



MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting: Downtown Community Meeting #1
Date: September 12, 2017
Time: 6:30 - 9:00 pm
Location: La Orilla Del Rio Ballroom (203 S. Saint Mary's Street)
Attendees:

Meeting Purpose

The City of San Antonio Planning Department kicked off the first Downtown Regional Center Plan Community Meeting with the following main objectives:

- Introduce the Downtown Regional Center planning process
- Review initial existing conditions findings
- Map Downtown's Challenges and Opportunities
- Identify a vision and goals
- Learn about further opportunities to get involved in planning for Downtown

Approximately 32 stakeholders attended the meeting to offer their ideas and perspectives. Community input from this meeting, along with additional feedback from the Downtown Planning Team and intercept events will be used to create a vision and goals for the future of the Downtown Plan Area. Public input and technical analyses will also inform the more detailed parts of the Plan in the coming months.

Meeting Format

Participants were invited to enjoy refreshments and view an Open House gallery of exhibits and activities either before or after the main presentation and group discussions. The meeting was organized into four main parts:

- I. Open House: 30 minutes
- II. Presentation: 30 minutes
- III. Group Discussions: 60 minutes
- IV. Open House: 30 minutes

Open House

The Open House portion of the meeting included a gallery of large existing conditions maps and a resource table with copies of the SA Tomorrow Plans and applicable neighborhood or community plans. Participants were invited to identify any corrections to the existing conditions maps using sticky notes, and mark on a map their common destinations and the vicinity of where they live.

Presentation

City of San Antonio Project Manager Jacob Floyd and MIG, Inc. Principal Jay Renkens and provided background on the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan that was adopted by the City in 2016, reviewed what we know about existing conditions in Downtown, and described the process for creating the Downtown Regional Center Plan. Following the formal presentation, meeting participants broke into five smaller groups for focused discussions.

Group Discussions

Project Team members from City of San Antonio Planning Department and the consulting team MIG, Inc. led small group discussions with participants gathered around tables with maps of the Downtown Plan Area. The group discussions were divided into three main parts. In Part 1, participants used a map, color-coded stickers, and sticky notes on a chart to discuss and document what they thought should be preserved, added, removed, or kept out (P.A.R.K.) of the Downtown Plan Area. In Part 2, participants discussed their vision for the future of the Downtown Plan area using a facilitated writing and discussion activity. Project Team leaders documented discussion points on a large sheet of paper on the wall. In Part 3, participants distilled their main ideas onto a “Madlib” style summary worksheet. Then, one representative from each small group shared discussion highlights aloud to the larger Community Meeting audience.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

The following is a summary of comments compiled from notes recorded during the five group discussions. Photographs of each group’s marked-up map, wallgraphic sheet, and discussion highlights worksheet are included at the end of this meeting summary.

Part 1: Preserve, Add, Remove, or Keep Out (P.A.R.K.)

Using a map of the Downtown Plan Area as a starting point for discussion, participants identified what they thought should be preserved, added, removed, or kept out (P.A.R.K.) of the Downtown Plan Area.

Preserve

- Green space
- Historic Buildings and Places and Character
- Riverwalk
- Connectivity of streets
- Authenticity
- Trees
- Neighborhoods with walkability, shading and culture
- Fitness in the park
- Environmental integrity
- Transit access to downtown from suburbs
- Hemisfair
- Market square tradition
- Entertainment hub
- Public art/murals

Add

- Green space
- Underground utilities
- High capacity, frequent transit options, bus stop amenities
- Bicycle connectivity and amenities



- Placemaking
- Pedestrian connectivity around Alamodome
- Music Festival
- Mixed Use
- Grocery Stores
- Affordable housing
- Housing options (types)
- Entertainment
- Off-street parking
- WiFi
- Small grocery businesses (River North area)
- Public gathering spaces, Common ground
- Mixed income housing
- Utilize under-passes for public spaces
- Improved sense of security
- Buffers, street trees (high-quality streetscape), Shade
- Community Gardens and Farmers Markets
- Street level activity
- Infill development

Remove

- Non-shade trees
- Surface parking lots
- Utility Poles
- Parking requirements (development)
- Noise and obstructions from trains
- Underutilized or unmaintained/abandoned buildings
- Undesirable land uses

Keep Out

- Light pollution
- “Cookie Cutter” design
- Undesirable land uses
- Violence
- Cars

Part 2: Small Group Discussion Highlights

The small groups discussed their collective P.A.R.K. themes to come to a consensus on the most significant opportunities (Preserve + Add) and greatest challenge to taking advantage of these opportunities (Remove + Keep) in the plan area.

Group 1 thought that the most significant opportunities are diverse and affordable housing options with a mix of uses, transportation options and supportive land use, and the authenticity that comes from the history and culture of Downtown. They felt that the greatest challenge to taking advantage of these is a car-centric paradigm and the resulting policies.

Group 2 thought that the most significant opportunities are the heritage, culture, and history of the area and a high quality transportation system. They felt that the greatest challenge to taking advantage of



these is the inability of many families to afford to participate in a revitalizing downtown.

Group 3 thought that the most significant opportunities are the preservation of community diversity, increased street-level activity, the safety of the area, and the quality of amenities. They felt that the greatest challenge to taking advantage of these is the risk of gentrification.

Group 4 thought that the most significant opportunities are the provision of housing/sheltering options for all, the rich culture and history of the area, and connectivity with the surrounding area through multiple modes. They felt that the greatest challenge to taking advantage of these is an infrastructure system dominated by automobiles.

Group 5 thought that the most significant opportunities are connecting to the outer areas of the Downtown plan area and enhancing the quality of life within them, the culture and historic character of the plan area, and opportunities for revitalization and infill development. They felt that the greatest challenge to taking advantage of these are a lack of civic activity and under-utilization of some areas.

Part 3: Vision Themes

Participants shared the following aspirations for the future of Downtown.

Group 1 envisioned a future Downtown that is **unique** and **full of life, vibrant, and inviting and accessible**.

Group 2 envisioned a future Downtown that has **safe neighborhoods, preserved history and culture**, with access to convenient and functional **transit**.

Group 3 envisioned a future Downtown that is **safe**, with great **public green spaces** and that is **well connected** with existing neighborhoods by safe and enjoyable streets, sidewalks, and other paths.

Group 4 envisioned a future for Downtown that is **functional** for people of all levels of ability, built around communally valued and **human-oriented public spaces**.

Group 5 envisioned a future for Downtown that is **diverse** and **vibrant** while maintaining the **small town feel** of the area, although it is a **big city**. Their future Downtown is makes people feel **safe** and **connected** to one another and preserves the **character** that gives its identity.

Next Steps

The City Planning Department will use the public's input from Community Meeting #1, along with input generated from intercepts, focus groups, interviews, and the Downtown Planning Team, to draft a vision for the Downtown Plan Area. The Vision will be used to guide more detailed plan recommendations that we will create in the coming months.

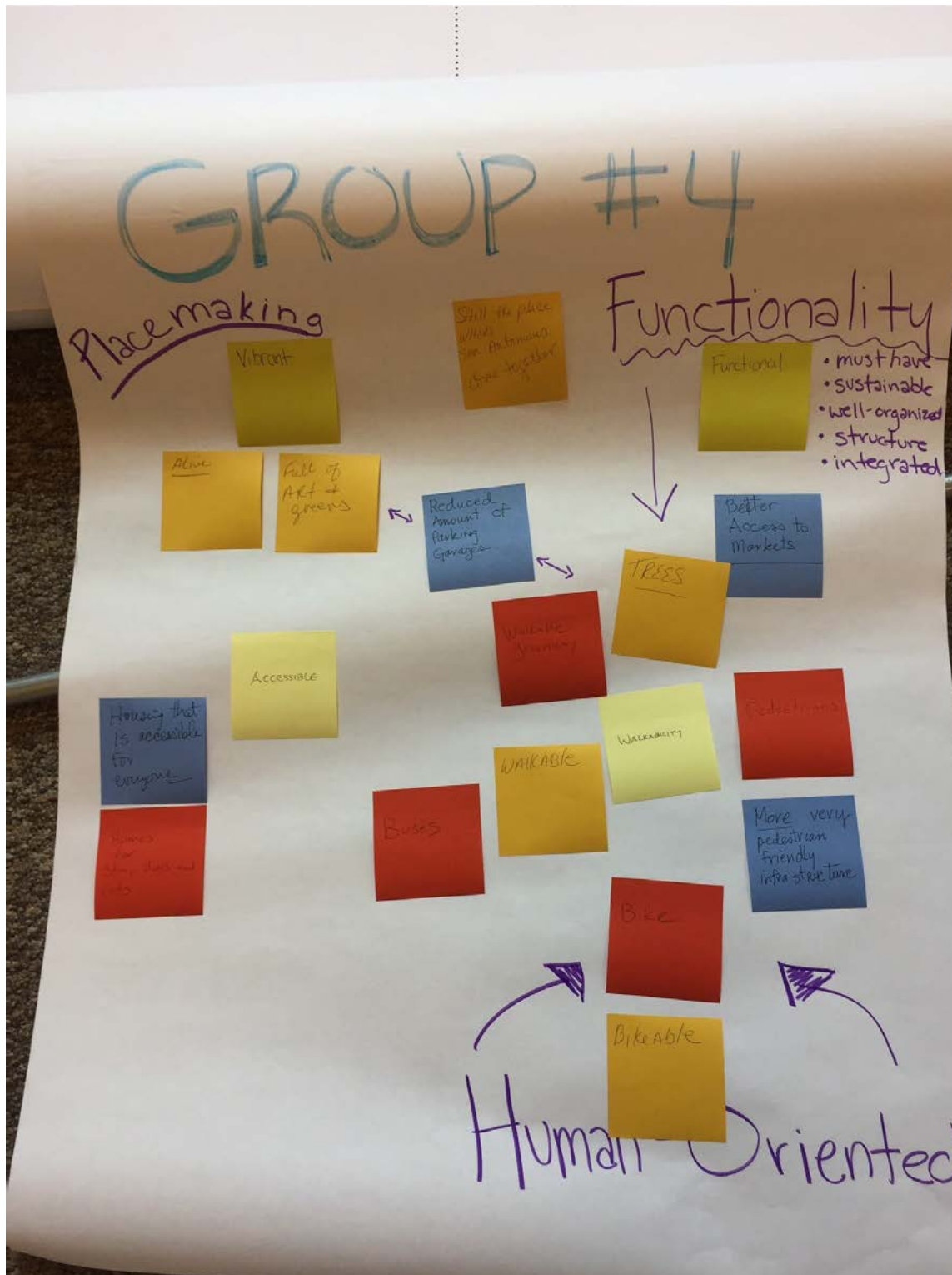
The second Community Meeting will be held in January 2018. Objectives for this meeting will include:


- Review the emerging Downtown Plan Area vision and goals
- Gather input to inform more detailed plan recommendations
- Provide more information on how the Downtown Plan is being created and further opportunities to get involved



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sub area planning

Downtown Community Workshop - Group# 3
September 12, 2017

PRESERVE - THINGS WE CURRENTLY HAVE / DO THAT ARE POSITIVE AND SHOULD BE RETAINED

COMMUNITY TRAILHEAD

THE DIAMOND LA VILLAGE

INTERACTIVE HUB

ALAMODOS AREA

ADD - THINGS WE DO NOT HAVE / DO THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN ARE POSITIVE

STREET LEVEL ACTIVITY

COMMON GROUND

ARTS DEVELOPMENT

REMOVE - THINGS WE HAVE THAT ARE UNDERUTILIZED OR UNNECESSARY AND SHOULD BE REMOVED

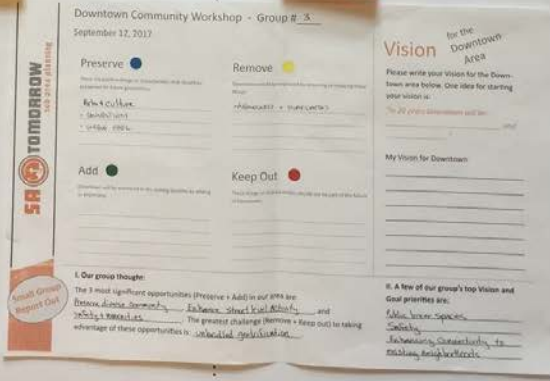
REMOVED BUILDINGS

TOWN HOUSE

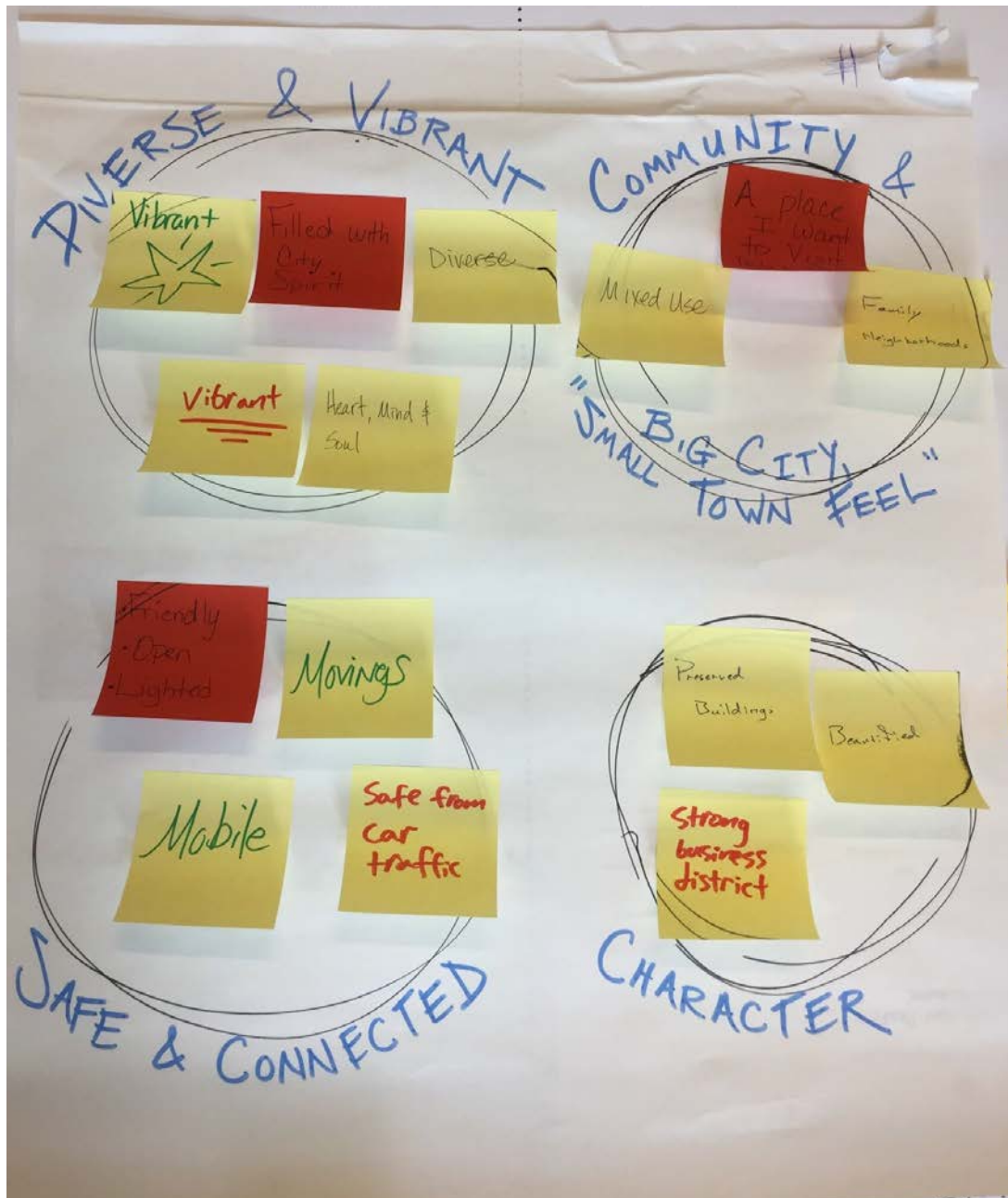
REMOVED BUILDINGS

KEEP OUT - THINGS WE DO NOT WANT TO SEE

REMOVED BUILDINGS







Downtown Community Workshop - Group # 1

September 12, 2017

Preserve ●

These are positive things or characteristics that should be preserved for future generations:

Remove ●

Downtown would be improved by removing or reducing these things:

Add ●

Downtown will be enhanced in the coming decades by adding or improving:

Keep Out ●

These things or characteristics should not be part of the future of Downtown:

Vision for the Downtown Area

Please write your Vision for the Downtown area below. One idea for starting your vision is:

"In 20 years Downtown will be: _____, and _____."

My Vision for Downtown:

INVITING + ACCESSIBLE
VIBRANT
FULL OF LIFE!
UNIQUE

I. Our group thought:

The 3 most significant opportunities (Preserve + Add) in our area are: mixed use density, housing type options, and supporting local businesses, and preserving the history, authenticity, and culture of downtown. The greatest challenge (Remove + Keep out) to taking advantage of these opportunities is: shift from our current car-centric paradigm and the policy prioritized result.

II. A few of our group's top Vision and Goal priorities are:

Small Group Report Out

Downtown Community Workshop - Group # 9

September 12, 2017

Preserve ●

These are positive things or characteristics that should be preserved for future generations:

Remove ●

Downtown would be improved by removing or reducing these things:

Add ●

Downtown will be enhanced in the coming decades by adding or improving:

Keep Out ●

These things or characteristics should not be part of the future of Downtown:

Vision for the Downtown Area

Please write your Vision for the Downtown area below. One idea for starting your vision is:

"In 20 years Downtown will be: _____, and _____."

My Vision for Downtown:

- Segregated - safety - of all the neighborhoods
- maintain the beauty & history/history of downtown
- route trains blocking the tracks creating a safety problem and congestion

I. Our group thought:

The 3 most significant opportunities (Preserve + Add) in our area are: Keep heritage, culture & history, transportation system's and trails, and keep street names. The greatest challenge (Remove + Keep out) to taking advantage of these opportunities is: many families can participate/benefit from this because of their economic situation.

II. A few of our group's top Vision and Goal priorities are:

- safety for our neighborhood
- keeping the history & culture of our city
- don't loop like trolley simulator for whole area designated as downtown

Small Group Report Out



Downtown Community Workshop - Group # 3

September 12, 2017

Preserve ●

These are positive things or characteristics that should be preserved for future generations:

Arts + culture
> CONNECTIVITY
> UNIQUE FEEL

Remove ●

Downtown would be improved by removing or reducing these things:

> ABANDONED + DILAPIDATED

Add ●

Downtown will be enhanced in the coming decades by adding or improving:

Keep Out ●

These things or characteristics should not be part of the future of Downtown:

Vision for the Downtown Area

Please write your Vision for the Downtown area below. One idea for starting your vision is:

"In 20 years Downtown will be:

_____, _____, and _____."

My Vision for Downtown:

I. Our group thought:

The 3 most significant opportunities (Preserve + Add) in our area are:

Preserve diverse community, Enhance street level activity, and safety + amenities. The greatest challenge (Remove + Keep out) to taking advantage of these opportunities is: unbridled gentrification.

II. A few of our group's top Vision and Goal priorities are:

Public green spaces
Safety
Enhancing Connectivity to existing neighborhoods

Small Group
Report Out

Downtown Community Workshop - Group # 4

September 12, 2017

Preserve ●

These are positive things or characteristics that should be preserved for future generations:

Remove ●

Downtown would be improved by removing or reducing these things:

Add ●

Downtown will be enhanced in the coming decades by adding or improving:

Keep Out ●

These things or characteristics should not be part of the future of Downtown:

Vision for the Downtown Area

Please write your Vision for the Downtown area below. One idea for starting your vision is:

"In 20 years Downtown will be:

_____, _____, and _____."

My Vision for Downtown:

I. Our group thought:

The 3 most significant opportunities (Preserve + Add) in our area are:

Housing/Sheltering options for all, culture + history, and connectivity by multi-modal means. The greatest challenge (Remove + Keep out) to taking advantage of these opportunities is: Parking (auto-dominated infrastructure)

II. A few of our group's top Vision and Goal priorities are:

Place-making
Functionality
Human-oriented

Small Group
Report Out



Downtown Community Workshop - Group # 6

September 12, 2017

Preserve ●

These are positive things or characteristics that should be preserved for future generations:

- HOMES & ARCHITECTURE
- CULTURE & HISTORIC CHARACTER
- REC & OPEN SPACE
- ENVIRON. INTEGRITY

Remove ●

Downtown would be improved by removing or reducing these things:

- SURFACE LOTS
- UNDERUTILIZED BLDGS.
- OVERHEAD POWER LINES
- OUTDATED UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Add ●

Downtown will be enhanced in the coming decades by adding or improving:

- NATURAL FEEL OFF RIVERWALK
- TOWN SQUARE/ACTIVITY CENTER
- PORTALS TO CELEBRATE HISTORY
- HOUSING OPTIONS (AFFORDABLE)
- CONNECTIONS TO NEIGHBORHOODS
- SPIN-OFF NON-PROFITS
- DETER VIOLENCE

Keep Out ●

These things or characteristics should not be part of the future of Downtown:

Vision for the Downtown Area

Please write your Vision for the Downtown area below. One idea for starting your vision is:

"In 20 years Downtown will be:

_____, _____, and _____"

My Vision for Downtown:

I. Our group thought:

The 3 most significant opportunities (Preserve + Add) in our area are:

^{CONNECTING & ENHANCING} ~~BEACHES~~ OUTER AREAS, CULTURE & HISTORIC CHARACTER, and

UPDATED & INFILL DEVELOPMENT. The greatest challenge (Remove + Keep out) to taking advantage of these opportunities is: UNDERUTILIZATION & LACK OF CIVIC ACTIVITY.

II. A few of our group's top Vision and Goal priorities are:

Diversity & Vibrancy
~~Character~~ ^{big city with} small town feel
Safe & Connected
Character

Small Group Report Out

