round of applause. Thank you.

Bishop Rosa Wilson ([00:05:20](#)):

Good morning. Good morning. This is a great day to have a town hall meeting. I'm glad to see so many faces, but let's give God a hand praise. I have to give him the glory. Come on, can we praise him? And let's give our hosts Commissioner Tommy Calvert, for putting this together with all the dignitaries that all the speakers that are here, and I can't forget my big brother, TC Calvert, Sr. back there. Give him some love. It's always good to see family and friends and community. So, I'm, I'm going to touch and pray, touch heaven and I ask that each and every one of you join in with me on this morning because we are here for a very, very important situation. Do you all agree? Shall we all pray to Heavenly Father, we come this morning for this is the day that the Lord has made.

([00:06:24](#)):

We just want to say thank you Heavenly Father. We need you this morning. We love you in all things you say, give thanks for this is the will of God concerning us. We here at the east side, the city of San Antonio, the community. Now Father, we pray today because the Frost Bank or the Frost Building, we have to make a decision if that be your will that the Spurs move. We are here to hear the citizens of the community. We are here to hear what the dignitaries have to tell us. But Lord, we want to make sound decisions. And you say to not only just be hearers of your word, but to be doers. This is a time to be heard, but yet a time to do some things, to change some things for the betterment. Father, we don't want to do anything without you, but we know Philippians 4 through 13 says, we can do all things through your son Jesus who strengthens us.

([00:07:26](#)):

So now Father, let us hear with attentive ears on this morning. Let us hear the dignitaries, the panels, let us hear the citizens to be heard. Let us speak with clarity of speech and thought. And Father, let us take it to heart that we will make the right decisions. You said if we delight ourself in you that you will give us the desires of our hearts. So we hear the community, we have desires God for the betterment of our community, that our people will be able to stand up and prosper and have good hope and cheer that they feel great about themselves and that for generations and generations to come that nothing shall die, but we shall live through you. In Jesus' name we pray, can we give God a Holy Ghost praise. Amen. Can we give God a Holy Ghost praise. Amen. Thank you Commissioner.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([00:08:24](#)):

Congratulations on another successful MLK March pre-program, Bishop. Thank you for your leadership in the community. We're going to have ground rules laid out by Ramon Chapa.

Then we're going to open it up to two audience members to speak. We will have the Freeman Coliseum needs outlined by Derrick Howard. Now, we had a conversation last week about a great vision that could be established and many of you contributed to that, but of course when identifying needs, there are things like your HVAC that has to be replaced, your fixtures have to be replaced, your electrical, your plumbing, all of those things. We need to make sure that the County, you the taxpayer, have invested \$300 million in these expo halls and this coliseum and in this Frost Bank Center and it has to be maintained for decades or we have to have an honest conversation. Are we going to just transition so that we don't have a dead carcass of an Astrodome sitting here for decades?

[\(00:09:24\)](#):

Do we just need to put a dynamite stick in it and start over with something new? Derrick Howard will talk to us about pedestrian bridges and other kinds of needs for the Coliseum and the Frost Bank grounds as he's the executive director here. We'll go back to citizen input at that point. We have been asked and we have put on COPS/Metro Alliance leaders that will be speaking here. We'll go back to the people's comments after that and then we're going to have a powerful video that you don't want to miss on the impact of these traffic cones that have been pushing people in and out and denying economic opportunity for so long. And it will illustrate in great detail the difference between what San Antonio does versus Dallas, what San Antonio does versus Los Angeles. It's starkly different. I put out a very clear gauntlet that for the remainder of the term that the Spurs are here, we need to have those cones removed so that economic development can flow in this community. You'll understand why those of us from the East Side, we understand what's going on. So then after that we will have citizen input and we're going to hear from small business people today and we're going to hear how the obstacles are in terms of if there is an arena, how do they need to be included in that regard. So with that Ramon Chapa, the agenda's been set. We now have the ground rules.

Ramon Chapa [\(00:11:02\)](#):

Alright, good morning. Thank y'all for being here today, taking the time for caring about your community. We appreciate you. My name is Ramon Chapa, Jr. Director of Committee Engagement and Security for Commissioner Tommy Calvert. So let me lay out the ground rules here for today. Hopefully everybody will be respectful of the rules. One, participate with intention. I would like to encourage you to pay attention to what this meeting was designed to address. Listen to what is discussed and ask questions to help you understand when it's your turn to speak. Share what you think in a constructive manner. Speak your mind from your heart. Leaving anything unsaid is not helping anyone. Meetings are convenient to accomplish specific goal objectives and we're eager to hear your best

thinking about how to accomplish these objectives. Two, appreciate the diversity of perspectives. Everyone brings kernels of wisdom based on their own unique history and experiences.

[\(00:11:58\)](#):

We can't not understand what someone else thinks unless we listen to them. We cannot have a full picture until everyone has had a chance to contribute. All perspectives are valid. When someone says something that challenges your thinking, listen to understand why they think as they do. This town hall style meeting was not designed to support an argument. It was designed to support learning together and the creation of shared understanding of how we collectively see this topic. Three, maintain a respectful space. It will be my job to maintain a respectful space but that job is much easier if we ask the participants to help. Everyone is deserving of respect. That means we all need to treat each other with kindness and respect. It also means that we all need to avoid distractions. So please don't do anything that will prevent others from hearing whoever's speaking. In addition, please silence your mobile phones. Better yet, turn off your technology and focus your attention on the room and on the topics at hand. So we invite, invite you all to agree to comply and thank you for helping us in enforcing the rules. There will be a timer that'll be going off two minutes when you come up to speak. You have two minutes. Please respect the Commissioner's wish for two minutes and others, all the people here can have a chance to speak so God bless y'all. Let's have a great meeting. Thank y'all.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(00:13:29\)](#):

Alright. At the request of citizens, because you felt oftentimes you're not actually heard, we welcome you to the mic. If someone wants to give their comments about how they feel about anything, we welcome you. Now we'll take these first two. Go ahead.

Jesse Medeles [\(00:13:43\)](#):

Okay, so who's the Spurs or who

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(00:13:48\)](#):

Spurs representative, where are you? There is a Spurs representative. They're there. Okay. You want to come up but we can, it doesn't work there. Sure. Can we get the mic corrected and turn this up? It sounds like I can hear it now. Thank you.

Jesse Medeles [\(00:14:00\)](#):

Should I turn around or am I good? Okay. I have a few questions first.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert (00:14:07):

Sure. We'll ask you to just who speaking and who Represen. Got it. Fair enough.

Jesse Medeles (00:14:16):

Hi, my name is Jesse Medeles. I'm a Latin artist, also an actor. I live in the community. I'm part of the United Homeowners Association. I am the community and I said this last week, I'm going to start off with that. If you do not live in the community, you shouldn't be making decisions. What's going to happen in the community? I am very disappointed. I'm disappointed in the Spurs.

(00:14:41):

Oh, I'm disappointed in the Spurs for the reason that I felt they failed us. They come well now they want a new arena but they failed all the promises they did to this African-American community. Now, eclectic community, I don't know if y'all know the history of our neighborhood, the Willow Wood Estates. It was where back in the day it was segregated where some of the most wealthiest African-Americans lived in the community. We have lawyers, doctors, we had the State Representative. We have tons of people there now. It's extremely eclectic. I feel they have been super disrespected by the Spurs wanting a freebie. They came, failed us, now want to leave an arena off the backs off of us. They're all millionaires. Y'all pay for it. Y'all want something. I believe that if y'all don't want to be here, leave, but you guys pay for it or pay this community royalties. And so that's just me from the United Homeowners Association. Thank you.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert (00:15:41):

Okay, thank you for coming.

Rose Hill (00:15:44):

Good morning everybody. My name is Rose Hill and I'm President of Government Hill Neighborhood Association. Commissioner Calvert, I appreciate these community meetings that have been called and given us an opportunity to voice concerns and what we would like to see on the Frost Arena. If the Spurs leave, I want to make sure, and I'm sure that many here do also, that these two meetings that we are engaged in are not lost in the negotiations with the Spurs and that what we have shared these two days are included in these negotiations. Are you going to be working on the negotiations and representing the County in the meetings with the Spurs? There is no one else from the Commissioners Court or County staff that has been here for these sessions and listen to the concerns of the community. You are our Commissioner for Precinct Four and the Commissioner over the

grounds and our neighborhoods. We want assurances that you are in the room because then we know that these meetings are impactful. Can you assure us, Commissioner Calvert, of your participation on working with Spurs to an agreement so that the voices here on the east side for once and for all can be heard because there's been too many promises and they have been broken. Please give us hope. Thank you.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([00:17:03](#)):

Well, let me answer your question. I did request when I was given a briefing this week by the County Manager that there was going to be an executive session item on Tuesdays Commissioners Court agenda. I did call the County Judge. I said I have heard from neighborhood presidents that there is a trust issue with leaving me out of these conversations and I think in the best interest of moving the community forward, I need to be a part of taking the conversations we've had in the town halls and the detail knowledge that I have of the local area to these conversations. At that time there was an okay but when I followed up in writing with my chief of staff, I asked my chief of staff to just make sure that the agenda item was changed. I was informed by the County Judge's chief of staff that there will be no change to just the County Judge being the negotiator.

([00:18:04](#)):

So at this point I cannot guarantee you that I will be there. What they have said is that they are planning to go in some sort of shuttle diplomacy to all of the Commissioners. So what I can say and will end this particular meeting with is the fact that your recommendations, this community, every speaker who has said something, there will be a policy recommendation on what you have said that will be filed as a report with the Spurs and with the County Judge and with the rest of the Commissioners Court and you the community so that we have a written document of your request in your needs. With that, thank you for those first two, we're going to turn it over to Derrick Howard, you may take the podium sir and you probably have a PowerPoint we need to get teed up. Thank you Derrick. Thank you. Appreciate it.

Derrick Howard, Freeman Coliseum ([00:18:59](#)):

First of all, I thank everyone, Commissioner, for your leadership and everyone for taking the time out to come out today. I want to start on a little bit of a high note and then we'll dig into numbers and information and all the challenging positions that we have going forward as a community to try to make sure that as long as we are here with these facilities on this side, on this east side, we have the least disruption for our community and the most progressive support for additional economic development and other opportunities for this community

as well. So you would have a video that I'll run and this one is just to kind of get everyone set on what we do around here. Our business is a business of entertaining. Our business is a business of keeping people happy, educating people and members. So I have a quick video I'll share and

[\(00:22:45\)](#):

That video actually was meant to set up exactly what we tried to do with assets. That video is actually a culmination of many activities that have gone on over the past years for many members of our community have been able to come out and enjoy the entertainment and all the success that we've been able to host here on the grounds. Obviously that video couldn't have happened without funding and support for these projects. And so as you think about the cost of these facilities anymore, nothing is cheap but I want to be real clear about it. In this business, in these arenas or in these expedition halls or in these Frost Bank Centers, nothing is cheap. So one of the things as you look at the Frost Bank building, we have a building that's turning 25 years old just like your house, just like your car, that little light comes on and it says it's time to change the oil or that little light comes on and your roofer says, "Hey, it's time to change the roof."

[\(00:23:43\)](#):

That little light comes on in and your IT guy comes and says, "Hey, you don't have enough bandwidth to make sure that you have the appropriate support for what you need." Every one of those issues that come up is a *chaching* and a *chaching* and a *chaching*. And so from that perspective, I want to make sure that everyone is clear that as we're moving forward and as the Commissioner is negotiating with the Spurs and others for the County, we will definitely have to make sure that we, what I call, cover home base first. So, we have assets here, we have the Freeman, we have the Frost Bank Center. So those buildings would definitely have to be sure that we keep those buildings in a what we call quality arena standard. So my job effectively is to make sure that we are continuing to make sure that the buildings manage and operate in a quality arena standard.

[\(00:24:33\)](#):

I will say this, I've given the Spurs some credit. They have done a pretty good job over the years in maintaining the building. However, they're just expenses like AC units when they turn 25 years old, no one can stop 25 years from happening. No one can stop a 25-year-old roof from happening. No one can stop a 25-year-old data and digital center. And so those are going to be the costs associated with what we will be experiencing next. Commissioner also mentioned doing things to help promote for more accessibility and ease of access for the site. So we've been looking at potential plans and ways to bring in what we call street

bridges or crossover. And so many of you know that when you come to a Spurs game, everything is done on the street level. So many venues around the country created these crossover bridges that allow for people to go up and over and it's less disruption for the community.

[\(00:25:33\)](#):

So one of the things that you'll find about that, kind of getting back to the Commissioner's point, I'm sure he'll show you more later, is that every second that you're having to stop is a second that gets pushed back into being late for the not getting there on time, being frustrated. All those things are part of where we're trying to fix and we're looking at. One thing I want to speak about specifically is technology. Everybody—I didn't bring my phone—everybody has a cell phone and I would imagine that you probably replace your cell phone at least every three to four years. And so it's no different than with all of our technology or video boards. Our televisions inside both the ATT center and the Freeman that these components, they also have an end of life. So, the moment these things kind of run into their cycle of being used to a degree that it's time to replace it, and what's happening in many cases, and this is just a fact, we replaced the video board in the Frost Bank Center about 10 years ago when we did the second layer of funding.

[\(00:26:49\)](#):

10 years later the company that actually made those centers no longer is making the product that actually supports both the back of house as well as the front of house as well as the video monitors that that will keep those video monitors working. And so there will be an ongoing cost associated with continuing to make sure that we do everything we can figure out how to keep that building operating at a high level. There's also an assumption that between now and the next five years, I don't want to get too far into it and obviously once there's a deal that'll be made, it takes about 36 months or so to build the building. It takes about a year or so to negotiate the terms and so there's still four years into the process. So with that four years being kind of a guarantee, there still has to be some funds spent in that building as well as this building to make sure that we get through the next 15 years. So more of that will be coming. Anything else, commissioner?

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(00:27:54\)](#):

The cost, give us numbers.

Derrick Howard, Freeman Coliseum [\(00:27:57\)](#):

So, the unique thing about cost is that there are several buildings in the country right now that are having these conversations. You guys may have heard about Oklahoma City. Oklahoma City went through a scenario whereby they were looking to either rebuild their arena, renovate it or build a new one. So they decided to rebuild their arena or build a new one I should say that's going to be at the cost for them at about a billion dollars. The Cleveland Cavaliers, they decided to go a different route. They decided to go in and do a major rehab to their facility, get it up to speed. That cost came in at about \$250 million if I'm not mistaken. And so the price is anywhere from I would say 175 to 250 on reno. Obviously a billion to 1.4 billion to build an arena.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([00:28:58](#)):

Okay, thank you Derrick. Thank you very much. Thank you very much Derrick. We'll open it back up to participants. We're sorry we got a standing room only, but we're thankful that you're here. We'll keep the program moving. Is there other citizens that want to be heard? Do you have two minutes and please come to the mic the first two and then we'll get back into the next presentation.

Speaker 9 ([00:29:21](#)):

Good morning commissioner. About Spurs thing at the last meeting that I came.

([00:29:29](#)):

My name's Adrian Flores, I'm with Tejano Democrats at D 26 and I'm also part of the Alta Vista Homeowner Association. So I live in District 4, it's just on the other side of 281. Okay, I want to tell you all guys about revitalization of your neighborhoods that y'all want that comes at a price. I got three houses over there in Alta Vista and I'm paying \$25,000 a year in taxes alone because my neighborhood is an up and coming neighborhood. So if you don't want that realization, it comes with a price. I'm going to tell you right now, okay, about the Spurs.

([00:30:13](#)):

I don't think these tax payers here in San—Bexar County are going to go for a billion dollar facility. I'm sorry. They're just not going to go for it. Okay. But I'll tell you a solution for it and that's going to have to come with the City and the County. We need to partner up with the San Antonio Spurs that we're going to keep 'em and build a new facility for 'em because that tax dollar from the alcohol and the hotels, they ain't going to cut it not for a billion dollars. We need to be a part of the San Antonio Spurs. We have supported this team forever and

ever and ever since I was a kid, I was a ball boy for the Spurs. It's about time we get a piece of the action like other cities have done it. Okay, thank you. Thank you for your comment.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([00:31:03](#)):

Equity comment. Yes sir. Thank you for coming.

Ruben Arciniega ([00:31:06](#)):

Thank you. My name is Ruben Arciniega. I am a stakeholder on the East Side, a small business owner. Obviously he's a resident of the east side. My family has a 300 year history here on the east side. So we've seen all the different ideas, the different promises, the different successes, the different failures as we all have. It's not exclusive just to our family. No. What I will say is this, at the end of the day, it is going to cost us money in order for us to get a so-called Project Marvel. And what I say is this, if we do that, all we're doing is once again kowtowing and falling to the ideas of these so-called promises that have never done what they say they were going to do. And so to Mr. Monroe's point, he said in 25 years, so are you telling me in

Unknown ([00:31:51](#)):

25 years we're going to need another project Marvel,

Ruben Arciniega ([00:31:54](#)):

Another Project Marvel in 25 years? Is that what we're saying? Because then what's the point of this meeting? In other words, you're going to say this, you're going to want public lands. Then remember, the community: these are your lands, these are your properties. This doesn't belong just to the County. This doesn't belong just to the City. So you have to understand the authority and power that you do have and with meetings like this we're able to express that but more so than that, it was disappointing Mr. Calvert and not do any fault of your own that you won't be allowed at the meetings to decide the fate of the so-called East side in which is where we live.

([00:32:27](#)):

And now for those of you who say, well he's against development or look, I say this, you don't agree with what I'm saying because either you don't live here, you don't care or you just want to line your pockets. Let's be honest about how that works. Enough with this so-called you want to elevate and enhance and make the neighborhood better. No you don't. What you want to do is enrich yourselves. You've always done that and you'll continue to do

that unless we make a stop. So please community, remember that you have the power and continue doing so. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert (00:32:59):

We're going to go into, we've only got two so we'll have to have you sit for just a second, but we'll get you up next Reverend Littlefield. But we are going to ask Reverend James Emerson, Sonya Rodriguez, they're going to be joined by a number of leaders from COPS Metro. They have a presentation that they would like to make. Thank you very much. Please give them a round.

Sonia Rodriguez, COPS/METRO (00:34:12):

Can we have the COPS/Metro leaders come forward please.

(00:34:51):

Good morning. My name is Sonia Rodriguez and I am a COPS/Metro leader from St. Margaret Mary's Catholic Church, a resident of the southeast side and a member of District 4, Commissioner's district. We want to thank you Commissioner for holding a town meeting because this is one of the few times that the public has actually had an opportunity to have a voice in what's happening with Project Marvel and the Spurs Arena and I want to thank the COPS leaders for joining us this morning to support our position. COPS/Metro is made up of 33 institutions across Bexar County and we're here to say today that we are opposed to the use of the county venue tax to build a third arena for the Spurs owners. We're opposed to Project Marvel. The taxpayers are being asked to sign a blank check to the organization having never seen a detailed plan, not knowing how much the owners are going to pony up for this project and not even knowing what the basic cost of the entire project is going to be. Nobody has been able to give us a response to that and why should we build a third arena for the Spurs? The lack of transparency so far has been beyond the pale. It's bad enough that the city of San Antonio has negotiated on behalf of taxpayers under a cloak of secrecy and hidden behind non-disclosure agreements,

(00:36:27):

But they didn't even bother to include the Bexar County Commissioners Court and yet the county commissioners were the ones who were expected to move immediately to force a public vote in May to approve the entire venue tax to pay for the arena. COPS/Metros is absolutely not. No. Don't be fooled into thinking that the tax is only being paid by people visiting San Antonio. That's what they've been telling us, right? Oh, it's a hotel tax and it's a car rental tax, but folks who paid for those hotels to come here, where did the subsidies

come from? Who was it that paid for those folks to come here and start their businesses? It's you, the taxpayers. It's all of us. We've been paying upfront for this for a long time. I'll tell you the one thing that we do know that a new downtown arena will bring and that's an increase in our property taxes for both homeowners and small businesses, especially those closest to downtown. The good news is that the venue tax can be used for so many other needed things beyond another arena. In 2008, the venue tax was used to improve the San Antonio River. It was used to build soccer and baseball fields for our kids. It was used to build performing arts and cultural facilities and yes, it was used to improve at that time the AT&T Center. The venue tax is public tax dollars and folks we're the ones that need to decide how it's going to be used. Not private equity firms outside of Texas.

Mike Philipps, COPS/METRO ([00:38:36](#)):

I am Mike Phillips, COPS/Metro leader with First Unitarian Universalist Church. The Spurs investors have been getting an incredible deal from Bexar County over the years. In 2002, 176 million in venue tax money was used to build the AT&T Center with only 28.5 million added by the Spurs. And in 2008, another a hundred million was spent on improvements. The Spurs' owners are supposed to be paying back the taxpayers by giving 20% of all profits back to the city as rent. Well guess how much they've paid? Zero. They game the deal and claim that since 2002 they've made zero in profits. The millionaire owners have also invested nothing in the community around the Frost Bank Center. In the middle of the pandemic, the Spurs owners even charged the city several hundred thousand dollars in rent when the city needed to use the arena to address the major public health crisis. In October 2023, the Spurs received another generous city county tax abatement for their Victory Capital Performance Center at the Rock at La Cantera. Now the Spurs' owners, the wealthy investors who own and control the team, want the entire venue tax that could add up to a billion dollars or another new arena that will compete for events with both the Alamodome and the Frost Center. This proposal for a new arena is just another bad deal for taxpayers. We shouldn't even be talking about it.

Elaine Harris, COPS/METRO ([00:40:37](#)):

Good morning. My name is Elaine Harris and I'm a member of St. Paul United Methodist Church and a COPS/Metro leader. I'm also a product of the East Side. My grandparents are one of the original owners of Willow Wood, which is where I now live today. I grew up here on the east side and spent a lot of time in the Wheatley Courts because my great-grandmother lived on Arthur Walk. I experienced the change over the years including the demise of the Wheatley Courts, Sutton Homes and East Terrace. I was later when the East Side Promise was proposed and my family was one of the first to move into East Meadows

on the corner of Walters and Hayes. It felt good to be back on familiar grounds. One night, as I was sitting in my room—we lived on the third floor on the corner of Hudson and Hayes—I watched this young man get murdered not too long after my youngest son, who is now 16, was taking the trash out shots ringing out. I see my baby ducking between cars, a parent's worst nightmare. The promises that were made for a better environment, better safety, and to bring pride back to the east side by rebuilding and remaking better resources available felt like it was never fully realized. And I've been a Spurs fan for life, even when I was stationed in Oakland and as a child when we were stationed overseas. The Spurs have never left my heart, but I feel really let down. The east side doesn't need a new stadium. We need long-term investment.

Terrence Littlefield, COPS/METRO ([00:42:37](#)):

Good morning to everyone. My name is Terrence Littlefield and, as well as Elaine, the product of the east side and like the progressive commercial: I'm trying not to be like my dad. I'm being like my dad in this instance. Yes you did. You put me up to it. So the divestment that the Spurs have taken on in terms of our community has been long standing. There has been no engagement with the Spurs other than a few sprinkles here and there. And those people that in the audience can very well attest to the space that we sit in and it's a day-to-day thing that we're dealing with. It's not a Spurs every other day we're going to the Spurs to pay a thousand dollars. I took my dad to the game the other day and I spent a thousand dollars. That's not what this community was built on.

([00:43:28](#)):

That's not what this community has stood for. And the fact that we have lost schools, the fact that we've lost just so many things that would move our individuals, our kids, I have a 2-year-old on the back, believe it or not, and what community does he belong to? Where is he to grow up and have parks? Where is he to grow up to have sound educational opportunities, the high rates of violence. Like Elaine said, I stayed in East Meadows when the promise was a promise and the divestment was taken away from us simply by having more and more people. That caused a lot of issues there, but the city, the county, it was a lack of participation and so I'm asking for the City, the County to participate in a way in which is unique to make sure that the Spurs are held accountable. As Sonya said,

([00:44:23](#)):

the transparency that has been a part of, I shouldn't say the transparency, the lack of transparency that has been a part of what the Spurs have done, the owners have done, it's an atrocity, but yet we're a victim. It's an I thing. I think now where people say, I've done this, I've done this, but really it's a community and the community is here today to say that the

Spurs have to be held accountable, not the jobs in the parking lot. And not to say that that's a bad job, but we need real economic jobs to get to where individuals can take care of a family and be a part of the community in a rightful way. So we're asking that you in whatever you can do, Commissioner Calvert, who ideally appreciate Jaylen and all that you've done, and those members that have served, who have worked at Bibliotech, the community.

[\(00:45:17\)](#):

So we would like for you to make sure that you hold the Spurs accountable. That money is taken in the real consideration to where we can do certain things. We talked about the food deserts, the high increase of crime. I too saw that young man that lost his life in the middle of the street when the parents, all they could do was just cry. We don't want to cry no more. We want to be a part of a community that is doing something. We want the economic growth that happens on Southwest Military, the kind of growth that happens in La Cantera, can we stand up and not divest in all of what we've accomplished? This is my little man and so what do we do? What do we do for this one? I ask that we take this into consideration. Thank you.

Pastor James Emerson, COPS/METRO [\(00:46:22\)](#):

Good morning. Morning. My name is Pastor James Emerson and I am the senior pastor of St. Paul United Methodist Church and a COPS/Metro leader. St. Paul United Methodist Church is the oldest African-American congregation organized in San Antonio in 1866. So I am not here just as a steward of my church, but also as one of the stewards of the east side. But you see, I've been an east side resident all of my life, but as a 160-year-old pillar in the community, I want to talk to you about quality of life for the east side. Jeremiah 29:7 says, seek the welfare of the city and I am here to demand that investment for the east side. Clearly, I'm aware that Jeremiah was talking to an exiled tribe in the Old Testament, but I'm talking prophetically in 2025 to the City of San Antonio.

[\(00:47:37\)](#):

I see and I hear, and I live in San Antonio and Bexar County and words matter, don't ignore or eliminate what quality of life is for the East side. As you have heard, there was booming economic development, churches, residential areas that were thriving and because of post segregation, we saw demise and we saw the city put its hands, sending money to other parts of the city, but yet we said we have no harm for the east side. We're going to do good and we hope the best of peace for all of its residents. But I don't see it today and I demand that we have a quality of life just on the east side as for all of Bexar County and San Antonio, and that requires making a home for all, finding work for all and finding welfare for all. But you see quality of life has several factors, environment, economic factors,

emotional wellbeing, housing and social support. But when you hear gunshots, that's not social wellbeing and nor is it emotional stability. When you see deplorable places like the Fredericks building that has been dilapidated for over 40 years and nobody wants to help renovate or restore it, that's not the support of social wellbeing of San Antonio's East Side. I am tired of being overlooked.

Unknown ([00:49:14](#)):

Amen. Amen.

Pastor James Emerson, COPS/METRO ([00:49:23](#)):

I am tired of not being heard and I'm certainly tired of not being invited to the table. I demand my Commissioner Calvert to be at that table and my Councilman Rodriguez to be a part of that negotiating. We elected them to serve us and they must be the ones who are the stewards of the east side. They're the ones who we say are the welfare of our east side as I also steward the St. Paul United Methodist Church along with these peers of COPS/Metro.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([00:50:48](#)):

All right, we will keep the program moving along. Molly, I would love to hear your comments. You have two minutes. Thank you very much for coming again,

([00:51:05](#)):

I'm so sorry. You're right. I did say that Reverend Littlefield would have a comment and I apologize. I was going to say that got it to my head and not to my heart. Reverend Littlefield, you have the floor and then Molly, and then we'll get into a video and a conversation. Thank you Reverend. Go ahead.

Reverend Littlefield ([00:51:22](#)):

I'm just waiting for everybody to get back to the seats. Commissioner,

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([00:51:25](#)):

Thank you for your good discipline everyone and being quiet while people are heard. I really appreciate you. Thank you.

Reverend Littlefield ([00:51:33](#)):

First of all, let me say good morning to each of you. There's a saying. I must work the works of him who sent me while it's day, but when night cometh, no man can work and you will find these too oftentimes, as you recall, several years ago we talk about economic development from one of our former council persons, but what happened? What happened? It is because this community, and I say this community because we still have property over there on Dora, failed to do one thing and that is to hold your city councilperson accountable.

[\(00:52:32\)](#):

Secondly, we did not plan or implement any type of projects that we want change for the community. How many of y'all know when the south side was nothing but weeds and sticks? How many of y'all know that but weeds and sticks. But look at the south side. Now look at the north side. Now look at the northwest side now. Folks is tired of—we talk to talk, but how often do you sit down and says, let's get a plan and then talk to the community and then let's go before our City Council. Let's go before the County. Stop asking, “What are you going to do?” But let's tell them, “This is what we want.”

Unknown [\(00:53:31\)](#):

Alright, alright,

Reverend Littlefield [\(00:53:31\)](#):

Alright. This is what we want. We have to plan, we have to organize, and then most of all, we have to implement. We got the talent in this community. We have it. How many of y'all able to talk about supporting up at St. Philip College? How many of y'all talk about let's be involved with our faith base in the community? How many of y'all talk about let's plan and let's represent what we want to do? Not what we're going to ask them, but what we're going to do. That's the only way we're going to make a change. We have to come and work together. We have to plan a plan and then implement. If you want to see changes, don't always beat down on your Commissioner because he also is representing this community. He's talking also across this country.

But you got to understand that we also have to work together and work through him with him and tell them that. Also, come for your City Council person. Let 'em know that we want you to be visible and talk to us in the community and see what we want and not what you want to tell us.

Commissioner Calvert

Thank you, Rev. Molly, go ahead.

Molly ([00:55:08](#)):

Super quick, super quick. Thank you very much, Commissioner for scheduling that appointment. I look forward to seeing you on Wednesday at three. I already have about six people that are going to be joining me. So community, your Commissioner Calvert has decided to move forward with positive solutions and working out a process to eliminate homelessness out of this neighborhood and put folks off the streets into a place to stay to make life easier for the constituents of this part of town. Thank you, Commissioner, from the bottom of my heart. And forgive me for the emails that I've been writing. I'm just very passionate about what I believe in. Thank you again from the bottom of my heart for moving forward with these positive solutions. Jalen, I know you haven't responded to me yet, so I hope you join Commissioner Calvert in moving forward with eliminating homelessness in this area as well. So February 5th at 3:00 PM and Commissioner Calvert's office, you can speak to Mr. Holler about the arrangements with Ms. Price. Thank you.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([00:56:16](#)):

Thank you very much. We're going to very quickly be at a point where we have the line not stop, so don't worry we're just doing this, but I want to get the video ready and queued up. We have a very, very important visual when you watch this video about the traffic cones. Notice there's not a single cone in Los Angeles and it is more density, more people around, more apartments, more housing, and there's not a single cone in Dallas. Roll the video tape and then we're going to go into a conversation.

VIDEO ON TRAFFIC CONES AT FBC PLAYS

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([01:00:41](#)):

Okay, well, we need to have a conversation to understand both sides. So we wanted to, this predates Lieutenant Pollard. This issue I think goes back frankly, even to former Mayor Howard Peak when that time was originally designing these kinds of traffic patterns. But we do want to hear, there is a study that was commissioned and we do want to understand the history of why these cones are here and not another arenas and how we can move forward. We don't want to beat up on Lieutenant. He's a great guy and we're excited that he's here. Please give your time and attention to Lieutenant Pollard. Thank you very much.

Lt. Raymond Pollard, BCSO ([01:01:31](#)):

So yes, we have cones, but I'm here with my counterpart, Lieutenant Freveletti and my chief who also runs the security for the Frost Bank Center and who does the traffic enforcement when we have events here. So why do we have cones? First and foremost, we have an ITS system. You don't know what that is. When you look at your lanes and you look up above you, you're going to see little arrows that are going to tell you which lanes are open and which ones are not. The other problem that we have too is that we are in an area where the streets are not as wide and it's kind of a congested area. So what are our main traffic flow venues that we have? We have IH 35, we have IH 10.

[\(01:02:29\):](#)

What we have to do, the reason why we have cones, because if we did not control the access or the entrance egress of traffic, we would have chaos. Everybody would be wanting to go in certain directions. They want to go in a certain way. We controlled the flow of traffic and we do that by cones. We tell people, you exit out of Delta gate, you're going to turn here. That's because we can get, when you have 16,000 to 18,000 people in this arena, you have to deal with the cars. We also have what now? We have Ubers and Lyft, so now we have to control where they go. If we don't control it, then they'll park in front of all the other gates and they'll park everywhere else and they stop traffic. The Spurs, okay? When we have a Spurs game, we have season ticket holders.

[\(01:03:26\):](#)

So, they learn, so they know where to go. Our biggest problem is concerts because what do we have? Everybody wants to be dropped off. They don't want to pay for the parking, they want to be dropped off. That's fine. The problem is they interfere with the flow of traffic. So with all this congestion coming in, we have to control the chaos that's coming into this arena. So that's why we have the cones. What we try to do when we have that big of a crowd, when the arena is sold out, we usually can get these vehicles and we're talking possibly around 10 to 12 thousand vehicles. We can get them out of here within 45 minutes. That's about our average time. Am I correct? About 45 minutes. We have about 30 to 35 officers directing traffic. Those officers know to keep traffic from without them, we would have people coming out of Charlie Gate, we'd have people coming out of Delta Gate.

[\(01:04:30\):](#)

They'd be going whatever way they wanted to. By us controlling it, and by using cones, we're telling people, here's how we want you to go. Some venues probably don't have that, but they have better traffic control, better signage. We have no signage. We can't tell people where to go because we don't have a way of communicating with these people. Uber drivers and Lyft drivers are supposed to get an email from their companies that are telling

them, when you pick up and drop off, you go to a certain area. You go in through Golf Gate, bring all that traffic in, get 'em out through Echo Gate, and at the end when we get most of the traffic out of these areas, then allow them to go through Bravo Gate. So that means we have to utilize Coca-Cola, utilize Houston Street, utilize Frost Bank Center. The previous plan, and that was a big complaint, is I've been with this working Spurs and when it was SBC, AT&T and now Frost Bank, I've been here since day one and on the inside, been on the outside.

[\(01:05:40\)](#):

Originally when we had the original traffic plan, we diverted traffic going down Gemblor Road. That became a problem for the people in the neighborhood because we get to their houses, and again, there was cones down there trying to get people to 410 to 35 to 90 off of Walters. But that changed. Covid hit, changed the traffic plan. So now we have two lanes going out to 35. It takes a little bit longer, yes, but we're not taking up all that traffic on Gemblor Road. So those, we try not to inconvenience the folks that live around here, but sometimes we have to because of the congestion that we have. That's a lot of cars that you have in one area. So we have to get this traffic done in a timely manner. Where could we get 'em out the quicker we get the roads open? Like I said, the biggest problem that we have, people come in, want to get into the gates right away.

[\(01:06:42\)](#):

It's not our problem. Pardon. It's not our fault. When people don't get here in a timely manner, they know what time the game starts. So they should get here in a timely manner, but they want to get here when the game starts at seven o'clock and expect to be here at 6:45 along with another seven or 8,000 people that want to get here at the same time. The other problem that they had in the few past was taking money because people have to pay for the parking. Parking is not free. So it takes time to exchange money or give out change or to get their credit card. So that takes time. So that backs up our traffic. So while they're taking somebody's money, next car behind him, got to wait until that transaction's done before the next car flows. So that's backing up some of our traffic. So I'm going to go ahead and let my chief speak on behalf of some of this other stuff that he has probably better knowledge of because he gets to meet with us first. So he probably has a little bit more than I do. But I just wanted to give you a basic idea that the reason why we have traffic cones that we control traffic flow, get 'em in. We get 'em out sooner. We get 'em out sooner. We get the cones picked up. Thank you.

Chief Raul Garza, BCSO [\(01:08:11\)](#):

Good morning everybody. It's so awesome to see the community involved and to see all of y'all come out on a Saturday morning. Thank you Commissioner for continuing to have the Sheriff's Office be a part of these community engagements and community talks. I've been with the Sheriff's Office almost 33 years now. I have a lot of pride in serving the community here in Bexar County. I grew up on the west side. I'm from the housing projects, so I understand the needs of the community and I serve with great pride because of my service where I grew up at. And I'm an Air Force veteran and I've come back home and I've been with the Sheriff's Office ever since. I currently serve as the Chief of Staff for Sheriff Salazar, and I wanted to follow up on a couple of things that Lieutenant Pollard said. First, I want to let everybody know that we do work with the Spurs.

[\(01:08:57\)](#):

We have made some changes. We don't impact the traffic off Gemblar Road anymore. In fact, we control that traffic light out there to prevent folks from having to go down that way. All of traffic flows towards 35. We've made some changes to the way we do the exits at each gate, so that way we get the folks out of here as quick as possible. I do like to brag a little bit on the work that we have Lieutenant Freveletti here in the audience too, along with Lieutenant Potter. Both of these service, my traffic commanders out here at every event, we're able to get Spurs game emptied out of here. We're able to dump this place in under 30 minutes most times, and that's because of the quality of work that you have deputies out here, plus the cones. I understand the cones have had some impact in the past.

[\(01:09:41\)](#):

Every time we've received a complaint, I get a complaint in my office, I reach out and I want to work with individuals. How can we lessen the impact? What else can we do moving forward to help prevent the cones from being a further issue? I know we scaled back the cones on Houston Street. We scaled back the cones on Frost and over on Coca-Cola. However, we're open for more suggestions. The Spurs put some money in the traffic plan. They're the ones to get it approved through the City. It is not just something that would come out and put together. And I also want you to know that we realize the impact to the neighborhood. We want to get in and out of here as quick as possible. So we do not let the bus services get impacted. We make room for the bus if the bus is coming down Frost.

[\(01:10:28\)](#):

If the bus is coming down Houston, we're going to move those cones out of the way for the bus. We also know that if there's any emergency in the area, we're not going to impact or delay those first responders getting to you. If those first responders need to travel down Houston or Frost, everybody's got a radio. We're in constant communication with each

other. We're going to open up the roadways to allow for that traffic to flow. Another thing the Spurs have done is they've invested in a drone. I don't know if you guys have seen that drone flying around at night. So with that drone, there is a command center inside the Frost Bank Center that the Sheriff's Office has a seat at that we can actually see the traffic live through the drone and we're able to make adjustments on the fly, so to speak, as needed at every event. So I am here, we'll be here afterwards today. If anybody's got any specific questions or anybody that would like to sit and talk to me, I'll be here afterwards. Okay. Thank you all. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([01:11:24](#)):

Alright, I'm going to say a couple of things on this. Complimentary, number one, for 10 years I've been trying to pinpoint who is in charge of this. And there was a previous Sheriff who said it was the City and then I called the police chief, he said it's the County. And then someone said, it's the Spurs. And so I said, well I need all three of y'all in the room together. So first of all, it's a landmark that we have clarity now. Okay? So thank you for that. But here's my humble observation of that. That is a north side traffic plan, meaning get people back to the north side and out. If Ms. Gloria Ray and I want to go to Tucker's or want to go across the street to the Andy to have a drink or to have something to eat after the game, or if I want to go to my house, it is harder for me to go, which I live in Willow Woods off of Gemblar.

([01:12:17](#)):

It is harder for me to get to my house because of this plan. There's no favor that I'm getting. And that is the economic development that we have to begin to change the mindset. So couple things, County Manager isn't here today, but I think it is in order to set aside a little money for both a zoom and a field trip to some of these other places, to see the difference and to bring the Spurs with us to see the difference and to bring the community with us to see the difference in order that we can have some peace and economic development. Because economic development, that brings more stability in terms of crime and joblessness and all kinds of other things. When the Iceman, George Gervin, who built the Spurs, he had the Willow Springs Golf Club as a restaurant bar. He told me, Tommy, nobody could get to my restaurant and bar because of the cones.

([01:13:14](#)):

That is an economic development that isn't the promise that we have. So you saw it somehow. There's no chaos in Los Angeles, Dallas, United Center, Chicago, Washington, dc It's okay for people from the north side to hang out on the east side. We welcome them, we welcome them. We're just as nice and friendly and you might even have a little bit more

fun hanging out with us if you get a chance to know us. And so let's begin to break bread, break some barbecue, break some enchiladas on the East Side. How about them? Let's go. Alright, my humble observation. Alright, let's get the comments from the citizens and let's continue to move forward. Thank you.

Shaleh Izel ([01:14:03](#)):

My name is Shaleh Izel. I am a resident on the East Side. I live on East Crockett and my fiancé and I are also intentional business owners on the East Side. So first I'd like to thank you for organizing this. I really appreciate it. The first thing I noticed though, one of the first things that I saw coming into the meeting was the video shown by Mr. Howard. And it seems like my sentiment continues to be echoed as we're hearing different things that have been promised and not come to fruition and even the direction of the traffic away from the East Side. And so what it feels like to me, even with the title of the meeting, the Future of the Frost Bank and no mention of the Spurs, is it feels like deceptive pacification. If the Spurs have already been committed to move, just say that. There are a lot of conversations about, they may be moving in an emphasis on that word may or perhaps in there's discussions.

([01:14:52](#)):

And the fact that our elected city officials, our Commissioners, my District person Jaylen, are not in those meetings and having those conversations lets me know that it's very likely that this decision has already been made, which makes these feel like they're for show. That is not how I feel. You've put this together. I feel like they have put you in a position to allow these feelings to develop and enhance. And so as the representative of the Spurs, I don't think that you can answer us with that today. I don't even know if you know, but I hope that you write that down that if this decision has been made, let the people know so we can adjust and accommodate appropriately. Now it will be disheartening if that's the case, but I will choose to be hopeful that this is a sincere effort to get feedback from the community. And what I'm hearing overwhelmingly is that one, we do not want taxpayer dollars to go to support this move.

([01:15:43](#)):

So if you are moving, if you are moving, figure it out yourself. Nonprofit organizations in this community have to do crowdsourcing and funding museums have to find their own funding schools. Get it, figure it out yourself if that's what you're going to be doing, assuming that this is a situation where you want our input. My vote would be that the future of the Spurs, which were not included in Mr. Howard's very well-developed video would be to leave them at the Frost Bank Center. Or we saw in one of the presentations that there's no imagination.

How beautiful would it be to revitalize the Alamodome ands, send them back to where they were. I lived here as a child, as a military brat, and we always went to the Alamodome. How great would it be to develop with some of those taxpayer dollars that will not be going to the development of a new arena and develop an initiative with via to bus people to the Alamodome or to the Frost Bank Center to help with some of the traffic to redirect some of those businesses in the area around the Frost Bank,

[\(01:16:46\)](#):

which my understanding is that there are things in place where legally that cannot happen. So if bylaws have been written to make that so they certainly can be unwritten so that way we can develop the east side. That's my point. Thank you.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(01:17:04\)](#):

Before the next speaker, let me give you ma'am, one point of information. Yes, the vote. If the commissioner's court decides to send this to a vote for funding, it will be the people that vote on it. And so that is why there is a contingency planning process that I have to go through as a Commissioner to understand if it goes through now. Pat Frost can tell you, who's here and good to see you, Pat, that Reverend Herman Price and Reverend Thurman Walker and I and Ruth McClendon and a whole bunch of other folks, we had an Alamo College District bond that we voted down, sent it back and got it right. And we did that by going to the District 9 Neighborhood Alliance, the District 10 Northeast Alliance. And the City Manager was just there at the District Nine Neighborhood Alliance and basically I think quieted them and told them that it's coming out of the visitors. But you all need to decide if you want to have those meetings like Netty Hinton who's here did, and educate your Northside voters who are 50% of how you feel about this particular plan. There is a past example of this community defeating a bond to get it right. So just know that.

Shaleh Izel [\(01:18:31\)](#):

Thank you for that clarification

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(01:18:32\)](#):

You bet. You bet. Cecilia, good to see you. Thank you for coming. Good to see you.

Cecilia Castellano [\(01:18:37\)](#):

Hi, good afternoon Commissioner Calvert. Thank you for organizing this event for the community. The reason why I'm up here is because of Mr. Howard's presentation that he did. So I represent the Fair Contracting Coalition and I'm also a construction business

owner. Azteca Designs and Construction, been in business for 18 years. I know Mr. Joe Monroe going to be speaking on small businesses, but I wanted to make it clear, how many small businesses do we have in the room? Raise your hand. Alright, how many small businesses are now afraid if they're going to continue to keep their doors open because of this administration? Alright, I know I am. So the reason why I'm saying is because there's been DEI, there's been the certifications that have been put in place for small businesses, black and brown, Asian American to have a seat at the table. And so I'm not sure if Mr. Howard knows this, but 34,000 small businesses are in San Antonio.

[\(01:19:38\)](#):

The Spurs does not participate with small minority woman-owned businesses. And I know that because I'm with the Fair Contracting Coalition, we've asked them to participate in the report card and they've declined it. And so also Mr. Howard mentioned about how when a light turns on, that's a bill when a light bulb needs to be fixed. That's the way a small business works. But what a small business needs to do is if we want to build and have a new office space, we got to call Mr. Frost Bank to try to get a loan and maybe get denied and then we got to go to another bank. So perhaps maybe the Spurs, instead of asking to increase taxes to pay for this new built is that they go get a loan or how about this? The salary for a Spurs player is \$29 million. How much does an employee, maybe even a small business owner make?

[\(01:20:46\)](#):

Come on now. But yet we are giving every day for either the covid, the snowstorm, we're always helping out. But \$29 million into here? I don't know who it was said that \$0 and rent was paid. If I didn't pay my rent where my business is at or for my home, I'd be evicted on the streets. So we are going to back you Commissioner Calvert, we're going to be there because let me tell you, it's going to take all of us, everyone that's here today to back Commissioner Calvert to make sure that he continues to have a seat at the table. And you have everyone's support. Is that correct?

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(01:21:34\)](#):

Thank you. We're going to hold up. Those are two, but you can stay there because Mr. Monroe is going to speak on small businesses. Now a lot of what this whole building process about is contracts and money and it is a very difficult time for a lot of small businesses. Tariffs enacted for the first time. Price of lumber is fixing to go up from Canadian wood. Price of food is getting ready to go up for Mexican goods. It's going to be a very interesting economic time. And so a lot of businesses could be going out of business if they don't get a piece of the pie. Now, if a billion dollars is passed by the community, I

expect the community to get a piece of that pie. And so Joe Monroe is going to talk to us about the obstacles, what can help from mobilization to bonding assistance because at the County they have been blocking for a year and a half. The bonding assistance program, it's coming on the agenda Tuesday, but we will see they're putting in an executive session which is closed to you and me. So I don't know what will happen, but we should have made progress on this years ago, but we're not making progress. And why is that? Are we only running the County for those who are an oligarchy or are we running it for you? That's what I want to know. You got the mic.

Joe Monroe, Black Contractors Association of San Antonio ([01:22:57](#)):

Good morning, everyone. Can y'all go ahead and stand up real quick just to get your blood flowing? And I know we've been sitting here. It's getting a little humid in here. Where the sprayers at? Can we turn up the air? Let's go. Alright, thank you. Thank you. Good morning. Our esteemed, elected officials, our colleagues and community stakeholders, glad to see you in the house today and the overwhelming turnout that we had. First, thank you, Commissioner Calvert, for putting this together and everything and everybody that showed up, all the leaders. But one thing I wanted to say, I know I got this whole spiel laid out, but as I sit here and I listen to everyone and the thought process just changed all of a sudden. And one thing I want to say is that Mr. Calvert and the second district councilman, they are advocating for us.

([01:24:01](#)):

But one thing I would like to put out is that when they have the Commissioners Court and stuff like that, we need to be there. We need to support him, we need to stand behind him, let everybody else see that, hey, what he's saying, we are supporting it. So that would help that to move on a little bit faster hopefully. So again, my name is Joe Monroe. I'm a proud owner of CISA Minority construction company, been serving the City of San Antonio for the past 18 years. I'm also the President of the Black Contractors Association of San Antonio, a nonprofit organization with the vision to help other minority firms grow. Today, I stand before you, not just as a contractor, but as a representative of countless small business owners navigating both opportunities and challenges in our industry. Do we have any of the BCA members in the house today?

([01:25:03](#)):

Could you please stand if you would? Yes, yes. Thank you. Thank you all for coming out. Okay. And guys, we are open. We are accepting membership. Okay, I had to throw that plug in there. So Ms. Ika, she's our treasurer, so if y'all want to talk about it, Dr. Bolden is in the back. Please talk with them and find out more about the organization. So while we build

bridges and roads and buildings that support the growth of our community, it is time that we address foundational issues that within our own organizations issues like if left unchecked, they will undermine the very progress that we're trying to make here. One of the things that, and I was glad when I got the invite to talk about the small businesses, some of the plight that we've been going through as business, trying to get contracts with the City, with Bexar County, with the Spurs, with other private organizations, CPS, the whole nine yards.

[\(01:26:16\)](#):

We go through a lot of issues just trying to even navigate that and we don't have a roadmap. We're trying to get a roadmap thanks to Ms. Renée Watson who started the Bear County Mentorship Program, but only so many people can fit in a class. I went through the class. That was very educational. Our workforce development, our biggest challenge is attracting and retaining labor. Skilled labor should I say, we can get anybody off the street, but what is that going to do for us but give us a bad name because the work, the quality is not there. And the other thing, we need a stronger partnership of vocational schools with the vocational schools, the local unions and city programs to create a pipeline not only to bring in talent, but to nurture it. After we bring it in, the Commissioner, he's spearheading the second chance opportunities.

[\(01:27:29\)](#):

Well, maybe we need to go back up a step further, not when they get out, but have them to develop some type of skills before they come to us because we're left with trying to train, trying to hold your hand. And so now guess what? I can't go out and BD business development and bring in new work because I'm too busy trying to hold hands and make sure people are doing what they're supposed to do on a daily basis. So a lot of times I get stuck at home at night till one, two o'clock in the morning just trying to work on a computer doing invoicing and applying for new solicitations because I'm out all day holding people's hands and don't have the skillset, equality and equity and contract opportunity. While the City and the County has made strides in promoting diversity, many minority-owned firms still struggle to compete for larger contracts.

[\(01:28:31\)](#):

The barriers are not just about qualifications. We can do the work. They're about the access to communication, the mentorship and resources. I urge the City to simplify the bidding process, provide more workshops on navigating procurement systems and ensure that minority contractors have a fair shot at growth. Not to mention when we get the project after we do get a project and then once we get to certain stages of the project, well we got

to get inspected by city officials and when they send the inspectors out, they might send one person one time and someone different the second time. Well, they're the inconsistencies and now we're doing what the first gentleman told us to do, a lady told us to do. And then when the next person come out, oh, you're doing it wrong, you need to tear it out and redo it. Well here we go.

[\(01:29:31\)](#):

I'm a small business owner so I got to pay to redo it because someone else told me something different. So those are some of the challenges. And then even when we're trying to do the permitting process, it takes almost an act of Congress just to get through the permitting process. Even if you just want to do a small sidewalk in the front of your house, we almost got to get engineer drawings about five or \$600 just to get a stamped engineer drawing. So we just need to look at all of this stuff and to try to better the small businesses and as business owners, the internal organizational challenges as business owners, we also have to look inward. My company, like many others, have faced issues with project management, lack of advanced technology adaptation and gaps in leadership development. These are not just operational hiccups. They affect our ability to deliver quality work on time and within budget we are committed. One thing I can say, we are committed to investing in training, adopting better project management tools and fostering leadership from within. But we can do more with the City and Bexar County's support through grants, workshops and shared resources. Okay, funding how, I'm glad y'all asked. How do we get the funding to support large contracts?

[\(01:31:18\)](#):

Can somebody ask that again? How do we get funding to support large contracts? Okay, well our challenge are long lead times getting paid. Even if we get the contract, we only can submit a pay voucher once a month and it's usually the 25th of the month. Well, we got to work the whole month in order to do something in order to submit for a percentage of the work completed. So once we submit on the 25th, well there's another two or three weeks sometime longer before we get a paycheck cut. So now that boils down to us ending up funding the larger company's contracts because our workers got to get paid every week because they got families to feed. We can't say, hey, well we can't pay you until we get paid. Although in our contract with the larger companies, you get paid when we get paid.

[\(01:32:22\)](#):

So now if there's a hiccup, even though my portion of the project maybe it's only a month long and I'm already completed, done, paid my vendors, paid my workers, I'm still waiting to get reimbursed as a small business owner because the larger contractor, they have

several scopes of work going on. So if they're not completed on something else or get a bad review from the inspectors, and so they're going to hold up their pay for that month. So if they hold up their pay, then if we can't get paid until they get paid, I mean it's not rocket science. So how can a small business owner continue to grow and prosper with those type of hiccups down the way? So those are some of the things I would like for us to take a look at, Commissioner, and see what we can do. I know there's a way, just like when we're taught construction 101 that we have to have working capital in order to sustain for two to three months without getting paid.

[\(01:33:35\)](#):

Well, shouldn't the larger contractors be held to the same 101? Because if I'm paying out my pocket, again, I'm small, I don't have that big wallet. So those are some of the things that I've talked to the other small contractors of the BCA and we put together some questions and some of the stuff that we're faced with and those are the things that we came up with, sir. So in closing, I want to emphasize that these challenges are not roadblocks. There are opportunities for growth. We're builders after all, we don't shy away from the tough projects. We roll up our sleeves and we get to work. Okay? And that's what we want to do. Give us the opportunity.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([01:34:30](#)):

Thank you. Thank you Joe. Joe, I want to say thank you for being a voice for many small business people, every creed and color who are trying to make it. And I know how hard it is. You can have a seat. I'm a multi-time over small business owner. I had the City of LA as a client before I had the city of San Antonio. I had the US Department of Health and Human Services as a client before I ever had the University Health System as a client, it's difficult to do business in San Antonio and what you spoke to is mobilization. Money needs to be increased so that mobilization in the construction industry is your front money that prepares you to buy materials and get ready for your business and construction. That has to be increased in the percentage amount so that you're not in a cashflow deficit.

[\(01:35:21\)](#):

We need to have probably some sort of Insta Rapid Pay at the city because of the Fair Contracting Coalition and others put in an 11 to 22 day payment. But the County does not have that. We pay slow, we pay exceedingly slow at the County. We pay shamefully slow at the County and I feel like a plumber sometimes because I'm having to unclog the... because people are not getting paid and it's never a good reason. It's never a really good reason. To be perfectly honest with you, when I hear the reasons why our small businesses are not getting paid, it's just amazing. I walk in the room and all of a sudden all the

problems are solved. I shouldn't have to do that. We should be good to our small business people who are helping the economy and hiring people.

[\(01:36:09\)](#):

And I've never understood why we don't have in San Antonio a Latino construction company the size of Zachary, I just don't understand it. What's wrong with us? What have we done to put a lid on opportunity? We've definitely put a lid on it. We've definitely put a lid on it and yeah, they're a different kind of cone. But what would help you would be things like a business accelerator. We could do the business accelerator right here on the Coliseum grounds and if we are smart about the accelerator, the County through the bonding assistance program could have funds control people who could set up an account so that your pay is administered and your invoices are looked at in a rapid 48 hours. And if there's an issue, you can work it out. There's a lot of flexibility that needs to happen for our small business people because we're a small business town. There's hundreds and thousands of small businesses, but a lot of 'em I've seen go out of business lately. A lot of closures lately and people are barely hanging on. So this is important to me because I am a small business owner that we finally get this right. So Joe, give Joe Monroe another round for his voice today. Great job.

[\(01:37:36\)](#):

Alright, it is the time to go into your complete control of the rest of this meeting in terms of what you say, two minutes. I'm need my timekeepers to be tight and say when the time has expired because I'm not keeping the clock.

[\(01:37:53\)](#):

Let me just say by way of follow that none of your comments are going in vain. Some of my County staff, I want to thank our Public Works director. Art, thank you for being in the house very much. Give him a big round. He's been at both meetings, which is more than we can say for some people. He's been at both meetings and he's seen a lot of good ideas and a lot of good projects that could be done by the public works and the people. I also want to thank Marshal Hoak from the Economic Development Department. Thank you for being here because it really isn't up to the Spurs to do the economic development. It's up to the City and the County because we've got economic development departments that are charged with doing that. And the staff of economic development needs to be in this room to hear these ideas and move these things every month forward, not just for a town hall.

[\(01:38:43\)](#):

That's why we talked last time that part of the reason the 18-member committee that they put together 25 years ago didn't work was they didn't come back to City Council. They didn't come back to Commissioners Court. There was no sunshine on the process. So, we are talking about changes and so that last agenda item is just to let you know that every speaker that has spoken on an idea, you'll have a policy recommendation from me and my staff that will help move forward. Things that you've talked about, oversight committees, you talked about youth and crime. So we might affix a policy like summer jobs, which they've cut tremendously. We might put a thing like a fund. What if we had a fund for all the children on the East Side to pay for their extracurriculars? They're so expensive to be in football and band and they can't afford it and as a result are going into gun violence and crime because they have no hope. They don't think they can live out their talent, but it would be an awesome thing for the Spurs and Frost and others to put in a fund to help the children get those extracurriculars paid for. Would you walk with me on that? I thought so. Alright, you've got the floor. I'll sit down and we will let y'all go.

Chris Parker ([01:40:06](#)):

Alright. My name is Chris Parker. I am a COPS/Metro member. I hold a lot of hats, but most of all I'm here to represent the people of the East Side, born and raised. I have seen a whole lot of things and I just really want to bring up two things, one to the Spurs and one to the City. I don't know who you are. I think it's a little ironic that it's just written in Spurs and one name is not actually on the card. We know a lot of people. We know a lot of people. Dr. Kara Allen, Dr. Morgan Jones or RC Buford. I'm surprised none of them are here. But in 2002, the SBC Center opened and it reminds me of back in 2000 as an Eastsider sitting there and hearing all the promises that the Spurs had made, it's going to bring hotels to the East Side. It's going to bring all these jobs and all these different things that never came. All we really got was the paved roads leading to the arena and that only really benefits the arena and the people that actually live on those roads. And we also got, oh, a couple of Starbucks. Thank you for that.

[\(01:41:18\)](#):

But the thing that happened after all this was the gentrification. We can't be more thankful for that because all of the people that I've known that have been raised around us is moving out and they're being moved out of their homes. And I'm really pessimistic right now because I can't help but think of just probably everybody else from this side of town. The decisions probably already been made. And that's what sucks because you think about whoever's really in power here to kind of say what's going to happen, what's not going to happen? You've probably already made that decision on the golf course. And I mean people like us suffer.

[\(01:41:56\)](#):

What could you do about that? I mean right across the tracks, you've got Ball Hogs, Hubert Brown, I know him personally. He has a program that works with the kids that tries to help show them how to work in this community rather than running and going and doing drugs and dealing drugs and stuff like that. And I asked him one time, you're right there, what have the Spurs done for you? Have they done anything? He goes, they gave us tickets. Thank you for that. I know, I know I'm being crappy and I'm sorry, but this is what the voices want to say. We are hearing that you guys are going to do Project Marvel, you're going to move away and you've done nothing. What could you do? Create infrastructure right here. Make equitable living for each one of us. But you've have done nothing. Absolutely nothing. I have sat with Kara Allen, I have sat with Morgan Jones and Spurs Give, I love that program, but I really wish they would give a damn about the East Side. But also I'm speaking to the City because I recall back in 2005

In 2005 you guys started. Y'all started the building, the Grand Hyatt. Go ahead. Ahead. 200 million up for that. I went to some of those meetings when they asked you guys for money to renovate places like the Frederick Building and stuff like that. You said you didn't have the money and at the same time turned around and you guys gave 200 and million plus in bonds to build the Grand Hyatt. That was a slap in the face.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(01:43:27\)](#):

City of San Antonio, not the county, but I understand.

Chris Parker [\(01:43:28\)](#):

Yeah, City of San Antonio. City of Antonio, San Antonio. And with that being said, oh God, we got to go to the next speaker. I'm just asking that you guys invest in the East side if you guys are really going to do that. We all are kind of convinced you're already going to do it. Just make sure you invest in the East Side. There's so many people. If you don't know the organizations talk to me. I know 'em all firsthand. They're all my, we would love to create an infrastructure within our own neighborhoods. Thank you so much. That's what it's about.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(01:43:55\)](#):

Good comments. Thank you very much. Appreciate you coming. Thank you for coming.

Kelly Walls [\(01:44:01\)](#):

Good morning. My name is Kelly Walls and I reside in District 1. I made San Antonio my home after I retired from the military over 20 years ago. Since then, I have watched the City

of San Antonio engage in multiple dog and pony shows in which residents are sold a bill of goods that destroyed public confidence. According to the Texas Public Policy Foundation, the City of San Antonio's debt now exceeds \$18 billion. And instead of addressing that debt that will burden generations of San Antonio families, we are at a crossroads now where once again, the personal desires of City Manager Eric Walsh and Ron Nirenberg's legacy projects further risk eroding public trust. As discussions move forward, I urge you to ensure that true community stakeholders are not ignored. Individuals who do not reside in the area or who stand to profit from possible development should not steer this car. We recently saw that with the city's transit oriented development process, developers and others who will financially benefit from TOD we're steering the call, so much so that these developers boldly told the city that TOD will cause displacement, but it will be handled humanely. Please demand that committees and commission members that will be involved in the community processes fully disclosed potential conflict of interest. Their employers as well as their residency—I individuals who do not live in the city should not be at the table. I thank you for your time.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([01:46:00](#)):

Kelly, thank you so much for your service. Can we help Jonathon? Good to see you, Betty. Thanks for coming to both meetings. Betty got a lot of wisdom to give us. Betty, go ahead.

Betty Bueché ([01:46:16](#)):

Thank you. I'm Betty Bueché. I am retired from Bexar County as the former Facilities Director and director of Bexar Heritage. I'd like to reference a podcast that Nelson Wolff recently gave, and of course he's one of our godfathers. He referred to Project Marvel as a Gordian Knot, which is a legendary knot that represents a complex problem that is solved with an unconventional solution. And he asked a question, who will solve this Gordian Knot? Who's going to cut through it? And I think Commissioner Calvert, it is you who will solve the Gordian Knot. And we realize that everyone here and more than everyone here must participate with you in order to do that. There are a couple of players who are not mentioned in these meetings, and I have brought them up now for the second time. One is UTSA who owns the land where the new arena is proposed to exist.

([01:47:26](#)):

UTSA, a signer of the non-disclosure agreement, went along with whatever the city staff had said, and it is the city staff who created this complex knot, not the elected officials. The staff have proposed this and the elected officials need to dispose this and UTSA needs to be brought to the table because they are acting, as we speak, as though the Spurs new

arena will be built. They are engaging in the interior demolition of the Institute of Texan Cultures building right now removing asbestos. I would like to ask if with your legion of helpers here, if you would request that UTSA stop the demolition because I don't think it's a sure thing that a new Spurs arena will be constructed on that site. And just as you want to avoid an empty carcass here, we should want to avoid a massive 13 acre parking lot that sits there for the next 10 to 20 years. Let's instead reuse the Institute of Texan Cultures Building, which is in good condition. Their own engineers, Robba Kissner have determined that it is in good condition. That is not the story that UTSA presents to the public. They're saying it's falling apart. It'll take 175 million to fix it. And those things are not true, unfortunately. Okay, thank you very much.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([01:49:19](#)):

Anything else? Betty? You're on a roll. Betty, anything else? Are you done?

Speaker 29 ([01:49:24](#)):

No, I'm not.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([01:49:25](#)):

I'll give you 30 more seconds because you've spent all those years at the county dealing with us politicians. Go ahead.

Speaker 29 ([01:49:30](#)):

Thank you. I also ask that CPS and SAWS be brought to the table. They not only will be impacted and we realize they're not the decision makers and the prime movers in this. They are owned by the city of San Antonio and they're reacting to it. No one has heard from SAWS and CPS what the impacts will be to their operations and how much it will cost for them to modify all of their infrastructure. And UTSA has actually proposed to build a new hotel on land owned by SAWS right now, right where their central cooling plant is located. How much will that cost? Who knows? Why don't they reuse the Institute of Texan Cultures, which is a state antiquities landmark and on the National Register of Historic Places to begin their hospitality program instead of trying to compete with the downtown hotels that are already in a challenging situation for occupancy. Finally, I'd like to address the traffic situation. If you think traffic around the arena, the Frost Bank Center, is difficult. Now imagine this part of the Gordian Knot. There's a Strait concert in the Alamodome and it's a full house. There's a championship game for the Spurs in their new arena, and there is a massive major convention happening at the convention center. There's only one major thoroughfare that serves the place where the new arena would be. This location at least

has two major thoroughfares. So imagine that nightmare and that part of the Gordian Knot. And I see the sheriff's deputy shaking his head. Okay, and that's it. Thank you.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([01:51:43](#)):

See what you get for listening. It's a good thing. We had a lot of great input. Help her out there. We're going to help you get out of here. Don't worry. Thank you, Betty, for your service and your very insightful comments. And that's why we listen to the people because you have the answers to the problems of your taxpayer dollars. Yes ma'am. Thank you for coming. I appreciate you being here.

Nora Stewman ([01:52:04](#)):

Hi. I called your office yesterday. Okay. Okay. I wanted to mention the Spurs used to play downtown.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([01:52:16](#)):

If you would just give us your name and where you were from.

Nora Stewman ([01:52:18](#)):

I'm Nora Stewman and I'm from the southeast in the 03 District. The Spurs used to play downtown. They played at Hemisfair Arena long time ago. They started there. It wasn't big enough. The city paid to raise the roof, more seats, and then that wasn't good enough. They went to the Alamodome. After the Alamodome, then they came over here. This wasn't good enough that we had to buy money or spend money to build their practice center on the north side. Now I think that it's time for us citizens to think of the future and invest in the children, the children coming up. I think that we need to, all these school districts are closing now. We need to think about investing in trade schools for you—the contractor over there, electricians, plumbers, stuff like that that they start in before high school. So, when they get out of high school, they have a decent living. I'm sorry, but the future is the children. It's not the dome for you. You can afford to build it yourself. I'm sorry.

Vanessa Shelton ([01:53:46](#)):

Hello, can you hear me? Yes. My name is Vanessa Shelton. I live in Dignowity Hill Historic District, former Neighborhood Association president and treasurer. Also a realtor and developer of homes in the neighborhood. I didn't grow up in San Antonio and I didn't grow up on the East Side, but I got here as quickly as I could and it's just the most amazing community I've ever lived in. Just coming from on the north side of San Antonio, it's always

surprising to me to see the inequity that the East Side has. Of course, I didn't know what was going on when I was in my bubble, but I know now and I'm very involved and very passionate about the East Side and things like infrastructure, streets, lights. I manage some properties in Denver Heights. CPS won't come out and put lights up. My property owners have to buy lights and put them on the telephone poles.

[\(01:54:48\)](#):

The neglect that happens, I can't understand and I'm trying to, other than the dirty words that nobody wants to say: systemic racism. I can't understand how we have a food desert. I live in a historic neighborhood where homes have sold for 700,000 and we don't have anywhere to go to walk to the grocery store. We can walk to the park, we could walk to the Pearl. There's not a grocery store for us to walk to. If you look at the roads that are coming into downtown, all the development stops at Austin Street. Just on the other side of Dignowity Hill, we have now a new skate park. We have Hay Street Bridge, but all the streets around there are potholes. I've been in the neighborhood four years. None of the streets, nothing's changed since the four years I've been in Dignowity Hill. We have Commerce Street that has beautiful, historic, dilapidated buildings.

[\(01:55:50\)](#):

That could be grocery stores, that could be stores, that could be boutiques, that could be shops and restaurants. No one's developing it. I really, really struggle and have a hard time understanding. Why would we be talking about an arena when this is what arena number three or four? I don't even know. And why wasn't this area developed? Like promised with this AT&T Center, there are homes, I'm a realtor. There are homes that are gorgeous, beautiful architecture that could be developed in this area. No one's going to come over here if we don't offer them a reason to come. So I'm trying to understand while we're having this conversation, I feel like it's really insulting to talk about a Spurs arena. Most of the people in these neighborhoods can't even afford to go to the Spurs games, myself included. So the Spurs are millionaires. They need to worry about their own arena is how I feel. There's just too many issues that have not been addressed that we need to address on the East Side.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(01:57:02\)](#):

Thank you for your service in the neighborhood. Thank you for coming.

Vanessa Shelton [\(01:57:04\)](#):

Appreciate that. Thank you.

Maria Vela ([01:57:09](#)):

Okay, sorry, I'm a bit short. Okay. Yes. So I also live in Dignowity Hill. My name is Maria. My name is Maria Vela. I'm also a resident of Dignowity Hill. Hi Jalen. Yes. So I also came because I was interested. I love budgets. I love spending. I love spending responsibly. One thing that I thought was interesting was two of the examples of stadiums, I believe one of them was, forgive me, I'm not a big sports person. One of them was the Crypto Stadium. That one was actually privately financed at the cost of 375 million. So they were able to do that with private financing. The other one was the Chicago one. Let's see, was that uc? The United Center in Chicago. That one was also privately financed by Wirtz and Reinsdorf families along with their bull book partners. The only example of public financing was Dallas. I don't know what's going on in Texas where we can't find people who are motivated to finance our projects, but I think that's a big problem.

([01:58:20](#)):

Secondly, I think if you do want people to invest in this project, which is what we would be doing, whether we're paying the sales tax on the tickets that we can't afford. I grew up here too. I never got to see a Spurs game until I got it paid by my company. Okay. That was really nice. It wasn't even a real game. It was a home game. It was like practice game. So my point is, if we are going to ask for the city to invest in this project, we do need a return on investment. I do expect that we're not only planning for how we're going to be spending this money and funding it, but how we're going to be spending the revenue that we get from this project. I love restaurants. I love retail. That's great. But that doesn't really help our community. We have realistic problems. We have so many people that are homeless on the street. Okay, thank you so much. I'm just asking you give us a good return on our investment.

Commissioner Calvert

Go ahead, please.

Karen Wilson ([01:59:27](#)):

Hello, I'm Karen Wilson. Grew up in San Antonio, graduated from Roosevelt, used the Coliseum for my graduation. It's a quality of life building. We need to keep the different programs that go on with the Coliseum. I think that it's been underutilized. Why we don't have any more at 35, while we don't have any more advertisements or some more beautification even along the way, and I got off the bus. There's only one sidewalk on one side. There's not even a bike rack out here. So if you're talking about congestion, let's start to get innovative. Let's put a bike rack out here. Glad to see public works here. Please. Art.

So I mean, there's other modes of transportation. So let's get innovative. We got plenty of buses while I'm standing here. I could count 'em back and forth. So we just never utilize that. Buses bring economic development.

[\(02:00:30\)](#):

We just underutilized this. We could do much better at the entrance of 35. There's nothing there but a couple little dead trees. So it's because nobody wanted to do anything here. Where's Alamo and Buck the Longhorn? Remember when I was at your office, I told you about the Longhorn. Your staff thought it was the football players. So let's bring Alamo and Buck. There's more than just sports here. Okay? And with you, Mr. McKee, where I grew up, let's do something about the panhandler right there under your district there, all these panhandlers, they have more opportunities than we do. I am tired of it. You see it every day. Clean it up. You shouldn't have panhandlers underneath 35. You go into Starlight Terrace, all you see is panhandlers there to go to Morgan's Wonderland. There's more places than just the Alamo here. Why aren't we doing something about that? But every time I go under 35 and Starlight Terrace, there's more the same panhandler, the same woman with her dog every time. Do something people.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(02:01:37\)](#):

Thank you, Karen. Thank you very much. Appreciate you coming.

Raymond Zavala [\(02:01:40\)](#):

Hello, my name is Raymond Zavala and I come to you not as a candidate for office, but as a concerned citizen. We talk about the East Side. Well, the west side is just as bad. The elected officials support the via green and silver lining coming from Our Lady of the Lake University up to this building. How many people are really going to ride it? Ridership is down and we're still paying for something that's not going to work. They're going to narrow the streets from two lanes to one lane. Commerce and Buena Vista. They're going to take San Pedro going from seven lanes to four. Where is the logic in that? And Mr. Monroe, I'm so glad that you're in the construction business. I'm pretty sure that you have a business plan before you started your construction business and that you try to live within your budget. Is that correct?

[\(02:02:44\)](#):

Now, what I don't understand is why the elected officials have placed before the voters for pay raise, except for the county. They just got themselves a raise and they're getting paid immediately. Why not? The rest of the small businesses, and by the way, small businesses,

no offense to the Bexar County Sheriff or SAPD, they're good people. However, why is it that the off-duty deputies and policemen are always here pulling security? What happens to the small business security companies? Why can't we spread the wealth? Why be greedy? Mr. Calvert? I respect you deeply, sir, and I hope that you'll take my comments. Not as negative, positive feedback. Also, when I see Bexar County Sheriff's, people violating the traffic laws, there can be no law. And I've seen them do it. They go against the traffic and to get into the parking lot, also the--well, thank you very much.

Adrian Flores ([02:03:55](#)):

Hello? I introduced myself. I don't introduce myself again. But how many people here live in District 4? Raise your hand, I'm sorry. In Precinct 4. Now, out of all you people, how many of you people own a house in 4? Okay, good. Jalen? Hi. What are you doing here? Let me ask you why I'm asking you this. Some of these questions have been directed to the City that have been up here. He's happened to have to try to answer 'em. You need to stand up. I'm sure TC will give you a minute to answer some of these questions. This Marvel thing is about the city, right? Not about the County. County wants to keep the Spurs here. They got a contract here till 32. Okay? The Marvel thing is about our mayor and the City Council. Am I right? Yeah. Okay, that's fine. They also want a baseball park, not just a billion dollar facility.

([02:05:01](#)):

They want a baseball park. And now we heard rumors about the Padres trying to move from San Diego, and we were mentioned in that. Fantastic. I like going to see baseball games too, but we need to be a part-ownership of that too. It's no longer good enough for these revenues. Like I said a while ago, we need to partner up and the City and the County need to work together. Sometimes in a big city like San Antonio, we're the seventh largest, third in area, in the country. So by time the City and the County get together and find some solutions. And for you people that want to be community leaders, not just come up here and condemn our City Councilmen, find solutions. Solutions is also being a leader. Okay? So before you come get people, come up with a solution because that's being progressive.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([02:05:59](#)):

Thank you.

Councilman Jalen McKee-Rodriguez

Thank you. Can I real quick?

Commissioner Tommy Calvert

Of course. Thank you for coming. Councilman. It's good to see you.

Councilman Jalen McKee-Rodriguez ([02:06:06](#)):

Hello. I've been summoned. Thank you all so much for being here. My name is Jalen McKee-Rodriguez. I have the privilege and honor of serving as the District 2 City Council member. Oh, he's leaving. Oh, no. I do want to address a couple things. Since I have been mentioned now twice at least. I hope Molly is still here. Unfortunately, I'm so sorry. I didn't realize that that email was to me. It was addressed to a Mr. Coleman and I was one of a hundred people CC'd on it. I will go back and look at it, and if there's a part that I need to address, I will absolutely do that. Never want someone to feel like they're not getting a response from me. The second piece of that is, of course, we are here talking about small businesses and someone brought up DEI, something that happened a couple months ago at least had to have been, that was really upsetting to me and to I know many small business owners was the removal of race consideration and gender consideration from our SBEDA program, our small business support program.

([02:07:02](#)):

And that was done preemptively to try to make sure that the courts weren't going to strike us down and prevent us from doing anything that was going to support small businesses. And we know that with DEI, there's a lot right now. Conversation about DEI is huge and it's, oh, all these businesses are being provided opportunities because they're black and brown. And that's not the case. The architects that we've worked with that we've seen, the black owned architecture firms, they are doing some of the best work. The people who get their contracts because they've earned them, they've earned them. Programs like SBEDA, programs like DEI allow it to where small businesses who would not be given opportunity are allowed in the door that outreach is important and it's necessary. And so that's something that as we're talking about the future of development of any major projects, any of our construction, I want you to know that it should be baked into every single core function of the City, of the County.

([02:07:56](#)):

That those businesses that would historically be left out and marginalized and not chosen and not given an opportunity that they have that opportunity to prove and show why they're the best. So that's a commitment. I wanted to make sure our small businesses heard that. Spurs, we've been having this conversation now for a while, and it's unfortunate that we rely

on the black County Commissioner, the black City Council member, the black State Rep, to be the voice of and to answer on behalf of the entire body that we represent. I'm one of 11 people on City Council. And every conversation I've had about the potential Spurs arena, about Project Marvel, which is not the new arena solely, it's the convention center, it's Hemisfair Park. It's a big, big Alamodome, big project. I've said this past year, we were just going through a budget deficit where we had to explain to nonprofits who provide services to our community, why they would not be provided additional funding from the City to do outreach to our youth, to provide job training and to support all of those needs that we have in the community. But whenever we have a Missions stadium, a new stadium, whenever we have a new arena, whenever there's a new hotel, whenever there's some big thing, there's some opportunity for the developers and the big businesses and the millionaires and the billionaires to make money, we're able to find an opportunity to give them money. And so long ago, I was but a five-year old when the promises were made about what was going to happen when the Frost Bank Center or at the SBC Arena, I was going somewhere with that. I promise

[\(02:09:46\)](#):

I said this. I said this last week, you cannot force investment by people who do not care about you. And that's one of the biggest problems we have is that we rely, we say, oh, we're going to build a new arena or a stadium, and that's going to make all these corporations are going to come and they're going to invest in the community and they're going to build restaurants and shops. And you're going to have all those things that you've never had before. And we know that's not the case. It hasn't happened the multiple times. We've built arenas and stadiums here. It's proven that it does not work across the country. It's not going to do what they say it's going to do. And the reason why those promises are not fulfilled is because, again, you cannot force people to invest in people they do not care about. And when we live in a black and brown community, that's the case. And so the opportunities that we have to support black and brown businesses, the opportunities that we have to support people who live and are from here, to have access to capital and to build here and to invest in their own community, that's going to be pivotal and important in any part of these conversations. I don't mean to talk too long, and I don't mean to preach, but

Unknown [\(02:10:51\)](#):

What was that two minutes?

Councilman Jalen McKee-Rodriguez [\(02:10:54\)](#):

You see, I got to—hey, people were speaking to me, so this isn't public comment, so I get to respond. I've maintained, we should not be talking about public dollars going towards an arena like this. I've maintained, the thing is I'm one of 11 people. And so Jalen, why haven't you undone systemic racism in the City? Why is it that we have 77 miles of failing streets? Jalen, why is this is something that we have to do together?

[\(02:11:28\)](#):

We have to do it together. And if we had this attendance at the City Council meetings, at the Commissioners Court hearings, if we had this, the people would see that when Jalen says, if you ask my community, do they want a new arena? If it comes down between choosing Spurs leaving or us building them a new arena, I bet you it's not what you think the answer is going to be. But they don't believe me when I say that. So this is a great opportunity. This is a meeting. Again, you're talking, and I'm glad you guys brought this up. You're speaking to your Commissioner, you're speaking to your city council member, and you're speaking to a few members of staff. This is going to have to carry on when we have the people who have been at the table—the mayor, the county judge, city manager, county manager.

[\(02:12:17\)](#):

When we have those meetings with them, you have to be there. So I'm asking you to show up. I want you to know, I see the issues y'all are talking about. Homelessness is an issue. I can't wait to hear the plan to eradicate all of homelessness in San Antonio. It's not going to be the sweeps. It's not going to be going to every single person who's panhandling and locking them away because they have a need. If you can't give them a dollar, don't give them a dollar. If they are going to hurt you, you have every right to respond how you must, but that's not happening. And so I wanted to address all of that really quickly. I'm going to try to stay to the end, but may not have to address you again. Thank you.

Commissioner Calvert

Thank you, Councilman. Okay. Yes, sir.

Will Singleton [\(02:13:03\)](#):

Yeah. My name is Will Singleton. I'm the owner and director of operations for Industrial Construction Company. Anyway, I've been in San Antonio for over 40 years. I'm here because of Mr. TC Calvert and his dad. The only reason I really stayed here. I left San Antonio. I came here in 1980, 83. I was an import from Fort Wayne, Indiana. I was a plant engineering manager for the Borgis Food company. HEB brought me here to run the milk plant operations. I was a plant engineer. So after about three years, decided to go out on my own. It was tough. And I started trying to work with the City of San Antonio. It was tough.

It was real hard. So several times I got contracts—lowest bidder—never heard from them. Next time I know again, it was back out to bid again. I said, I'm not taking that anymore. So I got up, my wife and I talked about it. We went to Austin for five years until such time that they get competent administration for the City of San Antonio.

[\(02:14:19\)](#):

Now I think they have competent administration 40 years. It was a long time trying to get along with San Antonio. They've gotten a lot better. When you was talking about pay, I had the same situation. I had waited til the 25th. I put my pay request in, so on the fifth next month I expected to have my pay, so I gave a little bit more time. I gave my mark and a week, so I went down there to the finance department, check on where's my money. She said, oh, Mr. Singleton, we haven't had a chance to look at it. I said, what? You haven't had a chance to look at it. It's been over 30 days. She said, I'm sorry, sir. I said, who's your boss? He was the vice president of finance. I said, I'd like to talk to him. She said, well, he's not here. I said, okay, do you have a blanket and a pillow? I said, do you have a blanket and a pillow? I sat down, I said, do you have a blanket and a pillow? Because I'm going to be here until he comes. So I sat there for about an hour, sat there about an hour. All of a sudden he came in and I got my business taken care of and we didn't have any problem with the city pay since that point.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(02:15:34\)](#):

Thank you Mr. Singleton. It's been very hard on small business people in this town. Thank you for coming, sir, go ahead. You have two minutes.

Mark Sullivan [\(02:15:47\)](#):

Can you fix this? Thank you Commissioner Calvert for convening this forum. Very important. My name is Mark Sullivan. I'm a biomedical engineer and an inventor and I have a plan. It's called Texposition. Texposition is a World's Fair for San Antonio. It is a tech-accelerator. It's unlike any other World's Fair in history. It can revitalize our community, it can make a job pipeline and create economic development for generations. It is a system for solving problems afflicting our community, but parts of it appear as a festival which fits in well with the Spurs Sports & Entertainment Corporation. And I have been meeting with my council member, Jalen, thank you, and with my Commissioner, and other members of our city staff. So if you want innovation Texposition provides it. It is a specific plan for solving problems and turning our problems into opportunity. I believe if you approach a problem with a positive attitude, you will activate positive results and create lasting solutions and we have real world solutions in the exposition World's Fair. It is a tech accelerator. I hope

that our elected officials and our community leaders will see the vision in this unique World's Fair named Texposition. You can visit texposition.org. It's a 01 C3. Thank you for your time.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([02:18:36](#)):

Thank you. Thank you very much. Great ideas. Beverly, thank you for coming and all your great contributions to the world. Appreciate you.

Beverly Watts Davis ([02:18:47](#)):

Thank you so very much. Commissioner, Councilman. Commissioner, I cannot thank you enough, Tommy. Your leadership is outstanding as usual and I just simply want to be able to make sure that we also remember the nonprofits, nonprofits in both your district and in your precinct is big business. We employ a very high percentage of people and so what I asked too is that you don't forget to engage the nonprofit community in these talks because again, we have a little bit more flexibility as a 501, we can be more flexible in terms of being able to create jobs and be able to do different things. You have seen what we have done with AmeriCorps in terms—and that's 300 young people who would've literally—might've had a different, negative trajectory in life that now have positive ones. But I also want to be able to simply bring your attention to the railroads and I've not heard anybody speak about this, but I would ask you all to please work with the railroads because the way through systemic, honestly, racism and redlining, we have railroad tracks that go through our communities and literally hold up us doing business in this community.

([02:19:56](#)):

They will literally drive in very, very slow stop on the track. People are trying to get to work, people are trying to get to any other where it's possible and they will stop. This does not happen in any other part of San Antonio where we have such poor participation from the railroad. Please visit with them because I have seen them truly be a negative driver to our economy and they're just forgotten about. So I know I don't have much time, but I want to thank you all for your leadership. Jalen, thank you for saying it is so important and I ask everybody in here to remember this call to action. We cannot expect Commissioner Calvert and Jalen to always be carrying our water as representatives of the black community. This is the East Side and it is representative of all people. We all need to be down there at the County Commission when you put out a call and when you put out a call. We need to do that because even though we may not be enough to elect someone, we are certainly enough to keep someone from being elected or reelected. So I want us to realize that power, it's criminal that you are not in this, involved in these and we need to make that

change and we need to remind people we may not be enough to elect you, but we're darn sure enough to keep you from being reelected. Thank you.

Denise Gutierrez Homer ([02:21:18](#)):

Good morning and thank you Mr. Calvert for offering us an opportunity to speak to your panel as well to the other residents and neighbors here in Bexar County. My name is Denise Gutierrez Homer and I'm a part of Infuse SA where we do our research on City and County issues and policies and specifically your taxes and where our money is going. We want to be your DOGE. You might not like the idea, but we need to see where our money is going. You need to see exactly where the investments are regarding those multimillionaire and billionaire people that are working behind doors with our elected officials. So I don't want to repeat everything that we said and I was here last week and I appreciate the video that was uploaded, but let's go ahead and look at the reality. Somebody mentioned the Crypto, but the fact is that used to be the Staples center. Right now the Staples Center is the same exact size as that building next door.

([02:22:09](#)):

It's as old as that facility with the Lakers, but guess what? They're getting ready for the Summer Olympics in that same building. Why haven't we proposed something of that caliber at the same time that building was built with our tax dollars. We have the Hyatt Hill Country Resort on the north side and look what happened up there. We have all the economy, the resort, the money coming to new residents and neighborhoods and what do we have to show for it? Those are the comparisons that we like to look at. The fact that we have multimillionaires like Mr. McCombs who decided to invest in Austin with the Grand Prix. We had the Grand Prix in San Antonio, but our City Council and the planners want to reduce our traffic. We will never have the Grand Prix again in San Antonio and that brought a lot of money to our area. The fact that we actually have to look at the reality that we are in a deficit. We are hurting financially in Bexar County that we need to have more people involved as taxpayers at this table. The municipalities of San Antonio on the North Side are the largest tax base for our funds. Precinct 3 goes all the way to Government Hill.

([02:23:28](#)):

Just go back to in views to say you'll see more information.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([02:23:37](#)):

I will say this for the record, Precinct 4 is the second greatest revenue-generating precinct for the County. So we are also a juggernaut of economic activity.

Unknown ([02:23:48](#)):

Alright, really appreciate this town hall. It's been great for the most part. My comments echo that of COPS/Metro is an excellent presentation. So when I get cut off, just copy paste that presentation to basically reflect my thoughts. I was really heated a couple months back when Mayor Nirenberg said something about with regard to criticisms on Project Marvel, the baseball stadium and such about we need to grow up about that level of thinking that to have a critique on these publicly financed projects, basically going to billionaires is worthy of criticism and that we need to think bigger or something like that. But those of us who work in our communities and such, we see the poverty, we see the need, we try to assist the houseless community, those sorts of things. We know that we've got another CPS rate hike coming onto our backs. We know that saws is now going to ask for a rate hike as well.

([02:24:51](#)):

Housing prices have skyrocket out of control for almost everybody in the entire county. These are the issues that really we're facing right now and there doesn't seem to be high level solutions for the difficulty in getting by when our wages don't increase at the same rates. I know for myself, I'm a war trauma veteran and so keeping steady employment can be somewhat of a challenge sometimes. And so it's like we're told to bootstrap it, we're told to get financial literacy and all these sorts of things. Then we're giving money to the wealthiest, wealthiest, wealthiest people in our entire community and it's like this doesn't make any sense. The whole situation is inverse and really it just feels like an abusive relationship. We cannot break from this abusive relationship for whatever reason, but I mean we do know why. It's because it's money. It's all about the money and how do they get all that control?

([02:25:45](#)):

Well, if we were to have a vote on this stadium and how much money we're going to give to Holt and others to help finance their stadium and so on, how much money are they going to pour into that election to make sure that we vote their way to scare monger us away? These sorts of things. I'm thinking about how am I going to break my relationship with the Spurs, right? How am I going to be able to just, I'm excited—Wembanyama, if we get De'Aaron Fox, all that stuff, right? But it cannot come at the expense of our community, of our city, of our county, of all this stuff. We need to do what's right for us and if Spurs and the Holts hate us, they can get out of here. We might love them forever, but they can get out of here if they can't do for the community. Thanks.

Harry Robinson ([02:26:39](#)):

Hello, my name is Harry Robinson and I'm the acting Vice Commander for the National Association of Black Vets. I want to say thank you to Commissioner Calvert and to the panel that's here. I'm here to ask for two things. One, I want everybody to remember the veterans here in San Antonio. We call ourselves Military City USA. I actually graduated from basic training and training over at Fort Sam Houston in 1980. I came back and was stationed here in 2006 and I've retired and been here since then. And what I'm asking for on the East Side specifically, we have veterans that are in need. We have a place, an office space where veterans can come into on a regular basis and they can come in and talk about their issues. We have veteran service organizations, not just like NAD Vets but others who could be working out of that space to help assist our veterans. So I appreciate that if you get that, make that happen. Thank you.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([02:27:30](#)):

Absolutely, Harry. It's good to see you buddy. Yeah, good to see. We go back.

Speaker 42 ([02:27:36](#)):

Hi, I am Grace Rose Gonzalez and I'm a business owner. I have been a past zoning commissioner and served on the Port Authority Board and also the chair of the Cultural Arts board for 10 years. So all of those things are integral and important when you start thinking about what do we do in the future. And there was a question and it's come up several times about what happened on the southeast side, or the south side, you know Military and how incredible that all is. And the reality is that that was the visioning of Mayor Garza and people actually laughed at him as he was going around with his presentation and he was saying, we have Toyota, we have Brooks, we need an education component. We can do all of this. And so he created sort of this whole territory and ability to vision what we could do.

([02:28:34](#)):

And so with that, he went over, got A&M and A&M took 500 acres and then they built a campus there and Toyota was a great partner with them and all of this started to happen together. So it really does take somebody with vision and the ability to go out in spite of how people will just boohoo everything. We don't think big enough. And I really appreciate Commissioner Calver saying, let's get together. Let's think about what would we put on there and even if they stay, what can we do with this campus? And I would venture to say the educational component is probably one of the most important. I would love to see a veterinarian school that would work with the Rodeo and go from there because when Cody was speaking last week and talking about how the horses and all of the connectivity of

those things with the children is, I think it's very important for us to start thinking like that even if they stay. Thank you.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([02:29:45](#)):

Thank you. Grace.

Steve Versteeg ([02:29:52](#)):

Yeah, thank you. My name is Steve Versteeg. I live right over here near I-35 and Walters and earlier speaker said that we had some Starbucks maybe because of the Spurs. Well, I'll tell you that Starbucks is not there because of the Spurs. Tommy Calvert, Jalen and Pat Frost also know that it was there because we fought off a gas station. So an earlier speaker said they were, I think, an intentional business owner. I'm an unintentional business owner. My wife has a business on Austin Highway and one thing I've heard and I agree with is that we need to keep talking like this. We need to be there at the meetings and voice our opinion, but I'm in my sixties and I can't retire earlier and I have to go to work. So if it's at 9:00 AM on Tuesday or Thursday, I'm not going to be there. Move those meetings to an evening to a Saturday and I'll be there. So help me out and I'll help you out.

Cindy Waddell ([02:31:12](#)):

I'm Cindy Waddell and I'm a former athletic director and high school administrator. I do live here on the east side. I love it here and my focus today is going to be for the future of this arena here. I believe that's what we came for. I am a USA Pickleball ambassador in San Antonio and I'm a president of a nonprofit, the San Antonio Pickleball Association, where we run one tournament a year and we give all those net proceeds back to scholarships for high school seniors. Thank you. I am proposing for part of this facility to be in multi-use indoor facility for kids, adults and seniors to be able to stay active. Multi-use is the key word I believe. And of course I want pickleball to be in that multi-use picture. These two guys know me, that's I'm sure when they saw my face, they know that was coming.

([02:32:27](#)):

But multi-use is the key with pickleball. It has grown. Those of you that don't know about it, 223% in the last three years and we have not even reached the pinnacle yet for the purposes of the east side, it would bring that has a potential to have tournaments in that facility, which right now the National Senior Games for Pickleball is looking for a place to play. They have over 1500 participants every year. That's just a small example of bringing some tourism dollars back to the East Side. So let's be creative and let's look at a multi-use indoor facility in this building. Thank you.

Belinda Mora Gavallos ([02:33:23](#)):

Hi, I love her idea. My name is Belinda Mora Gavallos. I am the chair of the Bexar County Historical Commission, though my role here is to speak on behalf of myself, not the commission. I'm also a product of the East Side. I spent my formative years on Cooper Street. Thank you Sisters of the Holy Spirit for teaching me how to read at our Lady of Perpetual Health. I'm going to address, I'm going to address you in regards to the Bexar County debt rating right now. As of November, 2024, the Bexar County debt rating was a AAA. The county has \$2.5 billion in outstanding debt. It's the highest debt per capita in the state of Texas. There are projects that are tied to those funds that are not completed. If the Spurs lease expires in 2032, that translates if they break their lease, that translates to money not going to the County for the County's use.

([02:34:33](#)):

That means our debt rating is going to go down. That means the county's ability to be able to borrow or offer debt is going to be reduced. Translation, everybody, that means programming is going to go down. So now that the borrowing climate is not as friendly to the rep—to everyone because of the high interest rates that are expected to go higher. My banker amigo, Mr. Frost can understand that. So I would like for you all to think about this in a very holistic financial way in terms of funding and rent that the County may not collect.

Kate Silvas ([02:35:31](#)):

Good morning, Tommy. For those that don't know me, my name is Kate Silvas. I'm a former elected official for the City of Converse. I have a certification as an economic developer. I've been in economic development for 20 plus years. I'm proud to say that I was part of the team that helped launch Port San Antonio creating 18,000 jobs where we lost 15,000 due to brac. I've been in economic development, as I said for 20 years, and there is so much opportunity and everyone here wants what's right for this community. I think we all do. What I do believe, and I think I've shared these thoughts with Tommy this week as a matter of fact, is the opportunity exists for if the Spurs were to vacate that facility, what if we were to look at it from an opportunity of healthcare, create a healthcare environment for senior living to be around the facility and create a teaching hospital for access to healthcare outside of Fort Sam Houston?

([02:36:35](#)):

There really isn't healthcare in this area. So it's really an opportunity for us to create jobs, good paying jobs that actually teach kids and all of us how to be better about taking care of our health. We have an obesity problem in San Antonio and I just think it's an opportunity.

Also as a tagline, I'd also say that the opportunity also existed. I don't know about the Institute of Texas Cultures and where they stand with their decision making, but that would be an amazing place for an actual skyscraper to be created for office jobs, to create more economic development. And then you'd have an opportunity in the Alamodome to actually have a sports arena that would make sense with existing assets. Thank you.

Nick Peña ([02:37:27](#)):

Thank you. Good morning. Is it still? Good morning? Yeah, good afternoon. My name is Nick Peña and I'm a small businessman in the community at the El Mercado and I gave you a little plan, Commissioner, that I want you to look at it. I have a lot of experience in this type of a situation. I think you have a great opportunity to make it happen. I think that the City, together with the County and the community, you will make it happen now. We made it happen 45 years ago during the celebration of the Great Society and the War on poverty.

([02:38:14](#)):

We were fighting to get something for us at the Mercado and we finally got it done through Congressman Henry B. Now, what's missing here at the table is the Congressman. The Congressman plays a big role in also securing funds such as HUD monies and development, economic development monies. But I want to congratulate both of you for being here and to opening the doors of opportunity. We are very blessed that we do not have the problems that they have in Washington DC where their mourning the dead of many, many innocent people that had on that crash and also the crash that happened in Pennsylvania where they were transporting some patients back to their homeland. So we are very blessed to be here and talk about this kind of work that we are trying to do, but you can make it happen. You can make it happen, I believe so thank you very much.

Maria Fernanda Rodriguez ([02:39:24](#)):

Hello, my name is Maria Fernanda Rodriguez and I wear many hats, but I'm here to always advocate for the youth. So thank you for Commissioner Calvert, Jalen, I know what you guys have done personally for the youth. I'm very aware. I work directly with the youth. So going back to the decision to whether the Spurs stay or go is above my pay grade, I always say that, but I know that, excuse the expression, money, walk walks bullshit—I mean money talks, bullshit walks. I apologize. I'm a little nervous, but the reason why I'm saying that is whatever decision is made, I just hope that whenever a strategic plan is being proposed or whatever you're going to end up doing with the jobs or the stadiums, I hope that you think about the, and that you think about some of the services that can be directly provided to the youth.

[\(02:40:18\)](#):

Because as somebody who works directly with the justice-involved, with the kids who are at risk or already using substances, I would hope that you have people at the table who understand firsthand what we're dealing with. I know that there's some resources in the city that provides workforce or development, but when I send my youth, I have to go in in person to advocate for them because I know somebody who knows somebody. Why should I have to do that? And that's at any level, why should I have to go and advocate for them when this is a resource that's going to be provided to the youth that should be provided to everybody. So I just ask, that's my small request. Just consider the youth, consider the providers and the community members and the nonprofits or whoever is providing services to the youth to be at the table so that you can hear firsthand some of the things that we're dealing with and where we have roadblocks. That's it. Thank you.

Colby Guillory [\(02:41:18\)](#):

Hello everyone. My name is Colby Guillory. I'm a local developer. I was here at the meeting last week. I thought it was pretty cool. But one of the things that were announced for this meeting was that there'd be more of a talk on the financing. And I assume that meant beyond just a potential venue tax. I'd like to pose this question to the panel. If you guys know of the free money that's just floating around there from the State and Federal Government that y'all could tap into for this project, whatever form that'll take shape assumably to improve the infrastructure here in the East Side.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(02:41:50\)](#):

Lemme just say this, I did call the City Finance Director to find out if the City was taking their venue tax because it was said by the bond council last week that they were not, because I can't understand why the County is being asked to pay for an arena if the City isn't doing their own venue tax. It just doesn't make sense to me at all. So I don't think I've gotten a call back. I've been very busy, so I may have missed a call from the finance director, but look, when we talk about the different finance resources that are available for redevelopment, we have an Inner City Tax Increment Refinance Zone. We've talked about a super public infrastructure district where you capture all of the taxes within a geographic boundary around this Coliseum and reinvest them in stuff. Let's just put it that way.

[\(02:42:42\)](#):

Ideas you all talked about here. We will have to look at, as I mentioned in the last meeting, we will have to look at innovative ways because the county lands and the city lands are not taxed. We'll have, if we do partnerships with developers, we'll have to look at payment in

lieu of taxes. If we maintain control of the grounds and the land, there are state federal opportunities that we could go after for infrastructure. Of course, the political environment's very cloudy right now in terms of what Washington will do for you and the rest of us. But in the past, there are opportunities for that at the ability to advance a university. A veterinary school here on the grounds comes from the State of Texas, and I brought my Texas A&M mug for a reason. And so those things come out of appropriations at the state level.

[\(02:43:47\)](#):

So again, if we are committed to researching dollars to help the community, they are there. Again, I have not been convinced by the County Manager about the so-called debt looming over the County. And what I mean by that is I'm keenly aware of our per capita debt, but at the same time, the restrictions to nonprofit agencies is not going to break the budget of the County on those capital infrastructures. Things that we tend to have as those big items that are causing that high number, the amount of money that the City and the County, well, the City is much better at it than the County. The County has maintained a million or \$2 million for nonprofits for a long time. But my point is that there's still money within the venue tax budget. For example, there's a couple hundred million dollars in capacity today for projects that got funded in the last realm, including the Riverwalk projects for maintenance on the buildings. So there's lots of money floating around. That's why the Project Marvel is 4 billion. There's money that could be utilized. It's about your priority and how you use it.

Colby Guillory [\(02:45:07\)](#):

Well, thank you very much.

Jacqueline Rita [\(02:45:15\)](#):

I guess I'm going to stand back. Good afternoon everyone. I'm Jacqueline Rita and I'm from San Antonio. 50 plus years I have seen drastic crimes. I have seen everybody else's side of town develop, but for some reason they keep forgetting the East Side. I have seen our people move from San Antonio because they cannot get employment, they cannot get work, they can't find the money to help these children who are committing these crimes because some of these gang members choose to bring these children in and draw them into the fast money. You talk about all this, about what we are going to do as far as this AT&T Center. It doesn't so-called matter to me. What matters is the people. We are forgetting that these people need development. We need black developers. We need black people to stand up and help build our side of town.

[\(02:46:33\)](#):

Everybody has a restaurant. We have to travel more than 15 minutes to get to a restaurant of good value. We cannot go to the schools. Our children don't even have technology implemented in their classes. But yet instead, you're here talking about an AT&T Center. We can't even have nice homes. Developers are building subdivisions. I put it from Southcross all around San Antonio, but they would bypass the east side. I'm here just explaining something because I've had several calls from the people, our clients, and they were upset because they had to move to the other side of town so that they can have a better education for their children so that they can have a job for their teenagers to do so that they won't get in trouble. But yet, instead, we're constantly talking about building something for a Spurs game. And I'm basically tired along with my clients. I'm tired of it. Nobody's doing anything for the East Side. The same HEB, I've left and traveled the world and came back several times and I cannot get lost on the East Side.

[\(02:48:07\)](#):

So tell me, what are we really discussing here? Because if you want to talk about money, I got plenty of ideas, plans. We can tell you what we need. We can get more people here. The people that live here and the people whose family that they had to move from this side of town all the way on 1604 Alamo Ranch, and they're working at restaurants because they've lost their jobs because they don't have a babysitter. They had to leave their family members here and they moved way across town because they don't have anybody to help them. We don't have daycares. We don't have sufficient education. We don't have effectiveness.

[\(02:48:58\)](#):

And I'm tired. If you want to do something and it's not on you, Commissioner, it's not on you, Jalen. It's the State, and we need to get these people to let release some funds so that these things can happen on the East Side from the bottom of the totem pole to the top. We need everybody, all of our elected officials, and I can say this to all the people, stop voting for people who do not think you matter. Thank you, Commissioner, because I know you do a great job. Thank you. I know you do too, Jalen, and I know you can't do it by yourself. All you got to do is call us and we can get the people there.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(02:49:46\)](#):

So before Steven, it looks like Steven might be our last speaker if there's no others that are lined up, but you certainly may come in.

Jacqueline Rita [\(02:49:54\)](#):

Well, thank you.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([02:49:55](#)):

Let me just say a word of education in this community. There's a lot of new heads in politics today. I have often joked that I didn't have much of a childhood because I was always in meetings like this, learning from you. But in the bad old days of politics, I'm talking decades ago when the head leaders, the Mayor and those guys, when they would come up with these new arena plans, there used to be a chicken in every pot. The politics used to be that we are going to have a community conversation about Southside Mission County Park having some renovations or the Northeast fields at Morgan's Wonderland or the Wheatley Heights Sports Complex getting a piece of the pie. That isn't the conversation anymore, Councilman, as you know. The conversation is, "We got a debt problem. We can't give you nothing. Don't ask us for nothing." But, yet, we got a AAA rating, which means we're cash rich. We have money in reserve. It doesn't make any sense. I don't buy it. I don't believe it. And it's with intent that nonprofits in this town are starved because you empower the people

([02:51:19](#)):

And not the oligarchy. So I just want to say that to this group that we have been advocating. We do know that in order to help gun violence, you can't put it in an ad campaign. \$900,000. People ought to be ashamed of themselves for doing stuff like that. Not a single city in the United States put 900,000 thinking an ad campaign would solve gun violence. These are serious issues to families that I serve and that Jalen serves and it has the lack of any kind of couth, Sister Rodriguez, to just cover the basis of your people so that there isn't unrest. Politically, it's gone. That finesse of politicians is nowhere to be seen. Some people don't get it, Pat. We're going to need your help to help these politicians start to learn how to be good leaders that bring us together. Steven, you got the floor

Steven Lucky ([02:52:22](#)):

All right. Thank you for having this. My name is Steven Lucky. I have grown up in San Antonio on the northeast side, up the street on Rittiman. I remember when I was five years old, I went to the Alamodome and to watch the Spurs game with my dad, it was a little loud. So I asked him to go home at halftime. I remember at 10 years old, 99, I was at the Memorial Day Miracle. I saw Sean Elliot hit the three in the corner. It was amazing. And I get outside of the arena and there's Sunset Station. I'm only 10 years old, so I can't partake in the fun. But when I learned that the Spurs were going to move from the Alamodome to the east side as a 10-year-old, I'm in fifth grade, it didn't make sense to me because it seemed like the Sunset Station, St.

([02:53:05](#)):

Paul Square was finally getting some economic growth there. It's centrally located. There's lots of parking, but the Spurs made a commitment to the East Side and there were a lot of promises that were made. So regardless of that decision that was made 20 years ago, the commitment that was promised needs to be fulfilled whether they're here or not, I try to travel a little bit. I go to Denver, they have a Pearl-esque venue next to the Rockies Stadium, this huge screen. You can watch the game, you can have a drink, you can get some food. You can walk across to the stadium. My wife is in San Diego. Petco Park is right downtown in the Gaslamp District. You can go to the game, you can watch the game. You can hear the game. They even have bars that you can see into the arena without actually being in the Petco Park.

[\(02:53:52\)](#):

I went to Jerry's World up in Dallas during the winter break. I didn't have tickets to the football game, but I got to go to Texas Live, which is right next to the stadium. I still got to be in my energy. I paid parking so they got some money from me there and got to hang out in the area. And then after the game, people are coming out. So it happens, it exists. The fact that we never developed this area like that is our fault. Does Coca-Cola really need to be right there? Thank you. Right? I mean, is that necessary? All these buildings over here could be amazing venues, right? We have the space. I'll finish up with this. We talk about we don't have money for things we don't have money for light rails. Too expensive. Austin just voted on light rail. Austin is putting in light rail. So we have 4 billion for an arena, but we don't have 4 billion for public transportation. That's all. Thank you

Commissioner Tommy Calvert [\(02:54:47\)](#):

Steven. Let me just say this about, I sometimes don't understand what's going on. On rail, Basset who did the polling on the rail system said that it's the highest infrastructure approval he's ever polled in his career in Texas. 84% of people in San Antonio approve of a rail between San Antonio and Austin. And so when I abstained from my vote for VIA TOD, it was for a variety of reasons, but it was in part because it's my belief that we should have put those monies to that effort first. Now, there's a lot of need at the State of Texas to have them help subsidize, and the Republicans at the state haven't figured out how to shake out enough campaign contributions out of the rail lobby to actually move it forward. The only thing that they move for, and that's the only reason you don't have it, it's the influence of political campaign contributions on those guys. But those are the kinds of things that would marvel me if we invested in a rail line from downtown and East San Antonio up to Austin, that would marvel me along with having backup power and backup water and housing and things of that nature. But any event, go ahead.

Speaker 51 ([02:56:14](#)):

Okay. Thank you. You all guys did a great job. Joe Monroe, Tommy Calvert, Jr. That's Jaylen, our councilman with the Spurs. Also, I want to mention this. I was reluctant. I was here last week and I was reluctant to say anything, but I do want to say this much. I've been a part of the Spurs for like since George Gervin days Convention Center, Alamodome, AT&T, SBCC, and now Frost. I've been there 20 years. So you're not the only Spurs Sports & Entertainment employee here. I was there last night. I'm sorry I missed you. They told me you was there, but we just here to support whatever decision that you guys make. Okay? As long as it agrees with the community on the East Side. Okay? I'm a homeowner here in district two. I've been here for a number of years, my relatives. Thank you very much.

([02:57:08](#)):

And I just want to say as far as Bexar County, you guys did a great job last night. I was there. Whatever decision is made long as we support these gentlemen that's got our back, we have to support them regardless of whatever it is we need to support these guys because they do a great job. I just want to say that much. I'm not going to say whatever the issues is with the Spurs. Thank you Ramon for organizing this. Thank you Pop Calvert for being back there. But whatever decision it is, let's just support these guys. Okay? I just want to thank you for that.

Carla-Joy Sisco ([02:57:47](#)):

I'm going to be quick. I think we have five minutes. My name is Carla-Joy Sisco. Yeah, two minutes. Two minutes. You're right. Two minutes. My name is Carla-Joy Sisco, and I've heard a lot. I was at the last meeting. I'm at this meeting, I heard a lot from the community. But one of the things that, as you said, the city has triple bond, AAA bond. There's funding every time there's a project, a major scale project that needs to be done. And we talked about a lot of other possibilities that we could do in the area. One of the things that I haven't heard is helping homeowners to stay in the community. Meaning how do we find the money to help them to repair their homes? How do we find the money so that they can actually stay and not necessarily say, oh, there's a new build over there. Let me run and get over there. There's a new build over here, and that's resources, that's knowledge, that's money, that's taxes, that's leaving the area because there are families that may not be able to afford to move, but their properties are falling apart. And so we need to also consider in the vision, in the plan, we need to consider how do we help people stay in the community. Besides all the other things, great things that we want to do.

Commissioner Tommy Calvert ([02:59:15](#)):

Let me just say that I've always believed that if we could give 105 million in renovations for the AT&T Center, which we did in 2015, we should be able to help you renovate your home. I believe that. And that's why in 2017, I created the Housing Bond with Mayor Ivy Taylor. Mayor Nierenberg tries to take credit for it. That's not true. It was Ivy Taylor, Lela Powell, Sheryl Scully, and myself in a room. And Lela will tell you that, as will Andrew, who's here, he was in the room too. And we've got to have in our next municipal election, 300 million to 500 million for housing and rehab and owner-occupied rehab because we have a silver tsunami of seniors who need to be able to age in place. And we have too many people who paid too much money into their housing and not gotten a return. I fundamentally believe that will help us with wealth, that will help us with economic stability and to keep some of these folks who want to stay here in their homes.

[\(03:00:13\)](#):

I had an aunt who in the February freeze didn't have water for two years. But I'm grateful to Mau Sanchez who put on his—he's running for mayor—and he put on his social media just how much money we're wasting and how little effort we're actually doing. It seems like a lot of money, but when you actually look at the total number of homes that are being helped on our, let's say 36 million or what was it, 36 million in the city budget, think it was 36 million. You're not helping very many people. You're helping a couple of hundred out of hundred thousand plus that actually need it. I mean, it's probably about 200,000 to be completely accurate. So we've got to look under the hood of where we're spending our money and be realistic about the challenges of San Antonio because in a depression or recession, we are economically very, very weak.

[\(03:01:12\)](#):

And we've got to be able to transition our people into wealth and educational opportunities that will sustain them. So we will regroup on when the next town hall will be. But the first priority is, as I said earlier, to take every single person who took the time, and I thank you for coming and all of the people who presented and all the people who are here, thank you so much. We will take every comment and we'll affix a policy recommendation to that and we will call you and we'll check in and see if you like that policy recommendation or if you've got another thing that you'd like to add to the gravy pot from here. Reminder: Tuesday, some very important items are on the Commissioners Court agenda that addresses things that you brought forward here. One, your voice, your voice in the negotiating table.

[\(03:02:06\)](#):

That is on the executive agenda. Number two is helping small business people. It's on the executive. It's been clogged up in the executive. It has been wasting away because the big

business people don't really want companies like Joe's to grow. And it used to be Joe, that the people who ran the city, when they knew they were coming to ask for this much money, they would make sure these programs got done. But that day appears to be over because we are not keeping our eye on the prize. And so I've got a commitment that I need to go back to CCSA. I need to go back to a COPS/Metro. I need to go back to all the organizations that were here, the black business, the Hispanic contract. I need to go back to talk to everybody and the interest groups that are here, the neighborhood now, King William gave some real, I don't know why King William, they've got some brilliant concerns about their infrastructure, and this is rubber meets the road on problems the neighborhood's having.

[\(03:03:15\)](#):

And I wish they would've spoken. But Lisa Lynn, the executive director, left some real detailed information about challenges they're having today without the Project Marvel. Just so everybody's clear, the Commissioners Court has never been briefed on Project Marvel. This is a ping pong game that is done in politics so that you don't know who's in charge of what. I have to deal with it every day. So they'll say, well, it's a city. So Project Marvel's a county project. No, it's not. It's a city project and Marvel--it's meant to confuse you. But we will eventually, I hope, get a briefing of court so that we can have a real understanding of what it is. I think I explained this in the last meeting, but this is an important part of demystifying the public process, giving you a voice. And I assure you that we will make sure the Commissioners Court hears you, but it's even better if you come down and make sure that you're heard yourself. So thank you all so much for coming. We'll be in touch. Thank you.

Video Media

**IF THE SPURS MOVE,
WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITH
THE FROST BANK CENTER?**



We can't let the Frost Bank Center become an abandoned Astrodome

So let us hear your ideas on what you want to uplift the community. Downtown residents also have needs for safety, infrastructure and more. Let us hear from those downtown and on the Eastside about how new arena projects need to address your neighborhood concerns.

Hosted by County Commissioner Tommy Calvert.

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[Commissioners Court: Jan 7th-Agenda Item 4.c.](#)

[Commissioners Court: Feb 4th-Agenda Item 97.](#)

[Commissioners Court: Feb 25th-Agenda Item 102.](#)

LA Live & Victory Park



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Authorization By Sakai



Authorization of County Judge Peter Sakai to Negotiate an MOU and the Path Forward for the Frost Bank Center

The community conversations surrounding the future of the Frost Bank Center (FBC) and the potential relocation of the San Antonio Spurs reached a pivotal moment during the February 4, 2025, Bexar County Commissioners Court meeting. This session served as a culmination of public discussions and community outreach aimed at ensuring transparency, economic justice, and a clear path forward for the venue and the surrounding East Side community.

At the heart of the discussion was a motion to authorize County Judge Peter Sakai to lead negotiations with the City of San Antonio and the Spurs on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for a potential venue tax election. This MOU would explore not only the feasibility of a new downtown arena but also the redevelopment of the Frost Bank Center, the Freeman Coliseum grounds, and adjacent properties. While the court ultimately voted in favor of the motion (4-1), the deliberations underscored deep concerns about inclusivity in the negotiation process, economic equity, and community impact.

Commissioner Calvert’s Request for Representation in Negotiations

Commissioner Tommy Calvert, whose Precinct 4 encompasses the Frost Bank Center and the proposed new arena site, was a vocal advocate for ensuring that the interests of his constituents were fully represented in these high-stakes discussions. During the court session, Commissioner Calvert proposed a friendly amendment to include himself as a negotiator alongside Judge Sakai. Given that the Spurs’ potential relocation would impact his precinct directly—both in terms of economic displacement and redevelopment opportunities—Calvert argued that his inclusion was both logical and necessary. His inclusion had also been a major demand from attendees of the two town halls in the preceding weeks on the subject of the future of the Frost Bank Center.

However, the amendment was not accepted by the Commissioner behind the motion, Commissioner Justin Rodriguez. The final motion left the negotiations solely in the hands of Judge Sakai. This decision was met with visible disappointment from Commissioner Calvert and his supporters, many of whom had attended the town halls and expressed concerns about the exclusion of East Side leadership from key conversations. Calvert, however, remained resolute, assuring the public that his office would continue to hold community meetings and ensure that residents’ voices were heard, regardless of the court’s decision.

Community Advocacy and Concerns

Public testimony during the session further emphasized the community’s desire for greater transparency and equity in the negotiation process. Several speakers, including representatives from COPS/Metro and local clergy, expressed opposition to the use of

public funds for a privately owned sports franchise without clear benefits for Bexar County residents. Sister Bernie of COPS/Metro directly called out the behind-closed-doors nature of previous discussions, demanding that taxpayers have a direct say in how venue tax dollars are allocated. Others, such as Pastor James Amerson, emphasized the historic neglect of the East Side and urged the court to ensure that redevelopment efforts prioritize local businesses, workforce housing, and public investment rather than corporate interests.

A particularly compelling argument came from community leader Adrian Flores, who proposed a public ownership model for the Spurs, similar to the Green Bay Packers, as a way to ensure long-term benefits for San Antonio taxpayers. While this idea was not formally considered, it reflected a broader sentiment that any deal made should be one that directly serves the community, not just private investors.

The Financial Considerations and Potential Impacts

County Manager David Smith provided a detailed financial analysis of the venue tax's revenue-generating capacity. Depending on the structure of the debt issuance, the County could generate between \$313 million and \$448 million for new projects, with a portion of those funds inevitably required to maintain and upgrade the Frost Bank Center. Smith acknowledged that regardless of whether the Spurs remain at the FBC or move downtown, the County must invest at least \$100 million in facility upgrades to keep it operational. This raised critical questions about whether public dollars should be allocated toward a new arena when existing county-owned assets already require substantial reinvestment.

Commissioner Justin Rodriguez and Commissioner Grant Moody both expressed cautious optimism about the negotiations but reiterated that no final commitments had been made. Both acknowledged that the discussions were in their early stages and that much more due diligence would be required before presenting any proposal to voters. Moody, in particular, stressed the need for a balanced deal, warning that if the proposal lacked fairness or raised taxes unnecessarily, he would not support it.

A Vote for Negotiations, But Not a Blank Check

Ultimately, the Commissioners Court voted 4-1 to approve the motion, with Commissioner Calvert casting the lone dissenting vote. His opposition was not based on a rejection of the negotiation process itself but rather on the exclusionary nature of the talks and the lack of guarantees for the East Side community. In his closing remarks, he reaffirmed his commitment to continuing town halls and engaging with residents to ensure that their priorities remain at the forefront of any redevelopment plan.

Judge Sakai, in his final comments, emphasized that the vote was merely a first step toward gathering more information and that no decisions had been made regarding tax

increases or final venue plans. He also committed to regular public updates and work sessions to ensure ongoing transparency.

Conclusion: The Road Ahead

The February 4 meeting marked a significant turning point in the ongoing debate over the future of the Frost Bank Center and the potential relocation of the Spurs. While the Court's decision allows negotiations to move forward, it also highlighted persistent tensions over representation, community investment, and financial accountability. Commissioner Calvert's steadfast advocacy ensures that Precinct 4 residents will not be forgotten in the process, even if he has not been granted a formal seat at the negotiating table.

As negotiations unfold, the question remains: will the redevelopment of the Frost Bank Center and the construction of a new arena lead to true economic revitalization for the East Side, or will it serve as yet another example of public dollars disproportionately benefiting private interests? The answer will depend not just on the final terms of the MOU but on the continued engagement of the community and their elected representatives in shaping the future of their neighborhood.

The issue at hand is a complex one of balancing economic development, public accountability, and historic equity concerns. With the community mobilized and eyes firmly on the process, Bexar County's leadership must ensure that any decision made serves not just the interests of the Spurs, but the people who have long called the East Side home.



Appendices



ARENA DISTRICT / EASTSIDE COMMUNITY PLAN

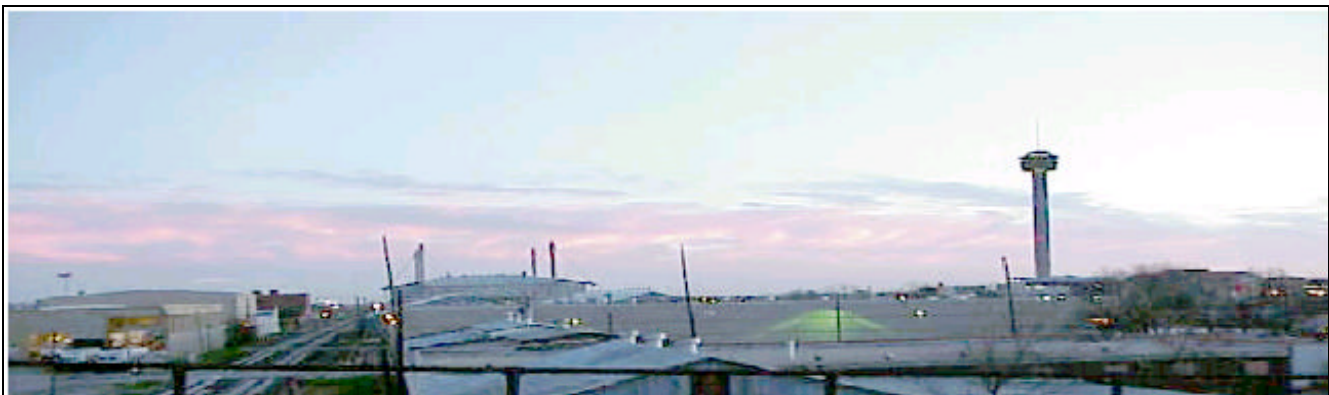


Arena District/Eastside Community Plan



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Alternatives Plan Executive Summary
- V. Appendices



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Leo Gomez, *Committee Chairman*

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Mary Emmerson, *Harvard Place-Eastlawn Neighborhood Assoc.*

Charles English, *Jefferson Heights Neighborhood Association*

Kathy Harris, *Skyline Park Neighborhood Association*

Lillie Harris, *People Against Corruption*

Wray Hood, *Coliseum Willow Park Neighborhood Association*



Acknowledgments

Arena District/Eastside Neighborhoods and Community Groups

Coliseum Oaks
Coliseum Willow Park Neighborhood Association
Community of Churches for Social Justice
Denver Heights Neighborhood Association
Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Association
Harvard Place-Eastlawn Neighborhood Association
Historic Gardens Homeowners Association
Jefferson Heights Association
Metropolitan Alliance
Neighborhood First Alliance
Nevada Street Neighborhood Association
People Against Corruption
Skyline Park Neighborhood Association
St. Paul's Square Owners Association
United Homeowners Improvement Association Inc.



Community Stakeholders

Coca Cola Bottling Company
Collie Boatright, *San Antonio Livestock Exposition*
June Bratcher, *Daisy Tours and Conventions San Antonio*
Rita Elizondo, *San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce*
Ernest Haffner, *San Antonio Development Agency*
Barbara Hawkins, *George Gervin Youth Center*
Derrick Howard, *Joe & Harry Freeman Coliseum*
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Cindy Taylor, *South San Antonio Chamber of Commerce*
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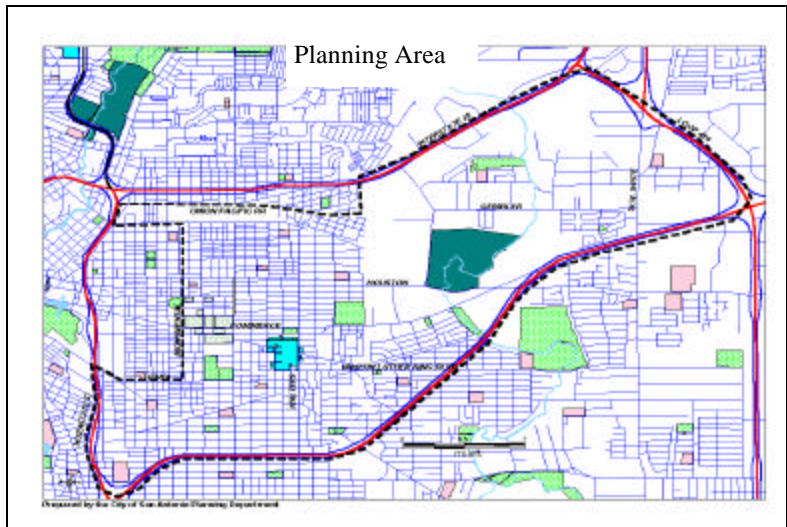
Plan Overview

The Arena District/Eastside Community, together with four funding partners, Bexar County, City of San Antonio, Community Economic Revitalization Agency, and the San Antonio Spurs, developed a community plan under the Community Building and Neighborhood Planning Program (CBNP). The Metropolitan Planning Organization through its Eastside Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan, jointly participated in the community planning process. Both reports comprise the Arena District/Eastside Community Plan.

The planning area is bound by IH-35 and the Government Hill Neighborhood Plan boundary on the north; IH-Loop 410 on the east; IH-10 on the south, and IH-37/US281 and the Downtown Neighborhoods Plan boundary (Monumental) on the west. The plan area is approximately 7.9 square miles and includes about 32,062 residents located in City Council District 2.

Pursuant to §35-420 (e) of the *Unified Development Code*, the Plan:

- Identifies goals that are consistent with adopted City policies, plans and regulations.
- Was developed in an inclusive manner to provide opportunities for all interest groups to participate.
- Is a definitive statement of the community and is appropriate for consultation and reference as a guide by the City Council, Departments, and Commissions for decision-making processes.



The Plan is reviewed by the Planning Commission, and upon its recommendation, the Plan is submitted to City Council for adoption as a component of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan. As defined in the Community Building and Neighborhood Planning Program adopted by City Council in October 1998, formal recognition is an acknowledgement of the plan's use and value without specific financial commitment to immediate action by the City or partnering agencies.

BACKGROUND

The Arena District/Eastside Community Plan was a joint project of Bexar County, the City of San Antonio, the Spurs, and Community Economic Revitalization Agency. The Plan provided a market analysis and recommended a strategic development program to show market potentials for facilities and activities that would redefine the use and image of the area. A second component of the plan is an assessment of the area's physical conditions and population characteristics; a land use plan; an urban design framework; landscape framework; and an action plan that identifies priority projects, partners, funding sources, time frames and community indicators.

Sponsored by the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization, the transportation element of the plan is the East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan Executive Summary, prepared by Parsons Transportation Group. This study addressed both mid-term and long-term transportation improvement opportunities

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning effort began in August 2002. Economics Research Associates coordinated the planning process with the Metropolitan Planning Organization and Parsons Transportation Group. A steering committee met from August 2002 through March 2003 to guide the planning process. An 18 member Steering Committee was composed of representatives from: Bexar County (1), Bexar County Coliseum Advisory Board (1), City of San Antonio (2), Community Economic Revitalization Agency (2), neighborhood association representatives (6), SAISD (1), Antioch Baptist Church (1), Alamo City Chamber of Commerce (1), MPO (1), and business owners (2). Neighborhood representatives on the steering committee were from Harvard Place/Eastlawn, Coliseum Willow Park, Skyline Park, Willow Woods, People Against Corruption, and Jefferson Heights.

Three community meetings were held at St. Philip's College on October 8, 2002, November 19, 2002 and February 11, 2003. Bilingual meeting notices were mailed to property owners and residents, and all registered neighborhood associations in the area. Press releases announced the community meetings, and significant coverage was received by the San Antonio Express-News and the television news. Additionally the consultants conducted key stakeholder interviews with representatives of business and industry on the Eastside. The community meetings had a total attendance of 218 people, representing 654 hours of citizen participation.

COORDINATION

The Arena District Community Development Plan is a partnership between the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, Spurs, and the Community Economic Development Agency. Bexar County issued a Request for Proposals on October 15, 2001. The consultant was approved by Bexar County Commissioners Court, the project's fiscal agent, on May 22, 2002. On August 1, 2002, City Council authorized a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate project implementation.

Review of the Arena District/Eastside Community Plan was coordinated with the following departments: Alamodome, City Manager's Office, Asset Management, City Clerk, Code Compliance, Community Initiatives, Convention Center Facilities, Cultural Affairs, Development Services, Economic Development, Environmental Services, Fire, Health, Housing & Community Development, Library, Neighborhood Action, Parks and Recreation, Planning, Police, and Public Works.

GOALS SUMMARY

The Arena District/Eastside Community plan has four plan elements: Real Estate Market Evaluation; Land Use and Community Facilities; Transportation and Infrastructure; and Plan Implementation.

Real Estate Market Evaluation

1. Redevelopment Goals over the next 10-15 years

- 1.1 New home construction - 25-50 homes per year
- 1.2 New light industrial development - 600,000 sq. ft. of new space
- 1.3 New retail, medical office, and business services space - an opportunity for up to 200,000 sq. feet of new space



GOALS SUMMARY

Land Use and Community Facilities

2. Land Use Guiding Principles

- 2.1 Establish a land use pattern that is responsive to the existing context and is founded upon realistic market expectations
- 2.2 Protect the neighborhoods by providing them with the necessary improvements to enable infill development and redevelopment
- 2.3 Create attractive streets
- 2.4 Develop an open space system that interconnects key destinations by use of greenways
- 2.5 Respect existing natural systems and maximize their benefit to the plan
- 2.6 Strengthen the community with additional gathering nodes and emphasize the places of significance

3. Urban Design Goals

- 3.1 Create a town center
- 3.2 Establish greenways along improved streets and pedestrian ways
- 3.3 Concentrate industrial uses
- 3.4 Celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King by creating a new public space/traffic circle with public art at Houston and New Braunfels

4. Land Use Plan Goals

- 4.1 Conserve existing neighborhoods
- 4.2 Recommend new medium density single family and high density multifamily residential neighborhoods near Salado Creek to supplement existing ones



GOALS SUMMARY

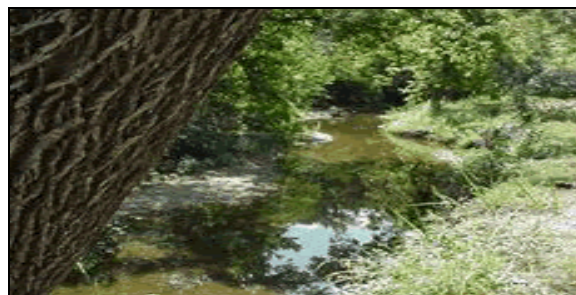
Land Use and Community Facilities

- 4.3 Reinforce Neighborhood Commercial nodes at cross streets
- 4.4 Develop mixed uses along New Braunfels to supplement existing commercial core at Commerce and New Braunfels
- 4.5 Create a Mixed Use Town Center south of the SBC Center
- 4.6 Pursue opportunity for regional commercial center near W.W. White and IH-10
- 4.7 Recommend new light industrial uses in the general location of existing industrial uses and adjacent to residential development, to create an appropriate land use transition
- 4.8 Concentrate heavy industrial uses near IH-Loop 410 and W.W. White



5. Landscape Frame work Goals

- 5.1 Recommends a "green image" for the community, and recommends the street system as an extension of the greenway
 - Gateways and edges
 - Salado Creek Greenway
 - Greenway "fingers" extending through the SBC Center site and into adjacent neighborhoods and the proposed Town Center site
 - Tree lined streets and pedestrian linkages
 - MLK Drive as a "Ceremonial" street



GOALS SUMMARY

Transportation and Infrastructure

6. Transportation Goals

- 6.1 Encourage economic revitalization through transportation
- 6.2 Enhance downtown-SBC Center connectivity
- 6.3 Protect the natural environment
- 6.4 Emphasize positive social and economic effects
- 6.5 Enhance rail/truck interfaces
- 6.6 Provides a balanced and coordinated transportation system
- 6.7 Develop non-motorized transportation solutions
- 6.8 Ensure public support for all improvements recommended
- 6.9 Maintain communications with the steering committee
- 6.10 Develop adequate visitor access to SBC Center/Freeman Coliseum



7. Transportation Options

Tier 1

- 7.1 Resurface 167 street blocks which have poor roadway pavements. Add new sidewalks where needed
- 7.2 Install weather protection shelters at the busiest bus stops. New sidewalks also will be added to/from these bus stops as needed
- 7.3 Convert the signalized intersection of New Braunfels Avenue and Houston Street into a traffic roundabout
- 7.4 Implement low cost safety improvements at the top ten crash intersections
- 7.5 Recommend several major streets as "feature streets" incorporating trees, on-street parking and wider sidewalks
 - Commerce from IH-37 to Houston
 - Martin Luther King Dr. from New Braunfels to IH-10
 - New Braunfels Avenue from MLK Dr. to IH-10
 - New Braunfels Avenue from IH-35 to MLK Dr.

GOALS SUMMARY

Transportation and Infrastructure

Tier 2

- 7.6 Reconstruct Houston St. from IH-37 to Walters St. as a feature street
- 7.7 Resurface six roadways at railroad crossings and replace wooden/asphalt railroad ties with concrete ties
- 7.8 Close eight at-grade railroad crossings; add street trees in planters to block vehicle access
- 7.9 Remove the Union Pacific railroad tracks between Roland Ave. and IH-35 that are adjacent to the Coliseum grounds to maintain as a future transportation corridor
- 7.10 Restore north/south cross town VIA bus service along Walters
- 7.11 Reconstruct Hackberry St. from Duval St. to IH-10 as a feature street
- 7.12 Develop a new roadway beginning at the Commerce/Houston St. intersection and continuing north to Seguin Street, roughly parallel to Salado Creek along the east bank

Implementation

8. Implementation Goals

- 8.1 Aggressively pursue road and infrastructure improvements recommended in the plan
- 8.2 Institute a comprehensive rezoning for the entire plan area
- 8.3 Formulate a marketing effort highlighting recent community improvements
- 8.4 Continue residential rehab, community retail space, and light industrial development
- 8.5 Create an action committee to meet on a regular basis to coordinate efforts and spearhead a development entity such as a PID or Arena District Authority to fund capital improvements
- 8.6 Community indicators to be monitored by the action committee to measure the progress of the plan



Community Development Plan

ERA

Economics Research Associates

Scope 2: Final Report

**Arena District / Eastside
Community Redevelopment Plan**

Submitted to

**CERA
Bexar County
San Antonio Spurs
City of San Antonio**

Submitted by:

**Economics Research Associates
SWA Group
Laura Thompson Associates**

April 11, 2003

ERA Project Number: 14677

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Introduction

Economics Research Associates (ERA), Laura Thompson Associates, and the SWA Group were engaged by Bexar County, the San Antonio Spurs, the Community Economic Revitalization Agency (CERA), and the City of San Antonio (COSA) to create a development plan and revitalization strategy for neighborhoods on the Eastside of San Antonio surrounding the SBC Center. The team's approach in this assignment (called Scope 2) covers the following four elements:

1. Assessment of study area characteristics, including strengths and weaknesses
2. Definition of economic development needs and market potentials
3. Creation of a revitalization strategy for the study area
4. Formation of an aggressive implementation strategy to move the program forward

The approach followed by ERA, SWA, and Laura Thompson Associates (the Team) will dovetail with two separate research and strategy development effort that focus on:

1. A market and strategy plan for the SBC Center / County Fairgrounds site (called Scope 1).
2. An overall transportation infrastructure plan for the Eastside

Strategy recommendations generated by the on-site assessment (Scope 1) will be incorporated in this study as well. Importantly, both Scope 1 and Scope 2 rely on an extensive community involvement process, which was led by Laura Thompson Associates and Ximenes Associates. This process included multiple public meetings and presentations, as well as focus groups and interviews with local stakeholders. The appendix to this report includes a draft of the public involvement report.

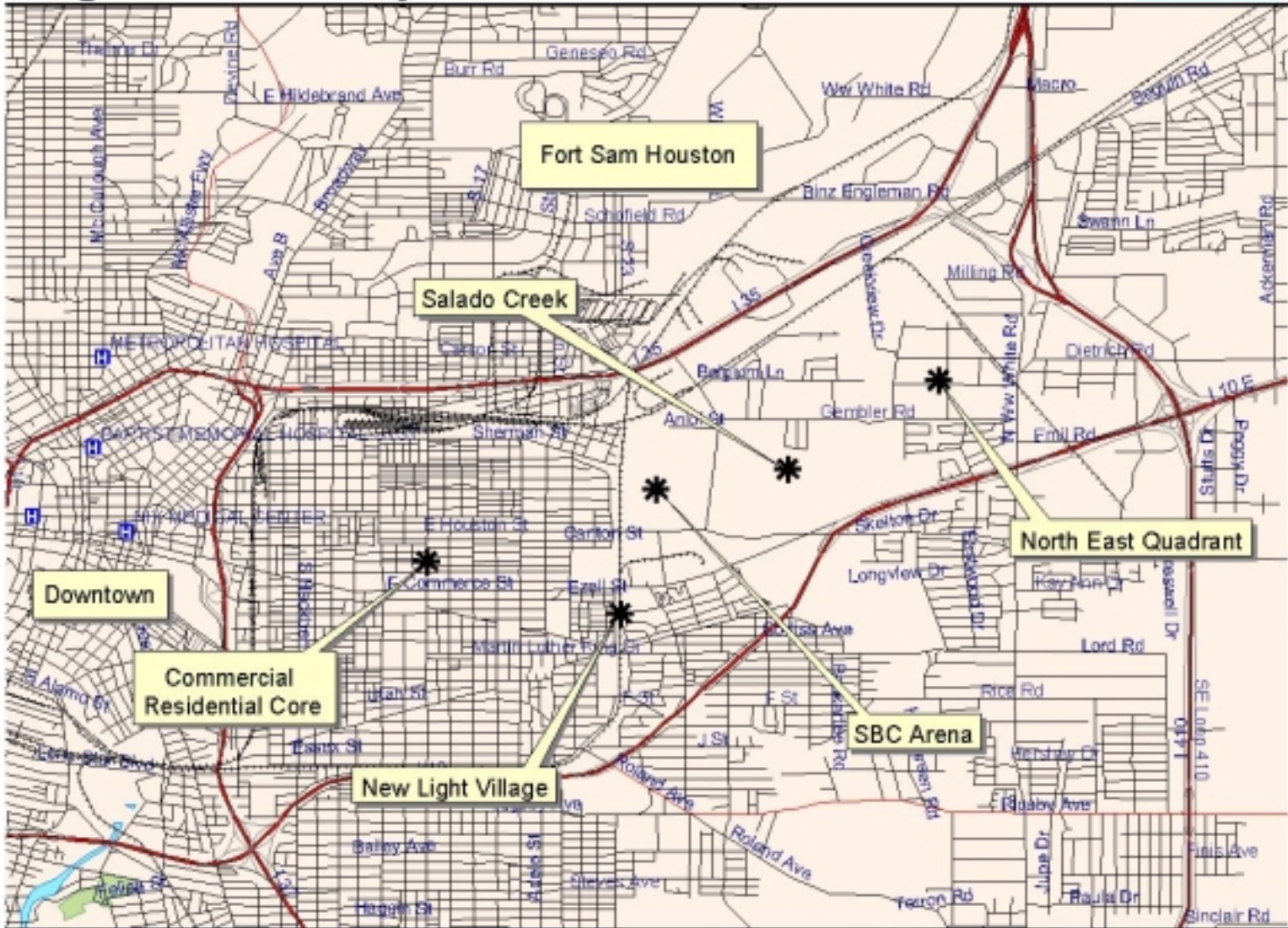
Study Area Definition

The Eastside is generally defined as the area bounded by Interstate 35 to the north, Loop 410 to the east, Interstate 10 to the south, and US Route 281 to the west. The study area for this analysis follows a more precise neighborhood definition highlighted on a map on the next page. The study area excludes several neighborhoods west of Monumental Road, primarily an area bordered by Monumental Road to the east, Sherman Street to the north, US 281 to the west, and Iowa Street to the south. This area was not included in ERA's study by the City of San Antonio (COSA) Planning Department because it had already been assessed in prior studies. The map on the next page highlights five key focal points that are important to this study:

1. The Commercial / Residential Core
2. New Light Village
3. The SBC Arena / County Fair Grounds
4. Salado Creek
5. The North East Quadrant

Background information regarding each focal point is discussed as follows.

Neighborhood Perspective



SBC Arena Neighborhood District Strategy

Area # 1: The Commercial / Residential Core

Running along New Braunfels Avenue from Commerce Street through Houston Street, this area supports the key retail centers that serve the local population. Key retailers include HEB (grocery) and Walgreen's (drugstore), both of which are located at the intersection of Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue. The commercial core serves as the primary commercial for residential neighborhoods on the Eastside. Site assessments identified several key aspects regarding this area:

- Closure of New Braunfels Avenue through Fort Sam Houston appears to have generated negative effects on retailers in the neighborhood, stemming from reduced traffic flows. This perception was suggested to ERA by officials from CERA and the City. Perhaps more importantly, it was also suggested that the New Braunfels Avenue gate at Fort Sam Houston may never be reopened.
- Although New Braunfels Avenue is improved with an attractive divided median area on either side of Houston Street, this improvement ends one block north and south of Houston Street.
- Existing retail space at this intersection is generally older, offering a mix of convenience and discount retail options, as well as fast food. Significantly, while the local grocery store (HEB) is not viewed as an asset, the area supports a recently built Walgreen's drug store.
- This area is buffered to the west by the city cemeteries, which form a substantial barrier between the retail core and potential customers to the west.
- The neighborhood analysis identified a significant number of vacant lots and smaller homes, which may limit the amount of retail space that is supportable.
- The Union Pacific Railroad mainline traverses the west and northern edges of the study area; a UP intermodal yard operates on the north side of this area, east and west of New Braunfels Avenue.

Area #2: New Light Village / Springview

This area includes the new Hope VI residential project with about 500 planned new affordable and market rate homes called Springview, as well as an apartment project that is under renovation. The first phase of Springview will include 184 homes, of which about 56 have been completed; the new homes are priced at around \$85,000. A new residential subdivision, called Coliseum Oaks, was completed in 1994. This area includes about ten acres of vacant land south of the arena across Commerce Street that would be suitable for residential or commercial development. Key anchors for this area include:

- St. Philips College
- The Barbara Jordan Center
- The Dora Miller Community Center

- The Claude Black Recreation Center
- The Coca Cola Bottling Plant

This neighborhood has several notable elements:

- The neighborhood is divided into eastern and western sections by a rail line that runs along an embankment; this rail line separates Springview from Coliseum Oaks.
- Land uses on either side of Commerce Street east of Springgsdale Street are mostly of an industrial nature, with several vacant or underutilized buildings.
- The Springview project has reportedly seen slower absorption of its market rate units. Local officials indicated that this might be driven by difficulties on the part of potential homebuyers in having money available for down payment requirements. Reportedly, this issue is being addressed.

Area #3: The SBC Arena / Freeman Coliseum Site

This area, considered an emerging focal point for the Eastside, includes the 8,000- to 10,000-seat Freeman Coliseum and related fairgrounds buildings, as well as the newly built 18,500-seat SBC Center. The Eastside community appears divided over the ultimate impact of the arena. On one hand there are clear local concerns about traffic management, which are offset by hopes that the new arena will act as a tool for revitalization. Options and recommendations for this site are covered under a separate on-site study, called Scope 1. Relevant conclusions from that study will be incorporated in this analysis, particularly in the area of traffic and road improvements.

Area #4: The North East Quadrant

This area extends north of the SBC Center and east of Salado Creek out to the associated interstate boundaries of the study area, covering an amalgam of industrial, distribution, retail, and residential uses. As a general rule, this area has a distinctly different appearance compared to the commercial residential core area noted above. Key attributes of this sub area include:

- The area contains two distinct industrial zones, one located north of the arena which emphasizes smaller light industrial and service businesses along the SBC Parkway, and a second zone concentrated along WW White Road predominated by heavy industrial and distribution uses. A number of suppliers to the San Antonio Convention Center have located in both of these areas.
- An interstate-service retail zone at WW White Road and I-10, supporting an interstate highway oriented mix of budget hotels and fast food establishments.
- Two residential areas, one being lower density single family homes in the vicinity of Willowood Boulevard and Belgium Lane, and the second being a higher density apartment project south of Gembler Road, East of Salado Creek.

- Access between the eastern and western sections of the study area is difficult without using an interstate (I-10 or I-35). The access problem is created in part by the fact that Commerce Street currently ends at the westbound service road for I-10, forcing eastbound traffic on Commerce Street to use the interstate to access WW White Road. The Team has evaluated a new north / south arterial connection north of Houston Street, improving travel times between the eastern and western sections of the study area.
- Salado Creek is a key focal point for the area, and is addressed separately below.
- The Willow Springs Golf Course is considered an amenity for the area. Plans are underway to improve the appearance of the course from adjacent streets, in part with removal of chain link fences, and other landscape improvements.

Area #5: Salado Creek & Willow Springs

Salado Creek runs south from I-35 down toward the Willow Springs Golf Course, cutting west through the course, and then south, crossing under Houston and Commerce Streets and flowing off to the southeast. The creek is a dividing line between western and eastern sections of the study area. The creek has become a key concern primarily due to recent flooding, which has forced FEMA to offer buyouts to several homes that are within its flood plain along Gemblar Road.

The Team sees the creek as an under-utilized recreational asset, to the extent that storm water management issues can be addressed. The Team notes that the Texas Department of Transportation has provided funding to support renovation of the Hays Street Bridge as a bikeway which will connect with Salado Creek, where several hike and bike trails are also under construction.

Study Area Capital Improvement Efforts

Local officials provided ERA with a listing of current and future planned and proposed capital reinvestment projects targeted for the arena district. These projects are being initiated by several local and state government agencies or departments, including:

- COSA Neighborhood Action Department
- COSA Parks and Recreation Department
- COSA Department of Community Initiatives
- San Antonio Independent School District
- Texas Department of Transportation
- COSA Housing Authority
- COSA Department of Public Works
- COSA Fire Department

As examples, ERA notes that six area elementary schools are receiving additions with a value of more than \$20 million. An additional \$14 million is being invested for a new middle school. The Texas Department of Transportation is also undertaking several significant projects,

including development of a hike and bike trail system along Salado Creek, at a cost of about \$3 million. The COSA Public Works Department also has a list of 20 projects underway, planned or proposed for the district, covering the reconstruction several roads, including Houston Street from Pine Street to Onslow Street, with an estimated cost of about \$2.7 million. Overall, a total of almost 50 projects are slated for the Arena District study area, with a combined potential investment of about \$150 million. Importantly, about \$48 million of this total is being targeted to revitalize the Spring View area. A list of the projects is included in the Appendix of this report.

Acknowledgments

The consulting team wishes to mention the considerable commitment of the following individuals, who have helped guide this process over the past six months.

Steering committee members include:

- Commissioner Tommy Adkisson – Bexar County
- Raul Rios, Coliseum Advisory Board – Bexar County
- Terri Williams, Committee Vice-Chair – CERA
- Ida D. Brown, Executive Director - CERA
- Councilman John Sanders - City of San Antonio
- Emil Moncivais, Director of Planning - City of San Antonio
- Leo Gomez, Committee Chair - San Antonio Spurs
- Mr. Rick Pych - San Antonio Spurs

Neighborhood association members include:

- Mary Emerson - Harvard Place/Eastlawn Neighborhood Association
- Wray Hood - Coliseum Willow Park Neighborhood Association
- Kathy Harris - Skyline Park Neighborhood Association
- Mr. Willie Dixon - Willow Woods Neighborhood Association
- Lillie Harris - New Jefferson Heights Neighborhood Association
- Charles English – Jefferson Heights Neighborhood Association

Key stakeholders include:

- Mr. David Marquez - Bexar County Community Project Manager
- Mr. Derrick Howard - Joe & Harry Freeman Coliseum
- Baltazar Serna, Jr. - Law Offices of Serna & Serna
- Ms. Jeanne Geiger, Senior Transportation Planner - Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Jo McCall - McCall & Associates
- Dorinda Rolle, President - Alamo City Chamber Of Commerce
- Dr. Morris Stribling
- James Howard - S.A.I.S.D.
- Rev. E. Thurman Walker - Antioch Baptist Church/CCS

-
- June Bratcher - Conventions San Antonio
 - Angie S. Runnels, Ph.D., President - St. Philips College
 - Barbara Hawkins - George Gervin Youth Center
 - Capt. Ronald Bruner – Eastside Police Substation
 - Capt. Tom Woystasczky - Eastside Fire Substation #30
 - Collie Boatwright - San Antonio Livestock Exposition
 - Mr. Harold Oliver
 - Representative Ruth Jones-McClendon
 - Ms. Cindy Taylor - South San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
 - Ms. Rita Elizondo - San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Community Involvement Process

The foundation of the Arena District Economic Development Strategy is community input; first to ensure that local residents and community leaders have a voice in the revitalization process, and second to disseminate information regarding market, economic, and planning factors that impact revitalization. The starting point for community involvement, led by Ximenes Associates (working with Parsons) and Laura Thompson Associates, was the identification of key stakeholders in the study area to provide for representative, informed, balanced community input to the project.

A small sample of the stakeholder groups that were interviewed for the Scope 2 Assessment include:

- The Metro Alliance
- Community Economic Revitalization Agency (CERA)
- The Alamo City Chamber of Commerce
- Community of Churches for Social Justice
- Neighborhood First Alliance
- Coca Cola Bottling
- The District Two Housing Sub-Committee
- Neighborhood Associations
- John Sanders – District 2 City Council
- Emil Moncivais – COSA Planning Dept
- Kimberly Coleman – COSA Neighborhood Action
- Trey Jacobson – COSA Economic Development
- Ruth Jones McClendon – State Representative, District 120

Interviews conducted with these and other organizations highlighted the following thoughts that are perceived regarding the study area. Our team was told:

Where are the community gathering places on the Eastside?

- Barbara Jordan Center
- Claude Black Center
- Churches
- YMCA
- Boys and Girls Club
- St. Philip's College
- Sam Houston High School
- Pletz Park, Martin Luther King Park, Pittman Sullivan Park, and Comanche Park

Note by City Staff: The Arena Area/Eastside Community is currently served by the Carver Branch Library located at 3350 E. Commerce St. The library was remodeled in 1994 and is currently 12,000 sq. ft.

Strengths

- Close to the downtown area, Opportunity for economic development
- More affordable compared to other sections of San Antonio
- Alamo City Chamber and other social organizations, Churches, Black Business Expo
- Residents of the community are seen as a key strength
- Levels of homeownership in the community are significant
- Near the freeways, providing excellent access to the region
- Clearly an untapped market,
- Near the SBC Arena - available land near SBC arena for redevelopment

Weaknesses

Code Enforcement - Allowing abandoned vehicles and other nuisance issues to remain in place.

Roads and Infrastructure – Streets are in poor condition, with small sidewalks that are not pedestrian friendly. With the new arena on line, there are ongoing concerns about traffic management and impacts

Stormwater Management – The area suffers from persistent flooding

Appearance and Curb Appeal – The Eastside generally is seen as an eyesore, lacks landscaping and streetscape improvements, and needs more streetlights

Perceptions – The Eastside suffers from perceptions of increased crime, which are not fully supported by crime statistics

Goals, Hopes, and Expectations

New Retail Options – Quality grocery stores, restaurants, banks, general retail and clothing, gas stations, hotels, and a movie theater complex.

New Institutions – hospitals or medical centers, a library, a police sub station, educational facilities or vocational schools

New Recreational Amenities – baseball diamonds, skating rinks, bowling centers, public parks

Public Improvements – Significant road and landscaping improvements, improved traffic management, new bus stops

Other Concepts – A marketing campaign to deal with the current negative perceptions of the Eastside

This narrative is only intended to serve only as an overview for what is in fact an extensive and on-going process. A full reporting of the community involvement component of this project is contained in a separate report.

Demographic Comparisons

ERA extracted US Census information for eight key census tracts that cover the Eastside neighborhood. Census Tracts 1301 - 1306 and 1308 to 1309 were analyzed with respect to changes in population, income, age, educational attainment, poverty status, and housing conditions between 1989 / 1990 and 1999 / 2000. Note that the eight selected census tracts cover an area slightly larger than the defined City of San Antonio Planning Department study area for the off-site element of this project. Comparable information for the City of San Antonio (COSA) was also extracted as a standard of comparison.

The following table highlights changes in population over the 1990 to 2000 period for the city and study area. The table shows that while the city sustained a significant rate of growth over the past 10-years, adding about 20,800 residents per year, the study area saw a decrease in population, losing about 1,000 residents over the same period, falling to about 32,000 residents in 2000.

Population Change Comparison

Market	1990	2000	Change
COSA	935,927	1,144,554	208,627
Study Area	33,133	32,062	-1,071

Source: US Census

The following table examines changes in the racial or ethnic mix of the city and study area. The table shows that the city has tended to see increases in Hispanic populations, with African Americans making up about 7% of the overall market. At the same time, the study area appears to support a significant African American population (at 54% in 1990), albeit one that has seen a decrease in its share of total study area population since 1990. The table highlights a relatively dramatic shift in the study area's ethnic makeup, with Hispanics populations seeing an increase from 39% to 52% of total residents, while African Americans have seen their share of total study area populations decrease from 54% to 42%.

Population Growth, COSA and Study Area

Ethnicity / Race	COSA		Study Area	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
White	72%	68%	26%	30%
Black	7%	6%	54%	42%
% Hispanic	55%	58%	39%	52%

Source: US Census

The following table identifies age cohort trends for the city. The table shows that the city tends to be younger, with more than 80% of the population in age groups below 55 years of age. The table highlights notable growth in the 25 to 54-age segment, driven likely by growth in younger families. Although the over-55 segment also increased in size over the 19-year period, its rate of growth did not outpace the younger age cohorts.

City of San Antonio Population Change
by Age Cohort

Age Cohort	1990	2000	1990 % Total	2000 % Total
Under 25	379,883	448,532	41%	39%
25 to 54	388,059	493,254	41%	43%
Over 55	167,985	202,768	18%	18%
Total	935,927	1,144,554	100%	100%

Source: US Census

The following table highlights comparable age cohort information for the Study Area, showing how the local population has a larger share of residents in the over 55-age cohort compared to the city as a whole (22% versus 18%). Importantly, the table indicates that while the number of 55 and over residents has decreased significantly (a loss of 1,800 people), the number of people in the 25 to 54 age group did increase, growing by about 780 new residents. Although the under 25 age group also saw a decrease, this group still makes up the largest share of the market.

Study Area Population Change by Age Cohort

Age Cohort	1990	2000	1990 % Total	2000 % Total
Under 25	13,432	13,222	40%	41%
25 to 54	11,151	11,936	33%	37%
Over 55	8,730	6,904	26%	22%
Total	33,313	32,062	100%	100%

Source: US Census

The following table portrays changes in levels of educational attainment for the city and the study area. The table indicates that the study area has a higher percentage of residents who have not completed high school (43% to 25%). This is partially offset by a larger population of study area residents who have graduated high school or equivalency (28% to 24%). The city supports a significantly higher population of residents who have graduated from college or achieved a more advanced degree (27% to 9%).

Educational Attainment, COSA and Study
Area, Year 2000

Level Attained	COSA	Study Area
12th grade, no diploma	25%	43%
HS Grad	24%	28%
Some College	23%	19%
College or advanced	27%	9%

Source: US Census

ERA evaluated median income trends for the study area, city, state and the country. The table below shows the results of this evaluation, indicating that the state and the city saw increases in median incomes above national averages, with compound annual growth rates (CAGR) of 4% and 4.4% respectively, compared to the national rate of 3.4%.

Median Income Trends, COSA and Study Area

Median Income	1989	1999	Change	CAGR
USA	\$30,056	\$41,994	\$11,938	3.4%
Texas	\$27,016	\$39,927	\$12,911	4.0%
COSA	\$23,584	\$36,214	\$12,630	4.4%
Study Area	\$12,870	\$21,469	\$8,599	5.3%

Source: US Census

The above table highlights two key points regarding the study area in particular:

1. The study area achieved a higher CAGR over the 10-year period compared to the city (5.3% to 4.4%)
2. However, the gap between study area median income and city median income widened over the same period, growing from 55% to 59%.

The following two tables compares households by income bracket for the city and the study area for 1989 and 1999. The first table shows that the city has seen its share of households earning less than \$25,000 decrease from about 50% down to 33% over the 10-year period. This decrease has been in step with dramatic growth in the number of households earning \$50,000 to \$75,000 and those earning more than \$75,000, which increased from about 5% to 16% of total households.

Households by Income Bracket, City of San Antonio

Income Bracket	1989	1999	1989 % of Total	1999 % of Total
Up to \$25K	172,039	136,065	52.55%	33.52%
\$25K to \$50K	102,788	129,788	31.39%	31.98%
50K to \$75K	34,538	72,213	10.55%	17.79%
>\$75K	18,038	67,821	5.51%	16.71%
Total	327,403	405,887	100.00%	100.00%

Source: US Census

The table on the following page highlights comparable 1989 to 1999 information for total households by income bracket for the Eastside study area. The table indicates that the number of households decreased by 227 over the noted period. Importantly, this table uses Census data that is based on a sample of the area, not a 100% count; as such, the number of total households in this table will vary slightly compared to other measures used later in this report.

Households by Income Bracket, Study Area

Income Bracket	1989	1999	1989 % of Total	1999 % of Total
Up to \$25K	8,640	6,133	76.7%	55.6%
\$25K to \$50K	2,230	3,152	19.8%	28.6%
50K to \$75K	289	1,105	2.6%	10.0%
>\$75K	101	643	0.9%	5.8%
Total	11,260	11,033	100.0%	100.0%

Source: US Census

The above table indicates that the Up To \$25,000 income bracket saw a significant reduction from 1989 to 1999, falling from 76% to 55% of total households. The table also highlights a small but growing market of households earning more than \$75,000, which increased from about 100 households to more than 640 over the 10-year period.

The table below takes income based assessments one step further, considering the percentage of people who fall below the poverty level in 1989 and 1999 for the study area, the city, the state and the US. The table indicates that the study area has seen the most significant improvement over the 10-year period compared to the city, state, or country, with a reduction from 41% to 33% of the population falling under the poverty level. While the trend is clearly moving in the right direction, ERA emphasizes that the study area’s share of people below the poverty line is significantly greater compared to the city, state, and nation.

% of Population Below the Poverty Line,
1989 and 1999

Category	Study Area	COSA	Texas	US
% of people below Poverty Line - 1989	41.6%	22.6%	18.0%	13.0%
% of people below Poverty Line - 1999	33.3%	17.3%	15.3%	12.3%
Change	8.3%	5.3%	2.7%	0.7%

Source: US Census

Demographic Implications

The above demographic assessments have highlighted several factors that will need to be considered in evaluation strategic planning goals for the Eastside. While assessments noted that median income growth rates have been strong, well in advance of inflation, overall income levels did not keep pace with trends for the city over the last 10 years as a whole. Trends relating to educational attainment also show how the study area is at a competitive disadvantage, with lower percentages of people who have attained a college level education. As one offset, ERA noted within the overall population decline trend that a number of younger family-aged households are moving to the study area, although not yet in numbers to offset declines in associated age cohorts. It is also clear that the community is going through a period of transition, with declines in the African American population, offset by growth in the Hispanic population.

Conclusions

In evaluating the study area ERA noted the following conclusions regarding strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

- The Eastside is directly adjacent to the downtown area, on the I-35 corridor to Austin. While San Antonio is currently a relatively “compact” city, compared to more sprawling urban centers such as Houston, this proximity has a reduced direct benefit. However, looking to the near-term (five to ten years), experience would suggest that proximity to downtown would become an increasingly important factor as traffic congestion and commuting distance become more significant.
- Portions of the Eastside have been designated as a tax increment finance district, which will allow growth in assessed values to be channeled toward additional public improvements in the area.
- Planning officials are moving forward with the renovation of the Hays Street Bridge project, which would create a pedestrian / bike route over the UP rail line that could eventually link up with Salado Creek. Initial funding has been secured to begin the renovation.
- City officials have created new zoning overlays to restrict the ability of homeowners to develop temporary parking lots on their homes on routes to the new arena. The new ordinance will require lot owners to pave, light, and stripe lots.
- Salado Creek has the potential to be a key recreational amenity for the study area

Weaknesses

- The team notes a general trend toward lower residential densities on the Eastside, with smaller homes, numerous vacant lots, and the city cemeteries occupying significant acreage. Lower densities have obvious implications for development of retail trade opportunities in the market.
- The study area includes numerous situations where industrial and residential land uses are in close proximity, which creates conflicts.
- The study area is impacted by active rail lines, both along the west and north sides, as well as the interior, of the area. In addition, the operation of a rail yard along the northern boundary of the Study Area does little to enhance property values of proximate housing.
- The study area is notable in that there are few larger vacant parcels available for development. Any planned redevelopment or revitalization effort will require the assembly of smaller parcels into larger tracts.

-
- Houston Street remains a narrow two-lane street with single-family homes that have limited setbacks from the street. Increased traffic generated by the SBC Arena will have obvious safety and traffic management implications for this route.
 - Storm water management concerns are an overall issue, with specific emphasis on the Salado Creek, which has been the source of significant flood damage for adjacent housing, some of which is now being purchased by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
 - Access between areas west and south of the arena and areas north and east of the arena is difficult, requiring a drive around the Arena on SBC Parkway up to Gembler Road.
 - Field assessments noted that primary and secondary roads in the study area generally appeared to be deficient, with notable undulations in pavement, limited sidewalks, and apparent storm water management issues.
 - While public transportation options are available, the bus stops themselves are unsightly, providing minimal cover from the elements.
 - The public involvement process suggested that the neighborhood has difficulty speaking with one voice; assessments noted that there are over 100 churches and at least five different neighborhood associations active in the Study Area.

Real Estate Market Evaluations

In considering redevelopment potentials for the Eastside, a primary concern is the extent of market demand for retail, residential and commercial property, including office space, industrial space, and recreation. The extent of opportunities available for commercial space is significant in that they can create important sources of employment for local residents. This discussion begins with an overview of development trends across metro San Antonio, before moving on to further discussion of property development opportunities.

Urban Growth Patterns

In discussions with local real estate and economic development officials, ERA noted the following broad conclusions regarding directions of growth and trends regarding new development:

- Industrial expansion has been occurring on the north and northwest side of San Antonio, supported in part by gradual expansion of the Kelly USA program. While the Eastside also supports considerable industrial development, our field assessments confirmed a lack of planned industrial areas and notable conflicts with proximate residential uses.
- Retail expansion has occurred most strongly on the north side of the city, particularly along the northern stretch of Loop 1604 where several major shopping centers are being built. Not surprisingly, this area is also home to the highest concentrations of wealth in the city. ERA also learned about development of a Walmart Super center just beyond the study area, at the intersection of Rigby Avenue and Loop 410.
- Residential expansion has been taking place on the outer northwest and west portions of the city. The key constraint against further growth to the north is the recharge zone for the Edwards Aquifer, which may encourage more residential development to the west and east, particularly along the interstate corridor to Austin.
- Office development has tended to follow I-10 and US 281 to the north, with several projects also being developed along Loop 1604. The Eastside study area does not have an identifiable office market.
- The downtown area continues to serve the tourism industry with a mix of hotel and retail, supported by the growing Riverwalk attraction and the expanded convention center. City officials continue to push for development of a convention center hotel as well.
- City officials have debated smart growth initiatives and revised their Unified Development Code to encourage smart growth, creating an important alternative to conventional residential development.

Real Estate Market Opportunities

ERA evaluated markets for residential development, retail development, industrial space, hotel development, and commercial office space development. The evaluations are used to discern the relative balance between demand and supply in the San Antonio market. Once overall trends have been highlighted, ERA can then estimate opportunities for development that could be captured by the Eastside study area.

Residential Development

ERA extracted detailed information from the US Census for the noted census tracts of the Eastside Study Area to evaluate the condition of the existing housing stock. Analysis focused on the median age of housing in the study area, compared to the city, state, and country, as well as changes in the supply of housing, levels of owner versus renter occupancy, and more detailed trends regarding housing stock by year built.

The table below highlights overall housing unit supply trends over the noted 10-year period, showing that while the city has added more than 6,700 new units per year on average, the Study Area lost housing units at an average rate of about 100 per year. ERA believes that a portion of this decline can be explained by the demolition and redevelopment of public housing in the area, including the current Hope 6 project southwest of the arena site.

Total Housing Unit Supply Trends, 1989 and 1999

Market	1990	2000	Change	Per Year
COSA	365,414	433,122	67,708	6,771
Study Area	13,475	12,308	-1,167	-117

Source: US Census

The following table compares the percentages of owner and renter occupied housing units for the city and the Study Area, as well as an estimate of the number of vacant units in each market. The table first shows that the city and Study Area have comparable trends for owner versus renter occupancy, which is significant. In general homeowners are more to take an active interest in their community compared to renters. The table also indicates that the Study Area has a more significant vacancy issue (13% vacancy) compared to the city as a whole, with a vacancy rate of about 6%.

2000 Owner / Renter Occupied Trends

Market	COSA	Study Area
Owner occupied	58.1%	57.1%
Renter occupied	41.9%	42.9%
% of Units Vacant	6.4%	12.9%

Source: US Census

The following table highlights the percentages of housing stock by the time period built for COSA and the Study Area. The table shows that about 16% of the COSA housing stock has been built since 1990, compared to about 5% of total housing for the Study Area. Significantly, the table shows that the 1980 to 1989 time frame saw construction of 22% of the city's housing stock, compared to about 5% of the study area's housing stock for the same period. The study area saw its most substantial boost in housing development during the 1950's when 23% of the current total supply was built. Also notable is that while only 6% of the city's housing is older than 1939, over 22% of the study area's housing falls below this date.

Housing Units by Year Built, COSA and Study Area

Time Period	COSA	Study Area
1999 to March 2000	2.5%	0.5%
Built 1995 to 1998	7.7%	2.4%
Built 1990 to 1994	6.1%	1.6%
Built 1980 to 1989	22.0%	5.1%
Built 1970 to 1979	19.9%	9.7%
Built 1960 to 1969	14.9%	17.8%
Built 1950 to 1959	13.2%	23.4%
Built 1940 to 1949	6.9%	17.6%
Built 1939 or earlier	6.6%	22.0%

Source: US Census

In more simple terms, the US Census indicated the following median ages of housing stock for the noted markets:

- COSA – 1974
- Study Area – 1952
- Texas - 1977
- National Average - 1971

The above median ages reinforce the notion that the existing housing stock in the Study Area is older and in poorer condition compared to the city as a whole. It is also clear that the Study Area has not benefited from the significant growth trend that the city has followed for the past 20 years. At the same time, the Study Area possesses a significant number of older historic homes that could be renovated, and benefits from a location immediately proximate to downtown. The noted Hope VI project has allowed developers to build one of the first new subdivisions in the area, creating the potential for more interest in the Eastside.

The Eastside is clearly not attracting its share of new residential demand from the rapidly growing region. Even so, ERA notes that other public agencies, including the San Antonio Development Agency and the San Antonio Alternative Housing Corporation, have been active in redeveloping housing in the city. These agencies, along with Bexar County, have also developed programs to make housing more affordable for low to middle income residents. The implementation section will expand on this market discussion highlighting priority projects and programs to create additional opportunities for infill residential development.

Retail Development

In the past decade, increased emphasis has been placed on potential retail opportunities in America's inner cities. In general, the retail market in inner cities is both large and concentrated. These markets are often populated with consumers who represent significant aggregate spending power. According to a recent report by the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, in 1998 there were 7.7 million households in America's inner cities with retail spending power in excess of \$85 billion per year. For a number of reasons, however, these markets have been noticeably under-served during the past few decades. Prospective retailers typically cite poor infrastructure, inadequately trained workforces, and crime as the main reasons for not investing in inner city locations. Recently, however, retailers have started looking at inner city markets in a different light. Many are beginning to see inner cities as the last large domestic frontier for expansion.

The situation on the Eastside appears to match the national experience, with an existing captive market served by older quality retail space which does not encourage repeat visitation, and inevitably pushes local residents beyond their neighborhood to make retail purchases. It should be noted that if the defined study area was consistent with national trends for retail space per person (about 22 square feet per person) a potential inventory of more than 700,000 square feet would be supported. It is clear that the vast majority of this inventory is outside the study area.

Discussion of retail trends for the Eastside begins with assessment of population trends for the community. The following table details US Census data for total households in each census tract and an estimate of year 2000 median household incomes, which was derived from an analysis of 1989 to 1999 changes in median income for each tract. The following table highlights a market of about 10,900 households with an estimated average household income of \$22,607 in the year 2000. The number of households used in this table is based on a 100% count, rather than a sample; as such, the totals may differ slightly from other household totals indicated in this report.

Household and Median HH Income
Trends, Eastside Study Area,
Year 2000

Tract	Total Households	Median Income
Census Tract 1301	1,273	\$17,289
Census Tract 1302	608	\$23,349
Census Tract 1303	1,102	\$20,809
Census Tract 1304	2,352	\$26,286
Census Tract 1305	1,230	\$19,015
Census Tract 1306	1,601	\$20,517
Census Tract 1308	1,376	\$29,647
Census Tract 1309	1,362	\$23,944
Total / Average	10,904	\$22,607

Source: US Census and ERA

Retail demand estimates for the Eastside study area are based on a comparison of total households with estimates of median household income (both shown above). This approach estimates total gross income and then net income after taxes, the latter of which can be used to derive estimates of potential retail demand. Based on statistics generated by the Bureau of Labor

Statistics Consumer Expenditure Survey, which tracks consumer expenditures by income level as well as metropolitan area, gross potential income of about \$245 million was converted to net (disposable) income of about \$210 million (see the following table). A conversion factor of 85% was used to estimate net income after taxes. The conversion factor was derived from statistics developed the Consumer Expenditure Survey. This disposable income would be available to support rent payments, mortgages, car payments, food, and broader discretionary retail spending, which is the focus of this assessment.

Retail Sales Potentials, Eastside

Category	2000 Estimate
Total Households	10,904
Average Income per Household	\$22,607
Total Gross Potential Income	\$246,511,394
Disposable Income	\$209,534,685

Source: US Census and ERA

Assessment of income spent on retail purchases is based again on the Consumer Expenditure Survey. ERA examined survey results based on income levels (the \$20,000 to \$29,999 bracket). Several categories of retail expenditures were considered, including:

- **Eating & Drinking Places** - This category basically consists of eating and drinking establishments. Fast food restaurants, bars and pubs, and other dining establishments are included.
- **Food & Grocery** - This category consists of grocery stores and food stores. All sizes of grocery stores are included as well as fish and meat markets, bakeries, specialty food stores, and convenience food stores.
- **General Retail** - This category consists of stores that sell a wide selection of personal and household goods, ranging from appliances to apparel. General stores, dollar stores, and variety stores are included in this category.
- **Entertainment and Other** - This category includes expenditures for theaters, bookstores, video rental shops, and other entertainment activities.

The following table highlights key expenditure and retail categories and the estimated trade area percentage range of income spent on each category.

Estimate of Retail Sales Potentials,
Eastside Trade Area

Retail Category	% of Income	Estimated Potential Retail Sales
Grocery / Convenience	17.1%	\$35,909,900
Entertainment	4.3%	\$9,067,650
General Retail	11.8%	\$24,696,930
Restaurant	5.6%	\$11,640,400
Total	38.8%	\$81,314,880

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics and ERA

The above estimates of retail sales potentials are converted into supportable inventories of retail space, as shown in the following table. The conversion is based on ERA experience regarding achievable store sales per square foot, which are applied to estimated potential retail sales to arrive at supportable inventories. The table below highlights a potential supportable inventory of about 250,000 square feet of retail space. The total includes almost 80,000 square feet of potential grocery and convenience store space, as well as about 100,000 square feet of general retail space, and about 40,000 square feet of restaurant space.

Estimate of Supportable Retail Inventories,
Eastside Trade Area

Retail Category	Target Sales /Sq. Foot	Estimated Supportable Inventory (Sq. Ft.)
Grocery / Convenience	450	79,800
Entertainment	300	30,230
General Retail	250	98,790
Restaurant	300	38,800
Total		247,620

Source: ERA

The current local market includes several retailers at the intersection of Houston Street and New Braunfels Avenue, including Walgreens, HEB, a discount strip retail center, and several fast food operations. While these retail centers cover perhaps 120,000 square feet of space, ERA was informed of significant local dissatisfaction with current retail options (particularly the grocery store), suggesting that a share of the market is choosing to spend outside the trade area rather than to shop locally.

Opportunities

One established economic premise for retail development in America is that most retailers perform best when located in a cluster with other stores. Americans prefer to accomplish multiple objectives during a single shopping excursion. From a market perspective, therefore, a development that has a “critical mass” of tenants is likely to do a better job of attracting customers than isolated stores. According to our analysis of market data and economic trends, development of new retail space that is unable to meet this criterion is not feasible in the study area under current market conditions. The success of such development forms attest to the importance of the “agglomeration effect” created when substantial mixes of tenants are housed in single developments.

In considering the noted strengths and weaknesses associated with the Eastside, ERA emphasizes several key points. Most importantly, the study area will never be able to compete with Target, Walmart, and Kohl’s for basic apparel and home appliance purchases. While smaller retailers have found ways to survive in proximity to a mass retailer, it is generally because of superior service or the offering of a specialized product or service that a Walmart does not offer. The demand estimates shown in the above table suggest to ERA the following conclusions regarding retail space development:

1. Current retailers active in the market generally do not appear to be serving the market the best possible extent. Retailers outside the trade area, such as the Walmart at Loop 410, are likely absorbing a share of current demand.
2. The University of Texas at San Antonio recently completed a retail trade assessment for this sub market, and came to similar conclusions regarding potential demand for new retail space.
3. ERA notes the recent closure of 23 Albertson's grocery stores in the market. HEB bought and reopened only four of these stores, suggesting that other grocers may be taking a harder look at the market, given the number of vacant stores now potentially available.
4. While residential densities favor a retail location at Commerce Street and New Braunfels Avenue, there are no vacant sites available in this area. There are vacant and under-utilized properties along Commerce Street south of the SBC Arena, which could be appropriate for retail use.

While trade area spending and the lack of competitive retail supply would suggest that there is sufficient demand to support construction of new convenience and neighborhood oriented retail space, ERA notes that current rent levels may not yet be high enough to justify new construction. To illustrate this, the appendix includes a preliminary financial analysis for a proposed 60,000-square-foot retail center development in the study area. The analysis includes assumptions and estimates regarding:

- Rental rates
- Construction costs
- Operating expenses
- Financing costs

The analysis suggests that incentives may need to be provided to allow a retail project to meet financial requirements. These incentives include:

- A public sector equity commitment to reduce the amount of total equity required by the developer
- Public investments for site preparation and land acquisition, reducing the developer's costs
- Below market financing, to reduce the developer's interest expenses and risk

The implementation section highlights a range of programs and options that could be used to facilitate the development of new retail space in the market.

Industrial Development

According to the Society of Industrial and Office Realtors (SIOR) the San Antonio suburban industrial market has seen considerable growth since 1997, adding about 12.7 million square feet of inventory in five years. A significant increment of new inventory was accounted for by the privatization of about 6.4 million square feet of industrial space at the former Kelly Air Force Base, now called Kelly USA. Over this period, vacancy rates have also trended upward, with vacant space at Kelly contributing significantly to the calculation. At the same time, Kelly is evolving into a center for aerospace related industrial development, which is a planned cornerstone of local economic development efforts.

Industrial Development Trends, San Antonio
Suburban Market

	1997	1999	2001
Inventory	46,242,970	55,867,970	58,988,344
Vacancy Rate	7.6%	8.3%	13.4%
Net Absorption	344,689	7,332,874	36,263

Source: SIOR

Overall, the local market is largely made up of warehouse and distribution buildings, comprising about 65% of total inventories. Manufacturing space covers a smaller 10% of total inventories. Within these broad statistics, it is important to note the physical differences between categories of industrial buildings. In general, modern warehouse buildings are built with the following attributes:

- Clear ceiling heights up to 30 feet
- Sprinkler systems and office space build outs of up to 10% of total floor area
- Larger truck courts and related staging areas

Flex / technology / service buildings tend to support different markets, with the following attributes:

- Clear ceiling heights of up to 24 feet
- Office space build-outs of 30% to 100%
- Higher quality sprinkler, fire safety, and related physical systems
- Greater parking requirements for cars as opposed to semi-trailers

In addition to the above property types, which tend to be built on a speculative basis by developers, industrial markets include a large quantity of owner occupied manufacturing and warehouse buildings, which are typically built to the specific needs of the user. While the Eastside includes a number of warehouse and flex buildings that have been built on a speculative basis by developers such as Prologis (a developer of industrial and distribution space), the study area also includes a number of owner-occupied light industrial and service buildings as well.

There are two specific economic development initiatives that the city has pursued with success. In one case, local officials have developed an aggressive technology and R&D effort, which has

translated in to demand for about 25% of total industrial inventories in the city. A portion of this inventory is concentrated on the West Side of San Antonio at the Texas Research Park. This development began in 1984 with the creation of the foundation, which was entrusted with developing the project. The city provided roughly 1,200 acres of vacant land; the first research building was built in 1990, following completion of infrastructure improvements. Since 1990, the foundation has added 2 multi-tenant buildings and several residences, which are used by UT students and others. Total land development has consumed 175 out of 1200 acres, for an annual absorption rate of about 17.5 acres per year, which supports an inventory of about 300,000 square feet of R&D space.

In a second and more recent economic development effort, city and county officials helped attract a new Toyota truck manufacturing plant to the south side of San Antonio. When operational in 2006, the new \$480-million-dollar plant will have the capacity to make about 150,000 vehicles per year, and employ up to 2,000 workers. Perhaps more importantly, the program will generate interest among tier 1 and 2 automotive parts suppliers to locate in the market as well.

The study area's industrial development makeup is quite mixed, including older single tenant / owner occupied buildings along Commerce Street and Houston Street, east of the Coca Cola Bottling plant, as well as more recently built industrial and flex space built along SBC Parkway. One new project in this second area is being planned by Prologis, and is called the Coliseum Distribution Center. Company officials indicated that they have several distribution buildings in the 100,000-square-foot range planned for this site. The area southeast of the Prologis development contains several vacant industrial buildings, as well as a large vehicle maintenance facility for a local utility provider. Interviews with local industrial development officials pointed to the following considerations regarding the status of the Eastside Market:

- There are a limited number of larger vacant tracts with appropriate zoning that are suitable for new planned industrial projects – property assembly may be required.
- Conflicts between adjacent residential and industrial uses are a concern throughout the study area.
- Although the study area has excellent interstate access, the area is also divided by a number of active rail lines and at-grade rail crossings.
- There are a number of warehouse and light industrial buildings located east of Coca Cola Avenue between Commerce and Houston Streets. Many of these buildings are empty or underutilized.
- Assessments also indicated the presence of several brownfield sites that will require remediation.

Hotel Development

ERA considered the strength of the local hotel market, which is a key supporter of the area's expanded convention and tourist industry, centered around the Gonzales Convention Center, now with about 1.3 million square feet of exhibition and meeting space. The following table highlights current occupancy and Average Daily Rate (ADR) statistics for the hotel market. The table shows that overall occupancies have trended downward slightly, with an ADR in the \$85 to \$86-dollar-range.

San Antonio Hotel Market Trends

	1999	2000	2001
Occupancy	66.2%	66.4%	64.8%
Avg. Daily rate	\$85.56	\$86.77	\$86.49

Source: Texas A& M Real Estate Center

The following table highlights more detailed trends for noted sub markets, beginning with the downtown area, which recorded occupancy of 67% in 2001, with an ADR of about \$110. Achievable ADR's in the north airport market are lower, at \$78, with a slightly higher occupancy level, compared to downtown. ERA notes that a share of convention delegates may choose to stay by the airport at a lower rate, benefiting from the airport's close proximity to downtown.

Hotel Sub-Market Trends, 2001

Location	Occupancy %	Average Daily Rate
Central Business District	67%	\$109.55
North-Airport	70%	\$78.88
Northeast	58%	\$50.49
Northwest-Fiesta	61%	\$69.13
South San Antonio	56%	\$59.68

Source: Texas A& M Real Estate Center

During the 1990's, the total number of hotels in San Antonio increased from 123 in 1985 to 231 in 1999, growing at an annualized rate of almost 5%, representing an average of close to 8 additional hotels per year. During the same period, the City of San Antonio's hotel room inventory increased from almost 16,000 to 26,000, representing an average of 740 additional rooms a year. The downtown area is to gain a new Holiday Inn Express and Suites, as well as other potential projects:

- Budget Suites of San Antonio –with 360 rooms
- Renovation of the Emily Morgan Hotel is getting a new multi-million dollar renovation.
- Renovation of the Karotkin Building, a 70,000-square-foot downtown building built in 1900 for conversion to a new luxury hotel called the Watermark Hotel and Spa.
- Proposals to build a convention center headquarters hotel

Currently, the Eastside supports a minor hotel market, with construction of a new Holiday Inn Express in St. Paul Square, as well as several budget oriented hotels along I-10 at WW White and Commerce Streets. While there is uncertainty regarding the level of near-term growth in hotel demand for San Antonio, caused in part by the current economic slowdown, as well as an expectation for reduced convention bookings and fewer city-wide events over the next two years, ERA would anticipate eventual hotel development in the Study Area as a mid-term opportunity.

Office Development Overview

ERA evaluated trends for the local office market, as reported by SIOR and shown in the table below. According to this source, the local market has seen considerable growth in suburban areas of the city, with development of about 300,000 square feet of Class A space and about 1.6 million square feet of Class B space. Since 1997, vacancy rates for both categories of space have trended upward, with 2001 levels of 10% and 14% respectively, as shown below.

Suburban Office Market Demand Trends

	1997	2001	Growth
Class A Suburban	4,994,191	5,298,908	304,717
Class B Suburban	6,657,099	8,255,129	1,598,030
Class A Vacancy	4%	10%	
Class B Vacancy	9.6%	14%	

Source: SIOR

The above table does not include downtown office space trends. According to SIOR and the Real Estate center at Texas A&M, the downtown office market saw limited new construction of space between 1997 and 2001, with an overall inventory of about 4.8 million square feet. Key suburban office markets include the north central area, adjacent to the San Antonio International Airport along Loop 410 and US 280, which contains the largest share of suburban space. In addition, the local medical office market continues to grow, with expansions at the University of Texas Health Sciences Center and the South Texas Medical Center.

Importantly, the Eastside study area currently does not offer any significant office space. While proximity to downtown would appear to be a logical opportunity, the office market appears to more strongly favor suburban north central and northwest sub markets. At the same time, ERA understands that there is a reported need for 10,000 to 20,000 square feet of medical clinic or medical office space in the target area – which apparently cannot be found.

Absorption and Development Conclusions

The San Antonio metro area has followed a significant growth curve over the past 20 years, with significant new commercial and residential development occurring at numerous locations around the metro area. It is important to emphasize the extent of this growth to help place future opportunities for the Eastside in perspective. The following discussion highlights average annual growth trends for key real estate development categories, including industrial, residential, and retail development.

Industrial Development – According to local sources, the San Antonio Industrial market has experienced between 400,000 and 900,000 square feet of annual net absorption, with an average of about 500,000 square feet of net absorption per year since 1993.

Residential Development – According to the US Census, between 1990 and 2000 the City of San Antonio gained an average of about 6,700 new housing units per year. As noted before, over the same period, the Study Area saw a net decrease in the number of housing units.

Retail Development – Between 1993 and 1999, San Antonio experienced median annual development of about 870,000 square feet of new retail space per year, with overall net absorption following a slightly higher trend. As with other development, new retail projects have tended to follow population and income growth to the north.

Hotel Development - Between 1985 and 1999 San Antonio saw development of an average of 740 hotel rooms per year.

Office Development – Between 1993 and 1999, the local office market generated median annual absorption of about 475,000 square feet per year, with development concentrated in the downtown area, as well as several north suburban sub-markets.

Population Growth – Previously in this report, ERA noted that San Antonio added roughly 20,800 residents per year between 1990 and 2000.

As the above highlights suggest, there is a significant market for commercial and residential development active in the region. It is also clear that, over the past ten years, the Eastside was able to capture only a minor recognizable increment of this demand, which is surprising given its close-in location.

Study Area Implications

ERA considered the extent of the potential market defined above that could realistically be captured by the Eastside over the next ten years. The approach is driven by the underlying assumption that, given the area's immediate proximity to downtown, with excellent interstate access (particularly to I-35), that it should logically begin to benefit from a share of economic growth occurring in the region, particularly if efforts are undertaken to accomplish two tasks:

1. Rebuild existing transportation infrastructure

2. Improve storm water management

As the above tasks begin to occur on the Eastside, it is likely that the process of assembling property can begin, allowing significant revitalization to occur. At this juncture in the assessment, ERA anticipates that the following real estate development goals should be achievable over the next 10 to 15 years:

- New Home Construction – 25 to 50 homes per year
- New Light Industrial Development – about 600,000 square feet of new space
- New Retail, Medical office, and Business Services Space – Opportunity for up to 200,000 square feet over the next ten years.

Land Planning Assessment

The Eastside is, in many ways, exactly what many new Neo Traditional communities are attempting to create today: organized, street grids that are spaced at very walk-able distances, many significant community destinations, and a generous number of neighborhood and community parks. But, the Eastside also has a number of problems that must be solved in order for the community to be revitalized. The physical problems include the poor condition of the streets and infrastructure, deteriorating housing stock, and the lack of cohesiveness and functionality in terms of its land use.

SWA has been addressing the broad physical realm of the Eastside and how it can be improved. The key issues that we have been addressing are: land use and resulting zoning implications, circulation and connectivity, and the “sense of place” through community facilities / places. This has been undertaken within the umbrella of the “Master Plan Policies” for the City of San Antonio dated May 29, 1997 and the Unified Development Code dated May 3, 2001, and the “Community Building and Neighborhood Planning Program” dated October 13, 1998 and amended February 8, 2001. The result will be a broad framework in which the necessary changes can be addressed.

Planning Guidelines

A number of neighborhoods have already come forth with “Neighborhood Plans” and the objectives are very consistent among them. These objectives have also recently been expressed in the first Community Meeting held in October (refer to the Appendix for Meeting Minutes). SWA has translated the communities expressed desires into six Guiding Design Principles that have been guiding the planning process:

1. Establish a land use pattern that is responsive to the existing context and is founded upon realistic market expectations.
2. Protect the neighborhoods by providing them with the necessary improvements to enable infill development and redevelopment.
3. Create attractive streets that adequately move automobiles, but also serve the pedestrian as well as bicycles, bus, and future light rail, as appropriate.
4. Develop an open space system that interconnects key destinations by use of “greenways”.
5. Respect existing natural systems and maximize their benefit to the plan.
6. Strengthen the community with additional gathering nodes and emphasize the places of significance.

Planning Challenges

One of the greatest challenges is that the Eastside is actually four distinct use areas:

- The cohesive, organized residential neighborhoods west of the Union Pacific railroad line that include a retail core at Houston Street / Commerce Street and New Braunfels Avenue, and that extend east of the railroad line and south of Commerce Street to Salado Creek,
- A disorganized area including both sides of W. W. White Road and both sides of SBC Parkway north of SBC Center and the Willow Springs Golf Course consisting of an incongruous mix of industrial, commercial, and residential uses, as well as underutilized and vacant land,
- A significant natural amenity, the Salado Creek corridor, that has a high degree of unrealized potential and is generally the “seam” between areas #1 and #2,
- And, a new neighbor, SBC Center that creates an expanded entertainment focus in conjunction with the Freeman Coliseum and has an adjacency to the Salado Creek corridor.

Within this framework, a land use pattern exists that does not always support the community goals and the guiding principles. The neighborhoods in the western area have lesser compatibility problems but minor issues do exist:

1. Isolated land use incompatibilities such as the industrial businesses that occur in Jefferson Heights, and in the blocks between Commerce, Martin Luther King, New Braunfels Avenue, and Walters.
2. The neighborhoods adjacent to the railroad yards on the north edge and those along the interface with SBC Center have incompatible land use adjacencies.
3. The industrial adjacency south of Durango with the residential neighborhoods.
4. Zoning inconsistencies such as the industrial zoning that currently exists along New Braunfels Avenue extending from the rail yards to Commerce Street, along Houston Street at the railroad, and along Commerce Street east of New Braunfels Avenue.

Other significant issues include:

- There is no sense of entry into and out of the community
- Although the neighborhoods have an identity, no “center of town” exists that ties the neighborhoods together.

To the east, the issues are broader in scale and more significant:

- Land uses are jumbled with residential neighborhoods interspersed into heavy industrial development, which creates one of the most incompatible types of land use adjacencies.
- The existing industrial development is not efficiently organized and is confusing to negotiate.
- There exist significant areas of undeveloped land interspersed within development.
- Much of the zoning is incompatible with the existing and / or appropriate uses.

Additional issues include:

- The image is not related to the remainder of the Eastside.
- SBC Parkway and W. W. White are the only north / south arterial streets in the area and limits north / south movements.
- Commerce Street has a nebulous point of beginning at I-10 where it begins as part of the frontage road and an erratic image from that point to the railroad crossing.

Master Planning Process

SWA undertook a 2-day “windshield” site reconnaissance of the Eastside, took photographs, and undertook a broad visual inventory. SWA also presented preliminary ideas to the Steering Committee and the community on November 11, 2002. The comments provided at those meetings have been incorporated into the final drawings discussed below.

Development Approach Diagram

Utilizing the guiding design principles, SWA prepared a Development Approach plan, subdivided into 4 categories describing recommended levels of conservation and development / redevelopment. As diagrammed in the Development Approach, SWA recommends that all residential neighborhoods should be conserved and minor adjustments made within them (identified as “C”). At the other end of the spectrum, the most disorganized and ill-defined areas are proposed to be entirely redeveloped / developed (identified as “D”). Two areas of incompatible adjacencies within the residential neighborhoods should have minor land use changes (identified as “M”) and a number of other partially developed areas should be a “balanced” conservation and development / redevelopment (identified as “B”).

Urban Design Concept

The Development Approach pattern, in conjunction with the community objectives, began to suggest an Urban Design Concept. It represents the “big ideas” that will begin to solve the physical problems and meet the community objectives. These “big ideas” include:

- Build upon the neighborhoods as the foundation of the Eastside.
- Improve the street system through removal of the north / south Union Pacific railroad line and replacement with a new arterial street, addition of a new north / south arterial street near Salado Creek, and reconfiguration of the Commerce Street / Houston Street intersection. These additions will provide a system of regularly spaced arterial streets for the entire District. Create a traffic circle at New Braunfels Avenue and Houston Street to calm traffic.
- Create a “town center” that provides a “heart” of the entire community.
- Develop a “green spine” along the Salado Creek corridor that extends outward as “greenways” along the improved streets and pedestrian ways to interconnect places and destinations within the entire Eastside.
- Create a retention pond from the existing stock pond along Salado Creek that will become a focal point of the greenway around which the new residential development can occur, and that will also provide flood control assistance for the watershed.
- Establish secondary pedestrian streets to link people with parks, churches and community centers within individual neighborhoods.
- Create a “critical mass” of residential neighborhoods on the eastern side organized around the Salado Creek corridor, and incorporate the existing neighborhoods.
- Develop commercial / retail nodes that are adjacent and convenient to residential neighborhoods.
- Concentrate the industrial uses in a district intended for that use.
- Celebrate Martin Luther King Drive and the annual march by signifying the special qualities of this street and terminate it in a new public space within the traffic circle. This represents a significant opportunity for a public art project.
- Define the Eastside along its perimeter with edges and gateways that create a distinct image, or a “family” of compatible and appropriate images.

Land Use Plan

The resulting Land Use Plan is a long-term vision for the entire Eastside area. It shows how the new pattern will enable this framework to ultimately occur:

- Existing neighborhoods are conserved and protected by appropriate adjacent and internal uses.

- New medium-density single-family and high-density multifamily residential neighborhoods are recommended to supplement the existing ones near Salado Creek and create a residential community.
- New parks are added in a few isolated areas so that all neighborhoods have access to a neighborhood park.
- Commercial, retail, office, and residential mixed uses are extended along New Braunfels Avenue to supplement the existing commercial core at Commerce Street and New Braunfels Avenue.
- Retail nodes are reinforced at cross streets to continue the legacy of neighborhood shopping destinations.
- A new mixed-use Town Center is recommended on the site bounded by Houston Street, Coca Cola Boulevard, Commerce Street, and the new arterial, Roland Street that will have synergistic adjacencies to the Barbara Jordan Center, Claude Black Center, SBC Center, residential neighborhoods, and Salado Creek. Mixed-use is also recommended for the blocks south and east along Commerce Street.
- Commercial land use is proposed for the area on either side of W. W. White Road at I-10, which could create the opportunity for a regional shopping center.
- A new, master planned light industrial / office park is proposed near I-10 at the intersection of Commerce Street and Houston Street. Because it will be sited at one of the major Eastside entries, strict design guidelines are recommended for its high-quality development.
- New light industrial uses are recommended in the general location of existing industrial uses and adjacent to residential development, which creates a good land use transition.
- Heavy industrial uses are concentrated in the area near I-410 and White where such land use already exists.

Land uses indicated in adjacent neighborhoods, including the Downtown Neighborhood and Government Hill, are consistent with the proposed land uses per their respective Neighborhood Plans. No land use changes are proposed in those areas.

Circulation Systems Diagram and Street Sections

The Circulation Systems diagram shows existing and recommended circulation systems. The objective is to have streets that function well for the pedestrian as well as for cars, and to enable other modes of circulation to coexist such as bus and bicycle and possibly light rail in the future. Cross sections have also been prepared that describe the typical major street configurations and identify the dimensions of the proposed improvements. These sections represent the optimal conditions and include:

- New parkway along Salado Creek providing another north/south travel option, which will be especially important during SBC Center events, and will also create access to many land-locked parcels,
- A new arterial street along the existing Union Pacific railroad line right-of-way from Roland Avenue to IH-35,
- Defined major pedestrian corridors along the arterials, although all streets are recommended to have sidewalks,
- Major bicycle links, incorporating the Hays St. Bridge and the Heritage Walking Tour & Bicycle Loop, and the existing link along Montana / Nevada,
- The bus system, bus stops which should be integrated into the streetscape design, and recommended extensions into new neighborhoods,
- Hike & bike trails along Salado Creek interconnecting the Eastside into areas up and down stream,

While the proposed Salado Creek Parkway is a significant opportunity, it must be designed and undertaken with great care and sensitivity to the existing riparian environment. If the Parkway is deemed to be best located within the floodplain so that it can travel along the Creek, it must incorporate a special structural system that will minimize environmental damage.

Landscape Framework Plan

The Landscape Framework Plan shows how the street system can become extensions of the greenway and will help create a street hierarchy for clarity within the system and establish a “green” image for the community. Key components include:

- Eastside gateways and edges
- Salado Creek greenway and lake amenity created from the existing stock pond
- Greenway “fingers” extending through the SBC Center site and into the adjacent neighborhoods, into the proposed Town Center site, and along Pershing Creek in the industrial area
- Major arterials designed as greenway extensions
- Tree-lined pedestrian linkages
- MLK as a “Ceremonial Street”

The landscape is envisioned to be a combination of street trees, street / pedestrian lighting, and other special amenities such as banners or icons. Opportunities will exist for public art to be

integrated into the streetscape improvements and concepts have already been initiated such as the I-37 artist gateways and the Rosa Parks art tiles project along Houston Street.

Town Center

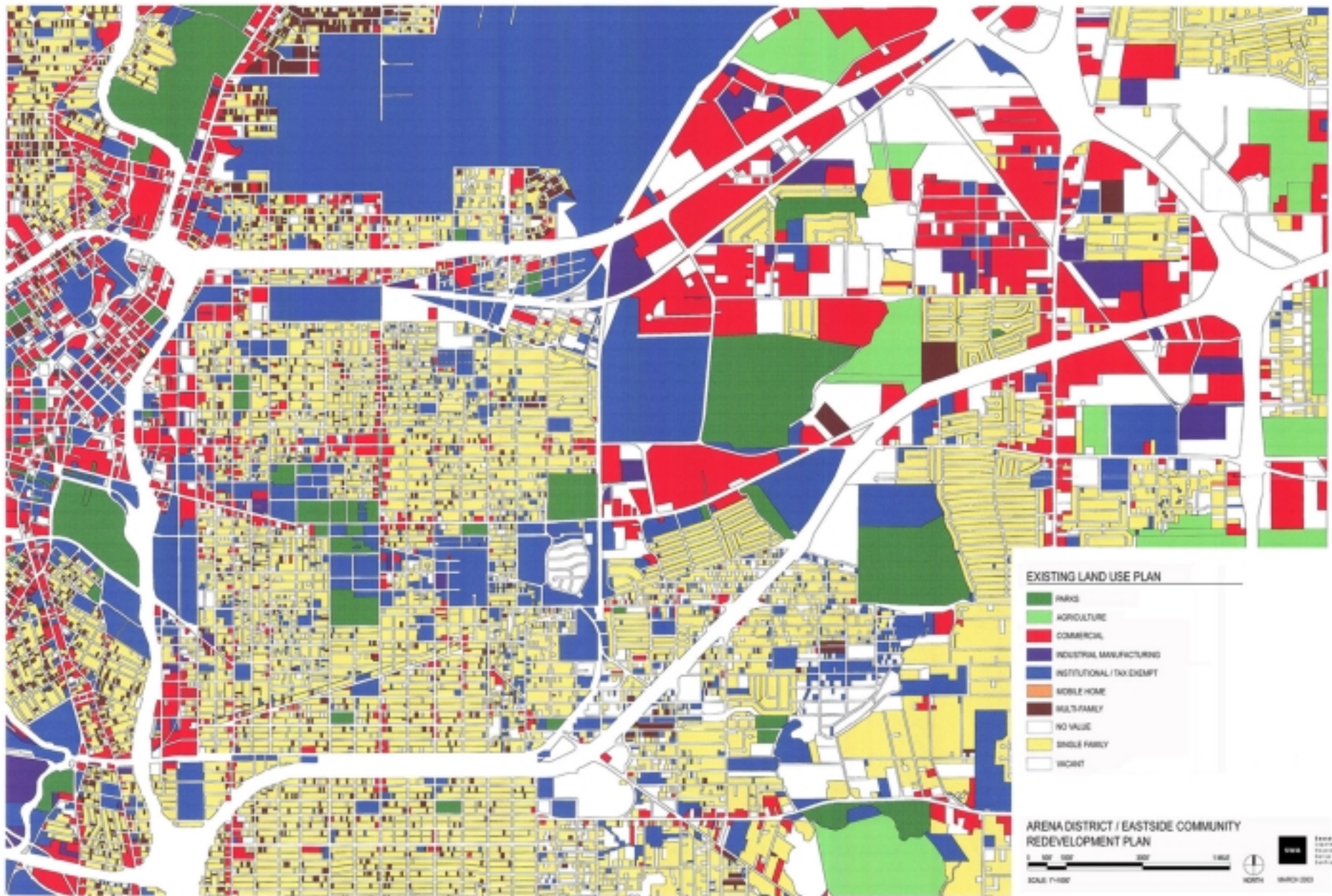
The Town Center is an exciting opportunity for the Eastside and could provide many of the uses that were outlined by the community in the initial interviews. At this time, the Town Center is envisioned to be a dense, urban, mixed-use center that includes not only retail / commercial uses such as a grocery store and shops, but also more community-oriented facilities such as a bank, medical facility, and / or library. Another possible use that did not come out of the interviews but may be appropriate is a post office. All these uses can co-exist in a well-planned development that is a combination of two to three-story buildings interspersed with open spaces and plazas and accessed by pedestrian-friendly streets.

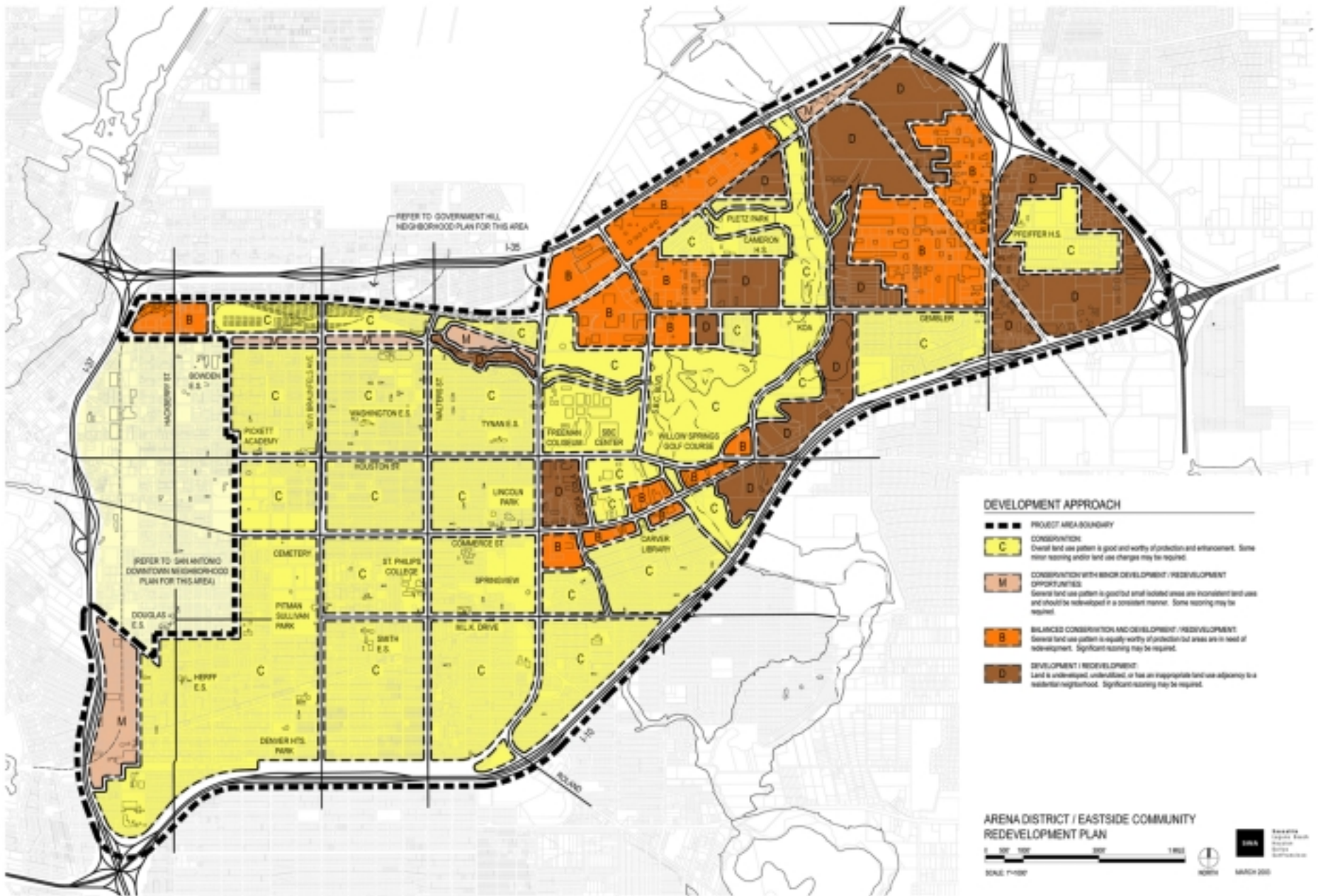
Parking must be accommodated but should not dominate the site. An opportunity exists for shared parking to occur with the SBC Center - this opportunity should be further investigated. A safe, convenient pedestrian crossing at Houston Street will also need to be designed into the master plan.

The Town Center open spaces can also become important use areas for gathering, performing, playing, or a host of other programmed events. The final programming of the Town Center and its subsequent design will be an important next step to undertake with the Eastside community. The design team preparing options for the SBC Center site have identified the opportunity for a public gathering space to be located on the south west corner of that site. This programming effort should be undertaken closely with the programming of the Town Center.

While many Town Centers have been completed throughout the U.S., a civic-oriented focus such as the one proposed for the Eastside is not a common prototype. The Team concludes that the Eastside Town Center must be designed so that it is “of the place”. Several examples exist, that include discrete characteristics that can be folded into the Eastside Town Center planning:

- Southlake Town Center, Southlake, Texas (Dallas / Ft. Worth area)
- Highland Park Village, Dallas, Texas
- Addison Town Center, Addison, Texas (north of Dallas)
- Stella Link, Houston, Texas
- Country Club Plaza, Kansas City, Missouri
- Woodbridge Town Center, California (South Orange County)
- Carmel Town Center, Carmel, California
- Mill Valley Town Center, Mill Valley, California
- Celebration Town Center, Celebration, Florida
- Abacoa Town Center, Jupiter, Florida
- Reston Town Center, Reston, Virginia





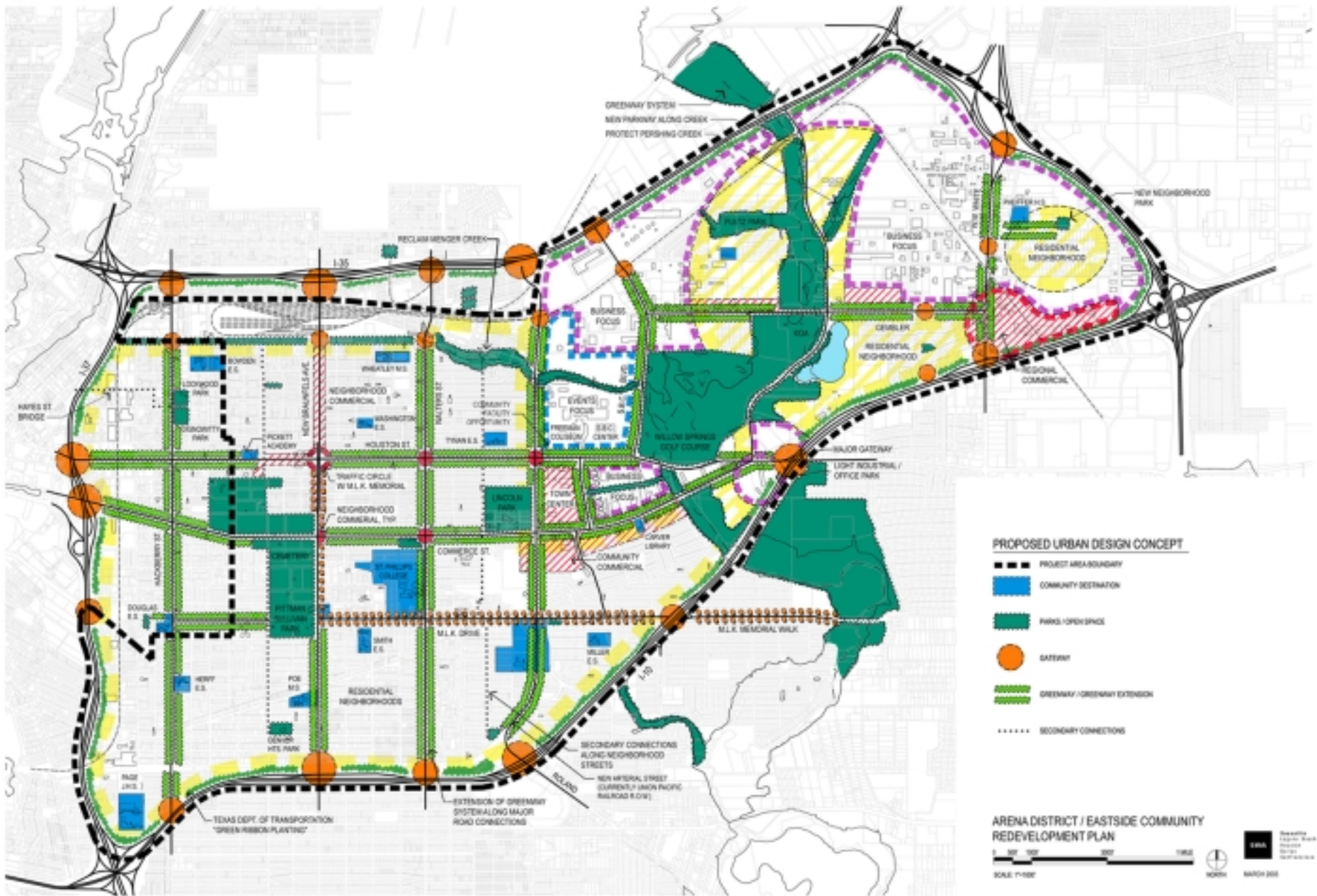
DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

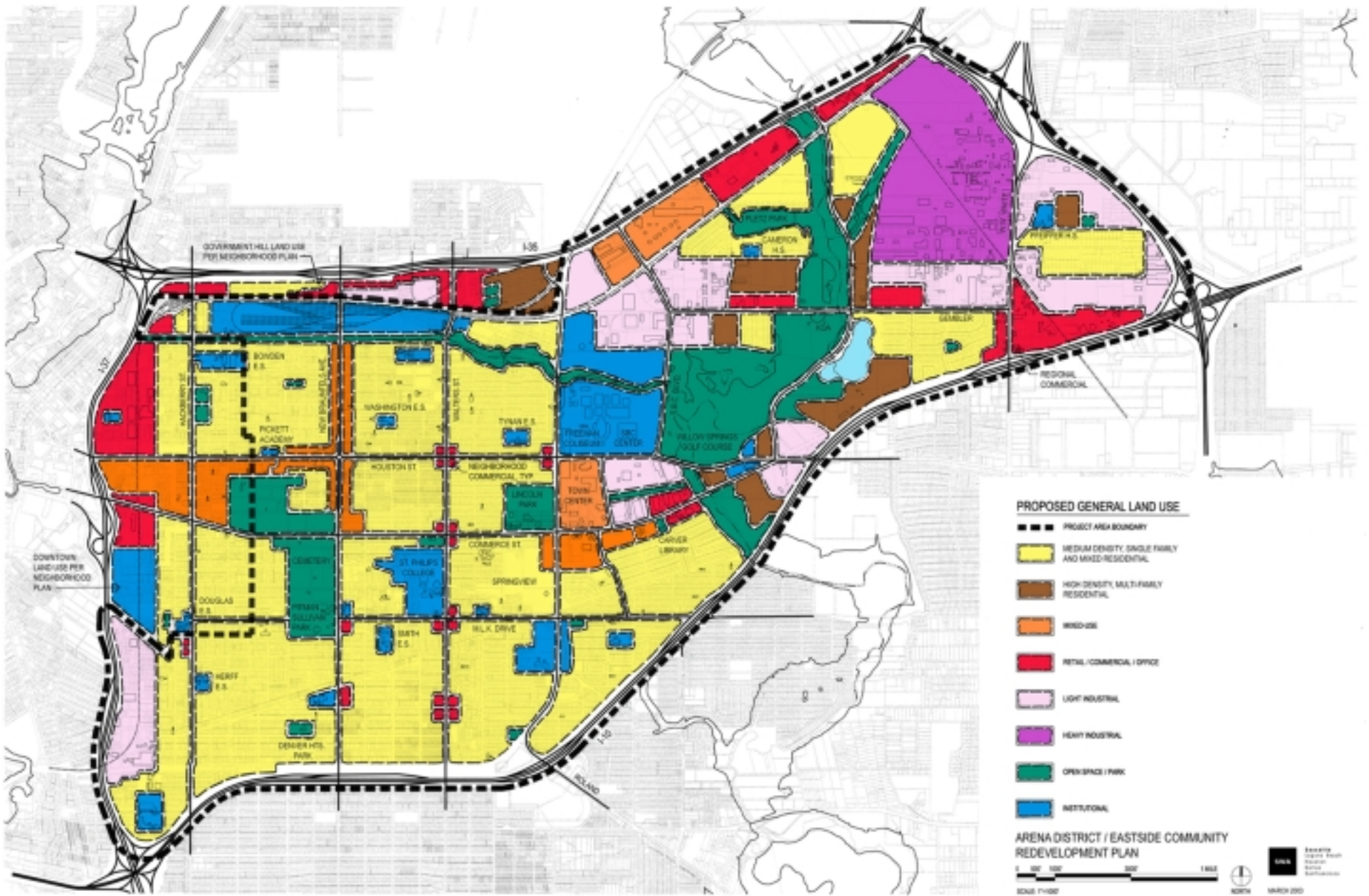
- PROJECT AREA BOUNDARY**
Thick dashed black line
- C CONSERVATION**
Conservation: Current land use pattern is good and worthy of protection and enhancement. Some minor reworking and/or land use changes may be required.
- M CONSERVATION WITH HIGH DEVELOPMENT / REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**
Conservation with high development/redevelopment opportunities: General land use pattern is good but small isolated areas are inconsistent land use and should be redeveloped in a consistent manner. Some reworking may be required.
- B BALANCED CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT / REDEVELOPMENT**
Balanced conservation and development/redevelopment: General land use pattern is equally worthy of protection but areas are in need of redevelopment. Significant reworking may be required.
- D DEVELOPMENT / REDEVELOPMENT**
Development/redevelopment: Land is undeveloped, underused, or has an inappropriate land use adjacency to a residential neighborhood. Significant reworking may be required.

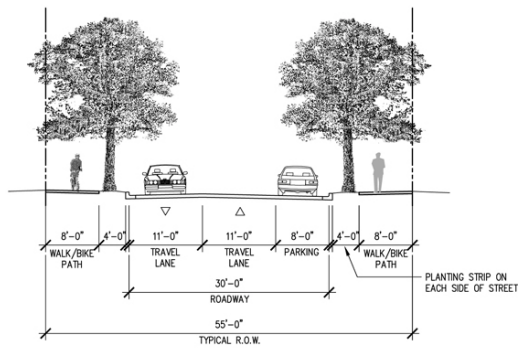
ARENA DISTRICT / EASTSIDE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

SCALE: 1"=100'
 0 50' 100' 150' 200'
 NORTH
 MARCH 2008

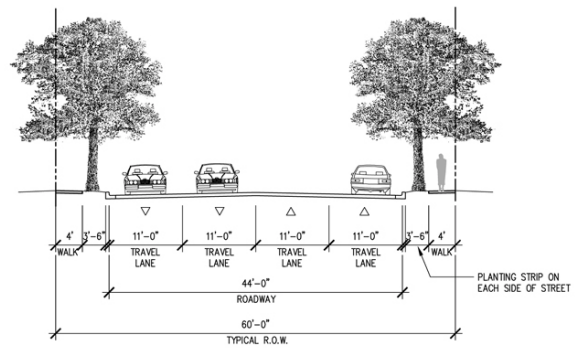




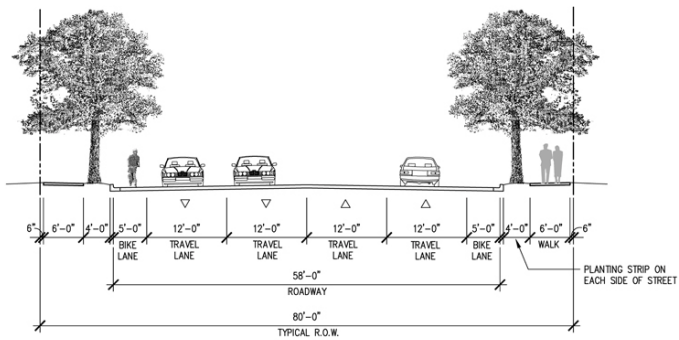




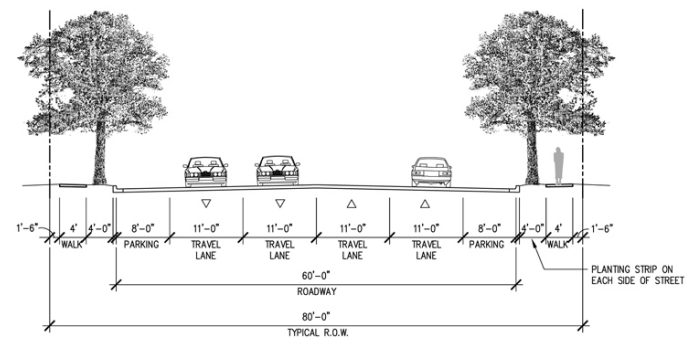
A TYPICAL STREET SECTION – NEW BRAUNFELS, M.L.K., HACKBERRY AND HOUSTON, (® RESIDENTIAL)



B TYPICAL STREET SECTION – WALTERS AND COMMERCE

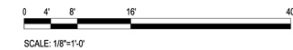


C COMMERCE STREET – FROM IH-37 TO WALNUT ST.

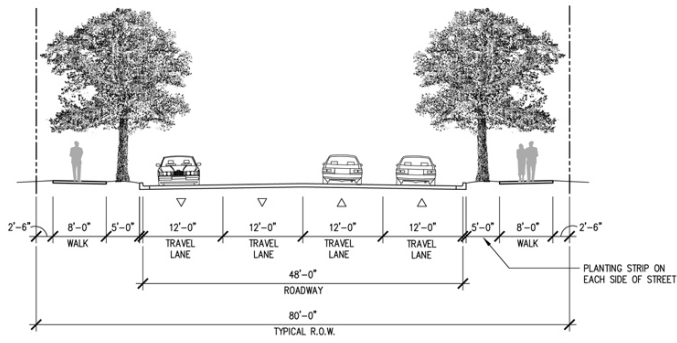


D COMMERCE STREET – FROM WALNUT ST. TO MONUMENTAL ST.

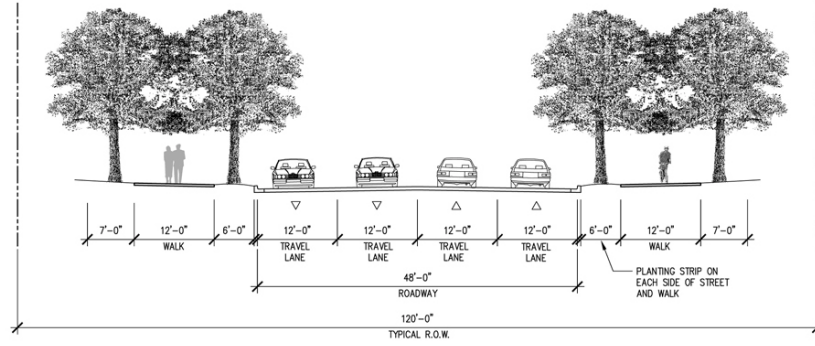
ARENA DISTRICT / EASTSIDE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



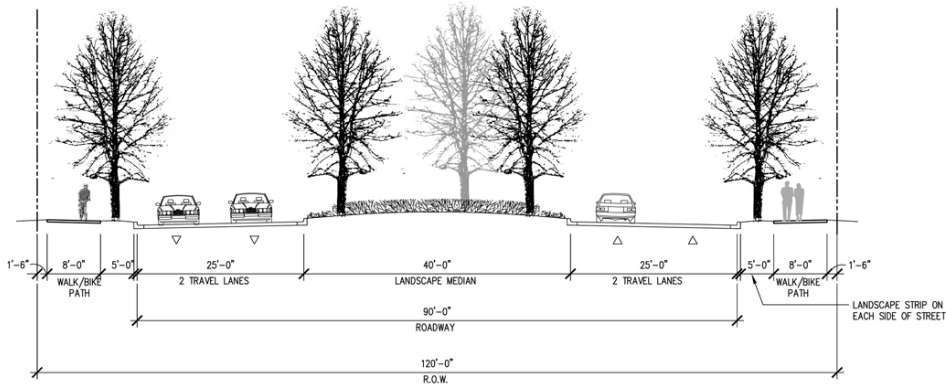
MARCH 2003



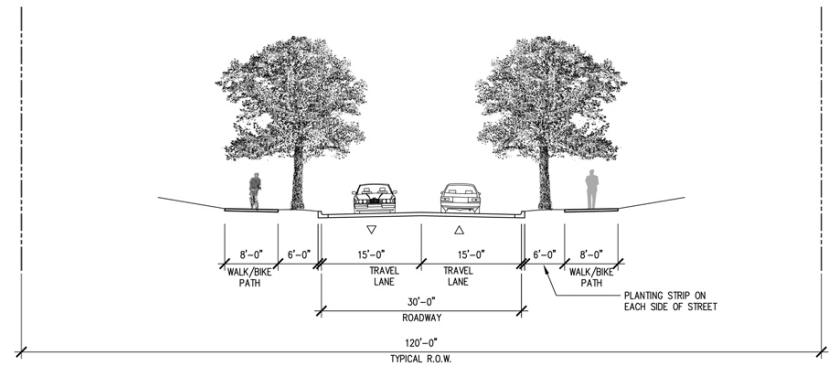
E COMMERCE STREET – FROM NEW BRAUNFELS AVE. TO GARCIA ST.



F COMMERCE STREET – FROM TO GARCIA ST. TO HOUSTON ST.



G NEW BRAUNFELS AVENUE – FROM PASO HONDO ST. TO DAWSON ST.

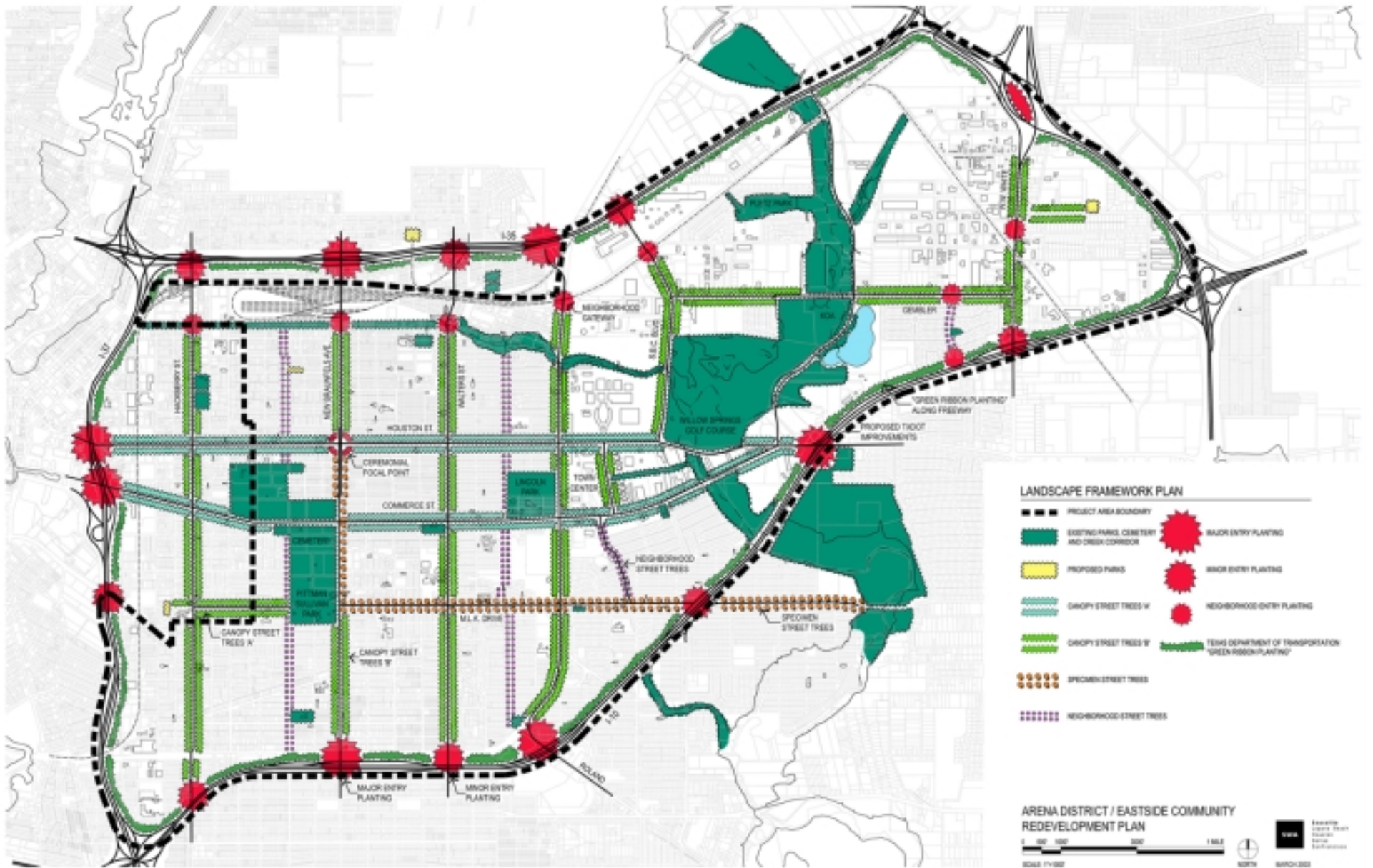


H ROLAND AVENUE – SOUTH OF COMMERCE

ARENA DISTRICT / EASTSIDE COMMUNITY
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



MARCH 2003



Implementation Discussion

This section of the report highlights key implementation steps to help facilitate revitalization efforts for the Eastside study area. Components of this section include identification of priority projects, roles to be played, timing, and financing options. Support for conclusions reached in this section is derived from research completed over the course of the study, including planning assessments, public involvement, and market research, as well as related studies completed by Parsons, that document needed road and transportation infrastructure improvements.

Priority Projects and Timing

The team concludes that a key first step will be to form a development entity / authority to guide revitalization of the Eastside. ERA concludes that some form of centralized “authority” is necessary, primarily to pull together the financial resources to rapidly generate the level of investment that will be required to move the program forward. Specifics on various options for this entity are discussed below. Once formed, this revitalization entity will have several distinct tasks:

1. To aggressively pursue road and infrastructure improvements, both those currently planned, as well as recommendations of this study.
2. Work with City and County officials to institute a comprehensive re-zoning effort for the Eastside study area
3. Formulate a marketing effort to re-introduce San Antonio metro area to the Eastside, highlighting its recent improvements, revitalized schools, and opportunities for real estate development.
4. Focus on priority projects identified in this report, to include new retail space, continuation of residential rehab and new construction, and light industrial / business services development.

Each recommended step in the process is discussed separately, in order of priority.

Create a Development Entity

Interviews conducted for the public involvement process highlighted a number of key challenges for the Eastside that suggest the need for a more centralized authority. These include:

- The study area is large, with several distinct sub-areas, each of which has different needs and challenges.
- The study area perceives that it has not received its share of investment in public infrastructure or leadership, and feels justified in seeing a greater share of near-term future investment.

- Although CERA has taken a clear and pronounced lead in pursuing Eastside revitalization efforts, the organization's non-profit status places a clear constraint on its financial capacities, particularly given the extent of financial reinvestment needed for the Eastside.
- Aside from CERA, and as noted in earlier analysis, the study area's leadership appears fragmented, with numerous churches, local business organizations, and related groups competing for residents attention. The area is also going through a pronounced demographic shift, with increased Hispanic migration to the study area.
- The City of San Antonio and Bexar County have numerous economic development initiatives that are on-going, and may have difficulty (in and of themselves) in prioritizing the Eastside in comparison with other projects, such as the new Toyota plant now planned for the south side of Bexar County.

Initially, ERA recommends the formation of an Action Committee, whose role will be to keep the public's eye (and policy maker's attention) focused on the pronounced needs of the Eastside. This committee could include individuals from the following entities:

- City and County officials
- The San Antonio Spurs
- Members of the Eastside Neighborhood Groups
- CERA
- The Alamo Chamber
- State government representatives

This committee should meet at least on a quarterly / monthly basis, with the primary goal of maintaining momentum and ensuring the flow of information among the broad number of local and state agencies who are currently planning reinvestments in the target area. The committee is a logical starting point for near-term development of a centralized redevelopment entity, which can quickly marshal the financial resources to energize revitalization efforts, starting first and foremost with road, transportation and infrastructure improvements. There are a number of ways that this "entity" could be structured:

- Creation of an **Arena District Authority** with specific capacity to tax and issue bonds. There would appear to be an opportunity to establish such a district, given that when the SBC center was built local officials chose to not set up a defined arena district, opting to only establish the hotel motel tax and car rental tax to help pay for the arena. Arena district authorities can generate taxes from parking fees, venue attendance, and a number of other areas. State law allows these authorities relatively broad latitude in defining how broad an area should be included in the district, and what needs should be targeted for reinvestment. Importantly, to the extent that new taxes are required, a public vote would be necessary.
- Formation of a **Public Improvement District (PID)**. Texas law allows for the formation of PID's, which are specific districts where commercial property owners can agree to be taxed to help fund district infrastructure improvements. Improvement projects could include transit

systems, new roads, sidewalks, parking, drainage systems, stormwater management, landscaping, streetscape improvements, etc. Either the city or an affected group of property owners can initiate this district. Once established, these districts can generate income from taxes levied on property, or sales taxes collected from commercial activities in the district.

- Expansion of **CERA**'s role in the community, growing it from a smaller grass roots non-profit organization into a larger development agency.

Given the extent of reinvestment that the Eastside requires, with more than \$250 million in identified projects underway, planned, proposed or recommended, revenue opportunities created by an Arena District authority need to be seriously evaluated. This is an immediate priority; ERA expects Bexar County officials and the Spurs to take the lead in pursuing this element. ERA understands that all of the above "entity" options have challenges. At minimum, the county and Spurs should seriously consider pursuit of additional taxes on arena / coliseum parking and / or event attendees, and target this income entirely to Eastside revitalization.

Priority 1 - Road and Infrastructure Improvements

In addition to the host of capital projects identified in the introduction to this report, reports completed by ERA and Parsons highlighted an additional range of transportation and infrastructure projects that will need to be completed. The East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan developed by Parsons identified a host of transportation improvements amounting to more than \$100 million in total investment. These projects were divided into two tiers, as follows:

Tier 1 – Priority improvement projects:

- Resurface 167 street blocks with new pavement - \$6.2 million
- Install weather protected bus shelters at major intersections - \$400,000
- Convert the New Braunfels / Commerce Street intersection to a traffic roundabout - \$935,000
- Implement safety improvements at key intersections - \$205,000
- Reconstruct several major streets, including streetscape improvements, parking, and wider sidewalks - \$27.9 million

Tier 2 – Recommended Transportation Options:

- Reconstruct Houston Street from IH 37 to Walters Street as a feature street - \$7.6 million
- Resurface six roadways at rail crossings and replace railroad ties - \$702,000
- Close eight at-grade rail crossings in the study area - \$423,000
- Remove the Union Pacific rail line between Roland Avenue and IH 35 that are adjacent to the coliseum grounds, and replace it with a new 2-lane to 4-lane roadway - \$33 million
- Restore north south cross town VIA bus service along Walters Street - \$570,000
- Reconstruct Hackberry Street from Duval Street to IH 10 as a feature street - \$10.5 million
- Create a new roadway from Commerce / Houston Streets northward, parallel with Salado Creek, to Seguin Street - \$14.7 million

The Parsons Study highlights more details regarding each of these projects, their potential timing, and potential funding sources. Obviously, given the magnitude of reinvestment requirements, new sources of funding will be needed to make these projects happen. ERA experience clearly suggests that the above road improvements are a necessary precursor for broader revitalization to occur. As such, we believe that there is clear value in forming an authority that has significant financial capacity to more aggressively pursue infrastructure reinvestment.

There are already a number of local and state agencies who are competing projects on the Eastside, including TxDOT and COSA Public Works. The introduction to this report highlighted a range of projects both ongoing and planned by these agencies. Clearly, additional funding will need to be secured to enhance current efforts. It would be logical for the District's state representative, Ruth Jones McClendon (District 120) to be asked to pursue additional state or federal resources, including T-21 or T-3 funding, that could become available in the near future.

Priority 2 - Comprehensive Rezoning

The current zoning in the Eastside is a combination of the 1938 Zoning District designations, the 1965 Zoning District designations, and new classifications that have been designed. The City of San Antonio has prepared a Conversion Matrix that outlines how the older designations can be converted to the New Classifications. The Eastside will need to undergo a rezoning effort so that the zoning classifications are consistent with the proposed Land Use Plan. Generally, the residential areas west of the Union Pacific railroad line have residential zoning designations and may need only minor adjustments or no adjustment at all. However, two key areas have more inconsistent zoning designations. These areas include:

- The Eastside of New Braunfels Avenue between Commerce Street and the rail yard that is recommended as Mixed-Use and is currently zoned I1, General Industrial.
- Two blocks along Commerce Street east of New Braunfels Avenue are recommended as Commercial use and are currently zoned I1, General Industrial.

Areas east of the Union Pacific railroad line have more significant zoning issues. A large amount of the land north of Gembler Road has an I2, Heavy Industrial zoning designation and the Land Use Plan is recommending that new residential and commercial uses occur in that area. The land south of Gembler Road includes a number of smaller parcels that have commercial and industrial zoning designations and are intermixed amongst existing and proposed residential neighborhoods.

The land east of W. W. White is currently a mix of light industrial, heavy industrial, commercial, and residential zoning designations. The land surrounding the eastern most Willow Wood neighborhood will need to be rezoned as I1, General Industrial, so that less intrusive uses will ultimately surround that neighborhood, and C3 near I-10 so that regional commercial development can occur per the Land Use Plan recommendations.

Per the Development Approach Plan, we have recommended that the existing neighborhoods should be the foundation of the new Plan and those neighborhoods should therefore be preserved and conserved. Within each neighborhood, individual efforts can and should be made for infill development of underutilized or vacant property, or property with inappropriate uses. Several tools exist that can be used to accomplish the goal of conservation to protect and strengthen the desirable aesthetic features and they include:

- Neighborhood Conservation Districts – zoning overlay designation used as management tool to address the appropriateness of new and infill construction in the neighborhood.
- Corridor Overlay Districts – zoning overlay designation to provide a framework to promote the unique character of the area and compatible development along the City’s major thoroughfare corridors that will address building design, site layout, and signage.
- Viewshed Protection District – zoning overlay designed to protect, preserve and enhance significant views and vistas.
- Historic District and Historic Landmark - zoning overlay designation to protect historic resources for neighborhoods that have been determined to be eligible due to their historical integrity, either as a Local Historic District or a National Register Historic District.
- Neighborhood Preservation Districts – to preserve the existing platted neighborhood from further subdivision.

Each neighborhood should investigate the criteria for these tools and determine the tool that will best suit their needs. These tools are more fully described in the City of San Antonio Unified Development Code (UDC). ERA assumes that revisions to the zoning code would be handled by the COSA planning department, consistent with the recommendations of this plan.

Priority 3 - Marketing, Marketing, Marketing

Once broader infrastructure reinvestment has begun, there will be a need to formulate and implement a marketing effort to re-introduce the broader San Antonio metro area to the Eastside, highlighting its recent improvements, revitalized schools, and opportunities for real estate development. The marketing effort should be initiated by a local authority or the Action Committee.

Priority 4 - Real Estate Development Initiatives

The Eastside study area also requires reinvestment in its residential and commercial space. Importantly, ERA does not believe that a critical mass of demand will materialize for the Eastside unless there is an initial and significant effort of associated infrastructure investment, as well as clarification of zoning and land use designations. Part of the reason that the Eastside has

fallen into its current situation relates to poor zoning enforcement, allowing encroachment between residential and industrial areas. As well, while the current capital improvement program emphasizes new investment for the Eastside, with \$150 million for roads, new schools, and the Springview housing area, it should be recognized that this is only a starting point. Additional investment is clearly needed to deal with:

- Re-surfacing 167 street blocks which have poor pavements
- Reconstruction of major arteries, complete with streetscape improvements
- Removal or improvement of at grade rail crossings
- Removal of a Union Pacific rail line and development of the Roland Avenue Extension past the SBC Center to IH-35
- Development of a Salado Creek Parkway, which will improve linkages between eastern and western sections of the study area.

Real estate development priorities should focus initially on revitalization of both residential and community retail space, and eventually include development of a modern planned business and light industrial development. Discussion for each topic is as follows:

Residential Development

Land use and planning assessments conducted for the Eastside clearly noted a lack of reinvestment in existing housing, with a median age of housing stock, which is significantly lower than the comparable level of the City of San Antonio (1952 versus 1974). Opportunities begin with the reality that home ownership trends for the Eastside and the City as a whole are reasonably consistent, with about 58% of the population owning their home. Priority efforts include renovation of homes in need of repair and assembly of properties with vacant or abandoned homes into larger tracts for redevelopment. Key goals include smart growth concepts, to include higher residential density targets for main streets and areas in proximity to public transportation.

Pursuit of an aggressive infill housing effort for the Eastside begins with a process of identifying properties that are either vacant or currently improved with abandoned homes, along with other steps. This process can include:

- Aggressive code enforcement
- Identification of properties with clouded titles and other liens
- Identification of abandoned or nuisance properties
- Identification of areas where industrial and residential uses conflict, creating dedicated routes to keep larger trucks off of residential streets.
- Opportunities for site assembly, when possible.
- Identification of sites that combine proximity to public transportation with zoning that allows for higher density residential development.

One area where several city and county agencies have achieved success is in broadening the base of potential homeowners, with programs that provide down payment assistance. Importantly, before down payment assistance efforts can begin, there needs to be a focused effort to identify

problem properties and prepare them for redevelopment. One early challenge is to identify properties that have clouded titles, due typically to the presence of tax or other liens against the property. Cities such as Chicago have created special programs to identify these properties, demolish existing improvements (if abandoned), and then clean up title issues. The city then works with developers to build new housing on these sites. The City of San Antonio's Neighborhood Action Department has developed several programs to deal with these issues as well. Key programs include the Housing Asset Recovery program and a housing rehab program. The City also has a Housing Master Plan, which documents a host of current efforts to pursue affordable housing and related initiatives.

ERA concludes that residential revitalization must follow in step with infrastructure improvements, such as ones noted above. Assessments and stake holder interviews suggest that one partial reason why Springview has absorbed more slowly than predicted relates to people's continued negative perceptions of the Eastside. This reality is one reason why a focused marketing effort for the study area will become more important.

Commercial Real Estate Development

Community input strongly emphasized the limited supply and perceived poor quality of existing retail in the community, particularly with regard to grocery stores, as well as the limited array of restaurants and other retail and community services. Assessments noted opportunity for development of new retail space targeted for two areas:

- The intersection of Commerce Street and New Braunfels Avenue,
- The intersection of Commerce Street and Coca Cola Boulevard.

The Commerce Street and New Braunfels Avenue area has been targeted for a major road improvement, a roundabout that will open up new open space for parks and memorials. This improvement is expected to become a key focal point for the community, including new streetscape improvements. More importantly, this public investment will emphasize the public re-commitment to the Eastside, and could also be leveraged to encourage local retailers to renovate their properties, improving the appeal of this shopping district, particularly the HEB grocery store. ERA understands that the City's Neighborhood Action Department has been working with a shopping center located north of the HEB Grocery store to help them secure façade improvements as well.

The area around Commerce Street and Coca Cola Boulevard, adjacent to the SBC Arena includes several vacant or under-utilized commercial properties that would more readily lend themselves to commercial redevelopment. This area is proximate to the Springview subdivision, as well as other recent residential projects. As the residential density in this area expands, local residents will have a logical need for retail space and local services. There are a number of residential communities located north or east of the SBC Center who currently do not have convenient access to retail shopping areas, and need to leave the study area for shopping. This area represents a logical opportunity for retail development, following a town center style of development noted in the land use planning section.

In meetings with community members during the public involvement process, there were a number of comments about the lack of specific retail services and options available in the market. ERA considered community input, as well as a recent large-scale retail strategy for the Eastside completed by the University of Texas at San Antonio in 2000. From these sources, ERA noted strong interest in the following types of tenants:

- Pharmacy
- Cleaners
- Restaurants
- Movie rentals
- Banking and financial services
- Other services, to includes medical / dental, post office, and related services

Light Industrial Development

Land planning and public involvement efforts noted a consistent concern with conflicts between residential and industrial uses throughout the Eastside. Team experience clearly suggests that industrial development is more successful when it is packaged in a planned development with appropriate setbacks from residential areas, supported by more restrictive development restrictions and covenants which improve the image of the park, and planned to ensure that related truck traffic is diverted from residential areas. Potential tenants could include:

- Local companies who service the downtown hotel and convention industries. These companies would gain from a location close to downtown as well. Given San Antonio's relative strength as a convention destination, these service providers will need to be close to downtown.
- Opportunities to support Tier 1 or Tier 2 automotive parts suppliers, a share of which will likely move to San Antonio to support the new Toyota light truck production plant. The locational requirements of parts suppliers are driven by "just-in-time" manufacturing processes; this typically requires several core suppliers to located within very specific drive time distances from the final assembly plant.
- The community may want to avoid a distribution and warehousing park, with its associated truck traffic and generally lower wage positions.
- Potential opportunities to attract services associated with the military at Fort Sam Houston. While security requirements may limit the size of this market, opportunities may still exist.

The land use plan created by SWA Group highlights the development of a new defined park to support service businesses and light industrial users. A new, master planned light industrial / office park is proposed near I-10 at the intersection of Commerce Street and Houston Street. Because it will be sited at one of the major Eastside entries, strict design guidelines are recommended for its high-quality development.

The development approach will need to consider the following steps:

1. City planning officials will need to identify contiguous parcels in the defined target area that can be assembled for a business park project.
2. Current zoning will need to be confirmed, to ensure that proposed uses are allowable, and impacts on adjacent or proximate residential uses are mitigated with buffer zones.
3. Although the City of San Antonio has powers of eminent domain, which could be used to purchase vacant or abandoned properties, ERA understands that the enabling legislation for eminent domain in Texas has very specific public benefit requirements, which make its use more complicated. A development authority could have more capabilities to assemble property.
4. The condition of utility infrastructure will need to be evaluated to determine incremental costs to boost capacity, if necessary.

Financing Options

Assessments noted a number of funding programs that are available to assist in revitalization efforts for the Eastside neighborhood. The following discussion highlights several options that may have applicability.

COSA Incentive Programs

The City of San Antonio, through its various departments offers an impressive array of programs and incentives to assist the Arena District area. Financial-related programs include:

- Brownfield Economic Development Initiatives (BEDI)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA) Revolving Loan Fund
- Enterprise Zone Program Tax-Exempt Bond Financing
- Federal Empowerment Zone Tax Incentives Loan
- HUD-Enterprise Community Loan Program
- Industrial Development Bond (IDB)
- Inner-City Loan Program
- Section 108 Loan Guarantee
- Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Loan Program
- Small Business Administration (SBA) Microloan Program
- Tax Increment Financing and Reinvestment Zone

The city also can also influence development opportunities through regulation, covering:

- Flexible Zoning
- Land Use Patterns
- Special Districts

- Supplemental Use Regulations

A number of specific tax incentive programs are also available:

- Brownfield Tax Incentive
- Defense Economic Readjustment Zone Project Designation
- Enterprise Zone Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)
- Federal Empowerment Zone Section 179 Expensing
- Federal Empowerment Zone Tax Credits
- Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ)
- Freeport Exemption
- State Enterprise Zone Project Designation
- Tax Phase-In Program
- Tax Phase-In Program (Bexar County)
- Tax Relief for Historic Structures

The City offers a significant number of workforce development and business advocacy programs, including:

- Economic Development Briefing Team
- First Point Business Information Center
- Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone)
- Industry/Customized Workforce Training
- Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)
- Small Business Economic Development Advocacy Program (SBEDA)

Within the broad range of programs noted above, ERA focuses on the following specific opportunities:

Tax Increment Financing – The Eastside already benefits from a tax increment finance district (TIRZ), which covers about 950 acres mostly along the commercial corridors of the Eastside. Importantly, city officials indicate that a majority of the district’s near-term increment has been allocated for current projects. As well, the district does not include the majority of residential areas in the study area.

Property Tax Abatement – The ability to delay or reduce payments of property taxes from a commercial property. Importantly, while this mechanism is not allowed in San Antonio for retail projects, it can be used for industrial or business park developments.

New Markets Tax Credits – Created as part of the Community Renewal Tax Relief Act of 2000, the new markets tax credit allows urban communities to attract a new source of equity for commercial income producing projects. Run by the US Treasury, the tax credits can be used by certified community development organization to generate investment equity for use in low-income neighborhoods. The tax credits can be used in census tracts with median incomes that are below 80% of the MSA median income. Although this program is very new, and its benefits

for lower income neighborhoods have yet to be seen, it represents a key opportunity for the Eastside to consider.

Sales Tax Sharing – Municipalities are now working with developers to use the future sales tax proceeds generated by a new retail store to help facilitate development. While some municipalities have specific ordinances on their books, most structure deals on a case-by-case basis, with a development agreement that stipulates the shares of future tax revenues that are allocated back to the developer, and the share that is kept by the public sector. The agreements are based only on actual revenue collected. ERA also notes comments by city economic development officials, who indicated that current policy toward retail development would focus primarily on the provision of infrastructure, as opposed to more direct project subsidies, such as sales tax sharing.

4B Sales Taxes for Economic Development – City officials indicated that they have not yet established a 4B sales tax for economic development efforts. This would require an additional local sales tax to be assessed, and collected exclusively for economic development activities, including land assembly, infrastructure and related projects.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation – A private non-profit company that works to pool grant funding, loans, and equity from public and private resources for use by community development organizations. According to their 2001 annual report, LISC has facilitated the construction of over 121,000 homes and more than 18 million square feet of retail and commercial space. While this conduit is not currently active in San Antonio, their Houston office has facilitated the completion of several comparable projects.

State and Federal Program Options

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has numerous programs that have been applied to the local situation, including:

- **Empowerment Zone Status** – The Eastside neighborhood benefits from its location in an empowerment zone, which generates several relevant benefits including tax incentives.
- **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** - The CDBG program is one of the first tools cities utilize when trying to revitalize distressed communities. HUD awards CDBG funds directly to metropolitan cities and urban counties (entitlement communities), or to States for distribution to non-entitlement communities. Any activity undertaken using CDBG funds must meet one of the program's three national objectives:
 1. Benefit low and moderate income persons
 2. Prevent or eliminate slums or blight
 3. Address conditions that present a serious and immediate threat to the health and safety of the community

- Section 108 Loans – Uses CDBG funds to create a larger potential pool of lending capacity for revitalization projects. Uses include purchases of real estate, site improvements, covering debt service reserves, infrastructure improvements
- Economic Development Initiative (EDI) Grants - Provide grants to local governments to enhance the security of HUD Section 108 loans, and or offset development costs, boosting the feasibility of urban revitalization projects. The new grocery store being built at 6th Avenue and University Avenue made use of an EDI grant.

HUD also offers a range of affordable housing financing options. As the availability of affordable housing has become a more significant concern, federal, state, and local agencies, along with non-profit and for-profit groups, have developed a variety of programs to help facilitate the development of affordable housing. Importantly, the application of these programs will vary from project to project, based on the income levels of targeted resident markets, specific development costs associated with each project, and the number of competing projects. ERA's initial research noted a host of potential programs, including:

- Low income housing tax credits
- Mortgage insurance, credit enhancement, and/or risk sharing programs
- Tax exempt bonding capacity
- HUD HOME program funding
- Federal and state historic tax credits
- HUD offers numerous programs, some of which include HUD Section 202 supportive housing for the elderly, and HUD Section 221(d)(3) and section 221(d)(4) mortgage insurance for rental and cooperative housing.

ERA stresses that the above programs, including tax credits and related loan risk sharing, have specific affordable income standards that must be met. Residential tax credit programs in particular require that 20% of units must be set aside for households earning at or below 50% of area median income; alternatively a minimum of 40% of units must be set aside for households earning at or below 60% of area median income. Other options, including tax-exempt bond financing, have similar income standards. There are circumstances where more flexible rules may apply. Importantly, the use of these programs requires that the income restrictions remain in effect for the length of the loan or agreement (up to 40 years potentially) to ensure “affordability”. ERA also understands that state level programs are increasingly looking at projects that provide a mix of market rate and affordable housing units.

Other Options - Brownfields Redevelopment Funding

These options may be appropriate for development of the business park, or reuse of the Aztec Ceramics site.

State of Texas Programs

The State of Texas offers state property tax incentives for Brownfields Redevelopment. Some local governments can now offer additional ad valorem property tax abatements to attract

brownfield cleanup and redevelopment. The 75th Texas Legislative Session added Section 312.211 to the Texas Tax Code, allowing municipal or county taxing authorities to provide property tax relief for the development or redevelopment of certain brownfield properties that are located within a reinvestment zone and have been cleaned up through the TNRCC Voluntary Cleanup Program. To be eligible, the property must:

- Be located in defined reinvestment zones created under the Texas Tax Code;
- Not be in an improvement project financed by tax increment bonds;
- Have received a Voluntary Cleanup Certificate of Completion from the TNRCC; and
- Have had the value adversely affected by the release of a hazardous substance or contaminants according to the two preceding appraisals by the appraisal office.

The governing body must enter into a tax abatement agreement with the owner of the brownfield property. The governing body is allowed to exempt from taxation:

- Not more than 100% of the value of the property in the first year covered by the agreement;
- Not more than 75% of the value of the property in the second year covered by the agreement;
- Not more than 50% of the value of the property in the third year covered by the agreement;
- Not more than 25% of the value of the property in the fourth year covered by the agreement.

Through its relationship with the Environmental Protection Agency, the TNRCC is able to provide technical advice, education, and project partnering (including partnering with other federal and state agencies) for some brownfields redevelopment projects owned by local governments, or where the local government is playing a key role in the redevelopment. Other tools that may be available in the future to help pay for investigations and cleanups include the Brownfield Site Assessments and revolving loan funds/grants.

The Environmental Protection Agency runs other brownfields financing programs. These programs include:

National Brownfields Pilot Award Program

This program has provided funding to 399 states, cities, towns, counties, and tribes for Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots. The pilots, each funded at up to \$200,000 over two years, will test redevelopment models, direct special efforts toward removing regulatory barriers without sacrificing protectiveness, and facilitate coordinated site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment efforts at the federal, state, and local levels.

Financial and Technical Assistance by Designation as a National Brownfields Showcase City

The Brownfields National Partnership Action Agenda calls for the selection of 16 showcase communities across the country to demonstrate that through cooperation, federal, state, local, and private efforts can be concentrated around brownfields to produce environmental cleanup, stimulate economic development, and revitalize communities. An additional 12 pilots were added in October of 2001, for a total of 28.

Special Targeted Site Assessment Assistance to Cities

Through the use of existing federal Superfund assessment and investigation funds, EPA Region 6 offers site assessment and technical assistance services for local governments and non-profits.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Programs

Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) grants enhance the security or improve the viability of a project financed with new Section 108 guaranteed loan authority. Section 108 is the loan guarantee provision of the CDBG program. Section 108 provides communities with a source of financing for economic development, housing rehabilitation, public facilities and large-scale physical development projects. BEDI funds may be used for any eligible activities under the Section 108 Loan Guarantee program.

HUD intends BEDI and Section 108 funds to finance projects and activities that will provide near-term results and demonstrable economic benefits, such as job creation and increases in the local tax base. BEDI funds can support a wide variety of activities. For example, a local government may use BEDI fund to address site remediation costs, or a local government may use a combination of Section 108 and BEDI funds to acquire a brownfield property and convey the site to a private sector party at a discounted price from its purchase price. The redevelopment focus for BEDI-assisted projects is prompted by the need to provide additional security for the Section 108 loan guarantee beyond the pledge of CDBG funds. HUD encourages local communities to integrate projects proposed for assistance under HUD's BEDI and Section 108 program with other federal, state and local brownfields redevelopment efforts.

Community Indicators

The Action Committee can track the success of the Plan by monitoring several indicators including:

- Increase in number of residential building permits for infill projects, and the value of renovations completed on an annual basis
- Growth in the residential tax base for the study area, on an annual basis
- New jobs created in the study area
- Change in retail sales taxes generated by the neighborhood

In addition to the above, there are several key interim steps that will need to occur

- Form an Action Committee to maintain and build interest in Eastside revitalization
- Gaining approval and adoption of the Arena District / Eastside Revitalization Strategy and re-zoning effort from city council
- Initiate efforts to secure federal and state dollars to leverage local investment for transportation improvements
- Work with Bexar County and the Spurs to evaluate implications of taxes on event parking and / or event attendance, and use this revenue to pursue further transportation improvements.

Appendix 1 – Retail Financial Model

To assist our client in making the best decisions possible regarding potential retail development around the SBC Center, ERA considered a scenario of 60,000 square feet of new retail space developed in the study area. This section analyzes development costs, operating costs and operating revenue from a developer's perspective. The model assumes that a developer will build the retail center and hold it for a 10-year period, selling it in the 11th year. Year zero is considered to be the construction and lease-up period. The model considers the up-front developer equity required, as well as annual offsetting cash flows after debt service, and a residual value to the developer after the property is sold in the 11th year. This approach, known as a discounted cash flow (or residual) analysis, allows ERA to estimate the amount of subsidy that may be required to make the project meet developer expectations for return on equity.

Initial Assumptions

- 60,000 square feet of gross leasable area, configured as a neighborhood retail shopping center.
- 63,000 square feet of gross building area, assuming that an efficient building is built with a 5% core factor.
- Total construction costs (hard, soft, and land acquisition) of \$75 per square foot, with a total construction cost of about \$4.7 million. This estimate does not include any unusual costs for storm water management. Tenants are assumed to absorb the majority of build-out costs for their spaces. Only modest land acquisition costs are assumed; if land assembly is required, the development timing and cost will both likely expand.
- Triple-net lease rates starting at about \$8.50 per square foot, and reimbursement income from tenants of about \$1.40 per square foot in year 1.
- Total year 1 operating costs of about \$2.80 per square foot, including reimbursable expenses.
- Revenues and operating costs inflate at 3% per year.
- An 80 / 20 debt to equity split, with a 20-year loan term, and a 9% interest rate that compounds monthly.
- Calculation of the residual value of the retail center is based on a terminal capitalization rate of 10%, applied to year 11 NOI before debt, less costs of sale (2%) and the remaining principal balance on the loan. The model includes a 20-year amortization table to allow for calculation of this remaining principal balance.
- The model assumes that a developer's minimum internal rate of return (IRR) for this project would be 16%, with a minimum loan to value ratio of 1.2.

This theoretical development financial highlights several factors that will need to be considered if a new 60,000-square-foot retail center is to be built in the Eastside. These include the reality that the analysis has not been conducted with a specific site in mind. As such, costs for land acquisition and assembly, as well as site preparation, possible building demolition and storm water management could change significantly. ERA also notes that costs for building construction and tenant improvements are estimates, which could change as well. The financial model is attached to this report as Appendix 1.

- Within these reasonable limitations, the analysis suggests that a developer may need to benefit from subsidy to make the project's returns acceptable. The analysis indicates an internal rate of return (IRR) to the developer of 13%, which would be slightly lower than the threshold likely required by a private developer (about 16%). Perhaps more importantly, the project would not appear to meet a key financial requirement, the debt coverage ratio, which compares annual debt service costs to annual NOI before debt. Most lenders require a minimum ratio of 1.2; the initial year financial returns point to a ratio of 0.98, which would not be adequate for traditional financing.

Gross Building Area	63,000
Gross Leasable Area	60,000

Reversion Calculation	
Year11 NOI	\$537,258
Terminal Capitalization Rate	10.0%
Value	\$5,372,584
Less: cost of sale (2%)	\$107,452
Outstanding Debt-end of 10th year	\$2,684,779
Residual Value to Developer	\$2,580,353

Construction / Loan Estimate	
Total Cost (Hard, Soft, and Land Costs)	\$75.00
Less: Public Investment Commitment	\$0.00
Total Cost	\$4,725,000
Private Equity	20%
Public Equity (subsidy)	0%
Debt Requirement	80%
Loan Amount	\$3,780,000
Loan Term (Years)	20
Total Payments	240
Private Interest Rate	9.0%
Benefit of Public Financing	0.0%
Effective Interest Rate	9.0%
Montly Payment	\$34,009.64
Annual Payment	\$408,115.69

Year	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Income												
Lease Income		\$525,300	\$541,059	\$557,291	\$574,009	\$591,230	\$608,967	\$627,236	\$646,053	\$665,434	\$685,397	
Common Area Maintenance		\$30,900	\$31,827	\$32,782	\$33,765	\$34,778	\$35,822	\$36,896	\$38,003	\$39,143	\$40,317	
Property Tax & insurance Reimbursement		\$53,303	\$54,902	\$56,549	\$58,245	\$59,992	\$61,792	\$63,646	\$65,555	\$67,522	\$69,548	
Total Gross Income		\$609,503	\$627,788	\$646,621	\$666,020	\$686,000	\$706,580	\$727,778	\$749,611	\$772,100	\$795,263	
<i>Less: Vacancy Credit Loss</i>		\$42,665	\$43,945	\$45,263	\$46,621	\$48,020	\$49,461	\$50,944	\$52,473	\$54,047	\$55,668	
Effective Gross Income		\$566,837	\$583,842	\$601,358	\$619,398	\$637,980	\$657,120	\$676,833	\$697,138	\$718,053	\$739,594	
Operating Expenses												
Maintenance		\$48,760	\$50,223	\$51,730	\$53,282	\$54,880	\$56,526	\$58,222	\$59,969	\$61,768	\$63,621	
Taxes and Insurance		\$71,070	\$73,202	\$75,398	\$77,660	\$79,990	\$82,390	\$84,861	\$87,407	\$90,029	\$92,730	
General and Admin		\$42,665	\$43,945	\$45,263	\$46,621	\$48,020	\$49,461	\$50,944	\$52,473	\$54,047	\$55,668	
Advertising		\$4,571	\$4,708	\$4,850	\$4,995	\$5,145	\$5,299	\$5,458	\$5,622	\$5,791	\$5,964	
Total Operating Expenses		\$167,067	\$172,079	\$177,241	\$182,558	\$188,035	\$193,676	\$199,486	\$205,471	\$211,635	\$217,984	
NOI Before Debt Service		\$399,771	\$411,764	\$424,117	\$436,840	\$449,945	\$463,444	\$477,347	\$491,668	\$506,418	\$521,610	
Debt Service Requirement		\$408,116	\$408,116	\$408,116	\$408,116	\$408,116	\$408,116	\$408,116	\$408,116	\$408,116	\$408,116	
Pre-Tax Cash Flow		-\$8,345	\$3,648	\$16,001	\$28,725	\$41,830	\$55,328	\$69,231	\$83,552	\$98,302	\$113,494	
Private Equity Commitment		-\$945,000										
Public Equity Commitment		\$0										
Net Property Reversion											\$2,580,353	
Cash Flow for Developer IRR		-\$945,000	-\$8,345	\$3,648	\$16,001	\$28,725	\$41,830	\$55,328	\$69,231	\$83,552	\$98,302	\$2,693,848
Cash Flow for Project IRR		-\$945,000	-\$8,345	\$3,648	\$16,001	\$28,725	\$41,830	\$55,328	\$69,231	\$83,552	\$98,302	\$2,693,848
10-Year Developer IRR		13%										
10-Year Overall Project IRR		13%										
Annual Debt Coverage Ratio		0.98	1.01	1.04	1.07	1.10	1.14	1.17	1.20	1.24	1.28	
Annual ROE		-0.9%	0.4%	1.7%	3.0%	4.4%	5.9%	7.3%	8.8%	10.4%	12.0%	

Appendix 2 – Land Use / Zoning Matrix

The following comparison is meant to be a guide, not an exact breakdown, which cross-references Future Land Use Plan categories with comparable uses permitted in certain Zoning Districts as defined in the Unified Development Code. A Future Land Use Plan does not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries. Rather, it is a plan for the long-range development of a municipality used to coordinate and guide the establishment of development regulations (*Local Government Code*, Chapter 219.001-005).

Zoning Matrix

Land Use Plan Category	Recommended Zoning District	Sample Allowable Uses
Medium Density Residential	R-3, Residential Single Family R-4, Residential Single Family R-5, Residential Single Family R-6, Residential Single Family RM-4, Mixed Residential RM-5, Mixed Residential RM-6, Mixed Residential	Single family homes, accessory dwellings, duplexes, three and four family dwellings, cottage homes and townhomes
High Density Residential	MF-25, Multifamily MF-33, Multifamily MF-40, Multifamily MF-50, Multifamily (and less intense residential zoning districts)	Single family homes, accessory dwellings, duplexes, three and four family dwellings, townhomes, apartments and condominiums
Neighborhood Commercial	NC, Neighborhood Commercial C-1, Commercial	Small gasoline service stations, food stores, small neighborhood shopping centers, restaurants, medical clinics, day care centers, bed and breakfasts, office or bank buildings (stand alone), social assistance services, live/work units, businesses without drive throughs, no outdoor storage or display of goods except for outdoor dining
General Commercial Retail/Commercial/Office	NC, Neighborhood Commercial C-1, Commercial C-2, Commercial O-1, Office District	Car washes, minor automobile repair and service, amusement establishments, theaters, arcades, fitness centers, plant nurseries, paint and wall paper stores, gasoline stations with repair service, fix-it shops, community shopping centers, small motels; low to mid rise office buildings; no outdoor storage or display of goods except for outdoor dining
Regional Commercial	NC, Neighborhood Commercial C-1, Commercial C-2, Commercial C-3, Commercial O-1, Office District O-2, Office District	Automobile sales, major automobile repair, mini-warehouses, wholesale, “big box” retailers, large commercial centers, malls, large home improvement centers, large hotels and motels, major employment centers, low to high rise office buildings that promote mixed uses; outdoor operations and display permitted in areas which are screened; no outdoor storage is permitted

Land Use Plan Category	Recommended Zoning District	Sample Allowable Uses
Mixed Use	MXD, Mixed Use District TOD, Transit Oriented Development District NC, Neighborhood Commercial C-1, Commercial C-2, Commercial O-1, Office District O-2, Office District RM-4, Mixed Residential RM-5, Mixed Residential RM-6, Mixed Residential MF-25, Multifamily MF-33, Multifamily MF-40, Multifamily MF-50, Multifamily	Mix of uses within same building or development, transit supported mixed use development, Town Centers, low to high rise office buildings that promote mixed uses
Light Industrial	L, Light Industrial C-3, Commercial O-1, Office District O-2, Office District	Cabinet shops, lumber yards, machine shops, sign manufacturers, auto paint and body shops, warehousing; proper screening and buffering required.
Heavy Industrial	I-1, General Industrial I-2, Heavy Industrial	Manufacturing, processing, and fabricating businesses; truck stops; carting, crating, haulage and storage; cold storage plant; grocery wholesale; proper screening and buffering required.

Land Use Classifications

Classification	Description
<p>LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL</p> <p>(single family, duplexes and accessory dwellings on lots of 8,000 sq. ft. or greater)</p>	<p>Low Density Residential supports the principles of concentrating urban growth, reinforcing existing neighborhoods, and supporting residential growth within walking distance of neighborhood commercial centers and schools. This development should be oriented toward the center of the neighborhoods and away from traffic arterials. Low Density Residential areas are composed mainly of single-family dwellings on individual lots. This classification describes established residential neighborhoods of low to medium density, and supports compatible in-fill development. Duplexes and accessory dwellings (carriage houses, granny flats, etc.) are allowed on lots of 8,000 square feet or greater. All off-street parking and vehicle use areas adjacent to residential uses require buffer landscaping, and lighting and signage controls. Certain non-residential activities, such as schools, places of worship and parks, are appropriate within these areas and should be centrally located to provide easy accessibility.</p>
<p>MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL</p> <p>(single family, accessory dwellings, cottage houses, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes)</p>	<p>Medium Density Residential includes small lot single-family development, accessory dwellings, duplexes, cottage houses, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhomes. Exhibiting a medium density, this category provides for a diversity of residential development while still maintaining an overall urban residential character. Typically, Low Density Residential uses are found within this classification, and should be located in the center of the neighborhood, with Medium Density Residential being located at the edges of the neighborhood.</p>
<p>HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL</p> <p>(single family, accessory dwellings, cottage houses, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, apartments, condominiums)</p>	<p>High Density Residential provides for compact development consisting of the full spectrum of residential unit types, and includes apartments and condominiums. All residential uses can be found within this classification. High Density Residential is typically located along or in the vicinity of major arterials or collectors, often in close proximity to commercial and transportation facilities. This classification may be used as a transition between Low Density Residential or Medium Density Residential uses and non-residential uses. Appropriate buffering should be required between High Density Residential uses and other residential uses. High Density Residential uses should be located in a manner that does not route traffic through other residential uses, often in close proximity to commercial and transportation facilities.</p>
<p>NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL</p>	<p>Neighborhood Commercial provides small areas for offices, professional services, service and shop front retail uses that can be served by pedestrian access. Neighborhood Commercial should have a service area radius of approximately a half-mile, and should serve a population of approximately 2,000 to 5,000 people. It permits a limited group of commercial uses that serve the neighborhood while protecting the abutting residential areas. Neighborhood Commercial should be located at the intersection of a collector and arterial street or where an existing commercial area has been established. Service yards located in the rear or side yard of the business use are screened from adjacent residential areas, and refuse enclosures are located at the rear of the site and screened. Buffer yards provide a landscaped separation between residential and commercial uses. Additionally all off-street parking and vehicle use areas adjacent to residential uses require buffer landscaping, and lighting and signage controls. No drive-through establishments are permissible. Live/work units, allowing for residential use above commercial space, are permitted. Examples of Neighborhood Commercial services are small gasoline service stations and convenience/food stores, restaurants, neighborhood shopping centers, medical clinics, day care centers, bed and breakfasts, rooming houses, social assistance services, and office or bank buildings (stand alone).</p>

Classification	Description
<p align="center">COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL</p>	<p>Community Commercial development includes medium to high-density land uses that draws its customer base from a larger community. This classification can include a mix of uses in the same building or in the same development. Community Commercial uses are typically located at nodes on arterials at major intersections, or in established commercial areas along arterials. Community Commercial uses should incorporate well-defined and accessible entrances, shared internal circulation, limited curb cuts to arterial streets, sidewalks and shade trees in parking lots, and landscaping on planter strips between the parking lot and street. To discourage large areas devoted to parking lots, shared parking facilities and pervious pavement are encouraged. Where possible, revitalized or redeveloped community commercial centers should be designed to create safe, attractive and convenient vehicular and pedestrian linkages with adjoining land uses. Examples of Community Commercial uses include all Neighborhood Commercial uses, car washes, minor automobile repair and service, amusement establishments such as theaters, arcades and fitness centers, plant nurseries, exterminators, printers, sign shops, paint and wall paper stores, linen supply/diaper service, gasoline stations with repair service, fix-it shops, community shopping centers and small motels.</p>
<p align="center">REGIONAL COMMERCIAL</p>	<p>Regional Commercial development includes high-density land uses that draw its customer base from a larger region. Regional Commercial uses are typically located at intersection nodes along major arterial highways and expressways, or along rapid transit system transfer nodes. These commercial nodes are typically 20 acres or greater in area. Regional Commercial uses should incorporate well-defined entrances, shared internal circulation, limited curb cuts to arterial streets, sidewalks and shade trees in parking lots, and landscaping on planter strips between the parking lot and street. Where it is possible, revitalized or redeveloped centers should be designed to create safe, attractive and convenient vehicular and pedestrian linkages with adjoining land uses. Pad sites between the primary use and the street frontage may be incorporated into the site design. Regional Commercial includes automobile sales, major automobile repair, mini-warehouses, wholesale, “big box” retailers, large commercial centers, malls, large home improvement centers, large hotels and motels, major employment centers, and mid to high rise office buildings.</p>
<p align="center">MIXED USE (Mixed Residential/ Office/ Commercial or Town Center Development with Mixed Uses)</p>	<p>Mixed Use provides for a concentrated blend of residential, retail, service, office, entertainment, leisure, and other related uses at increased densities to create a pedestrian-oriented environment where people can enjoy a wide range of fulfilling experiences in one place. Nodal development is preferred around a transit stop, where the density would decrease towards the edge of the node. Mixed Use should be located at the intersection of a collector and arterial street, two arterial streets, or where an existing commercial area has been established. Mixed Use incorporates high quality architecture and urban design features such as attractive streetscapes, parks/plazas, and outdoor cafes. Mixed use evolves from surface parking for cars to a multi-modal transportation system relying on transit, centralized parking, pedestrian linkages, and an option for light rail transit service. Buffer yards provide a landscaped separation between residential and commercial uses, and for all off-street parking areas and vehicle uses areas. Mixed Uses include those in the Commercial and Residential categories and including low, mid and high-rise office buildings and hotels. This classification allows for a mix of uses in the same building or in the same development such as small offices (dentists, insurance professionals, non-profits, etc.), small storefront retail establishment (coffee shops, cafes, shoe repair shops, gift shops, antique stores, specialty retail shops, hair salons, day care, drug stores, etc.) and residential uses (live/work units, small apartment buildings, townhomes, etc.) A Mixed Use Town Center provides a central civic function with mixed uses incorporated into the peripheral development. A special district should be implemented to provide design standards for Mixed Use development.</p>

Classification	Description
<p>LIGHT INDUSTRIAL</p>	<p>This classification includes a mix of light manufacturing uses, office park, and limited retail and service uses that service the industrial uses with the proper screening and buffering, all compatible with adjoining uses. High quality development is desired. Outside storage is not permitted (must be under roof and screened). Examples of light industrial uses are cabinet shops, can recycle collection stations, lumber yards, machine shops, rug cleaning, clothing manufacturers, sign manufacturers, auto paint and body shops, and warehousing.</p>
<p>HEAVY INDUSTRIAL</p>	<p>This classification includes a mix of heavy manufacturing, processing, and fabricating businesses; truck stops; carting, crating, haulage and storage; cold storage plant; grocery wholesale; proper screening and buffering required. The uses can create a great amount of traffic and noise. This use is not compatible with residential adjacencies and should be separated from residential uses by either an intermediate land use or a significant buffer.</p>
<p>PUBLIC/ INSTITUTIONAL</p>	<p>Public/Institutional areas provide for public, quasi-public, utility company and institutional uses. Examples of this classification are public buildings and facilities (government, post offices, libraries, social services, police and fire stations), public and parochial schools, religious facilities, museums, zoological parks, fraternal and service organizations, utilities, hospitals, nursing care facilities, airports and other major transportation facilities.</p>
<p>PARKS/ OPEN SPACE</p>	<p>Parks/Open Space, which includes both public and private lands, should preserve neighborhoods and promote economic vitality by providing high quality opportunities to enhance overall attractiveness and livability, maintain property values, improve the health and wellness of the city's residents, encourage natural resource protection, and promote tourism opportunities. Recreational lands and open spaces should maximize use by surrounding residents and, where possible be located adjacent to proposed school sites, ensure optimum management and conservation of natural waterways, flood plains, and open space areas of unique environmental or historical value, and provide for noise control or visual buffer zones along road and highway rights-of-way using urban forest areas. Examples of this classification are lands that are available for active use (golf courses, playgrounds, and athletic fields), passive enjoyment (trails, plazas, and courtyards), natural areas and reserves, greenway linkages or parkways, greenbelts, urban forests, wetlands, drainages, and utility easements.</p>

Appendix 3 – Capital Improvement Plan

Key	Projects and Limits	Improvements	Project Costs	Project Status	Department/ Agency
1	Lorenzo D. Lott, 143 Prelude/City wide	Rehabilitation of rental unit-prop. Will undertake extensive repairs	\$40,000	Pending bid Proposals	Neighborhood Action Department
2	New Light Village-Commerce St. commercial corridor from Union Pacific RR tracks to Salado Creek including Spriggdale and Coca Cola	Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization	\$225,000 over three years	In 1 year	Neighborhood Action Department
3	East Town @ Commerce-Commerce St. commercial corridor from Southern Pacific RR tracks east to Gevers.	Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization	\$225,000 over three years	In 2 nd year	Neighborhood Action Department
4	Historic E. Houston-Houston St. Commercial corridor IH 37 to New Braunfels Ave.	Neighborhood commercial Revitalization	\$225,000 over three years	In 1 st year	Neighborhood Action Department
5	Dawson Community Center Structural Repairs (2500 E. Commerce)	Structural and general repairs to the center, multi-purpose room and gymnasium; including ADA modifications	\$419,475	Under construction	Parks and Recreation Department
6	Carver Center Renovation	Major Bldg. Improvements	\$4,000,000	Underway	Department of Community Initiatives
7	Carver Academy	Preschool-8 th grade	\$5,000,000+	Underway	Department of Community Initiatives
8	CSVPA (temporary loc.)	Arts education	\$21,000	Completed	Department of Community Initiatives
9	CSVPA (Roeglein Bldg.)	Arts education	\$1,800,000	Capital	Department of Community Initiatives
10	E. Commerce St. NCR	Revitalization of E. Commerce	\$100,000	Underway	Department of Community Initiatives
11	E. Houston St. NCR	Revitalization of E. Houston	\$100,000	Underway	Department of Community Initiatives
12	Cameron E.S.-3635 Belgium Dr.	Wing Addition and P.E. Facility	\$2,222,161	Completion phase	S.A.I.S.D
13	Miller E.S.-207 Lincolnshire	Wing Addition and P.E. Facility	\$5,400,000	Under construction	S.A.I.S.D
14	Pfeiffer E.S.-4551 Dietrich	Wing Addition and P.E. Facility	\$2,900,004	Under construction	S.A.I.S.D
15	Smith E.S.-823 S. Gevers	Wing Addition and P.E. Facility	\$5,171,636	Under construction	S.A.I.S.D
16	Tynan E.S.-925 Gulf St.	Wing Addition and P.E. Facility	\$3,004,626	Under construction	S.A.I.S.D
17	Washington E.S.	Wing Addition and P.E. Facility	\$5,733,475	Under construction	S.A.I.S.D
18	Wheatley M.S.-415 Gabriel	New School	\$14,408,040	Under construction	S.A.I.S.D
19	IH 410, from Salado Creek to 0.321 KM N. of FM 1346	Planning, seal coat & asphalt Overlay	\$2,674,364	FY 2001	Texas Department of Transportation
20	IH 10, on IH 10 east at Houston St.	Reconfiguring existing Interchange & landscaping	\$2,000,000	FY 2001	Texas Department of Transportation
21	IH 35, at Coliseum Rd. at Houston St.	Landscaping development	\$150,000	FY 2001	Texas Department of Transportation
22	City St., in San Antonio on Coliseum Rd. from east Houston St. to Gemblar Rd	Add 7600 LF. Of 6 ft. sidewalk	\$168,000	FY 2002	Texas Department of Transportation
23	City St., in San Antonio on Coliseum Rd. from Belgium Rd. to IH 35	Widen narrow pavement for right turn lanes	\$493,706	FY 2002	Texas Department of Transportation

Key	Projects and Limits	Improvements	Project Costs	Project Status	Department/ Agency
24	City St., in San Antonio on E. Houston St. from N. Braunfels to Onslow	Rehab. & widen narrow pavement W/CL TL (drainage & sidewalks)	\$4,061,000	FY 2002	Texas Department of Transportation
25	City St., in San Antonio on East Houston St. from Onslow St. to Salado	Rehab. & widen narrow pavement W/CL TL (drainage & sidewalks)	\$3,023,700	FY 2002	Texas Department of Transportation
26	City St., in San Antonio on Coliseum Rd and Houston St.	Install Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) and Signals	\$480,000	FY 2002	Texas Department of Transportation
27	IH 35, SB main lanes at Coliseum Rd. To Rigsby Ave	Rehab. Bridge and Approaches	\$40,000	FY 2002	Texas Department of Transportation
28	LP 13, Seale Rd. to IH 10	Widen existing to provide Continuous Left Turn Lane	\$1,512,000	FY 2002	Texas Department of Transportation
29	City St., Commanche Park (US 87) to Willow Springs Golf Course St.)	Construct hike and bike trails along Salado Creek	\$3,000,000	FY 2003	Texas Department of Transportation
30	Spring View Apts. Revitalization Bounded by S. Grimes-W, Commerce-N, MLK-S. and UP Tracks on E.	Ren. of Our Lady of Charity Convent, single family home, & Senior housing	\$48,000,000	Phase 1-2001 Phase 2-2002	Housing Authority of the City of San Antonio
30	Houston-Bowe to Pine (MPO)	Reconstruction of Houston St. from Bowie to Pine at the existing 4 lanes (1.14 miles), includes curbs, 4' sidewalks at curbs and driveway approaches and necessary drainage	\$1,786,403 estimated	Under advertisement estimated start date-04/01	Department of Public Works
31	Houston-Pine to Onslow	Reconstruct existing 2 lane roadway to 2 lanes with a reversible center turn lane, curbs, 6' sidewalks at the curb and drainage	\$2,767,239 estimated	Estimated start date-10/01	Department of Public Works
32	Salado Creek Greenway (hike & bike)	Construct hike and bike trail from Willow Springs Golf Course to Comanche	\$2,500,000 estimated	Estimated Advertise Date-01/02	Department of Public Works
33	Aransas: Meerscheidt to Waters	Reconstruct Aransas from Meerscheidt to Waters to a roadway width of 30' concrete curbs, sidewalks and driveways, including surface improvements. Project length: 1055'	\$310,303	Under design	Public Works
34	Aurelia-M.L. King to Yucca Ph II	Reconstruction of Lincolnshire to a 30' width from Aurelia to Amanda. Including curbs, sidewalks, driveway approaches and storm sewer systems, replacement of water and sewer mains as necessary. project length: 615'	\$257,647	Under design	Public Works
35	Belgium: Picarde to Coliseum	Street reconstruction to 36' width to include curbs, sidewalks, driveway approaches and provide a storm sewer system. Project length: 4190'	\$1,702,566	Under design	Public Works
36	Cardiff-Aransas to dead end	Reconstruct to 30' width to include curbs, sidewalks, driveway approaches and necessary drainage, replacement of water and sewer mains as needed.	\$893,650	Under design	Public Works
37	Honey St: Commerce to Aransas, Phase I	Honey St from Edna to Aransas to a 30' pavement section W/concrete curbs, sidewalks, wheelchair ramps & driveway approaches, surface runoff improvements. Project Length: (785 ft)	\$208,000	Under design	Public Works
38	Honey St: Commerce to Aransas, Phase II	Reconstruct Honey from Commerce to Edna to a 30' pavement section w/concrete cubs, sidewalks, wheelchair ramps and driveways, Including improvements to surface Runoff. Project length: 800 ft.	\$200,000	Under design	Public Works

Map Key	Projects and Limits	Improvements	Project Costs	Project Status	Department /Agency
39	Houston: New Braunfels to Onslow	Reconstruct existing 2 lane roadway to 2 lanes with a reversible center turn lane (38'), curbs, 6' sidewalks at the curb and drainage . (5,966ft)	\$3,805,000	Under design	Public Works
40	Kono: Gembler to Belgium	Reconstruct Kono from Gembler to Belgium to a roadway width of 27', W/concrete curbs, sidewalks, and driveway approaches. Including improvements to surface runoff. Project length: 1,365 ft	\$737,030	Under design	Public Works
41	Potomac/Paso Hondo Streets	Reconstruct Potomac St to a 30' width from Walters to Mittman & Paso Hondo from New Braunfels to Walters to include curbs, sidewalks, driveway approaches and necessary drainage.	\$438,650	Under design	Public Works
42	Robeson-Yucca to Martin Luther King	Reconstruct Robeson to a 30' width to include curbs, sidewalks, driveway approaches & necessary drainage. Also replacement of water and sewer mains as needed. Project length: 1,405 ft	\$197,385	Under design	Public Works
43	Pershing Creek	Provide storm drain pipes and box Culvert outfall to Salado Creek	\$8,344,655	Proposed, not Currently funded	Public Works
44	Springfield Extension	Reconstruct street and provide Outfall pipes.	\$10,540,000	Proposed, not Currently funded	Public Works
45	Coca Cola Dr.-E. Houston to E. Commerce	Provide outfall drain to relieve street and building flooding	\$6,200,000	Proposed, not Currently funded	Public Works
46	Emil Rd.-W.W. White to IH 10	Provide storm drain outfall	\$2,128,750	Proposed, not Currently funded	Public Works
47	Mengor Creek-Cisco Blvd. & area Streets	Reconstruct channel and provide street drainage	\$6,200,000	Proposed, not Currently funded	Public Works
48	Creekview, west of Currency Low water crossing at Pershing Creek		\$0	Proposed, not Currently funded	Public Works
49	King Krest, east of Longleaf Low water crossing at Salado Creek			Proposed, not Currently funded	Public Works
Total			\$151,127,348.00		

Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan

East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan

Final Executive Summary



April 2003

Prepared for:
**San Antonio-Bexar County
Metropolitan Planning
Organization**



Prepared by:
PARSONS

In association with:



East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan was initiated in 2002 in conjunction with a separate Arena District Community Redevelopment planning study at the request of the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, the San Antonio Spurs and the Community Economic Revitalization Agency (CERA) to seek long-term land use and transportation improvement opportunities within the east side of San Antonio. The primary purpose of both plans was to create a future development plan and revitalization strategy for the neighborhoods surrounding the SBC Center and stretching from downtown to IH 410.

The San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) sponsored the transportation element of these studies. This element consisted of a detailed conceptual evaluation of various transportation alternatives that would support the long-term land use changes proposed within the study area and that can result in positive physical improvements to major roadways within the area. Although the nature of many of the improvements evaluated is long-term and creates specific economic benefits to the community (as opposed strictly to improved traffic operations), several transportation options desired by the community to improve immediate infrastructure and transit service needs were also evaluated by this transportation study.

Establishment of Project Goals

The Consultant Team and the Oversight Committee initiated this study effort by defining the goals and objectives of the project. These goals and objectives were refined during several Committee meetings and at the first public meeting. The subsequent determination of a long list of transportation alternatives and how they addressed these goals and objectives was a critical aspect of this study.

Goal 1 - Encourage Economic Revitalization Through Transportation: *Develop all transportation plan components with the idea that economic revitalization of east San Antonio can benefit from proper implementation of new urbanism concepts.*

Goal 2 - Enhance Downtown – SBC Center Connectivity: *Improve corridor mobility, especially between the SBC Center/Freeman Coliseum and downtown San Antonio.*

Goal 3 - Protect the Natural Environment: *Provide a transportation system that has minimal impact on the natural environment.*

Goal 4 - Emphasize Positive Social and Economic Effects: *Provide a transportation system that has a positive impact on the social and economic environment.*

Goal 5 - Enhance Rail/Truck interfaces within the Study Area: *Provide a transportation system that accommodates trucks and their interface with the many existing railroad tracks within the study area.*

Goal 6 - Provide a Balanced and Coordinated Transportation System: *Provide a transportation system that is balanced and coordinated with regional and local needs.*

Goal 7 - Develop Non-Motorized Transportation Solutions: *Support and expand upon existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the study area.*

Goal 8 - Ensure Public Support for all Improvements Recommended: *Involve the public as an active participant in all aspects of the study.*

East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan

Goal 9 - Maintain Communications with the Study Oversight Committee: *Meet frequently with the Study Oversight Committee to keep all members informed as to project progress and data needs.*

Goal 10 - Develop Adequate Visitor Access to SBC Center/Freeman Coliseum: *Ensure that visitors to sporting and other events at the two venues arrive and depart with relative ease.*

Transportation Alternatives Evaluation

The East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan considered several transportation infrastructure alternatives in support of the new proposed land use redevelopment plan for east San Antonio. Together, the transportation consultant team and the Arena Redevelopment project team worked on defining those roadway/transit elements that can be utilized to not only improve the movement of people within the study area, but also to make transportation facilities themselves stimuli for economic redevelopment.

A list of potential transportation options was presented to the public during the second public meeting held in November 2002. Shortly thereafter, this long list was refined by comments received from the public and input provided by the Oversight Committee. The final list of transportation options included 16 items, consisting of roadway, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle components.

Evaluation criteria and measures were then developed to objectively analyze these options for the East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan study area. Based on the previously identified study goals and objectives, evaluation criteria reflective of the critical aspects of each study goal were developed. The evaluation measures provided a systematic means of categorizing and applying the criteria to the alternatives. One important evaluation measure was purposely omitted in the initial evaluation methodology. This was the measure of cost. The Oversight Committee considered this measure as unfairly “outweighing” other factors during the initial screening process. Cost was calculated for each transportation option at a later stage in this study.

This first assessment (or ranking) of the 16 transportation options was then analyzed for their probable construction and right-of-way costs prior to a presentation of these options with their costs at the final public meeting in February 2003. Some consolidation of similar or complementary transportation options was undertaken to reduce the original list of alternatives. Utilizing a simulated budget exercise, the study area residents were asked to prioritize these remaining transportation options at the third public meeting. The outcome of this final ranking became the recommended set of transportation improvements that can meet the desired needs of the East Corridor study area community, as well as meeting the goals and objectives set forth at the beginning of this project.

Recommended Transportation Options

Since the proposed land use plan advocates significant connectivity between the many neighborhoods in this community, and the green space opportunities offered by Salado Creek, the transportation plan which supports these future long term land uses is presented as a cohesive element within the overall structure of the study area. At the same time, community residents expressed their desire for short term implementation of projects to correct immediate needs within their neighborhoods. The culmination of the recommended transportation plan tries to accommodate both the immediate needs as well as the long term potential in a meaningful and achievable way.

Since no funding is currently available for any of the evaluated transportation alternatives, a two-tiered set of transportation improvements is recommended. The first tier of improvements will solve some immediate infrastructure needs of the community while establishing a basis for the long term improvements for the study area. The second tier of improvements can be more long term in its

East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan

implementation, but creates a well-balanced transportation infrastructure system for the study area. Together, the Tier 1 and Tier 2 transportation plan components form a comprehensive set of transit, pedestrian and vehicular improvements which ultimately will help the study area achieve economic growth and improve the quality of life for the many citizens that live in east San Antonio. The two figures at the end of this Executive Summary display these recommended transportation plan components.

The funding options that are presented following each recommended transportation improvement are meant to offer potential sources of funding and are by no means exclusive for the particular project described. As most readers are well aware, funding for transportation projects is typically a dynamic process that is influenced significantly by political decisions, and any effort to prioritize the transportation options as recommended in this summary must involve this political process.

Tier 1 Recommended Transportation Options

- 1. Resurface 167 street blocks in the study area which have poor roadway pavements. Add new sidewalks along some of these street blocks where needed.**

Since many of the roadway segments needing resurfacing/sidewalk improvements are scattered through the entire study area, the City can best address this transportation option by scheduling resurfacing projects one neighborhood at a time, taking into consideration other street/sidewalk maintenance needs not considered as part of this transportation option. Those neighborhoods which have the greatest amount of immediate resurfacing/sidewalk needs should be improved first. Although this recommendation meets the strongly desired short-term needs of the community residents, the limited available funding for these improvements may result in this project taking ten years or possibly longer to fully complete.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$6.2 million	0 to 10 years	City of San Antonio Street Maintenance Program; City bond package; Community Development Block Grants; Neighborhood Accessibility Mobility Program

- 2. Install weather protection shelters at the busiest bus stops in the study area. New sidewalks will also be added to/from these bus stops as needed.**

Busy bus stops are defined as having at least 35 boardings or alightings per day from all bus routes serving that particular stop. Continuous sidewalks/crosswalks are recommended from these bus stops for at least one block in all directions, depending upon the land uses served by that bus stop. Furthermore, those stops which have high numbers of boardings should also have weather protection bus shelters provided as part of this transportation option.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$400,000	0 to 5 years	VIA Section 5307 funds; STP Metro Mobility funds; private development; City of San Antonio Neighborhood Accessibility Mobility Program (for sidewalks); FTA Enhancement Program (for sidewalks)

- 3. Convert the signalized intersection of New Braunfels Avenue and Houston Street into a traffic roundabout.**

As part of the desire of establishing a focal point for the revitalization of the study area, it was proposed that the existing intersection of New Braunfels Avenue and Houston Street be converted into a feature traffic roundabout. Most of the right-of-way needs for this roundabout can be met by

East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan

removing part of the existing wide medians on the north and south legs of this intersection. Some of the existing statues and monuments that are presently in this median will have to be removed and can be placed in the newly created roundabout center if desired.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$935,000	0 to 5 years	City of San Antonio; Community Economic Revitalization Agency; Bexar County

4. Implement low cost safety improvements at the top ten crash intersections within the study area.

The following intersections had the highest number of automobile crashes reported to the San Antonio Police Department, during the period 1999 through 2001, within the study area. The cost numbers in parentheses would cover the implementation of safety improvements at these intersections. The focus of each transportation improvement is to make the intersection more visible to the drivers by installing new pavement markings, signs and improving traffic signal visibility.

IH 35 @ Walters Street (\$18,635)	IH 10 @ New Braunfels Avenue (\$19,350)
IH 35 @ New Braunfels Avenue (\$47,399)	IH 10 @ Pine Street (\$3,110)
IH 10 @ Roland Avenue (\$17,850)	Martin Luther King @ Walters St. (\$25,400)
IH 10 @ W.W. White Road (\$44,170)	Commerce St. @ Hackberry Street (\$1,800)
SBC Center Parkway @ IH 35 (\$13,550)	Houston Street @ IH 10 (\$13,000)

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$205,000	0 to 5 years	City of San Antonio Public Works; Texas Department of Transportation Maintenance Funds and Safety Funds

5. Reconstruct several major streets within the study area into “feature” streets, incorporating street trees, on-street parking and wider sidewalks.

This transportation option arose directly from the land use planning process, facilitated from the planning notion to create strong “green” linkages which can tie the various neighborhoods together with Salado Creek. Since the western portion of the study area is primarily a grid network, the feature streets would be the key roadways within this grid network and would serve as desirable commercial and residential corridors for the betterment of the community.

Based upon a detailed travel forecasting modeling analysis of six major roadways (Commerce Street, New Braunfels Avenue, Houston Street, Martin Luther King Drive, Hackberry Street, Walters Street) for the year 2025, it is possible to reconstruct some portions of these roadways to have wider sidewalks, evenly spaced street trees, and on-street parking. In some situations, the number of travel lanes can be reduced. In others, the number of travel lanes can be increased. Each roadway can be designed to uniquely represent the neighborhoods it traverses.

Although six streets were initially evaluated as a single transportation option, this option was subsequently divided into six individual feature street options when presented to the public. The reason behind this is that the total cost of modifying all six streets is very prohibitive and could not be justified as a reasonable cost element. By breaking them apart, it was apparent that the public had specific desires as to which roadways they consider to be the most applicable for converting into feature streets. The result of both the engineering review and the public rankings is to recommend seeking funds for the conversion of three streets within the first tier of projects and two streets within the second tier of projects. The first tier feature street projects are listed on the following page.

East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan

(Walters Street from IH 35 to IH 10 was the only street on the initial list to not be recommended as a feature street. This facility has limited right-of-way throughout the study area and high traffic volumes. Therefore, four travel lanes would remain much as they are currently, with only some limited possibilities of expanding sidewalks and planting street trees.)

- **Commerce Street from IH 37 to Houston Street:** This feature street would continue to serve as the major east/west corridor through the study area. Four travel lanes can be reconstructed within the existing right-of-way, even between the constrictive cemetery properties. On-street parking would be prohibited along this entire stretch of roadway. It may be necessary to maintain six travel lanes through the short portion of Commerce Street west of Cherry Street during peak hours. This is within the St. Paul Square historic district and pedestrian amenities would have to be maintained or enhanced. Street trees can be planted continuously east of Cherry Street.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$16.7 million	15 to 25 years	City of San Antonio; Bexar County; city/county bond packages; private investment; tax increment financing district

- **Martin Luther King Drive from New Braunfels Avenue to IH 10:** This roadway can be converted from four travel lanes into two travel lanes with a parking lane provided as necessary. This roadway is a culturally important roadway within the community. Furthermore, it offers an opportunity to showcase St. Philip’s College as an integral component of the east side of San Antonio.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$7.4 million	15 to 25 years	City of San Antonio; Bexar County; city/county bond packages; private investment; tax increment financing district

- **New Braunfels Avenue from Martin Luther King Drive to IH 10:** This portion of New Braunfels Avenue has lower traffic volumes and the opportunity arises to create a feature street with two travel lanes and a parking lane in this corridor.
- **New Braunfels Avenue from IH 35 to Martin Luther King Drive:** Because of the higher traffic volumes, four travel lanes would generally need to be retained within this corridor. The right-of-way is fairly restrictive north of Dawson Street, so no feature elements are recommended in that section. However, south of Dawson Street, wider sidewalks and street trees can be implemented, while leaving the existing median and travel lanes intact.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$3.8 million	15 to 25 years	City of San Antonio; Bexar County; city/county bond packages; private investment; tax increment financing district

Tier 2 Recommended Transportation Options

6. Reconstruct Houston Street from IH 37 to Walters Street as a feature street.

Two travel lanes can handle the typical daily traffic requirements for this primarily residential roadway. A parking lane can be restored to certain portions of this roadway. It is important to note that an on-going City of San Antonio project has already started to convert Houston Street into a three-lane cross-section with a reversible middle lane to assist in the peak traffic flows to and from the SBC Center and Freeman Coliseum. The feature street desired for Houston Street by the community should be implemented to the degree possible complementing the traffic management improvements that the City already has underway.

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Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$7.6 million	15 to 25 years	City of San Antonio; Bexar County; city/county bond packages; private investment; tax increment financing district

7. Resurface six roadways at railroad crossings and replace wooden/asphalt railroad ties with concrete ties.

Each of the listed streets below crosses the Union Pacific railroad tracks near IH 37. In locations where tracks are utilizing wooden or asphalt crossings, they should be replaced with concrete beds which are significantly more durable and offer smoother crossings for vehicular tires.

- Commerce Street
- Florida Street
- Center Street
- Houston Street
- Burnet Street
- Sherman Street

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$702,000	5 to 10 years	City of San Antonio; Union Pacific; Federal At-Grade Railroad Crossing Safety Improvement funds; bond package

8. Close eight at-grade railroad crossings in the study area. Add street trees in planters to block vehicle access across the railroad tracks.

Each of the street crossings proposed to be closed at the railroad tracks has less than 500 cars crossing per day, and all businesses/residents have alternate access routes. Each street would be closed on either side of the tracks, using aesthetically pleasing concrete planters, and the crossing gate arms would be removed. A mountable wide sidewalk would be provided on one side to allow fire trucks to cross the railroad tracks and not have to turn around on these small streets. A small paved area would be provided for automobiles to turn around prior to reaching the railroad tracks. Closing these smaller streets allows the freight trains to operate with 50% fewer conflict points in the study area.

- Burleson Street
- Lamar Street
- Dawson Street
- Crockett Street
- Iowa Street
- Indiana Street
- Virginia Boulevard
- Delaware Street

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$423,000	10 to 15 years	City of San Antonio bond package; Community Development Block Grant; Union Pacific; Federal Railroad At-Grade Railroad Crossing Safety Improvement funds

9. Remove the Union Pacific railroad tracks between Roland Avenue and IH 35 that are adjacent to the Coliseum grounds. Maintain as a future transportation corridor.

This improvement would be a significant physical change for the East Corridor study area. The conversion of the Union Pacific right-of-way into a new two-lane to four-lane roadway offers significant future development opportunities along both sides of this rail line, by providing new access and interconnecting neighborhoods that previously had dead-end streets at the railroad. This option also provides for additional traffic capacity to handle SBC Center and Freeman Coliseum events from IH 35 and IH 10, and possibly relieve other local streets from this event traffic.

Note by City Staff: Public Works Department requests further analysis of Recommendation No. 9. It may be more advantageous to consider eliminating the railroad tracks that approximately parallel Cherry Street and IH-35 to reduce at-grade crossings.

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A major consideration for this transportation option is to replace the active 12 trains per day to the parallel train corridor which runs along IH 37. A new rail connection between the north/south and east/west rail lines near IH 35 plus other freight rail track improvements are needed as part of this transportation improvement. Union Pacific owns all of the track right-of-way in the study area, but other freight carriers such as Burlington Northern Southern Pacific also have trackage rights and will need to be involved in this process. Initial meetings with senior representatives of Union Pacific indicate their willingness to work with the City and the County to discuss how best to achieve this long term corridor exchange.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$33 million	20 to 25 years	City of San Antonio; Bexar County; Union Pacific; private development

10. Restore north/south cross town VIA bus service along Walters Street.

This transportation option would restore Route 508 along the length of Walters Street within the study area. The cost for this restoration of service is calculated on an annual operational basis and is not a one time capital expense. Operating costs include daily expenses such as labor, fringe benefits, fuel, tiers, utilities, casualty and liabilities, and other miscellaneous expenses.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$570,000	5 to 10 years	VIA operating funds using passenger fares and local sales tax

11. Reconstruct Hackberry Street from Duval Street to IH 10 as a feature street.

The existing four travel lanes can be reduced to two travel lanes. On-street parking can be provided along certain blocks, depending upon the desirable adjacent land uses.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$10.5 million	15 to 25 years	City of San Antonio; Bexar County; city/county bond packages; private investment; tax increment financing district

12. Develop a new roadway beginning at the Commerce/Houston Street intersection and continuing north to Seguin Street, roughly parallel to Salado Creek along the east bank.

All of the other improvements recommended for this transportation plan are concentrated on the western portion of the study area. This transportation option is the only recommended improvement that is located in the eastern portion of the study area and will focus attention on this area, which the proposed land use plan projects to have the most significant changes over the next 25 years.

The purpose of this new roadway is to accomplish several objectives. One objective is to relieve traffic volumes on W.W. White Road between IH 10 and IH 35. Secondly, this facility is envisioned to be a connector roadway that can bring together the Willow Wood and Skyline Park residential neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are isolated from other residential uses by large industrial/warehouse land uses. Finally, this roadway is conceptually designed as a scenic route following the east bank of Salado Creek, complementing the planned Salado Creek hike/bike trail along the west bank of the creek.

This roadway would require a significant amount of right-of-way from a few large private landowners between Houston Street and Gemblor Road, and short portions of the road may have to be slightly elevated to avoid flood prone areas. The new roadway alignment begins west (or south) of Houston

East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan

Street with a short realignment of Commerce Street so as to create a perpendicular intersection with Houston Street. After crossing Houston Street, this new roadway would become a two-lane roadway.

In addition to the new roadway along Salado Creek, Belgium Street would be connected with Director Drive by the construction of a new bridge over Salado Creek. Bexar County is currently in the process of designing a new access roadway to Pletz Park following the west bank of Salado Creek. This new access roadway would tie in with an eastern extension of Belgium Street. It is recommended that this same new county roadway also be continued to the north to link up with the current terminus of Willowood Street in order to provide a direct connection for those residents living on that street. Finally, King Krest Street can also be extended westward from the Skyline Park neighborhood to connect to the new roadway.

Estimated Cost	Timeframe	Possible Funding Sources
\$14.7 million	20 to 25 years	City of San Antonio; Bexar County; city/county bond packages; private investment; tax increment financing district

Conclusion

The East Corridor Multi-Modal Alternatives study shows that with an overall investment of approximately \$103 million, 12 evaluated transportation options can be constructed within the study area. The First Tier (5 improvements costing \$36 million) and the Second Tier (7 improvements costing \$67 million) would provide significant roadway, sidewalk, and transit improvements, as well as develop an enhanced “sense of place” for the community through the feature streets projects and the roundabout project. The latter elements are key components to making the proposed future long-term land use plan successful for this study area. The proposed addition of two new roadways and removal of a railroad barrier help define the long term economic opportunities and recreational opportunities for the study area.

This study process developed these recommended transportation improvements from their inception as possible solutions to transportation issues brought forward by the community at the first public meeting, to their evaluation and conceptual design, followed by cost calculations and final ranking by the community at the third public meeting. The completion of the study culminates a truly community-involved process by which the resulting transportation network will significantly meet the needs and desires of the public who live and work in the study area.

It is recommended that the MPO, City of San Antonio, Bexar County, VIA, and the Texas Department of Transportation use the results of this study and its associated conceptual design plans as the basis on which to move toward funding initiatives, final design and engineering and finally, the implementation of these transportation projects. Although this study is clearly a long-range (25 year) plan, immediate action can be taken to achieve some of the recommended transportation improvements.

The residents of the study area who have been such a strong component in helping articulate their needs and desires, should continue to have a firm voice regarding the implementation of these recommended plans. The community has requested, and should be obliged, to continue receiving updates on what happens following the completion of this planning document and submission to the Metropolitan Planning Organization. A strong unified voice from the community will help define priorities citywide from among the many possible uses of limited transportation funding and can lead to innovative financing ideas for some of these improvements.

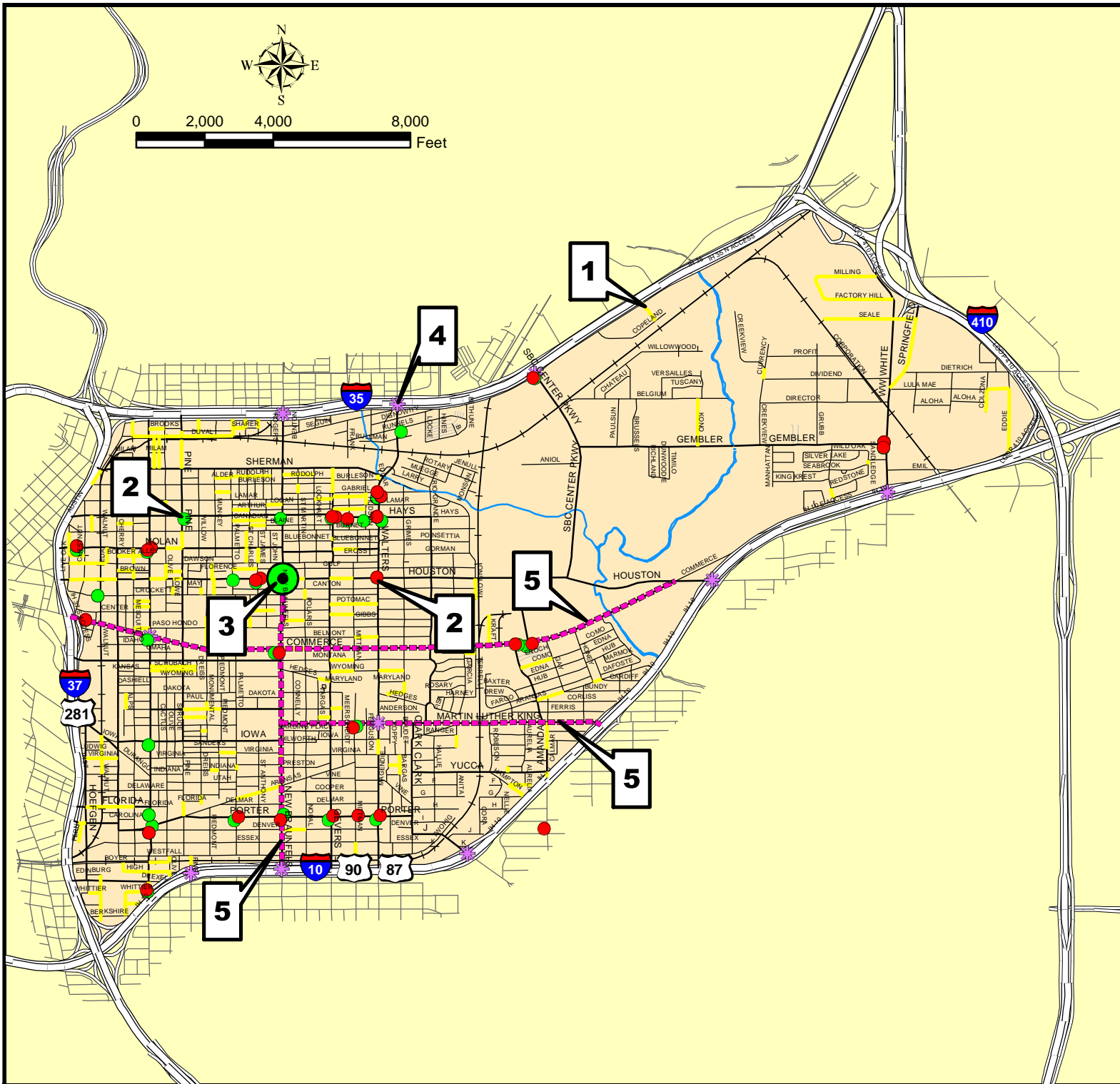


EAST CORRIDOR MULTI-MODAL ALTERNATIVES PLAN

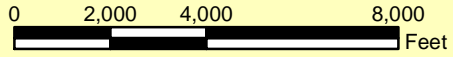
Tier 1 Recommended Transportation Plan

Legend

- Study Corridor
- 1 Resurfacing / Sidewalks
- 2 New Bus Shelter
- 2 New Sidewalk
- 3 Roundabout
- 4 Safety Improvements
- 5 Feature Street



PARSONS

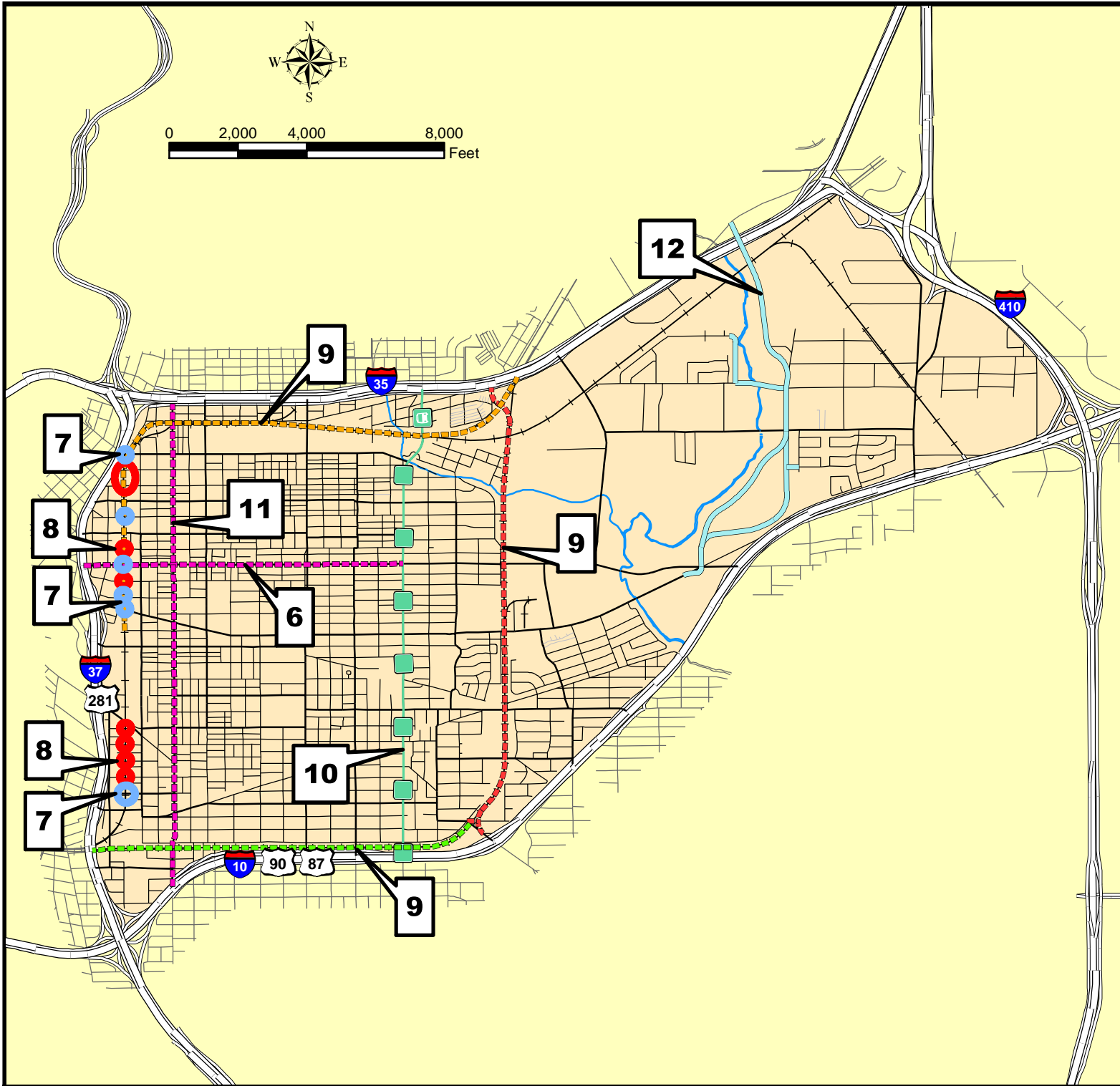


EAST CORRIDOR MULTI-MODAL ALTERNATIVES PLAN

Tier 2 Recommended Transportation Plan

Legend

- Study Corridor
- 6 Feature Street
- 7 Railroad Crossing Improvements
- 8 Streets Closed At R.R. Tracks
- 9 Available R.O.W.
- 9 Track Improvements
- 9 New Roadway
- 10 VIA Route 508
- 11 Feature Street
- 12 New Roadway



PARSONS

Appendices

Beyond the Alamo

Neighborhood Discovery Tours
Guidebook copy:

East Side / Ellis Alley

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Beyond the Alamo Program

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Rev. May 7, 2002

Neighborhood Discoveries – Eastside

This tour guide to one of San Antonio’s unique neighborhoods is different than what you will find in hotel lobbies and visitor centers. More anthropological than commercial, it makes no claim to be the definitive guide to the “best of” anything. Instead, this is a tour made up of detours to the well-trodden tourist trail. We invite you to take this side road with us into some of San Antonio’s overlooked, undervalued or simply unknown culturally-rich neighborhoods.

Within these pages you will find an introduction to the history as well as a contemporary exploration of some of the reasons the area is important to the larger San Antonio story. But, it cannot contain all there is to know. Hopefully, the stories and history visited here will inspire you to come back and make some true discoveries of your own.

Beyond the Alamo

Location, location, location. The old business axiom holds true for the earliest history of San Antonio. When a group of Spanish settlers needed a camp for their first expedition some 300 years ago, they picked a spot midway between the settled parts of Northern

Appendix A

Mexico and the French controlled towns of East Texas. That point is near where present South Loop 410 crosses the San Antonio River. Coahuiltecan, Payay, Lipan Apache and other native peoples already enjoyed this fertile river valley—a land they called “Yanaguana.” Nevertheless, the Spanish chose to call it San Antonio de Padua in honor of their arrival on this saint’s celebrated day. In late April of 1719, Governor Don Martin de Alarcon led some 72 Spaniards to the area to stay. Father Antonio de Buenaventura Olivares arrived soon after to establish the Mission San Antonio De Valero. We know this mission as the Alamo.

Today the Alamo is indeed “remembered” in history, myth, heart and controversy. Tourists come to San Antonio from throughout the world to see the legendary structure. But the story of San Antonio stretches far beyond those cool stone walls. One piece of this story is the significant role people of African descent have played in the establishment of San Antonio and continue to play in its cultural richness.

Canary Islanders

East San Antonio is generally thought of as *the* African-American section of town. Indeed, there was a concentration of African-Americans who settled the area by the early 20th Century. In addition, a bustling primarily black-owned business district developed during the years of legislated racial segregation. But African-Americans also settled in pockets across the city including areas on the far Westside and around the Monte Vista neighborhood. Furthermore, the roots of San Antonio’s historically black St. Philip’s College were first planted in downtown La Villita.

Interestingly, it was people of African descent who first settled in that nucleus of San Antonio. Their story is an unusual twist on the migration of most Africans to this country. Tragically, most people of African descent arrived in Texas unwillingly and were immediately forced into a life of slavery regardless of whether they were peasants or royalty back home. But a small group of settlers from the Spanish-controlled Canary Islands just off the coast of North Africa immigrated to a different reality.

In hoping to strengthen his hold on Texas, King Phillip V of Spain took his Brigadier General Riviera’s advice that “One permanent Spanish family could do more to hold the country than 100 soldiers.” The King promised impoverished Islanders passage to the frontier, free land and the title of “*hidalgo*” derived from the term “*hijo de algo*,” which translates literally to “*son of something*” the lowest level of Spanish nobility and a rather impotent title on the far fringes of the Spanish empire. Nevertheless, it was an attractive offer. Eventually 56 dark-skinned, mostly gray or blue-eyed Canary Island Guanches came to Texas. Guanches are the indigenous North African Berber inhabitants of the Islands who mixed with the Spanish and adopted Spanish customs and beliefs.

The settlers arrived at Presidio San Antonio de Bejar on March 9, 1731. This weary group of travelers would go on to establish Villa de San Fernando Bejar, the first civil settlement in Texas. Around 1733, the same time the Islanders received permission to form their governing council or “cabildo”, the budding settlement received a Spanish land grant for the croplands due east of the Islanders homes. This land would one day be developed by German and other Eastern European immigrants. Many of these families rented and eventually sold their properties to African-Americans who came to San Antonio in the years following the Emancipation Proclamation.

Juneteenth

June 19, 1865 or “Juneteenth” celebrates the end of slavery with the Emancipation Proclamation. More specifically, Juneteenth celebrates when the news of Lincoln’s January, 1863, announcement finally made it to Texas over two years later. Indeed, according to a program from a 1902 Juneteenth parade and celebration, General Gordon George arrived at the port of Galveston on June 18th or 19th, 1865 and threatened “to empty his shotgun shells within the boundaries of the Lone Star state if the slaves were not set free immediately.” Lincoln’s proclamation had taken two years to reach Texas shores.

One hundred and two-year-old Eastside resident Augusta Whittier remembers Juneteenth celebrations in her hometown of Victoria, Texas. “We had so many floats and a big parade. It was a real celebration.” Indeed, the parade described in the 1902 San Antonio celebration program lists the floats depicting work of African-Americans at the time. They included a printing press float, a stone mason float, an undertaker float and a carpenter float. Participants marched through downtown past the Alamo ending up at the old San Pedro Springs. Until the end of segregation in the mid-60s, blacks were only allowed to swim at the springs on Juneteenth.

History in the Hayloft

The 1902 program describing General George’s arrival to Texas was one of several documents discovered in the old hayloft of Carter Taylor Williams Mortuary on the corner of Center and Hackberry Streets. Vera Williams Young, Director of the funeral home was cleaning some boxes in her upstairs garage when she took a closer look. Inside, Young found original posters from San Antonio Juneteenth celebrations in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s. Young’s discovery led her to personally research Juneteenth happenings around the world. “Although Juneteenth is technically a Texas holiday, it is celebrated in Ghana, West Africa. They have celebrations in Tulsa and San Francisco and in more and more big cities. One day I hope our celebration will be as big as some that get 150,000 people. But since there are only 60 or 70 thousand blacks in San Antonio, we will need everyone to come out.”

Appendix A

Emily D. West (Morgan)

While the stories of the many early African-Americans in Texas before the Emancipation Proclamation have been lost, the role of one African-American in securing the future of Texas remains strong in the hearts of many San Antonio residents. Emily D. West, known by many as Emily Morgan, the name of her presumed slave master James Morgan, is who most call the “Yellow Rose of Texas.” With a luxury downtown hotel named in her honor, Emily Morgan has indeed become a contemporary Texas icon. While the detail’s of West’s history are debated by historians and folklorists alike, her legend and cultural importance endures.

Martha Ann Turner’s book *The Yellow Rose of Texas* describes West as a mixed-race “golden-skinned girl resembling a Latin goddess.” Most people assume West was a slave. However the Texas State Historical Association’s *Handbook of Texas Online* says West was a free black from New Haven, Connecticut who signed a contract to work a year as a housekeeper for Morgan in New Washington, Texas. Colonel Morgan was away from New Washington on April 16, 1836 when the Mexican Military invaded and looted his warehouses. Santa Anna, the Mexican commander and *presidente* saw Emily and reportedly took her as part of the loot.

According to an article by San Antonio journalist and historian Claude Stanush, Santa Anna traveled with a red and white silk tent, cases of champagne, boxes of opium, and crates of fighting cocks. The Mexican leader had recently sent his teenage “bride” Melchora Barrera back to Mexico and was presumably ready for some female “companionship.”

Willingly or not, West left New Washington with Santa Anna but reportedly sent a slave boy named Turner to Texan leader Sam Houston’s army to warn them of the approaching Mexicans. West’s access to this kind of information has been questioned by historians. Regardless, the Texans were able to crush the much larger, better prepared Mexican army at San Jacinto on the afternoon of April 21, 1836 because they took Santa Anna and his troops by surprise. Folklorists claim that a slave admirer penned a poem for her that became the “Yellow Rose of Texas” song. She is now linked with the song and the legend of her bravery at San Jacinto lives on.

Baptist Settlement

One of the first places former slaves and free blacks settled in San Antonio was known as the Baptist Settlement. This approximately ten-square-block district has long been an area of transition. The land was part of the Mission holdings divided among Los Adaes Indians from Louisiana and some early San Antonio settlers in the late 1700s. Ownership of the area changed in the early 1900s when the San Antonio Housing Authority purchased the title for \$642,293.01. According to a 1940 article in the San Antonio

Light, 300 houses were “extracted” from the area to create a public housing development called Victoria Courts. In 2000, families were again “extracted” from their homes. This time, the Courts were demolished so that the land could be redeveloped into mixed-income residences and small commercial properties.

One of the early inhabitants of the Baptist Settlement was a well-educated, entrepreneurial school teacher named P.F. Roberts. Originally from Mississippi, Roberts settled in San Antonio after college. His first P.F. Roberts store sold meat and dry goods to Baptist Settlement residents from the corner of Victoria and Indianola. According to Roberts daughter, 86-year-old Henrietta Stevenson, the family lived behind a second store at 635 S. Pine Street. Stevenson remembered hearing her father get up early to retrieve the milk and bread that was left by delivery trucks outside the shop, “No one would think of stealing it,” she mused.

Most of the houses in Baptist Settlement were front-gabled one room wide wooden homes called “shotguns.” The name “shotgun” comes from an old tale that said a shotgun blast fired in the front door would come out the back. This style was common in New England during the early nineteenth century and followed the westward expansion of the railroads in the 1850s. The one-story version seen in the Baptist Settlement was popular in many southern cities. Most of the structures were built between 1880 and 1930.

The housing stock of the Baptist Settlement is similar to what was found in the neighborhoods destroyed by nearby HemisFair Plaza. According to Rev. Claude Black, lifelong San Antonio resident, former City Council Member and Pastor Emeritus of Mt. Zion Baptist Church, some of these early Baptist Settlement residents organized Mt. Zion in 1871. Despite an 1886 storm and flood, 1890 fire and 1974 arson attack, the church remains active on the corner of Hackberry and Nebraska streets. Churches such as Mt. Zion and New Light Free Mission Baptist anchored the Baptist Settlement area. Said the 84-year-old Rev. Black, “As an old man looking back at a time when I was young and I was talking to ‘old men’ I remember how some of them built churches by simply coming into an area and building what they called a ‘brush arbor’. They just built frames and set up brush and sticks on top to try to keep the rain out the best they could. They would get some benches and they would start a church. Out of that beginning have developed some of our finest churches. I was thinking about the courage of those men, the innovation, the dedication.”

A second church that began in the brush of the Baptist Settlement was Second Baptist Church. The congregation now worships in a 1000 seat sanctuary inside a striking, variegated, tan brick structure with numerous standing seam metal roofs located at 3310 East Commerce. The building, designed by a black architect named Norrell Haywood, a protégé of renowned San Antonio architect O’Neil Ford, features a picturesque central atrium surrounded by smaller buildings that is characteristic of Ford’s distinct style.

Appendix A

That Corner at Center and Chestnut

First organized in 1879, Second Baptist Church spent over half a century in an equally impressive building. Originally known as Macedonia Baptist Church and housed in a frame house at Indiana and Goliad in the Baptist Settlement, the church was part of a migration eastward to the area known as Ellis Alley. Church members eventually raised funds to build an impressive gothic stone building on the corner of Chestnut and Center Streets. A 1910 article in the *San Antonio Light* recalls how church members paid \$1 each for the privilege of digging the foundation for the new structure. Second Baptist's longtime minister, S.H. James Jr., was San Antonio's first black City Council member. He was instrumental in negotiating the city's desegregation ordinance in 1965. With the construction of Highway I-37, a structure some on the Eastside call the city's "Berlin Wall," the great stone church was lost.

An 1873 Augustus Koch Bird's Eye View Map of San Antonio shows a "colored" church just east on Center Street. This unidentified building was the old St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, now St. Paul's United Methodist and the namesake for nearby St. Paul's Square. Established in 1866, St. Paul's is the oldest African-American church in San Antonio. Its early membership was primarily newly freed slaves who were once restricted to the balcony of Travis Park United Methodist Church in downtown San Antonio while the white owners worshipped below. According to an article in the *San Antonio Register*, St. Paul's current limestone structure at the corner of Cherry and Chestnut was built in 1922 for \$70,000. The article advertised an upcoming "Every Member Drive" to liquidate the remaining debt of \$2,700.35.

Farther east at 321 N. Center Street sits the G. J. Sutton State Office Building, also known as the SAMSCO building. SAMSCO (San Antonio Machine and Supply Company) was a machine shop and foundry that moved to existing brick buildings here in 1904. Additions were made in 1906 and 1912. The state of Texas acquired the buildings in 1975. They are named for G.J. Sutton, the first black representative to the Texas Legislature. After his death, Sutton's wife Lou Nelle succeeded him, becoming the first female in the state legislature. The Sutton name is legendary on San Antonio's Eastside. G.J.'s younger brother A.C. Sutton still directs the family funeral home on the corner of Cherry and Hackberry Streets. All fifteen of the Sutton children were born in a house connected to the business. Their father S.J. was principal of both Douglass and Wheatley schools.

The Business of Necessity

Local funeral home director, Vera Williams Young, emphasized the longtime importance of black-owned funeral homes. "There are institutions in black communities that have always lasted no matter what else happens. They are the church and funeral homes. In addition, there are black hair salons and barber shops. These areas are still generally segregated today." Indeed these are businesses that have always been fully black

controlled and operated. Young said, “It is simple, you always need someone to bury you and black people know about doing black people hair.” Driving through San Antonio’s Eastside today, one will undoubtedly see a high concentration of churches, funeral homes, hair salons and barber shops.

One building that still stands on this once busy corner is the Beacon Light Lodge. Still owned by the Masons, a men’s fraternal organization, the Lodge once housed the Odd Fellows, the Star Tom Lodge, the Free and Accepted Masons as well as O.J. Carter’s (of Carter, Taylor, Williams Mortuary) first undertaking parlor. After leaving Williamson and Son Mortuary, O. J. Carter went into business with S.J. Sutton. Eventually, Carter’s wife Annie ran the business as Carter Undertaking Co. The mortuary was then passed on to an adopted “niece” named Julia Taylor. Taylor and her husband ran the business with the help of Edward “Eddie” Williams. When Williams died in 1991, his sister Vera Williams Young and her family took over the still operating Carter, Taylor and Williams Mortuary. Sutton went on to open his own funeral which now operates as Sutton’s Paradise Funeral Home. Other prominent African-American owned funeral homes that are still in business are the Lewis Funeral Home on Hackberry Street and Collins Mortuary on Chestnut Street. According to an oral history of Abbey Louisa McCammel, mother of Vera Williams Young, Mr. Collins once embalmed his dog and set him out in front of the funeral home.

Ellis Alley

A drive through the Eastside will also provide a glimpse of numerous alleys tucked into city blocks. When African-Americans first moved to the Eastside, most lived in these narrow enclaves. It was not until the end of the American Civil War in 1865 that Texas laws changed to allow ex-slaves to own property at all. One of these former slaves was Isabel Scott. After the Emancipation Proclamation, she declined an offer to stay and work on the Fredricksburg, Texas farm where she had been a slave. Instead, Scott moved to San Antonio, eventually met her husband Edward and purchased property at 231 Ellis Alley. Scott’s great-granddaughter Nettie Brooks Hinton still lives on San Antonio’s Eastside. Together with local development groups, the San Antonio Department of Historic Preservation and San Antonio Conservation Society, she has helped steer the move to salvage this early enclave of black home ownership.

What remains of residential Ellis Alley are three wood frame cottages that are representative of the housing stock at this time. According to a history of Ellis Alley written by Debs McCray for the San Antonio Conservation Society, the 1905 city directory showed that 15 houses were located on Ellis Alley, all occupied by African Americans, 10 of whom were homeowners. These plots originally belonged to Felipe Elue and Joseph de la Buame through a Spanish land grant. In 1848, they sold it to Anthony Dignowity, a Czech doctor and the namesake of Dignowity Hill to the northeast. Dignowity in turn sold some of the land to Sam Maverick, a prominent landowner of the

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day. Maverick eventually divided Ellis Alley into 25-foot lots, many of which were rented and purchased by African-Americans between 1875 and 1886.

Like much of the near Eastside, the Ellis Alley area was racially mixed into the early 1900s. Maverick sold the still-standing 217 Ellis Alley to Ed Duran in 1886. He lived there until around 1910 when it was sold to an African-American family. The structure that still stands today was either built or rebuilt in 1910. The oldest remaining structure in the area is 225 Ellis Alley. It was built in 1885 and continually expanded. In 1882, Maverick sold this land to Sam Abrams who lived there with his son until 1902.

The San Antonio Register – Voice of the Eastside

Stories of the thousand small kindness exchanged in the fledgling Ellis Alley community still seem to whisper from between the boards of the small leaning houses. And since the 1930s, these stories have also lived on the pages of the *San Antonio Register*. As Edwin Glossen, editor of the *Register* tells the story the paper was born in a two story brick building on N. Center Street which held its predecessor, the *Inquirer*. When Valmo Bellinger, son of Eastside savior, kingpin, political genius and gambling legend Charles Bellinger, approached the *Inquirer* publisher G.W. Bouldin about running an ad for a slate of political candidates his father supported, Bouldin refused. “Valmo looked at him and said, you just bought yourself some competition,” said Glossen. “That was 1931.” Bellinger moved into offices next to the *Inquirer* and began publishing the Register. The *Inquirer* eventually folded.

Under Valmo Bellinger, the *Register* didn’t miss a weekly edition for nearly half a century. An interview with Valmo’s wife Josephine tells about the early days of the paper. She met Valmo when he called her boss at a major black benevolent association in Houston and asked if he knew a woman who could be a bookkeeper and accountant. Josephine’s boss recommended her on the spot. Soon after, Josephine found herself typing articles and proofing copy for the paper. Eventually they married and Valmo asked her to do a column of her own. This became “Jo’s Jottings,” a popular social and personal weekly column. Other early columns included Katherine Beverly’s literary “Poetry Corner” and the Butter Krust Family Photo Ads. Butter Krust, a local bread factory paid families some “dough” and some real bread for posing. In addition, the *Register* had contributors from outlying communities and for a while, other editions were published in Austin and Corpus Christi.

In late 1978, two employees walked out on Valmo and Josephine. Valmo suffered a heart attack shortly afterwards. Josephine ran the paper alone during his recovery and eventually sold it to Edwin Glossen in 1979. These days Glossen, a San Antonio native who played football and studied journalism at the university of Missouri says, “The community exists through this paper. I haven’t worked in 21 years. This is not work. I enjoy every minute.” As a high school football star at all-black Phyllis Wheatley High

School, Glossen and his teammates were bussed every two weeks to play the nearest team in their division in Houston. Glossen said that they got mere mentions in the mainstream *Express-News*. “I grew up in this paper (the *Register*.) I have a whole scrapbook full of clippings and they are all from the *Register*. No one else covered the black sports.”

When asked what keeps the paper community focused, Glossen replied, “People grow up in this paper. Kids sell it. I’ve sold it. I’ve done everything. Heck, I delivered a stack of papers this morning. People meet me and know me.. So I write articles of encouragement to kids. With a paper like this, it all comes back to me.”

Commerce Street Commerce

This sense of accountability is one characteristic of the self-reliance that resulted from segregation. In response to denial of services and access, African-Americans in San Antonio created their own. Most importantly, the businesses created in this area were supported by the entire community. The tightly-woven fabric of that community changed radically with integration and the disbursement of people and resources. When asked about the history of the area, Rev. Claude Black responded, “Before you talk about the history of an area like this you must know the context. History is not made by wealth. It is made by creativity, by doing without and by overcoming limits. This is all part of the history of black people. In talking about poverty areas, you must know the history that led to that area.”

The history of today’s East Commerce Street begins in 1905 when the Spanish laid the initial route. A painting by artist Herman Lungkwitz dated 1854 shows East Commerce (then called La Alameda) as an area with sparse development and cottonwood trees for vegetation. Had Lungkwitz painted a century later, he would have depicted a mix of restaurants, doctor’s offices, grocery stores, theaters and nightclubs. In many ways San Antonio has always been a “tourist town.” Whether providing saloons to cowboys or allnight clubs, restaurants and lodging to travelers or WWI troops coming through the Southern Pacific Station, Commerce Street was hopping with visitors and locals alike.

Longtime East San Antonio residents recall the popular Lifesaver Grill in the 1300 block of East Commerce. Demolished in 1995, the Lifesaver was a reliable spot for a reasonable meal, a jukebox and occasional live music. In the same block, Maggot’s Grocery remains open after nearly 120 years. Larry Maggott owns the store that his Polish grandfather Theodore opened as a general store in 1881. His grandparents lived in a house attached to the back of the store which then had a wood façade. Most days, Magott can be found stocking shelves and bustling around much as he did as a youngster. He recalls many of the other family-owned businesses in the area that have disappeared. “The Lifesaver was next door to what’s now my parking lot. They would bring all the really great black athletes down for a meal and when I was a kid we would get to go meet

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them. Mrs. Brown cut hair across the street. There was a paper company and a liquor shop and lots of barber shops.” Although the daily stop of the “Sunset Limited” route stopped in 1970, train travelers still come to Magotts for provisions. After 35 years at the checkout, Rose Stevenson knows most customers by name. She remembers walking by the store when the area was still primarily German and Polish. “I used to go to the Chocolate Bar across the street. But this was all German and we couldn’t come in here. Things started to change in the 40s when more black people came.” Many of these newcomers were military men who started businesses and bought property.

Eighty-three year old Sylvester Mitchell has lived on East Commerce Street for 77 years. He recalls that, “Everybody went to Sam Woo’s,” a Chinese restaurant demolished by the building of I-37. According to playwright and third generation Eastsider Sterling Houston, the popular lunch spot navigated the limits of segregation by having two front doors that opened to two counters angled back towards the same kitchen. “Blacks would use one door and whites the other and they would sit there looking at each other,” said Houston.

Area gambler and political boss Charles Bellinger had a taxi stand on Commerce Street and would often round up local young men and take them to the nearby Cameo Theater. A.C. Sutton of the politically active Sutton family recalls how Sporty Harvey used to box in the Froggy Bottom club on Commerce (also destroyed by I-37.) Sutton does not mince words in condemnation of the highway’s placement. “Black business were doing too well and getting too close to downtown. Some people didn’t like it and the highway stopped it.”

As with S.J. Sutton and P.F. Roberts who ran businesses in addition to being educators, most people needed more than one occupation to make ends meet. Some of this extra income came from speakeasies that brewed “white lightning.” Other Eastside residents worked for companies centered around the railroad tracks such as Alamo Iron Works and Steves Lumberyard. Many worked as porters, waiters, mail clerks and repairmen on the rails. Some found work in construction even pouring Eastside sidewalks. The name of Avis Bland, a black contractor, can still be seen in front of the Fredrich Air Conditioning Factory. Another contractor, A. Hamel’s, had a stone works store located across the street from the factory at 1122-24 East Commerce.

St. Paul’s Square and Sunset Depot

Just east of I-37 is St. Paul’s Square and the Southern Pacific “Sunset” Depot. In the mid-1800;s, San Antonio was the only major city without rail service and mule trains utilizing as many as 330 mules per train of carts regularly traveled city streets. An 1877 *San Antonio Express-News* article mentions the presence of the Corps of Engineers, camped “on the hill near Mrs. Dignowity’s place,” as they surveyed for the rail line. And on February 19, 1877, the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio railroad established a depot at the foot of the hill below Fort Sam Houston, then known as Rattlesnake Hill.

The railway was later purchased by the Southern Pacific Company. Immigration of Germans and other eastern Europeans centered on this area. In addition, many African-Americans who worked on the railways settled in housing along the rails.

Then in 1903, the Southern Pacific Railroad built a new station on East Commerce and residential development shifted south and east. The Southern Pacific Depot was built of brick on a concrete foundation and with a red clay roof. It cost \$115,000 to build and was designed by John D. Isaacs, the Assistant Engineer of the Maintenance-of-Way for the Southern Pacific Company in San Francisco, California. The waiting room of the station was lit with some 500 incandescent electric lights distributed on arches, panels, and around each of the two stained glass rose windows. Additional lighting was by combination of gas and electric fixtures. During the first few years, the building became known as the “house of 1000 lights.” In the north gable, a stained glass window shows the medallion of the Sunset Route with the year “1902” Roman Numerals. The depot is often called “Sunset Station” for the famous “Sunset Limited” train route across the south from California to Florida.

With the arrival of the new station, the surrounding area became a busy commercial district. Most of the buildings in the area were constructed between 1900 and 1920. The structures housed hotels, saloons, night clubs, retail stores and boarding houses. The area was named St. Paul’s Square after the St. Paul’s Methodist Church on Center Street. The train brought a wide range of visitors who used these services. The first train into the Southern Pacific station carried “distinguished Boer visitors from South Africa.” A relay team from Mexico comprised of Tarahumara Indians arrived at the station March 22, 1927 to compete in a University of Texas track meet. The Indians, known for their endurance running, went to visit the meet site, returned to San Antonio and then ran the 82 miles to Austin to compete. President Calvin Coolidge and his wife arrived at the station on February 16, 1930 and Judy Garland came on January 30, 1937. The depot has also been the site of many movies including of *The Alamo* with John Wayne, *Get Away* with Steve McQueen as well as parts of *Selena* and *The Newton Boys*.

Several factors led to the deterioration of St. Paul Square during the 50’s and 60’s. These include the passenger transportation shift from trains to automobiles, populace moving with the city’s growth northward, the opening of HemisFair Plaza which turned Commerce into a one-way street diverting traffic from the neighborhood, and the construction of I-37. In the final preparation for the 1968 HemisFair, city leaders decided the traffic pattern would be better served if Commerce Street were a one way street. However, “In the black Mecca of business, they found themselves closing down,” said Lou Miller, Executive Director of the African-American Chamber of Commerce. “They were no longer able to bring people from downtown. There was no traffic flow.” From 1981 to 1987, citizens and Eastside leaders fought the Texas Department of Transportation on plans for Commerce Street and I-37. The citizens wanted a two-way Commerce Street to facilitate traffic into the St. Paul Square area. In 1987, the partial

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one-way compromise we have today was passed. One still cannot exit east on Commerce when traveling north on I-37.

Cameo Theater and Entertainment District

One of the focal points of the old St. Paul's Square area was the Cameo theater, the first white-owned theater to open its doors to African Americans in San Antonio. Since 1919, the walls of the Cameo have heard every sound from the notes of Count Basie, Ma Rainey and Bessie Smith, to the dialogue of *Native Son*, the sermon's of Rev. Claude Black, to wailing 1980s heavy metal and to the now current silence before a hoped-for revival.

Writer Sterling Houston, recalls "going to the Cameo at least twice a week" as a boy. Houston laughed as he recalled his baby-sitter. "From when I was six to ten years old. She would take me to the theater. She was the one who talked to me about race for the first time. She was also a madam at a rather notorious bordello on Cherry Street." Houston said the theater showed, "everything. You had your cartoon, your short subjects, previews and of course Saturday serials. It was 10 cents for a double feature." Houston also recalls the vaudeville acts that would come. He would see the performers costumes hanging on the clotheslines of neighborhood women who provided a room for the night.

Rev. Claude Black remembers when, as a young minister, he held services in the Cameo. In order to use the theater for Sunday services, Black had to clean up from Saturday 1940s kiddie cowboy movies. In a 1999 article about the potential restoration of the Cameo, Black told the *San Antonio Express-News*, "there was everything from popcorn boxes to ice cream left in there. It was a job to clean up but they never charged me rent." The art-deco tiles of the front and deep colors of the theater's façade were restored in the 1980s. The Zaccaria family's Cameo Theatre Corporation now owns the theater and an adjacent office building. Future proposals for the site have included everything from a dinner theater to a salsa club.

Old San Antonio City Cemeteries Historic District

One of the most significant "living" records of geographical and social change during 19th century San Antonio is the Old San Antonio City Cemeteries Historic District. Recently named to the National Register of Historic Places, the District encompasses over 100 acres on the city's near Eastside. Noted cemetery historian Maria Watson Pfeiffer led this effort to attain national designation and provided comprehensive research on the area. Before City Council's move to designate a new city cemetery in the mid 1800s, San Antonio burials were conducted at the old public and Catholic burial grounds on the city's near west side (now Milam Park and Santa Rosa Hospital.) These eight acres in the center of the city were inadequate for the rapidly growing city center.

However, there were no City funds to spend on improving or buying land. So on October 2, 1850, City Alderman Onesimus Evans proposed that the City look at land the city already owned near what was known as Powder House Hill. This land was a part of San Antonio's original town tract granted to the municipality in the 18th century by the King of Spain and was named for the ruins of buildings apparently used as weapon and gunpowder storage by the Spanish.

The decision to use the Powder House land was in line the East Coast Rural Cemetery movement began by Jacob Bigelow in the 1830's. This effort proposed moving cemeteries from increasingly congested urban centers. Other benefits of the Powder House land included its rocky soil unsuitable for farming, good drainage and ventilation, fine views of countryside for visitors and a sense that the higher land was symbolically closer to heaven. Two years elapsed between the original request to consider the Powder House Hill and the actual survey of the area. Finally, in 1852, officials decided that one-half of the area would be sold at public auction, one-quarter reserved for free burials and one-quarter held for sale at a future time. Also during this time the Council had the old Catholic cemetery leveled and cleaned up. It is not known why the city had control over the Catholic Cemetery. There is also no documentation of the time and place of disposal for the old city and Catholic cemetery burials. The public auction of land meant that mayors and doctors or clerks and drivers, all contributors to San Antonio's development were buried in the same cemetery.

Additional land was sold to private ethnic, religious and fraternal groups and the complex eventually included 31 individual cemeteries, 24 primarily Anglo-American and seven primarily African-American. During the 19th century, most Latinos were interred at San Fernando Cemetery on San Antonio's West Side. This ethnic division mirrored that of the living; Anglos and Blacks east and Latinos west of downtown. The last public City Cemetery (#7) was created in November 1904 and was designated as a pauper's cemetery.

Fraternal Organizations

On November 28, 1853, Alamo Masonic Lodge purchased 16 acres of land from the city for its burial ground immediately west of City Cemetery #1. The Alamo Masonic Lodge, sold the Independent Order of Odd Fellow, San Antonio Lodge #11 six acres of its cemetery land on the same day it was purchased from the city. Other Masonic orders were established in 19th century San Antonio but Anchor Masonic Lodge #424 was the only other lodge to purchase and develop a cemetery in the area. Four lodges and four "sister" lodges of the Order of the Sons of Hermann were active in San Antonio. Harmonia Lodge #1 purchased property east of City Cemetery #5 and south of the Polish Catholic (St. Michael's) cemetery. Membership in this order increased and the Hermann Sons eventually purchased 4.2 acres at the southern end of the cemetery complex. This property was sold to the Hermann Sons Cemetery Association. The Hermann Sons remains an active fraternal organization in San Antonio and maintains its headquarters

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building at 515 South St. Mary's Street. Other early lodges include the Knights of Pythias who received a gift from the city of a tract between the St. Joseph Society and Anchor Masonic cemeteries. The African American Pythian lodge was apparently excluded from this gift and petitioned for its own burial ground in 1894.

Indeed, the sale of cemetery plots to private organizations was especially important to African-Americans in San Antonio who depended on such groups for insurance and death benefits. Often denied membership in the United States, African-American groups got their charters from Canadian and British Organizations. Most African-American fraternal organizations that petitioned for cemeteries received lots subdivided out of City Cemetery #3. These include the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, the United Brothers of Friendship, St. Elmo's Lodge who all received plots in 1894-5. The Beacon light lodge petitioned the city for burial land in 1890 and did not receive it until 1902 when it purchased five lots out of City Cemetery #3. This group held their meetings in the historic Beacon Light Hall at 220 Chestnut near the Southern Pacific Depot. Previous to the establishment of African-American private cemeteries, there was a "Colored Peoples" burial ground set aside in 1876 west of the military cemetery. However in 1884 the military cemetery was later expanded to encompass that land. It is not known how many "colored" burials took place between 1876 and 1884 and there is no record of how and where graves were disposed.

National Cemetery

The expanded military cemetery corresponded with the expansion of Congress's intent to include all honorably discharged veterans in addition to those who died in battle in military cemeteries. Soldiers who were originally interred in forts across West Texas and at other Army posts were re-interred at the San Antonio National Cemetery as the remote installations were abandoned. This included more than 300 Buffalo Soldiers. By 1907, the government realized it had to find a new larger area. The Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, originally called the Post Cemetery, was established adjacent to Fort Sam Houston in 1922.

Religious Cemeteries

The Cemetery District also includes a number of private religious and family cemeteries. When Elenora Lorch, a Philadelphia woman visiting her daughter and son-in-law, Regina and Siegmund Feinberg, found that there was no Jewish cemetery in San Antonio she contributed \$100 in 1855 to purchase four acres for a cemetery. The following year the San Antonio Hebrew Benevolent Society was founded and the Feinbergs transferred a portion of the cemetery to the Hebrew Benevolent Society in 1873 to create the first private religious cemetery. While most Catholics in the 19th century were buried in San Fernando Cemetery on the west side, German Catholic members of St. Mary's church were buried in the upper half of City Cemetery #1. Other churches to have private cemeteries include St. Michael's Church (1887) which was part a thriving Polish neighborhood. Now largely Hispanic, the church remains active and continues to care for

this lone remaining evidence of San Antonio's large Polish community. St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Benevolent Association was formed to care for several German Catholic congregations and received plots in 1889. During this time, San Antonio's first African-American Catholic congregation was formed and St. Peter Claver Church was given land in City Cemetery #3. The cemetery is now cared for by the members of Holy Redeemer Catholic Church. Lutherans were the only Protestant denomination to bury members in its own cemetery in San Antonio. St. John's Lutheran Church received land in 1866 and received a plot east of the German Catholic cemetery. As the church expanded, it took additional plots south of Commerce St. Emmanuel Lutheran Church also petitioned for plots in 1892. The two churches merged in 1922 and the cemeteries consolidated in 1926.

Family Cemeteries

The majority of early San Antonio families of note were buried in group cemeteries. Two exceptions are the Dignowity and Dullnig plots. Anthony Michael Dignowity, a Czech physician who came to San Antonio in 1846 purchased a large amount of property during land sales of the 1850s. He built a home on a hill several blocks north of the cemeteries in 1854. The site is now a City park that bears the family name as does the local historic district where many of the cemeteries are housed. In 1855, Dignowity sold land to Seigmund Feinberg to establish the Hebrew Benevolent Society's burial ground, today Temple Beth-El cemetery. About 1872, Dignowity's wife Amanda established the family's cemetery on a two acre tract west of the Society's land. Family members were buried at the southeast corner of the cemetery while the remainder of the land was sold to non-family members. After her husband's death in 1876, Amanda Dignowity advertised land in the *San Antonio Express-News* as "laid off as a private cemetery with reasonable lots." In 1947, the area was declared abandoned and ownership was assumed by the City of San Antonio. Members of the Dullnig Family are buried at the northern edge of City Cemetery #5. There is no official title to this land. The Dullnigs, like other families, purchased lots from the city, built a private walled enclosure and buried family members there. George Dullnig was born in Austria in 1846 and came to the United States as a child. With little education, he established a small shoe store that grew into the city's largest early department store. The family home still stands at 124 Nolan.

Design and Landscape

Former San Antonio Mayor, Sidney Lanier, wrote the following words about the Cemetery District: "...the visitor may stroll off to the eastward, climb the hill, wander about among the graves of heroes in the large cemetery on the crest of the ridge, and please himself with the noble reaches of the country east and west and with the perfect view of the city."

Indeed, a walk through the Old San Antonio City Cemeteries District still provides some of the city's finest vistas. Although San Antonio's cemeteries do not have many of the Romantic design elements common in cemeteries of the same era, many 19th and 20th

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century fences, columns, grave markers and mausoleums remain. Noted monument maker, Otto Zirkel had his marble and granite company on the near Eastside adjacent to the Southern Pacific tracks. Other stone cutters, florist and gardeners lived and work near the growing cemetery complex. Both the range of population and artifice make the Historic District a striking monument to the history of what was then Texas's largest city.

The Martin Luther King Jr. March and Freedom Bridge

It is best not to refer to San Antonio's annual Martin Luther King Celebration Jr. as a "parade." Assistant City Manager Travis Bishop will quickly correct the error. "The first thing everyone needs to understand is that it's a *march*." What may seem to be a technicality is fundamental to the spirit that guides San Antonio's nearly month-long series of events to honor the slain civil rights leader. King's birthday on April 15 was first made a federal holiday in 1986. That year, former San Antonio mayor, Henry Cisneros, attended an Atlanta observation of the holiday. Cisneros returned to San Antonio questioning why the city had no event of its own. So in the fall of 1986, he gathered a diverse group of some 100 community leaders to plan a celebration that would include all aspects of human freedom for which King fought. Some fifteen years later, San Antonio's Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration includes a city-wide series of events culminating with a march that attracts nearly 40,000 people. According to Aronneta Pierce, chair of that first Martin Luther King Jr. Commission, the success of San Antonio's MLK march is no accident, "From the beginning we said, 'let the process of our coming together as planners exemplify the spirit of King.' From the beginning, we were not just planning an event, we were building a community." Indeed, the community created by the MLK Commission continues to pay homage to the past while building future coalitions. The march is always led by a garbage truck in memory of the garbage collector's strike King was supporting in Memphis when he was assassinated. According to Bishop, the march continues to highlight current social justice issues such as voting rights and welfare reform. The Commission also takes the celebration of King's life seriously. For nearly a month leading up to the march, city schools, universities, churches and art centers stage commemorative events including a yearly ecumenical church service. And, on the 3rd Monday in January, as a swelling crowd that includes everyone from NAACP groups to Girl Scouts marches nearly three and a half miles over the New Braunfels Street Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Bridge to MLK Plaza in the heart of San Antonio's Eastside, the inclusive community of King's vision marches on.

Dignowity Hill

The peeling grandeur of Dignowity Hill sits regally atop a sloping hill east of Hackberry Street. Found on the National Historic Registry of Neighborhoods, it is named for Anthony Michael Dignowity, a Czech-American writer, public official and medical doctor who was born in Kuttentberg, Bohemia in 1810. Dignowity immigrated to the US in 1831. He came to San Antonio from Nachez, Mississippi with a group of volunteers for the Mexican War. According to a story in Physicians of the Republic of Texas, he was taking his first meal in San Antonio when he was summoned to take care of some

men hurt in a street fight. He decided to remain in San Antonio and put his skills to use. A noted abolitionist, Dignowity was forced to leave the South in 1861 because he was against secession. His wife remained in San Antonio while he worked in Washington DC during the Civil War. He returned to Texas in 1869 and died in 1875. His widow, Amanda J. Dignowity, also studied medicine although women were not allowed to practice at the time. She ended her studies to accompany her husband to Texas. Despite her husband's difficulty and loss of property during the war, Mrs. Dignowity, a native of Virginia, is quoted in *Indian Wars and Pioneers of Texas* as saying, "I am every inch a Texan...I have no higher wish than to here pass in the quiet of my home, surrounded by my children and grandchildren, the remainder of the years allotted to me on earth."

Dr. Dignowity built this home, often called Harmony House, on a hillside with a fine view of downtown San Antonio. The land remains as present day Dignowity Park. He sold plots of the surrounding land with its fine breezes to his various well-heeled friends. Noted San Antonio families such as the Friedrichs, Elmendorfs, Lockwoods and Otts built homes in this area. According to the San Antonio Historic Society, the area was first settled as estates with one house per block in the 1850's. The homes were typically two story, constructed of limestone and brick, and reflected the best designs of their time.

Emil Elmendorf House

One example of the distinctive design of the Dignowity Hill area is the Emil Elmendorf house on Burleson Street. Designed by prominent architect Alfred Giles, it is one of the few remaining Victorian raised-cottages and is gracefully integrated into the sloping hill of the site. It has a raised main floor and is constructed of random-coursed ashlar limestone with porches across the front and the rear. While there is decorative woodwork concentrated in the front of the house, it is secondary to the spacious and comfortable structural style Giles desired. Giles designs are also seen in the historic King William Neighborhood and in many Southern Texas courthouses. According to *A Guide to San Antonio Architecture*, Giles was the seventh son of a wealthy Englishman who came to San Antonio in 1873 to find a warmer climate for his rheumatic heart. He worked for master builder John H. Kampmann who taught him the characteristics of local building. According to an 1883 *San Antonio Express-News* article, Alfred Giles took bids for the two story, rock, Elmendorf house that were between \$7,400 and \$10,000. The house was built in 1884.

Elmendorf himself was born in New Braunfels, Texas in 1850 and was a respected local businessman who ran a series of hardware stores begun by his father known as Elmendorf and Company. The successful company built a new three-story building on Military Plaza in 1890, carried stock valued at \$100,000 and traded throughout Texas and Mexico. Emil and his brother Henry operated the business after the death of their father, Charles, for whom nearby Elmendorf, Texas is named.

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Hays Street Bridge

Looking down Hays Street from Dignowity Hill one can glimpse the trusses of the iron Hays Street Bridge. In 1982, the city put up steel gates at both ends to prevent cars from falling through the rotted wood deck. The bridge originally carried narrow gauge trains across the wild swamps of the Atchafalaya River in Louisiana. The parts of the Whipplestyle bridge were moved to San Antonio between 1908 and 1910. The bridge is actually two different iron truss bridges linked together, a “whipple” and a “phoenix” style. Only five other Whipple-style bridges exist in Texas. The phoenix style is more common. There is ornate 19th Century scroll work in the upper corners of the trusses. The City of San Antonio named the bridge a historically significant landmark in 1982. Some hope to open it again to pedestrian and bike traffic providing an additional link between Eastside neighborhoods and downtown San Antonio.

Denver Heights

When the railroad station moved from Government Hill down to East Commerce Street, both residential and industrial development shifted. African-Americans began to move farther east. In addition to incoming African-American households, the blocks that surround the rail station were home to German, Jewish, Irish, Polish, Indian, Mexican and Chinese families. The area, known as South Heights, extended out east past New Braunfels Street and North to Nolan Street. In 1916, it was renamed Denver Heights. After the Depression, many Anglos began to move out and establish San Antonio’s first northern suburbs. Many sold their homes to African-American families. While many of the houses were already deteriorating, the proximity to the railway and streetcar lines leading to jobs made them attractive purchases.

Much of Denver Heights was destroyed in the building of the Alamodome. Carlos Richardson, president of the Denver Heights Neighborhood Organization and Director of New Community Builders, is working to salvage what historic homes are left. One is the old Bellinger Clinic on Hackberry Street, which was owned and run by the daughter of Charles Bellinger, Dr. Ruth Bellinger. Another important structure in the neighborhood, the old Leonard Pharmacy, sits on the corner of Iowa and Pine Streets. Owned by W.H Leonard and his wife Belle, the Pharmacy was connected to a movie theater and the old Keyhole Club, a gathering place for political rallies, parties and dancing. Whether for a soda in the pharmacy or something stronger at the Keyhole, nearly every older Eastsider has a story about the shell of the elaborately tiled building at Iowa and Pine. Diagonally across the street from Leonard’s is Han Lee Grocery. In the mid 1900s Wong Shee and Shung Lew bought the store from previous owners and moved into the attached house. The owners of Han Lee are descended from the Chinese families that General Pershing brought to San Antonio from Mexico during his 1916 Punitive Expedition. Most worked at Fort Sam Houston for a number of years before receiving legal immigrant status and moving into the community. The shells of numerous Chinese grocery stores dot the eastside as landmarks to this unique immigration story.

Denver Heights is also home to the Frederick Douglass School. In 1914, the San Antonio Independent School District built this school to serve as the new location for the former Rincon School (located on what is now Convent Street in downtown San Antonio.) This school was established in 1869 to serve African-American students of all ages. It was first called the Rincon Street School, then Riverside School in 1884 and finally renamed for the African-American abolitionist and statesman in 1902. The first principal of Douglass High School at this new campus was S.J. Sutton who began serving the old school in 1891. He remained at Douglass until 1933. In 1924 Douglass incorporated a junior high school into its facility as part of the creation of junior high schools in the city becoming the first junior high in Texas for African-Americans. In 1933, Phyllis Wheatley high School was built for African-Americans and Douglass became solely a junior high. Then in 1969 as a part of school desegregation, Douglass became a nonsegregated elementary school which it remains today.

In 1920, Dr. Charles Austin Whittier brought his young bride Pearl Augusta to their new home in San Antonio. The building still stands on the southeast corner of Crockett and Hackberry Streets. Dr. Whittier went on to establish the Whittier Clinic in a building attached to the house. His widow, now 102, recalls that the clinic had two overnight rooms where Whittier performed minor surgery and kept patients overnight. According to Shirley Boteler Mock's, *San Antonio, Texas, 1900-1940: A Period of Mutual Aid*, there was a ratio of 4,970 black Texans for every black physician in 1932. To address this deficiency, Whittier began training black interns in his clinic. Always politically active, Whittier later became the first black doctor to integrate downtown Santa Rosa Hospital. As State Director of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, Whittier helped bring a suit that brought an end to the exclusion of Negroes from voting in the Texas Democratic Primaries. His widow remembers that the contentious Whittier consistently resisted the limits of segregation. She said, "I would want to go to the plays that came downtown. I mean I really wanted to go but he would say, 'I'm not spending my money to go in someone's back door.' And he wouldn't. And I never did get to go," she mused.

Charles Bellinger 1875-1937

The past promise and prosperity experienced by the Eastside owes much to Charles Bellinger. Born in Lockhart, Texas on April 15, 1875, Bellinger was a youngster when he was first hired by a white gambler to run his game. Savvy young "Charlie" not only made the man rich, he earned enough to move his own young family to San Antonio in 1905. Indeed, one story says Bellinger was on his way to Reno, Nevada when he stopped for a poker game in San Antonio and won \$10,000. He immediately declared San Antonio was "his Reno" and called the city home. This gambler's luck continued during his prosperous life as a true political boss whose power spanned beyond the edges of the Eastside.

Eventually Bellinger won enough to open several saloons, a real estate firm, a finance company, the first black theater, cafes and other businesses that provided countless jobs

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for African-Americans. However, Bellinger made his real money in the “numbers.” Under the turned-away eye of local police, Bellinger’s lotto consisted of the numbers 1 through 80. A correct pick of nine or ten won the jackpot. Five to seven correct won a player smaller amounts of money. Everyone from black maids and porters to rich white ladies played the “numbers.” The money Bellinger made on this lottery and his other enterprises transferred to immense political power. By organizing black voters into a powerful and desirable voting block for political candidates, Bellinger brokered favors and services for the Eastside. His support for then-mayor, John Tobin, is said to have resulted in paving, lights, plumbing, a meeting hall and a branch library for the Eastside. Indeed, the power Bellinger enjoyed was a rarity for an African-American. San Antonio was one of the few cities in Texas that allowed African-Americans to vote in Democratic Primaries. He controlled city elections for nearly fifteen years due to his control of the votes of nearly 1/4 of the voters.

One oft-told story holds that a young nervous would-be politician showed up at Bellinger’s office seeking his approval. After waiting nervously outside Bellinger’s door to be admitted, the young man was finally seen. Bellinger gave the politician his support and the young man went on to a long successful career in politics. His name was Lyndon B. Johnson. One politician who publicly decried Bellinger’s influence was the legendary Maury Maverick. Maverick at one time tried to repeal the fought-for presence of African-Americans in the election primaries simply because he resented that Bellinger’s power prevented Maverick from gaining a permanent political foothold in the city.

Sterling Houston recalled how his father became one of Bellinger’s proteges and eventually opened his own clubs and businesses. “When you think about it,” said Houston, “There were not many options.” Such employment paved the way for the children of Bellinger and his associates to educate their children, many of whom went on to great success in more legitimate fields. It was a risky business. A 1936, “failure to pay income taxes,” that was revealed by a disgruntled politician got Bellinger an 18-month sentence in Leavenworth prison and a \$30,000 fine. However, rumor has it that connections to FDR secured his parole shortly thereafter.

Inman’s Barber Shop

Some have said that the civil rights movement in San Antonio was born in Mr. Inman’s barber chair. Indeed, faded blue and red barber stripes on the front of the building’s shell at 827 Hackberry still recall an era when the plans and politics swirled around the heads of Eastside leaders and local boys alike. According to *San Antonio Express-News* columnist Cary Clack, who grew up on the Eastside, “Going to Inman’s meant many things: going to get a haircut, going to get religion, going to talk politics, going to organize or going for fellowship.” And while the legendary shop stands empty, the legacy of John Inman thrives.

Born in 1896 to a farmer and his wife in a settlement of some 12 to 15 African-American families southeast of San Antonio, Inman cut hair while getting his degree at Guadalupe Seminary College in Seguin. He went on to use that degree to teach from behind the chair rather than inside the pulpit. During WWII Inman was kicked off of Kelly Air Force Base where he was living and had his first barbershop. Later, Inman opened his shop on Hackberry during the 1920's and it was soon the spot where you could find information on issues affecting the African-American community. As A.C. Sutton once said, "Anything that looked like a movement, he would be a part of." At the Hackberry St. Shop nearly all his income came from within the African-American community and he was free from sanctions from the white community for his activism.

The role of the black barber is not that different from that of the African "griot" or storyteller who held onto the stories of a village. He spread the news of the community and initiated young boys into the talk of politics, sports and women. Indeed, within the walls of Inman's, black men and boys found a safe space to talk, to plan and to protest.

In 1928, Inman was elected president of the local NAACP. Over the years, he organized Eastside residents to sign up for the poll tax and to petition City Hall for more fire hydrants on the Eastside. When pecan workers organized for better wages and working conditions during the Depression, Inman encouraged them to use his shop as a meeting place. He also actively pushed African-Americans to patronize businesses that did not racially discriminate. In interviews before his death at 100, John Inman recalled the rocky years of 60's when he participated in restaurant sit-ins in San Antonio. He once said, "The harder they fought me the harder I fought back. I was never afraid of risking my life for the cause of justice and freedom."

Carver Cultural Center

Another story of risk and commitment on the Eastside is that of Ms. Norva Hill. During the 1960s, the building now known as the Carver Community Cultural Center had fallen into disuse. As the story goes, bulldozers arrived and Hill and other employees of a social service agency called United Citizens Project Planning and Operating Committee stood in protest before the machines. The women demanded that the city save the building that housed the literary and cultural soul of the Eastside. The bulldozers stopped.

The story of the Carver is nearly a century old. From 1905 to 1929 a Colored Library Association organized by Eastside civic leaders provided library services for the African American community with help from the Carnegie Library board. The library was originally housed in a wood frame structure. In 1919, the association received the support of the War Services Board to finance construction of a larger assembly building. In the early 1920's the City of San Antonio retired the outstanding notes on the property and became the owner. Then in 1929 the old buildings were demolished and a new structure was funded by a \$75,000 appropriation of a city bond issue. Some claim that

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city officials simply did not want African Americans to use the new downtown Municipal Auditorium. Benevolent in intention or not, the new building was renamed the Carver Library Auditorium.

Nearly every elderly Eastsider has a story about the Library Auditorium. Henrietta Stevenson remembers her kindergarten graduation and watching with awe as an older cousin went off to a dance. Joyce Sowell met her husband on the stage at one of the Center's many fashion shows. "It is a real love story, the Carver and me."

In addition to community events of all kinds, the Carver was a stop on the "chitlin circuit," a semi-official name for the tour of clubs, churches and community centers that African-American entertainers would play during segregation. According to Bernice Williams, who included the Carver in a project on lost jazz shrines, performers such as Etta James, Redd Foxx, Gatmouth Brown, Duke Ellington, Charlie "Bird" Parker, Count Basie and many others regularly played the Carver. Many of these performers played whites-only shows at the Majestic Theater or other venues and then came and jammed after-hours in black clubs.

After desegregation, changes in housing patterns and poor maintenance of the building led to its closure and resulted in the demolition order which Hill's protest halted. Eventually the efforts she spearheaded convinced the city to renovate the building. The remodeled structure opened in 1976. The Carver Development Board, a city-appointed independent 501(c) 3 governing body hired Jo Long as Director. She served the center until 1999. With Long's arrival, the focus of the center became multi-cultural visual and performing arts with an emphasis on African-American culture. Long's skill in developing diverse programming garnered national praises for the center.

In September of 1997, the Carver Development board announced plans for the Carver Complex. The \$12 million plan is anchored by a \$5 million dollar commitment from San Antonio Spurs center David Robinson and his wife Valerie through the David M. Robinson Foundation. Plans for the complex include the Carver Academy, a privately financed and governed school for 220 children from kindergarten through eighth grade; the Little Carver Civic Center housed in the historic Porter Memorial Church, new facilities for the Carver School of Visual and Performing Arts, a renovated Carver Center and rehabilitated housing in the area. Indeed, the "spur" of Robinson's gift has sparked interest in the housing stock and other abandoned properties including a plan to renovate the 472,000 square foot Friedrich Air Conditioning factory building.

Carver Public Information Officer Ross Horner said "I think the truest legacy of the Carver is seen when an elderly man stops at the historic plaque on the outside of the building and tells his grandson, "I checked out my first book here." With the Carver's big plans for multifaceted development, that child may one day tell his own grandson,

“This is where I decided to be a dancer or a painter or a writer. This is where I learned about my community and the world.”

Colored YWCA/Delta House/Myra Davis Hemmings Resource Center (MDHRC)

South of Dignowity Park at 328 N. Pine Street is a renovated gray Victorian house with a wide wraparound porch. Inside the glass-paned front door, the row of portraits that hang on a wall of the Myra Davis Hemmings Resource Center (MHDRC) seem to watch over what goes on inside the house. Indeed, the faces in the photos, past Presidents of San Antonio’s Delta Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Inc., could tell stories about all that has passed by these sturdy walls. The most important story would explain how this building has housed a century of service and commitment to African-Americans in San Antonio.

One of the faces on the wall is Joyce Sowell. In addition to being a past Delta President, Sowell was the teen program director of the YWCA from 1946-49. The MHDRC is located in what was the YWCA’s building. In response to San Antonio’s African-American community’s desire for a YWCA, a branch was opened on the Eastside in 1918. For over 60 years, the center served as an important meeting place for African-Americans from all parts of the city. “We planned all kinds of activities,” said Sowell. “We would have ‘Friday Hops’ and charm classes. Young people would come by all the time just to see what we were having.”

But like many Eastside institutions, the “Y” discontinued programming by 1970. And like many houses in the area, the building deteriorated and was vandalized. The house remained vacant until 1980 when the Deltas asked the city for permission to purchase the building, which sat on four city-owned lots. The sorority got a loan to purchase the house. They acquired the property on July 27, 1981 and eventually secured \$300,000 in community Development Grants for the restoration project. Today, the building includes a living room, dining room kitchen, office, four meeting rooms, two complete baths, a library, elevator, handicapped access, central heat and air and a large auditorium on the second floor. The building was formally dedicated on September 7, 1986 and the women burned the mortgage September 19, 1993.

The MDHRC is named after longtime San Antonio resident Myra Davis Hemmings. Hemmings taught English and drama at Douglass and Phyllis Wheatley Schools. Together with her husband John W. Hemmings, she founded the San Antonio Negro Little Theater Company in 1931. According to a December 18, 1931 article in *The Register* (San Antonio), the Company performed “Bought and Paid For” in the Carver Library Auditorium that year. The entire proceeds of the play were given to charity.

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Ella Austin Community Center

Farther north on Pine Street is yet another organization with a century long commitment to the Eastside. On any given day, over 150 children will receive comfort and care, hundreds of meals will be served to senior citizens, and established San Antonio artists will meet with young “Artists in the Making.” If visitors are lucky, they might catch folk artist Rev. Seymour Perkins leading the morning Senior Nutrition Program’s Gospel Choir. In the corner of the room where the Senior Nutrition Program gathers and sings is a lone picture of a woman. She has upswept hair, fine features and dark determined eyes. Her name is Ella Austin and this work happens in her name.

Housed in the former Ralph Waldo Emerson Junior High School, the Ella Austin Community Center operates in tribute to a woman whose name is more known than her history. What is known is that, in 1897, the married but childless Sunday school teacher became appalled by a lack of social services on the Eastside and started taking homeless children into her own home. Austin’s original orphanage at 1920 Burnet St. now houses the Ella Austin Health Center. This clinic provides medical and dental care for more than 7,000 children and adults yearly on a sliding scale, pay-as-you-can basis.

In the early 1900s, Austin, with the help of the Women’s Progressive Club, purchased that property on Burnet Street and built a two-story building that served as an orphanage for decades. A 1915 notebook of Progressive Club’s minutes found in the papers of Mrs. Annie Carter lists the names of the committees working for the orphanage. Carter was on the Transport Committee that used the horse and buggy from her Carter Undertaking Company. 102-year-old Augusta Whittier remembers that she was on the Food Committee. Whittier, who joined the club in 1920 does not remember meeting Austin. “I think she was gone before my time,” she said. The Progressive Women’s Club still leases the Burnet Street building to the Health Center for \$1/year. Over the years the building was rebuilt after a fire; it also served as a day care facility for senior citizens. In 1968 the board decided to close the orphanage in favor of the multi-service center. In 1980, the health service center, which maintained its Burnet Street location, was officially separated from the community center.

The San Antonio Light once reported that Austin lived from 1856-1902 and that her husband was a barber. A barber named Edward Austin is registered as a ‘colored’ man in the 1900 city census which says he was married to an A.S. Austin born in 1856 in Ohio. The couple had one child who was not living at the time of the census. Their address was listed as 926 W. Houston. Whether the census taker misunderstood or misspelled Ella or if the details of her personal life remain a mystery, her commitment to social service on the Eastside endures.

Artemisia Bowden and St. Philip's College

A 1902 early letter to Artemisia Bowden from James Steptoe Johnson, bishop of the West Texas Diocese of the Episcopal Church reads:

I include \$32 to defray expenses in San Antonio. I have old fashioned thoughts about you traveling on Sunday, and do not think it should be done unless necessary... In order for your identification you will please have a bow of red ribbon about 1/2 inch on your left shoulder.

The woman who stepped off of a train with a ribbon on her shoulder stepped into a legendary place in the story of education of African-Americans San Antonio. Bowden served for 52 years as dean of the college. But the St. Philips story begins before her time.

In 1885 a small group of educated blacks approached Johnson with request to form St. Philips College. St. Philip's Church was part of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Johnson then began what was called St. Philip's Normal and Industrial School. This first school offered weekend sewing classes for six black girls held by a Miss Cowan in an old adobe house at what is now 502 La Villita, the original location where the Canary Islanders settled.

In 1902, Johnson hired Bowden as administrator and teacher. Under her supervision the school grew from an industrial school for girls into a high school and later a junior college. During this period the institution was known as Bowden's School. In 1917 Bowden moved the school from La Villita to the Eastside of San Antonio. In 1925 the school built the Johnson Memorial Building. Joske of the Joske Department store donated \$6,000 to the \$41,844 of the building.

St. Philip's remained a private Episcopal school until the Depression when the church and Diocese of West Texas could not handle financial responsibility. Bowden took on the responsibility of keeping the school financially soluble. Her first act was campaigning to have the San Antonio Independent School District take over the institution because it supported all white schools. Finally, in 1942 after numerous refusals, the board reluctantly agreed to incorporate St. Philip's. It became a municipal junior college affiliated with San Antonio College under the auspices of the San Antonio Independent School District. The name St. Philip's Junior College was retained.

Elderly African-Americans, like Georgia, in the neighborhoods still remember the early days when "Miss Bowden came knocking on doors to get mamas to take their kids to school." Georgia went to school at St. Philips. She and her brother Sylvester both graduated from St. Philip's College. Sylvester remembers years later when you wouldn't see Bowden for months "because she would be out

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raising money on the East Coast.” By all accounts, Bowden was a ceaseless advocate and a tireless fundraiser.

The transition to a public junior college increased the diversity of St. Philip’s population. A district board of trustees eventually replaced the SAISD and was called the San Antonio Union Junior College District (now Alamo Community College District). Under this administration in, 1955, St. Philip’s college began admitting white students and black students were admitted to San Antonio College. The current student body is 47% Latino, 30% Anglo, 21% Black, 3% Other.

Artemisia Bowden began a tradition of commitment to educating a diverse population and providing focused career-based training. Her motto...”Learn to do something, and do that something well,” still holds as true today as the 1902 afternoon she stepped off of that train.

St. Peter Claver/ Healy Murphy Learning Center

This will be my work someday; it is the great need of this time. The Holy Spirit has helped me to make this decision. –Mother Margaret Mary Healy Murphy

No one who overheard these words, uttered to a friend by an Irish woman one Sunday morning in 1887, knew that they would continue to impact education in San Antonio in the 21st Century. But the details of Mother Margaret Mary Healy Murphy’s early life of compassion and service might well have predicted her future. No doubt the legacy of St. Peter Claver School and the ongoing work of Healy Murphy Learning Center prove her commitment to filling great needs of the time.

When Margaret Mary Healy Murphy moved into a house at 215 Blum in San Antonio (near today’s Rivercenter Mall) she was both a widow and an orphan. She was born Margaret Mary Healy to Richard and Jane Healy in Cahirciveen, County Kerry, Ireland on May 4, 1833. Her mother died when she was only five. She immigrated to the United States with her father, a physician, in 1845. They settled in West Virginia where education was considered the responsibility of the family. Together with other German and Irish immigrants, the Healy family began a Sunday School for adults and children. They also taught reading and writing to many of the African-American plantation workers in the area. Exposure to the plight of these workers sensitized the young Healy Murphy to the importance of education. Eventually her family moved to New Orleans. Shortly thereafter she lost her father. The family then moved to Matamoros, Mexico to settle in an enclave of Irish immigrants. Tragedy continued when both of Margaret’s brothers and an uncle left Mexico for the California Gold Rush and never returned. Margaret remained with her aunts and soon met an Irish entrepreneur named John Bernard Murphy. They were married in the Matamoros Cathedral on May 4, 1849, her sixteenth birthday.

The Murphys built a ranch in San Patricio County and the lessons Healy Murphy learned from her physician father helped her care for the ill throughout the rugged region. One morning, she encountered an abandoned Mexican girl named Delphine. She was never able to locate the girl's family and soon the girl became her close companion. Many years later, Delphine was the woman who heard Healy Murphy's comment after church about helping educate African-Americans in San Antonio.

The Murphys relocated to Corpus Christi and Bernard Murphy became a successful lawyer and eventual mayor of the town. Healy Murphy again found herself in constant service tending to victims of a yellow fever epidemic in the town and a devastating 1875 hurricane. Again, she endured personal loss when her husband became ill and died in 1884.

That tragic turn sent Margaret first to Temple, Texas to make an unsuccessful attempt at starting a school for black children. She eventually came to San Antonio. It was 1887 and the 13th Amendment had theoretically made slaves citizens. However, Jim Crow laws and immeasurable social discrimination had left the black illiteracy rate at more than 80%.

Furthermore, the legal requirement of educating the races separately obstructed the construction of sufficient public schools for the African-American population. Using money from her husband's estate, Healy Murphy bought property at the corner of Live Oak and Nolan for \$2,800. She opened St. Peter Claver School at this site on September 17, 1888 and dedicated an adjoining church on September 18, 1888. It was the first private school in Texas dedicated to serving African-American children. The school was named for the newly canonized Jesuit Saint who had devoted his life to helping slaves. By January, St. Peter Claver School had 60 children but Healy Murphy's hardships continued, this time they were financial. There was much discrimination against the school and little funding. According to Sr. Mary Boniface O'Neill, former principal of St. Peter Claver, "a banker said to Mother Mary, 'Yes, if you change your mission (to educate black children) you can have all the money you want.'" Eventually, Healy Murphy began a religious order, the Sisters of the Holy Ghost to stabilize staffing at the school. Beginning in 1896, she made numerous recruitment trips to Ireland to bring young nuns back to serve with the Order.

Sister Boniface was one of those nuns. She taught at the school for 36 years before becoming director in 1970. Academics at St. Peter Claver were excellent. The school persisted through both World Wars and the Great Depression. By the 1940s Catholic schools in San Antonio had began to integrate. Public schools followed in the late 1950s and by the 60s there was less need for the institution. Led by Sister Boniface, the school refocused its vision and changed its name to the Healy Murphy Learning Center (HMLC). Now an alternative high school and Day Care Center, HMLC serves dropouts, pregnant girls and other students who do not succeed in conventional school

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environments. No longer a religious school, HMLC is chartered by the state of Texas and includes vocational and traditional academic training. While different in nature, the mission of HMLC echoes the original hopes of Mother Margaret Mary Healy Murphy: to find a great need and fill it.

Holy Redeemer Catholic Church

Bishop John Anthony Forest was the 3rd Catholic Bishop of San Antonio and was witness to remarkable growth in the diocese in the early 1900s. His most lasting achievement was overseeing the increase in charitable institutions. He established the Home for the Colored Poor in San Antonio in 1901. This home became the core of Holy Redeemer Parish. In February of 1901 Rev. A. J. Dumolin, pastor of St. Peter Claver's Church for Catholic African-Americans, sought to obtain four lots held by the diocese at what was then called East-End between Vargas and Gevers Streets. Dumolin petitioned Forest for the property, received it and began construction later that year. The first buildings were completed in April and mass was celebrated that Thanksgiving. East-End African-American Catholics continued to be served by leaders of St. Peter Claver until 1910 when Father Welbers set up Holy Redeemer Parish as a separate and independent unit. A Josephite Priest, Welbers, was pastor of Holy Redeemer for 37 years. During his tenure the church, school and rectory were built. The church continued to grow. Holy Redeemer Credit Union was founded in 1950. A new convent was started in 1960. The Parish school closed in 1968 when the Josephite sisters withdrew from the parish.

Conclusion

Indeed, the streets of San Antonio's Eastside are lined with legends. Some are living, some are only stories and some are coming back to life. When Rev. Claude Black speaks at Mt. Zion Baptist Church, one can imagine the early thatched lean-tos in the Baptist settlement swelling with praise and promise. It is a promise of community still seen in the craftsmanship of the early German and Eastern European settlers who built the wooden houses that line the shady streets. It is the promise of struggle felt in the tens of thousands of feet that march in memory of Martin Luther King every January. It is the promise of rebirth with each new nail that strengthens the renovated Ellis Alley Settlements and with each child that learns to dance, sing and imagine at the Carver Community Center. It is a promise of progress yet to come, a promise of a vibrant past not to be forgotten.

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Neighborhoods Acting Together

Councilman Mario Salas and the Fair Share Agreement Committee

Alamo City Chamber of Commerce

African-American Chamber of Commerce

Community of Churches for Social Action

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The San Antonio Public Library, Main Library, Texana collection.
St. Philip's College Archives

The Private Collection of Vera Williams Young

Special thanks to the input of community historians and their generous work to ensure that this history is not lost.

Mark Barnes, archivist at St. Philip's College

Rev. Claude Black, pastor, Mt. Zion Baptist Church and former city councilperson

Travis Bishop, Assistant City Manager

Edwin Glossen, editor of The Register

Nettie Hinton, eastside activist

Ross Horne, lifelong eastside resident

Sterling Houston, playwright

Larry Maggott, owner of Maggott's grocery

Sylvester Mitchell, eastside resident

Aaronetta Pierce, Martin Luther King Commission

Carlos Richardson, President, Denver Heights Neighborhood Association

Henrietta Stevenson, eastside resident

A.C. Sutton, Director, Sutton's Paradise Funeral Home

Augusta Whittier, Widow of CA Whittier and lifelong eastside resident

Bernice Williams, artist and community activist

Mariah Pfeiffer, community historian

Vera Williams Young, Director, Carter, Taylor, Williams Mortuary

Appendix A

About the writer:

Jenny Browne has a bachelor's degree in African American studies from University of Wisconsin, Madison. She has worked and studied in Africa, Central America, Eastern Europe, and Asia as a travel correspondent. In San Antonio, she works as a journalist and as a poet in residence for the Texas Commission on the Arts, Arts San Antonio, and Gemini Ink. She was nominated for a 2000 Pushcart Prize and her poems will be featured with the other Texas poets in the Poetry Society of America's Poetry in Motion Project in Austin, Texas. Her first collection, *Glass* was published in 2000 by Pecan Grove Press.

About **Gemini Ink**:

When the Office of Cultural Affairs began to work on developing the Neighborhood Discovery Tours, it contracted with Gemini Ink to handle the researching, writing and editing of the manuscripts.

Gemini Ink is San Antonio's non-profit, literary arts center. It is located in new offices at 513 S. Presa, San Antonio, Texas 78205. Their phone is 210-734-WORD (9673) or Toll-free 877-734-WORD (9673). Fax is 210-737-0688 and email is info@geminiink.org

The mission of Gemini Ink is:

- ? to celebrate art in literature
- ? to expose as wide a segment of the area's population as possible to the best current and classical literature in an entertaining, educational and enlightening fashion
- ? to design a program of the humanities, involving professional performers from several artistic disciplines for each performance, including writers, actors, singers, musicians, and academic scholars
- ? to celebrate individual bodies of literature which identify with various cultural or ethnic groups, thereby encouraging cross-cultural acceptance
- ? to offer university-and master-level classes in various types of writing, literature, theory, philosophy, psychology, and the related arts

AACOG – Alamo Area Council of Governments. An independent board that acts as a liaison between the Federal Government and localities that has programs that address: aging, criminal justice, natural resources, economic development, transportation, workforce development and housing.

Abut or Abutting - Having property lines in common.

Access Management - a plan showing the design of access, or the vehicular approach, for lots on a road segment, often developed jointly by the state, county, and local governments.

Accessory Apartment – A Dwelling Unit located within the Principal Dwelling, and that is accessory, supplementary, and secondary to the Principal Dwelling Unit. An Accessory Apartment may be constructed as an attached addition to the principal use or occupied as an accessory to the principal use. An Accessory Apartment is located within the same building as the Principal Dwelling Unit.

Accessory building – A building subordinate to the use of the primary building located on the same lot, such as a detached garage, out-building, or storage building.

Accessory Dwelling Unit – A dwelling unit that is accessory, supplementary, and secondary to the principal dwelling unit that may be constructed as an addition to the principal structure or as an accessory to the principal structure.

Acequia – Spanish term for irrigation ditch.

ADA – American with Disabilities Act.

Adaptive reuse – The development of a new use for an older building or for a building originally designed for a specific purpose.

Affordable Housing – A unit of housing, which does not exceed in cost 30% of the gross household income, including utilities and maintenance, for families as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

AIA – American Institute of Architects.

Alley – A road primarily used to access the rear of residences and businesses, not designed for general traffic.

Amortization – As related to zoning, a method of eliminating nonconforming uses by requiring the termination of the nonconforming use after a specified time period.

Annexation – the procedure by which additional territory, usually previously unincorporated, is added to an existing municipality and becomes a part of it.

Annual Improvement Project Report (AIRP) - An annual report prepared by the Planning Department in coordination with the Housing and Neighborhood Action Team (HNAT) that details the capital and operating needs identified in neighborhood and community plans.

Arterial Street – A route used primarily for the movement of traffic, which may be both local and non-local in nature. Several classifications include:

Primary Arterial – A major thoroughfare, with limited at-grade access, which expands and links to the expressway system and is designed primarily for the movement to through traffic between activity centers of medium intensity.

Secondary Arterial – A major thoroughfare, with limited at-grade access, which supports the primary arterial system by providing essential system linkages to expressways, primary arterials, and activity centers of medium intensity.

Also see expressway, collector street, local access street, and alley

At-Grade Crossing – The general area where two or more roadways, railways, and/or pathways join or cross. For example, an at-grade railroad crossing has a street going across the railroad tracks.

Base Flood – The flood having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. (i.e. 100-Year Frequency Flood)

Best management practices (BMP) - An effective integration of stormwater management systems, with appropriate combinations of landscape conservation, enhancement, structural controls, impervious cover, schedules of activities, prohibitions of practices, maintenance procedures and other management practices which provide an optimum way to convey, store and release runoff, so as to reduce peak discharge, remove pollutants, and enhance the environment.

Bicycle Lane – A portion of the roadway that has been designated for preferential or exclusive use by bicycles, usually by striping, signing and/or pavement markings.

Bicycle Path – A designated paved travelway intended for bicycle use, to the exclusion of routine motor vehicle use.

Bicycle Trail – A bicycle facility designed to accommodate bicycle travel on unpaved roads and trails.

Board of Adjustment (BOA) – A quasi-judicial appellate body responsible for holding hearings and making decisions on special exemptions to the zoning requirements of the Unified Development Code and the Sign Ordinance. In specific cases authorizes variances to the UDC where hardship is not solely financial and will not be contrary to the public interest. Appeals to the board's decisions can be made to district court. The Board has eleven members and 4 alternates appointed by City Council for two-year terms. Meets the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month at 1:30 PM in Development Business Service Center.

Bollard – A post or similar obstruction that prevents the passage of vehicles. The spacing of bollards usually allows the passage of bicycles and pedestrians. Bollards may incorporate lighting.

Buffer – A strip of land that physically and/or visually separates two land uses, especially if the uses are incompatible, or to shield or block noise, lights or other nuisances. This can include fences and berms as well as shrubbery and trees.

Buffer Yard—A unit of yard together with enough planting to eliminate or minimize potential negative impacts such as dirt, litter, noise, glare of lights, signs and unsightly buildings between different land use intensity classes.

Building coverage – The percentage of the lot area covered by the building area.

Bungalow – Historic term popular in the early 20th century describing most any small, affordable, comfortable American suburban house.

Bungalow Style - Developed from a blend of Oriental, Arts and Crafts, and Prairie School influences, characteristics of this architectural style include low pitched roofs and wide eaves; exposed rafter ends and knee-brace eave brackets, asymmetrical facades with front porches supported by massive, battered piers, sometimes of rustic materials.

Bus Shelter – A roofed structure with at least three walls located on or adjacent to the right-of-way of a street, and which is designed and used primarily for the protection and convenience of bus passengers.

Bus stop bulb – A portion of the sidewalk that extends out to the lane of traffic at a bus stop providing wider sidewalk space and more room for waiting bus passengers and street furniture. This provides a minimum loss of on-street parking by allowing buses to pick up and drop off passengers while stopped in the traffic lane next to the bulb. Buses do not have to re-enter the flow of traffic, thus saving valuable transit time.

Bus only lanes – Curb lane segments on high-volume arterials that are dedicated exclusively to buses and other high-occupancy vehicles in order to help the speed and reliability of buses.

Bus pullout/turnout – A section of pavement at a bus stop that allows buses to leave the flow of traffic while stopped to load and unload passengers.

Bus zone landing pad – A paved area between the sidewalk and the curb for bus riders to board and disembark without having to step in the grass or mud in the planting strip. Especially useful for riders in wheelchairs or with strollers.

CAPCBC – College Access Project for Corporations and the Business Community.

Capital Improvements Program – The list of recommended capital improvements to be constructed during the forthcoming five-year period.

CDC – Community Development Corporation. A corporation established 1) by investors or membership, which develops housing, fosters economic growth and revitalization, creates small businesses, and supports other community development initiatives; 2) within a defined neighborhood or area; and 3) whose profits, dividends, tax credits and other distributions from equity investments or interest income are devoted to activities that primarily promote the public welfare.

Census tract – Small areas into which large cities and adjacent areas have been divided for statistical purposes. Each census tract is based upon an average population of four thousand people.

Certificate of occupancy (“C of O”) - A certificate indicating that the premises comply with all the provisions of this Chapter and the building code. Note: the certificate of occupancy is issued after approval of a building permit and construction has occurred pursuant to the building permit.

Charrette – Is a brainstorming exercise that results in a quick visual presentation of the generated ideas.

Chicane – A set of three landscaped curb bulbs that extend out into the street in order to narrow the road and force motorists to decrease vehicle speed. Also known as deviations, serpentine, reversing curves and twists.

Choker – A set of two curb bulbs that extend out into the street that narrows the road and causes motorists to slow their speed. Can be located at the intersection or in mid-block. Also known as pinch points, constrictions, mid-block narrowings and mid-block yield points. Similar to curb bulbs.

CIP—Capital Improvements Program. The list of recommended capital improvements to be constructed in the forthcoming five-year period.

Clear Vision Area - The triangular area adjacent to the intersection of any street within which no obstruction may be placed which would block the sight lines for vehicular traffic.

Cluster development – A design technique that concentrates buildings in specific areas on the site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, and/or preservation of environmentally sensitive features.

Collector street – A street that carries traffic from minor streets to the major system of arterial streets and highways.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Federal entitlement funds that provide housing programs, street and drainage reconstruction, parks, neighborhood facilities, and other public services to directly benefit low and moderate income communities. The funds are administered by the City’s Housing and Community Development Department in compliance with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulatory and policy requirements.

Community Facilities – Services or conveniences provided for or available to a community. Examples include parks, libraries, fire/police stations, etc.

Community Policing – The practice of crime prevention by assigning a police officer permanently to a specific sector for surveillance by foot or bicycle patrol. Community policing differs from the common practice of responding to emergencies by patrol car on a city-wide basis.

Community Revitalization Action Group (CRAG) – A 24 member blue-ribbon committee appointed by the City Council to identify impediments to revitalization, analyze methods for revitalization inside Loop 410, and focus on private investment and private/public partnerships.

Conservation District – See Neighborhood Conservation District.

Conservation Easement – A nonpossessory interest of a holder in real property that imposes limitations or affirmative obligations designed to 1) retain or protect natural, scenic, or open space values of real property or assure its availability for agricultural, forest, recreational, or open space use; 2) protect natural resources; 3) maintain or enhance air or water quality; or 4) Preserve the historical, architectural, archeological, or cultural aspects of real property.

Consolidated Plan – A five year comprehensive plan and strategy developed to assess housing, infrastructure, and social service needs that is submitted with an application for federal funds under the Housing and Urban Development’s formula grant programs.

COP – Cellular On Patrol. A program that prepares neighborhood residents to be the “eyes and ears” of the police and promote cooperation between residents and the city agencies that exist to serve them.

Corridor District – an overlay zoning district that addresses special siting and compatibility issues along arterials and expressways in the Major Thoroughfare Plan. Corridor Districts address site development standards such as signage, landscaping, building materials, tree preservation, and setbacks. Unlike Neighborhood Conservation Districts, a Corridor District does not include design standards.

COSA – City of San Antonio.

CPS – City Public Service. San Antonio’s municipal utility service provider.

Crosswalk – The marked or unmarked portion of the roadway designated for pedestrians to cross the street.

Curb bulb – An extension of the curb line into the roadway. This improves pedestrian crossings by providing better visibility between motorists and pedestrians, shortening the crossing distance, and reducing the time that pedestrians are in the street. They also prevent vehicles from parking in a crosswalk and may encourage motorists to drive more slowly. Intersections may have full or half-corner curb bulbs. Also known as flares.

Curb cut – An opening in the curb where vehicles may enter or leave the roadway. Where there is no curb, the point at which the driveway meets the roadway pavement is considered the curb cut.

Curb radius – Refers to the degree of curvature of the curb at a corner. Other conditions being equal, a large curb radius allows right-turning vehicles to turn more quickly than a small curb radius. A reduced curb radius shortens the pedestrian crossing distance, improves visibility between pedestrians and motorists, reduces the speed at which motorists can turn, and may add parking spaces to the street.

Curb ramp – The area of the sidewalk, usually at the intersection, that allows easy access/transition for wheelchairs, strollers, and other wheeled equipment, between the sidewalk and the street.

Demolition – The complete or partial removal of a structure from a site.

Density – An objective measure of the number of people or residential units allowed per unit of land, such as employees or residents per acre.

Design Enhancements – Means unique artworks in a variety of media that are an integral part of eligible capital improvement projects, and produced by professional visual artists or craft persons, or an artist or craft person in collaboration with an architect, landscape architect or engineer. Works may be permanent or temporary, functional or non-functional.

Design Standards – Design standards are intended to provide a framework of design criteria within which physical planning can take place. The standards provide suggestions for the design of new homes/businesses and repair/rehabilitation of existing homes/businesses in order to maintain the overall character of the neighborhood. Generally, character-defining elements such as front porches, roof slopes, etc. are emphasized in residential standards while setbacks, canopies and signage may be emphasized in commercial standards.

Development – Any man-made change in improved and unimproved real estate, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, drilling operations or storage of equipment or materials.

Downzoning – The reduction of the intensity of a zoning district through a formal zone change process.

Drainage swale – A shallow, grassy drainage channel that accommodates surface water runoff, treating the runoff as it passes through the channel by catching sediments. Used on streets without curbs and gutters. Can be planted with wildflowers or perennials.

Duplex – A building used exclusively for residential purposes containing two dwelling units.

Dwelling – A building or portion of a building designed exclusively for residential occupancy, but not including motels and hotels.

Dwelling Unit – A building or portion of a building designed exclusively for residential occupancy by one family and provided with sanitation and cooking facilities.

Easement – A grant of one or more of the property rights by the property owner to and/or for the use by the public, a corporation, or another person or entity.

Economic Base – The foundation on which a neighborhood relies for economic sustainability.

Economic Development – Describes the process by which the functioning of economic markets is improved. Economic development may include equipping residents with the skills and resources to enable them to take advantage of the new market opportunities.

Effective sidewalk width – The width of the sidewalk area available for walking or wheelchair travel, unobstructed by street furniture, telephone poles or other impediments.

Egress – A means of exit.

Eminent domain – The authority of a government to take, or authorize the taking of, private property for public use. The Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution requires just compensation for any taking and prohibits the taking of private property for private use unless declared blighted.

Empowerment Zone – Program run by the Department of Housing and Urban Development designed to generate new investment and employment in declining sub-areas of cities through targeted fiscal incentives and regulatory relief. The program provides tax incentives, grants and loans and regulatory relief to produce employment and expand enterprise. It also focuses on activities to support people looking for work such as job training, child care and transportation.

EPA – Environmental Protection Agency. Established pursuant to federal law, EPA's mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment — air, water, and land — upon which life depends.

Expressway – A limited access, normally grade-separated, thoroughfare designed for the movement of large volumes of vehicular traffic operating at high speeds for long distances, connecting principal or regional activity centers.

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) – The unincorporated area generally within five miles of the San Antonio City Limits. Within the ETJ, the City may regulate the subdivision of land and the formation of special districts, such as Municipal Utility Districts.

Façade – the exterior wall of a building exposed to public view.

Family – (as defined by the Census Bureau) A group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together; all such people (including related subfamily members) are considered as members of one family. Beginning with the 1980 Current Population Survey, unrelated subfamilies (referred to in the past as secondary families) are no longer included in the count of families, nor are the members of unrelated subfamilies included in the count of family members. The number of families is equal to the number of family households, however, the count of family members differs from the count of family household members because family household members include any non-relatives living in the household.

Family Households – (as defined by the Census Bureau) A household maintained by a householder who is in a family, and includes any unrelated people (unrelated subfamily members and/or secondary individuals) who may be residing there. The number of family households is equal to the number of families. The count of family household members differs from the count of family members, however, in that the family household members include all people living in the household, whereas family members include only the householder and his/her relatives.

FHWA – Federal Highway Administration.

Flood Hazard Boundary Map – An official map of a community, issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, where the areas within the boundaries of special flood hazards have been designated as Zone A.

Floodplain – Any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source.

Four Square – A type of 1- or 2-story American house popular from 1910 – 1940, characterized by a pyramidal roof, central front dormer and symmetrical façade. The name reflects a square plan with four rooms per floor, sometimes divided by a central hall.

Frontage – That distance where a property line is common with a street right of way line.

Full street closure – A physical barrier that closes the street to motor vehicles. Usually landscaped, a full closure can be build to allow passage of pedestrians, bicycles and wheel chairs.

Garage Apartment – A single unit apartment located above a garage and sited behind the primary residence.

Gateway – A physical threshold that mark one’s arrival or departure from a place.

Goal—An ideal future end, condition or state related to the public health, safety or general welfare toward which planning and planning implementation measures are directed.

Grade-separated crossing – An interchange between roadways, railways, or pathways, that provides for the movement of traffic on different levels.

Granny Flat – A free-standing, single unit apartment located behind the primary residence.

Hazard Elimination Safety Program (HESP) – Each fiscal year 10% of the Surface Transportation Program funds apportioned to a state must be used for hazard elimination activities or rail-highway crossing activities. Funding for HESP activities may be used on any public road. The program is competitive and is administered by the Texas Department of Transportation.

Heritage Tree – A tree, or any species, having a trunk size of thirty (30 inches) DBH or larger.

Historic Preservation - The protection, rehabilitation and restoration of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and artifacts significant in history, architecture, archeology, or culture. This includes managing, stabilizing, and at times sensitive reuse of historic buildings.

Historic Tax Credits – Ad Valorem tax (property tax) exemption is available to City of San Antonio home and commercial property owners who substantially restore or renovate their historic properties. If a commercial property is listed on the National Register of Historic Properties or a contributing structure in a National Register Historic District, commercial property owners may be eligible for a federal income tax credit for completing a restoration or renovation of the historic property.

HOME – Home Investment Partnerships Program. HOME provides formula grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to states and localities that communities use-often in partnership with local nonprofit groups-to fund a wide range of activities that build, buy, and/or rehabilitate affordable housing for rent or homeownership or provide direct rental assistance to low-income people.

Homestead Exemption – A general residential exemption by the Bexar Appraisal District if the subject property is the applicant’s residence homestead, and a residence homestead exemption is not being claimed on any other property. To qualify for the exemption, an applicant must own and reside in his or her home on January 1 of the tax year. Applicants may also receive the Over-65 Homestead Exemption, the Over-55 Surviving Spouse of a Person who Received the Over-65 Exemption, or the Disability Exemption upon qualifying for the homestead exemption, if eligible.

Household – (as defined by the Census Bureau) Consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit.

Housing Unit – (as defined by the Census Bureau) A house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied as a separate living quarters, or if vacant, is intended for occupancy as a separate living quarters.

HOV – High occupancy vehicle; typically referring to a transit vehicle, carpool, or vanpool.

Impervious Cover—Roads, parking areas, pools, patios, sheds, driveways, private sidewalks, and other impermeable construction covering the natural land surface; this includes but is not limited to all streets and pavement within a community.

Indicator—A way to measure the impact of local actions to determine the progress of a community plan.

Infill Development – New buildings constructed on vacant lots or open sites in an area that is predominantly developed.

Infill Housing – New housing constructed on vacant lots in an area that is predominantly developed. The new housing can include: single-family, duplexes, townhouses, apartments, senior housing, etc.

Infrastructure—Facilities and services needed to sustain any type of development—residential, commercial or industrial activities. Includes water and sewer lines, streets, electrical power, fire and police stations.

Jobs-Housing Balance – A tool that measures the degree of equilibrium between the number and types of jobs with the amount of cost of housing in a given region. The jobs-housing ratio divides the number jobs in an area by the number of employed residents. A ratio of 1.0 indicates a balance. A ratio greater than 1.0 indicates a net in-commute (more jobs than housing); a ratio less than 1.0 indicates a net out-commute (more housing than jobs).

Kiosk – A small freestanding structure either open or partially closed, where merchandise is displayed, advertised, or sold, or where notices are displayed.

Landscaping Ordinance – Implemented in 1994 and revised in 2001 and 2003, the primary purpose of the City’s Landscaping Ordinance is to increase the attractiveness of commercial developments and reduce their negative environmental impact while adding value to the property. See also Tree Preservation Ordinance.

Land Trust – local, regional or statewide nonprofit conservation organizations directly involved in helping protect natural, scenic, recreational, agricultural, historic, or cultural property.

Land Use – The manner in which land is used. For example, low-density residential land uses primarily include single-family houses.

Land Use Plan—A plan that graphically depicts future land uses. A land use plan serves as a guide in the preparation of zoning ordinances and zoning district maps.

Linear Parks– Provides a physical link between two or more areas. Linear park trails can accommodate bicycling, hiking, jogging, and walking. The width of a linear park system is important because the amount of land included in the corridor is intended to reflect a park-like environment.

Livable Wage – An income sufficient to meet a family’s basic needs.

Live/Work Units – Living units which also are zoned to allow small businesses to operate from a portion of the structure, generally identified by small retail or service oriented businesses or artist studios.

Local Access Street – A roadway, primarily a residential street, designed to provide direct access to individual homes, shops, abutting land, and similar minor traffic destinations with no provision for through traffic.

Major Thoroughfare - Street routes that are identified in the Major Thoroughfare Plan, and as may from time to time be amended. Major thoroughfares are devoted to moving large volumes of traffic over long distances.

Major Thoroughfare Plan– That part of the City’s Master Plan designating the location, dimensions, and dedication requirements of expressways, primary arterials and secondary arterials.

Marketing Studies – A detailed study of the potential consumers in a certain area. This type of study helps businesses determine whether or not it would be beneficial to them to locate to, develop in, or service an area.

Mass Transit – The transportation of passengers by surface, overhead, or underground means of transportation, or combination of those means, including motor bus, trolley, coach, rail, and suspended overhead rail transportation.

Master Plan – The City’s Master Plan Policies, adopted May 1997. The Master Plan Policies are intended to provide guidance in the evaluation of future decisions on land use, infrastructure improvements, transportation, and other issues, and ordinances that are proposed and considered after the adoption of the Master Plan Policies. It should be consistent with the relevant goals and policies contained in the Plan. The primary objectives of master plans are to coordinate public and private investment; minimize conflict between land uses; influence and manage the development of the community; increase both the benefits and cost effectiveness of public investment; predict infrastructure and service needs in advance of demand; and ensure that community facilities are located to best serve the community.

Mean – The arithmetic average.

Median– 1) A solid yellow or cross hatched pavement marking or a physical barrier such as a long raised island at least 18” in width, which divides any street into two or more roadways.

Medians decrease accidents and give pedestrians a safe place to stop as they cross the street. By providing areas for planting street trees and ground cover, medians can make the street more attractive and pleasant. **OR** 2) The middle point in a mathematical distribution.

Mediterranean – An architectural style influenced by designs in the various European countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, usually resulting in buildings with exterior walls of stucco and low pitched tile roofs.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) – A 20- to 25- year master plan that identifies the existing and future land use trends and transportation needs, develops coordinated strategies to provide necessary transportation facilities, and assures the continuation of federal transportation funds for the San Antonio area. The MTP is administered by the Metropolitan Planning Organization(see MPO).

Microenterprise – A small business entity, usually employing less than five people.

Mixed Use District – A zoning district that provides residential, retail, service, or office uses in a concentrated environment subject to design standards.

Mission Revival – An architectural style beginning in the late 19th century influenced by Spanish missions of the U.S. Southwest, and characterized by curvilinear parapets, stucco walls with occasional ornamentation and bell towers.

MPO—San Antonio/Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization. An agency created by federal law to provide local input for urban transportation planning and allocating federal transportation funds to cities with populations of greater than 50,000.

Municipal Management District – A defined geographic area that established a separate taxing entity to provide funds for improvements within that area. Examples are TIFs (Tax Increment Financing districts) and PIDs (Public Improvement Districts).

NAD – The City of San Antonio Neighborhood Action Department.

NAMP – Neighborhood Accessibility and Mobility Program. A program administered by the City’s Public Works Department that funds a variety of neighborhood transportation projects such as sidewalks and bicycle routes.

NAs – Neighborhood Associations.

Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) – A program administered by the City’s Neighborhood Action Department (NAD) that provides financial support to revitalize older commercial districts to create jobs, economic opportunity and a better quality of life in older neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) – is an overlay zoning district that includes the application of neighborhood based design standards, individually tailored to address specific redevelopment issues.

Neighborhood Planning Process – A procedure by which neighborhood residents and property owners can develop neighborhood plans suitable for recognition as components of the City’s Master Plan by the Planning Commission and City Council.

Neighborhood Unit – A neighborhood unit encompasses an area that includes residences, businesses, parks, schools, and other community facilities. Populations may range from 4,000 to 10,000 people depending on the geographic area and boundaries. A neighborhood unit usually contains at least 1,500 housing units.

Node – A center of activity or development, often located at a major intersection.

Nonconforming Use – Generally, the use of an existing property or structure that does not comply with the use regulations applicable to the zoning district in which the property is located.

Nonpoint Pollution – Pollution that can not be traced to a single location. For example, exhaust from cars is a source of nonpoint pollution whereas a pipe dumping pollutants into a stream would be a point source of pollution.

Objective – A specific end, condition, or state that is an intermediate step toward attaining a goal. An objective should be achievable and when possible measurable and time specific.

Off-street parking – Publicly or privately owned parking outside the street right-of-way.

Open Space – Land and/or water area with its surface open to the sky or predominantly undeveloped, which is set aside to serve the purposes of providing park and recreation opportunities, conserving valuable resources, and structuring urban development and form.

Ordinance – A municipally adopted law or regulation.

Overlay Zoning District – Is a zoning district that defines an additional set of requirements over and above the base zoning requirements. It is commonly used to show natural site limitations that may inhibit or prohibit the use of land as otherwise zoned. An example of an overlay zone is a Neighborhood Conservation District.

Pedestrian friendly – Describing an environment that is pleasant and inviting for people to experience on foot; specifically, offering sensory appeal, safety, street amenities such as plantings and furniture, good lighting, easy visual and physical access to buildings, and diverse activities.

Pedestrian refuge island – A defined area in the center of the street that protects the pedestrian from moving traffic and provides a safe place to wait as they cross the street. They allow the

pedestrian to cross one half of the roadway with a safe place to stop before crossing the second half of the roadway.

Pedestrian scale lighting – Overhead street lighting which is typically over the sidewalk instead of the roadway, and at a lower height than typical street light fixtures; providing illumination for pedestrians instead of motorists.

Planned Unit Development (PUD) - A zoning classification created to accommodate master planned developments that include mixed uses, varied housing types, and/or unconventional subdivision designs. In San Antonio, public access to these areas may be restricted.

Planning – The process of setting development goals and policy, gathering and evaluating information, and developing alternatives for future actions based on the evaluation of the information.

Planning Commission—A nine member, at large body established pursuant to the City Charter that acts as an advisory body to the City Council on the City’s Master Plan and which approves plats and subdivision variances. Meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 2:00 PM at the Development Business Services Center.

Planning Commission / City Council Recognition– The Planning Commission reviews community plans to ensure the document is inclusive, consistent with city policies and an accurate reflection of the community’s values. After Planning Commission recognition, the plan is forwarded to City Council for adoption as a component of the City’s Master Plan. An approved plan is used by city departments, boards and commissions as a guide for decision-making.

Planting strip – The street right-of-way area lying between the constructed curb and the sidewalk.

Plat – A complete and exact map representing a tract of land, showing the boundaries and location of individual lots, easements, and streets which has been approved by the Planning Commission and recorded in the Office of the County Clerk.

Preservation – Retaining the historic appearance of a property through continued maintenance and use.

Principal Dwelling – A Dwelling Unit that constitutes the principal building or principal structure on a lot or parcel, in which the principal use is conducted.

Public Improvement District (PID) – See Municipal Management District.

Public Works – A City department charged with the design, engineering and implementation of street and drainage projects; management of municipal building and parking facilities; managing public rights of way; public art and design enhancements; and other functions as directed by the

City Manager and City Charter. In 2001 solid waste and environmental services were switched from Public Works to the Environmental Services Department.

Rehabilitation – A project that combines preservation, restoration, and adaptive use, generally to allow a property to retain its historic integrity while meeting modern requirements.

Replat—See subdivision.

Restoration – The return of a property (or an element such as the exterior or interior) to its appearance at a particular time during its history.

Revitalization – A coordinated program to capitalize on inner city assets such as commercial and residential buildings, an untapped workforce, and proximity to downtown to ensure the sustainability of the urban core.

Residential Parking Zone – A designated zone in which on-street parking for the general public is restricted. Residents of the area are exempted from the parking restrictions by permit.

Rezone – To change the zoning classification of particular lots or parcels of land.

Right-of-way – 1) A strip of land platted, dedicated, condemned,, established by prescription, or otherwise legally established for the use of pedestrians, vehicles or utilities; 2) the legal right of one vehicle, bicycle, pedestrian or device to proceed in a lawful manner in preference to another vehicle, bicycle pedestrian or device.

RIO - River Improvement Overlay District. A series of six overlay zoning districts created in 2002 to protect, preserve and enhance the San Antonio River and its improvements by establishing design standards and guidelines for properties located near the River.

Riparian Land - Land that is traversed or bounded by a natural watercourse or adjoining tidal lands.

Roof Pitch—The slope of a roof as determined by the vertical rise in inches for every horizontal twelve-inch length (“the run”). Pitch is expressed with the rise mentioned first and the run mentioned second. For example, a roof with a four-inch rise for every horizontal foot has a 4:12 pitch.

Roundabout – A raised traffic island, usually landscaped, located in the middle of an intersection of arterial streets. Similar to a traffic circle but located in a busier intersection at a larger scale. Traffic circulates counter-clockwise around the island. Cars in the roundabout have the right of way, while cars entering must yield. Traffic slows but does not stop because left turns are not possible.

SAC – San Antonio College. A branch of the Alamo Community College District.

SADA – San Antonio Development Agency. The mission of the San Antonio Development Agency is to define and resolve problems of slum and blighting influences regarding both residential and commercial developments within the Greater San Antonio area, conserve existing housing stock and provide affordable housing opportunities for area residents.

SAFFE – San Antonio Fear Free Environment is a community policing program that consists of officers who focus on identifying, evaluating and resolving community crime problems with the cooperation and participation of community residents. SAFFE officers are assigned to specific areas within the city, and work closely with both residents and the district patrol officers assigned to those areas.

SARA – San Antonio River Authority. An authority created by the State of Texas to preserve, protect and manage the resources and environment of the San Antonio River and its tributaries. The SARA district spans Bexar, Goliad, Karnes and Wilson counties.

Sandwich boards – Stand-up A-shaped signs often placed on the sidewalk or street right-of-way to advertise a business or an attraction.

Sanitary Sewer – A piped system which is owned, operated, and maintained by a local municipality or sanitary district, and that is designated to carry only sewage.

SAWS—San Antonio Water System. A public utility owned by the City of San Antonio. In addition to water and wastewater service, SAWS has a planning role in watershed protection including the enforcement of certain city ordinances related to subdivision development.

School Zone – An established reduced speed area around a school.

Screen – A wall, a trellis or a dense planting of trees or shrubbery designed specifically to define a space, mask an undesirable view, or create a more private open space.

Section 8 Housing Assistance (HUD-8) – A rent subsidies program administered by local governments to eligible tenants – low (50 percent of median) income, elderly, disabled and handicapped tenants.

Setback – The required or actual placement of a building a specified distance away from a road, property line or other structure.

Shoulder – The paved or unpaved area between the roadway edge and the property line.

Sign, billboard (off-premise) – Any outdoor sign, description, device, figure, painting, drawing, message, placard, poster, structure or thing which directs the attention of the travelling public to a business, commercial product, commercial activity, or commercial service, conducted, sold or offered at a location other than the premises on which the sign is located.

Sign Ordinance – Rules and regulations that govern the posting of signs in a city. This includes billboards as well as signs affixed to a structure, window or other structural element.

Single-family detached dwelling – A dwelling that is designed for and occupied by only one family and surrounded by open space or yards and is not attached to any other dwelling.

Smart Growth—A term that describes the efforts of communities across the United States to manage and direct growth in ways that minimize damage to the environment and which build livable towns and cities.

Special Districts – As it pertains to zoning, a special district is a zoning district that addresses unique situations and replaces the standards and requirements of the base zoning district.

Sprawl - Uncontrolled growth, usually of a low density nature, in previously rural areas and some distance from existing development and infrastructure.

Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program (STEP) – A reimbursement program funded through the Surface Transportation Program, and administered by the Texas Department of Transportation for the Federal Highway Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation, transportation enhancement projects must establish a relationship to the surface transportation system. Eligible projects may include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, safety and education activities for pedestrians and bicyclists, acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites, scenic or historic highway programs including tourist and welcome center facilities, landscaping and other scenic beautification, historic preservation, rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation facilities, preservation of abandoned railway corridors, including conversion and use for pedestrian and bicycle trails, archaeological planning and research, environmental mitigation, and transportation museums. A 20% local match is required.

Strategic Planning - A methodology that focuses on specific issues and action plans toward implementation.

Streets – See expressway, arterial, collector street, local access street and alley.

Street closure – partial – A curb bulb that physically blocks one direction of traffic at an intersection on an otherwise two-way street.

Street furniture – Accessories and amenities placed on sidewalks for the convenience and accommodation of pedestrians. These may include such things as benches or other seating, trash receptacles, drinking fountains planter, kiosks, clocks, newspaper dispensers, or telephones.

Street tree – A tree planted along a street or roadway behind the right-of-way line or between a sidewalk and the edge of the paved surface of the roadway.

Street tree grates – Grates, usually metal and often decorative, that cover street tree pits and allow air and water to reach the soil.

Street tree pits – Cutouts from a sidewalk or paved planting strip, to allow air and water to reach the trees planted in the cutout.

Streetscape – A design term referring to all the elements that constitute the physical makeup of a street and that, as a group, define its character, including building frontage, street paving, street furniture, landscaping, awnings, marquees, signs, and lighting.

Subdivision—A division of any tract of land into two (2) or more parts for the purpose of layout out lots, streets, alleys, or parks or other portions intended for public use, or the use of purchasers or owners of lots thereon or adjacent thereto. A subdivision includes a replat.

Sustainable Development - responsible development that enables a society to meet its needs without depriving future generations.

T-intersection – The meeting of two streets, usually perpendicular, where one street does not continue through.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) – A technique used by local governments, through Chapter 311 of the Texas Tax Code, to capture the future tax benefits of publicly financed improvements to pay the present cost of implementing the improvements. The developer will front related costs to finance public improvements. To repay the developer, the taxing jurisdiction agrees to set aside all tax revenues above the predefined base level (tax increment) generated in that area during the financing period. A TIF project should act as an economic stimulus to the surrounding areas. By leveraging private investment for certain types of development within a targeted area, TIF can be a tool used to assist in financing needed public improvements and enhancing infrastructure.

TEA-21 – The Transportation Efficiency Act for the 21st Century.

Townhouse – A one-family dwelling in a row of at least three such units in which each unit has its own front and rear access to the outside and each unit is separated from another unit by one or more common fire resistant walls.

TPWD – Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) – A type of development that combines a variety of housing types with commercial and civic uses in a compact, walkable neighborhood setting. TNDs feature a highly interconnected street network and setbacks appropriate to create a public realm built on a human scale.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) – A market based technique that encourages the voluntary transfer of growth from places where a community would like to see less development (the “sending area”), to places where a community would like to see more development occur (the “receiving area”).

Traffic calming – Of or relating to transportation techniques, programs, or facilities intended to slow the movement of motor vehicles.

Traffic circle – Raised circular islands constructed in the center of an intersection of two local streets that cause motorists to decrease speed in order to maneuver around the circle. Can take the place of a 4-way stop sign. A traffic circle is similar to a roundabout but at a smaller scale.

Transit oriented development (TOD) – Similar to traditional neighborhood development, but typically incorporates higher densities and an orientation to transit and pedestrian travel. Retail services and other uses are clustered in a “town center” and a range of housing densities is offered, providing an alternative to typical suburban growth patterns. Usually a 1/4 mile radius around a transit stop and core commercial area that is designed to emphasize a pedestrian-oriented environment where it is convenient for residents and employees to travel by transit, bicycle or foot, as well as by car.

Transit signal queue jump – A traffic lane on a major arterial that allows transit vehicles in the outside lane to continue through to the far side of the intersection, permitting buses to “jump” ahead of the normal flow of traffic.

Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) – A short-range, three-year programming document that allocates funding for all transportation projects and activities in the area. The TIP must include all roadway and transit projects that are to receive federal funds. The TIP is reviewed and approved by the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Tree Preservation Ordinance (TPO) – Implemented in 1997 and revised in 2003, the primary purpose of the City’s Tree Preservation Ordinance is to create commercial land uses that not only are attractive but add value to the property. Landscaping includes preservation of existing trees, understory plants, and natural areas in addition to installing new trees and plants. The TPO works in conjunction with the Landscaping Ordinance.

Two-way left turn lane – A lane in the center of the street that can be used by left-turning vehicles travelling in either direction.

TxDOT – Texas Department of Transportation. Formerly known as the Highway Department.

TxABC – Texas Alcohol and Beverage Commission.

Uncontrolled intersection – An intersection where the right-of-way is not controlled by a stop sign, yield sign, or traffic signal.

Unified Development Code (UDC)—Chapter 35 of the Municipal Code of Ordinances. The UDC establishes standards and procedures for new development in the City and its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Urban Design – A process to creatively shape the City’s physical form, image or identity that incorporates broad community and professional involvement to visually improve the character of the City at a scale and level ranging from streetscapes, to individual buildings, to neighborhoods and to the City as a whole.

Use – The purpose for which land or structures thereon is designated, arranged, or intended to be occupied or used, or for which it is occupied, maintained, rented or leased.

Utility Conversion District – A zoning overlay district that identifies and designates specific urban corridors to require the various utility companies to implement projects as part of public works or civic improvement projects and to require property owners and utility customers to modify their property as necessary to receive utility services from underground, relocated or redesigned distribution systems.

Variance - A request for permission to vary or depart from a requirement of the Municipal Code where, due to special conditions, a literal enforcement of the requirement will result in an unnecessary hardship. Variance requests from the zoning text and the sign ordinance are heard by the Board of Adjustments. The Planning Commission hears variance requests from the subdivision ordinance.

Vegetative Buffer Yard – A unit of yard together with the required installation of landscaping and screening materials to minimize potential negative impacts such as dirt, litter, noise, glare of lights, signs and unsightly buildings between different land use intensity classes.

Vested Rights – The right of a property owner or developer to complete a project under the rules, regulations and ordinances in effect at the time the project was initiated through a permit as defined in the Unified Development Code. When vested rights exist for property within the boundaries of a project, certain ordinances passed after the date the project is initiated shall not apply to the project except as specifically provided by State Law or the Municipal Code.

VIA—VIA Metropolitan Transit. Public transit operator for San Antonio and Bexar County.

Viewshed – Any area of open sky or view behind: 1) the major entrance to a designated historic landmark, building, object, site or structure; 2) the primary access point or points to a designated historic district; 3) the primary access to a major tourist attraction or amusement park; or 4) the primary view or access point to the San Antonio Riverwalk, a city lake or amusement park that has been defined as a viewshed in the Unified Development Code. An overlay zoning district may be established for viewshed protection.

Walking Distance – Defined as the distance that may be covered by a five-minute walk at an easy pace from the outer limit of the neighborhood proper to the edge of the neighborhood center. This is the distance that most persons will walk rather than drive, providing the environment is pedestrian-friendly. This dimension is by convention one-quarter of a mile or 1,320 feet. In conventional suburban development, the extent of parking lots and the length of shopping malls is systematically disciplined by this gauge of walking distance.

WIC – Women Infants and Children. A U.S. Department of Agriculture program designed to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants and children up to age five who are at nutritional risk by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care.

Zero Lot Line—The location of a building on a lot in such a manner that one (1) or more of the sides of the building lies directly on or immediately adjacent to the lot line.

Zoning—Regulates building size, bulk, density and the way land is used through the establishment of zoning districts.

Zoning Commission—an eleven-member body appointed by City Council district which is advisory to the City Council on zoning district boundaries and the regulations to enforce zoning. Meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1:00 PM at the Development Business Services Center.

Zoning Districts—Zoning districts are established to promote compatible patterns of land use. Distinct zoning districts exist for residential, office, commercial and industrial uses. Furthermore, specific use restrictions, site development regulations or performance standards may apply to zoning districts combined with special overlay zoning districts.

Zoning Map—The zoning map shows the locations of adopted zoning districts.

Zoning Text—The zoning text establishes zoning districts and sets forth regulations governing land use and development. The Unified Development Code contains the City’s zoning text.

RESOLUTION NO. 03-09-01

RECOMMENDING THE ARENA DISTRICT/EASTSIDE COMMUNITY PLAN TO CITY COUNCIL TO BECOME A COMPONENT OF THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN AS IT CONFORMS TO THE APPROVAL CRITERIA SET FORTH IN THE UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE, SECTION 35-420, PERTAINING TO "COMPREHENSIVE, NEIGHBORHOOD, COMMUNITY, AND PERIMETER PLANS."

WHEREAS, the 1997 Master Plan Neighborhood Goal 2 calls for strengthening neighborhood plans; and

WHEREAS, the San Antonio Planning Commission has approved the 1998 Community Building and Neighborhood Planning Program; and

WHEREAS, the *Unified Development Code* (adopted May 3, 2001), Section 35-420, sets forth provisions for the development and approval of Comprehensive, Neighborhood, Community and Perimeter Plans; and

WHEREAS, the Arena District/Eastside Community Plan area is bound by IH-35 and the Government Hill Neighborhood Plan boundary on the north; IH-Loop 410 on the east; IH-10 on the south, and IH-37/US 281 and the Downtown Neighborhood Plan boundary (Monumental) on the west; and

WHEREAS, the plan area is approximately 7.9 square miles and includes about 32,062 residents located in City Council District 2; and

WHEREAS, the Arena District/Eastside Community Plan is a project of the Eastside Community with the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, Community Economic Revitalization Agency, and the San Antonio Spurs, the four funding partners; and Economics Research Associates prepared the real estate, land use and community facilities plan elements; and

WHEREAS, the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization jointly participated in the community planning process through the development Eastside Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan by Parsons Transportation Group, which was accepted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization on April 28, 2003; and the executive summary of the Eastside Multi-Modal Alternatives Plan is the transportation element of the plan; and

WHEREAS, the public involvement process included a series of community meetings hosted by the planning partners at St. Philips College on October 8, 2002, November 19, 2002 and February 11, 2003; and

WHEREAS, the San Antonio Planning Commission has reviewed the Arena District/Eastside Community Plan and found the plan to be consistent with City policies, plans and regulations and

in conformance with the *Unified Development Code*, Section 35-420, therefore meeting all requirements; and


WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on September 10, 2003.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO:

SECTION 1: The Arena District/Eastside Community Plan attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference is to be submitted to the City Council with this Commission's recommendation for approval by the City Council that it be adopted as a component to the City's Comprehensive Master Plan.

PASSED AND APPROVED ON THIS 10th day of September 2003.

Approved:

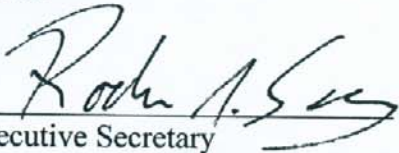


Heriberto Herrera

Chairperson

San Antonio Planning Commission

Attest:



Executive Secretary

San Antonio Planning Commission

AN ORDINANCE

98562

ADOPTING THE ARENA DISTRICT/EASTSIDE COMMUNITY PLAN AS A COMPONENT OF THE MASTER PLAN OF THE CITY IN AN AREA BOUNDED BY IH-35 AND THE GOVERNMENT HILL MASTER PLAN ON THE NORTH, IH-410 ON THE EAST, IH-10 ON THE SOUTH, AND IH-37/U.S. 281 ON THE WEST.

WHEREAS, the City of San Antonio adopted a Master Plan on May 29, 1997; and

WHEREAS, the Arena District/Eastside Community Plan includes 7.9 square miles and approximately 32,062 residents; and

WHEREAS, the planning process was initiated in August 2002, a Steering Committee established, and more than 654 hours of citizen participation were devoted to the development of the plan in 3 community meetings; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing allowing all interested citizens to be heard was held on September 10, 2003; and

WHEREAS, the San Antonio Planning Commission reviewed the Arena District/Eastside Community Plan on September 10, 2003 and found the plan to be consistent with City policies, plans and regulations and in conformance with the Unified Development Code, §35-420; and


WHEREAS, the Planning Commission recommends adoption of the Arena District/Eastside Community Plan as a component of the Master Plan of the City, NOW THEREFORE;

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO:

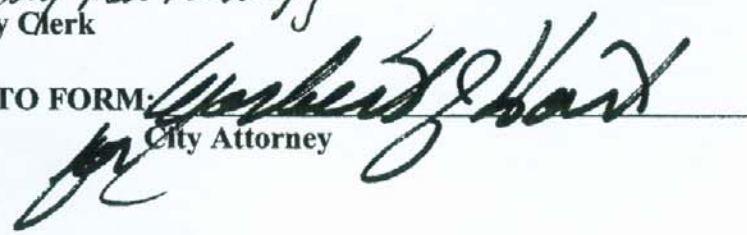
SECTION 1. The Arena District/Eastside Community Plan is hereby adopted as a component of the Master Plan of the City of San Antonio. A copy of the plan is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference for all purposes as Attachment I.

SECTION 2. This ordinance shall take effect on December 14, 2003.

PASSED AND APPROVED on this 4th day of December 2003.


MAYOR
EDWARD D. GARZA

ATTEST: 
for City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM: 
City Attorney

ARENA DISTRICT / EASTSIDE COMMUNITY PLAN



East Side Economic Development Summit



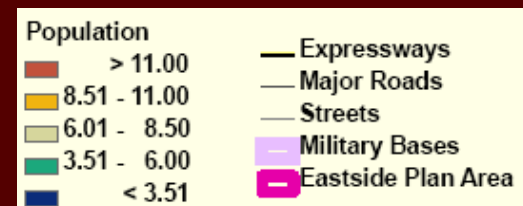
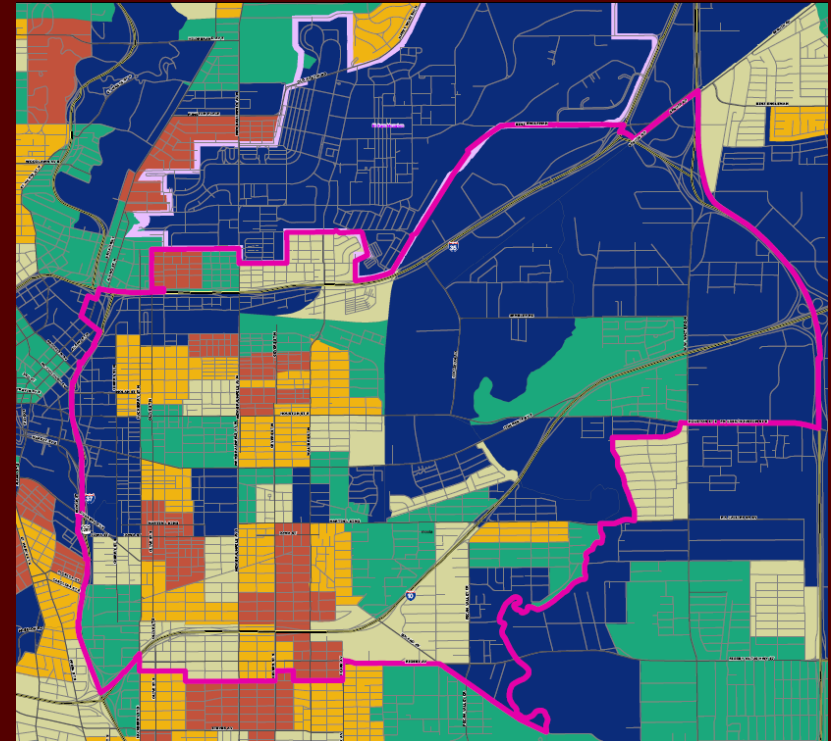
January 22, 2010

Area Profile: Demographic Data

- Commercial Data Provider: Nielsen Claritas
- Based on 2000 Census
- Projection Estimates for 2008
- Density Values per Acre

Area Profile: Population

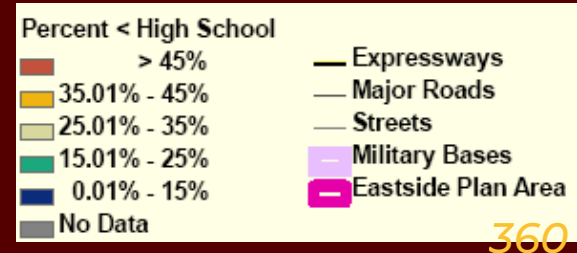
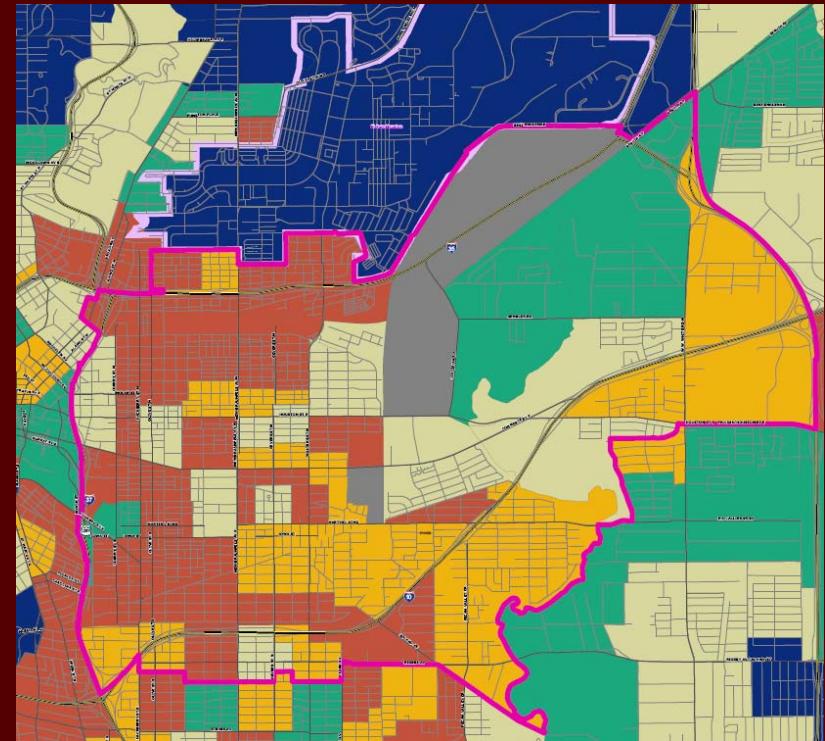
- Demographics
 - Total Population
 - COSA: 1,290,393
 - Eastside: 45,788
 - Population Density per Acre
 - COSA: 4.32
 - Eastside: 4.52



Area Profile: Education

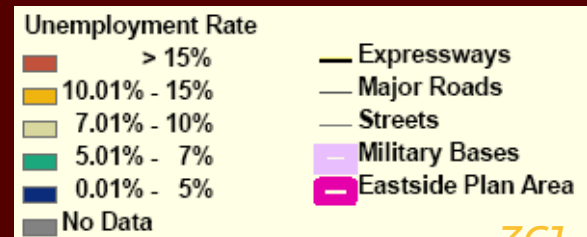
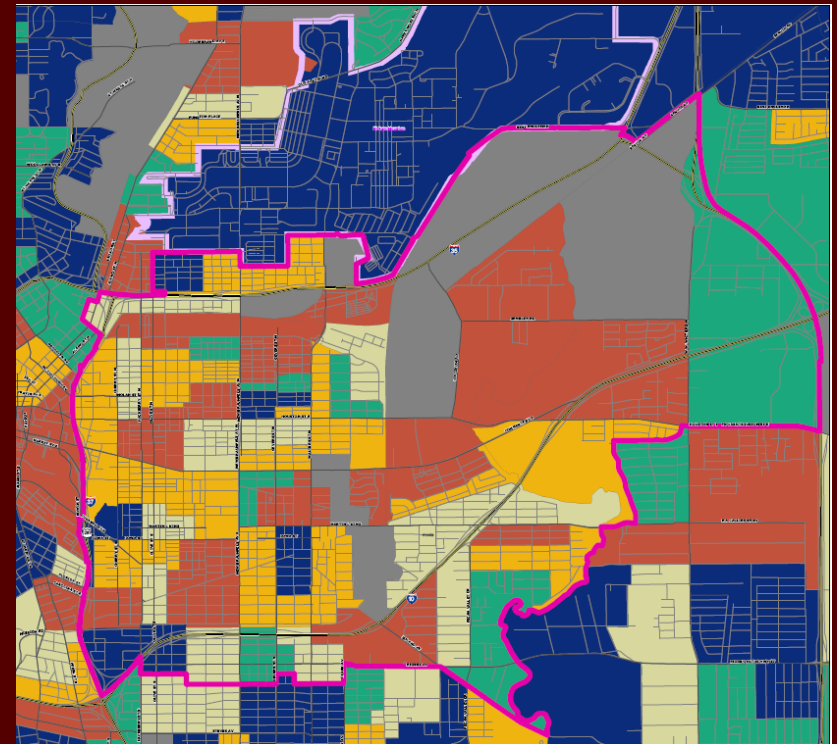
■ Demographics

- Population Age 25+ Less than High School Education
 - COSA: 181,580
 - Eastside: 11,570
- Percent Age 25+ Less than High School Education
 - COSA: 22.87%
 - Eastside: 43.34%



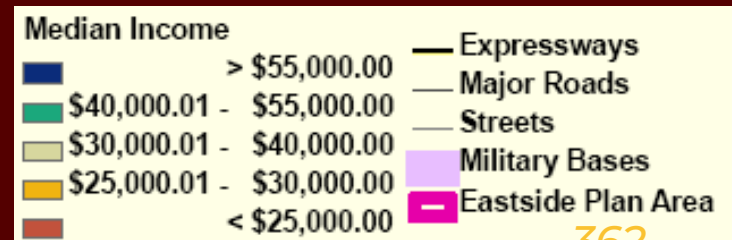
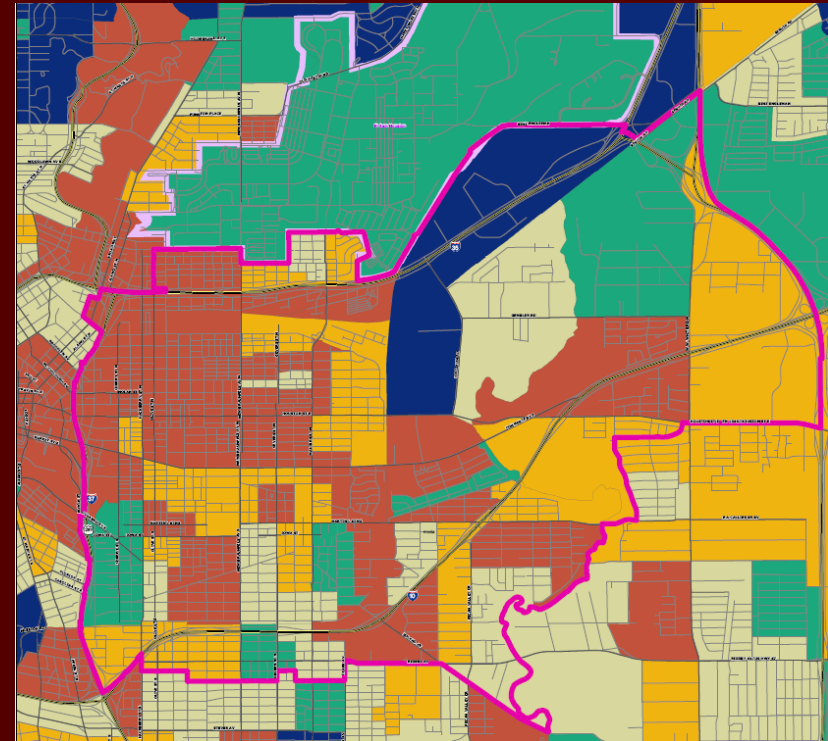
Area Profile: Unemployment

- Demographics
 - Unemployment Rate
 - COSA: 5.85%
 - Eastside: 12.10%



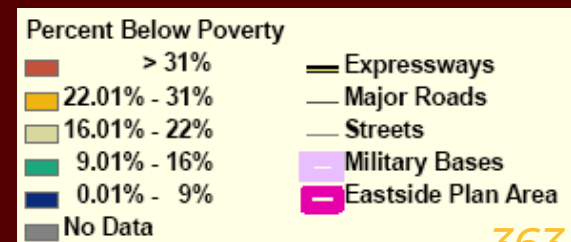
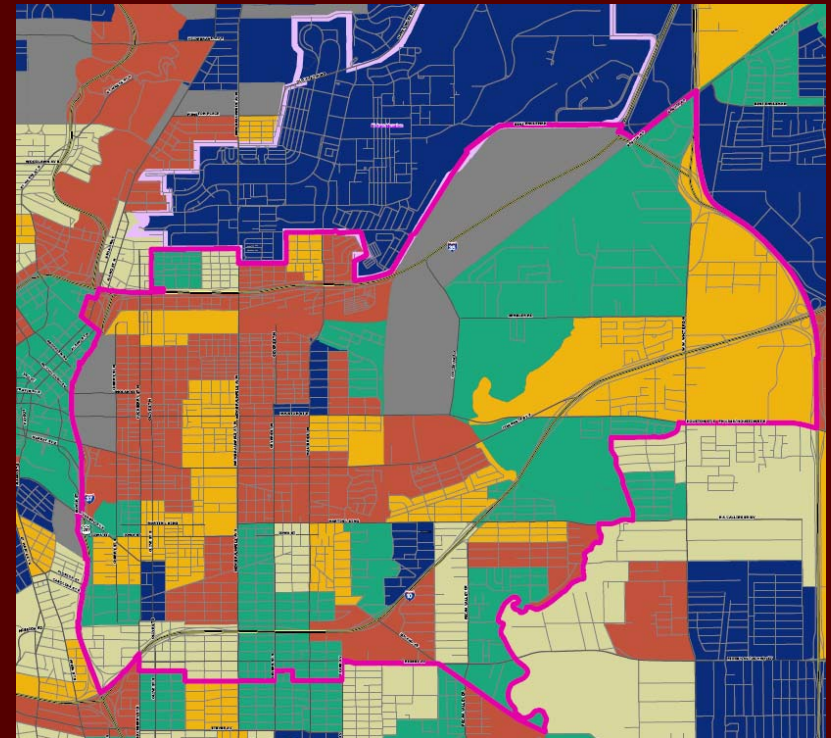
Area Profile: Household Income

- Demographics
 - Median Household Income
 - COSA: \$46,511
 - Eastside: \$26,909



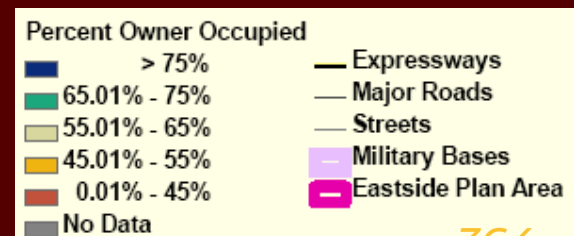
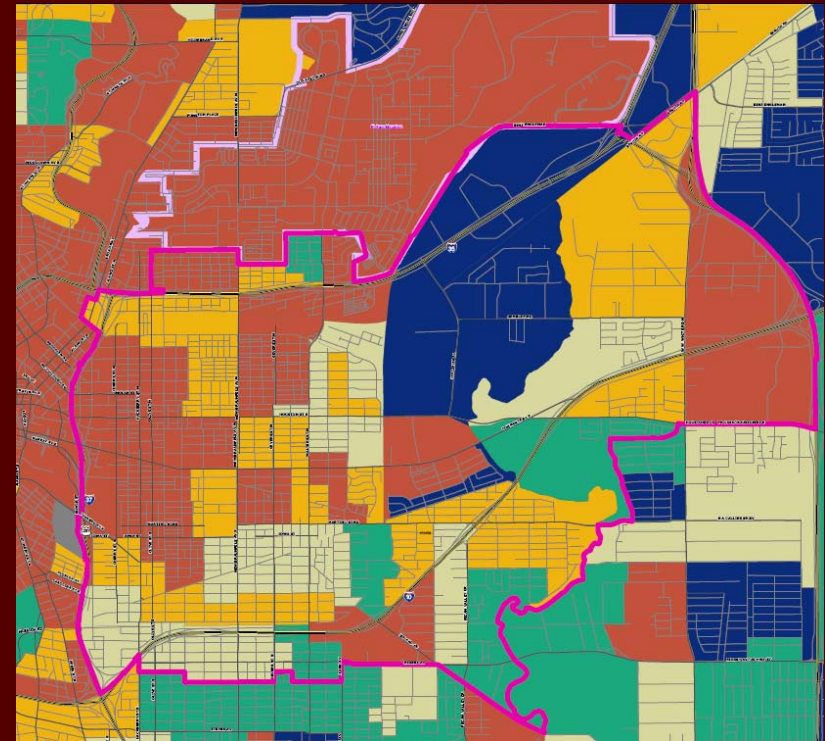
Area Profile: Poverty Levels

- Demographics
 - Families Below Poverty
 - COSA: 41,991
 - Eastside: 3,039
 - Percent Families Below Poverty
 - COSA: 13.20%
 - Eastside: 28.73%



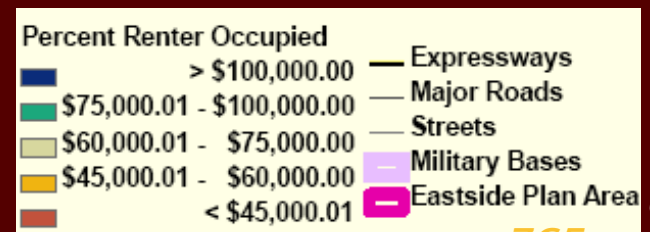
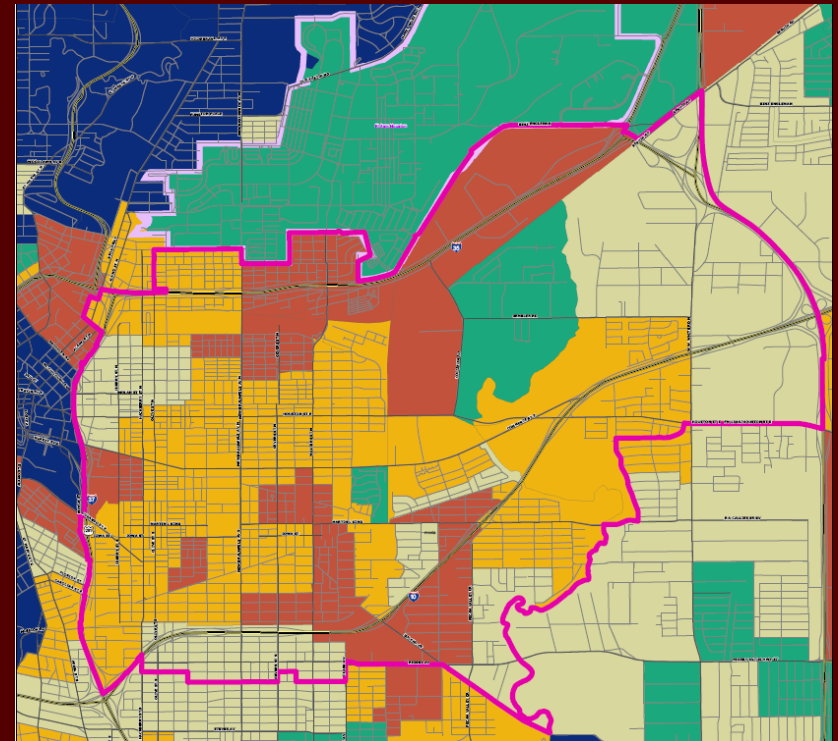
Area Profile: Owner Occupied

- Demographics
 - Owner Occupied Housing Units
 - COSA: 271,823
 - Eastside: 8,783
 - Percent Owner Occupied Housing Units
 - COSA: 55.02%
 - Eastside: 50.93%



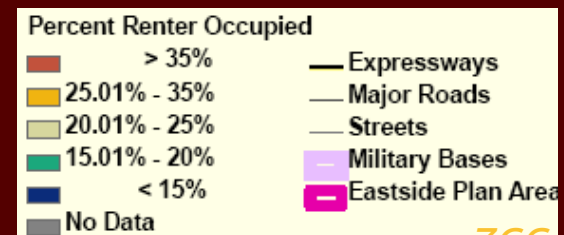
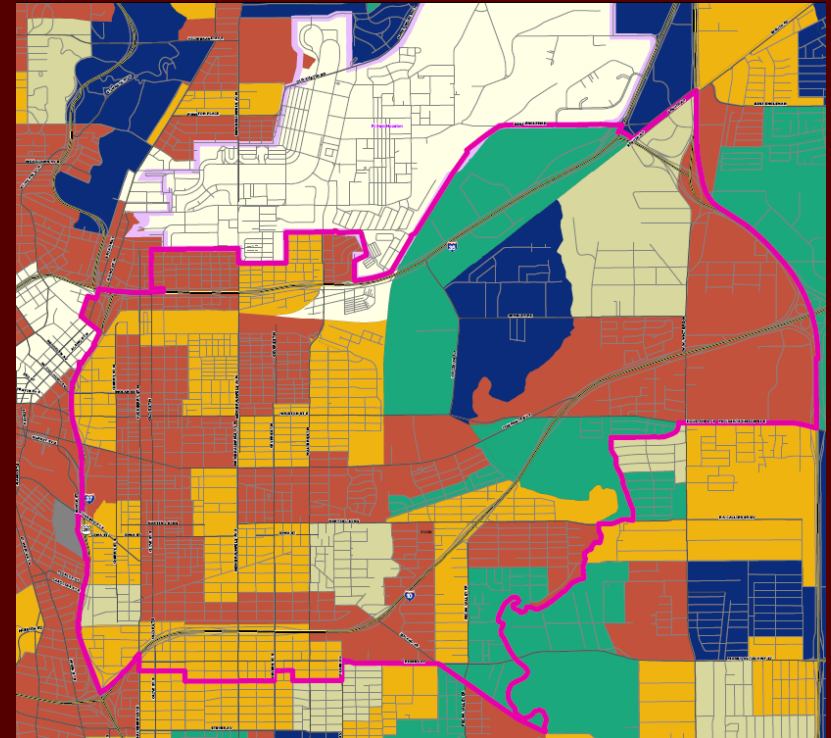
Area Profile: Housing Value

- Demographics
 - Median Owner Occupied Housing Unit Value
 - COSA: \$113,988
 - Eastside: \$53,555



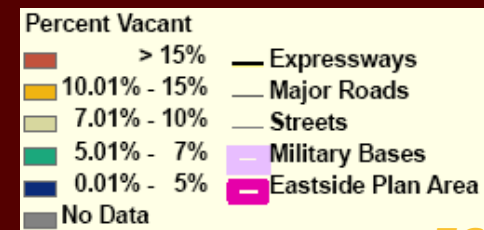
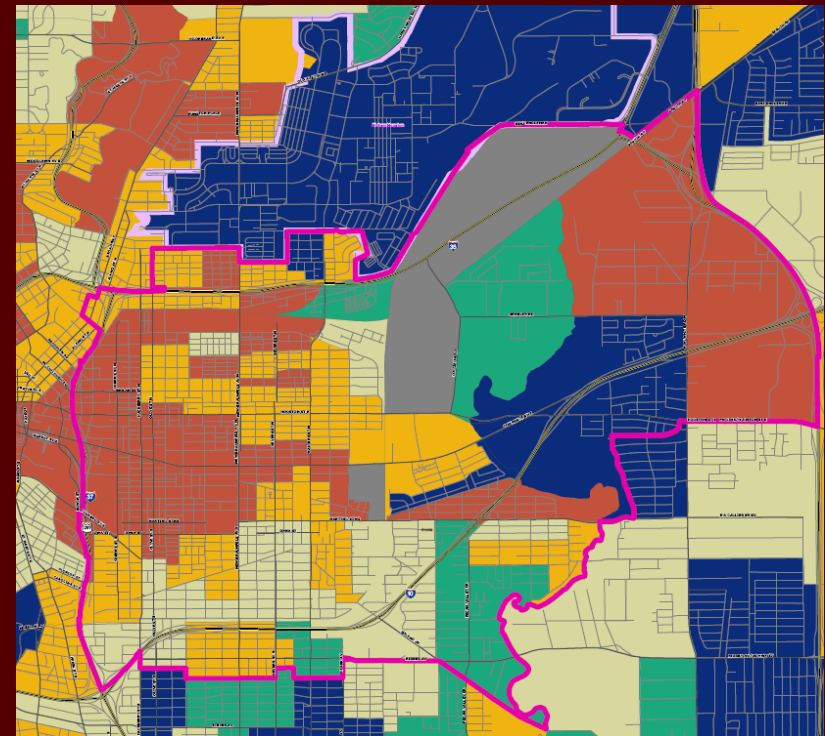
Area Profile: Renter Occupied

- Demographics
 - Renter Occupied Housing Units
 - COSA: 188,254
 - Eastside: 6,409
 - Percent Renter Occupied Housing Units
 - COSA: 38.11%
 - Eastside: 37.16%

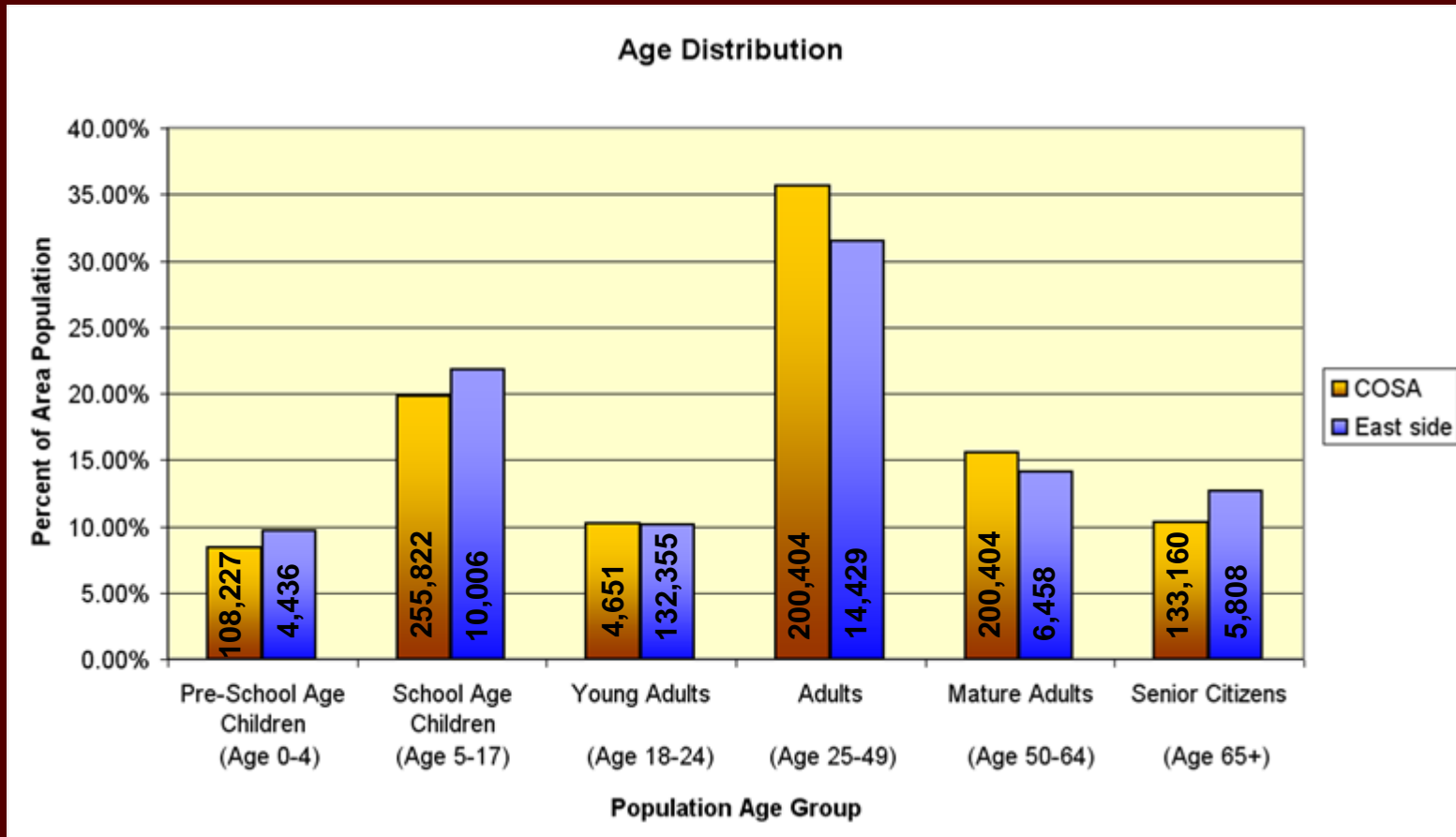


Area Profile: Vacancy Rates

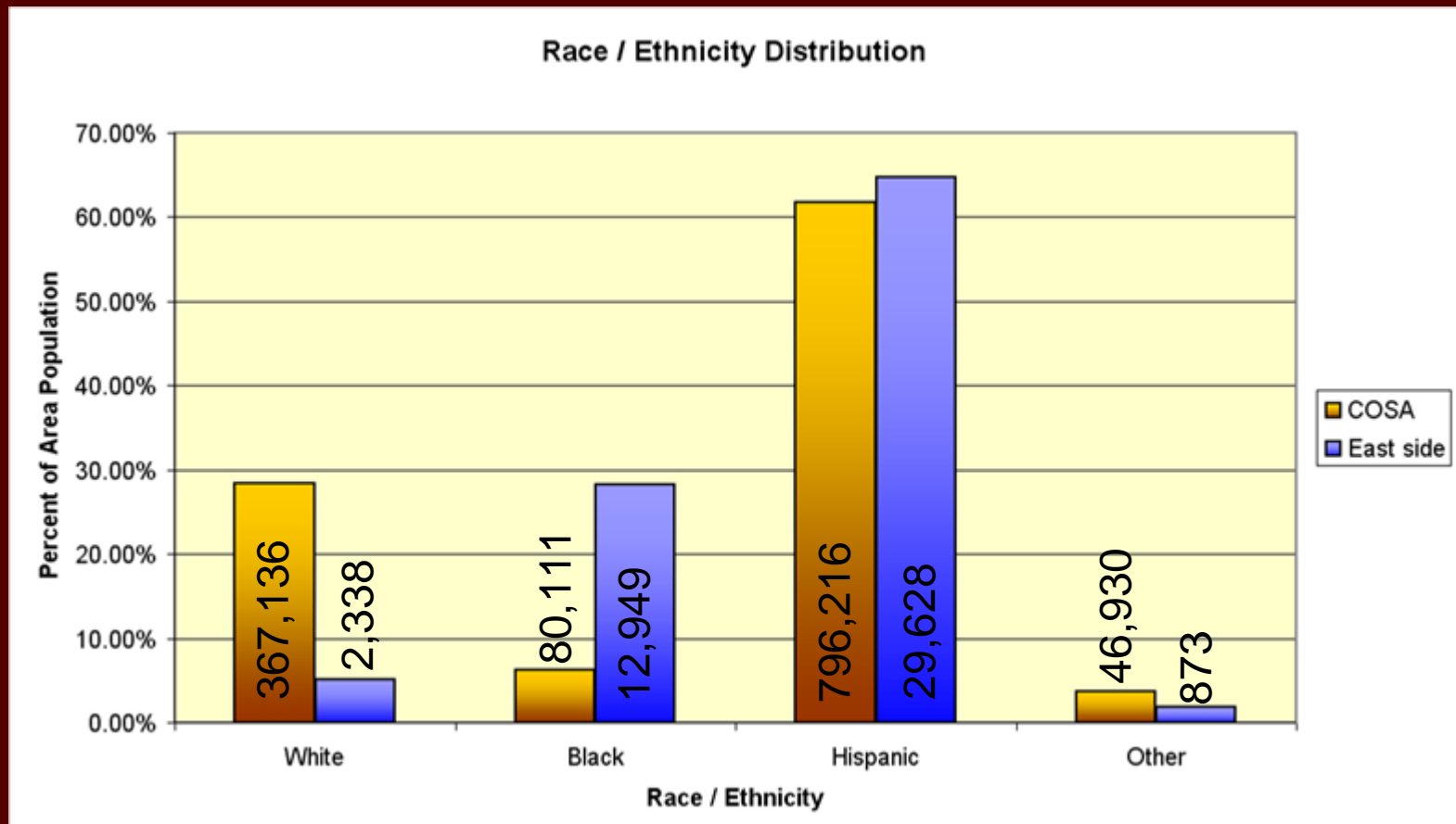
- Demographics
 - Vacant Housing Units
 - COSA: 33,937
 - Eastside: 2,053
 - Percent Vacant Housing Units
 - COSA: 6.87%
 - Eastside: 11.90%



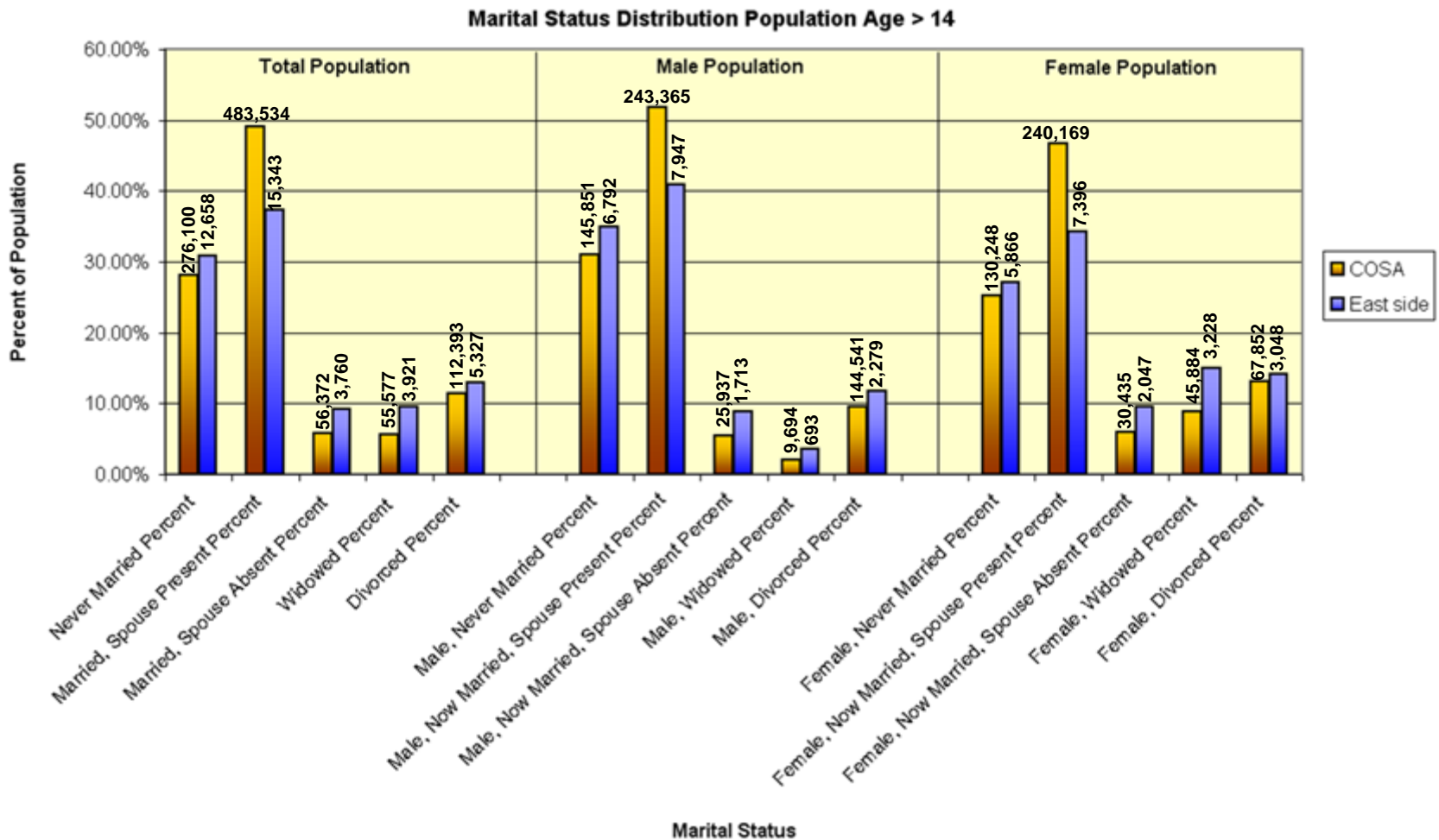
Area Profile: Population Age



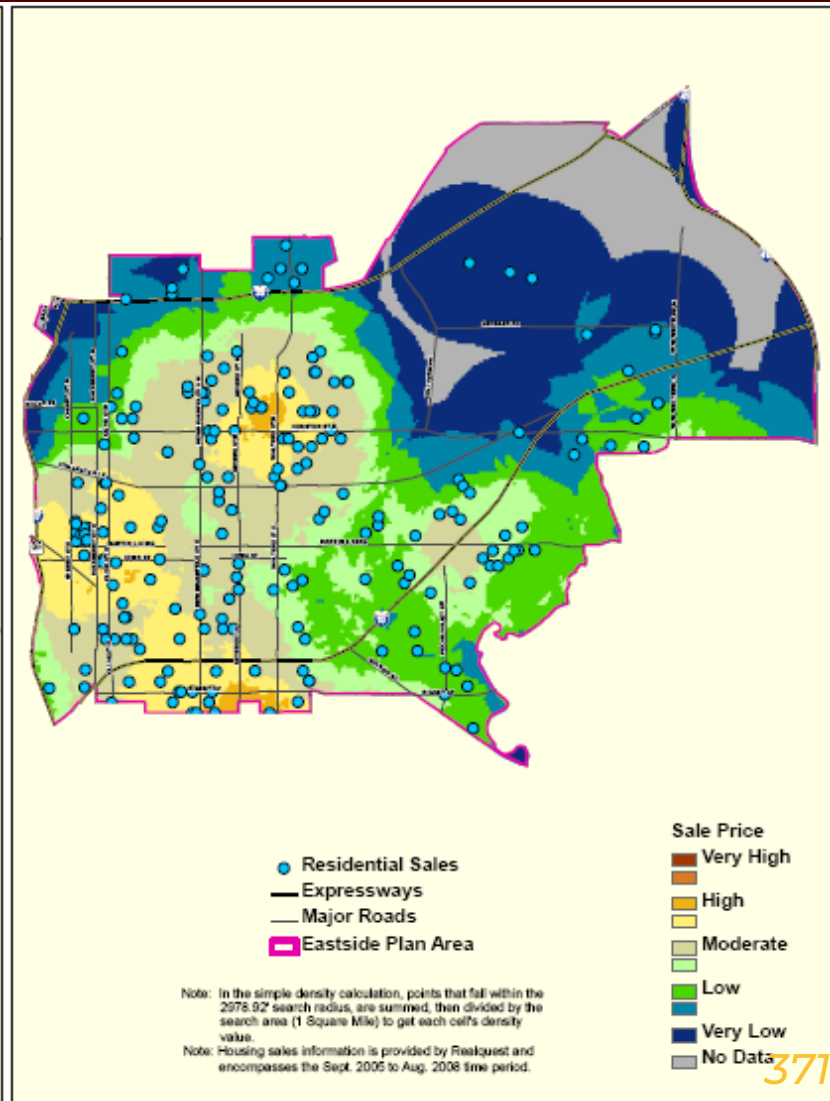
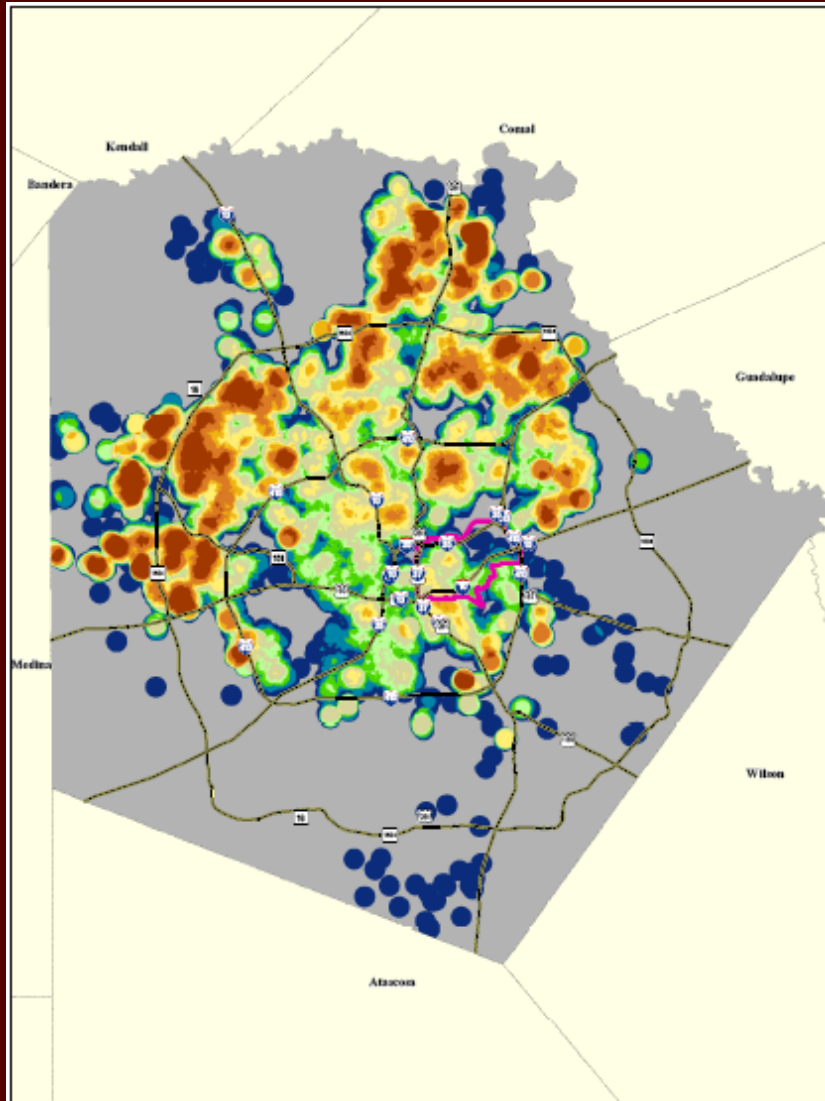
Area Profile: Race / Ethnicity



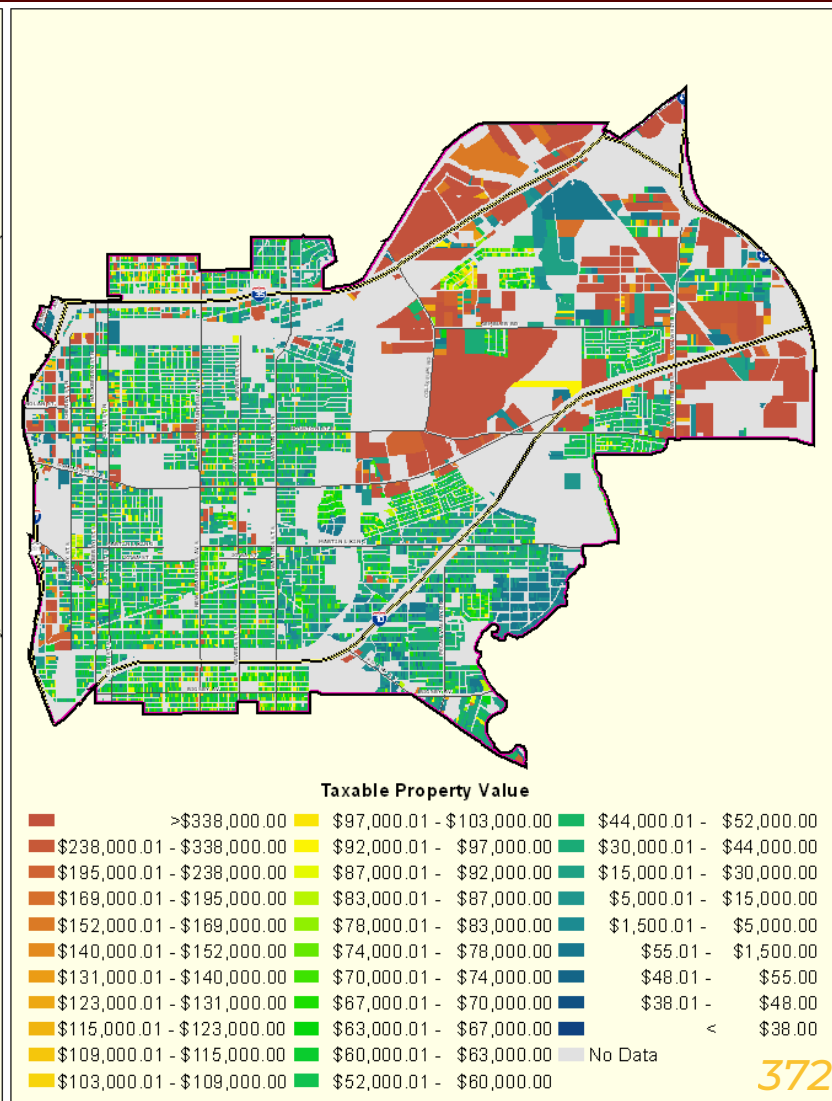
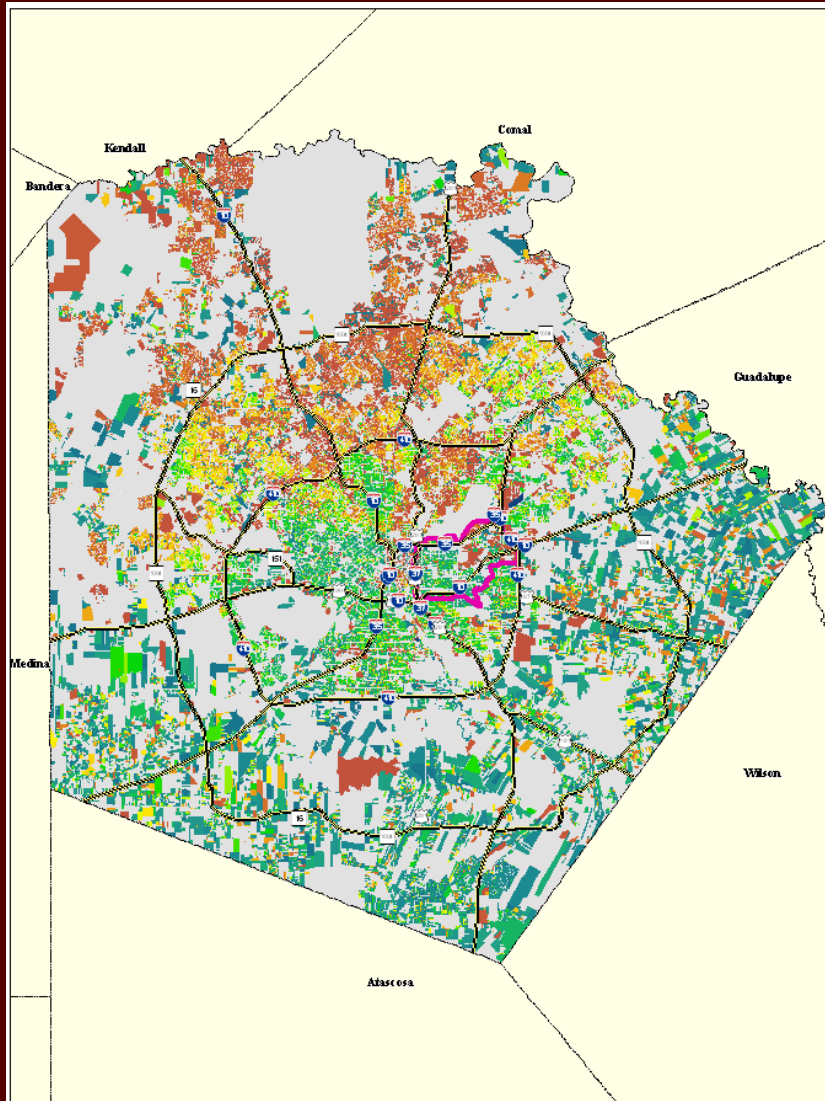
Area Profile: Marital Status



Area Profile: Residential Sales Price

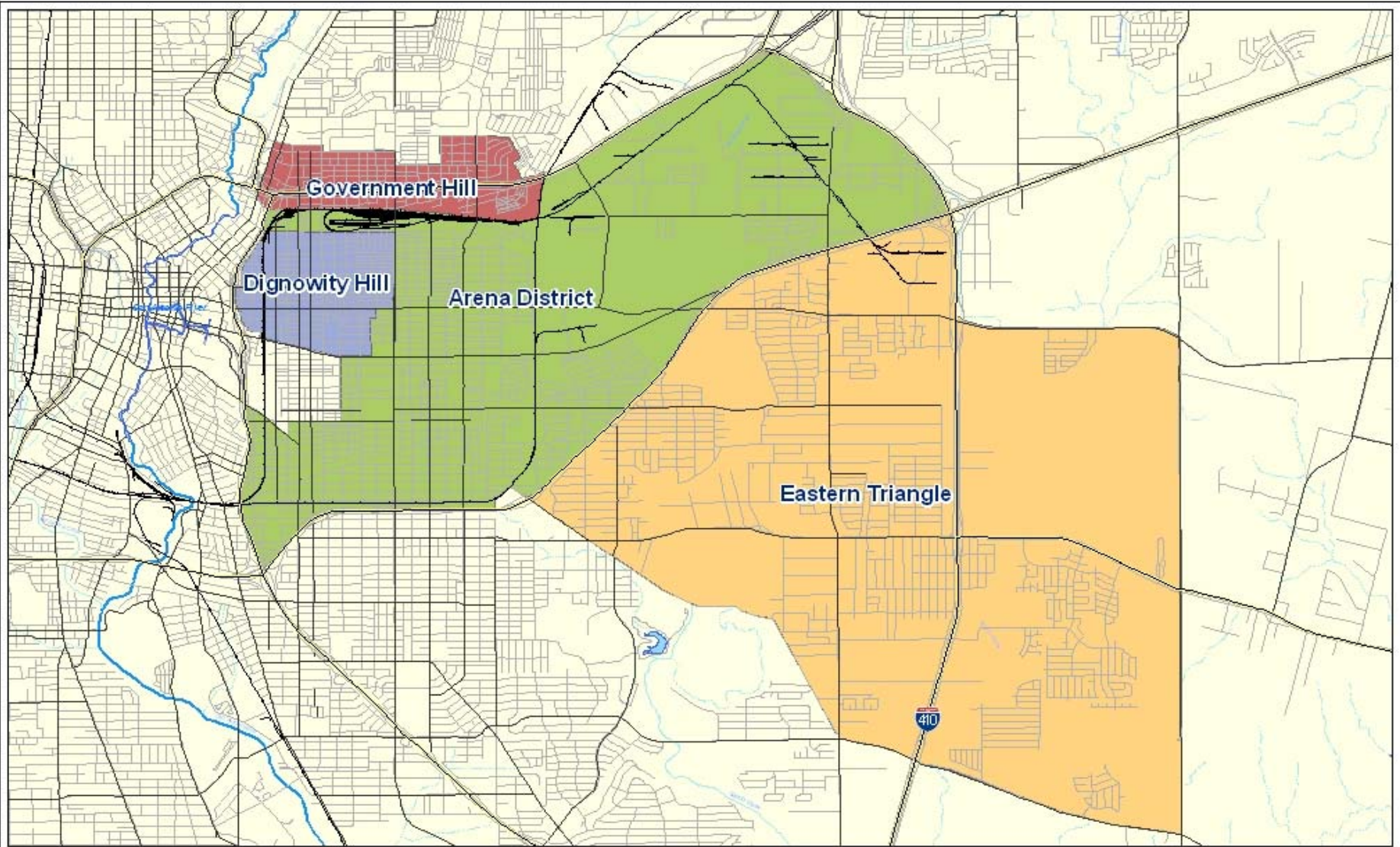


Area Profile: Taxable Property Value



Taxable Property Value

>\$338,000.00	\$97,000.01 - \$103,000.00	\$44,000.01 - \$52,000.00
\$238,000.01 - \$338,000.00	\$92,000.01 - \$97,000.00	\$30,000.01 - \$44,000.00
\$195,000.01 - \$238,000.00	\$87,000.01 - \$92,000.00	\$15,000.01 - \$30,000.00
\$169,000.01 - \$195,000.00	\$83,000.01 - \$87,000.00	\$5,000.01 - \$15,000.00
\$152,000.01 - \$169,000.00	\$78,000.01 - \$83,000.00	\$1,500.01 - \$5,000.00
\$140,000.01 - \$152,000.00	\$74,000.01 - \$78,000.00	\$55.01 - \$1,500.00
\$131,000.01 - \$140,000.00	\$70,000.01 - \$74,000.00	\$48.01 - \$55.00
\$123,000.01 - \$131,000.00	\$67,000.01 - \$70,000.00	\$38.01 - \$48.00
\$115,000.01 - \$123,000.00	\$63,000.01 - \$67,000.00	< \$38.00
\$109,000.01 - \$115,000.00	\$60,000.01 - \$63,000.00	No Data
\$103,000.01 - \$109,000.00	\$52,000.01 - \$60,000.00	



Data Source: City of San Antonio, Complex GIS, Shape Files (TM), Aerial Aerials (TM)
 This map is a representation of the City of San Antonio's adopted plans for the Eastside. It is not intended to be used for any other purpose. The City of San Antonio is not responsible for any errors or omissions in this map. The City of San Antonio is not responsible for any damages or liabilities arising from the use of this map. The City of San Antonio is not responsible for any copyright or trademark infringement. The City of San Antonio is not responsible for any other legal issues.

Map Courtesy: Aerials Office
 Map Last Updated: October 2018

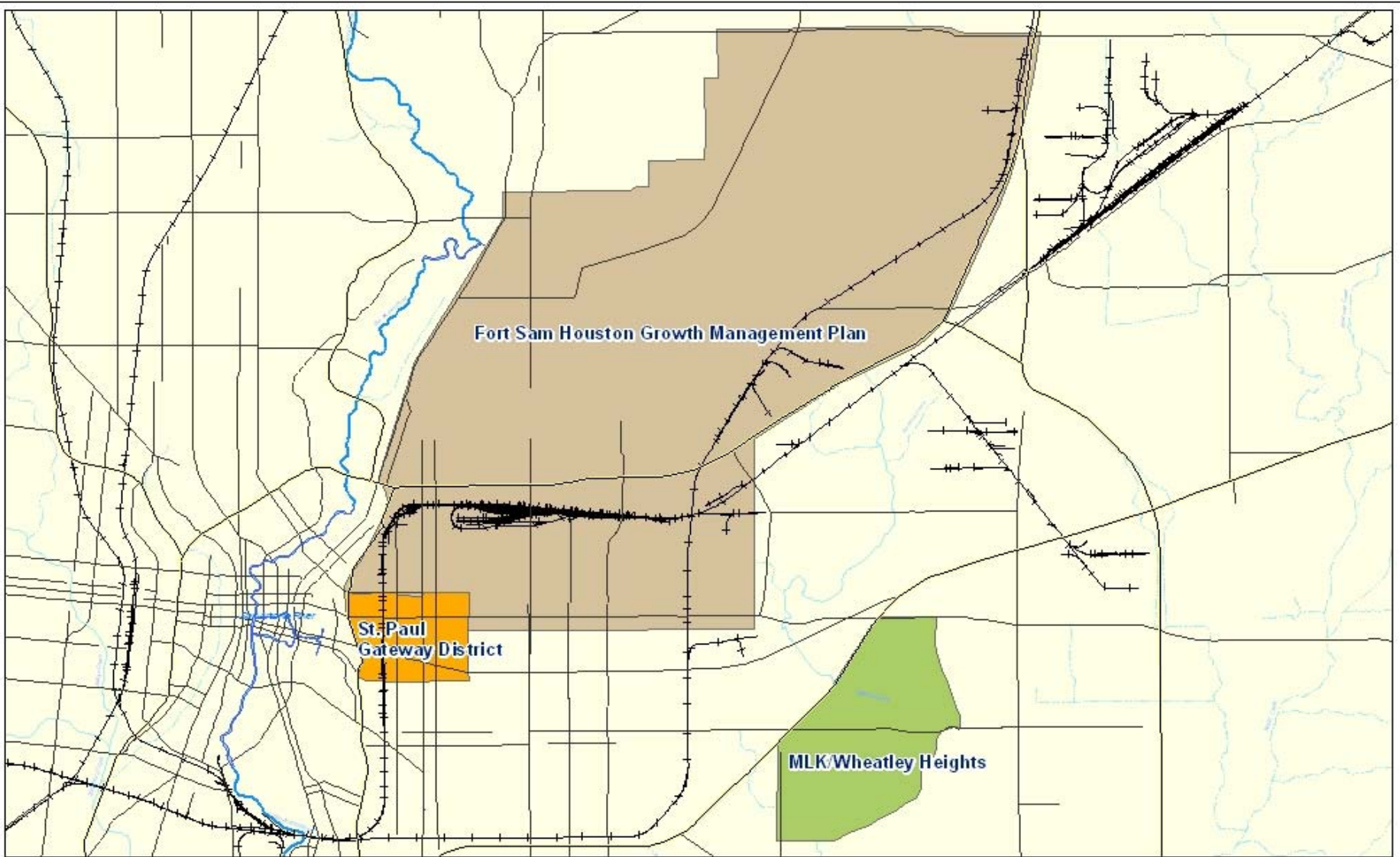
Eastside Adopted Plans

City of San Antonio



City of San Antonio
 Planning and Development
 Services Department
 Rodolfo J. Sanchez, AICP, CIBG
 Director
 373





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Map Courtesy: Arista Office
 Map Last Updated: 7/20/2020

Eastside Additional Planning Efforts

City of San Antonio



City of San Antonio
 Planning and Development
 Services Department
 Rodolfo J. Sanchez, AICP, CBO
 Director

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Common Themes

- Infill development
- Housing rehabilitation
- Economic Development
- Neighborhood Safety
 - Crime
 - Stray Animals
 - Code Compliance
- Parks and Greenways

Accomplishments

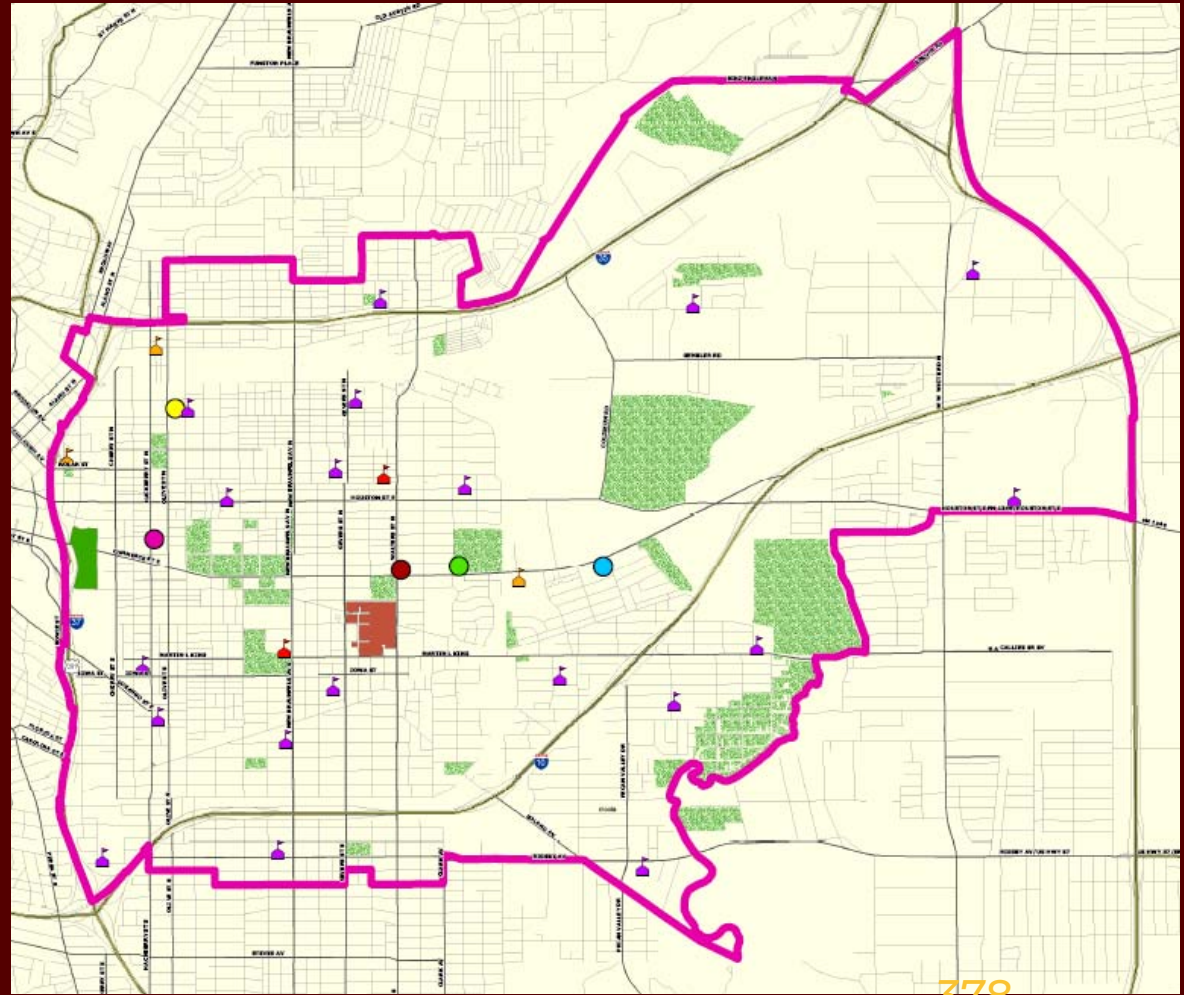
- Walters Street Maintenance
- East Commerce Street Improvements
- Inner City TIRZ Projects
- 2007 Bond Program
- KLN Steel
- Frank Bryant Center
- Fort Sam Houston Community Development Office

Planned Projects/Initiatives

- Walters Street Improvements
- Walters Street Charrette
- Infrastructure Management Program
- CDBG Projects
- Hays Street Bridge
- UIW Eye Clinic

Community Assets

- Public School
- Charter School
- Private School
- Carver Academy and Cultural Center
- Proposed University of Incarnate Word Eye Clinic
- Barbara Jordan Community Center
- Ella Austin Community Center
- G.W. Carver Branch Library
- Expressways
- Major Roads
- Streets
- EastsideParks
- St. Paul Square
- St. Philips College
- Eastside Plan Area



East Side Economic Development Summit



Pat DiGiovanni, Deputy City Manager

January 9th Summit

15 Catalytic Projects

1. Improve the image and media coverage;
2. Eliminate the negative perception of the east side;
3. Encourage new construction of homes and improve existing housing stock;
4. Improve and develop existing parks;
5. Improve school system and their facilities;
6. Capitalize on youth in the area;
7. Build a civilian hospital on the east side;
8. Intensify the city's code-compliance enforcement;

January 9th Summit

15 Catalytic Projects

9. Redevelop the Friedrich Building;
10. Improve the mega warehouse on WW White Road;
11. Construct a street car system along Houston and Commerce Streets;
12. Create a reinvestment zone/district around Fort Sam Houston;
13. Develop east side corridors;
14. Encourage mixed use development that maintains the east side character; and
15. Create a retail development center near the Willow Springs Golf Course.

Projects With High Redevelopment Potential



January 9th Summit

Catalytic Projects

- **Redevelop the Friedrich Building;**
- Improve the mega warehouse on WW White Road;
- Create a reinvestment zone/district around Fort Sam Houston;
- Develop east side corridors;
- Construct a street car system along Houston and Commerce Streets;
- Encourage mixed use development that maintains the east side character; and
- Create a retail development center near the Willow Springs Golf Course.

Friedrich Building



Lot size: 5.2 acres
Building SF: 533,496
Year Constructed: 1932
Zoning: AE-3 HS



Features/Available Incentives:
Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone
Federal Empowerment Zone
10-Yr, 100% Tax Abatement-eligible

Friedrich Building Vicinity Employees



January 9th Summit

Catalytic Projects

- Redevelop the Friedrich Building;
- Improve the mega warehouse on WW White Road;
- Create a reinvestment zone/district around Fort Sam Houston;
- Develop east side corridors;
- Construct a street car system along Houston and Commerce Streets;
- Encourage mixed use development that maintains the east side character; and
- Create a retail development center near the Willow Springs Golf Course.

Mega Warehouse



Lot size: 3.79 ac
Building SF: 49,242
Year Constructed: 1978
Zoning: C2



Features/Available Incentives:

10-Yr, 100% Tax Abatement-eligible
Eligible for TIRZ designation

January 9th Summit

Catalytic Projects

- Redevelop the Friedrich Building;
- Improve the mega warehouse on WW White Road;
- Create a reinvestment zone/district around Fort Sam Houston;
- Develop east side corridors;
- Construct a street car system along Houston and Commerce Streets;
- Encourage mixed use development that maintains the east side character; and
- Create a retail development center near the Willow Springs Golf Course.

FSH Reinvestment Zone



Features/Available Incentives:

Vacant/ Publicly Owned Properties with Redevelopment Potential
Walters Street 2012 GO Bond Improvements
Walters Street Charrette

January 9th Summit

Catalytic Projects

- Redevelop the Friedrich Building;
- Improve the mega warehouse on WW White Road;
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Eastside Corridors, Streetcars, Mixed-Use Development



Features/Available Incentives:

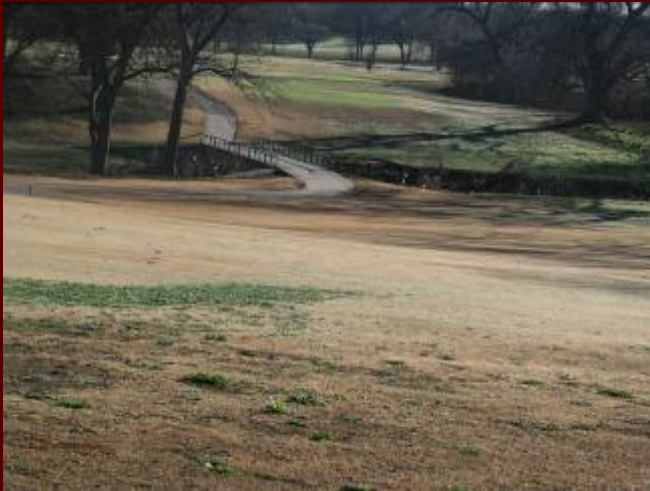
Recent public improvements complement potential streetcar route;
Major anchors: Downtown, St. Paul Square, St. Philips, Ft. Sam Houston;
“AE” zoning allow for mixed-use development

January 9th Summit

Catalytic Projects

- Redevelop the Friedrich Building;
- Improve the mega warehouse on WW White Road;
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- Develop east side corridors;
- Construct a street car system along Houston and Commerce Streets;
- Encourage mixed use development that maintains the east side character; and
- **Create a retail development center near the Willow Springs Golf Course.**

Willow Springs Retail Development

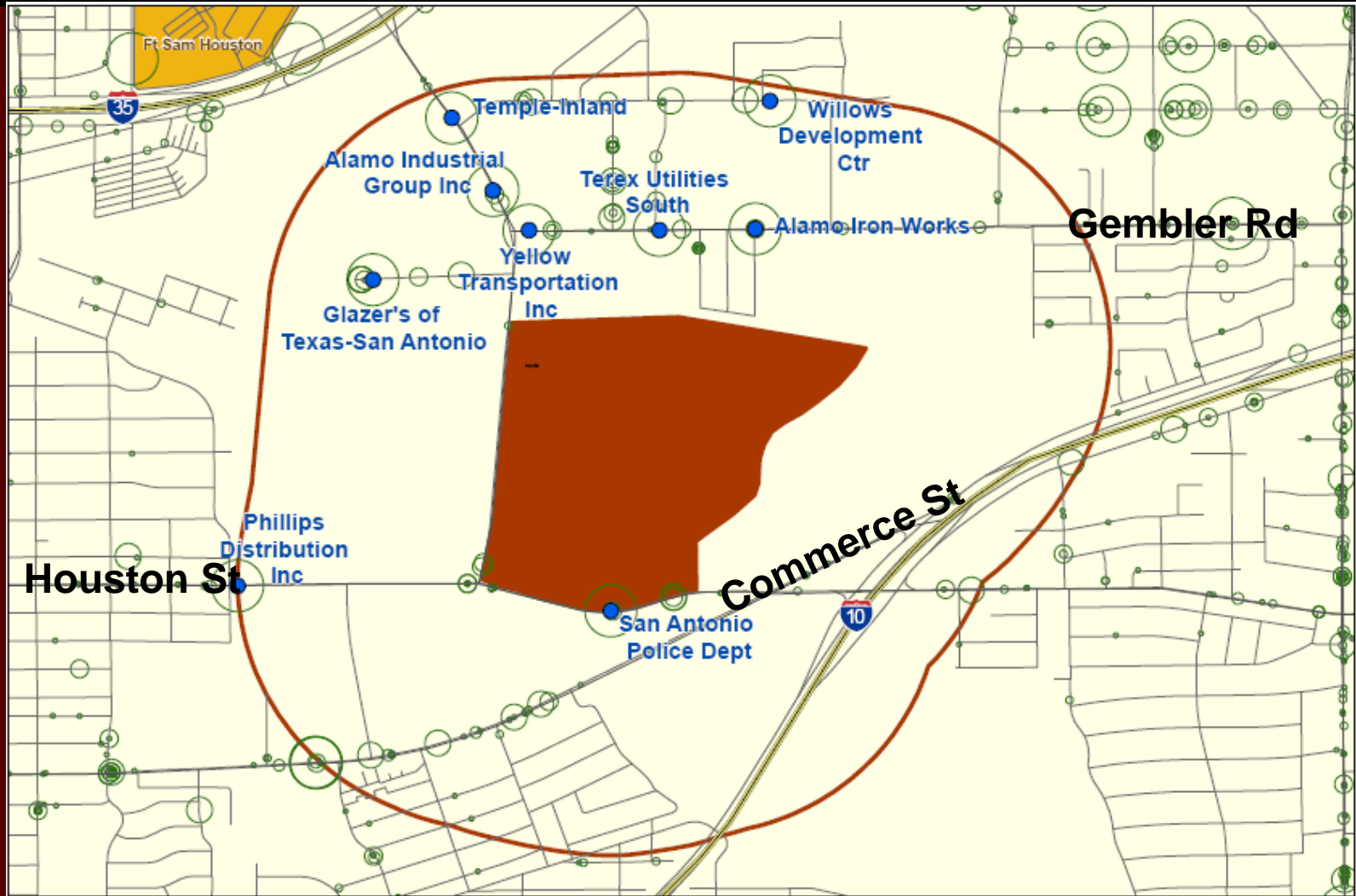


Lot size: 74 developable acres
Zoning: AE-3



Features/Available Incentives:
Within TIRZ #11 and Empowerment Zone
10 year 100% Tax Abatement
Recent public ROW improvements on AT&T Center Parkway

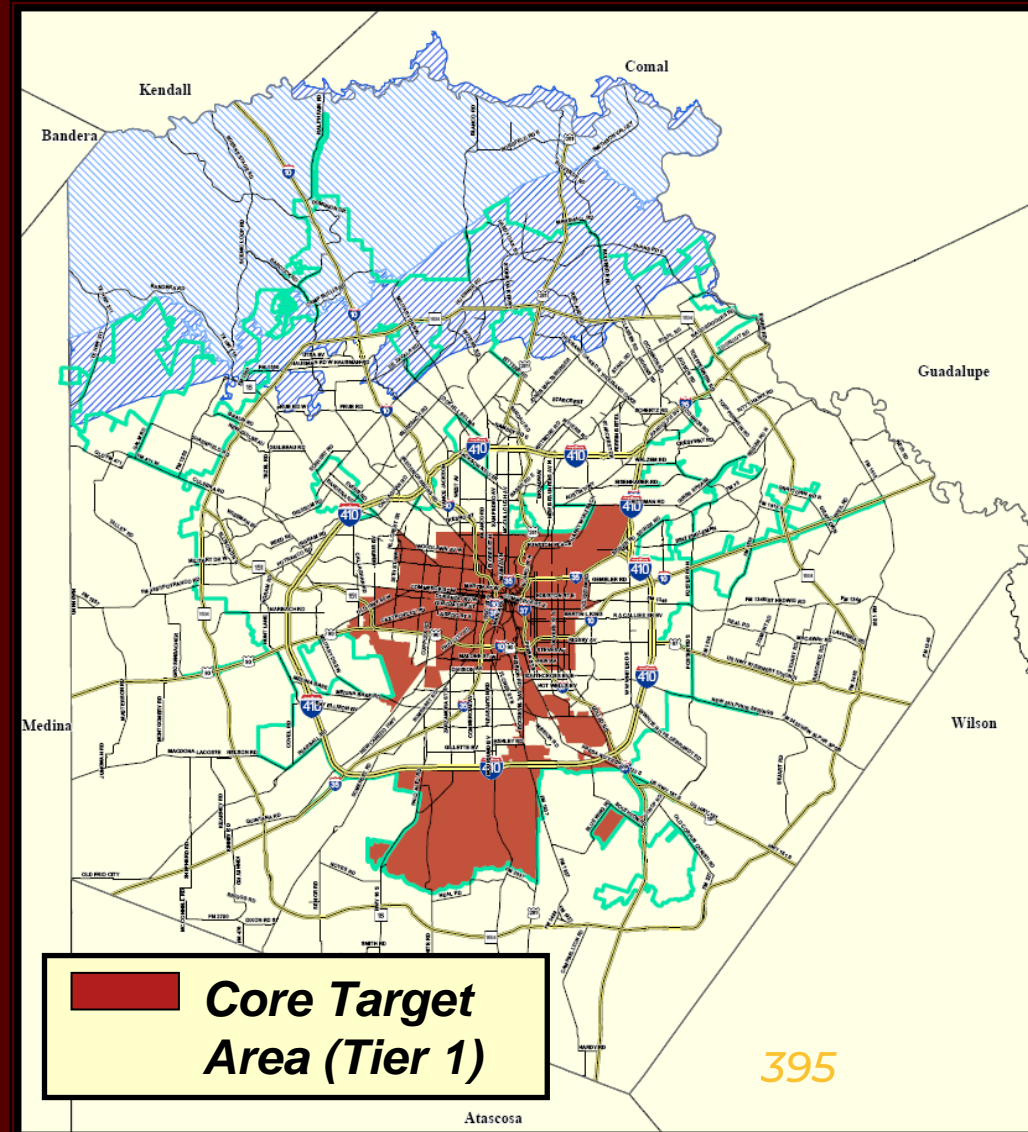
Willow Springs Vicinity Employees



Inner City Revitalization / Infill Policy

Promote growth and development in the heart of the City

- Remove City fees and provide incentives in targeted areas
- Increase new development (housing and commercial) on vacant lots
- Increase redevelopment of underused buildings and sites
- Increase rehabilitation, upgrade, adaptive reuse of existing buildings
- Improve maintenance of existing buildings and sites
- Increase business recruitment and assistance



East Side Economic Development Summit



January 22, 2010