

## VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETING SUMMARY

### Port San Antonio Area Regional Center (Draft Plan)

**Meeting Date:** June 29, 2021

**Time:** 6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

**Location:** Zoom

#### City of San Antonio Staff & Consultant Team:

Carlos Guerra II, *Project Manager*

Chris Ryerson, AICP, *Planning Administrator*

Iris Gonzales, *Special Projects Manager*

Ana Villareal, *Senior Planner*

Rudy Nino, AICP, *Assistant Planning Director*

Bridgett White, AICP, *Planning Director*

Sonia Jimenez, JD, *Ximenes & Associates*

Laura Calderon, *Ximenes & Associates*

Linda Ximenes, *Ximenes & Associates*

Gretchen Roufs, APR, *Auxiliary Marketing Services*

#### Meeting Objectives:

The purpose of the Virtual Community Meeting was to inform the public of the Draft Port San Antonio Area Regional Center Plan, and to provide a brief tutorial on where and how to access the draft document, and other plan information, on the plan area website.

#### Meeting Format

The Community Meeting was held virtually through Zoom. Including planning and consultant staff, the total number of attendees was 44. The meeting began with instructions on how to ask questions or provide discussion through the chat function, followed by an option for Spanish speaking attendees to join a separate break-out room with the live Spanish language presentation. The meeting continued with staff introductions, including a foreword by the department's Assistant Director, Rudy Nino, AICP and Planning Department Director, Bridgett White, AICP. A special thank you was also given to Channary Gould, the former Project Manager of the Port San Antonio Area Regional Center plan. The meeting continued with an overview of the Port SA Area Regional Center Plan, a live Question & Answer Session, as well as "next steps" in the planning process, and information on how to access both the website's draft planning document including physical copies which are available at the public libraries located within the plan boundary.

#### Port San Antonio Area Regional Center Overview

The Project Manager began the PowerPoint presentation with an overview of the regional center, followed by a description of the planning team and the timeline the group has worked on thus far to develop the draft plan document. Over the course of two years, the planning team-made up of area stakeholders and neighborhood representatives, developed the draft plan by analyzing the existing

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conditions of the area and creating a vision and set of goals for the area. The planning process also includes establishing a set of recommendations to address several plan elements within the community including Land Use, Focus Areas, Mobility, Amenities and Public Space, Economic Development, and Transformative Projects.

### Priority Recommendations

While all the recommendations and strategies in the plan are important, the Planning Team and community identified some priorities that are either: most critical to achieving the plan vision and goals; are more likely to be funded and implemented in the short-term; build upon other existing or ongoing initiatives; or are a necessary first step to provide a foundation for other projects and investments. These priority recommendations were presented to the attendees. These include strategies related to Land Use, Focus Areas, Mobility, Amenities and Public Space, and Economic Development. The strategies are accessible through the PowerPoint associated with this Community Meeting, which is available on the website's document library: <https://portsanantonio.sacompplan.com/documents/>

### Live Q&A Session

Following the overview of the regional center plan, the project manager described questions commonly received at previous community meetings. The questions were answered by Planning Staff and the responses in *italics* are as follows:

Example Question #1: Why are we planning for the Port SA Area?

*Planning for the Port San Antonio Area is part of a bigger effort to plan for the entire City as part of implementing the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan. As mentioned earlier, the Comprehensive Plan identified 13 Regional Centers (including the Port San Antonio Area) that are the main employment centers of the City. The City is growing quickly, and we know a significant number of new homes and jobs will locate in these Regional Centers. So, we want to proactively plan for these areas to ensure infrastructure, community amenities, and housing and transportation choices are in place to meet the needs of current and future residents. Planning for these areas ahead of time can also help guide new development to certain corridors and focus areas where higher density housing or commercial uses make sense, and encourage the preservation of existing neighborhood areas.*

Example Question #2: Does this mean the city will rezone my property?

*While the land use maps in our Sub-Area Plans and zoning are certainly related, adoption of this plan does not mean any properties automatically get rezoned. Rezoning is its own dedicated process, with many steps and several opportunities for outreach to property owners. City-initiated re-zonings would occur in larger areas where existing zoning is inconsistent with the adopted future land use. This might occur in areas where zoning was never updated to match existing development patterns, or where new nodes of higher density development are anticipated, for instance in designated focus areas or around major future transit stations.*

\*during the live Q&A session an attendee asked for clarification to this question, and the full answer to this question is available below:



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Example Question #3: How will these improvements and projects be paid for?

*Public projects and initiatives recommended in the plan may be funded through typical mechanisms such as the City's annual budget, the five-year Bond cycle, the City's Infrastructure Management Program (IMP), or designated areas such as Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ). In some cases, Federal funding programs, such as Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) may be appropriate funding options. In addition, partner organizations and agencies such as Bexar County, VIA Metropolitan Transit, the San Antonio River Authority, or the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization may also contribute to or support funding for certain projects. While the funding sources just mentioned may be used for public investments and amenities, or in some cases, Public-Private Partnerships, it is important to remember that private developers with private funding sources will ultimately be the ones to build housing, commercial, and mixed-use projects.*

After the pre-screened questions, the project manager asked the attendees to provide their own questions in the chat, and the questions would be answered by planning staff. The questions were noted by the consultant team and compiled into a word document, which the project manager read off and so that planning staff could answer the questions. The questions are below and the response to each question is accessible through the meeting recordings on the project website:

<https://portsanantonio.sacomplan.com/>

1. The port was originally designed to keep people out and military what strategies are you going to use to help bring the communities into the port? The Quintana community is cut off to the port by the rail port and no walkable or bike access on the bridge. How can we connect our community to the port?
  - a. *Chris Ryerson: The Quintana community, in terms of neighborhood boundaries, falls just outside the plan boundary into the Southwest Community Plan Boundary-which we will be working on in the next couple years. We'll be reaching out to Quintana community as we get closer to it. There was also a recent effort by the Office of Historic Preservation looking at the community and the fact that it is in an opportunity zone, and the different ways we can leverage to provide different community amenities and different types of business that could be located in the area. Although the Port SA plan does not address the community directly, because it falls outside the plan boundary it is something we will be addressing in future planning efforts as we go along.*
2. Should these "street trees" be added to the redesign of these roads, whom will be responsible for their maintenance and how often will that maintenance be performed?
  - a. *Carlos Guerra: Street trees are generally located within city right of way, which is city property and therefore would be maintained as needed by the city.*
3. A few years back San Antonio AIA (American Institute of Architects) and the port did a master plan competition have you guys thought about using these concepts to help develop this process?
  - a. *Chris Ryerson: We worked closely with Port SA, they had several members who attended each planning team meeting, so they are certainly aware of the overall plan for the area. They also have their own master plan. Port SA has its own initiatives and funding. We can try to get more information for you. Many previous plans, before this process, were considered*



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*and given their due respect early on, so we could use that to build upon during the planning process with the planning team.*

4. For creating a buffer between the road and sidewalk/bike lanes, besides trees, are there other options considered, such as car-protected bike lanes, planters or so-called "parklets"?
  - a. *Chris Ryerson: Yes. Other options are definitely considered. To clarify, in most cases, the level of planning that we are able to do with these regional center plans and the other sub area plans-essentially we're able to recommend concepts and general design principles that the community has said they would like to see. Ultimately the plan will recommend creating complete streets or complete green streets in certain areas in Port SA. When the plan gets adopted that gives the impetus for the Transportation and Public Works Department to do more detailed studies. For instance, to do implement car protected bike lanes or the parklets requires engineering and a lot more detailed analysis that we (the Planning Department) are just not able to do on every roadway in these sub area plans. We certainly recommend those things as concepts and as the other departments mentioned: Transportation and Public Works, that will ultimately build the projects will do the more detailed studies to measure the right of way of the road, understand the exact traffic patterns and volumes along the road, understand parking needs in the area and make recommendations based on that and will also go through a community process. When they come up with their recommendations there would be a community input process around the detailed design work.*
  
5. **\*\*Requires Clarification\*\*** This is in regard to Mr. Nino's answer to property being rezoned: I think those watching the stream would like a more simplified response to the question as it almost sounded as though the city would take property as needed, which could scare residents.
  - a. *Rudy Nino: I'd definitely like to clarify, I'm sure we all understand the concepts of Land Use and Zoning can be somewhat complicated but to provide a more simplified response. Its important, number one, that the city in no way would be taking the use of someone's property for some other use. If you look through the draft plan, nowhere does it recommend that. Quite the opposite, this plan is about enhancing the community, trying to connect communities and build an area for the future that provides additional job opportunities and housing choices that also connect this center to the rest of San Antonio in a much better fashion. In order for us to do that, we look at land use. The Planning Team has done a really good job with our staff at looking at the land use and identifying where certain types of uses should go, whether industrial should go within a particular area, or residential or commercial, and at what level of intensity that should look like. Typically what follows the adoption of a plan, and the adoption of this land use map that you are going to see when you review this plan, is the process of zoning the area. Oftentimes the communities vision needs to match what occurs on the ground. We would do an evaluation of the area to identify what needs to be updated in order to match the community's vision. If there was an area, for example, that was zoned as industrial in 1970, but through this community planning process it was determined that the area should be used for housing or should be a commercial area to enhance access to grocery stores; it is incumbent on the city to go in and rezone so that the community's vision can be borne out. The city will do a much more intense, deeper dive into the zoning that is appropriate for the area following the adoption of the land use map that the community has bought in on. There would be a lot more community discussion and engagement around that. Our department has participated in*



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- that type of zoning and we make sure that there is an enhanced level of communication that goes out to neighborhoods and individual neighborhoods whenever zoning occurs that the city is taking a look at. Just know, there would be a lot more communication about zoning of property in the future following the adoption of the plan.*
- b. Chris Ryerson: It might be worth mentioning, the great majority of properties in the area probably wouldn't be considered as needing any type of rezoning. It is very specific circumstances that the city would look at and say "hey, we need to rezone your property." The great majority of properties in the area don't need to worry about undergoing that sort of process.*
  - c. Rudy Nino: I agree. This is one of the unique regional centers that there wouldn't really need to be much rezoning that takes place-there may be some areas that we need to help neighborhoods maintain stability, and in those cases, of course we will make every effort to do so.*
6. Can you explain the Kelly Parkway Study and its status in the plan?
- a. Chris Ryerson: The Kelly Parkway Study, if I remember correctly was completed 20 years ago and revisited 10 years ago, and Channary, the former project manager, was very aware of it. We have had conversations with the Public Works and Transportation Departments that works on the Major Throughfare Plan (MTP) and Kelly Parkway is designated on the plan. The MTP is essentially a map that identifies roadway types; whether they are high capacity, potential highways, etc. but also, potential future roadways that may be needed in different parts of the city if certain types of development occur. The Kelly Parkway, as proposed many years ago, extends from the Northeast corner of the Port SA Regional Center, cuts down through Port SA and through the Quintana neighborhood and further south across to Southwest Military and then curve east and out to the Brooks area and through a lot of South San Antonio. There is a lot of Kelly Parkway to consider with different segments and the Transportation Department is very aware of that, in fact, they are working on some potential revisions in the parts of Southern San Antonio. We have a recommendation and strategies to basically ask the Transportation Department to look at the Kelly Parkway Study within the Port SA area and determine which aspects of it are still relevant, if the alignments still make sense-all of those sorts of things. It is not something that we can determine and make a specific recommendation, within the context of this plan, but we have put a recommendation in there to get that other department to take a closer look in the coming years and really update that study, how it is depicted on the map and which aspects need to be continued to be considered for funding.*
7. Is there a plan for the historical housing at the Port of SA?
- a. Rudy Nino: There was a question about the historically designated houses on the base. Because some of that housing is designated as a historical landmark, the Port-since they are the property owner, would go through a process to make any redevelopments or updates to those structures. Currently Port SA has indicated that some of those structures will remain.*
8. When is this anticipated to be completed?
- a. Carlos Guerra: Ideally at the end of the year (2021). There is a public input process that would need to be completed by July 18<sup>th</sup>, after that, we will take those recommendations and run them by the planning team and get their buy-in and make any changes before it goes to adoption. The plan would need approval from the Comprehensive Planning*



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*Committee and the Planning Commission before ultimately going to City Council for adoption. If you consider those public hearings and the required timelines for input that puts us at the end of the year 2021.*

9. Were there specific recommendations made in regard to the density of mixed-use buildings? For instance, building height and amount of residences.
  - a. *Carlos Guerra: through the land use plan there are designations that would only allow a certain number of units per acre, which addresses the density. Keep in mind when considering building heights we are close to a base so we cant go too high and we need appropriate transitions in densities from areas like mixed use corridors where we have more people living and transition away as we get closer to traditional single story homes.*
  - b. *Chris Ryerson: just to build on that, when you look at the land use map the plan has descriptions that have a range of densities and heights or stories that would typically be allowed in that land use or zoning designation. Keep in mind, when you look at those different categories, each represented by a different color, there is a range within from lower to mid to high. Within each of those land use categories such as commercial-Regional Commercial or Neighborhood Commercial, the name gives you an idea of anticipated or encouraged densities. As you have any questions, we'll put Carlos' contact information in the chat, reach out to at any time to either of us so we can answer any specific questions regarding land use.*
  
10. Will neighborhood leaders be receiving copies of the draft plan? I recall Channary asking if anyone preferred a hard copy of the plan instead of reviewing the draft online. This would allow leaders to share the draft with members of their associations.
  - a. *Carlos Guerra: Absolutely. All you need to do is reach out to one of us and we can get you a hard copy. I definitely understand the benefit of having a physical copy and being able to share it with your neighborhood association. That being said, I am available to attend neighborhood association meetings if you'd like to discuss. Also, hard copies are available at the public libraries within the plan area, including the Johnston, Millers Pond, Normoyole Community Center and the District 4 Council Office at Pearsall Park.*

After the Q&A session, attendees were encouraged to provide additional questions to the project manager, Carlos Guerra through email: [carlos.guerra2@sanantonio.gov](mailto:carlos.guerra2@sanantonio.gov) or by phone at (210) 207-5425.

### Website Tutorial

Following the Live Q&A session, the project manager presented slides to show attendees how to access the draft plan on the website. The plan is available at <https://portsanantonio.sacomplan.com/> by clicking on the link on the orange banner at the top of the webpage. Additional resources, such as meeting summaries and presentations, are available in the document's library: <https://portsanantonio.sacomplan.com/documents/>

Physical copies of the draft plan are also available at libraries located within the plan area including: Johnston Library, Miller's Pond Center, Normoyle Community Center and the District 4 Council Office at Pearsall Park.



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**NEXT STEPS:** Community feedback will be taken until Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021 , after which, planning staff will amend the plan if necessary and revisit with the Planning Team to discuss any potential changes or revisions. After final approval from the planning team, the plan will continue along in the adoption process including being discussed at Planning Commission and City Council toward the end of the year.

Complete Community Meeting summaries can be found within the document's library on the sub area website: <https://texasam.sacomplan.com/documents/>

The deadline to submit any comments related to the draft plan is Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The meeting concluded after the project manager reminded attendees of where to access the draft plan, next steps, contact information, and a "Thank You" to the attendees for their participation.

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