

ORDINANCE 2019-12-05-0998

**ADOPTING THE DOWNTOWN AREA REGIONAL CENTER PLAN AS A COMPONENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN OF THE CITY FOR A 6.4-SQUARE MILE AREA GENERALLY BOUND BY INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 10 AND INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 35 TO THE NORTH; AUSTIN STREET, DUVAL, MILAM, CHERRY, WEST BOYER, WEST HIGH AVENUE, AND ABERDEEN PLACE TO THE EAST; INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 10, SOUTH PRESA STREET, EAST MITCHELL STREET, PARKER, SCHOOL STREET, ROOSEVELT AVENUE, HANSFORD STREET, MISSION ROAD, AND THEO AVENUE TO THE SOUTH; AND INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 35, INTERSTATE HIGHWAY 10, SOUTH FLORES STREET, WEST CEVALLOS, ALAZAN CREEK, SAN MARCOS, WEST MARTIN STREET, AND NORTH COLORADO STREET TO THE WEST.**

\* \* \* \* \*

**WHEREAS**, the City of San Antonio's SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan adopted August 11, 2016 recommends that the City develop Sub-Area Plans to provide a more coordinated, efficient, and effective structure for planning throughout the city; and

**WHEREAS**, the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan identifies three categories of Sub-Area Plans including Regional Center Plans, Corridor Plans, and Community Plans; and

**WHEREAS**, the Downtown Area Regional Center planning process was initiated in June 2017, and included nine Planning Team meetings, three community meetings, and dozens of other public engagement activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the draft Downtown Area Regional Center Plan document has been available to the public and to City Officials since June 14, 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, public comment and feedback received on the Public Draft was documented, reviewed and incorporated, as applicable, into the Administrative Draft document which has been available to the public and to City Officials since August 29, 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning and Community Development Committee of City Council and the Planning Commission have been briefed on the draft Downtown Area Regional Center Plan document and have considered public comments and proposed changes to the draft document; and

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 213 of the Texas Local Government Code provides that the Comprehensive Master Plan may consist of a coordinated set of plans organized by subject and geographic area, and may be adopted and amended by ordinance following a public hearing and review by the Planning Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, the San Antonio Planning Commission has reviewed the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan and found the plan to be consistent with City policies, plans, and regulations, therefore meeting all requirements; and



**WHEREAS**, the San Antonio Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 23, 2019 at which the public was given the opportunity to give testimony and present written evidence; and

**WHEREAS**, the San Antonio Planning Commission recommended adoption of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan with staff's amendments; **NOW THEREFORE**;

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SAN ANTONIO:**

**SECTION 1.** The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan is hereby adopted as a component to the City's SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, for a 6.4-square mile area generally bound by Interstate Highway 10 and Interstate Highway 35 to the north; Austin Street, Duval, Milam, Cherry, West Boyer, West High Avenue, and Aberdeen Place to the east; Interstate Highway 10, South Presa Street, East Mitchell Street, Parker, School Street, Roosevelt Avenue, Hansford Street, Mission Road, and Theo Avenue to the south; and Interstate Highway 35, Interstate Highway 10, South Flores Street, West Cevallos, Alazan Creek, San Marcos, West Martin Street, and North Colorado Street to the west.

**SECTION 2.** The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan is adopted as presented.


**SECTION 3.** The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan shall control over any conflict with the Lone Star Community Plan, Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Plan/Eastside Reinvestment Plan, Downtown Neighborhood Plan including the West Neighborhood Update and the River North Update, Guadalupe Westside Community Plan, South Central Community Plan, Alamodome Neighborhood Plan, Arena District/Eastside Community Plan, and Lavaca Neighborhood Plan, where plan areas overlap.

**SECTION 4.** The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan is attached as **Attachment I**.

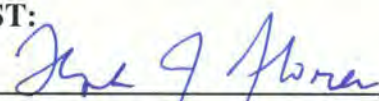
**SECTION 5.** City Council directs staff to initiate rezoning to implement the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan.

**SECTION 6.** This ordinance shall take effect on December 15, 2019.


**PASSED AND APPROVED** on this 5<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019.

  
**M A Y O R**  
**Ron Nirenberg**

**ATTEST:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tina Flores, Acting City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
for Andrew Segovia, City Attorney

<b>Agenda Item:</b>	31 ( in consent vote: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34A, 34B )						
<b>Date:</b>	12/05/2019						
<b>Time:</b>	10:02:56 AM						
<b>Vote Type:</b>	Motion to Approve						
<b>Description:</b>	Ordinance adopting the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan as a component of the Comprehensive Master Plan of the City, for a 6.4-square mile area generally bound by Interstate Highway 10 and Interstate Highway 35 to the north; Austin Street, Duval, Milam, Cherry, West Boyer, West High Avenue, and Aberdeen Place to the east; Interstate Highway 10, South Presa Street, East Mitchell Street, Parker, School Street, Roosevelt Avenue, Hansford Street, Mission Road, and Theo Avenue to the south; and Interstate Highway 35, Interstate Highway 10, South Flores Street, West Cevallos, Alazan Creek, San Marcos, West Martin Street, and North Colorado Street to the west. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Bridgett White, Director, Planning]						
<b>Result:</b>	Passed						
<b>Voter</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Not Present</b>	<b>Yea</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Motion</b>	<b>Second</b>
Ron Nirenberg	Mayor		x				
Roberto C. Treviño	District 1		x				
Jada Andrews-Sullivan	District 2		x			x	
Rebecca Viagran	District 3		x				
Adriana Rocha Garcia	District 4		x				x
Shirley Gonzales	District 5		x				
Melissa Cabello Havrda	District 6		x				
Ana E. Sandoval	District 7		x				
Manny Pelaez	District 8		x				
John Courage	District 9		x				
Clayton H. Perry	District 10		x				



SA TOMORROW SUB-AREA PLANNING:  
DOWNTOWN AREA REGIONAL CENTER PLAN

ADOPTED: DECEMBER 5, 2019



## Acknowledgements

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Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, District 4

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John Courage, District 9

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### Special Thanks

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Visit San Antonio

Sub-Area Planning Technical  
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# 1 Introduction

## Process and Timeline

The process of developing the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan was approximately 30-months, from project chartering to City Council adoption. Staff from the Planning Department worked with a wide range of community members that included neighborhood associations, business and property owners, employers, educational and cultural institutions, partner organizations, and City departments to create a realistic and implementable plan for this important Regional Center.

### ***Phase 1: Project Chartering***

April - June 2017:

The first phase of the project focused on project chartering, which included determining the Planning Team membership and finalizing the detailed plan area boundaries. Phase 1 also included an analysis by the Project Team to refine estimates for capture of growth in all regional centers and to determine how total projected growth for the City should be allocated into each Regional Center, and more generally to the future high capacity transit corridors as delineated in the adopted SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan.

### ***Phase 2: Analysis and Visioning***

June - November 2017:

The second phase of the project focused on assessing the existing conditions and growth capacity of the Downtown Area Regional Center. The Planning Team and community members provided direction on visioning and goal setting for the Downtown Area. The analysis and refinement of existing conditions helped ensure that the vision and goals for the Downtown Area Regional Center are grounded in the proper context.

### ***Phase 3: Plan Framework***

November 2017 - April 2019:

The third phase of the project focused on working with the community and stakeholders to establish the Plan Framework. The Framework includes land use and urban form; identification and planning for focus areas, multimodal corridors, and catalytic sites; infrastructure and amenities planning; mobility and connectivity for all modes; public realm and placemaking; and place types.

### ***Phase 4: Recommendation and Implementation Strategies***

May 2018 - June 2019:

The fourth phase developed specific projects, programs, and policies to affect change in the Downtown Area Regional Center. This phase also included the development of specific, action-oriented implementation strategies and recommendations for potential funding sources.

## ***Phase 5: Documentation and Adoption***

June 2019 - December 2019:

The last phase of the project was devoted to converting the project website into the final ePlan for the Downtown Area Regional Center, creating the Executive Summary, and guiding the plan through the approval and adoption process. The Project Team met with City departments and other partners to develop critical next steps to support implementation of the plan.

## **Stakeholders**

The Downtown Area Regional Center planning process incorporated over 100 engagement activities such as interviews, intercepts, and focus groups with stakeholders from the following groups, in addition to conversations with community leaders, small business owners, and individuals not listed below:

- Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG)
- Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO)
- AREA Real Estate
- Bexar County
- Bike San Antonio
- CAST Tech High School
- Centro San Antonio
- City Council District 1
- City Council District 2
- City Council District 3
- City Council District 5
- City of San Antonio Center City Development and Operations
- City of San Antonio Department of Arts and Culture
- City of San Antonio Development Services Department
- City of San Antonio Economic Development Department
- City of San Antonio Metropolitan Health District
- City of San Antonio Neighborhood and Housing Services Department
- City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation
- City of San Antonio Office of Innovation
- City of San Antonio Office of Sustainability
- City of San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department
- City of San Antonio Transportation and Capital Improvements Department
- City of San Antonio World Heritage Office
- Denver Heights Neighborhood Association
- Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Association
- disABILITYsa
- Geekdom
- Haven for Hope
- Hemisfair
- Hixon Properties
- King William Association



- La Familia Cortez
- Lavaca Neighborhood Association
- Leadership Organization of Professionals (LOOP)
- Lone Star Arts District
- Lone Star Neighborhood Association
- McCullough Avenue Consortium
- My Urban SA
- National Park Service
- NRP Group
- Pape-Dawson
- Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association
- San Antonio 2030 District
- San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
- San Antonio Conservation Society
- San Antonio Hotel & Lodging Association
- San Antonio Independent School District
- San Antonio Museum of Art
- San Antonio Public Library
- San Antonio River Authority (SARA)
- San Antonio River Walk Association
- San Antonio Water System (SAWS)
- San Antonio Youth Commission
- San Fernando Cathedral
- Shops at River Center
- Southtown Arts District
- Swell Cycle
- Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone #11 (Inner City) Board
- Tech Bloc
- Texas Department of Transportation
- The Majestic
- The Nonprofit Council
- University of Texas at San Antonio
- Urban Land Institute San Antonio
- VIA Metropolitan Transit
- Westside Development Corporation
- Zachry Group

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  - Lavaca Neighborhood Association
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- Thomas Davis
  - Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Association
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  - CAST Tech High School
- Liza Barratachea
  - San Antonio Hotel & Lodging Association
- John Beauchamp
  - Hixon Properties
- Susan Beavin
  - San Antonio Conservation Society
- Steve Graham
  - San Antonio River Authority
- Corrina Green
  - Zachry Group
- Belinda Hartwig
  - San Antonio Chamber of Commerce
- David Huete
  - Haven for Hope
- Santiago Jaramillo
  - VIA Metropolitan Transit
- Elizabeth Kertesz
  - San Antonio 2030 District
- Ernest Haffner
  - University of Texas at San Antonio
- Mariah Kilbourne
  - disABILITYsa
- Luis Miguel Martinez
  - AREA Real Estate



- Atiya Mitchell
  - University of Texas at San Antonio Student
- Ruth Morris
  - Leadership Organization of Professionals (LOOP)
- Benjamin Perry
  - University of Texas at San Antonio
- Janis Ploetz
  - Urban Land Institute – San Antonio
- Jason Rodriguez
  - HNTB
- Louis Sanchez
  - San Fernando Cathedral
- JD Simpson
  - SWell Cycle
- Lisa Tapp
  - San Antonio Museum of Art
- Maggie Thompson
  - San Antonio Riverwalk Association
- Edward A. Romero
  - Centro San Antonio
- Matt Brown
  - Centro San Antonio
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- Andrew Rutz
  - Project Manager, MIG
- Jacob Floyd
  - Project Manager, City of San Antonio
- Robert Anderson
  - Former Project Manager, City of San Antonio

### ***The Selection Process***

Each of the SA Tomorrow sub-area plans was developed with regular input and participation from local residents, business owners, property owners, institutional representatives, and other key partners and stakeholders. In addition, a formal Planning Team was created for each sub-area that provided more frequent, in-depth, and consistent advice and guidance throughout the planning process. The composition of the Planning Team for each area is drawn from the representatives and stakeholders described above, and varies depending on the existing uses, assets, challenges, and opportunities associated with each area.

## 2 Existing Conditions

### A History of the Downtown Area

Home of the Alamo. Heart of the Alamo City. San Antonio grew out of Presidio San Antonio de Bexar, founded in 1718, and the villa of San Fernando de Bexar, chartered by Canary Islanders in 1731. San Fernando Cathedral, Main Plaza, and Plaza de Armas were the focal points for growth of the new city. Downtown is where it all began.

Every great city has a great downtown. Ours is a hub of people and activity: business, government, entertainment, culture, and housing. The one-time hazard of the San Antonio River was harnessed and repurposed into a world-class amenity for residents and visitors alike; the San Antonio River Walk. The buildings that stand here reflect the efforts of residents who have worked, lived and prospered in this place, the communal heart of San Antonio.

The Downtown Plan area also includes the King William, Lavaca, Roosevelt Park, Lone Star, Denver Heights, and Dignowity Hill Neighborhoods. These historic neighborhoods, amongst the oldest in San Antonio, represent a diverse and prosperous past, present and future.

[Exhibit 1 – Existing Conditions Atlas]

[Figure 1 – Study Area Map]

[Figure 2 – Plan Location Map]

### Assets

Downtown possesses many assets, some historic and others as a result of new wants and needs. The San Antonio River Walk, the Alamo, Mission Concepcion, San Fernando Cathedral, Hemisfair, San Pedro Creek Park, Blue Star Arts Complex, Historic Market Square, the Tower of the Americas, and many historic neighborhoods are just a few of the places that make Downtown San Antonio unique. Assets such as the Tobin Center and Alameda and Majestic theaters reflect the area's history as a center of nightlife and entertainment. Downtown also features some of the most walkable and bikeable areas in the entire city and is a major transit hub. While Downtown may be primarily associated with a strong tourism and hospitality industry, other significant employers include various governmental agencies, healthcare, and finance. It is also an emerging center for IT (information technology) and professional service jobs. Other assets include the redeveloping Hemisfair Park and San Pedro Creek improvements.

### Challenges

One of Downtown's greatest assets, a strong tourism industry, also poses one of its greatest challenges. The majority of new development, in particular mid to high-rise development, in Downtown in the last several decades has been hotels and related services. Long identified as a tourist destination the abundance of hotel development also drives business for restaurants, bars, entertainment, and retail establishments. Recently developed housing is not affordable for many people already living in the Downtown Area, with average rental rates higher than the rest of the county for all types of units. While still highly walkable, the street level pedestrian experience currently falls far short of the River Walk experience. The Downtown plan area suffers widespread gaps in the sidewalk network and areas of poor sidewalk condition, prevalent surface parking detracting from the pedestrian experience, inconsistent and inefficient lighting, and would benefit from better connectivity with adjacent



neighborhoods. Additionally, lack of a widespread tree canopy and an abundance of impervious cover combine to create a heat island in the Downtown Area.

## Opportunities

Opportunity abounds for the Downtown Planning Area. The abundance of parking lots and garages present a substantial inventory of underutilized land that may be redeveloped for more beneficial uses such as housing, office space, and resident supporting retail and services. Likewise, the vacant land and industrial sites found mainly around the periphery of the plan area are prime redevelopment opportunities that can help provide more mixed-use places, residential options, and 18-hour amenities. It is essential that these redevelopments be sensitive to the context of the areas surrounding them. While Downtown is physically separated from adjacent neighborhoods by the elevated highways that ring and in some cases divide the plan area, the space beneath them presents opportunities for the creation of creative public spaces and safer, more comfortable links to the surrounding neighborhoods.

## Sub-Area Plans and Existing Neighborhood and Community Plans

Sub-Area Plans are intended to provide a more coordinated, efficient, and effective structure for neighborhood planning. Existing neighborhood planning will be integrated into planning for regional centers and community areas. Neighborhoods will become integral sub-geographies of these sub-areas while also receiving special attention through chapters and/or sections in each Sub-Area Plan, reflecting specific opportunities, challenges, recommendations, and priorities from each participating neighborhood. Neighborhood and community plans should be considered, as appropriate, as they are integrated into the Sub-Area Plans.

## 3 Vision and Goals

### What is a Vision Statement?

A vision statement describes the desired state of a place in the future. With community support, an effective vision can influence decisions and inspire action to move toward that idealized future. Goals further describe the outcomes that will support the realization of the vision. These, in turn, are supported by more specific strategies and actions that will implement the bigger-picture vision and goals. These strategies will involve specific proposed projects, programs, policies, and other means of achieving the community vision.

The Downtown Area Regional Center Vision and Goals were developed with input from residents and community stakeholders through an iterative process of developing and refining these concepts. During preliminary community engagement efforts, community members articulated important values and identified the Downtown Area's assets, challenges, and opportunities. This community input became the basis for the Downtown Area Vision and Goals which were refined with feedback from the Planning Team and participants at the second Community Meeting.

### Establishing the Vision and Goals

The success of the SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Plans depends on broad participation from area stakeholders. To ensure this success, City staff worked with a wide range of community members throughout the planning process. These included neighborhood associations, business and property owners, residents, employers, educational and cultural institutions, public and nonprofit organizations, and other City departments to create a realistic and implementable plan for the Downtown Area.

The planning process was designed to create a "feedback loop" between the City and the community as the plan was developed. This approach ensures that the Sub-Area Plan reflects community values and priorities. A variety of tools and techniques were used to ensure that those interested were well-informed about the SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Plans; encouraged to participate in a range of stimulating events and activities; and engaged in providing constructive feedback on a preferred future.

For each public input exercise, this section describes what was asked, how the input was presented back to the stakeholders, then carried forward in further engagement exercises, and eventually incorporated into the plan.

Results from the exercises and surveys are available in the website Documents Library and as an appendix to the Plan. In some cases, results have been summarized. Throughout the process, complete raw results from exercises have been posted on the plan webpage.

To facilitate public information and community participation, the Downtown Area Regional Center website was created and made available to the general public. The website includes a section for leaving comments which are sent directly to the project manager.

#### Exercise 1: Draft Assets, Challenges, and Opportunities

An initial Planning Team kick-off meeting was held at San Antonio College, Nursing & Allied Health Complex. At the kickoff meeting, the Planning Team discussed assets, challenges, and opportunities in the Downtown Area as well as strategies for outreach efforts. Results of Exercise 1 were posted to the website's Documents Library. This information helped inform draft plan vision elements, priorities & goals.



#### Exercise 2: Draft Vision Elements

The second Planning Team meeting was held at the San Antonio Central Library Auditorium in the Downtown Area. Planning Team members started to identify the themes of a vision for the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan through facilitated discussion by the project team. The results of Exercise 2 were posted to the plan website and distributed to the Planning Team. This exercise helped inform the draft plan vision and goal statements.

#### Exercise 3: Develop Area Vision and Goals

The first Downtown Area Community Meeting was held at the La Orilla Del Rio Ballroom located at 203 South St. Mary's Street. Spanish interpretation services were available. The objectives of this meeting were to develop the draft vision statement and goals for the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan. Community members participated in several facilitated small group exercises. In the first exercise the groups identified what they thought should be preserved, added, removed, and kept out of the Downtown Area. Next the groups discussed their results to come to a consensus on the most significant opportunities facing the Downtown Area and the greatest challenges to taking advantage of these opportunities. The vision and goals exercise asked community members to write a statement describing how they envision the future of the Downtown Area. Facilitators encouraged community members to think about elements such as housing, connectivity, mobility, parks and open space, shops, restaurants, employment and other amenities. Small groups identified common themes amongst their group's individual vision statements. From these common themes, each group completed a summary of their ideas which was then read aloud by one spokesperson from each group to the entire audience. Examples of group summary images can be seen here. Results of Exercise 3 were posted to the plan website. These results directly informed the draft vision and goals statement.

#### Exercise 4: Review Draft Vision and Goals

The third Planning Team meeting was held at the Steves Homestead River House, located in the King William neighborhood. Planning Team members were presented with a summary of the community feedback received up to that point, which informed the draft vision statement and goals. During this meeting, the initial draft vision statement and goals were presented for facilitated discussion and comments. The Planning Team suggested that a long-form vision statement was useful, but too lengthy to be effectively communicated with the public and requested a "tagline" version be drafted. The results of Exercise 4 were included in the meeting summary posted to the plan website.

#### Exercise 5: Review and Confirm Draft Vision and Goals

During the fourth Planning Team Meeting held in the San Antonio Museum of Art Annex Board Room, Planning Department staff presented a summary of revisions made to the vision and goals so far including the "tagline" version of the vision statement. Planning Team members were made aware that the revised draft of the vision statement and goals would be presented for public input during this phase of the planning process.

#### Exercise 6: Finalize Draft Vision and Goals

The second Downtown Area Community Meeting took place in the Roosevelt Park Clubhouse. Spanish interpreters were available. Participants were invited to comment on the Plan's emerging Vision and Goals. The exercise asked participants to use colored markers to highlight (or add comments) words or statements of interest to them: Green= "Like", Blue = "Add", Red = "Dislike". Results of the exercise were posted to the plan website via the Community Meeting #2 Summary. These results led to a final refinement of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan Vision and Goals statements. The results of Exercise 6 were included in the meeting summary posted to the plan website.



## Vision

Downtown is a diverse and thriving city center, rooted in a rich history and seamlessly connected to great Downtown neighborhoods. Downtown is a family-friendly, livable, and inviting place that has retained its small town, community feel, while cultivating a greater mix of uses and density.

Downtown has a wealth of active public spaces and urban greenways, connected by robust public transit and safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Its urban neighborhoods infuse their unique character into an exciting live, work, and play environment. A diverse array of housing choices provides options that are affordable for all Downtown residents.

## Goals

### ***Goal 1: Preserve and Enhance Downtown's Authenticity***

- Grow and evolve in meaningful ways that encourage attachment between people and places;
- Respect historic and culturally significant places, including significant examples of more contemporary and modern architecture;
- Preserve and protect the World Heritage designated San Antonio Missions and other historical sites by ensuring compatible growth; and
- Encourage adaptive reuse.

### ***Goal 2: Connect Districts and Neighborhoods with an Accessible Multi-Modal Network***

- Provide infrastructure and development to support improved transit connectivity;
- Improve and expand a high-quality sidewalk network and pedestrian crossings to provide safe access for people of all ability levels;
- Utilize ground floor retail uses and thoughtful design to create an engaging street level experience;
- Invest in bike infrastructure that serves both commuters and recreation;
- Meaningfully incorporate transit into the existing waterway network; and
- Prioritize pedestrian and bike infrastructure over automobiles, including creative curb space management solutions.

### ***Goal 3: Embrace Lifelong Learning and Celebrate the Arts and Cultural Diversity***

- Provide access to a full range of schools and other educational opportunities for residents at every stage of their lives;
- Promote an educated and well-trained workforce;
- Encourage the incorporation of public art into development and redevelopment projects;
- Incorporate contextually derived wayfinding features and placemaking; and
- Ensure the sustainability of arts and cultural organizations and institutions.

### ***Goal 4: Diversify the Mix of Uses in the Downtown Core***

- Encourage new and renovated buildings to incorporate a mix of uses;
- Encourage the development of vacant lots in the city center with a geographically balanced mix of uses;



- Cultivate entrepreneurship, small business, and innovation;
- Attract additional housing and a diversity of employment options in the Downtown Core; and
- Create complete neighborhoods by providing residents with safe and convenient access to daily activities, goods, and services.

### ***Goal 5: Leverage and Enhance Downtown’s Reputation as a Destination for Hospitality and Tourism***

- Create new and enhance existing destinations to provide additional cultural and entertainment opportunities for residents and visitors alike;
- Create safe and inviting gateways into the Downtown Area from both surface streets and highways;
- Ensure residents and visitors have places to eat, play, and experience San Antonio’s authentic culture; and
- Create complementary uses that engage both visitors and residents.

### ***Goal 6: Broaden the Diversity of Housing Options throughout the Downtown Core and its Neighborhoods***

- Provide a variety of housing types, both owner- and renter-occupied, that are affordable for people at all stages of life and for a range of income levels;
- Preserve existing affordable housing;
- Emphasize the development of “Missing Middle” housing for both renters and owners; and
- Ensure Downtown is a livable place for families, children, students, the elderly, and others.

### ***Goal 7: Create Greater Opportunities for Parks, Public Space, and Recreation***

- Encourage connectivity to existing trails;
- Ensure that public spaces are scaled appropriately, flexible, programmable, and functional for people of all ability levels;
- Ensure that public spaces are located appropriately to be accessible and active;
- Create a public realm that is safe and inviting enough that children are empowered to play and interact with everyday spaces;
- Support existing and encourage new community events; and
- Embrace innovative opportunities to create new parks and recreation spaces.

### ***Goal 8: Promote Safety, Health, and Sustainability***

- Increase pedestrian safety through an active investment in improved lighting and complete street design;
- Increase the tree canopy throughout Downtown;
- Create healthy and sustainable urban neighborhoods through high-quality urban design, high-performance buildings, and an emphasis on green infrastructure, air and water quality; and
- Promote the use of pervious surfaces in redevelopment efforts.

### ***Goal 9: Enhance Wayfinding, Key Gateways and Critical Connections***

- Integrate great signage, and distinct monumentation and wayfinding throughout Downtown;

- Promote stronger, unique identities for each of the districts to highlight their unique sense of place;
- Identify and enhance key gateways between districts and neighborhoods to better demarcate their boundaries; and
- Address major infrastructure barriers, such as freight rail lines and interstate highways, and enhance critical connections through creative design, lighting, and public art.



## 4 Plan Framework

### Establishing the Plan Framework and Recommendations

The Plan Framework includes key physical improvements and strategic concepts that will influence development in the Downtown Area Regional Center. These include priority focus areas for (re)development; pedestrian, bicycle, and street improvements; parks and open space recommendations; and priority areas to encourage mixed-use development.

The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan Framework was developed through a combination of technical analysis and community input. The Framework illustrates and outlines the overall long-term vision for the Downtown Area Regional Center, including areas where new development will be focused, key mobility improvements, opportunities for more parks and open space, and other “big moves” that will shape the future of the area.

At the beginning of the planning process, the project team developed an in-depth study and analysis of the Downtown Area Regional Center to understand the history and development of the area as well as existing conditions. The Planning Team shared their input regarding area assets, opportunities, and challenges to develop a more nuanced understanding of the Regional Center and the community’s values and priorities. City staff also conducted additional stakeholder and public outreach to capture input from a broad range of Downtown Area residents. Through a series of facilitated work sessions and interactive exercises, the Planning Team provided input and direction that is reflected in the Plan Framework.

Over several months, project staff and the Planning Team worked collaboratively to build upon the Framework to identify the key priorities, improvements and strategies that will shape the Sub-Area Plan and guide growth, development, and investment in the Downtown Area Regional Center. A series of draft recommendations on several topics were developed for stakeholder feedback and are reflected in the Plan.

#### *Plan Framework*

The focus of the third Planning Team meeting was to develop key plan concepts such as focus areas, mixed-use corridors, parks, open space, and recreation, trails, priority transit routes, priority bicycle routes, and priority streetscape improvements. Meeting attendees split into groups to create their own framework diagrams which were then synthesized by City staff to create the base for the plan framework diagram.

At the first Community Meeting, community members participated in small group exercise to map strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats which were described verbally and then symbolized on a map. This feedback was also incorporated into the framework diagrams.

At Planning Team Meeting #6, the Planning Team discussed several catalytic sites which also became part of the plan framework diagram. The catalytic sites were chosen from the Focus Areas identified at previous meetings.

#### *Focus Areas*

Focus areas were a topic of discussion at Planning Team Meeting #3 as part of drafting the Plan Framework. Preliminary identification of plan elements, including the focus areas, was recorded on maps produced by breakout groups.



At Planning Team Meeting #4, the Planning Team completed group exercises to discuss focus areas and corridors, their purpose, future character, scale of development, how to transition to surrounding areas, and potential catalytic projects.

During Community Meeting #2 maps and photographs of each focus area were displayed on the wall. The Planning Team's comments on the intended future purpose, character, and building heights for each area were also displayed. Participants were encouraged to write and discuss their intentions for the future purpose, character and building heights in each draft focus areas and mixed-use corridors.

Input from Community Meeting #2 was reviewed by the Planning Team during Meeting #5. The focus areas were further refined based on this input and the visions offered for the focus areas were generally agreed upon. The Planning Team also discussed potential catalytic projects.

### *Mobility*

Mobility was discussed at Planning Team #3 as part of drafting the Plan Framework. A variety of transportation options were considered when planning for the Downtown Area Regional Center. Trails, transit routes, bicycle routes, streetscape improvements, pedestrian safety, and traffic congestion were discussed in order to create a layered multimodal transportation network.

At Community Meeting #2, participants were asked to complete two activities to help City staff prioritize different routes for different modes of travel, and to explore how to allocate right-of-way to alternative modes of transportation and street elements within a constrained street environment.

Major corridors were identified on the mobility framework diagram. Participants then voted using stickers with bus, car, and bicycle icons to symbolize what mode of travel they thought needed to be prioritized on each street. The other activity featured two major thoroughfares in the area. Participants then chose elements such as bike lanes, turn lanes, and medians to design streets for their preferred modes of transportation.

### *Amenities and Infrastructure*

The Planning Team discussed amenities and infrastructure on May 2, 2018 at Planning Team Meeting #7. Meeting participants were first briefed by city staff and consultants on the components of complete neighborhoods such as active recreation opportunities, social spaces, places to walk, and public art, among other things.

After being presented with examples of the elements that contribute to making complete neighborhoods, Planning Team Members discussed which elements were most critical and should be prioritized to create complete neighborhoods in the Downtown Area Regional Center. The Planning Team carried out a group exercise to thoroughly discuss and prioritize amenities, then worked together to create an amenities and infrastructure framework diagram.

The results of the exercise were presented at Planning Team Meeting #7B. Afterward, City staff facilitated a group discussion to refine the initial framework diagram.

A final discussion of amenities and infrastructure was conducted during Planning Team Meeting #8. This discussion further refined the amenities and infrastructure framework diagram with a particular emphasis on "character defining features," or the elements of a neighborhood or district that give the area its character or contribute to its sense of place.

### *Land Use*

The Planning Team met for Meeting #6 to discuss future land use. The meeting began with an overview of the proposed land use categories to be used throughout San Antonio, the methodology behind the



draft maps, and then a presentation of the draft land use map created by city staff. The topic of future land use was discussed again at Planning Team Meeting # 7.

The Planning Team later met to review the most recent future land use map and discuss proposed changes from City staff. The revisions represented input received by city staff through direct engagement with neighborhood association members and leaders throughout 2018 and early 2019. This meeting concluded with general consensus on the future land use map with several minor adjustments.

### *Housing*

During Community Meeting #2 participants reviewed images of a range of housing types and identified which types of dwellings they thought would be appropriate in different areas of the Regional Center by placing a colored dot marker on the map. Participants were also asked to review information on area demographic and economic characteristics, housing and transportation costs, and a comparison of typical area incomes to rental costs.

During Meeting #5, the Planning Team discussed preliminary housing objectives and strategies. During a robust discussion, Planning Team members explored key issues and potential strategies such as affordability, opportunity, historic character, capacity for growth, and quality of life. Notes from the discussion were recorded on flip charts.

### *Economic Development*

The Planning Team also discussed preliminary economic development objectives and strategies during Meeting #5. After a presentation by city staff and consultants the Planning Team explored critical challenges and potential strategies such as target industries, tourism and convention business, and opportunities to build on an emerging tech district. The notes from this discussion were recorded by city staff for on charts.

## **Plan Framework Overview**

[Figure 3 – Plan Framework Map]

The Plan Framework map identifies and shows the interrelatedness of key physical concepts and strategies in the plan. These include priority focus areas for investment and redevelopment; recommended pedestrian, bicycle, and street improvements; gateway opportunities; parks and open space recommendations; and priority areas to encourage mixed-use corridors. These recommended physical improvements and investments are complemented by other supportive plan strategies related to housing; economic development; infrastructure; and neighborhood priorities.

The Downtown Area Regional Center focuses growth and new development in areas of opportunity that minimize the impact on established single-family neighborhoods while complementing the existing neighborhood character. Each of the five focus areas is unique, however, they are all places where more people can live, work, and play in the future, and where there can be more stores, services, destinations, and more places for people to gather. They are oriented to large employers like the University of Texas at San Antonio, existing amenities like parks or museums, and existing or future destinations like the Alamodome or the Lone Star Brewery site.



## Land Use

[Figure 4 – Future Land Use Map]

### ***Future Land Use***

The Downtown Area Regional Center future land use plan supports the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, Multimodal Transportation Plan, and Sustainability Plan. It also draws on recommendations from the SA Corridors Strategic Framework Plan and implements the Vision, Goals, and Plan Framework for the Downtown Area.

Downtown continues to contain a mixture of uses at higher densities than what is generally found in other areas of the city. Transitions to adjacent neighborhoods and centers are important, as are adaptive reuse and repurposing of legacy properties within the plan area. Historic neighborhoods and commercial areas support and reinforce the commercial core of the city, and the transportation network connects Downtown to the larger region through transit, trails, and other forms of multi-modal transportation.

The following sections describe the general land use patterns of the Downtown Area Regional Center. Recommendations for implementing the land use plan follow, and the full catalogue of land use categories adopted in the Unified Development Code (UDC) are found at the end of this section for reference.

It is important to note that the land use classifications do not alter any historic designation or other approved design criteria for existing neighborhoods. It is the intent of this Plan to preserve the character and identity of the historic neighborhoods of the city, in terms of use and of design.

### ***Residential Areas***

As Downtown is the center of a large metropolitan area, many of the residential uses are generally higher in density than those found in other regional centers throughout the city. Residential uses in Downtown include urban low density residential, medium density residential and high density residential.

### ***Neighborhood Areas***

The neighborhood areas in the Downtown Area Regional Center are classified as either Urban Low Density Residential or Medium Density Residential on the future land use map. These are intended to be primarily quiet, stable residential places that retain their character in the future. The future land use plan anticipates moderate growth of additional households in these neighborhoods, primarily where existing zoning supports such growth and where potential enhanced transit corridors and station areas create opportunities for more residents to access transit amenities. Commercial businesses should generally not encroach into these areas as they may cause disruption to quality of life and divert commercial activity away from places where it is specifically desired, however small scale retail and service uses supporting adjacent residences may be appropriate.

### ***High-Density Residential Areas***

Most of the high-density residential property in the Downtown Area Regional Center has a land use designation of mixed-use. This is to encourage the integration of residential and commercial development, in order to decrease vehicle trips and create a more pedestrian-oriented Downtown environment. However, several locations that are already classified as High-Density Residential, such as the former Victoria Courts site in the area between Cesar Chavez Boulevard, Labor Street, Leigh Street, and IH-37, retain the designation solely for High-Density Residential and do not include an element of



commercial development. The High-Density Residential designation therefore expressly calls for residential development.

#### *Mixed-Use Centers and Corridors*

Most of the land in Downtown north of Caesar Chavez Boulevard is classified as some type of mixed-use, continuing existing patterns of development and encouraging growth next to existing and planned transit corridors, major amenities, employment anchors, or existing commercial areas. Together the mixed-use areas will absorb development that would otherwise pressure traditional neighborhoods and instead support high-quality transit service, great amenities and public spaces, and housing and economic opportunity for existing and future residents.

#### *Regional Mixed-Use*

The Downtown Core is classified as Regional Mixed-Use. Traditionally the economic and civic hub of the entire city, this area calls for the highest level of density and intensity in the land use categories available. This is also in keeping with existing development patterns. Additionally, the majority of the area currently zoned "D" Downtown District, the River North area, the Lone Star Brewery area, and a few other locations are designated Regional Mixed-Use. Regional Mixed-Use allows for very high residential densities and encourages retail and commercial uses on lower floors. High rise office buildings may be appropriate for land classified as Regional Mixed-Use, although the scale of development should be respectful of adjacent traditional neighborhoods.

#### *Urban Mixed-Use*

Urban Mixed-Use is an intermediate intensity mixed-use classification and buildings are typically mid-rise or even just a few stories in height. Much of the land next to major corridors like Frio Street, South Alamo, South St. Mary's and South Presa is designated Urban Mixed-Use.

#### *Neighborhood Mixed-Use*

The lowest intensity mixed-use land use category is Neighborhood Mixed-Use. This encourages a mixture of residential and commercial uses in areas with fewer people and less activity. Buildings are not very tall, they have a smaller footprint, and the lot sizes are often small. This land use classification is found along South Flores Street, south of South Alamo Street, as well as the South Flores and IH-35 corridors near Burbank High School. The intent is for these Neighborhood Mixed-Use areas to provide a mixture of uses that serve surrounding communities in a walkable environment, without significantly increasing traffic levels or the scale of development.

#### *Commercial Areas*

Most of the commercial uses in the Downtown Area Regional Center area are classified as mixed-use, rather than strictly commercial. There are, however, a few properties south of IH-10/ US Highway 90 which are classified as Community Commercial and Neighborhood Commercial, which are existing clusters of community serving businesses. These designations do not include a residential component.

#### *Other Employment Areas*

While designated mixed-use and commercial areas will support a variety of businesses and employment opportunities, there are three land use designations in this area that also have an impact on employment: City, State and Federal Government, Employment/Flex Mixed-Use, and Business/Innovation Mixed-Use.

#### *City/State/Federal Government*



Government properties are classified as distinct from other properties because their use and development are regulated differently. These properties, which include City Hall, Public Safety Headquarters, Haven for Hope, the Central Library, Fire Stations, Alamo Plaza and the Federal Court Building, are classified as City/State/Federal Government on the Future Land Use Map.

#### *Employment/Flex Mixed-Use*

There are many areas in the Downtown Area Regional Center which have historically been used for industrial purposes and which supported a variety of blue color jobs, but which have or could evolve into areas with a mix of employment, industrial arts, craft industries, creative spaces, and residences. Employment/Flex Mixed-Use properties are typically smaller-scale properties in historically industrial areas which could be re-purposed or re-used for industrial arts, craft industries, and as live-work properties, and are often interspersed along neighborhood edges. Most of the Employment/Flex Mixed-Use in the Downtown Area is found west of the University of Texas at San Antonio Downtown Campus, between IH-37 and Cherry Street south of East César E. Chavez Boulevard, north of Lone Star Boulevard between Probandt and South Flores streets, and near the intersection of Steves Avenue and Mission Road.

#### *Business/Innovation Mixed-Use*

Business/Innovation Mixed-Use is intended for campus-scale development for industrial uses with office, commercial, and residential uses in a cohesive setting. Although industrial in nature, these properties should generally have their activity housed indoors, and, though requiring buffers associated with industrial uses, they do not have the same environmental impacts as conventional industrial uses. There are limited instances of Business/Innovation Mixed-Use in the Downtown Area Regional Center, due to the historic and existing patterns of use in the area. HEB Grocery Headquarters, Pioneer Flour Mill, and EPIcenter are among the designated properties with this category. Other areas are found at the northwest corner of the plan area near the intersection of North Frio Street and West Poplar Street along IH-10 at the boundary of the Regional Center plan area.

#### *Parks and Open Spaces*

Parks and open spaces are important organizing features in the Downtown Area Regional Center. The San Antonio River connects Alamo Plaza with the historic missions to the south, including Mission Concepcion, which is located within this plan area. North of Market Street, traditional plazas and block parks provide green space and gathering places for Downtown. Like government uses, public parks and open spaces are treated as a separate land use category on the Future Land Use Map.

### ***Land Use Recommendations***

Six land use recommendations are identified to support the future land use plan for the Downtown Area Regional Center. In the Implementation section of the plan, specific strategies are provided for each of the following recommendations.

#### ***Land Use Recommendation #1: Create transitions in scale and intensity between Downtown and surrounding areas to encourage greater integration of these areas with Downtown.***

North of Downtown is the Midtown Area Regional Center, which contains significant institutional properties to the north of IH-35. Higher densities can be accommodated in this part of Downtown, but right of way configuration, lot sizes, and existing design standards for districts such as River North should be factors in determining the form of development in the future.



The Eastside Community Area is home to historic neighborhoods that were some of the first streetcar suburbs connected to Downtown, though the area of the Eastside within this Regional Center plan is primarily industrial. As the properties along the east side of IH-37 are repurposed, development should decrease in size and mass along Cherry Street to respect the traditional neighborhoods of the Eastside Community Area.

The Westside Community Area is another historic, early suburb with strong ties to Downtown. Because of the difference in intensity of development in the community, as compared to that in the Downtown Core, development west of IH-35 should also transition from high-density, downtown-scale buildings along Frio Street to medium density, mid-rise and smaller buildings with a flexible range of uses west of Salado Street.

Due to the presence of VIA's central office in this part of Downtown, the strong transit ridership of the Westside community, and the institutional uses in this part of Downtown, transit-supportive land use and transit-oriented development should be a priority in this area. Building heights for new development should transition gradually from surrounding properties when possible, and setbacks should be consistent along major thoroughfares and transit corridors to create a positive pedestrian environment.

***Land Use Recommendation #2: Evaluate and revise the various tools that the City uses to guide development in the Downtown Area so that they are consistent with SA Tomorrow and the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan.***

There are several tools in place to provide design oversight for Downtown. These tools are critical, as much of the Downtown Core has a single zoning designation. Though there is a lack of differentiation in development entitlements, differentiation is provided through design oversight. To ensure that existing tools are in line with this plan, the Downtown Design Guide, River North Master Plan and Form-Based Zoning, and the "D" Downtown Zoning District should be revisited with a specific focus on how they need to be updated in order to facilitate implementation of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan.

***Land Use Recommendation #3: Evaluate and consider revisions to the "D" Downtown Zoning District to more clearly differentiate the scale of development and the desired land use pattern within the Central Business District.***

The above mentioned lack of differentiation in the development entitlements of the Central Business District has resulted in a lack of clear identity of districts within the Downtown Area and no clearly expressed land use pattern. Consequently, most recent development has been hospitality uses and large, disconnected institutional and corporate campuses, with few new office buildings or residential developments. To ensure that future development and redevelopment are consistent with this plan, updates to the "D" Downtown Zoning District should be considered to provide for more orderly development and create a balanced mixture of land uses. Additionally, design and use requirements for the ground-level of buildings facing primary roadways should be considered to help create active, pedestrian oriented streets.

***Land Use Recommendation #4: Update the Unified Development Code to support transit-supportive development, mixed-use corridors and centers, and a high-quality public realm, and initiate rezoning in selected mixed-use corridors and focus areas.***

Implementing the Downtown future land use plan will require a coordinated approach to update multiple sections of the Unified Development Code. New mixed-use and revised transit-oriented zoning districts should be written into the Unified Development Code and the City should lead in rezoning selected portions of focus areas and mixed-use corridors using these new zoning districts. The new



transit-oriented and mixed-use zoning should encourage vertical mixed-use development, with public-facing commercial activity on ground floors, and offices and/or residences above. New automobile-oriented uses and site designs should be discouraged or prohibited in these zoning categories.

Successful and vibrant commercial areas featuring significant pedestrian activity and a diverse mix of business and services rely on a substantial population to support them. Their success also relies on businesses being sufficiently concentrated, rather than overly spread out across long travel corridors, interspersed with vacant areas and abundant surface parking areas. Accordingly, to activate underused places, meet the city's housing goals, and encourage concentrated vibrant commercial areas, multi-family residential development is encouraged in mixed-use corridors and focus areas.

In areas designated Employment/Flex Mixed-Use or Business/Innovation Mixed-Use, adaptive re-use of older properties is encouraged. However, existing buildings may not meet the setback, height and use requirements of the existing zoning categories. In order to accommodate these uses, a new mixed-use zoning category may be needed, which allows for industrial arts, live-work, craft industry, neighborhood services, and residential uses. Setbacks, heights and other site design requirements will also need flexibility to accommodate existing property constraints, as many of these properties were historically zoned for industrial uses, without many limitations on site design. These two mixed-use land use categories are also effective at preserving legacy industrial properties that should be preserved and repurposed.

***Land Use Recommendation #5: Discourage incremental rezoning (both up-zoning and down-zoning) in Downtown neighborhood areas.***

Neighborhood stability, ensuring adequate housing supply, and fostering vibrant, pedestrian-oriented commercial areas are important elements of this Plan. In the Downtown Area Regional Center, there is substantial supply of land available for redevelopment in mixed-use corridors and focus areas; however, there is a forecasted need for several thousand additional housing units by 2040. Accordingly, new, incompatible commercial development in neighborhood residential areas is discouraged.

To support stability, predictability, and modest growth in housing supply and choice within neighborhood areas, down-zoning residential properties to restrict housing unit density and exclude potential future neighborhood residents is generally discouraged. Similarly, changing the base zoning of residentially zoned properties in neighborhood residential areas to allow more density is also generally discouraged, except in cases where large vacant, commercial, or institutional sites are redeveloped to create new missing middle housing.

Where additional households or uses beyond those currently allowed may be appropriate, conditional rezoning is a mechanism that provides more certainty as to development outcomes and the future evolution of a property. Accordingly, to support stability and predictability while supporting other community goals, such as incentivizing affordable housing, senior housing, housing for people with disabilities, housing with multiple bedrooms for families, and reinvestment in existing structures that contribute to the essential character of a neighborhood, conditional rezoning is preferred over changing the base zoning district of properties in residential areas of the neighborhood.

Similarly, to implement the recommendations of the Mayor's Housing Policy Task Force to incentivize certain types of housing, some combination of Unified Development Code amendments and rezoning in neighborhood residential areas that simultaneously encourages more housing for people, while providing more certainty on building and site design is encouraged.



***Land Use Recommendation #6: Coordinate existing public and private parking resources to facilitate more effective management and utilization for existing development and stronger assurance of supply and access to parking for new development.***

Parking structures and surface parking lots are dominant features in the Downtown Area, particularly in the Downtown Core. Many of the area's parking facilities are single use structures with big, blank walls at the street level that discourage pedestrian and bicycle activity, and curb cuts that create unsafe conditions on sidewalks. Surface parking lots create gaps in activity and are typically unattractive without landscaping or shade features. Meanwhile, many new developments require adequate amounts of parking to serve businesses and residents. The continuing redevelopment of the Downtown Area will require creative thinking to resolve design issues related to off-street parking structures and lots; reduce parking needs for existing and new development; encourage use of mass transit to reduce overall parking demand; and leverage new parking technologies to manage future demand.

### ***Future Land Use Categories***

As described above, the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan includes a range of land use designations that represent the unique character of the area, while encouraging and supporting development patterns that reflect the goals of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan and the preferences of the Downtown community. Listed below is the full list of land use categories adopted by City Council into the Unified Development Code (UDC), Chapter 35, on October 11, 2018. Each category listed includes a description, general guidance on where the land use designation is most appropriate, and a list of allowable zoning districts.

#### ***Residential Estate***

Residential Estate includes large lot single-family detached houses on individual estate-sized lots or in conservation subdivisions. This form of development should be located away from major arterials, and can include certain nonresidential uses such as schools, places of worship, and parks that are centrally located for convenient neighborhood access. Permitted zoning districts: FR, R-20, RE, and RP.

Typical densities in this land use category would be up to 2 dwelling units per acre.

#### ***Low Density Residential***

Low Density Residential includes single-family detached houses on individual lots, including manufactured and modular homes. This form of development should not typically be located adjacent to major arterials. This land use category can include certain nonresidential uses such as schools, places of worship, and parks that are centrally located for convenient neighborhood access. Permitted zoning districts: R-4, R-5, R-6, NP-8, NP-10, and NP-15.

Typical densities in this land use category would range from 3 to 12 dwelling units per acre.

IDZ and PUD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### ***Urban Low Density Residential***

Urban Low Density Residential includes a range of housing types including single-family attached and detached houses on individual lots, small lot residences, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage homes, manufactured homes, low-rise garden-style apartments, and manufactured home parks. This land use category may also accommodate small scale retail and service uses that are intended to support the adjacent residential uses. Other nonresidential uses, including, but not limited to, schools, places of



worship, and parks are appropriate within these areas and should be centrally located to provide easy accessibility. Permitted zoning districts: R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, RM-5, RM-6, MF-18, MH, MHC, MHP, and NC.

Typical densities in this land use category would range from 7 to 18 dwelling units per acre.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, and TOD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Medium Density Residential*

Medium Density Residential accommodates a range of housing types including single-family attached and detached houses on individual lots, manufactured and modular homes, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and low-rise, garden-style apartments with more than four (4) dwelling units per building. Cottage homes and very small lot single-family houses are also appropriate within this land use category. Higher density multi-family uses, where practical, should be located in proximity to transit facilities. Certain nonresidential uses, including, but not limited to, schools, places of worship, and parks are appropriate within these areas and should be centrally located to provide easy accessibility.

Permitted zoning districts: R-3, R-4, RM-4, RM-5, RM-6, MF-18, MF-25, MF-33, MH, MHC, and MHP.

Typical densities in this land use category would range from 13 to 33 dwelling units per acre.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, and TOD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *High Density Residential*

High Density Residential includes low-rise to mid-rise buildings with four (4) or more dwelling units in each. High density residential provides for compact development including apartments, condominiums, and assisted living facilities. This form of development is typically located along or near major arterials or collectors. High density multi-family uses should be located in close proximity to transit facilities. Certain nonresidential uses, including, but not limited to schools, places of worship, and parks are appropriate within these areas and should be centrally located to provide easy accessibility. This classification may be used as a transitional buffer between lower density residential uses and nonresidential uses. High density residential uses should be located in a manner that does not route traffic through lower-density residential uses. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, MF-25, MF-33, MF-40, MF-50, MF-65, MH, MHC, and MHP.

Typical densities in this land use category would range from 25 to 50 dwelling units per acre.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, and TOD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Neighborhood Commercial*

Neighborhood Commercial includes smaller intensity commercial uses such as small-scale retail or offices, professional services, and convenience retail and services that are intended to support the adjacent residential uses. Neighborhood commercial uses should be located within walking distance of neighborhood residential areas. Special consideration should be given to pedestrian and bicycle facilities that connect neighborhoods to commercial nodes. Permitted zoning districts: O-1, NC, and C-1.



IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD, and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Community Commercial*

Community Commercial includes offices, professional services, and retail uses that are accessible to bicyclists and pedestrians and linked to transit facilities. This form of development should be located in proximity to major intersections or where an existing commercial area has been established. Community commercial uses are intended to support multiple neighborhoods, have a larger market draw than neighborhood commercial uses, and attract patrons from the neighboring residential areas. All off-street parking and loading areas adjacent to residential uses should include landscape buffers, lighting and signage controls. Examples of community commercial uses include, but are not limited to, cafes, offices, restaurants, beauty parlors, neighborhood groceries or markets, shoe repair shops and medical clinics. Permitted zoning districts: O-1.5, NC, C-1, and C-2.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD, and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Regional Commercial*

Regional Commercial includes high intensity uses that draw customers from both adjacent communities as well as the larger metropolitan region. Regional commercial uses are typically located in general proximity to nodes along expressways or major arterial roadways and incorporate high-capacity transit facilities. Regional Commercial uses should incorporate well-defined entrances, shared internal circulation, limited curb cuts to expressways and arterial streets, sidewalks and shade trees in parking lots, landscaping between the parking lots and roadways, and well- designed monument signage. Examples of regional commercial uses include, but are not limited to, movie theaters, plant nurseries, automotive repair shops, fitness centers, home improvement centers, hotels and motels, mid- to high-rise office buildings, and automobile dealerships. Permitted zoning districts: O-1.5, O-2, C- 2, C-3, L, and BP.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Neighborhood Mixed-Use*

Neighborhood Mixed-Use contains a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses at a neighborhood scale. Within mixed-use buildings, residential units located above first floor are encouraged. Typical first floor uses include, but are not limited to, small office spaces, professional services, and small-scale retail establishments and restaurants. The mix of uses may be vertically or horizontally distributed, and there is no requirement that a single building contain more than one use. Live/work housing options are permissible in Neighborhood Mixed-Use area to ensure access to housing options and services within close proximity for the local workforce. Where practical, buildings are situated close to the public right-of-way, and parking is located behind buildings. Parking requirements may be minimized using a variety of creative methods, such as shared or cooperative parking agreements, to maximize land available for housing and community services. Pedestrian spaces are encouraged to include lighting and signage, and streetscaping should be scaled for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles. Properties classified as Neighborhood Mixed-Use should be located in close proximity to



transit facilities. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, RM-5, RM-6, MF-18, O-1, NC, C-1, MH, MHC, MHP, FBZD, AE-1, and AE-2.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Urban Mixed-Use*

Urban Mixed-Use contains a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses at a medium level of intensity. Urban mixed-use development is typically larger-scale than Neighborhood Mixed-Use and smaller-scale than Regional Mixed-Use, although many of the allowable uses could be the same in all three categories. Building footprints may be block-scale but could be smaller depending on block configuration and overall development density. Typical first floor uses include, but are not limited to, professional services, offices, institutional uses, restaurants, and retail including grocery stores. The mix of uses may be vertically or horizontally distributed, and there is no requirement that a single building contain more than one use. Live/work housing options are permissible in Urban Mixed-Use areas to ensure access to housing options and services within close proximity for the local workforce. Structured parking is encouraged in Urban Mixed-Use category but is not required. Parking requirements may be satisfied through shared or cooperative parking agreements, which could include off-site garages or lots. The Urban Mixed-Use category should be located in proximity to transit facilities. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, RM-5, RM-6, MF-18, MF-25, MF-33, MF-40, O-1, O-1.5, C-1, C-2, MH, MHP, MHC, FBZD, AE-1, AE-2, AE-3, and AE-4.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Regional Mixed-Use*

Regional mixed-use contains residential, commercial and institutional uses at high densities. Regional Mixed-Use developments are typically located within regional centers and in close proximity to transit facilities, where mid-rise to high-rise buildings would be appropriate. Typical lower floor uses include, but are not limited to, offices, professional services, institutional uses, restaurants, and retail including grocery stores. The mix of uses may be vertically or horizontally distributed, and there is no requirement that a single building contain more than one use. Live/work housing options are permissible in Regional Mixed-Use areas to ensure access to housing options and services within close proximity for the local workforce. Where feasible, development is ideally built at the block scale, with minimum building setbacks. Parking requirements may be satisfied through shared or cooperative parking agreements, which can include off-site garages or lots. If parking requirements are satisfied on-site, structured parking is encouraged. Pedestrian spaces are encouraged to be generous in width and lighting, with streetscaping and signage scaled to pedestrians. Regional mixed-use projects encourage incorporation of transit facilities into development. Permitted zoning districts: MF-33, MF-40, MF-50, MF-65, O-1.5, O-2, C-2, C-3, D, ED, FBZD, AE-1, AE-2, AE-3, and AE-4.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Employment/Flex Mixed-Use*

Employment/Flex Mixed-Use provides a flexible live/work environment with an urban mix of residential and light service industrial uses. Uses include smaller-scale office, retail, art studio warehouses, art-



oriented fabrication, creative businesses and workspaces, and cottage industrial and fabrication uses. Adaptive uses of vacant or underutilized structures are encouraged to provide residential urban infill and appropriate employment opportunities within or in close proximity to neighborhoods. Buildings have a smaller footprint and can closely resemble campus-like development across multiple sites or with several multi-functioning buildings on one site. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, MF-18, MF-25, MF-33, O-1, O-1.5, C-1, C-2, L, AE-1, AE-2, AE-3, and AE-4.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Business/Innovation Mixed-Use*

Business/Innovation Mixed-Use accommodates industrial uses with office, commercial, and residential uses, all within a cohesive setting, on a larger scale and within larger footprints than the Employment/Flex Mixed-Use category. Industrial arts workshops, high tech fabrication, processing and assembly, and other industrial uses are permitted, in addition to commercial uses. Vocational training, technological learning centers, medical campuses, and research/development institutions are also appropriate for these spaces. Additional environmental performance standards should be employed for properties designated as Business/Innovation Mixed-Use, such as hours of activity, loading, noise levels and lighting, to ensure that the intensity of the industrially oriented uses is comparable to that of the other non-residential uses. The mix of uses may be either vertically or horizontally distributed. Live/work housing options are permissible in Business/Innovation mixed-use areas to ensure access to housing options and services within close proximity of business innovation areas for the local workforce. Business/Innovation mixed-use should incorporate transit and bicycle facilities to serve the training and employment base. Permitted zoning districts: RM-4, MF-18, MF-25, O-1.5, O-2, C-2, C-3, L, I-1, MI-1, BP, AE-1, AE-2, AE-3, and AE-4.

IDZ, PUD, MXD, TOD and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Light Industrial*

Light Industrial includes a mix of manufacturing uses, business park, and limited retail/service uses that serve the industrial uses. Industrial uses should be screened and buffered from adjoining non-industrial uses. Any outside storage should be under a roof and screened from public view. Examples of light industrial uses include drug laboratories, furniture wholesalers, lumberyards, food production, and warehousing. Permitted zoning districts: L, I-1, MI-1, and BP.

IDZ, TOD, and MPCD may be considered consistent with this land use category, provided the permitted uses included on the zoning site plan and zoning ordinance are consistent with the uses and densities outlined above.

#### *Heavy Industrial*

Heavy Industrial includes heavy manufacturing, processing and fabricating businesses. Heavy industrial uses shall be concentrated at arterials, expressways, and railroad lines. This category is not compatible with neighborhood-scaled categories or those that permit residential zoning. Heavy Industrial should be separated from non-industrial uses by an allowable land use or a significant buffer. Examples of heavy industrial uses include auto manufacturing, battery manufacturing, and petro chemical bulk storage. Permitted zoning districts: I-1, I-2, MI-1, MI-2, QD, and SGD.



### *Agricultural*

Agricultural includes crop agriculture, ranching, and related agribusiness practices. Single-family detached houses and detached accessory dwelling units are permitted on agricultural and ranch lands at very low densities or in conservation subdivisions that will not interfere with agricultural operations. Limited commercial uses directly serving agricultural and ranching uses, such as farmers markets, nurseries, stables, bed and breakfasts are permitted. To maintain scenic qualities, natural vegetative buffers, deeper setbacks, increased signage control, earthen drainage channels, and more restrictive access management standards are desired along major scenic corridors. Floodplain protection and buffer zones along creeks and rivers are instrumental in retaining rural character. Permitted zoning districts: RP and FR.

### *Parks/Open Space*

Parks/Open Space may include, but is not limited to, large, linear, or unimproved land where conservation is promoted, and development is not encouraged due to the presence of topographic constraints or institutional uses on the site. Parks/Open Space may include utility corridors and public or private land uses that encourage outdoor passive or active recreation. Examples include city owned and/or operated pocket, regional, or linear parks, as well as private parks associated with subdivisions and neighborhood associations.

### *City/State/Federal Government*

City/State/Federal Government includes areas owned and operated by a federal, state, or city agency. Examples may include government offices, public service facilities such as libraries and police stations, military bases, state colleges, and federal courts. This category does not apply to properties owned by a public agency but leased to and operated by another party.



## Focus Areas

[Figure 5 – Focus Area Framework Map]

Focus areas and mixed-use corridors have a strong combination of amenities and assets where there is room for more people to live, work, and play. Focus areas may also include, or be next to, sensitive places like historic areas, creeks, major infrastructure, or traditional neighborhoods, where improvements and growth require careful planning. Each has a unique history and will have a unique future. The plan provides extra focus on these places where there are opportunities to improve quality of life in ways that will be felt by multiple generations. Focus areas and mixed-use corridors are situated throughout the Downtown Area Regional Center with the majority addressing edges of the planning area and major barriers to development and connectivity that exist today.

### ***Focus Area #1: Madison Square Park/River North***

The Madison Square Park/River North Focus Area is located along the northern edge of the plan area, bordering the Midtown Area Regional Center and IH-35. Madison Square Park is at its center and the area includes the San Antonio Museum of Art, the Baptist Medical Center, Central Catholic and Providence Catholic Schools, and Fox Tech and CAST Tech High Schools. Part of the 2009 River North Master Plan, this Focus Area includes what that plan dubbed the Madison Square Park and Museum Neighborhoods.

While the Broadway Corridor has seen significant public and private investment in recent years, the Madison Square Park/River North Focus Area just west of the Broadway Corridor and all of its recent development activity, has lagged behind and many blocks are mostly or entirely made up of surface parking.

#### *Vision*

The Madison Square Park/River North Focus Area should be a complete neighborhood where you can live and perform daily activities like shopping, dining, and recreation. It should continue to be a concentration of institutions celebrating visual arts, performing arts and other cultural amenities, with complementary studios, craft businesses, and performance spaces in the surrounding area. Development should be of diverse styles and designed to enhance the pedestrian experience, preserving the historic street grid and resulting in streetscapes that are unique, comfortable, and enjoyable places to spend time. Development along the San Antonio River should maintain the open character of the river corridor and enhance the view from the river itself and street level vistas. Development along the edges of Madison Square Park should generally be two to eight stories tall and enhance the quality of the public space through a diverse mix of uses that activate the park and buildings that complement the design of existing anchors nearby. The most intense development in terms of density and scale should be focused in the southern end of the Focus Area and on the northern edge along IH-35.

### ***Focus Area #2: Cattleman Square/Frio Street***

Comprising much of an area known as Vista Verde South, once a vibrant neighborhood with businesses, churches, schools and homes nearby the Missouri Pacific Railroad Depot (Depot), lumber and stockyards, the area suffered economic decline, decay, and disinvestment beginning with the Great Depression and continuing with the construction of IH-35 and the closure of the Depot. Situated along Frio Street between West Martin Street, San Marcos Street, and San Fernando Street, the area is divided by railroad tracks and is largely cut off from the Downtown Core by IH-35. Likewise, the Focus Area is effectively separated from the Westside by Alazan Creek and has few connections westward. This area is



currently home to large institutional facilities like the Bexar County Jail, Municipal Courts, the City of San Antonio Fleet Maintenance and Operations, the City of San Antonio Information Technology and Services Department, VIA Metropolitan Transit Headquarters, and numerous industrial businesses and warehouses. Many of these institutional, utility, and industrial uses occupy large sites that interrupt the street grid, further compounding mobility and access challenges in the area.

#### *Vision*

The Cattleman Square/Frio Street Focus Area should be a walkable and sustainable neighborhood, supportive of and activated by the University of Texas at San Antonio Downtown Campus; a place of 24/7 activity. It should not only be home to students, educators, and university staff, but a home to arts and cultural institutions, their administrations and supporting businesses. Future development should serve to sustain and strengthen not just the physical, but also the emotional connections with the area's historic and cultural legacy by preserving and restoring the historic street grid to the greatest possible extent, spanning the barriers created by the creek, railroad tracks, Frio Street, and IH-35, and reestablishing connections between the Westside and the Downtown Core. Streetscapes should be safe for pedestrians and people riding bicycles, with comfortable sidewalks, good lighting, shade, dedicated bike facilities, and other amenities, along with street and railroad crossings that are safe for all users.

New buildings may be up to ten stories tall along Frio Street near Buena Vista Street and Commerce Street. However, most new development should be much smaller in scale, with mid-rise buildings decreasing in scale to one- or two-story buildings from east to west to respect the transition to traditional neighborhoods to the west. The University of Texas at San Antonio Downtown Campus will expand to add new buildings for education, research, administration, and student housing. West of the railroad tracks, businesses and small-scale industry are interspersed with live/work spaces, apartments, artists' studios, shops and services. Enhanced transit service increases the mobility and access available to the area's residents, workers, and visitors. The perimeter walls of the Bexar County Jail are transformed by art expressing the legacy of the community and reducing the impact of the facility on the surrounding area. In the distant future, the railroad tracks are consolidated and diverted below ground to be covered by greens, parks, and community gathering places.

### ***Focus Area #3: Alamodome/St. Paul Square***

The Alamodome/St. Paul Square Focus Area is situated in the area south of Houston Street, north of Cesar Chavez Boulevard, east of IH-37, and west of Cherry Street, and is bisected by the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. It is largely an area of commercial and industrial land uses interspersed with hotels and a few recently built multi-family developments; however, its most prominent feature is the city owned Alamodome arena and its associated parking lots. Other prominent features include Sunset Station and the St. Paul Square Historic District.

The Alamodome/St. Paul Square Focus Area is both a barrier and a potential gateway between Downtown and the Near Eastside. Numerous at-grade railroad crossings and monolithic industrial and institutional land uses, combined with poor sidewalk conditions and IH-37 create a place that is poorly suited to pedestrians. Cherry Street—the eastern extent of the Downtown Area Regional Center and this Focus Area—is a transition point between large-scale development and traditional neighborhoods to the east.

#### *Vision*

The vision for the Alamodome/St. Paul Square Focus Area is for a safe, walkable, and vibrant mixed-use neighborhood that connects the Eastside and Downtown. It should have a mixed-use fabric woven of multiple types of housing, neighborhood-scaled commercial spaces to serve the daily needs of its



residents, and music and entertainment venues creating around the clock activity. Streetscapes should be safe, comfortable, and functional places that move people biking, walking, driving, and using transit.

Development should be mid-rise in scale, generally between four and six stories, decreasing in height and massing from west to east to respect the transition from large-scale downtown development to smaller-scale traditional neighborhoods marking the western edge of the Eastside Community Area. The tallest buildings and highest density of people should be adjacent to VIA's planned East-West rapid transit corridor along Commerce Street to support the public's investment and ensure that the greatest number of people have easy access to this amenity in the future. Small plazas and pocket parks will create gathering places for residents and visitors and humanize the urban environment. Catalytic Site Concepts for the Alamodome Parking Lots illustrate what the area might look like in the future.

#### ***Focus Area #4: East Cevallos***

The East Cevallos Focus Area is centered on East Cevallos Street and is located between South Flores Street, South Alamo Street, Simon Street, and Probandt Street. Unlike the other focus areas, East Cevallos has already experienced substantial growth in recent years with new apartments, businesses, and single-family homes replacing vacant and former industrial land and buildings. An area north of Clay Street situated along the railroad tracks was once warehouses and businesses and has seen apartments and mixed-use buildings developed and planned. South of Clay Street is a largely single-family neighborhood with a mix of modest traditional homes and recent modern single-family infill development bound on the north, east, and west by major arterial roadways. This Focus Area has limited options for north-south travel within the neighborhood and the surrounding roadways are lacking in pedestrian and bicycle amenities, let alone shaded sidewalks and separated bike lanes. Exacerbating the problem, moderately compact infill development has resulted in an increase in demand for on-street parking on narrow neighborhood streets, often with narrow, discontinuous, or no sidewalks.

##### *Vision*

The vision for East Cevallos is an area with a legible multimodal transportation network and well-defined roads that provide dedicated pedestrian spaces and bike facilities that are safe, comfortable, and enjoyable. Street and railroad crossings will be safe for all users and streetscapes will be well lit in the evenings and well landscaped to provide traffic calming, urban cooling, and shade.

Development will create a mix of commercial areas near and among residential areas with a range of densities and forms, with the greatest concentrations of people living along higher intensity, mixed-use arterial roadways along the "edges" of the Focus Area and continuing along Cevallos Street. New buildings should be between one and five stories tall with the majority being three to five stories. Buildings as tall as seven or eight stories are appropriate north of Cevallos Street or along Probandt Street.

#### ***Focus Area #5: Lone Star***

The Lone Star Focus Area is centered on the Mission Reach of the San Antonio River and includes the former Lone Star Brewery site, as well as adjacent institutional and industrial sites between Probandt Street and Roosevelt Avenue, south of Lone Star Boulevard and north of Mitchell Street. This Focus Area also includes the EPIcenter (Energy Partnerships Innovation Center) incubator and Bexar County Juvenile Detention Center. Most of the area consists of current or former heavy industrial land uses and it is crossed by an active railroad line.



### *Vision*

The Lone Star Focus Area should be a family-friendly, sustainable, and diverse mixed-use center serving both current nearby residents as well as new residents living within new mixed-use developments. It should be a place where residents can shop, buy groceries, work, and find entertainment. New multi-family residences will provide housing opportunities for a variety of household types, sizes, and incomes, and give people the opportunity to live near their place of work. This Focus Area should build off the foundation created by EPIcenter to become a center for creative and innovative businesses.

As formerly industrial spaces are redeveloped, the new development should preserve elements of the industrial feel and create a connection to the area's industrial heritage through the reuse of older industrial buildings and infrastructure. New development and redeveloped sites should be well connected to the river through pedestrian-oriented streetscapes with wide sidewalks, shade, safe crossings, and other amenities. Additionally, this Focus Area is located within the River Improvement Overlay District (RIO-4), allowing new buildings on larger development sites up to ten stories tall (if located within a Development Node as described by section 35-338 of the Unified Development Code), although most buildings will be substantially shorter, in the one to five story range.

## **Mixed-use Corridors**

### ***Flores Street Mixed-use Corridor***

Flores Street traverses the entire Downtown Area Regional Center from north to south and changes character several times along its extent. At the northern end, much of the land on either side is vacant or surface parking with landmarks like Fox Tech High School and ArtPace, and other buildings often only a few stories tall. Between Martin Street and Cesar Chavez Boulevard, Flores Street is a Downtown Core thoroughfare with a diverse mix of uses in taller buildings, wider sidewalks, few curb cuts, and lots of activity. South of Cesar Chavez Boulevard to Cevallos Street, tall downtown buildings give way to more land intensive commercial, industrial, and institutional sites interspersed with apartments and condominiums along with the occasional mixed-use building. Redevelopment of historic commercial buildings as mixed-use buildings and condominiums has begun to generate new levels of activity on this section of the corridor; however the sidewalks are narrow in this segment of Downtown and there is little in the way of landscaping along the street to create a desirable pedestrian environment. South of Cevallos Street, Flores Street serves as a neighborhood main street lined with small commercial buildings, churches, and schools behind which are traditional single-family homes.

### *Vision*

Flores Street should continue as a mixed-use corridor as new development increases the number of people living and working along it. New buildings should both respect and inform their context along the corridor, with tall buildings appropriate to the Downtown Core located north of Cesar Chavez Boulevard, transitioning to mid-rise buildings (from two to six stories tall) between Cesar Chavez Boulevard and Cevallos Street, and one to three story buildings from there continuing south. As more people come to use these areas, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and other aspects of the streetscape will need to be improved.

### ***Frio Street Mixed-use Corridor***

Frio Street north of IH-35/IH-10 includes a mix of institutional and commercial land uses, as well as pockets of single-family homes at the southern end, and several large apartment complexes at the northern end. Aside from recent improvements near the University of Texas at San Antonio Downtown Campus, Frio Street is fairly wide, allowing traffic to move quickly. However, most sidewalks are narrow



and marked pedestrian crossings are few and far between, leading to an automobile dominated streetscape that is unsafe and uncomfortable to other ways of getting around. The corridor is part of the Vista Verde South neighborhood and Cattleman's Square Historic District.

#### *Vision*

New development along Frio Street should strengthen ties to the cultural resources and legacy of the community by restoring connections between the east and west sides of the corridor with safe and comfortable streetscapes and street crossings and gathering places that allow people to experience the cultural landscape and identity of the area. More people can and should be able to live, work, and gather along and near to Frio Street. Per the direction provided for the adjoining focus area, new buildings may be up to ten stories tall along Frio Street near Buena Vista Street and Commerce Street. However, most new development should be much smaller in scale, with mid-rise buildings decreasing in scale to one- or two-story buildings from east to west to respect the transition to traditional neighborhoods to the west.

### ***South Alamo Street & Probandt Street Mixed-use Corridor***

South Alamo Street from IH-35/IH-10 to Probandt Street and continuing south along Probandt Street is a wide, automobile-oriented corridor that move cars quickly through the area but does not accommodate other modes of travel very well. The availability of sidewalks is inconsistent and where present, sidewalks are mostly in poor condition, narrow, and lacking pedestrian amenities. Recent infill development has improved sidewalk conditions in a piecemeal manner, so gaps are now even more pronounced. This corridor includes a mix of older commercial buildings interspersed with large industrial sites. Along the southern segment, south of Lone Star Boulevard, single-family homes front the west side of Probandt Street and mix with several commercial buildings and restaurants. The east side of this portion of the corridor is the Lone Star Focus Area described earlier. This corridor is impacted by two at-grade railroad crossings at Probandt and East Cevallos Street and at Probandt and Lone Star Boulevard.

#### *Vision*

The vision for this corridor is of a bustling mixed-use corridor with new places for people to live, work, shop, and gather. Commercial diversity brings new places to eat, shop, celebrate, and find everyday services. The amount of right-of-way devoted to moving automobiles along South Alamo and Probandt streets should be reduced to calm traffic and to accommodate the addition of separated bike lanes, wide and shaded sidewalks that are comfortable and inviting, and safer crossing conditions both at street intersections and railroad crossings. The corridor plays an important role, along with the Frio Street corridor, of connecting three focus areas, including Cattleman's Square/Frio Street, East Cevallos, and Lone Star. Both portions of the corridor should include a wide variety of uses with the highest intensity of development and the greatest concentration of entertainment and commercial uses directly adjacent to the corridor, particularly in and adjacent to the focus areas.

### ***South St. Mary's Street & Roosevelt Avenue Mixed-use Corridor***

South St. Mary's Street from South Alamo Street to the railroad tracks and continuing south as Roosevelt Avenue has a mix of dining and drinking establishments, as well as shops and services, schools, churches, and parks in a fairly compact, traditional main street form. Many historic commercial and residential buildings continue to be actively used and many have been restored and reused several times. This area is part of the historic King William, Lavaca, and Roosevelt Park neighborhoods and connects the Downtown Core with areas to the south. VIA is considering using St. Mary's Street and Roosevelt Avenue for high quality rapid transit service.



*Vision*

The vision for this corridor is for moderate growth in commercial business, services, and housing. Existing structures that contribute to the identity of the area should be adapted to new uses. Higher density residential infill should complement existing commercial and residential properties. A mix of additional commercial uses should support investments in rapid transit service and streetscapes should allow more people to use the corridor without relying on a car. The vision includes striking a balance of infusing more people and activity along the corridor to support transit and other amenities, while still celebrating and respecting the historic main street fabric that is very much intact along this corridor. New development should be designed to be compatible with existing buildings as prescribed by existing design standards and guidelines.

***South Presa Street Mixed-use Corridor***

Like South St. Mary’s Street, South Presa Street is primarily a traditional main street serving the surrounding neighborhoods. Though not as abundant as St. Mary’s Street, Presa Street has a mix of places to eat and drink, places to shop, churches, and services. However, while St. Mary’s Street is more commercial in nature, South Presa Street has a more residential character particularly in the southern segment where single-family and multi-family homes front the corridor. Several pocket parks create places for residents to gather and visitors to rest.

*Vision*

The vision for this corridor is for moderate growth in housing and to a lesser extent commercial business and services. Existing structures that contribute to the identity of the area should be adapted to new uses. Higher density residential development mixed with commercial uses should support investments in rapid transit service and streetscapes should allow people to walk and bike safely and comfortably along the corridor without relying on a car. New development should be designed to be compatible with existing buildings as prescribed by existing design standards and guidelines.

***McCullough Avenue & Nolan Street Mixed-use Corridor***

[Figure 20 – McCullough Avenue Improvements – Existing]

[Figure 21 – McCullough Avenue Improvements – Concept]

McCullough Avenue, continuing as Nolan Street when it crosses IH-37, crosses through the northern portion of the Downtown Area Regional Center and provides a strong opportunity for connectivity from the Midtown area through Downtown and to the Eastside. This corridor is a gateway to many Downtown churches, corporate headquarters, medical centers, the Healy–Murphy Center, Healy–Murphy Park, and the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts. The pedestrian environment is disjointed and unwelcoming with poor lighting and uncomfortable streetscapes, and there are few places for people to live, work, or gather. The corridor is relatively non-descript today with many surface parking lots, inactive building frontages, and few pedestrian or bicycle amenities.

*Vision*

The vision for this corridor is for a vibrant and welcoming mixed-use corridor where people live, work, and play. Inviting and engaging streetscapes encourage pedestrian activity by providing shaded sidewalks, places to sit, public art, and good pedestrian-scaled urban lighting. On-street parking creates a buffer between travel lanes and the sidewalk and bike lanes provide safe dedicated facilities for people on bicycles. The improvements to the streetscape will encourage property owners to reinvest in existing buildings and to develop lots and portions of lots that are currently vacant or devoted to surface parking.



## Investment Areas

Through the planning effort, the Downtown Area Regional Center Planning Team and the community wanted to acknowledge three investment areas that are critical to the success of Downtown but have already received a great deal of planning attention and are currently enjoying both public and private investment. With that said, the success of these investment areas is essential to the success of many of the focus areas and mixed-use corridors described in this section, as well as to the success of the overall Downtown Area Regional Center. The three investment areas include: Broadway Active Investment Area, Hemisfair Active Investment Area, and the Zona Cultural Active Investment Area.

### ***Broadway Active Investment Area***

According to the Midtown Area Regional Center Plan which also includes a significant portion of the Broadway corridor and planned 2017 Bond improvement project, Broadway should be a place for people to learn, live, work, play, and recreate outdoors. The area will play an important role in the success and character of the Broadway Cultural Corridor. This corridor begins in Downtown before extending north through Midtown and beyond. Investments include voter approved spending on design and reconstruction of Broadway to become a complete street with great transit that puts people first. Improvements in the Broadway Active Investment Area within Downtown will calm traffic, improve shade and lighting, and significantly improve the safety and comfort of crossings for all users. While private investment along the Broadway Cultural Corridor has been most evident north of Maverick Park, many projects between Maverick and Travis parks are under design or have recently broken ground. This segment of Broadway will be a critical link between the Midtown Area and the Downtown Core.

### ***Hemisfair Active Investment Area***

In 2009, the San Antonio City Council established the Hemisfair Park Area Redevelopment Corporation (HPARC), a local government organization appointed to manage and revitalize the Hemisfair area. HPARC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit local government corporation that was founded on seven principles that guide all decisions in the redevelopment process of Hemisfair. These include connectivity, development, green space, balance, preservation, sustainability, and leadership. The overall mission of HPARC is to expand the existing park and improve its quality by merging the concepts of preservation and growth.

HPARC is working to create spectacular public spaces in the heart of San Antonio, complete with plazas, courtyards, green space, art and cultural amenities, residences, and local businesses. The plan for Hemisfair will help this Downtown asset mature into a cherished community space, bursting with visitors, excitement, and functionality. Multifamily housing has recently been reintroduced to Hemisfair along with a mix of cultural and dining destinations. Future hospitality development and additional residential options at Hemisfair will continue to draw more people Downtown, both as visitors and as permanent residents.

### ***Zona Cultural Active Investment Area***

In 2014 the City Council created a local Cultural and Arts District called “El Mercado Zona Cultural” and authorized the application for the district to be considered for designation as a Cultural District by the Texas Commission of the Arts. The district is bound by Houston Street on the north, the San Antonio River on the east, Nueva Street on the south, and North Pecos-La Trinidad Street on the west. Broadly, the goals of designating this area as a local Cultural and Arts District are to foster economic development in order to preserve and rehabilitate historic buildings and tourism development in order to contribute to the overall visitor development goals of the city. The area now referred to as “Zona Cultural” was officially designated a state cultural district in 2015. Subsequently, Centro San Antonio



developed a revitalization plan for the Zona Cultural area in 2016, which envisions Zona Cultural as “a crossroads of culture, commerce and community; a destination celebrating the story of San Antonio through music, food, culture and the arts.”

The priorities for Zona Cultural identified in Centro’s revitalization plan include:

- Establish a clear brand and identity for Zona Cultural, one that identifies an experience beyond just Market Square or Main Plaza;
- Incubate local economic growth through initiatives that fill vacant space and provide jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for residents;
- Ensure the district is pedestrian-friendly and bicycle-friendly, and that walkways and crossings are safe;
- Bring color and storytelling to the district through murals, public art, and other appropriate activation as a way to share history and bolster vibrancy in Zona Cultural;
- Better integrate and build on Market Square as a centerpiece of the district;
- Capitalize on projects happening now and ensure collaboration and synergistic coordination of projects while promoting and tying into the Zona Cultural identity; and
- Create a sustainable structure for localized management and funding for Zona Cultural that puts the future of the area into the hands of stakeholders in the immediate area

The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan includes recommendations that support the priorities and strategies of Centro’s Zona Cultural Revitalization Plan, such as safe infrastructure for pedestrians and people on bicycles, activation of public spaces with art and lighting, support for affordable housing, and wayfinding improvements, to name a few.

The Zona Cultural area has seen a number of developments planned and completed already, including the new Frost Tower and Municipal Tower, the planned redevelopment of the Continental Hotel building for housing, San Pedro Creek Culture Park, infrastructure improvements at a cost of approximately \$63.2 million in 2012 and 2017 City of San Antonio Bond funds, the \$150 million renovation of the Children’s Hospital of San Antonio, renovation of the Alameda Theater, the planned expansion of the UTSA Downtown Campus, the \$50 million Center for Health Care Services, future planning and improvements to Historic Market Square, and several new hotel developments. However, continued support for the “El Mercado Zona Cultural” Cultural and Arts District and Centro’s Zona Cultural Revitalization Plan will be essential to the success of the district.

### ***Downtown Core Area***

In 2010, the SA2020 effort identified the Downtown Core as a major cause area. That effort said “Downtown is a showcase for visitors, a center of vibrant activity for residents to live, work and play, and an economically inviting locale for businesses to flourish. Downtown’s historic buildings and character are preserved, its parks and green spaces are inviting, and the river continues to be treasured as its defining asset.” While there are growing concerns of affordability in the Downtown Area Regional Center, and especially the Downtown Core, the area is seeing significant increases in the amount of residential and commercial investment.

Hemisfair has reemerged as an essential anchor to the east and the River Walk continues to thrive. The San Pedro Creek Culture Park and Zona Cultural investments will strengthen the western edge of the Downtown Core. A major emphasis over the life of this plan will be the transition of surface and structured parking that currently dominate many portions of the Downtown Core. As automobile use



decreases and the Downtown Core becomes an even better place to walk, bike, and utilize transit and personal mobility devices, the demand for parking will decrease and market economics will begin to support development or redevelopment of these important properties at the heart of the city. It will be important to promote a mix of uses including additional affordable, workforce, and market rate housing, offices, dining and entertainment, and hospitality, as well as promoting connected transportation networks, low impact development, and vibrant public realms.

### ***Focus Areas Recommendations***

#### ***Focus Areas Recommendation #1: Prioritize major amenity and infrastructure improvement projects that support growth in focus areas and mixed-use corridors.***

In the future, mixed-use corridors and focus areas will host the greatest concentrations of people in Downtown and other Regional Centers. Focusing major infrastructure and amenity improvements in these areas will ensure that they are thoroughly used, benefit many people, and contribute to citywide goals with compounding benefits felt by several generations of San Antonians. Focus areas and mixed-use corridors are located throughout Downtown with an emphasis on the edges of the planning area, so the improvements made in these places will benefit many residents, employees, and visitors of Downtown as well as nearby neighborhoods. Major public projects in focus areas and mixed-use corridors should incorporate design justice, environmental justice, and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into design processes, and support the vitality of existing and future businesses and residents. Design justice rethinks design processes, includes people who are normally marginalized by design, and uses collaborative, creative practices to address the deepest challenges our communities face. Environmental justice strives to ensure that no group of people or areas of a community are overly burdened by the impacts of new development or that a particular group benefits from a project at the detriment of others. Finally, CPTED uses data and observation to inform design that promotes natural surveillance and discourages unwanted behaviors.

#### ***Focus Areas Recommendation #2: Update zoning and design standards to support the unique vision for each focus area and mixed-use corridor, create high quality places, support transportation choices, and avoid impacts to sensitive areas nearby.***

In Downtown's focus areas and mixed-use corridors, existing zoning and development regulations tend to promote development that is not always consistent with the three SA Tomorrow Plans, the Downtown vision and goals, and the unique intentions established for individual areas within the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan. Accommodating population and employment growth in mixed-use corridors and focus areas with high quality development will take pressure off of existing neighborhood areas, industrial areas, and natural areas, helping these places retain many of the qualities that made them what they are today, while also ensuring that quality of life continues improving for existing and future residents. The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan provides the direction necessary to create more nuanced direction for form and use in different parts of the study area. These important values and considerations articulated by the community should be reflected in updated zoning and design standards.

#### ***Focus Areas Recommendation #3: Implement housing and economic development programs and incentives to support focus areas and mixed-use corridors as inclusive places of housing, employment, and recreational opportunity for a diverse population.***

Downtown is a place of immense opportunity. It includes a flagship university, several schools with unique programs for youth, over twice as many jobs as residents, and distinctive



concentrations of cultural assets, urban waterways, and parks. Housing and economic development incentives should ensure that Downtown is a place where people of diverse means and backgrounds can participate and contribute. Downtown’s Housing and Economic Development Strategies and San Antonio’s Housing Policy Framework recommend a variety of solutions. While all of them, including those focused on neighborhood stability, contribute to this goal, several may be particularly relevant and important to focus areas and selected mixed-use corridors, as the places planned to have the greatest access to jobs, affordable transportation choices, cultural assets, parks, education, and other amenities.

***Focus Areas Recommendation #4: Ensure transitions between new, higher-intensity development in focus areas and mixed-use corridors and established traditional neighborhoods.***

In some cases, new development in Downtown’s focus areas and mixed-use corridors can be designed at a scale that is generally in alignment with the adjacent traditional neighborhoods. In many other instances, there is a strong desire for focus areas and mixed-use corridors to include development that is much more intense than what currently exists in the many parts of the Downtown Area Regional Center. In certain cases, a focus area or mixed-use corridor is envisioned to have eight to ten story developments just a block or two away from existing development that may only be one to three stories. In these instances, it is critical that the updated zoning and design standards provide strong guidance to make appropriate transitions between new higher intensity development and existing lower intensity development. Solar access, shade, and privacy should be considerations when developing guidance for transitions that may include setbacks, step-backs, transitional height allowances, landscaping, screening, and guidance for site planning and building orientation.

***Focus Areas Recommendation #5: Balance development and investment in focus areas with protection and enhancements of public spaces, including parks, plazas, waterways, and publicly accessible privately-owned gathering spaces.***

As previously stated, the Downtown Area Regional Center benefits from a significant number of parks and plazas and the one-of-a-kind public space provided by the River Walk. The San Pedro Creek Springs Cultural Park will further bolster the public space offerings in the study area. Still, it should be noted that the vast majority of public spaces are located in the northern half of the Downtown Area Regional Center. It is critical that future development preserve and enhance these existing, and often historical, public gathering spaces. In addition, new development outside of the Downtown Core and especially in the southern half of the plan area should incorporate new public and private gathering spaces. Many downtowns across the country are formalizing programs to catalogue and promote privately-owned gathering spaces that are accessible to the public. These can include privately-owned parks, plazas, rooftop gardens, patios and balconies. As larger scale development and redevelopment occurs within Downtown, ensure that public spaces that are publicly accessible are a focal point of the overall development strategy.

***Focus Areas Recommendation #6: Ensure focus areas, mixed-use corridors and other area amenities can be safely and comfortably accessed by all modes of travel.***

As described throughout this section of the Plan, focus areas and mixed-use corridors must provide a safe environment for all users with a strong focus on pedestrians, bicyclists, micromobility, and transit riders. Multi-modal transportation and transit ridership will benefit from increased pedestrian connectivity as all riders must be able to safely access transit centers and bus stops by foot or assistive mobility device. In order to further improve the pedestrian environment, future public and private investment should protect existing trees and increase



the amount of on-street and street fronting landscaping and trees to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. Landscaping and trees provide shade and refuge from the extreme summer heat and will allow pedestrians to move more comfortably through the Downtown Area Regional Center.



## Mobility

[Figure 6 – Mobility Framework Map]

### ***Background and Vision***

In 2016, the City of San Antonio adopted the SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan, to make our city’s transportation system “sustainable, safe, convenient, efficient, and inclusive of all modes.” The plan adopted by City Council established “a shift in focus from moving vehicles to moving people,” in order to manage traffic congestion, and improve transportation choices. The plan identified two primary and interdependent methods for managing future traffic congestion:

- Develop a land use pattern and policy to promote local trips
- Provide transportation options, in addition to automobiles, that connect Regional Centers

The SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan acknowledged that we cannot build our way out of congestion and that the Comprehensive Plan – and associated land use plans – are a primary opportunity to improve mobility in San Antonio. By welcoming more people to live, work and play in urban centers, regional centers, and transit corridors, we can shorten trip lengths, offer more transportation choices, and improve quality of life.

The combined costs of housing and transportation (commonly referred to as H+T) are often a large portion of a household’s budget, with experts recommending the combined total not be more than 45% of household income. In the Greater San Antonio region that total, on average, is 53%. Walkable communities that provide great transit options can reduce the household transportation costs for the average person because if people have an alternative to driving alone, transportation costs can be stable even when gas prices rise. By providing transportation options, as some people choose to go to their destination on foot, bicycle or transit, the number of cars on the road will be minimized, reducing traffic delay for those people that choose to drive.

As San Antonio’s hub of business, government, entertainment, and culture the Downtown Area Regional Center plays a central role in the growth and health of the region. The Downtown Area anchors San Antonio’s thriving tourism industry, as well as other major employment sectors, such as governmental agencies, healthcare, and finance. Downtown is home to some of the most walkable and bikeable areas of the city, and serves as the heart of the regional transit system. Nevertheless, more investments in multimodal infrastructure are needed to keep this area mobile, as well as connect the region to its historic, economic, and cultural center.

The mobility vision for Downtown focuses on creating a vibrant and diverse urban center, welcoming residents, workers, and visitors alike. With an abundance of historic and contemporary public spaces and urban greenways, downtown is connected and livable. Transit, safe bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and micromobility options provide convenient choices for getting around. These options allow people to access destinations near their homes without having to drive. A number of trails provide separated facilities for people walking, bicycling, or strolling, including the San Pedro Creek Cultural Park and the San Antonio River Walk (including the Museum Reach and Mission Reach). These trails provide a low-stress pathway for commuting, but also connect residents and visitors to San Antonio’s extraordinary cultural and natural heritage. The Westside Creeks of the Howard W. Peak Greenway Trails system, stemming from Alazan and Apache Creeks, provide Downtown connections to Westside destinations like Our Lady of the Lake University and Woodlawn Lake Park.

As high-capacity transit options mature and evolve, Downtown will remain the nexus of the region’s most frequent service. Primo service will be joined by north-south and east-west Rapid Transit Corridors



and other frequent routes, including express service to outlying regional centers (such as the Brooks Area, Medical Center Area and Stone Oak Area Regional Centers). Sidewalks, streetscaping, and complete streets will also support transit usage to and from Downtown. Pedestrians will have a range of last mile connections between transit stations and their downtown destinations, including safe environments for walking, people riding bicycles, micromobility options (e.g. scooters), or shared mobility options (e.g. rideshare or Transportation Networking Companies).

### ***Downtown Area Regional Center’s Mobility Needs***

The Downtown Area Regional Center is the region’s economic and cultural center. A mobile downtown will continue to spur sustainable growth in the Greater San Antonio Region. As this growth continues, the City of San Antonio, VIA and the Texas Department of Transportation must implement solutions that ensure access, livability, and vitality downtown. Key mobility needs include the following:

- Safety of the transportation network, for all users, but especially pedestrians and bicyclists;
- Multimodal improvements - transformation of the transportation network to serve people choosing to walk, bicycle, scooter, take transit, rideshare, or travel in their own vehicle;
- Better connections between the Downtown Area with all other Regional Centers in the broader San Antonio area;
- Improved curb management and parking strategies to accommodate shared and micromobility options, and allocation of additional space for multimodal improvements; and
- Improved connections to the neighborhoods adjacent to the Downtown Area.

A set of high-level recommendations have been developed to address these Downtown Area Regional Center mobility needs, along with a set of strategies to implement the recommendations through projects, policies, and partnerships. These recommendations and strategies are also illustrated on the Mobility Recommendations map.

### ***Mobility Recommendations***

#### ***Mobility Recommendation #1: Continue implementing the San Antonio Vision Zero Action Plan.***

[Figure 7 – Mobility Framework Map: Pedestrian Improvements]

The City of San Antonio’s Vision Zero initiative aims to achieve zero fatalities on the community’s roadways and improve roadway safety for all users, whether driving, bicycling, or walking. The Vision Zero initiative evaluates and makes recommendations to improve safety in Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas (SPIAs), locations where two or more crashes close together have resulted in severe pedestrian injuries. Potential tools for improving pedestrian safety in Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas include leading pedestrian intervals, medians, pedestrian crossing islands, intersection crossing markings, curb extensions, and even widening sidewalks based upon analysis of the unique factors that contribute to crashes in each location and depending upon the results of engineering assessments. Improvements in pedestrian amenities, including safe lighting and landscaping, can also make these areas more inviting and visible. Another approach to improve safety involves dedicating more space in the roadway to bicyclists and pedestrians. From new ways to protect bicycle lanes with separated barriers such as bollards, to landscaping and planters and raised medians, San Antonio has many available tools to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety. The City of San Antonio Vision Zero Action Plan lists additional tools for improving pedestrian and bicycle safety.

The Downtown Area Regional Center has a wealth of opportunities for improving transportation and safety. Transportation investments that focus on safety, such as improving crossings and investing in



complete streets can have a significant positive impact throughout the Downtown Area Regional Center. In particular, the 2017 San Antonio Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas Report (pages 25-26) identifies six Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas (SPIAs) within or adjacent to the Downtown Area Regional Center that should be priorities for study and investment:

- Flores Street from Euclid Avenue to El Paso Street;
- Martin Street from Comal Street to Flores Street;
- Commerce Street from Alamo Plaza to Bowie Street;
- Commerce Street from Smith Street to Santa Rosa Street;
- St Mary’s Street from Commerce Street to Travis Street; and
- Market Street from St. Mary’s Street to Alamo Street.

Additional analysis of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle crash data, along with community input, also identified additional points of conflict between people and vehicles that should be studied for future improvements. Major highways, such as IH-10, IH-35, and IH-37, and their associated frontage roads, create barriers for many pedestrians and bicyclists. The unwelcoming environment of fast speeds and incomplete networks limits travel options for those walking or bicycling. Major roadways, like St. Mary’s Street, Broadway, Cesar Chavez Boulevard, and Alamo Street have insufficient accommodations and less than ideal conditions for pedestrians and bicycles to travel on and cross safely. In addition, numerous driveways and some valet stands create many potential conflict points between automobiles, pedestrians, and bicycles. Employing strategies to reduce and prevent these points of conflict can increase safety in the study area.

Investments that focus on safety, such as the Vision Zero tools listed above, can have a significant positive impact on Downtown, and especially in these identified conflict areas. Reducing speeds in appropriate areas can also greatly improve safety for all users by reducing the likelihood and intensity of crashes.

***Mobility Recommendation #2: Focus Downtown mobility resources to support San Antonio’s multimodal transportation network.***

Multimodal and connected networks are key aspects to providing mobility for all users, regardless of ability or financial status. Transit improvements ensure areas are accessible while bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure provide last-mile connections to and from transit and key destinations. Urban design elements such as driveway relocation, street calming, and complete streets further support these improvements while providing safe and inviting spaces.

Shifting users from driving alone to alternative modes of transportation can alleviate congestion along a corridor or within an area. This becomes more viable when alternatives are convenient, such as through improved access to transit and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. This strategy directly supports the community’s, City’s, and VIA’s goals and objectives, improving access to key destinations, decreasing vehicle miles traveled, and increasing walkability. To support growth and continue the vibrancy of the region’s economic centers, the community needs easy, comfortable, reliable, and congestion-proof choices for traveling to and from work, school, and key destinations.

**Priority Streetscape Improvements**

[Figure 7 – Mobility Framework Map: Pedestrian Improvements]

Streetscape improvements such as trees, decorative street lighting, benches, or other place identifiers can enhance the unique qualities of a place and make walking and exploring more enjoyable. The vision



for these corridors is one where people walking, biking, or taking transit or rideshare brings street-level activity to create safer and more vibrant streets.

Such improvements are envisioned on the following roadways that are not part of the 2012 or 2017 Capital Improvements Bond Programs:

- McCullough Avenue from IH-35 to St. Mary’s Street;
- McCullough Avenue and Nolan Street from Bonham Street to Cherry Street;
- San Pedro Avenue from IH-35 to Main Avenue;
- Flores Street from IH-35 to Martin Street;
- Martin Street from IH-35 to Flores Street;
- Frio Street from Martin Street to Commerce Street;
- Frio Street from Cesar Chavez Boulevard to Guadalupe Street;
- Cherry Street from Commerce Street to Iowa Street;
- Labor Street from Cesar Chavez Boulevard to Presa Street;
- Flores Street from Guadalupe Street to Cevallos Street;
- Cevallos Street from Flores Street to Probandt Street;
- Alamo Street from Flores Street to Probandt Street; and
- Steves Avenue from Probandt Street to Roosevelt Avenue.

**Downtown Pedestrian Priority Zone**

In a vibrant downtown area, automobile level of service is of less importance than safely and comfortably moving people walking, riding bicycles, and using other modes of transportation. The area within the core of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan has the highest concentration of activity in the area but is also the most constrained in terms of physical space available to provide streets and sidewalks. In light of this, the Downtown Core should be a pedestrian-oriented space that prioritizes the movement of people walking, riding bicycles, and using transit over the movement of people driving cars. Street design and signal timing should support slower vehicle speeds and prioritize pedestrians. Driveways should be consolidated and/or relocated to minimize the number of curb cuts and potential points of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles. Streetscape improvements such as trees and landscaping, wide sidewalks decorative street lighting, benches and other furnishings should be provided to enhance the pedestrian realm and make downtown sidewalks more comfortable and inviting places to spend time.

**Priority Multimodal Improvements**

[Figure 8 – Mobility Framework Map: Multimodal Roadway Improvements]

Within the Downtown Area Regional Center every street should ideally provide spaces accessible for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists alike, a concept known as “Complete Streets.” However, the space available to reconstruct streets in the Downtown Area is constrained due to historically narrow rights-of-way and many buildings built on or near property lines, setting them very close to the street. Such limitations necessitate careful consideration of how each street segment functions and which modes should be prioritized and can safely coexist in the same right-of-way. To ensure we make the greatest impact on mobility of all street users in the Downtown Area this plan must prioritize street segments for improvements. Streets were prioritized based on their location relative to a focus area, connection to Downtown adjacent neighborhoods, and significance to connectivity within the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan. The following are recommended for priority multimodal street improvements:

- St. Mary’s Street (from Cesar Chavez Boulevard to Roosevelt Avenue);
- San Pedro Avenue (from IH-35 to Main Avenue);



- Martin Street (from Colorado Street to Broadway Street);
- Houston Street (from IH-37 to Cherry Street);
- Frio Street (from Cesar Chavez Boulevard to Alamo Street);
- Cherry Street (from Dawson Street to Iowa Street);
- Probandt Street (from IH-10/ US Hwy 90 to West Theo Avenue);
- Mitchell Street (from Flores Street to Presa Street);
- Alamo Street (from Frio Street to Probandt Street);
- Flores Street (from IH-35 to Mitchell Street);
- McCullough Avenue (from IH-35 to IH-37);
- Nolan Street (from IH-37 to Cherry Street);
- Guadalupe Street (from Flores Street to Alazan Creek); and
- Cesar Chavez Boulevard (from Santa Rosa Street to Cherry Street).

These streets will also connect to recreational trails and parks, such as the existing Howard W. Peak Greenway Trails and San Antonio River Walk Trails, and the nearby Mission Reach, which connects four 18th century Spanish missions.

#### **Priority Trails**

[Figure 9 – Mobility Framework Map: Bicycle and Trail Improvements]

Key trails nearby or within the Downtown Area Regional Center, like San Pedro Creek Cultural Park, the San Antonio River Walk (including the Museum Reach, and Mission Reach), and the Alazan and Apache Creeks Greenway Trails provide critical continuous arteries of separated pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure, connecting numerous parks, retail locations, schools, and libraries. The critical access points to these regional amenities provide opportunities to improve connections for people walking, strolling or bicycling with deliberate side paths or on-road infrastructure like crosswalks, sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

#### **Preferred Bicycle Routes**

Bicyclists currently endure unsafe conditions like riding in mixed-traffic on high-speed and high-volume roads. Additional bike infrastructure, such as protected and separated lanes, is needed for safer streets. These measures will improve riding conditions for today’s commuters and welcome newer, less confident bicyclists, otherwise unaccustomed to riding alongside vehicles. The provision of bicycle parking and bike share at transit provides an important connection for people wanting to access transit by bicycle and helps to address the ‘last mile’ challenge, helping people connect from their destinations to and from transit.

Based on input from the Downtown Area Planning Team and other community stakeholders, the plan identifies priority bicycle routes including:

- Navarro Street/St. Mary’s Street/Roosevelt Avenue (from IH-35 to Hansford Street);
- Jones Avenue (from IH-35 to IH-37);
- Alamo Street (from IH-35 to Houston Street);
- Nueva Street/Montana Street (from South Pecos La Trinidad Street to Cherry Street, through Hemisfair); and
- Probandt Street (from IH-10 to Theo Avenue).



Corridors identified for complete streets should also incorporate cycling infrastructure as a component of the design based on future studies by the Transportation and Capital Improvements (TCI) Department to determine feasibility and the types of facilities needed.

***Mobility Recommendation #3: Create new connections between Downtown and the Near Westside by mitigating physical and psychological barriers.***

[Figure 8 – Mobility Framework Map: Multimodal Roadway Improvements]

Both Alazan Creek and the railroad tracks are physical barriers between Downtown and the Near Westside, limiting connectivity for all modes of travel to a few crossing points. Psychological barriers, such as real and perceived unsafe conditions, dilapidated and vacant buildings, and lack of pedestrian-oriented streetscapes exacerbate the poor physical connectivity.

A new physical connection should be created by extending Cesar Chavez Boulevard beyond its current terminus at Frio Street, traversing the railroad tracks by under-pass, over-pass, or grade crossing, and bridging Alazan Creek to link with West Cesar Chavez Boulevard. This new connection should include facilities for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles and should not displace Tafolla Middle School.

Psychological barriers should be addressed through improvements to streetscapes to prioritize the experience of pedestrians and people riding bicycles. In particular, the Guadalupe Street Bridge should incorporate expanded sidewalks, pedestrian lighting, and bike facilities.

***Mobility Recommendation #4: Accommodate changes in curbside demand from emerging shared mobility, autonomous vehicles, micromobility, and freight delivery through City policies and street and transit station design.***

The proliferation of shared and micromobility options is changing how people travel. Transportation and land use policies can foster an environment which encourages usage of these new mobility options and offer safe alternatives to driving alone. Street design can dedicate a larger proportion of curb space for shared mobility and autonomous vehicles. These uses can support reallocated space dedicated to parking or vehicle throughput, as these shared vehicles and micromobility options (e.g. scooters) can replace single-occupancy vehicle trips with a smaller spatial footprint.

*Shared Mobility*

These new and emerging technologies, such as Transportation Network Companies (“TNCs” -- like Lyft and Uber), peer-to-peer car-sharing, and ridesharing offer on-demand alternatives for short trips and reduce the need for a private vehicle (in particular the need to park as many private vehicles).

*Autonomous Vehicles*

Anticipation around autonomous vehicles is simultaneously fueling speculation about how these new technologies will change travel behavior and how San Antonio’s streets can accommodate these changes. As technologies change rapidly, adaptive street design and policies will ensure their integration within a multimodal transportation network.

*Micromobility*

These options, which include e-scooters, and dockless and docked bike sharing, are rapidly revolutionizing trips within the study area. Safe street design and parking will help these technologies co-exist with current roadway users and pedestrians.



### *Freight Delivery*

Changes in freight delivery patterns are also changing traffic flows and curbside demand. Same-day and last mile delivery are changing how goods and materials reach consumers and commercial establishments. Previous models of large-scale, centralized freight deliveries had more predictable delivery times and needs. Now, direct deliveries court smaller-scale retailers or consumer’s home location, within hours of order placement, either from a centralized warehouse/distribution center or other regional retail facilities. These shifts place new demands on curbside provision and regulation.

Flexible regulations will need to be updated frequently to keep pace with how emerging technologies will change parking and trip demand. By encouraging these technologies, San Antonio can improve roadway safety and mitigate congestion. In addition, improved data collection and management strategies will facilitate improved regulation.

***Mobility Recommendation #5: Manage transportation demand through deliberate parking management strategies and traffic management plans that prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and transit options during congestion, special events and construction.***

[Figure 10 – Mobility Framework Map: Transit Improvements]

Downtown San Antonio is host to countless special events and critical construction projects that place heightened strain the street network and creates challenges for people using alternative modes of transportation. This additional congestion requires strategies that encourage multimodal choices and allow one-time or infrequent visitors to navigate transportation options and Downtown parking areas more efficiently.

### *Parking and Construction Mitigation*

Parking management solutions integrating both privately- and publicly operated facilities provide information on parking availability at key locations, as well as traffic conditions, and utilize guide signs help visitors find their way to desired parking areas. These same strategies can also be used to effectively direct vehicles through construction-related congestion. Pricing strategies also generate revenue for parking spaces based on demand and incentivize alternative transportation if cost becomes a barrier to parking. Identification of safe and convenient alternative paths for pedestrians, cyclists, and micromobility riders integrated into construction traffic plans is also critical.

### *Peak Congestion*

While congestion can be viewed as a sign of economic health, delays caused by congestion waste valuable time and create transportation emissions that reduce air quality. A series of targeted operational and multimodal interventions can provide more travel options and reduce the demand on our roadways. Key investments to reduce congestion and conflict zones that delay transit can help transit stay on schedule and move more rapidly on San Antonio’s roadways. These improvements, such as peak hour or school zone bus only lanes, queue jump traffic signals, and grade separated railroad tracks, paired with other VIA Metropolitan Transit investments in service, can help make transit a more attractive travel option. This recommendation is responsive to the community goal to “Connect Districts and Neighborhoods with an Accessible Multimodal Network” and the SA Tomorrow Multimodal Plan’s goal of multimodal transportation. These strategies can support the vibrancy of the region’s economic centers, by connecting residents with easy, reliable, and congestion-proof choices to and from work, school, and key destinations.



### *Special Events*

The Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, The Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, Alamodome & Sunset Station, and Hemisfair each generate sufficient congestion to mandate special events traffic plan strategies. Key improvements could improve the experience for those using transit, shared mobility and micromobility during special events, including special event priority lanes to give priority to buses during the traffic surges of planned events or bus bulbs to allow buses to pick up passengers without exiting and re-entering traffic. Specific plans to facilitate ease of use of shared mobility options and micromobility will help relieve stress on the transportation network during special events. Studies will need to be conducted to determine the appropriateness for each strategy for the areas of local congestion.

### ***Mobility Recommendation #6: Support proposed VIA Metropolitan Transit Rapid Transit Corridor Service by prioritizing transit supportive policies and infrastructure near transit stations.***

Two proposed VIA Metropolitan Transit Rapid Transit Corridors anticipated to operate east-west (on Commerce Street and Market Street) and a north-south line (on San Pedro Avenue, Navarro Street, Mary's Street, and Roosevelt Avenue) require prioritized transit supportive land use and development policies and infrastructure, such as reduced parking requirements, and cohesive networks of sidewalks, crosswalks, and curb ramps improvements to provide safe connections to the transit line for people walking, bicycling, or getting dropped off in a vehicle.

Providing last mile connections between transit and key destinations, such as jobs and public spaces, improves mobility throughout the area while supporting walkability and safety for all transportation users. These improvements are outlined by the community's goals and objectives for the Downtown Area Regional Center and are applicable to the future rapid transit corridors proposed east-west (on Commerce Street and Market Street) and north-south (on San Pedro Avenue, Navarro Street, Mary's Street, and Roosevelt Avenue). Key components of VIA Metropolitan Transit's approach of making a place transit-supportive include designing streets for pedestrians, improving the safety of all users, and supporting compact, mixed-use developments that provide access to a variety of services reachable on foot.

Additionally, every person that gets on or off a bus or other transit vehicle is a pedestrian. Safe, comfortable, and direct access to transit for people walking or biking to a transit station or stop will improve their experience as a transit rider and will increase the number of people choosing walking, bicycling, and taking transit as their preferred travel choice. These improvements also contribute to the overall quality of neighborhoods and communities. As indicated on the Mobility Recommendations map, these priority transit areas that also experience major congestion include Flores Street (from IH-35 to Alamo Street), Martin Street (from IH-35 to Houston Street), Cesar Chavez Boulevard (from Frio St to Presa Street), and IH-37 (from Jones Avenue to Cesar Chavez Boulevard). Key improvements that could improve transit mobility enforcement of bus-only lanes that give priority to buses in times of peak traffic; queue jump traffic signals that allow buses a chance to get ahead of the traffic; and bus bulbs to allow buses to pick up passengers without exiting and re-entering traffic. Studies will need to be conducted to determine the appropriateness for each strategy for the areas of local congestion.

### ***Mobility Concepts***

The recommendations in this plan will help connect districts and neighborhoods with an accessible multimodal network that promotes safety, health, and sustainability. These recommendations also focus on enhancing wayfinding, key gateways, and critical connections. The general concepts below serve as guiding principles for the more detailed Mobility Recommendations listed above.



## Complete Streets

In September 2011, San Antonio adopted a Complete Streets Policy (Ordinance 2011-09-29-0795) which encourages street designs that take into account all users and accommodate all ages and abilities including children, older adults, and persons with disabilities. This approach to street design “supports pedestrian and bicycle-oriented neighborhoods; promotes healthy living, fitness, and activity; enhances the economic vitality of commercial corridors and districts; and maximizes the benefits of investment in public infrastructure.” Not all “complete” streets have to be the same; the function of the road, level of traffic by mode, and adjacent land use and intensity will all be used to help determine road type and design features.

Complete Streets studies and subsequent implementation should take into account best practices from guidance provided in the NACTO Design Guidelines, and NACTO Transit Street Design Guide for roadways that will include VIA Primo or Rapid Transit Corridor Service. Improvements should also include lighting, landscaping, and green infrastructure where possible, and other placemaking features such as artistic elements. Implementing these policies and projects will ensure all people, regardless of income or ability, can access high-quality transportation services and can choose to live car-free and access services, jobs and recreation. Where possible, sustainable Complete (green) Streets should be considered to support the heat island and stormwater quality goals of the SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan

Additional resources to implement strategies for better streets include: The Bicycle & Pedestrian Program of the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Human Environment (provides extensive bicycle and pedestrian resources and guidance); [The Smart Growth America National Complete Streets Coalition](#); [Complete Streets: Best Policy and Implementation Practices](#) (based on the evaluation of 30 communities across the U.S.); and the Toolkit: [Complete Streets in the Southeast](#) (Developed through a partnership amongst AARP Government Affairs, Smart Growth America, and the National Complete Streets Coalition.); [Sustainable Complete Streets](#).

## Preferred Bicycle Routes and Priority Streetscape Improvements

Creating a Regional Center that encourages walking and biking as convenient, safe, and comfortable options will require an integrated network of pedestrian and bicycle routes along with well-designed streets in key activity areas. Today, there are gaps in the multimodal system serving the Downtown Area, especially for people wishing to walk or bike. This Plan focuses on completing sidewalk and bicycle networks, and more directly access trails and other amenities.

## Improved Pedestrian Crossings

Safety is central to planning for the Downtown Area Regional Center's development as a walkable center. Analysis of the previous pedestrian crashes in this Sub-Area has identified road segments most in need of additional pedestrian accommodations. Improved access to VIA Metropolitan Transit service is also a key factor for improving existing crossings.

Resources to implement strategies for intersections include the FHWA Office of Safety Proven Safety Countermeasures, <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures>; NCHRP Report 500: Volume 12, A Guide for Reducing Collisions at Signalized Intersections; and NCHRP Report 500: Volume 5, A Guide for Addressing Unsignalized Intersection Collisions

Dedicating more space in the roadway to bicyclists and pedestrians by adding landscaping, buffered sidewalks, and lighting along the roadway can improve the level of comfort for vulnerable users. Adding dedicated space for sidewalks results in a 65-89% reduction in crashes involving pedestrians walking



along roadways, according to the FHWA.<sup>1</sup> Bicycle and pedestrian facility design and materials have advanced considerably over the last decade. Many of San Antonio's peers have tested and reported the results of new applications. From new ways to separate bicycle lanes with LED lit bollards, to landscaping and planters or raised medians or lanes, San Antonio has many options to implement the safety strategies in a way that meets the goals of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan to improve safety on the transportation system and improving walkability.

Resources to implement strategies for pedestrians and bicycles can be sourced from the City of San Antonio Vision Zero Action Plan, as well as national resources such as the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Design Guide to Transit Corridors. For resources on proven approaches to crash reduction, see the Federal Highway Administration [Crash Reduction Factor Toolbox](#); National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices, Seventh Edition, 2011. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Transportation. 2013; NCHRP Report 500 Volume 18: A Guide for Reducing Collisions Involving Bicycles; [Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse](#); FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures. Federal Highway Administration, Office of Safety, Washington, DC, 2012; Handbook for Designing Roadways for the Aging Population. Federal Highway Administration, Office of Safety, Washington, DC, 2014; [Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide](#); and the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide (part of the Cities for Cycling initiative).

#### **Frequent, Reliable, and Accessible Transit**

Through VIA Metropolitan Transit's ongoing planning, new Primo and Rapid Transit Corridors are currently being identified. Studies are determining exact routing and phasing of construction. As of Fall 2018, Rapid Transit routes under consideration are anticipated to provide east-west service along Commerce Street and Market Street, and a north-south line on Navarro Street, St. Mary's Street, and Roosevelt Avenue. Complete streets and placemaking investments near transit corridors and access points are important to improve people's ability to utilize transit through safe and pleasant community connections.

Street configuration directly impacts an area's last-mile connectivity to and from transit stations. Places with dense streets and shorter blocks, such as downtowns, provide more direct routes to destinations and more storefront access. Places that are most accommodating to transit, bicycles, and pedestrians, have a tight grid network, meaning people can experience fairly direct access to their destination. Areas with low block density (are often caused by large campuses, or disconnected street networks).

#### **Linked Mobility and Land Use**

As communities evolve and grow, so do the demands on the mobility system. The location and type of growth in an area or along a corridor help determine the demand on the transportation network and viability of various transportation options. Likewise, transportation helps shape the desirability and type of development in an area. Aligning this relationship shapes future development and growth patterns and directly supports the community's goals and objectives of improving walkability, increasing access to transit, and enhancing access to economic areas and other key destinations. Such alignment of land use and mobility also helps implement VIA's 2040 Strategic Plan for Station Areas, supporting transit-supportive land use surrounding transit stations.

As the Downtown Area Regional Center adds residents and employees based on the updated land use plan, impacts on the mobility needs of these new people and those of current employees, residents, and students need to be considered. Land uses encouraging mixed-use and higher density developments are

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures/walkways/>



recommended along Presa Street, Alamo Street, Flores Street, Probandt Street, Frio Street, Cesar Chavez Boulevard, Santa Rosa Avenue, McCullough Avenue, Broadway Street and St. Mary's Street. With these more intense land uses, these major roadways can anticipate additional pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, cars, and freight delivery trucks of various sizes. Studies will need to determine common paths and volumes of pedestrian, bicycle, automobile, transit, and freight travel to ensure the area has sufficient infrastructure and careful prioritization of modes to help people safely reach their destinations.

### **Gateway Opportunities**

[Figure 8 – Mobility Framework Map: Multimodal Roadway Improvements]

To build on the strong community identity of the Downtown Area Regional Center, several places provide opportunities for unique neighborhood gateways. Gateways provide a sense of place and welcome residents and visitors with art and architectural elements which reflect neighborhood history and culture. These gateways are an opportunity to enhance wayfinding, integrate great signage, and highlight a unique sense of place. Gateways can also transform major infrastructure barriers, such as freight rails lines and interstate highways, and enhance critical connections through creative design, lighting and public art.

Based on Planning Team and community input, there are several ideal locations for gateways in the core of the Downtown Area Regional Center. Gateways at Roosevelt Avenue and the Union Pacific Railroad Tracks, IH-37 and Cesar Chavez Boulevard, IH-37 and Houston Street, West Commerce Street Bridge, Buena Vista Street Bridge, IH-35 and Flores Street, IH-35 and San Pedro Ave, and Broadway Street and IH-35, McCullough Avenue and IH-35, and IH-35 and St. Mary's Street are ideal locations to welcome visitors and residents and distinguish the center's identity.



## Amenities and Infrastructure

[Figure 11 – Amenities and Infrastructure Framework Map]

[Figure 12 – Amenities and Infrastructure Framework Detail Map]

### Introduction

In the future, as more people live, work, and play in Downtown, quality of life should improve with better public spaces, arts and cultural events, better infrastructure, and more opportunities for people to make connections to surrounding areas and to each other. Mobility improvements will aid in accommodating different ways that people choose to get around, but there are many other elements to ensuring that moving from place to place is safe, comfortable and inviting. There are a variety of attractive streets and paths in and around Downtown and it will be important to better link these moving forward by filling gaps and prioritizing amenities between areas that are already pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

With the Downtown Area Regional Center being so diverse with the Downtown Core, Hemisfair, River North, Zona Cultural, Vista Verde South and a host of other districts and neighborhoods, it is also critical that amenities are well distributed and do not serve only one area or one population. The types of infrastructure and amenities, and the manner in which they are provided, should be as diverse as the different sections of the Downtown Area Regional Center, but it is important that areas that have been neglected or overlooked in the past receive public and private investment in quality of life, placemaking, and placekeeping.

With the largest concentration of hospitality uses and other visitor amenities, it is also important that Downtown continues to add infrastructure, amenities and services for residents and employees. Downtown will continue to be a major visitor destination moving forward and it is important to stay competitive in this critical sector of the San Antonio economy. With that said, investments in places like Yanaguana Garden at Hemisfair illustrate how well-designed spaces and amenities can draw residents from around the city while also serving tourists and other visitors.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #1: Include trees, shade, and high-quality lighting in mixed-use corridor and focus area redevelopment to create comfortable places to walk, explore, and stay.***

Walking is a preferred mode of travel within the Downtown Core, but few people choose to walk outside in this area. In order for walking to be a viable and enjoyable choice for getting around, connecting to transit service, or parking once and visiting multiple destinations in the same area, a variety of improvements to the pedestrian experience are needed to promote more human scale frontages including preservation of tree canopy and increased provision of street trees; murals and green walls; and improved street lighting.

Downtown San Antonio is largely built out and the heat island effect is extremely pronounced, especially in the Downtown Core. A person walking amongst trees and shade will feel several degrees cooler than someone fully exposed to the sun. Because most of Downtown’s mixed-use corridors are constrained by the original subdivision of the area, strong street walls with buildings close to the street, and streets that have been “improved” to provide as many lanes as possible for travelling vehicles, accommodating more trees in these highly urban environments is a challenge. At the same time, there is increasing demand for widening sidewalks, adding bicycle lanes, street parking, and other uses in the public right-of-way. However, trees are an important part of Downtown’s future. For growth and development to improve quality of life in Downtown, trees should be included with new private development and public investments in mixed-use areas.



Street lighting is also important in Downtown, especially in focus areas and mixed-use corridors for the same reasons that it is valued in neighborhood areas, primarily to make people feel safe, secure, and visible at night. However, street lighting in focus areas and mixed-use corridors can also contribute to the unique character of each area with decorative light fixtures/poles and can serve to highlight that a certain set of street segments or a mixed-use node at a particular intersection is special, with extra lighting that is intentionally designed to complement the character of the place and encourage night time use.

The City’s Urban Lighting Master Plan was adopted in April 2019 to provide a uniform set of guidelines for lighting for various types of roadways, parks, art projects, and facilities. Guidelines recommended within the Urban Lighting Master Plan should inform lighting improvements within the Downtown Area Regional Center as bond projects and other capital projects are implemented. As investments are made to implement the Urban Lighting Master Plan, street lighting should be installed at selected commercial mixed-use nodes within focus areas and mixed-use corridors identified in this Plan where the mix of uses, transit service, and density will support active pedestrian uses at night. This will reinforce the desire to have these neighborhood nodes serve as places for the community to gather. The Downtown Core Investment Area would benefit from an emphasis on decorative lighting at the street level to strengthen wayfinding onto and off of the San Antonio River Walk and to complement the character of distinct neighborhoods and districts such as Zona Cultural.

[Figure 22 – Underpass Lighting – Existing]

[Figure 23 – Underpass Lighting – Concept]

Decorative lighting underneath highway underpasses can encourage pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods. However, more than lighting and art are needed to make highway underpasses feel comfortable, safe, and secure. Consistent with the Catalytic Projects and future land use map in this Plan, dense mixed-use development that serves a variety of users at all times of day will support an abundance of pedestrians and ground floor users. An abundance of fellow pedestrians can make underpasses feel more secure, and an enticing street scene on either side of a highway can draw people to cross from one side to the other. Temporary activation of the highway underpasses through lighting and art can also be an effective and transformative intervention in the short-term while long-term visions are being pursued.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #2: Better connect the many diverse cultural assets and amenities throughout the Downtown Area Regional Center using new and existing routes that accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and other personal mobility devices.***

[Figure 24 – Cultural Network – Existing]

[Figure 25 – Cultural Network – Concept]

The Downtown Area is fortunate to have a diverse and robust collection of cultural assets and amenities, including historic landmarks, historic districts, museums, river and creek trails and pathways, parks, plazas, public art, studios, galleries and more. While it is relatively easy for people to move between the cultural assets and amenities within the immediate core of Downtown, there is increasing interest in experiencing areas beyond the historical core and using a variety of ways to get there. As the River Walk continues to attract visitors and the San Pedro Creek Culture Park is completed, there will also be a need to ensure that the connections between these off-street experience and streets nearby are maintained and enhanced. A “Cultural Network” system of urban pathways should be established to enhance and sustain connections to the community’s cultural assets. Many downtowns across the country are taking Indianapolis’ lead and designing urban pathways akin to the Indianapolis Cultural Trail. Of those communities working on similar culturally oriented infrastructure, San Antonio easily has



the most robust collection of cultural assets and amenities, as well as significant pieces of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in place. A San Antonio Cultural Network can connect several areas of the Downtown Area Regional Center, dozens of cultural assets and amenities, and help to sustain and strengthen cultural resources which are already in place.

San Antonio's Downtown is already touted for the River Walk network along the San Antonio River. This network will be enhanced with the addition of the San Pedro Creek Culture Park. As these waterway pathways and amenities mature, it will become even more important to ensure that signage and wayfinding helps pedestrians (and cyclists in certain locations) navigate between the waterway path level and the street level of Downtown.

Due to the success of the River Walk, there are instances of shops and restaurants presenting their major entry and frontage on the River Walk with a much less prominent frontage at street level. As Downtown sees additional development and becomes even more vibrant, design of rehabilitated and new buildings should balance the activation of the waterway path level and street level.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #3: Develop stronger connections to character defining features and other areas outside the Downtown Core by addressing barriers created by major infrastructure.***

The Downtown Area Regional Center has a number of character defining features. While many of them are located within the freeway loop and are concentrated in the historic Downtown Core, the majority are actually outside this area and separated by major highways, railroads and other transportation infrastructure. For Downtown to feel and function like a single Regional Center that is well-connected and cohesive, it will be important for future investments to address the major barriers impeding safe and comfortable travel from place to place.

Highways IH-10, IH-35 and IH-37 create a series of raised highway infrastructure, underpasses, and berms surrounding Downtown and separating several subareas of the Regional Center from one another.

There are several active rails running through and along the edges of the Downtown Area Regional Center. Many of these railroad corridors are crossed by roadways and pedestrian and bicycle amenities are often constrained or absent from these corridors when they cross rails and improvements are necessary to comfortably serve pedestrians and bicyclists.

As more development occurs within the Downtown Area Regional Center, pedestrian, bicycle, shared micromobility vehicles, and vehicle traffic will all continue to increase. This makes it vital that the crossings of major roads are frequent, giving many opportunities to safely cross, and designed to suit the needs of people walking and biking in Downtown.

Additionally, the majority of the Downtown Area Regional Center has above ground utilities that detract from visual aesthetics and create significant barriers in the pedestrian infrastructure. In many cases, utility poles are in the center of sidewalks or on the edge of already narrow sidewalks. Though costly, above ground utilities should be consolidated and relocated to alleyways or buried to create the safest and most pleasing pedestrian environment possible.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #4: Promote stronger sense of community within all areas of the Downtown Area Regional Center with new and enhanced community gathering spaces.***

Like many downtowns around the region and across the country, community gathering spaces were an important part of the area's original design and layout. As the Downtown has grown and new development has occurred, community gathering spaces have not been integrated into the urban fabric



with the same emphasis and care. With that said, there are many recent successes to build on in terms of both public and private provision of community gathering spaces.

The Downtown Core has a significant number of existing parks and plazas. As these important elements of quality of life infrastructure continue to age and a new generation of Downtown residents, employees and visitors uses these spaces, it will be important to maintain those spaces and make investments to ensure that they are serving the various audiences in ways that stay true to the historic character and maintain and create relevancy for existing and new users.

Although challenging to find additional space within the built environment, opportunities should be identified to create new community gathering spaces. The San Pedro Creek Culture Park and larger greenway projects will add a significant amount of community gathering space to the western half of the study area. Completion of the Hemisfair redevelopment will also result in additional community gathering space. Adaptive reuse and new construction in Downtown can provide opportunities to incorporate parks, plazas, patios and other open spaces that can be open to the public. Rooftop patios and balconies can also supplement community gathering spaces as the Downtown becomes more built out. Although streets, alleys, sidewalks, and other rights-of-way primarily serve as places for people to move through, they are also the places where we interact and conduct the business of daily life. It is where children engage with, learn from, and learn how to navigate their communities. Streetscapes should incorporate interactive elements that allow children to safely play.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #5: Activate alleys to improve pedestrian comfort and safety while also celebrating the unique urban form of Downtown with intimate paseos, patios, and plazas.***

A growing trend in downtowns of all sizes is rethinking how alleys are utilized to enhance the public realm and not serve only as utilitarian back-of-house corridors. Alleys are being programmed and improved to accommodate pedestrian traffic, outdoor seating and dining, and even new retail frontages. In Downtown San Antonio, the scale of alleys fit the overall intimacy of the urban core and are well suited to supplement the existing network of paseos, patios and plazas that speckle the Downtown Core. A simple and relatively inexpensive intervention that provides a large impact is lighting and art in alleys. Murals and other 2D art using adjacent building exteriors can be supplemented with 3D art and lighting suspended above alleyways. In many communities, these relatively low-cost improvements have become popular attractions for residents and visitors and help to make alleys safer and more inviting places.

However, many alleys in Downtown are still relied upon to provide service access, trash and recycling removal and more. Strategies should be developed to limit these needs to certain times of the day and week to create opportunities for using alley spaces for seating and other active uses.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #6: Construct drainage improvements and integrate stormwater management features to improve water quality and reduce flood risk in Downtown.***

The Downtown Area Regional Center is the most built out of any of the 13 regional centers identified within the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. With that said, the Downtown Core and surrounding neighborhoods and districts are enjoying a renaissance and the rising value of Downtown real estate is resulting in adaptive reuse, infill development, and redevelopment at a variety of scales. As these new investments are made in the Downtown Area Regional Center, it will be important to better integrate stormwater management and other Low Impact Development techniques (LID) in both public and private projects.



While many of Downtown's rights-of-way are constrained, there are still opportunities along certain streets, alleys, and at some intersections to repurpose portions of the right-of-way to integrate stormwater planters, bioswales, and other green infrastructure techniques. These improvements can assist with stormwater management, improve water quality, and reduce the risk of flooding; important concerns given the influence of the San Antonio River and San Pedro Creek in defining this area. The improvements can also help to mitigate the heat island effect and create a more comfortable and inviting pedestrian experience.

The SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan and Sustainability Plan provide guidance and encouragement for LID techniques. The Downtown Area Regional Center is a unique opportunity where LID techniques should be highly encouraged. The cost and scale of development and potential profit associated with the final projects can help to justify investing in LID techniques that may have a higher upfront cost. In addition, the Downtown Area Regional Center is the most urban place in all of San Antonio. As such, more traditional techniques like detention ponds and basins are not feasible. LID techniques may make the development of certain sites more feasible and/or increase the yield of the development while contributing to sustainability and resiliency.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #7: Offer more convenient choices to residents who want healthy food.***

Downtown already has some healthy food options. For example, there is a community garden in the Lavaca Neighborhood, a grocery store with a produce section on Cesar Chavez Boulevard, and a variety of restaurants with healthy food options. However, most people travel to supermarkets in other areas, and improving healthy food access was raised repeatedly in public engagement. As Downtown's population grows, there will be opportunities to improve healthy food access. A larger population will be able to support more community gardens, more frequent farmers markets, and additional grocery stores.

## ***Amenities and Infrastructure Components***

### ***Parks, Trails, and Open Space***

[Figure 26 – Lone Star Trail Spur – Existing]

[Figure 27 – Lone Star Trail Spur – Concept]

Parks, trails, and open spaces are fundamental building blocks to the quality of life in Downtown. They serve multiple purposes simultaneously for social gathering, exercise, leisure, education, flood risk mitigation, clean air and water, civic engagement, and more. Their importance increases with growth in the built environment and the resident and workforce populations. In Downtown, parks, trails, and open space improvements should primarily improve access to and experience with water, create urban plazas in high growth areas, and incrementally improve existing parks and open spaces where needed.

Traditional parks and plazas should be improved with amenities like Wi-Fi, shade, and programming to better serve new and existing residents. These should be supplemented with creative delivery of parks, trails and open space in public rights-of-way and as part of private development projects.

### ***Arts and Cultural Assets & Amenities***

Arts and cultural assets and amenities are critical aspects of Downtown's historic identity and sense of place, as well as important economic generators. Art and culture in Downtown takes many forms, from historic landmarks and historic districts to world class visual and performing arts, and from culinary experiences and a variety of museums to live music, festivals and more. Downtown is also home to Texas's only independent college of art, the Southwest School of Art. These existing arts and cultural



assets should be cultivated and serve as anchors, inspiration, and sources of energy for the continuing celebration and evolution of culture in Downtown.

### ***Community Amenities***

Community amenities such as schools, universities, libraries, and community centers are important places for social gathering, learning, and civic engagement. The work of building and maintaining community often occurs in these places. As Downtown's population grows, there will be a need to enhance the capacity and offerings of community amenities that already exist. In addition, there will be a growing need to provide additional community amenities in the southern reaches of the Downtown Area Regional Center, as well as along the west and east edges of the planning area.

### ***Character Defining Features***

The Downtown Area Regional Center has no shortage of character defining features and they take a variety of forms. As additional development occurs within and near Downtown, it will be important that urban design and architecture are used effectively to showcase and enhance character defining features rather than compete with or detract from these important assets. While many more exist at a variety of scales, major character defining features identified throughout the planning process include:

- Alamo Plaza
- Columbus Park
- Confluence
- Eagleland
- Hays Street Bridge
- Hemisfair
- Main Plaza
- Market Square
- Mission Concepción
- Missions National Historical Park
- River Bend
- the River Walk
- St. Paul Square
- UTSA Downtown Campus
- Zona Cultural

### ***Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development***

The importance of pervious surfaces and green infrastructure increases as the Downtown Area Regional Center accommodates even more people and development. Streets, sidewalks and pathways represent an opportunity to use space for more than just transportation and recreation. They are places that can accommodate trees, landscaped areas to soak rainwater into the ground, and stormwater detention basins that include plants and potentially art.

Green infrastructure and Low Impact Development techniques should be incorporated into Downtown's urban landscape at multiple scales, including individual site developments, along multiple street segments as part of street reconstructions, or through coordinated investments throughout a new development. Examples of green infrastructure and low impact design tools that may be used in Downtown include those listed below. The *NACTO Urban Street Stormwater Guide* provides guidance and examples of green infrastructure incorporated into streets.

- Alternative street designs



- Bioretention cells
- Bioretention curb extensions and sidewalk planters
- Bioswales and vegetated swales
- Grassed infiltration areas
- Interrupted runoff flow paths
- Permeable pavement
- Rain gardens
- Sidewalk trees and tree boxes
- Street trees
- Water quality swales



## Catalytic Projects

[Figure 13 – Catalytic Projects Map]

### **Nueva Street Infill**

The Nueva Street Infill site encompasses four adjacent surface parking lots totaling approximately 3.5 acres located along East Nueva Street between South Saint Mary’s Street and Main Plaza Street. Portions of the site are also immediately adjacent to the San Antonio River Walk. All are currently used as public, hourly-paid parking serving the Bexar County Courthouse, Hemisfair, and other nearby destinations.

### **Alamodome Parking Lots**

The Alamodome Parking Lots site includes approximately 27 acres of surface parking located south and east of the Alamodome between South Cherry Street, East Cesar Chavez Boulevard, Montana Street, and IH-37. The site, bisected by the Union Pacific railroad tracks, has been the focus of several previous studies and planning efforts. Approximately 2,600 parking spots are on the site, which is also used for tailgating, carnivals, music events, and community events.

### **Introduction**

The two catalytic sites were selected by the Planning Team for more detailed concept design work to inspire change at these specific locations and to illustrate how similar sites around the Downtown Area Regional Center can also be conceptualized and developed. They each show one scenario of what future development could be like in the area, how it could both serve the community and also complement the vision for the Downtown Area.

The locations were selected, in part, because of their underutilization as surface parking lots and due to their proximity to existing destinations and amenities such as Hemisfair, the San Antonio River Walk, and the Alamodome. Additionally, their adjacency to potential high-quality, frequent, and reliable transit service lend the sites to supporting transit investments and reducing reliance on personal automobiles in Downtown and the surrounding areas.

### **Catalytic Project Recommendations**

#### ***Catalytic Projects Recommendation #1: Support the development of a residential mixed-use node along Nueva Street.***

Initiate collaboration with local property owners to create a development/redevelopment plan to implement the Nueva Street Infill site.

#### ***Catalytic Projects Recommendation #2: Support the development of a residential mixed-use neighborhood on the Alamodome Parking Lots site.***

Identify the entitlements and incentives available to implement the vision for the Alamodome Parking Lots catalytic site.

#### ***Catalytic Projects Recommendation #3: Use design justice principles in future public design processes for the catalytic sites.***

Collaborate with local firms and leaders fluent in design justice principles to create appropriate design processes for public projects. Design justice rethinks design processes, centers people who are normally



marginalized by design, and uses collaborative, creative practices to address the deepest challenges our communities face.

### ***Catalytic Project #1 – Nueva Street Infill***

#### *Description*

The Nueva Street site consists of approximately 3.5 acres of commercial surface parking lots, totaling about 525 parking spots, serving people going to nearby destinations such as the Bexar County Courthouse and La Villita. Three of the four parcels of land sit along the north side of East Nueva Street, while the fourth and largest parcel is on the south side. Nueva Street, while less than a mile in total length, directly connects to both the UTSA Downtown Campus, about one-half of a mile to the west, and Hemisfair, less than a quarter of a mile east of the site. Three of the four parcels abut the San Antonio River and all four have easy access to the River Walk. Additionally, South Saint Mary’s Street runs along the eastern edge of the site presents an opportunity for future frequent transit service.

#### *Vision*

The surface parking lots are reimagined as new mixed-use buildings supporting the Downtown Area’s need for more housing, including below market rate units, and resident-supporting shops and services. A national brand anchor store will provide goods currently not available within the Downtown Area. The design concept will create a more inviting streetscape with much wider sidewalks, street trees providing shade and pleasant pedestrian spaces such as plazas with vegetation and art opportunities. The concept includes vertical public spaces catering to residents and office users in the form of amenity decks, siting areas, and observation decks to take in the view of the San Antonio River and of Downtown. The design also explores the viewshed of the Tower Life Building from areas to the south by locating buildings designed with plazas and shorter portions close to the intersection of East Nueva Street and Jack White Way, while taller portions are set back.

The vision for the Nueva Street Infill does not integrate any off-street parking and illustrates how new development in the Downtown Core should not be reliant on cars but, rather, prioritize the pedestrian experience by providing ample sidewalk space, protected bike lanes, and high-quality, frequent, and reliable transit service in the form of bus rapid transit (BRT). The illustration shows the addition of dedicated BRT lanes on Navarro Street and St. Mary’s Street, as is proposed by VIA’s Rapid Transit Corridor planning, and a transit station would be just a short walk away.

[Figure 14 – Nueva Street Infill – Existing]

[Figure 15 – Nueva Street Infill – Concept]

### ***Catalytic Project #2 – Alamodome Parking Lots***

#### *Description*

The city-owned surface parking lots total approximately 27 acres and 2,600 parking spots on two tracts of land bisected by the Union Pacific railroad tracks. The larger tract, Lots B and C, is about 19 acres in size, with 1,700 parking spots, and is physically separated from the Alamodome by the railroad tracks, with access to the arena consisting of a single pedestrian underpass. The smaller tract, Lot A, is approximately 7 acres and is located immediately south of the arena. This tract also features a small warehouse and a small historic structure, the Roatzsch-Griesenbeck-Arciniega house, which hosts a “peek-in art gallery” known as the Jewelbox Project. In addition to parking for the up to 64,000 seat area, the site is periodically used for tailgating, carnivals, music, and community events.



Most affected by any future development on this site, by virtue of its proximity to the east across Cherry Street, is the Alamodome Gardens neighborhood, consisting of single-family homes one or two stories tall and a few low-slung commercial properties fronting on to Cherry Street. To the north, the St. Paul Square Historic District is a revitalizing commercial and entertainment district connected to Downtown and the Eastside by Commerce Street. Additionally, VIA’s Robert Thompson Transit Station, located immediately north of the Alamodome, is the subject of a potential joint redevelopment effort by VIA to create an active mixed-use, multi-modal transportation hub with station facilities, retail space, and residential space. West of the site, on the other side of IH-37, is Hemisfair, home to the Tower of the Americas, Institute for Texan Cultures, the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, and planned office, residential, and commercial developments as well as a future world-class urban park.

*Vision*

The vision for the Alamodome Parking Lots is a mixed-income community with a variety of housing types, mixed-use buildings, and green spaces for parks and active recreation. Mindful that the existing parking lots serve the arena, the vision seeks to replace inefficient surface parking with integrated parking structures that accommodate both Alamodome visitors and residential parking, resulting in a more intentional and effective use of essentially vacant land. The parking structures are positioned so as to be screened from view of the neighborhoods to the east and wrapped or located behind mixed-use buildings of equal or greater height. Multiple, separate parking structures allow for the creation of a partial street-grid within the site, reduce the overall mass of the buildings, and will allow for more efficient traffic ingress and egress during events.

Additionally, on the “Lot A” tract the concept provides public green space for parks and athletic fields on top of underground parking structures, maintaining a smaller area of surface parking, positioned close to the highway and away from the residential area, that is well planted with trees and can be flexibly employed for community events, tailgating and fan space. Accessible recreational spaces and parks are an acute need in this area of the near Eastside, as was repeatedly articulated throughout the planning process.

The vision for the Alamodome Parking Lots creates a mixed-income, mixed-use community with desirable retail and restaurant space integrated within multi-family buildings. This concept includes a concentration of commercial uses around shared pedestrian spaces that lead to the Alamodome. The vision includes not just market-rate units but dwelling units affordable for people living on the near Eastside today.

The design concept illustrates how residential buildings should interact with the street to create a dynamic and pedestrian-friendly streetscape with wider sidewalks, street trees to give shade, and separation from vehicles traveling on Cherry Street. The concept also illustrates how buildings along Cherry Street should be sensitively scaled to respect the existing adjacent neighborhoods to the east.

[Figure 16 – Alamodome Parking Lots – Existing]

[Figure 17 – Alamodome Parking Lots – Concept]



## Housing

### ***Housing Snapshot***

[Figure 18 – Housing Snapshot]

[Figure 19 – Cost Burdened Renter Households by Income]

The Downtown Area Regional Center is experiencing a renaissance of growth supported by the City's efforts to revitalize the urban core with the City's "Decade of Downtown". The Downtown Area is evolving into a vibrant mixed-use area with a combination of employment, services, and housing. Traditionally the entertainment and cultural center of the city, the Downtown Area is increasingly becoming a more sought after location for residents attracted to the live, work, and play environment. Revitalization efforts by the City and its partners have focused on increasing both the number of housing units, and the attractiveness of living Downtown. The decade-long effort to revitalize the Downtown Core has begun to bear fruit, with increased housing development and the recognition that portions of the center city have become some of the most desirable places to live. Although housing will continue to be a central component of on-going Downtown Area development efforts, the overall Downtown Area housing strategy needs to evolve and focus on the challenges of the next ten years.

The population of the Downtown Area Regional Center is 25,400. The area had an increase of 265 households between 2000 and 2010; although, the population actually slightly decreased. Since 2010, however, the Downtown Area population has grown by 1.6% per year, a rate faster than the City's overall growth. Households have also continued growing at a faster rate than population since 2010. A housing growth goal was developed within the SA2020 community vision effort. The goal was to create 7,500 new housing units in the Downtown Area by 2020. The Downtown Area Regional Center has increased in housing units by over 3,100 units from 2010 to 2017, with approximately 1,400 units now under-construction, and another 3,000 units within proposed projects. Downtown is likely to attract the desired 7,500 units at or just after 2020. (Note: SA2020 estimated just over 7,000 new units are built, under-construction, or proposed in their 2018 Impact Report).

Characteristics of households in the Downtown Area Regional Center vary considerably from the City overall. Downtown Area households are smaller on average and the majority of households are non-family households. The age of residents varies greatly as the area has a population that is older than the average of region overall, but also has a greater concentration of younger residents (age 25 to 34). Average household incomes are lower than the City and County averages. There are also significant differences in housing tenure between the Downtown Area and the region overall. Only 32% of units in the Downtown Area are owner-occupied, while 68% are renter-occupied.

### ***Housing Affordability***

Average home values in the Downtown Area are lower than the County average, however new product being built in the area has much higher costs than the rest of the region. New infill, for-sale housing in the Downtown Area is listing for an average of \$500,000, which is well higher than the County average. Rental housing costs in the Downtown Area are also higher than the County average. Overall, the average rent the Downtown Area is 30% higher than the County average. Rental rates for new development (built in 2010 or later) are also higher and have continued increasing as demand for housing in the area rises.

Housing affordability and accessibility were major issues identified in the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. Each regional center's access and affordability were assessed to identify challenges and



opportunities. Housing affordability is often measured in terms of “cost burden,” or the share of a household’s income paid towards housing costs. In general, if a household spends over 30% of income on housing it is considered to be “cost burdened.” The percent of renter households’ cost-burdened in the Downtown Area Regional Center is 41%, which is less than the Bexar County average. Overall, 26% of homeowners in the area are cost burdened, a figure slightly higher than the Bexar County average. San Antonio’s Housing Policy Framework noted that city-wide, 1 in 5 homeowners and half of all renters experience cost-burden.

However, changes in property values and rental rates indicate a growing increase in the cost of housing that may not be evident in the US Census data. Assessed property values for residential properties increased by 20% annually from 2010 to 2017 (according to Bexar County Assessor data), which is significantly higher than the increases for all property types of 7% annually. Average rental rates are rising quickly as well. Since 2000, the average rental rate per month has increased by a total of \$580, which is a 75% greater increase than the average County change during this period. These increases are pricing some existing renters out of the Downtown Area and into surrounding neighborhoods that are more affordable. In part due to longer tenure, over half of the homeowners in the Downtown Area do not have mortgages, which indicates that existing housing costs for these owners are likely affordable. However, these homeowners may be significantly impacted by large increases in property values and resulting increases in property taxes, especially older homeowners.

Housing issues and strategies were primary topics of discussion at Community Meeting #2 and Planning Team Meeting #5, and were prominent topics of community and stakeholder input throughout the planning process. Community Meeting and Planning Team Meeting Summaries are available in the Documents Library of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan webpage.

### ***Housing Challenges in the Downtown Area Regional Center***

Support for housing was one of the four focus areas within Centro’s 2011 Strategic Framework Plan which identified the need to increase the amount of people living in the Downtown Area as an essential element for increasing activity in the urban core and to spur revitalization. Barriers to housing in the Downtown Area at the time included a lack of attractive housing options, barriers to financial feasibility for new housing development due to the cost of development and regulatory hurdles, and the lack of a vibrant public realm and the amenities and services needed to support residents living in the urban core.

Many successful efforts were taken to increase housing development in the urban core and has the City on its way to achieving its goal of 7,500 new households in Downtown by 2020. The strategies that were utilized to support housing included: focusing housing growth in the most attractive areas at the time including River North/Midtown, Downtown Core, Cesar Chavez/Hemisfair Corridor, and Near River South; investing in and creating a vibrant public realm; using public lands to catalyze new development; establishing an as-of-right housing incentive program; attracting and investing in services and amenities to attract residents; and supporting catalytic housing projects through a center city housing fund. The City’s efforts have been largely successful as those focus areas have captured significant housing growth. This housing growth has been supported by the City’s Center City Housing Incentive Policy (CCHIP), and both the public realm and resident-serving amenities in the Downtown Area have been enhanced. These efforts have been stewarded by the City’s Center City Development Office (CCDO) and Centro. Both of these entities and the support they are provided were envisioned within the Strategic Framework Plan.

As the Downtown Area moves into the next decade, the focus of efforts is beginning to shift, but some housing challenges still exist. There are three main challenges in the Downtown Area Regional Center related to housing:



### **1. Maintaining opportunity for all household types and incomes to live in Downtown**

The feasibility of housing development has become less of an issue as the housing market in the Downtown Area has grown steadily and projects are achieving the market's highest rents in the most attractive areas. However, infill and redevelopment continues to be costly with unpredictable conditions demanding higher rents to cover costs. The affordability of housing for existing middle and lower income residents in the urban core has become challenging. New residents of the Downtown Area are largely able to afford housing costs, as evidenced by the cost burden statistics, but lower income residents are at risk of having to leave the Downtown Area to access more affordable housing. As demand continues to grow, there is a need to maintain and create affordable housing options along with the market-rate development in order to address impacts of rising property values and rental rates, particularly for lower-income renters. As the appeal of urban living grows, the need for housing options that are attainable and attractive to homeowners and families will be in demand.

### **2. Maintaining opportunity for all housing unit types, new and old**

The Downtown Area has a diversity of neighborhoods, diversity in housing and development density, and diversity of forms. The older single-family housing stock gives the area amazing character but is often difficult to maintain due to costs of reinvestment and development pressures. Preserving the historic character and reinvesting in older housing stock is needed to maintain character. New development must also work within the character of the historic neighborhoods. However, developing new housing in these infill settings can be difficult due to some regulatory barriers within existing zoning. The City's recently revised "IDZ" Infill Development Zone zoning is a helpful tool to facilitate successful infill development, but the rezoning process is a risk that may deter developers. The Strategic Framework Plan called for a form-based zoning approach to address design challenges and ease the barriers to housing development. But, the form-based approach has not worked as initially envisioned (and despite several revisions), as developments in the River North area with the form-based zoning have had challenges meeting a number of the form-based standards.

### **3. Capacity for housing development**

As the Downtown Area continues to evolve and redevelop, the capacity to support future growth has become a major consideration. The success of revitalization efforts has generated a substantial growth trend, especially for housing. The greater Downtown Area has been capturing over 600 new housing units per year since 2010. Based on an analysis to identify opportunity sites for new development (vacant, public, and potential redevelopment sites), there is an estimated capacity of approximately 300 acres of privately-owned sites for new development. Housing growth forecasts for the area range from 18,500 to 28,700 new units from 2010 to 2040, which would require new development to be built at a density of nearly 100 units per acre, making it difficult to realistically accommodate the forecast housing and employment growth. The Downtown Area also has a significant amount of publicly owned parcels, some of which are underutilized. The City and its partners have been successful at using public lands to catalyze growth in the Downtown Area with the Hemisfair project and other efforts and there is continued need to utilize public lands to enable growth in the Downtown Area Regional Center. If potentially underutilized publicly owned parcels are included in the



analysis, an additional 150 acres of capacity is generated. With these additional public parcels, average housing development would need to be at 40 to 60 units per acre, which is achievable and less units per acre than many of newer housing projects of recent years. The public lands also become important in supporting other efforts related to housing, including increased affordable housing in the Downtown Area, but also supporting economic growth. A greater utilization of downtown development sites is needed to continue the area's momentum and support for housing.

### ***Housing Recommendations***

Housing recommendations were developed based on the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan's vision and goals and to address the challenges identified during the planning process. Specific strategies to implement these recommendations can be found in the Implementation section of the Plan.

***Housing Recommendation #1: Continue to use under-utilized public lands to support housing growth, provide for affordable housing options, and catalyze new development in focus areas and mixed-use corridors.***

The use of public land to help catalyze downtown development has been a successful model for the City of San Antonio. As the focus of revitalization in the Downtown Area expands to the identified focus areas and mixed-use corridors, the use of public lands should continue to be used to help catalyze desired housing types, community-serving amenities and economic assets. The City's control of the redevelopment of sites in the focus areas will ensure that affordable housing, missing housing types, greater housing density, and residential support amenities and services are included in projects. As well, a diversity of housing product types will be needed including senior housing, student housing to support the growth of the University of Texas at San Antonio Downtown Campus, and more homeownership options.

***Housing Recommendation #2: Support housing growth in the Downtown Area by creating a diversity of housing options in mixed-use areas and accommodating additional housing in neighborhoods and transition areas through context sensitive design and small scale infill.***

The Downtown Area has a wide variety of housing types and ages of housing units. The density and character of housing varies greatly as well. Continued support of housing growth is needed following with the recommendations provided in the 2011 Strategic Framework Plan. Support efforts are needed in emerging focus areas similar to the efforts provided over the past decade. The CCHIP provides a tiered system for incentives that helps focus efforts on these emerging areas. Continued investment is needed in amenities and infrastructure that supports urban living is needed. The majority of housing growth is planned for mixed-use areas and corridors, but accommodating context sensitive, small-scale infill housing development is also needed in existing neighborhoods to help maintain, and even expand the current diversity of housing choices.

***Housing Recommendation #3: Support San Antonio's Housing Policy Framework by developing Downtown-specific goals for providing a greater diversity of housing and increasing the availability of affordable housing units.***

Housing affordability has been recognized as an existing and increasing challenge for San Antonio for a number of years. Most recently, both the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan and San Antonio's *Housing Policy Framework* laid out goals and recommendations for addressing this challenge. Development in and around the Downtown Area has been part of the discussion around the need for affordable housing.



The Downtown Area is one part of San Antonio, and its housing issues and opportunities are inextricably linked to the rest of the City and the region. Ensuring diverse and affordable housing options exist amidst all of the Downtown Area's opportunities cannot be accomplished with a focus on Downtown alone. Many programs, incentives, and funding sources for maintaining housing affordability should be established in consideration of the whole city. San Antonio's Housing Policy Framework has identified actions, policy priorities, and implementation strategies to do this. Similarly, every Regional Center and Community Plan Area in San Antonio has a role to play in achieving a diverse and affordable housing future for the City of San Antonio. The Downtown Area's communities have indicated through the planning process that diversity is valued, that Downtown and its adjacent neighborhoods are places where existing residents should be able to stay, and where new diverse housing for people to live in is welcome. As with every other part of San Antonio, the Downtown Area's future success is tied, in part, to implementing San Antonio's Housing Policy Framework.

The City's CCHIP program has been modified to a tiered system to allow a base level of incentive and increased incentives for the inclusion of affordable housing for households earning up to 80% and up to 60% of AMI. However, the CCHIP is just one tool and increasing the availability of housing units affordable to households earning less than 80 percent of AMI will rely on strategies including the use of innovative housing finance tools, utilization of public sites for development, preservation of existing affordable housing units, and partnerships to incorporate mixed income units in focus areas and mixed use corridors.

***Housing Recommendation #4: Proactively address impacts of new development on existing neighborhoods and residents that are vulnerable to displacement.***

The Downtown Area has a collection of historic neighborhoods whose residents have decade's long ties and roots to the area. The majority of homeowners do not have a mortgage, indicating the long-standing residency in these areas. Revitalization and investment in the urban core will continue to increase the attractiveness of the area for new residents. Increases in property values will have an effect on the finances of existing residents and may make existing naturally affordable housing options unaffordable through increases in rents and home prices, and redevelopment of lower density housing stock. Strategies are needed to address the issues with involuntary displacement of residents.



## Economic Development

### *Introduction*

The Downtown Area Regional Center is the historic and cultural center of the City and home to the world-renowned River Walk. The area is experiencing a renaissance of growth supported by the City's efforts to revitalize the urban core with the "Decade of Downtown" and SA2020 movements. The Downtown Area is evolving into a vibrant mixed-use area with a combination of employment, services, and housing all centered on the great historical and cultural destinations. The Downtown Area Regional Center had 83,800 jobs in 2016 and is the center of San Antonio's economy, anchored by the tourism, public administration, education, and health care industries. Nearly 20% of employment in Downtown is in Accommodation and Food Services, a larger share than the 11% in the County overall. The next largest employment sector is Public Administration; with close to 18% of area employment (this sector comprises 4% of County employment). Other large employment sectors are Health Care and Social Assistance (13% of Center employment), Finance and Insurance (close to 10% of Center employment), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (close to 10% of Center employment). Economic attributes of the Downtown Area Regional Center include:

- A mixture of jobs that are generally higher paying than the County overall, although the population living in the area is less wealthy.
- An economic base anchored by Public Administration, Accommodation and Food Services, and Finance and Insurance, with higher than average shares of these jobs than the County overall. 42% of Public Administration employment in the County is located Downtown, as is 20% of County employment in the Finance and Insurance sector.
- Forecast to continue with strong growth with an estimated 6% capture of employment growth by 2040.

The Downtown Area Regional Center is major employment node for the County and has 9.9 million square feet of office space. The office market has struggled until recent years as new office development has mainly occurred on the edges of the City near Loop 1604 over the past 10 to 20 years. As a result, office vacancy rates are higher in the Downtown Area than the County average, and average rental rates are slightly lower than the County average. There has been a recent increase in office construction in Downtown as new housing and public investments have attracted employers back to the City Center. There have been five new office projects built in the area since 2010, including the Phipps Building and Camden Medical Center, totaling 300,700 square feet of new space. The new Frost Tower adds another 460,000 square feet of office space to the Downtown Area. This is the first new office tower to be developed in Downtown since 1989, and its development is seen as a major step in the evolution of the Downtown Area. The Civic Park development at Hemisfair is also planned to add new office space to the surrounding area.

The Downtown Area Regional Center remains a major entertainment and shopping destination. The center currently has 6 million square feet of retail space, however the inventory of retail space in the area has decreased by 202,000 square feet since 2005. New retailers and restaurants have largely occupied existing buildings or are part of larger, mixed-use buildings. The growth of the area's restaurant and service commercial uses has been robust and has begun to diversify in order to serve residents and workers living and working in and around Downtown, expanding beyond their traditional target audience of visitors and tourists. This is evidenced by the growing neighborhood commercial districts (Southtown, Blue Star, SoFlo, and Broadway Street Corridor) and the addition of a new HEB grocery store in the Downtown Core. Vacancy rates for retail in the area are lower than the County average and rental rates are higher than area averages indicating continued demand. Growth of the



tourism related sectors continues as well. There are 78 hotel properties in the Downtown Area, totaling over 9,000 rooms and almost 900 new hotel rooms have been added in the past decade. At least 8 projects are under construction, being renovated, or are proposed for the area, which will add over 600 more hotel rooms to the inventory.

The industrial building inventory in the Downtown Area Regional Center has been declining as these sites are being redeveloped for higher intensity uses. The area has an inventory of 6.7 million square feet of industrial space, but the inventory has decreased by 432,000 square feet since 2005. Rental rates are higher than average and there are low vacancy rates indicating demand for the space that does remain. The role of industrial uses, and space devoted to them, are diminishing but there are still areas that are needed to serve the area and the larger region.

### ***Economic Challenges to Address***

The Downtown Area Regional Center still has challenges to address that hamper its ability to attract business and continue to develop economically. There are three main challenges in the Downtown Area Regional Center related to economic development.

- **Growing the Downtown Area office employment base:** The Regional Center has a relatively small office employment base when public administration jobs are not included. The economic base lacks a significant presence of private sector office employment. The lack of new office development has made proving out demand for new development difficult for speculative office development despite renewed interest in Downtown from employers. Additionally, the existing office inventory is largely dated, built before 1990, and often does not meet the needs/desires of new companies seeking more open and flexible floor plate designs.
- **Mitigating the impacts of large concentrations of surface parking lots:** Over 40 percent of the land in the Downtown Public Improvement District is utilized for parking. Supporting the growth of other uses is needed to make more efficient use of the scarce supply of developable land and to achieve the goals of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan to increase the number of residents in the Downtown Area.
- **Increasing connectivity to the area:** Lastly, the Downtown Area Regional Center must continue to ensure that connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods and the region is enhanced, allowing residents, workers, and visitors to better access Downtown. The growth of VIA's Primo service and continued efforts to create dedicated transit lanes through Downtown are needed to maintain access to employers and entertainment options and help mitigate congestion. The revival of the City's urban neighborhoods also highlights the benefits of connecting the Downtown Area to its surrounding neighborhoods through enhanced multimodal connections. The physical dividers (e.g. interstate highways) of Downtown from its surrounding areas need to be crossed to allow all areas surrounding Downtown to benefit from its growth and to access its amenities.
- **Increasing and Diversifying Employment Opportunities:** Downtown should leverage the strength of the tourism and hospitality industry to attract other complementary industries and jobs to the Downtown Area. The key to an economically resilient Downtown, City of San Antonio, and larger region will be to maintain and enhance existing industry, while attracting a greater number and diversity of businesses and jobs to the area. Downtown already has many of the amenities today's workforce desires.



## ***Target/Opportunity Industries***

Based on an analysis of existing conditions and the assessment of strengths and weaknesses, target industries and economic opportunities were identified for the Downtown Area Regional Center. The target industries and economic opportunities are meant to help organize the City's economic geography and provide guidance on the role the Downtown Area plays in the City's overall efforts. They also give direction to the City and its economic partners as to what areas are best suited for certain opportunities when they arise. For Downtown, the major industries will also be a focus of and central to the economic health of the entire region. Growth in tourism and healthcare, and continued stewardship and management of the City and its services should be supported. The target industries and economic opportunities for the Downtown Area Regional Center are the emerging opportunities that can help address the challenges the area faces and take advantage of assets and investments. The target economic opportunities for Downtown are:

- **A Center for Education** – A major educational institution is an asset that is needed to help bolster and spur the burgeoning start-up cluster in downtown. UTSA's Downtown Campus was a major investment and addition to Downtown in 1997, increasing the presence of students and bolstering the vitality of the area. The next evolution of the university's growth in Downtown is the expansion of educational programs and, importantly, research and development activities. UTSA, in partnership with the City of San Antonio and Bexar County, has proposed a major expansion of the Campus to introduce new colleges and education offerings related to business and data science and the creation of a National Security Collaboration Center to bolster the growth of cyber-security in the region. The Downtown Campus is planned to grow from 4,500 students to over 15,000 students at build-out, which will make UTSA an even larger and ever-important economic asset for Downtown and for the City. Leveraging these physical investments in Downtown's built form, the addition of new students and jobs, and the research & development (R&D) activity should be a clear focus of economic development efforts in Downtown as the next phase of the campus develops.
- **Downtown Tech/Innovation District** – The Downtown Area has a burgeoning cluster of technology companies, startups, and support businesses and agencies to help foster business growth in technology. The Houston Street and Travis Street corridors have become the City's Tech District, which is supported by entities like Geekdom, Rackspace, and Scaleworks, and bolstered by the movement of tech jobs to Downtown by large businesses in the region including USAA. This emerging collection of technology employers and workers needs to be further supported to allow it to grow and thrive. UTSA's plans to expand its education and R&D efforts into downtown will help continue to support this growing industry.
- **Historic/Arts/Culture Destination** – The historic, art, and cultural assets in Downtown have long served as a generator of visitation and economic activity. These assets have been the focus of major public investments including the extensions of the River Walk north and south to connect the San Antonio Museum of Art (Museum Reach) and the historic Mission Concepción (Mission Reach). Downtown's arts and culture districts, including, La Villita, Zona Cultural, Blue Star Arts Complex, the Southwest School of Art, and the Lone Star and Southtown Arts Districts should continue to be supported through investment in art, art programming and education, and through ensuring availability of places to create, display, and perform.



- **Vibrant Neighborhood Commercial Business Districts** – The growth of housing and activity in downtown has spurred the revival and emergence of neighborhood business districts that serve not only surrounding neighborhoods, but which have also become major entertainment destinations in their own right. Supporting these districts will help continue to increase the appeal of both working and living in Downtown and grow the area as a diverse entertainment destination. These districts, which are often aligned with arts and culture districts and assets, function best when there is a partnership of public and private entities to achieve a shared vision.

### ***Innovation***

Innovation is a major theme of the guiding policy documents for the City of San Antonio including the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan and Forefront SA. A goal for economic competitiveness in the Comprehensive Plan is to “create an economic environment that fosters business creation and innovation.” The Downtown Area Regional Center is a focal point for business creation and innovation. The innovation economy is the connection of knowledge, technology, entrepreneurship, and innovation as a means to spur economic growth. To drive higher productivity and innovation, investments and policy interventions are needed to create and support partnerships between the public and private sectors.

In order to understand the economic strengths and weaknesses of the Downtown Area Regional Center as an environment that supports innovation, an innovation audit was completed to inventory and measure the attributes which contribute to this culture. The Downtown Area Regional Center innovation audit found that the area currently has many of the physical assets that are desirable to employers and employees. However, the area is in need of more modern workspaces of all sizes to support the growth of new businesses. Although Downtown has attracted a collection of technology companies and support agencies for start-ups, the area still needs to increase the employment opportunities for workers in the technology industries and the number of new and growing technology businesses to reach a critical mass. A major missing element to innovation and commercialization of ideas and products is the presence of research activities and an anchor education institution. UTSA’s expansion of its education offerings and the creation of a National Security Collaboration Center can help increase research activities in Downtown and help translate this research into new businesses and ideas.

### ***Economic Development Recommendations***

The Economic Development recommendations below are intended to leverage Downtown’s central location, land use mix, amenities and infrastructure to foster a diversity of industry sectors and business sizes. More specific economic development strategies that may be developed in collaboration with the City of San Antonio, partner organizations and the community may aid in implementing the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan.

#### ***Economic Development Recommendation #1: Invest in and leverage the growth of the UTSA Downtown Campus.***

UTSA’s plan to triple its Downtown enrollment and introduce new colleges and schools to its Downtown Campus is a major economic opportunity for the City. The partnership of the City, County, and UTSA to make this expansion needs to be furthered leveraged to generate additional economic activity and attract new business opportunities to Downtown. The investments into the growth of the Downtown Campus will need to be supported to ensure students, faculty, and staff can access and live near the



Campus. The expansion of the campus is also an opportunity to connect economic activity in Downtown to the Westside and utilize VIA's Centro Plaza and transit services to connect the campus to the rest of the City and region.

***Economic Development Recommendation #2: Make Downtown a premier location of new business creation, tech employment, and innovation.***

The growth of the tech and start-up cluster in Downtown creates an opportunity to spur further businesses creation, attract new technology businesses and ideas, and foster innovation through the commercialization of research within UTSA and the business incubation support entities in the area. The Tech District of San Antonio should be further supported through the growth of a variety of workspaces and configurations, further growth of residential uses in Downtown near the Tech District, and the investments in amenities and infrastructure that will increase the attractiveness of the District to businesses and workers and utilize and showcase technology solutions within public infrastructure.

***Economic Development Recommendation #3: Support and grow entertainment, arts and culture activities, organizations, and businesses in Downtown.***

Downtown San Antonio is a major arts, entertainment and cultural destination in Texas. The continued vibrancy of the entertainment and arts areas is dependent on the continued growth in opportunities to create, display and perform art, and provide for entertainment venues (from restaurants and bars to large performance/entertainment venues). Support for existing arts districts and cultural organizations is needed to allow them to continue to grow and attract visitors.

***Economic Development Recommendation #4: Proactively guide the growth of tourism and visitor activities in Downtown in order to generate new opportunities for the overall expansion of Downtown economic activity.***

Tourism is a major economic driver for the region. Historic and cultural assets, the River Walk, and the Henry B Gonzalez Convention Center are major attractions that will continue to grow visitation to the City. Growth of tourism has always had a major impact on the overall growth of Downtown. The high value generated by tourism businesses and hotels should be leveraged. Proactive stewardship of growth is needed to make sure there is a sustainable economic boost generated by visitation to Downtown.

***Economic Development Recommendation #5: Continue to invest time and resources into the management of Downtown growth and partner with existing and new urban place management organizations to guide and maintain public investments.***

The support of urban place management organizations for a wide variety enhanced services and amenities can help provide the curation and day-to-day support of these districts that the City or businesses cannot provide alone. The City has already utilized these districts (examples include Centro, Zona Cultural, Hemisfair) to guide, protect, and maintain public investments and to promote and plan for future investment in these areas. The focus areas identified within the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan should be supported through the use of these organizations to help implement and maintain planned investments. In some cases, existing entities such as Centro are already serving these areas or could potentially expand to support the growth of these areas. Other focus areas may benefit from the creation of new organizations to help support their growth. The City has invested significant resources and time into the support of Downtown growth through the "Decade of Downtown" efforts, SA2020, and the creation of the Center City Development Office (CCDO). The next phase of Downtown's growth may have different needs, and the continued efforts of the City through CCDO and others are



needed to support the next evolution of Downtown and to implement the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan.



## 5 Neighborhood Profiles and Priorities

### What are Neighborhood Profiles and Priorities?

San Antonio is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own unique history, qualities and character. Many neighborhoods throughout the City have developed Neighborhood Plans that reflect local values and priorities. These plans, adopted by the City, have guided local investments and improvements for many years and helped strengthen the relationship between residents and the City.

The City is currently in the process of creating Sub-Area Plans to implement the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. These Sub-Area Plans are intended to provide a more coordinated, efficient and effective structure for neighborhood planning. The Sub-Area Plans are intended to increase equity citywide, by ensuring that all of San Antonio's neighborhoods have a base level of policy guidance, as many neighborhoods within the City lack an existing Neighborhood Plan or a registered neighborhood organization. In this way, each Sub-Area Plan will integrate key elements of existing Neighborhood Plans for those neighborhoods that have a plan, while promoting citywide policy consistency and providing key recommendations and strategies for those neighborhoods currently lacking that direction.

The Neighborhood Profile and Priorities section of the Sub-Area Plans provides special attention to prior neighborhood planning efforts and recognizes the community groups and individuals who were instrumental in their creation. They summarize specific opportunities, challenges, recommendations and priorities from each participating neighborhood, in an effort to more efficiently direct public and private investment within the City to help these neighborhoods achieve their short-term goals and long-term visions.

#### ***Denver Heights Neighborhood Profile and Priorities***

[See Exhibit 2]

#### ***Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Profile and Priorities***

[See Exhibit 3]

#### ***Downtown Core Neighborhood Profile and Priorities***

[See Exhibit 4]

#### ***King William Neighborhood Profile and Priorities***

[See Exhibit 5]

#### ***Lavaca Neighborhood Profile and Priorities***

[See Exhibit 6]

#### ***Lone Star Neighborhood Profile and Priorities***

[See Exhibit 7]

#### ***Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Profile and Priorities***

[See Exhibit 8]



## 6 Implementation

### Plan Purpose

This Plan proposes a medium-term vision, recommendations, and strategies for improving and developing the Downtown Area Regional Center over the next ten years. The Plan is an implementation component of the City of San Antonio's SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. Adopted in 2016, the Comprehensive Plan is the City's long-range land use and policy plan that is intended to be a blueprint for future growth and development through the year 2040. The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan is an implementation-oriented Sub-Area plan that will further develop recommendations from the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan to guide growth and development that accommodates projected housing and employment increases, and to fulfill other Comprehensive Plan goals and policies through a community-based planning process.

The Regional Center Plan honors and integrates previously adopted neighborhood and community plans while providing an equitable path for all neighborhoods to participate in planning, to create priorities, and to advocate for implementing their priorities in the future.

### Intent of the Plan

The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan will be the essential tool to guide future development and City investment in the plan area based on the vision and goals for the Downtown Area. A diverse assemblage of stakeholders met for a series of nine planning team meetings over 15 months to make recommendations that support both the policy direction of the Comprehensive Plan as well as the community's aspirations. This work culminated with achievable recommendations and strategies that will be utilized by City Departments, partner agencies, private entities, and community partners to guide policies and investments that implement appropriate and desired development patterns as well as the creation and support of livable, complete neighborhoods.

### How to Use This Plan

The vision for the Downtown Area Regional Center can be realized through implementation of the Plan Framework, with recommendations and strategies related to the following topics: Land Use, Focus Areas, Mobility, Amenities and Infrastructure, Housing, and Economic Development. These recommendations and strategies include policy and regulatory matters, partnerships, and investments. Plan recommendations are written to provide actionable specificity while still allowing the flexibility needed to adapt to unforeseen challenges or opportunities.

### Coordination with Adopted Plans

The City of San Antonio adopted several plans in recent decades for individual neighborhoods or parts of the Downtown Regional Center. Each of these plans is described in the Downtown Plan. Some specific recommendations from these plans are directly referenced as complementary to achieving the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan vision and goals. Each of the plans was used as a foundational element for creating the Downtown Plan. The previously adopted plans include important historical information, policies reflecting the values of participants at the time of their adoption, detailed information and recommendations for specific places and issues such as for a single neighborhood, for a district in the Downtown Area, a park or plaza, and topics not addressed by the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan in the realms of social services, law enforcement, and organizational strategies for



neighborhood associations and other organizations that created the plans. These plans include but are not limited to:

- *Lone Star Community Plan*
- *Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Plan/Eastside Reinvestment Plan*
- *River North District Master Plan*
- *Downtown Neighborhood Plan*
- *Downtown Neighborhood Plan – West Neighborhood Update*
- *Guadalupe Westside Community Plan*
- *South Central Community Plan*
- *Alamodome Neighborhood Plan*
- *Arena District/Eastside Community Plan*
- *Lavaca Neighborhood Plan*
- *HemisFair Park Area Master Plan*
- *UTSA Campus Master Plan*
- *Alamo Plaza Master Plan*
- *Center City Strategic Framework Implementation Plan*
- *Zona Cultural Revitalization Plan*
- *Downtown Transportation Study*
- *VIA Villa Vision Plan*
- *Urban Lighting Master Plan*

The Downtown Area Regional Center Plan was also developed to complement and contribute to the implementation of the following regional and citywide plans:

- *San Antonio’s Housing Policy Framework*
- *SA Tomorrow Multi-modal Transportation Plan*
- *SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan*
- *SA Corridors Strategic Framework Plan*
- *VIA’s Vision 2040 Plan*
- *River South Area Management Plan*
- *SA Parks System Plan*

In implementing the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan, further consideration should be given to the recommendations of emerging and ongoing planning processes, including but not limited to:

- *VIA’s Rapid Transit Corridors planning*
- *SA Climate Ready*
- *San Antonio’s Housing Policy Framework implementation*
- *San Antonio Sidewalk Master Plan*
- *Vision Zero San Antonio Initiative*
- *ConnectSA*
- *Homeless Strategic Plan*



## Statutory Requirements

Once adopted by City Council, the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan becomes a component of the City's SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. Previously adopted neighborhood, community, and sector land use plans that are contained within or partially overlap the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan are identified as a foundational part of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan. However, where a previous plan and the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan have conflicting land use designations within the adopted boundary of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan, the Sub-Area Plan will be plan of reference. Similarly, where a previous plan and the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan have conflicting policies or priorities within the adopted boundary of the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan, the Sub-Area Plan will be City policy.

By virtue of the plan adoption process, all proposed projects must be found to be consistent with the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, and as such, the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan must be consulted when proposing a public investment or a land use project that requires deviation from current entitlements.

## Implementation – Land Use

***Land Use Recommendation #1: Create transitions in scale and intensity between Downtown and surrounding areas to encourage greater integration of these areas with Downtown.***

### *Strategy 1.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

When rezoning properties in this plan area, properties west of Salado Street and the railroad and south of Martin Street should maintain/or/retain zoning districts appropriate for the Employment/Flex Mixed-Use land use category. The zoning of properties East of IH-37, south of Virginia Boulevard and north of Carolina Street should also be consistent with the Employment/Flex Mixed-Use designation. This will create appropriate transitions to the neighboring communities while stimulating reinvestment and redevelopment that is appropriate for the area.

### *Strategy 1.2 (Regulatory and Policy)*

The Downtown Design Guide should be revisited for possible revisions to create transitions in scale and intensity along the periphery of the "D" Downtown Zoning District.

***Land Use Recommendation #2: Evaluate and revise the various tools that the City uses to guide development in the Downtown Area so that they are consistent with SA Tomorrow and the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan.***

### *Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

The Downtown Design Guide, River North Master Plan and Form-Based Zoning District, and the Standards for the Downtown Zoning District are the major regulatory instruments which guide site design and development downtown. For each of these documents, standards should be evaluated and revised for: parking requirements; parking lot landscaping, screening and lighting; building heights and setbacks; pedestrian-oriented streetscaping; building facades and fenestration; pedestrian-scaled lighting requirements; bicycle parking requirements; sidewalks; street trees; permitted first floor uses, temporary uses, and accessory uses.



#### *Strategy 2.2 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Implement the vision for the Madison Square/River North Focus Area through updates to the River North Master Plan and other applicable plans.

***Land Use Recommendation #3: Evaluate and consider revisions to the “D” Downtown Zoning District to more clearly differentiate the scale of development and the desired land use pattern within the Central Business District.***

#### *Strategy 3.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Work with Downtown stakeholders to identify potential revisions to the “D” Downtown zoning district to create a more balanced mix of land uses and building forms that provide transitions to surrounding areas and clear districts within the Central Business District.

#### *Strategy 3.2 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Work with Downtown stakeholders to identify strategies to address barriers to development of non-hospitality uses and to explore collaborative parking solutions to allow for the development of Downtown land currently used for parking.

***Land Use Recommendation #4: Update the Unified Development Code to support transit-supportive development, mixed-use corridors and centers, and a high-quality public realm, and initiate rezoning in selected mixed-use corridors and focus areas.***

#### *Strategy 4.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Where appropriate, amend zoning to allow for vertical mixed-use development near transit facilities. Key mixed-use corridors were identified for this plan area, including Flores Street, Frio Street, South Alamo Street, and Probandt Street. For each of these corridors, development and site design should be transit-supportive and pedestrian-oriented. Aggregation around transit facilities, lower parking requirements, and an engaged public space should be encouraged through zoning and other entitlements.

#### *Strategy 4.2 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Amend zoning in the Cattleman’s Square focus area, to align with designated land uses including Urban Mixed-Use, Employment/Flex Mixed-Use and City/State/Federal Government. Alternative transportation options should be incorporated into design and development in this Focus Area, including ample public spaces for pedestrians, bike parking facilities and pedestrian-scaled streetscaping where appropriate. Uses should draw from and be consistent with the VIA Centro Plaza station and UTSA Downtown Campus, while transitioning appropriately to the Westside community.

#### *Strategy 4.3 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Legacy industrial properties should be preserved and repurposed through adaptive reuse. To this end, zoning of legacy industrial properties should be amended to align with the Employment/Flex Mixed-Use or Business-Innovation Mixed-Use categories, as indicated on the future land use map. In cases where infill projects do not conform to one of the city’s base zoning districts, the use of the “IDZ” Infill Development Zone zoning category might be more appropriate.



**Land Use Recommendation #5: Discourage incremental rezoning (both up-zoning and down-zoning) in Downtown neighborhood areas.**

*Strategy 5.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Identify and initiate rezoning of residential properties in existing neighborhoods where current use and current zoning is not aligned. This will ensure neighborhood preservation and help to guide residential redevelopment in this plan area.

**Land Use Recommendation #6: Coordinate existing public and private parking resources to facilitate more effective management and utilization for existing development and stronger assurance of supply and access to parking for new development.**

*Strategy 6.1 (Partnerships, Investment; Regulatory and Policy)*

Develop a program for part or all of Downtown that inventories existing parking resources, coordinates the various ownership and management interests, facilitates creative shared parking solutions, and deploys tools for more effective and efficient use by residents, visitors and employees; explore a parking enterprise program for provision of public parking resources.

*Strategy 6.2 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Explore the feasibility and efficacy of a VIA route or other shuttle-like service to connect parking patrons from large supplies of less utilized parking (typically near the edges of Downtown) to destinations in the core of Downtown and nearby.

*Strategy 6.3 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Work with developers and the lending community to lean more heavily on coordinated, district-level parking supplies that already exist and less on the provision of new parking supplies dedicated to one particular development; consider enterprise parking and other mechanisms for the City to provide necessary assurances to lenders that a coordinated parking strategy will effectively serve new development and redevelopment projects.

## Implementation – Focus Areas

**Focus Areas Recommendation #1: Prioritize major amenity and infrastructure improvement projects that support growth in focus areas and mixed-use corridors.**

*Strategy 1.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Major transportation infrastructure projects should be designed to improve mobility and accessibility for multiple transportation modes and contribute to creating unique and high-quality public places in focus areas and mixed-use corridors.

*Strategy 1.2 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Priority should be given to funding major infrastructure and amenity projects that support the vision for Downtown's focus areas and mixed-use corridors.

*Strategy 1.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships)*

Incorporate design justice, environmental justice, and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into the design process for major infrastructure and amenity projects that support the vision for Downtown's focus areas and mixed-use corridors.



***Focus Areas Recommendation #2: Update zoning and design standards to support the unique vision for each focus area and mixed-use corridor, create high quality places, support transportation choices, and avoid impacts to sensitive areas nearby.***

*Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Create zoning districts in the Unified Development Code (UDC) that make pedestrian-, transit-, and amenity-supportive mixed-use development the default and predictable path for new development to use in mixed-use corridors and focus areas.

*Strategy 2.2 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Evaluate, and update as needed, tree planting, green stormwater management, and access management ordinances/guidelines for their impact on new development feasibility in focus areas and mixed-use corridors.

*Strategy 2.3 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Review the Future Land Use Map and existing zoning of properties within focus areas and along mixed-use corridors to identify areas in need of City-initiated zoning changes.

*Strategy 2.4 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships)*

Consistent with the Downtown Area Regional Center Plan future land use plan, zoning code and map changes in the vicinity of VIA's proposed Rapid Transit Corridors and station areas should follow guidance provided by the:

- [SA Corridors Plan](#)
- [VIA Strategic Plan for Transit Station Areas in the Greater San Antonio Region](#)
- [VIA Guide to Transit Supportive Land Use](#)

***Focus Areas Recommendation #3: Implement housing and economic development programs and incentives to support focus areas and mixed-use corridors as inclusive places of housing, employment, and recreational opportunity for a diverse population.***

*Strategy 3.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Downtown's focus areas and mixed-use corridors are appropriate places for the city to apply new affordable housing incentive and funding tools, such as the Neighborhood Improvements Bond funds, Center City Housing Incentive Program (CCHIP), City of San Antonio Fee Waiver Program, density bonuses, Low Income Housing Tax Credit support, public housing, land banking, and other recommendations from the 2018 Housing Policy Framework.

*Strategy 3.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Existing affordable and workforce housing in focus areas and mixed-use corridors should be incentivized to remain affordable and not be replaced by higher priced housing.

*Strategy 3.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

City initiated rezoning in focus areas and mixed-use corridors should be done strategically to not preclude opportunities to incent new affordable and workforce housing.



***Focus Areas Recommendation #4: Ensure transitions between new, higher-intensity development in focus areas and mixed-use corridors and established traditional neighborhoods.***

*Strategy 4.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Amend the UDC to create or update zoning districts, design standards, and design guidelines to provide guidance on transitions between higher intensity development and existing lower intensity development that includes considerations for solar access, shade, privacy, drainage, and other factors.

***Focus Areas Recommendation #5: Balance development and investment in focus areas with protection and enhancements of public spaces, including parks, plazas, waterways, and publicly accessible privately-owned gathering spaces.***

*Strategy 5.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Amend or create design guidelines to require or encourage public spaces to be incorporated in redevelopment projects.

*Strategy 5.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnership)*

Support the replacement of on-street parking with small, privately maintained public gathering spaces within public rights-of-way, such as parklets. These may include seating for nearby businesses.

*Strategy 5.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Ensure redevelopment of city-owned property provides publicly accessible public space for active or passive recreation.

***Focus Areas Recommendation #6: Ensure focus areas, mixed-use corridors and other area amenities can be safely and comfortably accessed by all modes of travel.***

*Strategy 6.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Priority should be given to complete streets and pedestrian streetscape improvements in and adjacent to focus areas and mixed-use corridors that support the vision for Downtown's focus areas and mixed-use corridors.

*Strategy 6.2 (Partnerships, Investment)*

As redevelopment occurs within focus areas and mixed-use corridors, encourage private investment in amenities that support safe and accessible multi-modal transportation for all users, so that each infill development is contributing to the vision for Downtown's focus areas and mixed-use corridors.

## **Implementation – Mobility**

[Figure 7 – Mobility Framework Map: Pedestrian Improvements]

[Figure 8 – Mobility Framework Map: Multimodal Roadway Improvements]

[Figure 9 – Mobility Framework Map: Bicycle and Trail Improvements]

[Figure 10 – Mobility Framework Map: Transit Improvements]

***Mobility Recommendation #1: Continue implementing the San Antonio Vision Zero Action Plan.***

*Strategy 1.1 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Continue evaluating and implementing proven strategies and best practices improvements, potentially including traffic calming and Complete Streets principles, which improve safety for all users and help



achieve San Antonio’s Vision Zero goals. Highest priority areas are the identified Severe Pedestrian Injury Areas (SPIAs).

Analysis of pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle crash data, along with community input, identified as priorities the following:

- Flores Street from Euclid Street to El Paso Street;
- Martin Street from Comal Street to Flores Street;
- Commerce Street from Alamo Plaza to Bowie Street;
- Commerce Street from Smith Street to Santa Rosa Street;
- St. Mary’s Street from Commerce Street to Travis Street;
- Market Street from St. Mary’s Street to Alamo Street.

Encourage coordination with Bond projects, Infrastructure Management Plan (IMP) projects, and partner agencies such as TxDOT.

*Strategy 1.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

In anticipation of adding more density to land use and due to current needs, make investments in well-designed crossings that incorporate best practices for safety and placemaking at the intersections of:

- IH-10 and Martin Street;
- IH-10 and Houston Street;
- IH-10 and Buena Vista Street;
- IH-10 and Cesar Chavez Boulevard;
- IH-10 and Presa Street;
- IH-10 and Probandt Street;
- IH-37 and Jones Avenue;
- IH-37 and Brooklyn Avenue;
- IH-37 and Nolan Street;
- IH-37 and Houston Street;
- IH-37 and Commerce Street;
- IH-37 and Cesar Chavez Boulevard;
- IH-37 and Carolina Street;
- IH-37 and Florida Street;
- Roosevelt Avenue and the Union Pacific Railroad Underpass;
- Probandt Street and Cevallos Street;
- Probandt Street and Lone Star Boulevard;
- Probandt Street and Alamo Street;
- Mission Road and Steves Avenue; and
- South Presa Street and the Union Pacific Railroad Tracks.

***Mobility Recommendation #2: Focus Downtown mobility resources to support San Antonio’s multimodal transportation network.***

*Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Conduct a Complete Streets study to find opportunities to reduce pedestrian crossing times, increase pedestrian crossing opportunities, consolidate and/or relocate driveways, and reduce operational speeds. The following street segments are ideal for study and implementation:



- St. Mary’s Street (from Cesar Chavez Boulevard to Roosevelt Avenue);
- San Pedro Avenue (from IH-35 to Main Avenue);
- Martin Street (from Colorado Street to Broadway Street);
- Houston Street (from IH-37 to Cherry Street);
- Frio Street (from Cesar Chavez Boulevard to Alamo Street);
- Cherry Street (from Dawson Street to Iowa Street);
- Probandt Street (from IH-10/ US Hwy 90 to West Theo Avenue);
- Mitchell Street (from Flores Street to Presa Street);
- Alamo Street (from Frio Street to Probandt Street);
- Flores Street (from IH-35 to Mitchell Street);
- McCullough Avenue (from IH-35 to IH-37);
- Nolan Street (from IH-37 to Cherry Street);
- Guadalupe Street (from Flores Street to Alazan Creek); and
- Cesar Chavez Boulevard (from Santa Rosa Street to Cherry Street).

*Strategy 2.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Incorporate pedestrian supporting streetscape improvements into complete streets projects and in segments of other prominent streets that serve or will serve a large number of pedestrian users including:

- Pedestrian priority zones;
- McCullough Avenue from IH-35 to St. Mary’s Street;
- McCullough Avenue and Nolan Street from Bonham Street to Cherry Street;
- San Pedro Avenue from IH-35 to Main Avenue;
- Flores Street from IH-35 to Martin Street;
- Martin Street from IH-35 to Flores Street;
- Frio Street from Martin Street to Commerce Street;
- Frio Street from Cesar Chavez Boulevard to Guadalupe Street;
- Cherry Street from Commerce Street to Iowa Street;
- Labor Street from Cesar Chavez Boulevard to Presa Street;
- Flores Street from Guadalupe Street to Cevallos Street;
- Cevallos Street from Flores Street to Probandt Street;
- Alamo Street from Flores Street to Probandt Street; and
- Steves Avenue from Probandt Street to Roosevelt Avenue.

*Strategy 2.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Continue to complete the Downtown Area bicycle and sidewalk network by implementing priority projects and adding facilities as streets are repaved or reconstructed. As shown on the Mobility Recommendations Map, priority locations to implement this strategy include:

- Navarro Street/St. Mary’s Street/Roosevelt Avenue (from IH-35 to Hansford Street);
- Alamo Street (from IH-35 to Houston Street);
- Jones Avenue (from IH-35 to IH-37);
- Nueva Street (from South Pecos La Trinidad to Cherry Street, through Hemisfair); and
- Probandt Street (from IH-10 to Theo Avenue).



Corridors identified for complete streets should also incorporate cycling infrastructure as a component of the design based on future studies by the Transportation and Capital Improvements (TCI) Department to determine feasibility and the types of facilities needed.

*Strategy 2.4 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Initiate a Bike Master Plan update to prioritize and understand the feasibility of critical bike network links.

*Strategy 2.5 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Update the Downtown Transportation Plan to align strategies with current and ongoing planning by VIA Metropolitan Transit and the Texas Department of Transportation.

***Mobility Recommendation #3: Create new connections between Downtown and the near Westside by mitigating physical and psychological barriers.***

*Strategy 3.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnership, Investment)*

Conduct a feasibility study to investigate the costs and challenges to acquire right-of-way, fund, and construct an extension of Cesar Chavez Boulevard including a railroad crossing and bridge spanning Alazan Creek.

*Strategy 3.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Conduct a Complete Streets study to find opportunities to reduce pedestrian crossing time, improve pedestrian lighting, expand bicycle networks, and reduce operational speeds on Guadalupe Street from Alazan Creek (the western extent of the plan) to Flores Street.

***Mobility Recommendation #4: Accommodate changes in curbside demand of emerging shared mobility, autonomous vehicles, micromobility, and freight delivery within City policies and street and transit station design.***

*Strategy 4.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Develop curb space management and right-of-way guidelines that accommodate new technologies, including shared mobility options and autonomous vehicles. Shared mobility and micromobility choices, such as Transportation Networking Companies and rideshare platforms, are already changing travel behavior in Downtown. Micromobility, such as scooters, also provides a popular way to complete shorter trips or overcome first/last mile challenges. As more residents and visitors utilize these options (versus defaulting to private vehicle trips), street and station area design will need to accommodate these preferences while ensuring the continued safety of pedestrians. The following actions will allow San Antonio to anticipate and facilitate these shifts in travel demand and behavior:

- Create a working group of transportation technology industry leadership to understand forthcoming technologies;
- Collect and analyze curbside utilization data, utilize smart sensing technology to understand changing demand, and connect these patterns to curbspace management and provision;
- Offer flexible curb space allocation that will change according to new transportation options; and
- Partner with autonomous vehicle and shared mobility representatives to integrate operational needs into parking, roadway, and transit station design.



*Strategy 4.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Develop freight delivery management policies that accommodate changing delivery patterns and needs. Curbside delivery designations should be considered alongside parking to allocate space for competing demands. These policies should ensure access for commercial traffic downtown, recognizing the economic importance of on-time deliveries.

***Mobility Recommendation #5: Manage transportation demand through deliberate parking management strategies and traffic management plans that prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and transit options during congestion, special events, and construction.***

*Strategy 5.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Develop parking management strategies for the Downtown Area integrating both privately- and publicly operated facilities that provide information on parking availability and help route one-time or infrequent visitors to these parking areas more efficiently. The system would include information on parking availability at key locations, as well as traffic conditions, and utilize guide signs to help visitors find their way to desired parking areas.

*Strategy 5.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Evaluate street and intersection design for transit reliability chokepoints, like common violations of bus-only lanes, at-grade railroad crossings, and vehicular traffic, and prioritize multimodal investments to ensure reliable alternatives to vehicular travel. Most of Downtown experiences levels of congestion that interfere with transit service reliability. However, identified focus areas where existing service faces travel time delay include:

- Flores Street from IH-35 to Alamo Street;
- Martin Street from IH-35 to Houston Street;
- Cesar Chavez Boulevard -from Frio Street to Presa Street; and
- IH-37 from Jones Avenue to Cesar Chavez Boulevard

Potential multimodal improvements that would require study before implementation include:

- Peak hour or bus-only lanes that give priority to buses in times of heavy traffic;
- Queue jump traffic signals to allow buses a chance to get ahead of the traffic;
- Special event priority lanes that give priority to buses during the traffic surges of planned events; and
- Bus bulbs to allow buses to pick up passengers without entering/exiting traffic.

*Strategy 5.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Encourage more support for transit choices during special events, better information on parking availability, and improved information on road closures due to special events and construction. Work with venues to create special event parking zones, especially off-site parking and shuttles, and designate pick-up zones and policies for rideshare vehicles. Working with venues and third-party providers (e.g. TNC applications or Waze) can also help disseminate information about these options through ticketing purchases or mobile applications.

Special events and construction create additional transportation management needs. Numerous Downtown events significantly increase congestion around performances, festivals, and other special events. Similarly, construction in Downtown also strains roadways, limiting usage of lanes and creating navigation challenges for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.



***Mobility Recommendation #6: Support VIA Metropolitan Transit Rapid Transit Corridor service by prioritizing transit supportive policies and infrastructure near transit stations.***

*Strategy 6.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Implement first/last mile strategies, such as sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks, bicycle facilities, etc., at VIA Metropolitan Transit Transfer Areas and Primo and Rapid Transit Corridor station areas, in order to promote access to transit by creating inviting, quality public space at stations. Investments focused in station areas should consider the implementation timeline and prioritize areas of both rapid transit and fixed-route services based on current VIA rapid transit corridor studies.

*Strategy 6.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

When VIA Rapid Transit Corridor Stations are designated, complete studies determining the application of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zoning. Future development in these station areas should be consistent with the VIA Urban Design Guidelines for Transit Station Areas, including:

- **Density** – Increased neighborhood amenities and destinations near stations and stops influence the type of transit services offered in an area. Transit frequency is directly dependent on density – the more people and jobs within an area, the more transit frequency is justified.
- **Design** – Buildings designed for the pedestrian; placed and oriented along the front of the street with parking on-street, placed behind or structured, and with direct access to first-floor building activities are vital components of transit-supportive design.
- **Mix of Uses** – Providing a mix of residential, employment, and retail uses within walking distance of a transit stop or transit station is beneficial to the community and make walking and riding transit more efficient choices for meeting daily needs.
- **Walkability** – Pleasantly designed, walkable places are attractive areas where people desire to travel on foot or by mobility device. An active street with development continuous along many blocks encourages economic activity. Investments to improve the pedestrian realm include streetscape enhancements in public spaces, such as continuous level surfaces, street furniture, lighting, landscaping, and shading devices, where applicable.

## **Implementation – Amenities and Infrastructure**

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #1: Include trees, shade, and high-quality lighting in mixed-use corridor and focus area redevelopment to create comfortable places to walk, explore, and stay.***

*Strategy 1.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Include street trees when reconstructing sidewalks, curbs, and gutters to provide additional shade within focus areas and along mixed-use corridors and other priority pedestrian routes in and around Downtown. Where possible, tree placement should be done in conjunction with Low Impact Development (LID) using elements such as curbside tree wells and planter boxes.

*Strategy 1.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships)*

Maintain and improve a healthy tree canopy throughout Downtown’s residential areas.

- Developers should be given credit towards tree maintenance and landscaping requirements for planting and successfully maintaining street trees that are large enough to shade sidewalks. This will contribute to more comfortable walking temperatures in the neighborhoods as well as Downtown’s focus areas and mixed-use corridors.



- Planting strips should be preserved or added between the streets and sidewalks and used to plant trees that can provide shade within the neighborhoods.

*Strategy 1.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships)*

Encourage public art, murals, greenscaping with vines or green walls in highly urban, Downtown environments, such as the Downtown Core Investment Area, where blank walls face a secondary street. This strategy will contribute to creating a more comfortable streetscape environment while promoting a more human scale along frontages with blank facades.

*Strategy 1.4 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Improve street lighting in the Downtown Core, and in the surrounding neighborhoods and districts.

- Street lighting is important in Downtown, especially in focus areas and mixed-use corridors for the same reasons that it is valued in neighborhood areas, primarily to make people feel safe, secure, and visible at night
- Street lighting in focus areas and mixed-use corridors can also contribute to the unique character of each area with decorative light fixtures/poles and can serve to highlight that a certain set of street segments or a mixed-use node at a particular intersection is special, with extra lighting that is intentionally designed to complement the character of the place and encourage night time use.
- As investments are made to implement the San Antonio Urban Lighting Master Plan, street lighting should be installed at selected commercial mixed-use nodes within focus areas and mixed-use corridors identified in this Plan where the mix of uses, transit service, and density will support active pedestrian uses at night.

*Strategy 1.5 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Utilize decorative lighting and other pedestrian treatments to encourage pedestrian connections across IH-10, IH-35, and IH-37 into surrounding neighborhoods.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #2: Better connect the many diverse cultural assets and amenities throughout the Downtown Area Regional Center using new and existing routes that accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, and other personal mobility devices.***

*Strategy 2.1 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Establish a Cultural Network that provides connections between many of the existing cultural assets and amenities within the Downtown Area Regional Center and adjacent neighborhoods in the Westside Community Plan and the Eastside Community Plan areas, areas in the Midtown Area Regional Center Plan like San Pedro Springs and the Broadway Cultural Corridor, and the Historic San Antonio Missions.

- Prioritize a main loop and then connect to additional cultural assets and amenities with extensions and spurs stemming from the main Cultural Network loop.

*Strategy 2.2 (Investment)*

Create better signage and wayfinding directing people between the waterway trails and pathways and the street level of Downtown.

*Strategy 2.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Ensure that the street level of buildings along the San Antonio River and San Pedro Creek are active and inviting.



***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #3: Develop stronger connections to character defining features and other areas outside the Downtown Core by addressing barriers created by major infrastructure.***

*Strategy 3.1 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Reduce the impact of the freeway loop by incorporating better lighting, art, public spaces and other means of activating what are typically dark and uninviting spaces.

- Projects should be prioritized that improve and activate underpasses with public art, improved lighting, and other amenities. Pedestrian and bicycle crossings should be safe and comfortable.
- Development adjacent to the highways should better leverage the adjacency to activate the areas.

*Strategy 3.2 (Investment)*

Improve railroad crossings, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Roadway improvements at rail crossings should provide more definition to the right-of-way and enhanced pedestrian and bicycle amenities where possible.

*Strategy 3.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Ensure that crossings of major roads are frequent and designed to optimize safety for people walking and biking in Downtown.

- Crossing locations, especially along major roads, should be prioritized for improvements to reduce crossing distances, prioritize pedestrians, integrate identity and gateway features, and improve overall comfort and safety.

*Strategy 3.4 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Consolidate and/or bury above ground utilities as new development and redevelopment occurs.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #4: Promote stronger sense of community within all areas of the Downtown Area Regional Center with new and enhanced community gathering spaces.***

*Strategy 4.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Continue to invest in existing parks and plazas to make them attractive and inviting to all potential users.

- Improvements should include addition of public restroom facilities, in addition to places to sit, shade, kiosks and other amenities, to ensure basic human needs are met and to create attractive, engaging places.

*Strategy 4.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Integrate new community gathering spaces into public improvement projects.

- Opportunities should be prioritized to add additional community gathering space to the southern half of the Downtown Area Regional Center.

*Strategy 4.3 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships)*

Encourage the incorporation of publicly accessible community gathering spaces into private development projects.



*Strategy 4.4 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships, Investment)*

Ensure that streetscapes incorporate interactive elements that allow children to play.

- Spaces that empower children to safely play, with murals or games painted on the pavement, imaginative street furniture, and shade trees, are also pleasant and inviting spaces for adults to occupy and can serve as a reminder that Downtown is a neighborhood.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #5: Activate alleys to improve pedestrian comfort and safety while also celebrating the unique urban form of Downtown with intimate paseos, patios, and plazas.***

*Strategy 5.1 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Incorporate art and lighting into alleys to make them more attractive and celebrate the unique character of different buildings and blocks within Downtown.

*Strategy 5.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships)*

Work to coordinate schedules and explore consolidation of trash removal, deliveries and other alley uses to allow for temporary or permanent alley activation with tables, chairs and other furnishings and amenities.

*Strategy 5.3 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Evaluate the network of alleys to identify one or more that should be improved to bolster pedestrian connectivity within the Downtown Core. In some downtowns, one or more alleys have been used to supplement the pedestrian network where other on-street or pathway connections are constrained or lacking. In these cases, communities have invested in hardscape and landscape improvements to make the alley or alleys even more inviting and legible as a priority pedestrian corridor.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #6: Construct drainage improvements and integrate stormwater management features to improve water quality and reduce flood risk in Downtown.***

*Strategy 6.1 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Identify opportunities for enhanced green infrastructure when streets, alleys, and other public properties are improved and/or rebuilt throughout the Downtown Area Regional Center.

*Strategy 6.2 (Partnerships, Investment)*

Encourage Low Impact Development techniques in site planning, design and landscaping of private development projects.

***Amenities and Infrastructure Recommendation #7: Offer more convenient choices to residents who want healthy food.***

*Strategy 7.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships)*

Downtown's future land use plan was created to accommodate significant population and employment growth, which in turn should support additional full-service grocery stores. Subsequent future land use decisions should support additional grocery opportunities.

*Strategy 7.2 (Regulatory and Policy, Partnerships)*

Support alternative healthy food sources, such as a local cooperative grocery, farmers markets, community gardens, and gardens at homes, businesses, schools, and places of worship.



## Implementation – Catalytic Projects

***Catalytic Projects Recommendation #1: Support the development of a residential mixed-use node along Nueva Street.***

*Strategy 1.1 (Partnerships)*

Initiate collaboration with local property owners to create a development/redevelopment plan to implement the Nueva Street Infill site.

***Catalytic Projects Recommendation #2: Support the development of a residential mixed-use neighborhood on the Alamodome Parking Lots site.***

*Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy, Investment)*

Identify the entitlements and incentives available to implement the vision for the Alamodome Parking Lots catalytic site.

***Catalytic Projects Recommendation #3: Use design justice principles in future public design processes for the catalytic sites.***

*Strategy 3.1 (Partnerships)*

Collaborate with local firms and leaders fluent in design justice principles to create appropriate design processes for public projects. Design justice rethinks design processes, centers people who are normally marginalized by design, and uses collaborative, creative practices to address the deepest challenges our communities face.

## Implementation – Housing

***Housing Recommendation #1: Continue to use under-utilized public lands to support housing growth, provide for affordable housing options, and catalyze new development in focus areas and mixed-use corridors.***

*Strategy 1.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Identify under-utilized publically owned parcels that can be used to catalyze additional redevelopment and housing development with a focus on parcels within focus areas.

*Strategy 1.2 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Maintain land ownership or long-term control or influence of public lands used for catalytic housing development and affordable housing when possible. Utilize land leases, development agreements/convents, deed-restrictions, the public facilities corporation, and duration of income restrictions to maintain and preserve long term affordability and control of public land assets.

*Strategy 1.3 (Partnerships)*

Collaborate with local housing partners to solicit development interest in publically owned sites to create needed housing products in the Downtown Area including (but not limited to) affordable housing, student housing, senior housing, transitional/homeless supportive housing, and others.

***Housing Recommendation #2: Support housing growth in the Downtown Area by creating a diversity of housing options in mixed-use areas and accommodating additional housing in neighborhoods and transition areas through context sensitive design and small scale infill.***



*Strategy 2.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Continue to use and periodically revise the Center City Housing Incentive Policy (CCHIP) to help catalyze housing development, especially high density housing in Regional Mixed-use areas and identified focus areas and mixed-use corridors.

*Strategy 2.2 (Partnerships)*

Collaborate with UTSA, Alamo Colleges Districts, and other education providers to estimate future needs for student housing and develop a strategy to create student housing options that are affordable and accessible to students in Downtown.

*Strategy 2.3 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Identify opportunities and remove barriers for existing neighborhoods to accommodate additional housing by allowing for smaller lots, accessory dwelling units and middle-density housing types (e.g. duplex, townhomes) where appropriate, particularly in areas of transition between established low-density residential neighborhoods and higher density neighborhoods.

***Housing Recommendation #3: Support San Antonio's Housing Policy Framework by developing Downtown-specific goals for providing a greater diversity of housing and increasing the availability of affordable housing units.***

*Strategy 3.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Develop a goal for the number of new housing units affordable to households earning less than 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) created in Downtown by 2030. Strive for 20% of new units, based on the CCHIP incentive tiers, until a formal goal has been established.

*Strategy 3.2 (Investments)*

Utilize and promote the use of current and future Neighborhood Improvement Bonds to create new affordable housing units that match with the needs identified in the Housing Policy Framework.

*Strategy 3.3 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Create a joint effort between the Neighborhood and Housing Services Department and the City Center Development Office to attract housing developments with affordable units and to implement the Housing Policy Framework strategies in Downtown.

***Housing Recommendation #4: Proactively address impacts of new development on existing neighborhoods and residents that are vulnerable to displacement.***

*Strategy 4.1 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Develop and proactively implement a plan to address involuntary displacement of existing residents in Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.

*Strategy 4.2 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Identify a strategy and financial tools that can help mitigate impacts of increases in property values on property taxes and other impacts of escalating property values for lower-income homeowners or owners on fixed incomes.



## Implementation – Economic Development

### ***Economic Development Recommendation #1: Invest in and leverage the growth of the UTSA Downtown Campus.***

#### *Strategy 1.1 (Partnerships)*

Work with the UTSA Downtown Campus to identify strategies to jointly address the addition of amenities and services the Campus will need to accommodate future growth including, but not limited to, student-oriented housing, retail and commercial services, mobility needs, urban place management and security, and parking.

#### *Strategy 1.2 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Identify changes to Unified Development Code (UDC) to support the Campus Master Plan and associated development. Explore the need for design guidelines to help create a unified character for development in and around the campus.

#### *Strategy 1.3 (Partnerships)*

Proactively attract to the campus area corporate research activities related to areas of research occurring at the UTSA Downtown Campus. Help form strategic partnerships with the University, public, private, and non-profit sectors to increase commercialization of research through shared data, intellectual property agreements, and addressing technology barriers in the area and region.

### ***Economic Development Recommendation #2: Make Downtown a premier location of new business creation, tech employment, and innovation.***

#### *Strategy 2.1 (Partnerships)*

Work with Downtown businesses and the San Antonio Economic Development Foundation to develop a promotional strategy for Downtown's technology businesses, support agencies, and employment opportunities to attract tech workers to San Antonio.

#### *Strategy 2.2 (Partnership, Investment)*

Create a center for research commercialization and business incubation near the UTSA Downtown Campus and Downtown Tech Corridor in coordination with regional technology and research partners and UTSA. Create accessible and affordable work spaces for new and growing businesses by providing needed laboratory, testing space, maker spaces, training program space, and co-office spaces. Locate City business support services in or near the center to reduce barriers to business formation and increase access to resources.

#### *Strategy 2.3 (Partnership, Investment)*

Invest in and implement strategies developed for Downtown that are being created as part of the Innovation Zones Smart Cities partnership program, SmartSA.

#### *Strategy 2.4 (Regulatory and Policy)*

Incentivize and invest in the creation of new office space within Downtown with a focus on increasing the amount of co-working and flexible office layouts that are supportive of small and growing businesses through the use of under-utilized public lands and assets, fee-waivers, expansion of tax abatement to facilitate new building development, master lease programs, and other economic development resources.



***Economic Development Recommendation #3: Support and grow entertainment, arts and culture activities, organizations, and businesses in Downtown.***

*Strategy 3.1 (Partnerships)*

Work with Downtown arts, culture, and historic attractions and institutions to create regular events and programs, such as doors open events, to increase awareness of Downtown attractions.

*Strategy 3.2 (Investments)*

Utilize locally commissioned art in place-making and focus area designation through installations within areas identified on the Amenities and Infrastructure Framework Plan.

*Strategy 3.3 (Partnerships, Investments)*

Attract new and support existing businesses based on arts, entertainment and culture.

***Economic Development Recommendation #4: Proactively guide the growth of tourism and visitor activities in Downtown in order to generate new opportunities for the overall expansion of Downtown economic activity.***

*Strategy 4.1 (Partnerships)*

Expand existing and attract additional hospitality education institutions, course offerings, programs and internships programs within Downtown. Explore the creation of applied educational opportunities within Downtown hotels in connection with local and national hospitality education providers.

*Strategy 4.2 (Partnerships)*

Identify opportunities to attract and increase the presence and number of repeatable tourism events in conjunction with the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, Hemisfair, and other area institutions to increase awareness of the central Downtown Area and increase repeat visitation.

***Economic Development Recommendation #5: Continue to invest time and resources into the management of Downtown growth and partner with existing and new urban place management organizations to guide and maintain public investments.***

*Strategy 5.1 (Partnerships)*

Identify a strategy and organization to serve as an urban place management organization for the UTSA Downtown Campus and Near Westside Area. Align public financing mechanisms, such as a public improvement district, to support the creation and maintenance of public spaces in the Downtown Campus area.

*Strategy 5.2 (Partnerships)*

Identify strategies and partnerships to support the urban place management and activation of public spaces within Focus Areas 3 (Alamodome and St. Paul Square) and Focus Area 5 (Lone Star Brewery, EPIcenter) as redevelopment of these areas continues.



## Appendix: Maps, Figures, and Exhibits

Maps, Figures, and Exhibits referenced throughout this document are collected in the Appendix which begins on the next page.

### List of Maps, Figures, and Exhibits

**Figure 1:** Study Area Map

**Figure 2:** Plan Location Map

**Figure 3:** Plan Framework Map

**Figure 4:** Future Land Use Map

**Figure 5:** Focus Areas Framework Map

**Figure 6:** Mobility Framework Map

**Figure 7:** Mobility Framework Map: Pedestrian Improvements

**Figure 8:** Mobility Framework Map: Multimodal Roadway Improvements

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**Figure 14:** Nueva Street Infill – Existing

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**Figure 22:** Underpass Lighting – Existing

**Figure 23:** Underpass Lighting – Concept

**Figure 24:** Cultural Network – Existing

**Figure 25:** Cultural Network – Concept

**Figure 26:** Lone Star Trail Spur – Existing

**Figure 27:** Lone Star Trail Spur – Concept

**Exhibit 1:** Downtown Area Regional Center Existing Conditions Atlas

**Exhibit 2:** Denver Heights Neighborhood Profile and Priorities

**Exhibit 3:** Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Profile and Priorities

**Exhibit 4:** Downtown Core Neighborhood Profile and Priorities

**Exhibit 5:** King William Neighborhood Profile and Priorities

**Exhibit 6:** Lavaca Neighborhood Profile and Priorities

**Exhibit 7:** Lone Star Neighborhood Profile and Priorities

**Exhibit 8:** Roosevelt Park Neighborhood Profile and Priorities







**SA** Downtown  
Regional  
Center Area  
**TOMORROW**

PLAN LOCATION

- LEGEND
- City Boundary
  - Major Highway
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Water Body

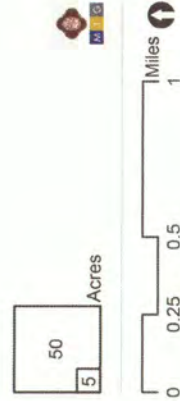


[Figure 2] - Plan Location Map  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



# PLAN FRAMEWORK

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or River
  - Body of Water
  - Focus Area
  - Active Investment Area
  - Downtown Core
  - Under-Freeway Parks and Open Space Opportunity
  - Priority Transit Route
  - Priority Trail
  - Priority Bicycle Route
  - Other Multi-Use Corridor
  - Priority Pedestrian Streetscape
  - Improved Pedestrian Crossing
  - Gateway Opportunity
  - Plaza Opportunity



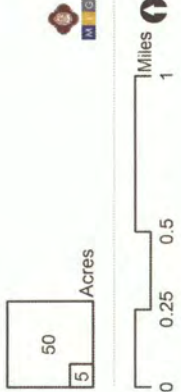
[Figure 3] - Plan Framework Map  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



**SA** Downtown Regional Center Area  
**TOMORROW** Center Area  
**FUTURE LAND USE**

- LEGEND**
- Midtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - City Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Parcel
  - Land Uses
  - Urban Low Density Residential
  - Medium Density Residential
  - High Density Residential
  - Neighborhood Mixed-Use
  - Urban Mixed-Use
  - Regional Mixed-Use
  - Employment / Flex Mixed-Use
  - Business and Innovation Mixed-Use
  - Community Commercial
  - Neighborhood Commercial
  - City / State / Federal Government
  - Parks / Open Space

A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries

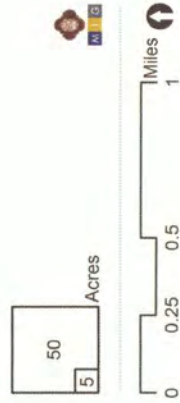


[Figure 4] - Future Land Use Map  
 SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



**SA** Downtown Regional Center Area  
**TOMORROW** Center Area  
**FOCUS AREAS**

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or River
  - Body of Water
  - Focus Area
  - Active Investment Area
  - Downtown Core
  - Under-Freeway Parks and Open Space Opportunity
  - Other Mixed-Use Corridor
  - Plaza Opportunity

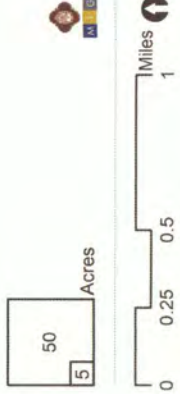


[Figure 5] - Focus Area Framework Map  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



# MOBILITY

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or River
  - Priority Transit Route
  - Body of Water
  - Priority Trail
  - Priority Bicycle Route
  - Priority Pedestrian Activation Area
  - Priority Pedestrian Streetscape
  - Improved Pedestrian Crossing
  - Gateway Opportunity
  - Priority Vision Zero Improvement Corridor
  - Access Management
  - Transit Reliability Improvements
  - VIA Centro Plaza
  - 2012 and 2017 Bond Projects in Downtown
  - Priority Multi-Modal Improvements

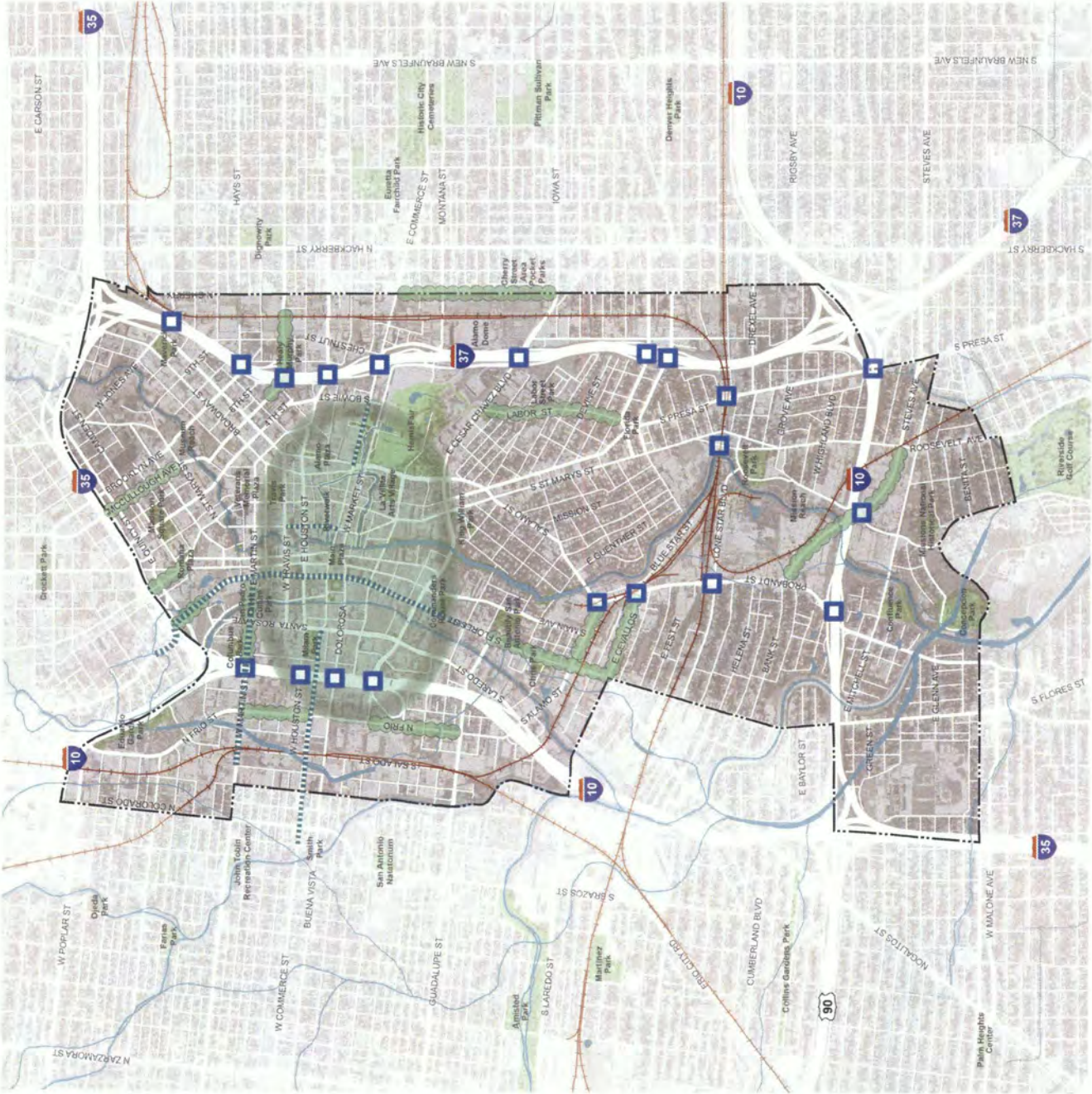
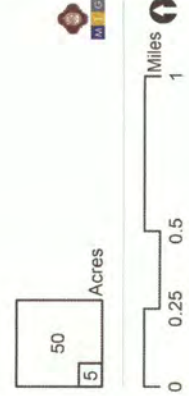


[Figure 6] - Mobility Framework Map  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



# PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or River
  - Body of Water
  - Pedestrian Priority Zone
  - Priority Pedestrian Streetscape
  - Improved Pedestrian Crossing
  - Priority Vision Zero Improvement Corridors

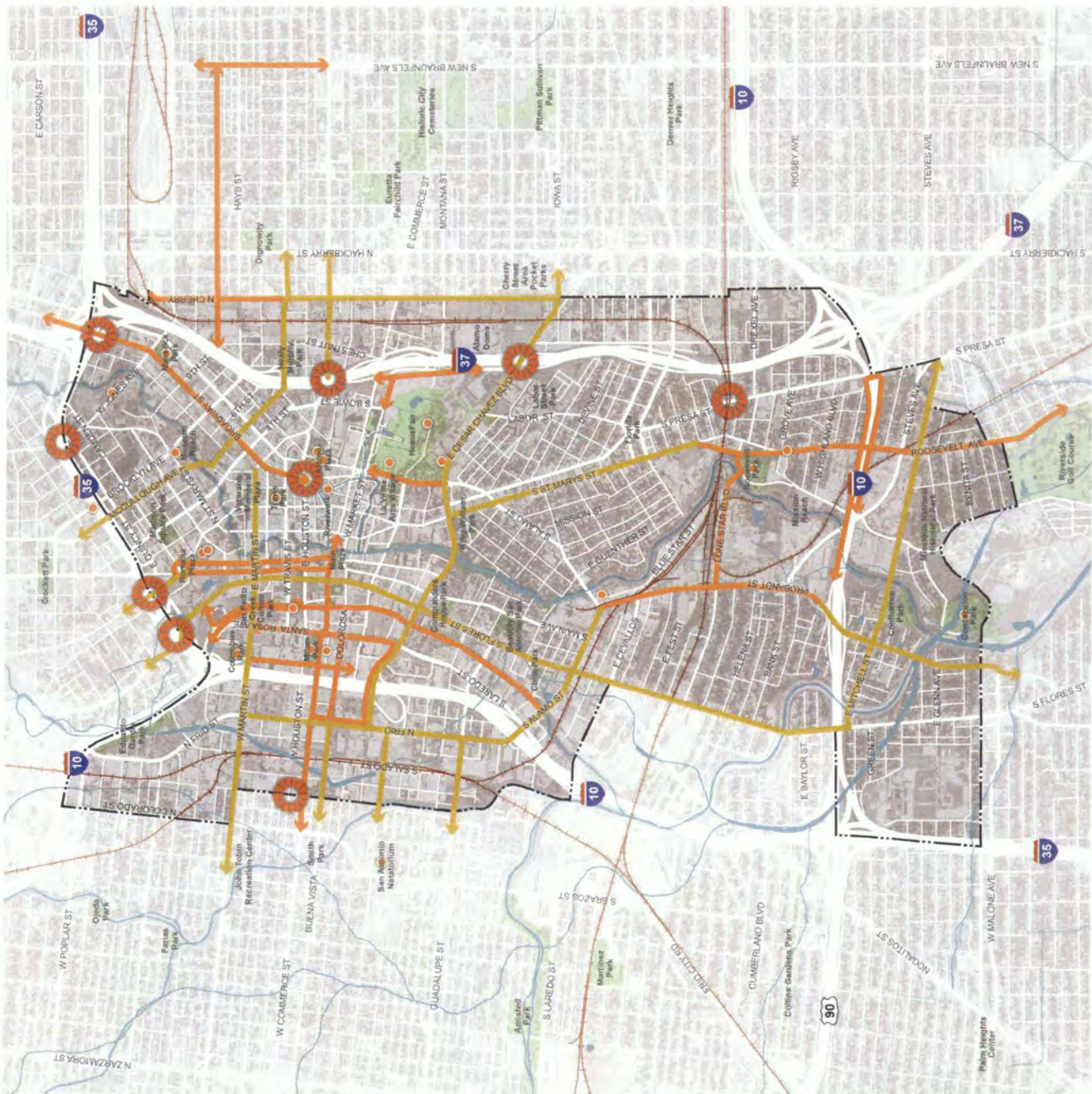
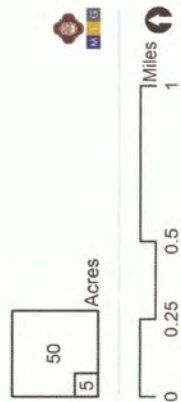


[Figure 7] - Mobility Framework Map: Pedestrian Improvements  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



**SA** Downtown Regional Center Area  
**TOMORROW** Center Area  
**MULTI-MODAL ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS**

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or River
  - Body of Water
  - Gateway Opportunity
  - 2012 and 2017 Bond Projects in Downtown
  - Priority Multi-Modal Improvements



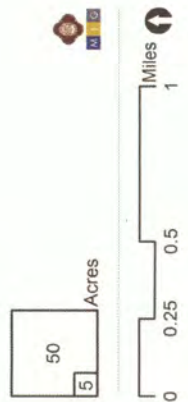
[Figure 8] - Mobility Framework Map: Multimodal Roadway Improvements  
 SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



**SA** Downtown Regional Center Area  
**TOMORROW** Center Area

# BICYCLE AND TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

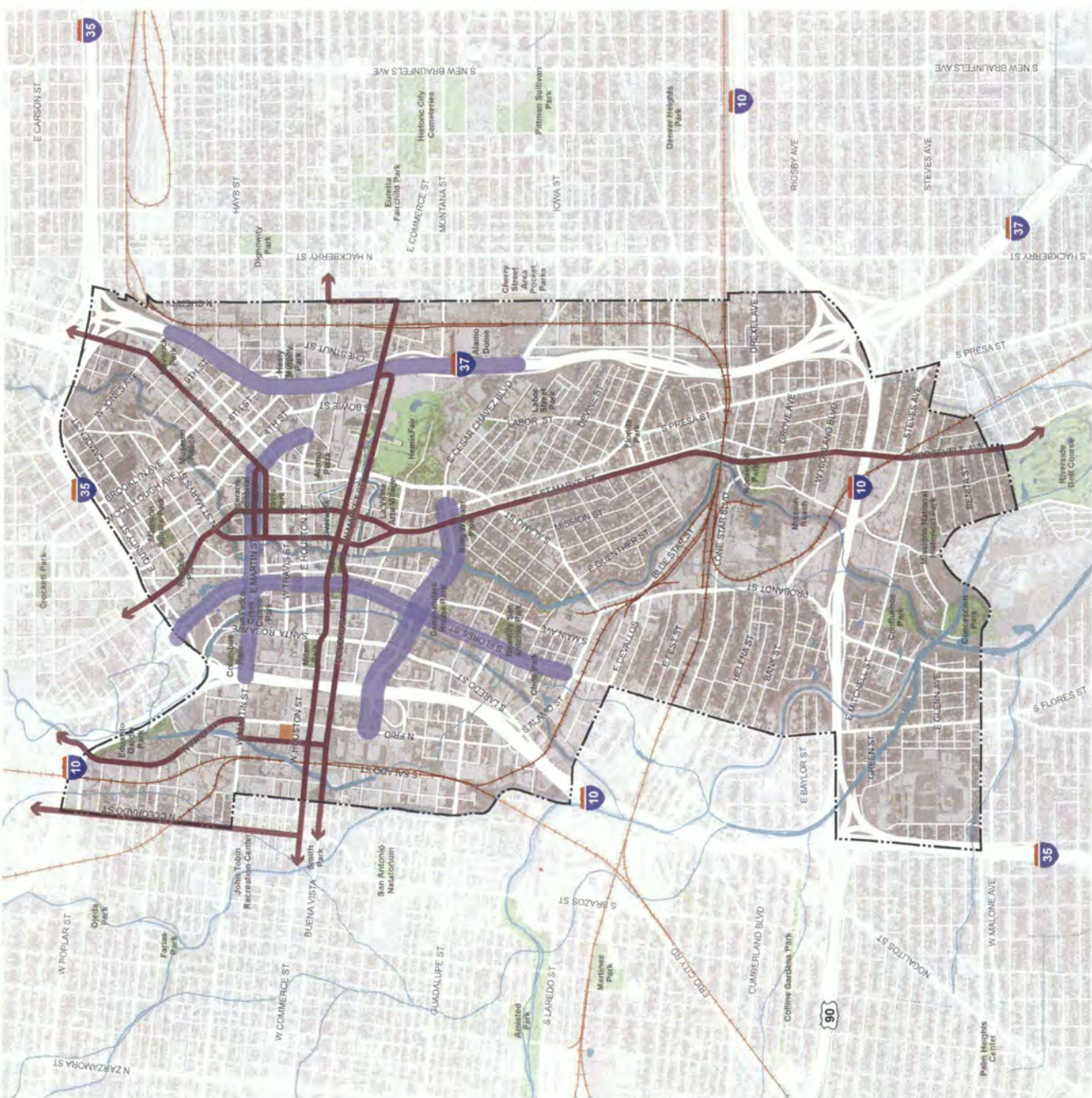
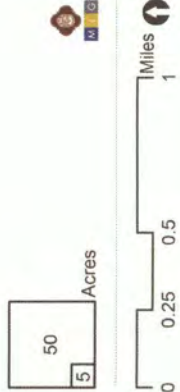
- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or River
  - Body of Water
  - Priority Trail
  - Priority Bicycle Route
  - Cultural Network & Points of Interests





# TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or River
  - Body of Water
  - Priority Transit Route
  - Transit Reliability Improvements
  - VIA Centro Plaza

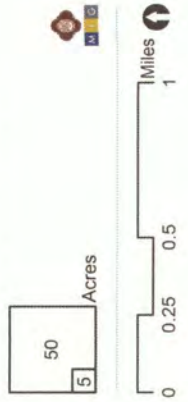


[Figure 10] - Mobility Framework Map: Transit Improvements  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



# AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or River
  - Body of Water
  - Focus Area\*
  - Priority Pedestrian Infrastructure\*\*
  - Priority Transit Route\*\*\*
  - Priority Trail
  - Cultural Network & Points of Interest
  - Enhanced Tree Canopy and Landscaping
  - Enhanced Stormwater Management
  - Low Impact Development (LID) Techniques
  - Enhanced Pedestrian Safety and Lighting
  - Public Art
  - Existing Public Art Features
  - Active Recreation Opportunity
  - Healthy Food Access
  - Community Amenities
  - Signage and Wayfinding
  - Character-Defining Features
  - Social Gathering and Community Event Space
  - Natural Feature to Celebrate
  - Keyhole Route
- \* Refer to the Focus Area Framework for more information  
 \*\* This stage combines Priority Trails, Priority Bicycle Routes and Priority Street/corridor Improvements from the Mobility Framework Map. Refer to the Mobility Framework for more details.  
 \*\*\* Refer to the Mobility Framework for more information.

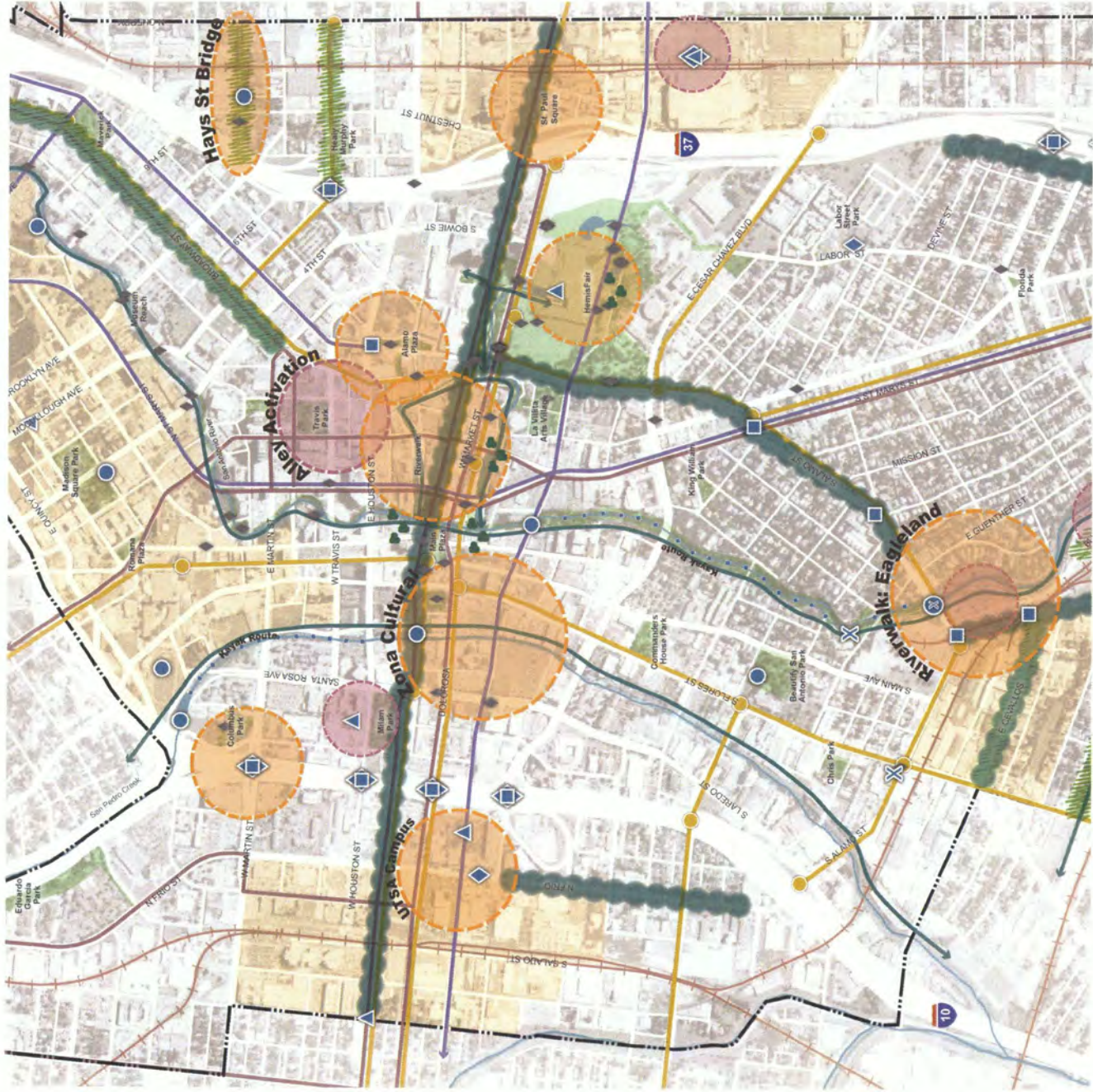
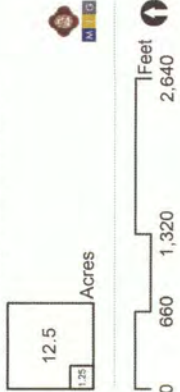


[Figure 11] - Amenities and Infrastructure Framework Map  
 SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



# AMENITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE DETAIL

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or Rivert
  - Body of Water
  - Focus Area\*
  - Priority Pedestrian Infrastructure\*\*
  - Priority Transit Route\*\*\*
  - Priority Trail
  - Cultural Network & Points of Interests
  - Enhanced Tree Canopy and Landscaping
  - Enhanced Stormwater Management
  - Low Impact Development (LID) Techniques
  - Enhanced Pedestrian Safety and Lighting
  - Public Art
  - Existing Public Art Features
  - Active Recreation Opportunity
  - Healthy Food Access
  - Community Amenities
  - Signage and Wayfinding
  - Character-Defining Features
  - Social Gathering and Community Event Space
  - Natural Features to Celebrate
  - Kayak Route
- \* Refer to the Focus Area Framework for more information.  
 \*\* This layer combines Priority Trails, Priority Bicycle Routes and Priority Streetscape Improvements from the Mobility Framework Map. Refer to the Mobility Framework for more details.  
 \*\*\* Refer to the Mobility Framework for more information.



[Figure 12] - Amenities and Infrastructure Framework Detail Map  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan

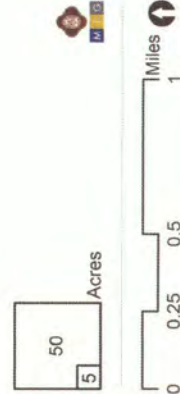


**CATALYTIC PROJECTS**

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream, Creek or River
  - Body of Water
  - Catalytic Project

**CATALYTIC PROJECT IDENTIFIERS**

- 1** Downtown
- 2** Alamo Dome



[Figure 13] - Catalytic Projects Map  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan





[Figure 14] - Nueva Street Infill - Existing

SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan





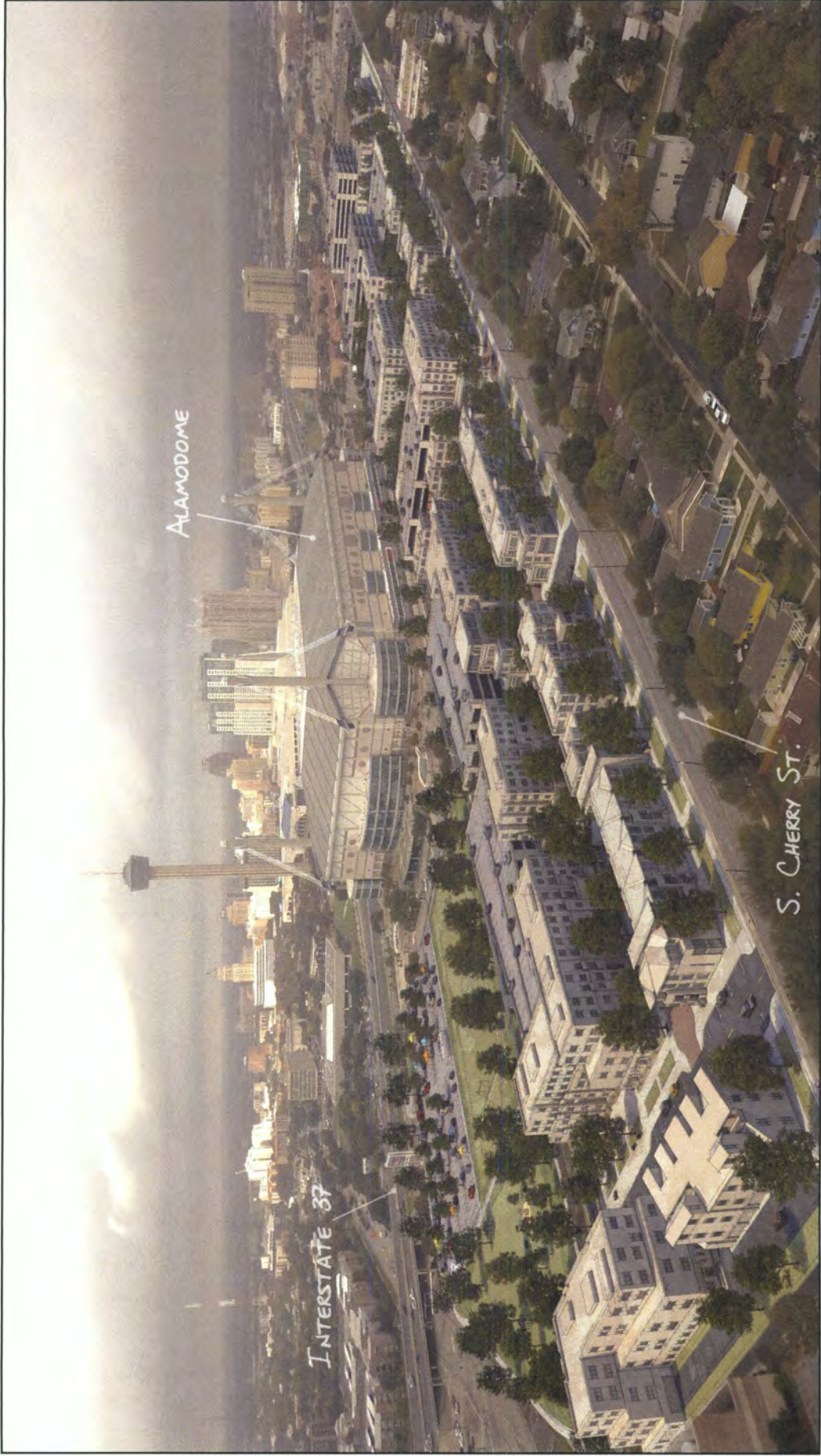
[Figure 15] - Nueva Street Infill - Concept  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan





[Figure 16 - Alamodome Parking Lots - Existing]  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan

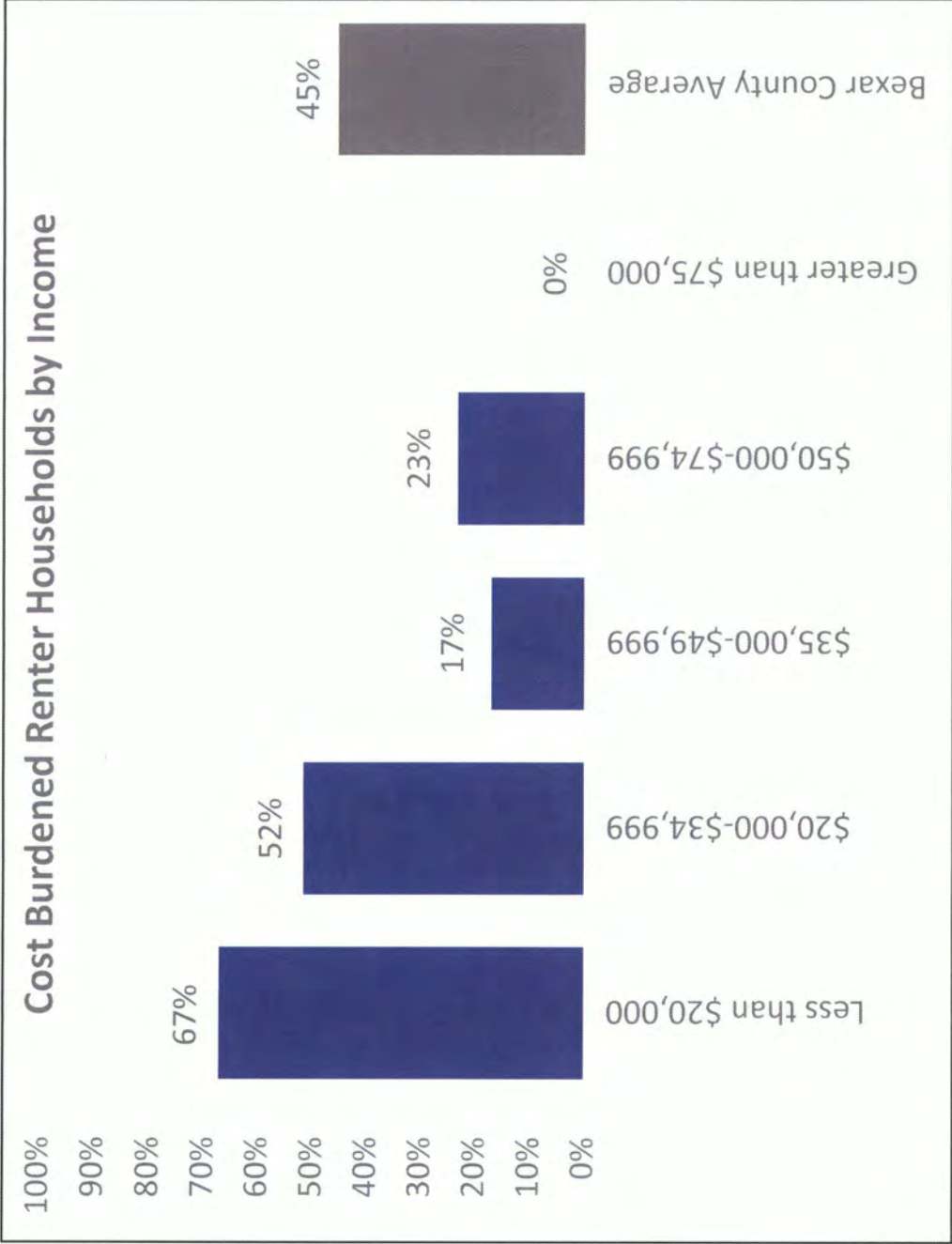




[Figure 17] - Almodome Parking Lots - Concept  
SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan



HOUSING SNAPSHOT	
Total Population	25,405
Total Households	8,957
Annual Household Growth, 2010-2016	2.3% (CO5A   1.0%)
Average Household Size	2.2 persons (CO5A   2.75)
One-Person Households	51% (CO5A   28%)
Non-Family Households	55% (CO5A   35%)
Median Household Income	\$26,800 (CO5A   \$46,500)



[Figure 19]

[Figure 18]



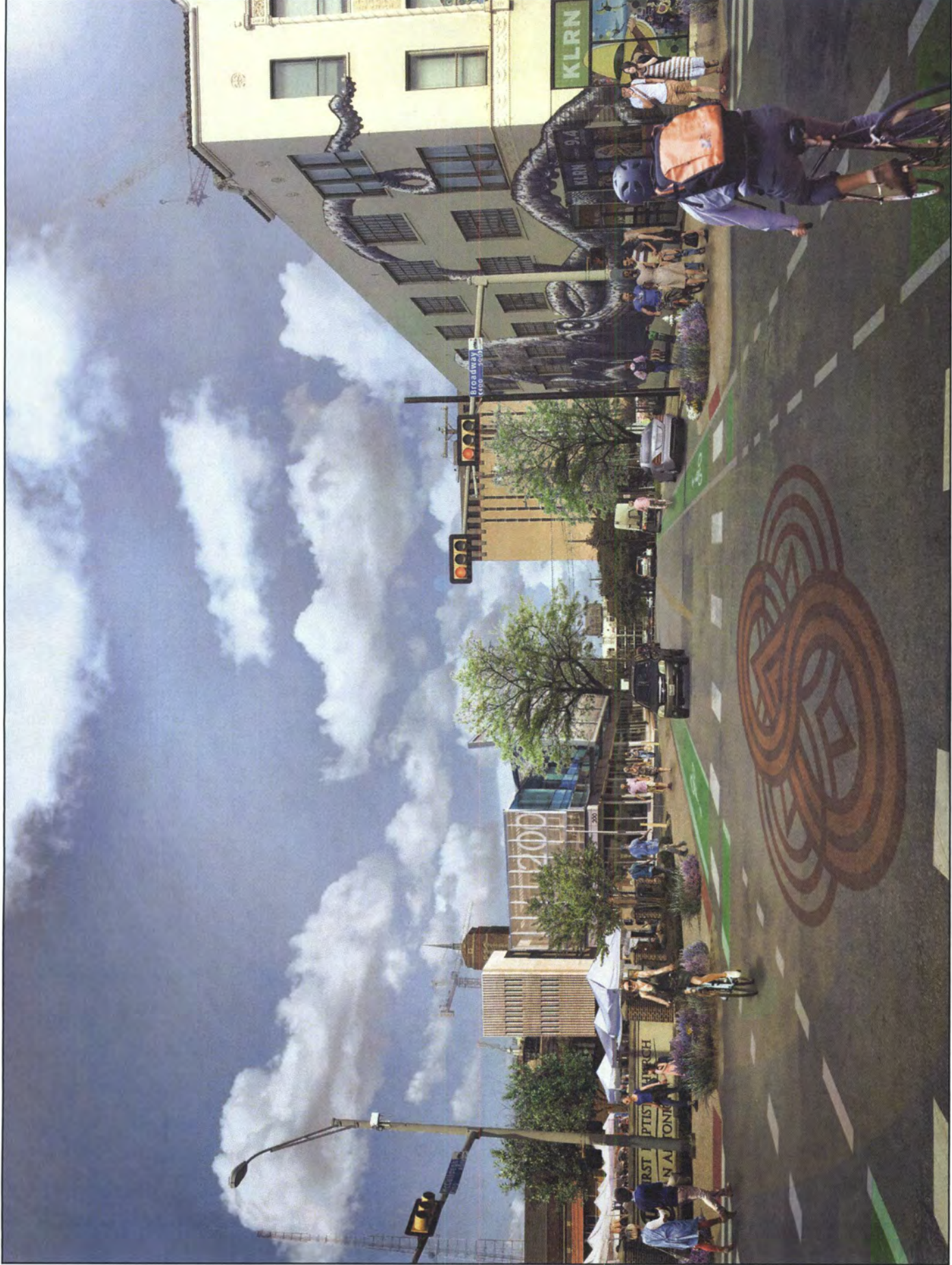


[Figure 20] - McCullough Avenue Improvements - Existing

SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan





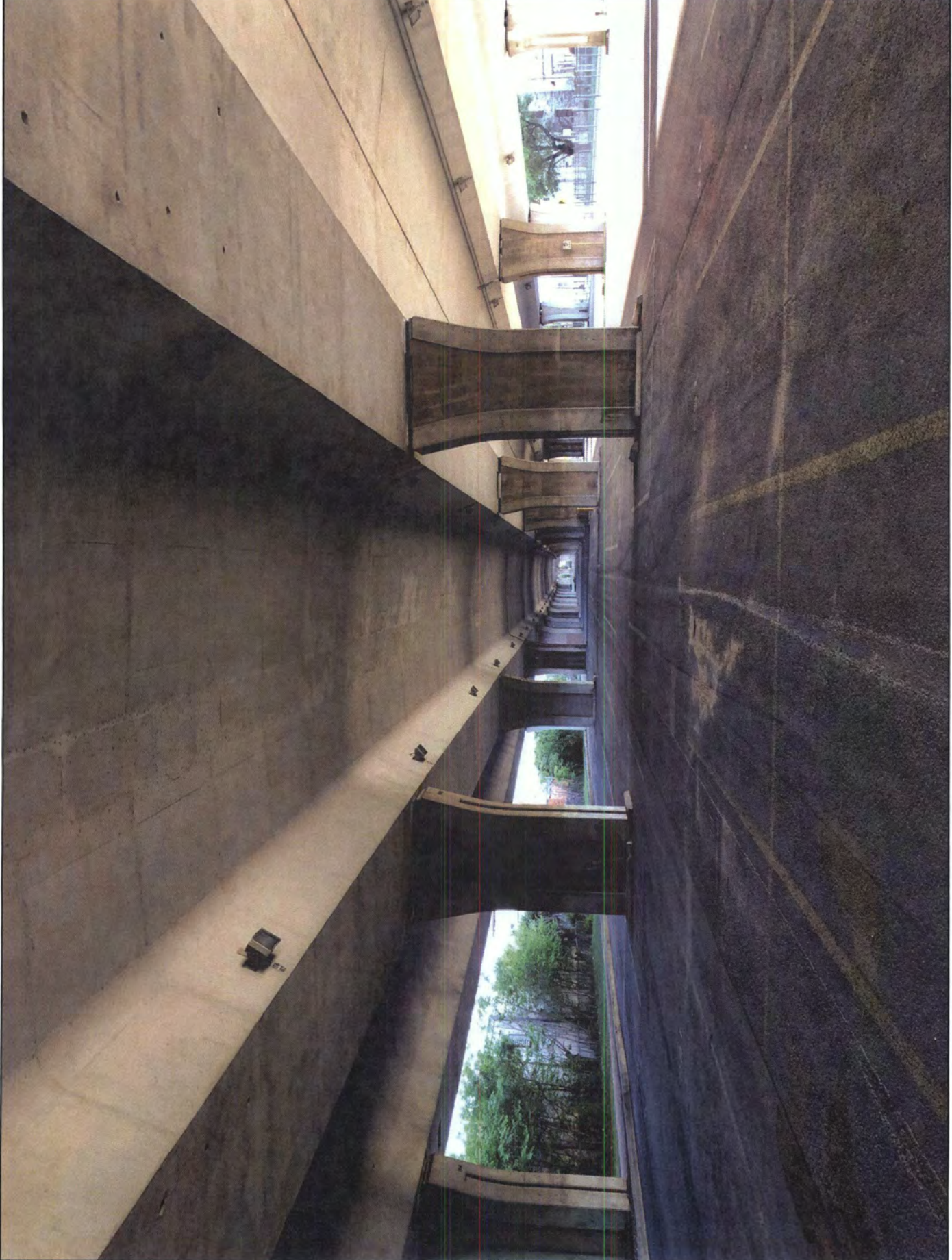


[Figure 21] - McCullough Avenue Improvements - Concept

SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan







[Figure 22] - Underpass Lighting - Existing

SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan





[Figure 23] - Underpass Lighting - Concept

SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan





[Figure 24] - Cultural Network - Existing

SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan







[Figure 25] - Cultural Network - Concept

SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan







[Figure 26] - Lone Star Trail Spur - Existing

SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan







[Figure 27] - Lone Star Trail Spur - Concept

SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning: Downtown Area Regional Center Plan





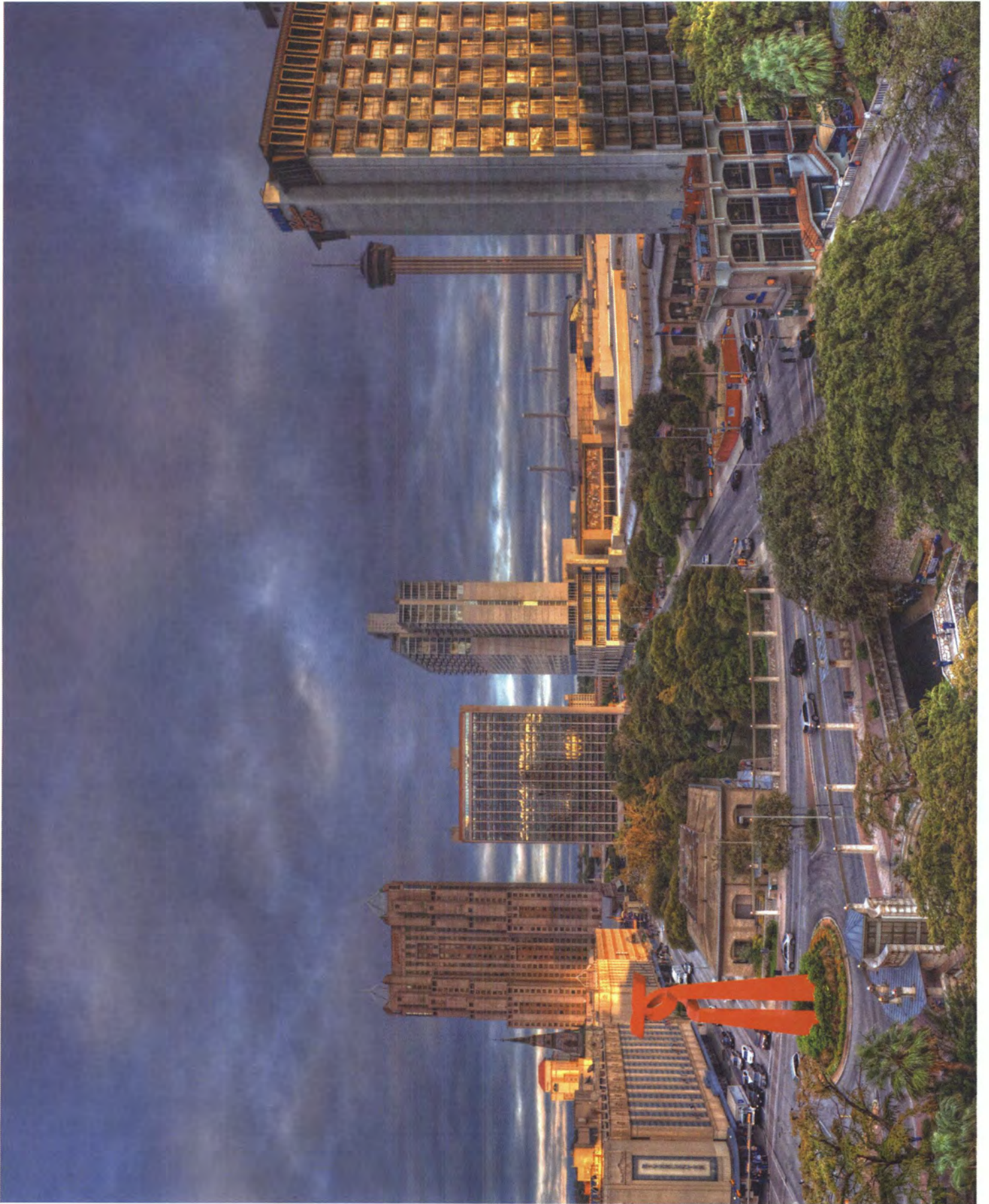


*atlas*  
**Existing Conditions**

DOWNTOWN AREA REGIONAL CENTER PLAN

Exhibit 1







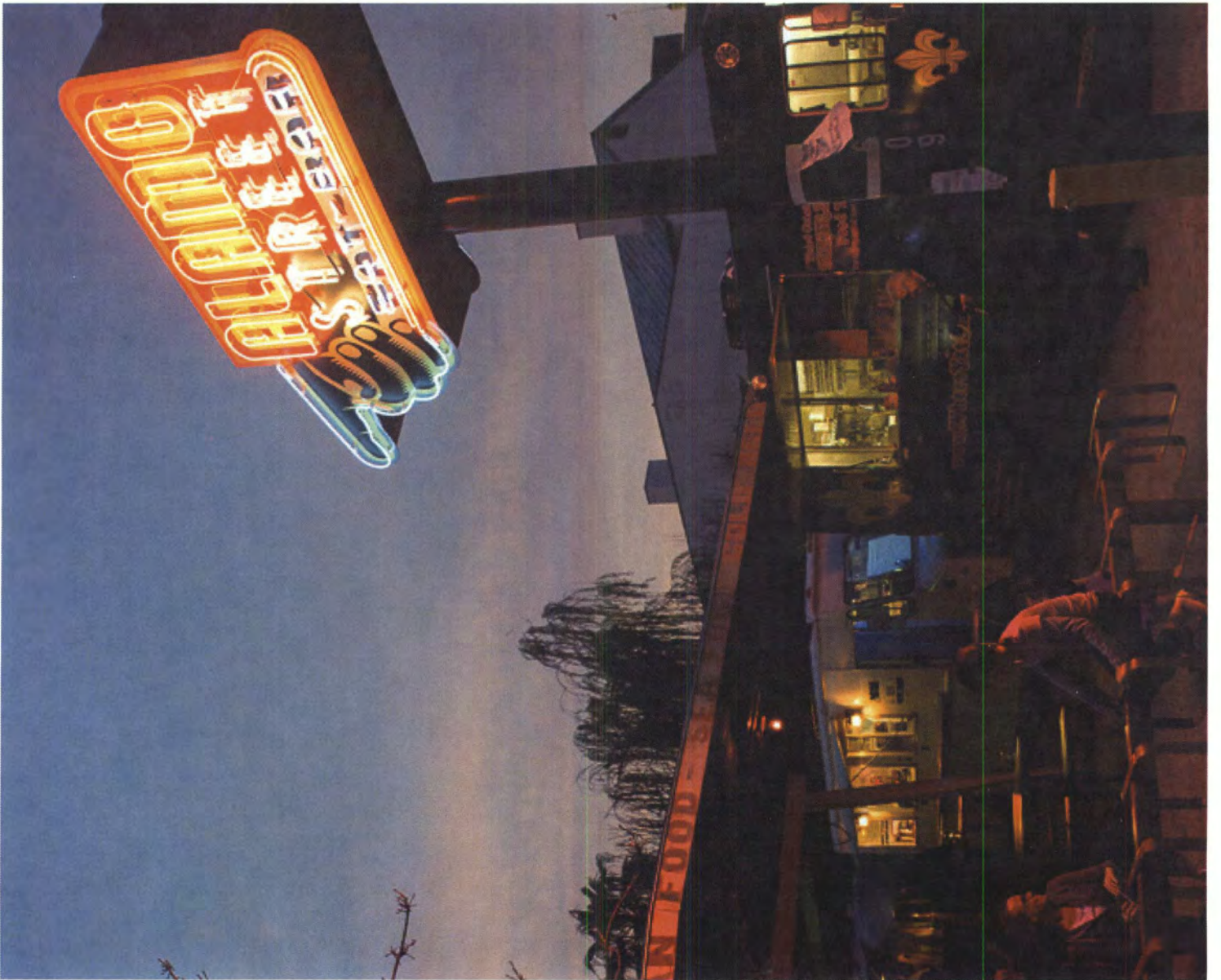
## SA Tomorrow Project Overview

By 2040, Bexar County's population is expected to increase by approximately 1 million people, 500,000 new jobs, and 500,000 new housing units. Planning for this growth and the next 25 years is a complex task and can be uncertain. However, San Antonio is planning boldly. We're tackling the tough issues and making the hard choices because "business as usual" isn't good enough. We're planning now to ensure that our great city captures the type of growth and economic development that is compatible with our community's vision of the future, and provides benefits to all our current and future residents. SA Tomorrow was established to implement the SA2020 vision, and includes three complementary plans: the updated Comprehensive Plan, the Sustainability Plan, and the Multimodal Transportation Plan. These plans all work in concert to guide the city toward smart, sustainable growth.

The SA Tomorrow plans prepare our community for the anticipated population and employment growth, and help us to understand what that growth will look like and how it will affect our daily lives. With a relatively fixed area available for future development, the anticipated population and employment growth will have an impact on our community's overall quality of life and livability. We also have to ask ourselves if it's now time to expand our boundaries or focus on development within the city's existing footprint. To be successful and truly address the long-term issues facing San Antonio, we as a community, need to tackle the difficult questions that arise from an honest assessment of our community's challenges and clearly state the hard choices we must make to achieve the community's vision for the future. Many of these hard choices are rooted in the fact that current trends have resulted in systems and development patterns that are unsustainable or that produce results counter to our community's stated vision and goals.

Reversing decades-old habits and changing entrenched systems is difficult. The three citywide SA Tomorrow Plans started the process for San Antonio. Now, we are working in more focused geographies across the city to implement the policy recommendations and growth patterns called for by SA Tomorrow. These Sub-Area plans — including Regional Centers, Community Areas, and Corridors — will address a range of issues such as land use; transportation and mobility; parks, trails, and open space; housing and economic development strategies; infrastructure; and urban design. This Atlas helps catalogue the most important existing conditions relevant to the Downtown Regional Center Plan. Along with extensive community input, best practices research, and expert technical analysis and advice, these findings will serve as an important input to plan recommendations and implementation and investment priorities.







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## City-Wide Vision and Plans

### SA2020

The SA2020 vision originated with a series of public forums in 2010 to develop goals for improving San Antonio by the year 2020. The process was a community-wide visioning effort guided by a steering committee of community leaders and representatives. In addition, thousands of San Antonians participated in the visioning process, which culminated in a detailed report, released in 2011, that outlined a bold strategic vision for San Antonio's future. The SA2020 vision provided a significant foundation for the three SA Tomorrow plans, reflecting the community's desire to support economic development and new jobs while fostering community arts, education, health and culture.



### VIA's Vision 2040

Vision 2040 was a community-driven process to update VIA Metropolitan Transit's Long Range Comprehensive Transportation Plan through the year 2040 and develop our region's vision for the future of public transportation. The Vision 2040 planning process occurred alongside SA Tomorrow and identifies a range of transit solutions to serve our region's busiest and most vibrant areas of activity, employment and housing. The plan presents various modes of transportation, and develops system alternatives to understand how transit could affect our region. By engaging the community, Vision 2040 will work to evaluate all alternatives and identify a preferred system plan that meets the transit needs of today and tomorrow.



### SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan

The SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan addresses wide-ranging and interconnected citywide issues. As a long-range vision for San Antonio, the Plan provides strategic direction for decision making and community investment. Perhaps the most important task tackled by our community when crafting this Comprehensive Plan was determining where growth should be directed and encouraged, and doing so in a way that protects vital historic, cultural, social and natural resources.

If guided properly, the expected influx of new residents and jobs will enhance our city and all our residents. Planning now allows us to direct growth in a manner consistent with the community's vision and our goals for the future. The Comprehensive Plan provides an overarching framework for the physical form of San Antonio. It outlines how regional centers, corridors and neighborhoods work in concert to create the San Antonio we envision over the coming decades. In addition, 12 prototype place types offer examples of development models that can build upon and protect existing and future community assets while also creating places that are livable, inclusive and sustainable.

Policy guidance in the Comprehensive Plan is based on nine topical Plan Elements that address topics including: city growth patterns, transportation, housing, economic competitiveness, natural resources and the environment, the military, and historic preservation and cultural heritage, among others. Each Plan Element chapter includes an overview of key issues and challenges specific to the element and provides a set of goals and policies that set the direction for how our community will respond to or address the challenges before us



### SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan

The Sustainability Plan focuses on the three pillars of sustainability (economic, environmental, and social) and is the roadmap for both the community and the municipal government to achieve the overall vision of a sustainable San Antonio as an inclusive and fair community with a thriving economy and a healthy environment. The Sustainability Plan highlights seven focus areas and five cross-cutting themes. Each focus area has its own vision, outcomes, strategies and measures of success. The cross-cutting themes identify and highlight key priorities. Additionally, these cross-cutting themes were considered and integrated into each of the major components and elements of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan and the Multimodal Transportation Plan.



### SA Tomorrow Multi-Modal Transportation Plan

The Multimodal Transportation plan is a dynamic, balanced, and forward-thinking plan for all modes of transportation, including cars, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians. It communicates the City's transportation strategy and serves as a tool to analyze transportation priorities to best meet community goals. The City worked with stakeholders, partner agencies and the larger community to develop a plan that builds upon and operationalizes SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan goals and policies, incorporates all modes of transportation and recommends a sustainable, safe and efficient transportation system that can support the new residents, housing and jobs anticipated for our community over the coming decades.



# SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning

## Comprehensive Planning Program

The Comprehensive Planning Program (CPP) is the city's coordinated approach and process for city planning. It provides the rationale and goals for the city's long-range development efforts and contains three main service components: Building Capacity, Comprehensive Planning, and Implementation. The SA Tomorrow process identified several changes to be incorporated in the CPP, including new planning approaches and geographies. The intent of the revised hierarchy is to ensure that planning at all levels in San Antonio is completed in an efficient and effective manner with meaningful participation and buy-in from neighborhoods, property owners, business owners, partner agencies, major institutions and other key stakeholders.

While the Comprehensive Plan is the overarching planning and policy document for the City, there are four other planning levels including: Regional Plans (developed in collaboration with partner agencies to guide regional and multi-jurisdictional services and/or infrastructure investments); Citywide Functional Plans (directing specialized components of city planning such as transportation, economic development, housing, natural resources and sustainability); Sub-Area Plans (providing detailed strategies for specific geographies, such as regional centers, corridors, and neighborhood groupings, aligning them with higher level plan); and Specific Plans (addressing smaller scale geographies and focused on implementation).

The Midtown Regional Center Plan that this Atlas addresses is part of the Sub-Area planning program described in more detail below.

## San Antonio Sub-Area Planning

Following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in August 2016, the Planning Department is working with communities to create Sub-Area plans for the 13 Regional Centers and 17 Community Areas that collectively cover the entire City of San Antonio.

Regional Centers are one of the major building blocks of San Antonio's city form and a focus of the overall SA Tomorrow effort. While most cities have one or two larger employment centers, we have 13. This provides challenges and opportunities. A major organizing principle of the City's Comprehensive Plan is to focus growth in these Regional Centers, building on the existing pattern of development. They are envisioned as new "places" where we live, work, and play. Each center is different and its development will be influenced by its existing uses. However, many of the centers are also well-positioned to develop as vibrant mixed-use places. They offer a variety of housing options and price ranges, allow higher-density and incorporate carefully designed and located amenities that will benefit both residents and employees of the center. San Antonio must focus its investment and infrastructure strategies on supporting and leveraging the unique identity and assets of each center.

Community Areas form the rest of San Antonio outside of the Regional Centers. These areas comprise many of our existing neighborhoods, grouped by geography and common history, challenges, and opportunities. By proactively directing a higher proportion of growth to our Regional Centers, we aim to limit the impacts of that growth on existing, stable neighborhoods. However, cities and neighborhoods are always evolving.

We must plan to adapt to and leverage change for all our existing and future residents by creating complete neighborhoods and communities that provide a full range of amenities and services, a variety of housing and transportation choices, and opportunities for employment, shopping, education, and recreation.

The Regional Center and Community Area Plans will address the following topics based, in part, on the existing conditions identified in this Atlas: Land Use; Parks and Open Space; Economic Development; Housing; Mobility and Infrastructure; Placemaking and Urban Design; and Policy and Investment Priorities.

## SA Tomorrow SA Corridors

SA Corridors is a collaborative effort to help lay out the future of our city in the most equitable, sustainable, and efficient way possible. It is one of the first steps in implementing SA Tomorrow as well as VIA's Vision 2040 plan, which both identified corridors as areas where future growth should be concentrated where appropriate. SA Corridors objectives overlap with and support the ongoing Sub-Area planning efforts. The plan develops a recommended future land use map and plan for 12 corridor areas, respecting existing small area and neighborhood plans while helping to implement SA Tomorrow. In addition, SA Corridors recommends proper regulations and incentives are in place to realize SA Tomorrow's vision for growth and economic development around VIA's transit investments, and to help bring about new and more transit-supportive types of development that meet a range of desires and incomes.



## Three Types of Regional Centers

The 13 regional centers are grouped in three categories based on analysis of their existing conditions, unique traits and potential growth capabilities. It is important to note that they are not homogenous places. Although they cover large areas, each one includes multiple place types, urban forms and land uses.



### Activity Centers

These areas have high concentrations of people and jobs in a mixed-use environment. They should be highly walkable and well connected by multiple types of transportation and transit. They should have an even mixture of jobs and housing and contain amenities that support residents, workers and employers within the centers and also throughout the city. Many are home to our educational, entertainment and cultural institutions.



### Logistics/Services Centers

These areas have superior connectivity for the movement of goods and people including air, freight/rail and roadway transportation. This positions them as launching points for the city's exports and imports. These centers have large, coordinated areas of single uses, and concentrated nodes of mixed-use, with more jobs than residents. They provide goods and service to support businesses and residents adjacent to the center.



### Special Purpose Centers

These areas have large employers, institutions and/or concentrations of similar types of employment. These centers typically require or a barrier or buffer to separate their specialized activities from surrounding areas. They mostly contain primary employers and supportive services and amenities.

Regional Centers are one of the key building blocks of our city's future. In order to leverage their potential to help absorb San Antonio's projected growth we need a clear vision and strategic plan for each. These regional center plans need to refine each center's boundaries, identify areas of change and stability, and develop a detailed land use plan that prioritizes infrastructure, policy and program improvements. While these centers should promote higher-density, mixed-use development, not all areas within a regional center are recommended for this type of growth. For example, existing historic districts and neighborhood conservation districts are not recommended for higher-density development and should receive enhanced protection to prevent this. Our historic and conservation districts are some of our city's greatest assets and our development policies should protect them. Regional center plans must be respectful of these special areas when defining development opportunities.



# Regional Center Area Profile

## CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (DOWNTOWN) REGIONAL CENTER PROFILE FROM THE SA TOMORROW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

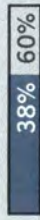
Existing & Aspirational Scores



Walkability



Residential Density of Developed Land



Housing + Transportation Index



Job Diversity Index



**Strengths:** Downtown is the most walkable and transit-friendly regional center. It has a high concentration and diversity of jobs and is surrounded by a large workforce.

**Population (2015 estimate):** 5,567

**Households (2015 estimate):** 2,920

**Single-family to Multifamily Housing Units Ratio:** 0.18

**Employment (2013 estimate):** 44,400

**Largest Industries (by employment):** Accommodations and Food Service, Healthcare and Public Administration  
**Acres:** 960

**Developed Acres:** 840



Downtown is the historic and cultural center of the city and home to the world-renowned Riverwalk. It is the center of San Antonio's traditional economy, anchored by our multi-billion-dollar tourism, education and healthcare industries. The urban core is revitalizing and experiencing a growth renaissance, supported by the "Decade of Downtown" movement. The City Center is evolving into a vibrant mixed-use area with a range of employment, services and housing, all centered around great historical and cultural destinations.

**Tasks Ahead:** Although it is close to meeting the aspirational scores, Downtown needs to continue adding housing to even the mix of employment and residents.



The Cityway development in downtown Indianapolis includes a world-class business hotel, high-end apartments, restaurants, retail shops and other community amenities.







## History of the Downtown Regional Center Area

Home of the Alamo. Heart of the Alamo City. San Antonio grew out of Presidio San Antonio de Bexar, founded in 1718, and the villa of San Fernando de Bexar, chartered by Canary Islanders in 1731. San Fernando Cathedral, Main Plaza, and Plaza de Armas were the focal points for growth of the new city. Downtown is where it all began.

The area was explored by Spanish expeditions in 1691 and 1709, at which time the region was already occupied by an indigenous community called Yanaguana in the area of San Pedro Springs, just north of what is now Downtown. First discovered by the Spanish on the feast day of Saint Anthony of Padua, they named the place and the river San Antonio in his honor. The actual founding of the city occurred in 1718 when Father Antonio Olivares established Mission San Antonio de Valero (later the Alamo) and Presidio San Antonio de Bexar. Later, in 1731, a group of Canary Islanders lead joined the community to form the nucleus of the villa of San Fernando de Bexar, the first regularly organized civil government in Texas. Mission Nuestra Señora de la Purísima Concepcion de Acuna, the second Spanish mission in the Downtown Plan Area was dedicated in 1755 and by 1778 the population of the settlement that became San Antonio exceeded 2,000 people. The missions were all secularized by 1795 and the Alamo became a military barracks.



During the Texas Revolution San Antonio was the site of several battles, including the siege of Bexar and the battle of the Alamo, making it one of the most fought-over cities in North America. In 1836 the Republic of Texas organized Bexar County and San Antonio was chartered as its seat in 1837. Seized twice in the Mexican invasions of 1842, the population of San Antonio shrank to around 800 people in 1846. However, when Texas entered the Union the city grew rapidly as it became a center of trade and service to the westward movement of the United States, growing to a population of 8,235 in 1860, making it the largest town in Texas at the time.



In 1861, shortly after the start of the Civil War, local militia forced the surrender of the federal arsenal at San Antonio even before the state seceded on March 2, 1861. San Antonio then served as a Confederate depot and saw the formation of several units, though the city was removed from the fighting. After the war the city prospered as a cattle, distribution, commerce, and military center for the border region and the Southwest. In 1877 the city saw the arrival of the Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio Railway and experienced another great population and economic boom, reaching a population of 20,550 in 1880. By 1900 five railroads had built into the city. Explosive growth

in the 1880's and early 1900's saw the population soar to 96,614, with much of the population living in or near the Downtown area.

At the beginning of the 20th century, as the city modernized, many of the Downtown streets were widened to accommodate street cars and modern traffic, destroying many historic buildings in the process. It was also in the first half of the 20th century that construction of the San Antonio River Walk began in response to disastrous flooding and subsequent calls for a flood control and beautification project that would evolve into the River Walk we know today.

In the 1950s and 60s Interstates 35, 10, and 37 were built, dividing neighborhoods and separating the Central Business District from surrounding districts. As the promise of convenient transportation increasingly incentivized development on the cities edges many original downtown neighborhoods experienced decline. The 1968 World's Fair, HemisFair'68, was held in Downtown San Antonio on the southeast edge of the Central Business District, on a site acquired mainly through eminent domain. Though the majority of the buildings on the 96 acres site were demolished, and a community displaced, 24 buildings were preserved through the efforts of the San Antonio Conservation Society and incorporated into the fair site. Reinvestment in some Downtown neighborhoods occurred slowly from the 1970s onward, though deterioration of other areas continued.

In recent decades Downtown has seen a boom of residential and employment growth, most notably beginning with former Mayor Julian Castro's declaration of a "Decade of Downtown" in 2010. Since that time over 5,500 new housing units and over 18,000 new employees have been added to the Downtown core.



# Downtown Infrastructure and Institutions

## Major Landmarks and Infrastructure

The Downtown Area Regional Center is the heart of the city and is home to many major landmarks and memorable locations, including:

- Main Plaza and San Fernando Cathedral were the central features of the 1730 Plan for San Fernando de Bexar (San Antonio)
- The Alamo (Mission San Antonio de Valero) was a Spanish mission and site of a pivotal battle of the Texas Revolution
- The River Walk is a city park and network of pathways along the banks of the San Antonio River.
- Mission Concepcion was a Spanish mission and site of the first major engagement of the Texas Revolution
- HemisFair Park & the Tower of the Americas were built for the 1968 World's Fair
- La Villita Historic Arts Village is an art community and was one of San Antonio's first neighborhoods
- The Milam Building was first entirely air conditioned office tower in the world.
- The San Antonio Central Library, a "Mexican Modernist" design by renowned architect Ricardo Legorreta
- The Nix Building was the largest and tallest hospital in the country when completed in the 1930s

## Neighborhoods and Institutions

The Downtown Plan area includes the King William, Lavaca, Roosevelt Park, Lone Star, Denver Heights, and Dignowity Hill Neighborhoods. These historic neighborhoods, amongst the oldest in San Antonio, represent a diverse and prosperous past, present and future. Each of these neighborhoods have organized neighborhood association who are active civic organizations that advocate within their neighborhoods.

Other civic and cultural include, but are not limited to:

- The Downtown Residents Association
- The HemisFair Coalition
- The Main Plaza Conservancy
- The Archdiocese of San Antonio
- Major institutions in the Downtown Area include:
- The San Antonio Museum of Art
- University of Texas at San Antonio – Downtown Campus
- The Tobin Center for the Performing Arts
- Southwest School of Art
- Artpace
- Bexar County
- City of San Antonio
- San Antonio River Authority

- The Tower Life Building, formerly Smith-Young Tower, is a 31 story skyscraper that was San Antonio's tallest building for many years

- The Alamodome is a 64,000 seat, domed, multi-purpose facility used for football, basketball, soccer, baseball, and convention center events.

- Market Square is a three block outdoor plaza and home of the largest Mexican Market in the United States



La Villita Historic Arts Village



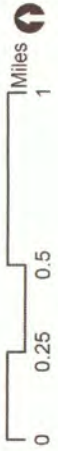
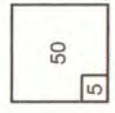
Mission Concepcion





# STUDY AREA

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream





## Demographics and Economic Profile

The Downtown Regional Center is the historic and cultural center of the City and home to the world renowned Riverwalk. Downtown is the center of San Antonio's traditional economy, anchored by the tourism, education and health care industries. The area is experiencing a renaissance of growth supported by the City's efforts to revitalize the urban core with the City's "Decade of Downtown" movement. Downtown is evolving into a vibrant mixed use area with a mixture of employment, services, and housing all centered on the great historical and cultural destinations. Traditionally the entertainment and cultural center of the community, Downtown is becoming a more sought after location for residents attracted by the live, work, play environment.

Overall, the Downtown Regional Center:

- Has a population that is older than the region overall, but also has a greater concentration of Millennials (age 25 to 34)
- Has a greater share of renter occupied households than the City overall, a higher concentration of non-family and 1-person households
- Has had a lot of new residential development recently, particularly apartments
- Has jobs that are generally higher paying than the County overall, although the population living in the area is less wealthy
- Has an economic base anchored by Public Administration, Accommodation and Food Services, and Finance and Insurance, with higher than average shares of these jobs than the County overall. 42% of Public Administration employment in the County is located Downtown, as is 20% of County employment in the Finance and Insurance sector

- Has not had much new commercial development, however vacancy rates and rent for all commercial types indicate potential demand for new development
- Is forecast to continue with strong growth, capturing 4% of County household growth and 6% of County employment growth to 2040

### Population

The population of the Downtown Regional Center is 25,400. The population in the Downtown Regional Center decreased slightly between 2000 and 2010, although the area grew by 265 households over that time. Since 2010, however, the area has grown by 1.6% per year, adding 3,250 residents between 2010 and 2016. This growth is faster than the City, which increased by 1.1% annually over this time. Households have grown at a faster rate than population since 2010, averaging 2.3% growth annually and adding 1,150 households between 2010 and 2016. The growth rate of households in the area is also faster than the City, which added households at 1.0% annually over this time. Characteristics of households in the Downtown Regional Center vary considerably from the City overall; Downtown households are smaller on average, with an average household size of 2.2 compared to the City average of 2.73. Additionally, Downtown has 55% non-family households, compared to only 35% in the City and 31% in the MSA, and 46% of households in Downtown have only 1 person, compared to 28% in the City and 25% in the MSA.

### Age:

The Downtown population is on average older than the regional population overall; the median age in the area is 36.8 years, compared to 33.7 in the City and 35.0 in the MSA. Only 20% of the Downtown population is under age 20, compared to 28% in both the City and the MSA. 28% of the

population downtown is within the "Millennial" age cohort – those born between about 1980 and 1995 – higher than the 24% in the City and 22% in the MSA. Downtown also has a slightly higher concentration of seniors than the region, with 14% of the population over age 65, compared to 12% in the City and 13% in the MSA (Figure 2).

### Race and Ethnicity:

The population in Downtown is 77% Hispanic, higher than the 65% in the City and 55% in the MSA, and 75% White, slightly higher than 71% in the City and 74% in the MSA. The area has a Diversity Index score of 64, lower than both the City and the MSA (which both have a score of 72). Measured from 0 to 100, this number represents the likelihood that two random persons in the same area belong to different racial or ethnic groups.

### Income:

Incomes of residents living in the Downtown area are lower than the region overall (Table 1). There is a higher concentration of low income households and fewer high income households in Downtown compared to the City, with 47% of area households earning less than \$25,000 per year, compared to 27% in the City, and only 10% of households earning over \$100,000 per year, compared to 18% in the City.

### Education:

The education of the population in the Downtown Regional Center varies from the region overall. The area has a higher concentration of residents without a high school diploma (32% of the population aged 25 and older, compared to 18% Citywide) and a lower concentration of residents with a college degree (24%, compared to 33% Citywide). Despite this difference in the population that lives Downtown, the education required for jobs in the area mirrors the overall distribution in the County (Figure 1).



## 2016 Personal and Household Income

	Downtown	City of San Antonio	San Antonio MSA
Median Household Income	\$26,827	\$46,460	\$54,186
Per Capita Income	\$19,200	\$23,976	\$26,902
Average Household Income	\$45,270	\$65,213	\$74,515

Source: ESRI; Economic & Planning Systems

Table 1: 2016 Personal and Household Income



## Housing

Average home values in the Downtown area are lower than the County average, however new product being built in the area has much higher costs than the region. While the average single family home value is around \$115,500 – only 71% of the County average value of \$163,000 – new infill, for-sale housing in the southern part of Downtown is listing and selling for between \$300,000 and \$500,000.

For rental housing, the average rental rates in the Downtown area are higher than the County for all types of units. Overall, the average rent Downtown is \$1,278 per month, or \$1.63 per square foot, much higher than the County average of \$921 per month (\$1.11 per square foot). For new development (built in 2010 or later), average rent Downtown is \$1,451 per month, or \$1.74 per square foot – also much higher than the County average for new product of \$1,226 per month (\$1.38 per square foot).

The composition of housing stock in Downtown is also significantly different from the region overall. Only 44% of units are single family detached homes, compared to 64% in both the City and the MSA, while 21% of units are in structures with 50 or more units, compared to only 5% in the City and 3% in the MSA (Figure 3).

There are also significant differences in housing tenure between Downtown and the region overall. Only 32% of units in Downtown are owner-occupied, and 68% are renter-occupied. This is in contrast to the City split of 53% owner and 47% renter, and the MSA split of 61% owner and 38% renter. The vacancy rate in Downtown was 13% in 2016; while this is much higher than the 8% vacancy in the City and the MSA. Downtown





## Housing Tenure

Vacant



has a fair amount of new construction that may be affecting this value, and it may also be higher due to housing used as short term rentals. The age of householders in Downtown is similar to the overall region, except Downtown has more households headed by someone aged 65 or over (28% of households) compared to the City (21%) and the MSA (22%).

The population growth seen in Downtown since 2010 is also reflected in new housing development over that time. Ten new apartment projects have been completed in the area since 2010, totaling 2,096 new units. An additional five projects are currently under construction, which will add another 1,284 units, and eight projects are proposed for Downtown that would add 1,428 units. Residential projects are also planned as part of the Hemisfair redevelopment. In addition to this apartment development, there have been a number of smaller scale infill townhome developments, concentrated on the south side of the Downtown Regional Center in the South Flores St area.

### Housing Targets:

The Downtown Regional Center is forecast to grow by 18,500 households between 2010 and 2040, which equates to nearly 620 households annually, or 4% of County growth.

## Employment

The Downtown Regional Center had 83,800 jobs in 2016. Employment in the area is anchored by tourism (accommodation and food services), as well as public administration. Nearly 20% of employment in Downtown is in Accommodation and Food Services, a larger share than the 11% in the County overall. The next largest employment sector is Public Administration; with close to 18% of area employment (this sector comprises 4% of County employment). Other large employment sectors are Health Care and Social Assistance (13% of Center employment), Finance and Insurance (close to 10% of Center employment), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (close to 10% of Center employment). Major employers in the area include:

- City of San Antonio
- Bexar County
- Downtown Hospitals
- Downtown Hotels

The wages for jobs Downtown are higher those of the County overall. 21% of jobs Downtown have annual earnings of \$15,000 or less, compared to 26% in the County. 38% of jobs have earnings of between \$15,000 and \$40,000 (compared to 37% in the County), while 40% of jobs have earnings of over \$40,000 annually, compared to 37% in the County.

Almost no employees in the Downtown Regional Center live in the area – 98% of workers commute in from other places. Most employees live relatively close by, with 49% commuting less than 10 miles to work, and another 32% commuting between 10 and 24 miles.

## Commercial and Industrial Development

### Office

The Downtown Regional Center has 9.9 million square feet of office space, and has seen a net increase of 213,000 square feet since 2005. Office vacancy rates are 13.95%, higher than the County average of 9.98%, and have remained relatively consistent since 2010. Average rent for office space in Downtown is \$18.95 per square foot, slightly lower than the County average of \$19.30, and rents have increased at an average rate of 0.9% annually since 2005. There have been 5 new office projects built in the area since 2010, including the Phipps Building and Camden Medical Center, totaling 300,700 square feet of new space. There is one office project proposed for the area, Frost Tower, which will add another 460,000 square feet of office space to the Downtown area. This is the first new office tower to be developed in Downtown since 1989, and its development is seen as a major step in the evolution of the downtown area. The Civic Park development at Hemisfair is also planned to add new office space to the surrounding area.

### Retail

The Downtown Regional Center currently has 6 million square feet of retail space; the inventory of retail space in the area has decreased by 202,000



square feet since 2005. Vacancy rates for retail in the area are 3.3%, lower than the County average of 4.18% and the lowest rate in the area since at least 2005. The average rent for retail space in Downtown is \$22.96 per square foot, and rents have increased an average of 4.1% per year since 2005. These rents are much higher than the County average for retail space of \$14.88 per square foot. Only 2 new retail projects have been completed in the area since 2010, totaling 43,360 square feet of new space. The larger of these projects, The 1010 (at 1010 South Flores), added 42,240 square feet of ground floor retail as part of an apartment development. There are no new retail projects under construction or proposed for the Downtown area; the low vacancy rate and high rent indicate that there may be demand for more retail development, which may continue to be met largely by existing retail spaces.

### Industrial

The Downtown Regional Center currently has 6.7 million square feet of industrial space; the inventory of industrial space in the area has decreased by 432,000 square feet since 2005. Vacancy rates for industrial space in Downtown are 6.38%. While this is higher than the average of 5.6% vacancy in the County, it is the lowest rate for space in Downtown since at least 2005. Rents for industrial space have more than doubled since 2005, and are currently \$6.45 per square foot, higher than the County average of \$5.25 per square foot. Only 1 new industrial development has been completed in the area since 2010, adding 18,000 square feet on the Alamo Beer Company Site. There are no industrial projects under construction or proposed for the area.

### Hotel

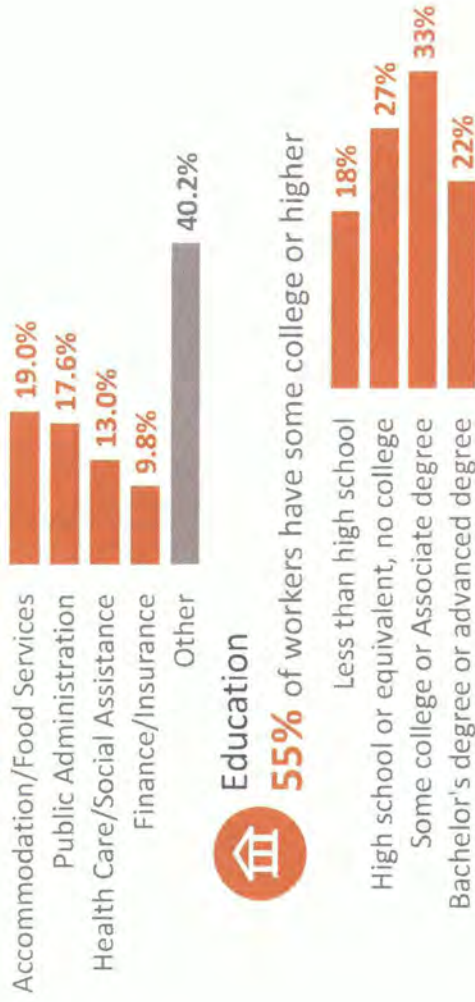
There are 78 hotel properties in the Downtown area, totaling over 9,000 rooms. 4 of these hotels have been built in the past 5 years, adding close to 600 new hotel rooms to the Downtown area. An additional 2 projects are under construction or renovation, and 6 hotel projects have been proposed for the area which if built will add over 600 more hotel rooms to the inventory.

### Employment Targets:

The Downtown Regional Center is forecast to grow by 43,600 jobs between 2010 and 2040, or 1,450 jobs annually, representing 6% of County growth.



## Largest Employment Sectors Health Care, Public Admin., Finance/Insurance, and Accommodation





## Previously Adopted Plans

### Neighborhood /Community Plans

**The Lone Star Community Plan (2013)**, includes portions of Lone Star, Roosevelt Park, King William and Collins garden Neighborhood Associations (although, Collins Gardens is not included within the Plan, presumably because it was not a registered neighborhood association at the time). Most of the Lone Star Community Plan lies within the southern boundaries of the Downtown Regional Center Plan. The Lone Star Community Plan emphasizes preservation of arts and culture in the area. The plan highlights a vision for arts, entertainment and creative living spaces through adaptive re-use of the industrial buildings in the neighborhood.

**The Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Plan/ Eastside Reinvestment Plan (2009)** is two plans in one. The neighborhood plan is intended to plan for a twenty-year timeframe whereas the reinvestment plan had a five-year horizon. Much of the Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Plan is outside of the Downtown Regional Center Plan boundaries although the area between IH-37 and Cherry Street, south of Sherman Street and north of Commerce is included in the current effort. The plan expresses a desire that industrial uses in this area transition into a high-density mixed use district with high-quality urban design.

**The River North District Master Plan (2009)**, addresses the area immediately north of the Central Business District and is entirely contained within the Downtown Regional Center Plan boundaries. The River North District Master Plan emphasizes improving underutilized land, and focuses on districts as a design construct, catalytic projects, increasing housing supply, and transportation options.



**The Guadalupe Westside Community Plan (2007)** is an official land use plan that overlaps with the downtown boundary very minimally near Apache Creek.

**The South Central Community Plan (2005)** overlaps the southern extent of the Downtown Regional Center Plan. The South Central Community Plan emphasizes a pattern of development that provides a full range of housing choices and sense of community, mixed use and higher densities along corridors, and transition of industrial uses along the San Antonio River to mixed uses.

**The Arena District/Eastside Community Plan (2003)** partially overlaps the Downtown Regional Center Plan on the east side of I-37, and within I-35 and I-10. The later adoption of Dignowity Hill Neighborhood Plan, by contrast, updates portions of the Arena District/Eastside Community plan. The Plan highlights the need for a land use pattern that is founded upon realistic market expectations, protection of neighborhoods by providing the necessary improvement s to enable infill development and redevelopment, and respect for existing natural systems.



**The Downtown Neighborhood Plan – West Neighborhood Update (2009)** partially overlaps a small area of the Downtown Regional Center Plan. The 1999 Downtown Neighborhood Plan designates the entire area as ‘Residential’. The Downtown West Neighborhood Plan establishes other land uses which may be more appropriate for this district to accomplish goals such as creating a gateway corridor along Commerce Street.





**The Lavaca Neighborhood Plan (2001)** falls entirely within the current Downtown Regional Center Plan boundaries, and is meant to address the Lavaca Neighborhood Association boundaries. The Plan emphasizes improvements to the economic health and overall quality of housing while maintaining the historic character within the Lavaca Neighborhood. The Lavaca Neighborhood Plan also touches on addressing the insufficient infrastructure and by making aesthetic improvements along neighborhood streets which cater to multi-modal transportation options.

**The Downtown Neighborhood Plan (1999)** covers the central business district and surrounding areas although its boundaries have shrunk as the previously mentioned plans have been completed. The Plan emphasizes making downtown easy to travel by foot, bike, car, and public transit. The Plan promotes the creation of urban neighborhoods, access to green spaces and shade, along with public open space. The Downtown Neighborhood Plan encourages the preservation of downtown's history and character by creating a balance between franchise and local businesses.

## Master Plans

**The HemisFair Park Area Master Plan (2012)** presents a strategic approach for the future of the physical form of HemisFair Park and its critical role as a neighborhood in the revitalization of downtown San Antonio.

**The UTSA Campus Master Plan (2009)** serves as a guide for the campus's expansion, addressing growth in academic and recreational space, and extending its civic structure to strengthen the campus identity and its relationship with downtown San Antonio.

**Alamo Plaza Master Plan (2017)** seeks to bring reverence, historical authenticity and aesthetic and pedestrian improvements to the area around the Alamo Plaza site.

## Regional Plans with Recommendations for Downtown

**The SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan (2016)** is a citywide plan that includes future road design alternatives for a segment of Houston Street in the Downtown Plan Area.

**The River South Area Management Plan (2010)** is a collaborative effort among Bexar County, the San Antonio River Authority, the City of San Antonio, and the National Park Service. Within the Downtown Regional Center Plan Area, the plan includes the area south of Lone Star Boulevard to Mission Conception.

**The VIA Vision 2040 Long range Plan (2016)** is a regional plan that identified multiple future high capacity transit corridors and station areas that includes the Downtown Plan Area.

## Misc. Other Plans

**The Center City Strategic Framework Implementation Plan (2012)** provides recommendations related to financing, planning, management, and regulation of the center city's growth through 2020 focusing on four key topics; public investment, support for housing, organization and management, and planning and regulation. Recommendations include short and long term target areas for housing development, creating a welcoming and comfortable public realm, and master planning for Center City districts, among others.

**Zona Cultural Revitalization Plan (2016)** aims to create a revitalization strategy for the Zona Cultural state designated Cultural District, between Main Plaza and Salado Street.

**The Downtown Transportation Study (2012)** was commissioned to support the vision for Downtown as envisioned in SA 2020 and the Center City Strategic Framework Plan.

**The VIA Villa Vision Plan (2016)** is guide to inform future land use and neighborhood planning efforts as well as facility and infrastructure design in and around VIA Villa. The plan includes an informed market analysis and considers opportunities associated with major infrastructure improvements.





## Natural Systems

The Downtown Plan Area's primary natural systems are the San Antonio River, San Pedro Creek, and Alazan Creek, although over the course of the city's history all three have been subject to extensive human modification.

*The San Antonio River is formed by about one hundred large springs in a beautiful valley four miles above the city. Many of these springs would singly form a river; and when they unite in San Antonio, they form a bold and rapid stream of two hundred feet in width, and about four feet deep over the shoals. — George W. Bonnell, 1840*



The headwaters of the San Antonio River are located on the grounds of the University of the Incarnate Word, flowing south from there through the Midtown Plan Area before flowing through Downtown. In the northern fringe of the plan area the San Antonio River Tunnel diverts some of the river's flow under much of the Downtown area, emerging just north of Roosevelt Park. In recent years some sections of the river have been restored to a more natural state to improve fish and wildlife habitat and to mitigate flooding, while other areas have been modified to enhance public access to the river and walking paths. Extensive impervious land cover and limited tree canopy in the watershed prevents soil and vegetation from absorbing and slowing runoff, resulting in flooding near the river and its associated channels such as the Acequia Madre.

The springs that form San Pedro Creek emerge a short distance north of Downtown in present day San Pedro Springs Park. While the San Antonio River was transformed into a gem of the urban landscape in the 1900s and early 2000s, San Pedro Creek was constrained to concrete channels and hidden in underground culverts. Begun in 2015 a collaborative effort of Bexar County, the San Antonio River Authority, and the City of San Antonio known as the San Pedro Creek Improvements Project seeks to restore the creek's aquatic environment and establish it as a linear park. The creek is largely diverted to a flood bypass tunnel just after it enters the Downtown Plan area, emerging just north of Guadalupe-Ybarra Street. As it flows south San Pedro Creek is joined by Alazan Creek before eventually flowing into the San Antonio River near Mission Concepcion.



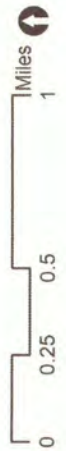
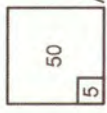
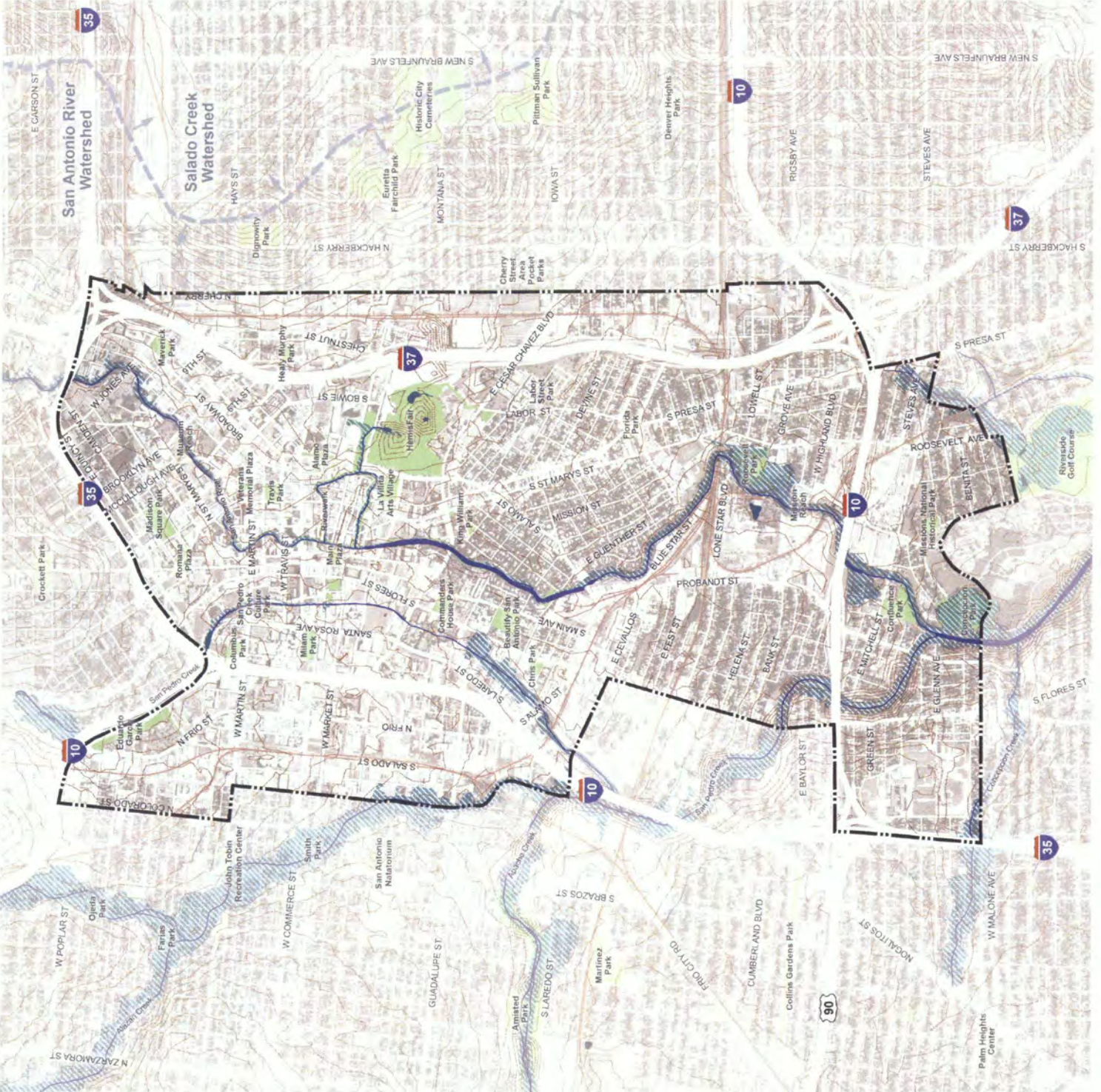




**SA Tomorrow**  
Downtown Regional Center Area

# NATURAL SYSTEMS

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Rail Line
  - Park or Open Space
  - Watershed Boundary
  - 5-foot Contour Lines
  - FEMA 100-year Floodplain
  - Riverline
  - Freshwater Wetland
  - Lake/Freshwater Pond







## Existing Districts

The Downtown Plan Area includes not only the traditional Central Business District but unique urban neighborhoods as well. The Existing Districts map shows the boundaries of the neighborhood and resident associations in the plan area, as well as the Centro Public Improvement District and several historic districts. The map also displays the two cultural arts districts in the plan area: Zona Cultural and King William. Seven neighborhood and resident associations are registered within the Downtown Regional Center Plan boundary: Denver Heights, Dignowity Hill, Downtown Residents Association, King William, Lavaca, Lone Star, and Roosevelt Park.

Perhaps the most prominent features of the Downtown area are the 15 local historic districts. These include the Old Lone Star Brewery, Ursuline, Auditorium Circle, Cattleman Square, Main and Military Plaza, Healy-Murphy, St. Paul Square, Alamo Plaza, La Villita, Hemisfair, Arsenal, King William, Lavaca, Nathan, and Mission Historic Districts. Each historic district is unique in its history and character, ranging from past industrial brewing, military grounds, and civic spaces to residential neighborhoods and academic institutions. Additionally, the San Antonio Downtown and River Walk National Register Historic District was listed in February 2018.

Some districts cannot be represented spatially as they are constructs of individual or community perception and are somewhat subjective. These include areas like SoFlo (short for South Flores), Southtown (collectively the King William, Lavaca, Collins Garden, Lone Star, and Roosevelt Park neighborhoods), Lower Broadway, and the Civic District to name a few. Recognition of places such as these is important not just in the sense of identity but in understanding how people interact with and relate to them.



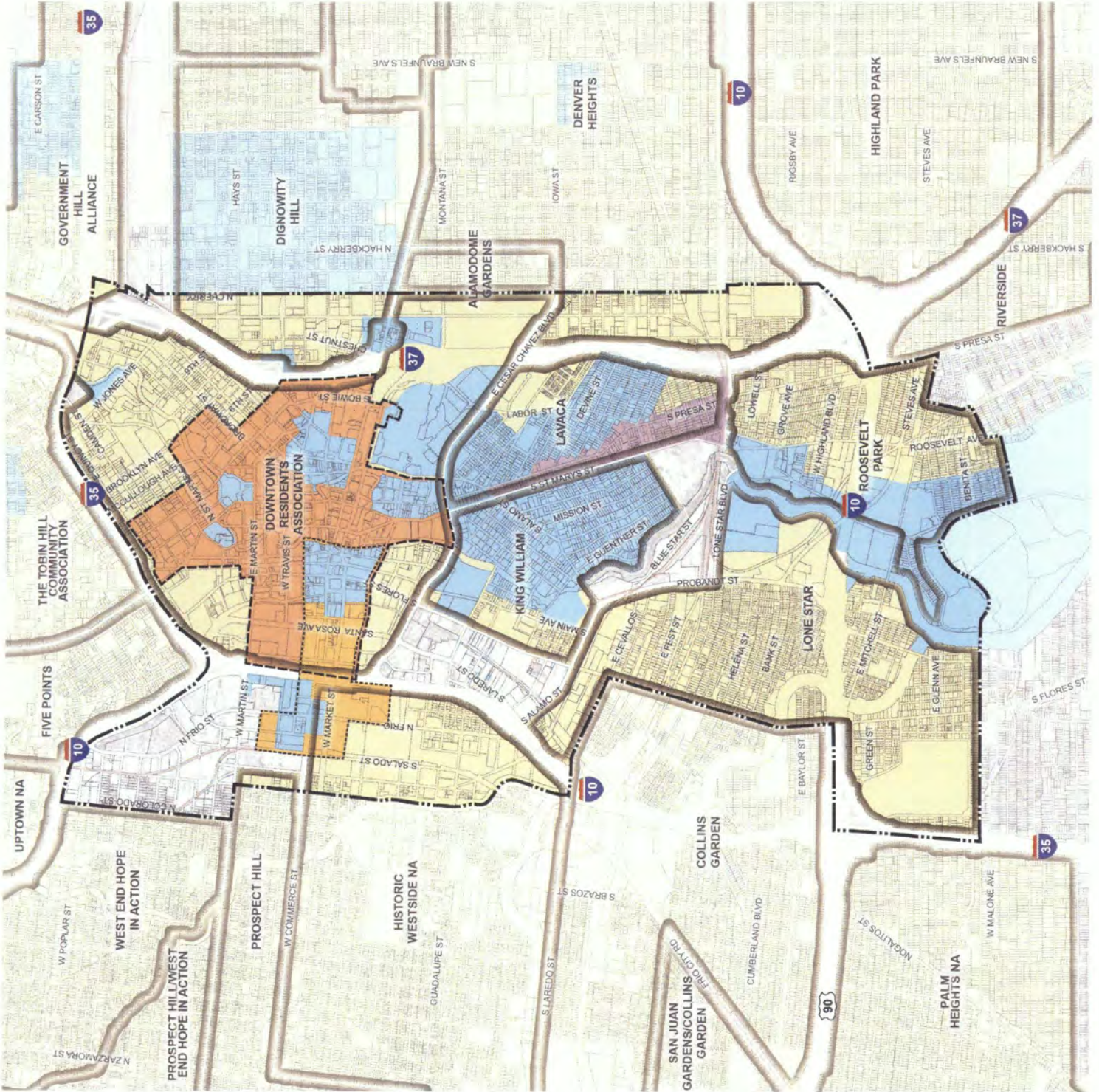
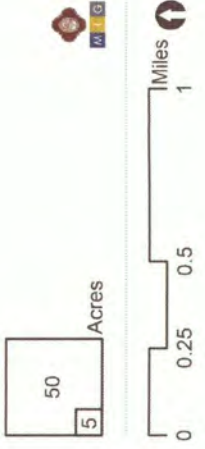




**SA** Downtown  
Regional  
**TOMORROW** Center Area

# DISTRICTS

- LEGEND**
- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Parcels
  - Neighborhood Association
  - Historic District
  - Neighborhood Conservation District
  - Centro PID
  - Zona Cultural







## Land Use

The Downtown Regional Center is characterized by a mixture of commercial, institutional, and residential areas that formed throughout the history of the City.

### Historic Single-Family Residential

Single-family residences account for approximately 24% of the overall land use in the plan area, mostly concentrated south of Cesar Chavez Boulevard. Many of the residential neighborhoods in this area are designated local historic districts and were some of the earliest neighborhoods in San Antonio. Historic District and Neighborhood Conservation District zoning overlays have been successfully employed in this area to encourage both preservation and reinvestment.

### Commercial

Commercial property makes up approximately 19% of the land area within the Downtown Regional Center Plan. The majority of the commercial property in the area is located north of Cesar Chavez Boulevard and along arterial roadways such as St. Mary's Street, South Presa Street, and South Flores Street. Due to limitations in classifying parcel level land use data much of the "commercial" land use within the core of Downtown is likely to be some mix of commercial and residential land use or hospitality uses.

### Industrial

Industrial uses include manufacturing, assembly, distribution, and storage facilities. Within the plan area 11% of the land is used for industrial purposes, primarily around the periphery of the study area along the freeways and near the railways.

### Institutional

Institutional land uses account for 33% of all the land within the plan area. These include schools, churches, social services, cultural institutions, healthcare services and hospitals, as well as government offices. Downtown San Antonio is home to public agencies such as the San Antonio River Authority, San Antonio Housing Authority, and VIA Metropolitan Transit as well as offices of the City and County Governments. Because land owned by the City of San Antonio is considered institutional public park and recreational areas are included in this category. Consequently Hemisfair Park, Madison Square Park, Maverick Park, the San Antonio Riverwalk, and other open space areas are included within this category.

### Multi-family Residential

Multi-family residential properties are those that have multiple units (more than 4) that are either owned or rented by different households. This includes apartments and condominiums. Multi-family residential makes up the smallest percentage of overall land use in this area at 6%.

### Vacant Land

For the purposes of this analysis vacant land is land where there is no vertical improvement or that has no assigned use. While some of this land is made up of utility or drainage easements and is undevelopable, some of it is developable and will be able to accommodate future growth in this regional center. Vacant land accounts for 7% of the land within the Downtown Plan area.











## Transportation and Mobility

San Antonio's existing bus network prioritizes access to downtown; most frequent and express routes begin and end in this area. To the west, Centro Plaza acts as a transit anchor for Downtown; Ellis Alley and Sunset Station provide multimodal connectivity on the east side of town. While there is no formal transit station located "in the Riverbend"—the prominent horseshoe bend surrounding the intersection of the St. Mary's/Navarro and Commerce/Market Street pairs—the large number of transit routes passing through this area make it a de facto transit center.

San Antonio's historic Riverwalk provides dedicated pedestrian facilities to the north and south. A robust street grid, with numerous public plazas, makes walking a key travel mode in this area. Despite the relatively bike-friendly street grid, dedicated bicycle facilities are limited downtown. A network of B-cycle bike share stations connects many destinations along the San Antonio River, the Market Square area, and St. Paul Square. San Antonio's robust freeway system is centered around Downtown, with elevated freeways surrounding the city's historic core. Interstates I-10, I-35, and I-37 along with US Highway 90 and Highway 281 provide access in every cardinal direction, but provide major barriers to other modes passing through the area. The Rio Taxi service carries passengers between a number of stops on the San Antonio River between the Pearl Brewery and the Riverbend area, as well as the Henry B. Gonzalez convention center; however, its utility as a regular means of transportation is somewhat limited.

### Moving to Multi-Modal Mobility

Due to its cultural, economic, and historic importance to the City of San Antonio, Downtown has been the focus of many planning efforts. Careful coordination between modes of transport will ensure that the area's "complete streets" will

serve San Antonians—and visitors—for centuries to come.

- Investments in Rapid Transit will provide strong connections between Downtown San Antonio and other activity centers. Dedicated lanes for BRT or Light Rail service will ensure that travel through downtown is not slowed by congestion. Most (but not all) Rapid Transit Corridors will provide direct access to downtown. While transit service is currently focused on Fredericksburg/Frio, Commerce/Houston, St. Mary's/Navarro, and Broadway, rapid transit investments could shift focus to new corridors, such as Santa Rosa, Flores, Probandt, or the full length of Martin/Pecan.
- Expansion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities downtown to connect and augment existing networks will help reinforce multimodal access to downtown. The San Antonio Bicycle Master Plan prioritizes network connectivity along Houston and Jefferson Streets, with a distributed network of protected bicycle lanes filling in the gaps. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities serve as both circulation modes for short trips and "first mile/last mile" modes for transit, shared mobility, and intercity travel.
- HOV lanes are likely to be implemented along I-35, I-10, and US 281. Extending these facilities Downtown, with its denser construction and higher concentration of historic facilities, will be difficult. While this dense development and high level of transit service make fixed-route, high-capacity transit service a primary feature of any downtown transportation plan, shared-mobility services such as car share and ride-hailing will play an important role as well.





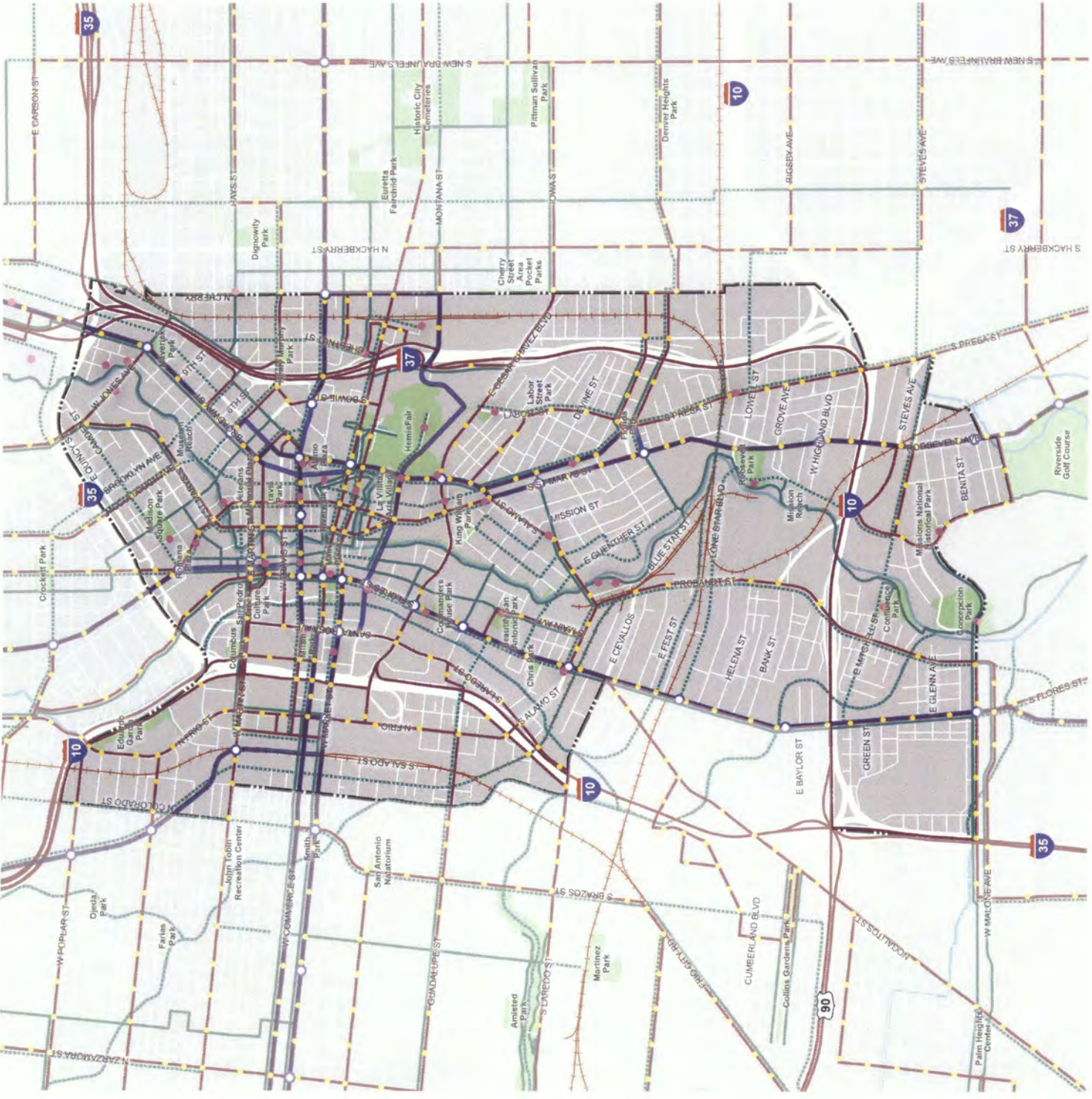
**SA** Downtown Regional Center Area  
**TOMORROW** Center Area

# TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

## LEGEND

- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
- Block
- Rail Line
- Park or Open Space
- Stream
- VIA Bus Route
- VIA Bus Stop
- Proposed LRCTP Route
- Proposed LRCTP Stop
- Existing Bicycle Trail, Lane or Route
- Proposed Bicycle Trail, Lane or Route\*
- B-Cycle Location

\* Acquired from the 2011 Bicycle Master Plan





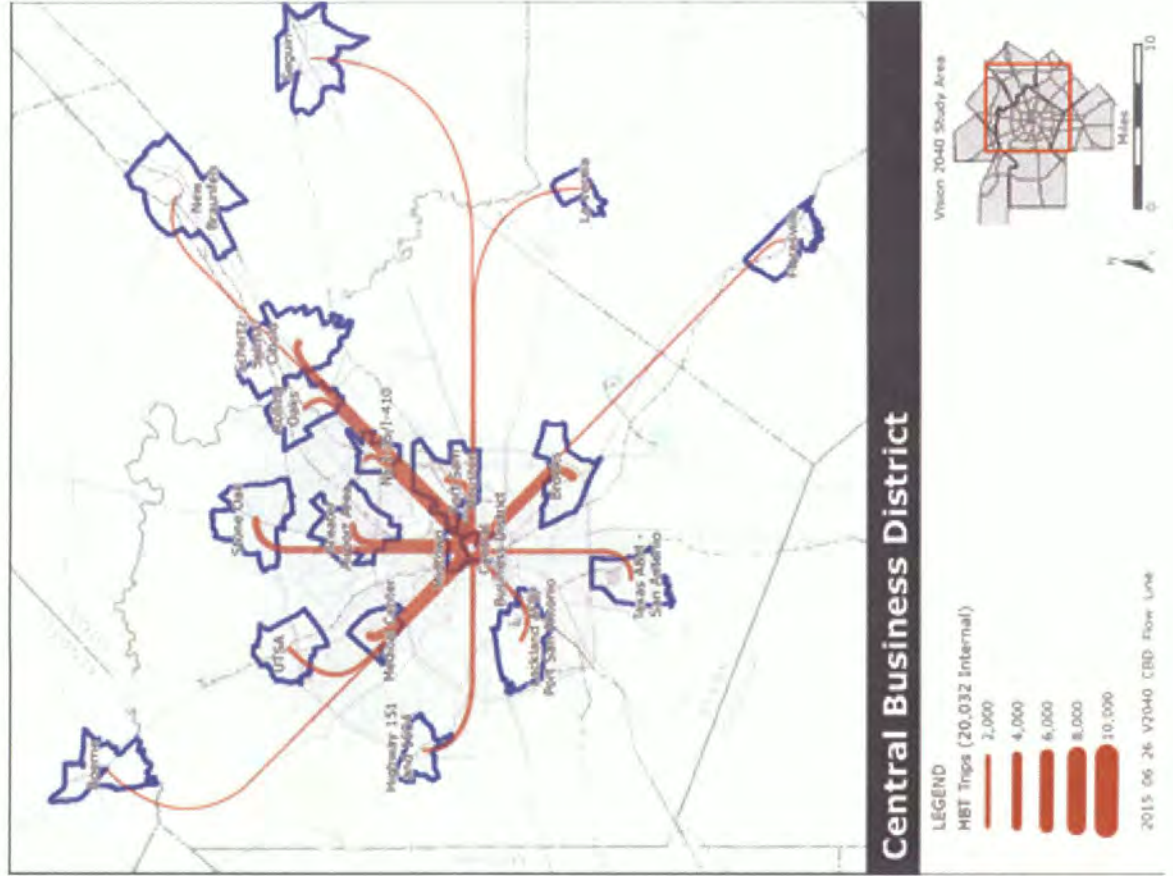
Transportation planning for the Downtown Regional Center will focus on how to effectively move residents, employees, and tourists from their origins to destinations without expanding roadway capacity, as there is limited available right of way that must be shared by pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, freight and automobiles. With the expected increase in population and jobs in the Greater San Antonio Region, managing traffic congestion will need to occur through effective land use policy and the provision of high quality and abundant multimodal transportation facilities- this will be especially pertinent in the largely built-out Downtown, but will also be critical for all Regional Centers.

Planning for the Downtown should coordinate closely with plans for the Inner West Community Plan and VIA Metropolitan's Via Villa Vision Plan, which include considerations for better connecting the Downtown with the near west side.

Key stakeholders will include Centro, SARA, SAHA, the San Antonio Area Tourism Council, and the development community.

### Roadways

The major roadways that provide for north-south travel are Flores Street, I-10, I-37, Probandt, Frio Street, St. Mary's Street, and Presa Street. East-west travel is available on Martin Street, Commerce Street, Market Street, Cesar Chavez Boulevard, I-10, and I-35. North of Cesar Chavez Boulevard, downtown San Antonio maintains a compact grid. As a result, the study area is well-suited to transit service due to the number of direct roads which ultimately connect to radial arterials leading to other activity centers beyond downtown. South of Cesar Chavez Blvd, residential neighborhood development begins, but continues on a grid. Flores Street, Probandt, Nogalitos Street, St. Mary's Street and Presa Street are important thoroughfares for this portion of the study area. Direct east-west connections, however, are limited.





Public space downtown, in areas like the Main Plaza, the Historic Market Square, and Travis Park, offer areas for pedestrians and also function as important transit plazas. Though there is a significant amount of surface parking, downtown has a relatively connected sidewalk network, and represents San Antonio's most walkable area. At transit stops with high transit ridership, pedestrians and riders compete for space.

The map at left shows an image that represents the total attractions (number of vehicles moving toward) the Downtown activity center from all other centers in the Greater San Antonio Region. Each flow line represents the approximate total flow from other activity centers and the approximate direction of flow; however, flow lines do not represent the exact route that traffic would take to reach the destination.

#### **City of San Antonio Multimodal Transportation Plan – Plans for Downtown Study Area**

The City of San Antonio included the Downtown study area (denoted as Central Business District) as one component of the San Antonio Tomorrow Plan. The City of San Antonio Transportation and Capital Improvements Department (TCI) developed the City of San Antonio Multimodal Transportation Plan (MMTP) as a component of SA Tomorrow. The MMTP includes a study of the Commerce Street, San Pedro Avenue, and Houston Street Corridors, all of which terminate in the Downtown study area. These studies consider a variety of multimodal transportation improvements for their corridor and will depend upon resources within this study area, such as wayfinding and station amenities, to improve the quality of transit service.

Since downtown is a hub for most VIA routes, a high number of routes terminate in or traverse through downtown.

#### **VIA Metropolitan Transit Vision 2040 Long Range Plan – Impacts on Downtown Study Area:**

Downtown is where each of the four corridors (Northeast, Northwest, Southwest, and Southeast) originate or terminate within VIA's Vision 2040 Long Range Plan (LRP). These Rapid Transit Corridors are under evaluation to determine which projects to first implement the LRP plan through the VIA Alternatives Analysis. This analysis considers data, feasibility, professional expertise, and public input to prioritize which Rapid Transit Corridor should move toward project implementation, as well as route selection and mode choice (Light Rail or Bus Rapid Transit).

These four Rapid Transit Corridors were identified in the VIA Vision 2040 LRP as a critical component of the Rapid Transit Network, a higher speed, reliable network of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Light Rail Transit (LRT), and Express Bus Service. The map at right shows a map of the proposed alternatives for each of the four Rapid Transit Corridors.

The purpose of the Rapid Transit Network is to provide highly-reliable, direct connections between activity centers. High-quality transit service is needed to address the issues with and constraints of current bus service in these corridors, better serve current riders, and attract new riders to the system. Rapid transit, with some dedicated right-of-way or priority treatment at selected intersections, would offer a more reliable service to and through downtown than local bus. As each corridor is built out, Rapid Transit service would also improve overall mobility to Regional Centers, and will better connect people to jobs, schools and services, it will strengthen the competitiveness of transit, reduce pollution, and leverage local investments.



#### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

Existing facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists are insufficient in the study area. While Downtown's sidewalk network is more complete than many of the study area, gaps still remain, particularly in the more residential areas to the east and south ends of the study area. The quality of sidewalks is also an important concern; many are narrow, or lack buffers between the sidewalk and adjacent traffic. The MMTP pedestrian facilities map indicates many sidewalk gaps. Downtown attractions like the Riverwalk welcome many pedestrians as a hub for downtown tourism, making sidewalk improvements particularly important in this study area.

The MMTP bicycle facilities map indicates few limited bike lanes or trails in the study area. Existing bike infrastructure focuses on recreational cycling. For example, the San Antonio River Walk, Hike, and Bike path is an important north-south resource for cyclists and pedestrians, and connects parks like Roosevelt and Concepcion Park to the Downtown Riverwalk. Additionally, Downtown hosts the majority of stations for the San Antonio B-cycle bikeshare system.





## Amenities and Access

Downtown is home to many of San Antonio's greatest and most iconic amenities, some historic and others as a result of new wants and needs. The Alamo, the San Antonio Riverwalk, San Fernando Cathedral, and the Tower of the Americas are just a few of the historic places that make Downtown San Antonio unique. Newer amenities such as the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, and the Alamodome draw residents and visitors alike for performances and events. Houston Street has historically been Downtown's main commercial thoroughfare and continues to be a major pedestrian corridor with an eclectic assortment of shops, office space, hotels, and theaters. The Hays Street Bridge, a historic bridge connecting the Near Eastside to Downtown, provides pedestrians and people on bikes, yoga practitioners and photographers with sweeping views of the Downtown skyline. The restoration of San Pedro Creek, long a neglected and overgrown drainage channel, into a new linear park will provide another amenity to the Downtown Plan area and city as a whole.

Downtown is also home to some of the city's most iconic parks. The reinvigorating HemisFair Park is not only a local Downtown park but is a regional destination, drawing visitors from throughout the metropolitan area. Travis Park, Roosevelt Park, Madison Square Park, Maverick Park, Milam Park, Columbus Park, and Conception Park are a few of the other parks enjoyed by Downtown area neighborhoods.





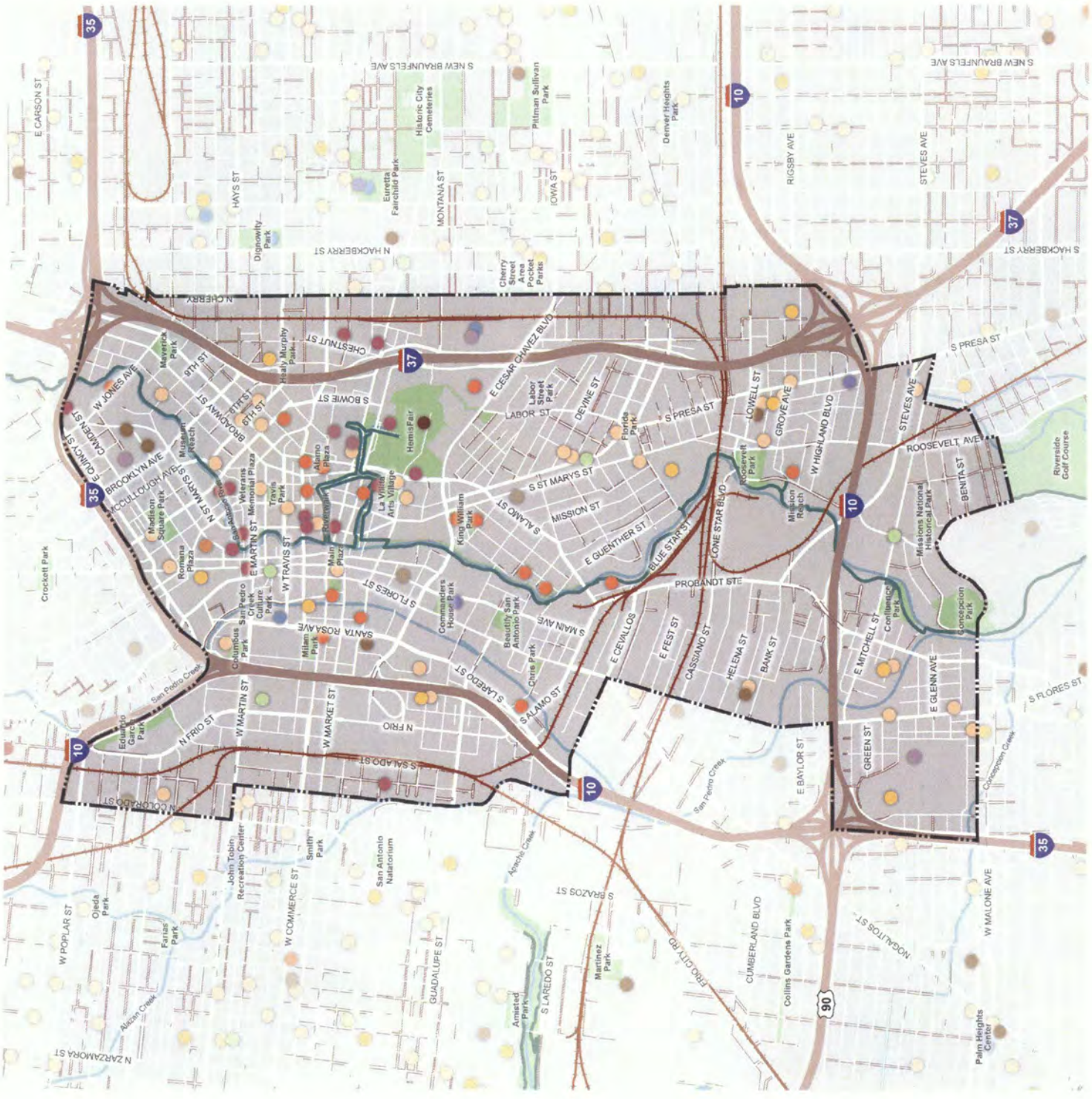
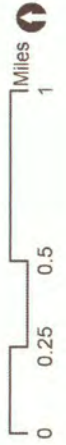


**SA Tomorrow** Downtown Regional Center Area

# AMENITIES AND ACCESS

## LEGEND

- Downtown Regional Center Area Boundary
  - Block
  - Park or Open Space
  - Stream
  - Greenway or Riverwalk
  - Public School
  - Private School
  - Charter School
  - Place of Worship
  - Library
  - Museum
  - Community Center
  - Recreation Center
  - Community Garden
  - Movie Theater or Planetarium
  - Stadium or Arena
  - Theater/Auditorium or Performing Arts Center
  - Conference Center
- 
- Physical Barriers**
  - Major Road
  - Rail Line
  - Non-existent Sidewalks







## Public Investments

The Downtown plan area benefits from several investment programs. The majority of the area is within the Inner City Reinvestment Infill Program (ICRIP) area, which stimulates growth, development, and private investments through prioritization of public incentives in the area. Several City initiated Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) areas variously intersect portions of the Downtown Plan Area including the Westside TIRZ, Midtown TIRZ, Houston Street TIRZ, Hemisfair TIRZ, and Inner City TIRZ. The Westside TIRZ program was initiated by the City of San Antonio in 2009 and has a term extending through 2032. It was enacted with a purpose of assisting ongoing revitalization initiatives by providing a source of funding for public improvements implementing the goals of adopted city plans and programs. The Midtown TIRZ term began in 2008 and is approved through 2031. This TIRZ was updated in 2012 to increase the included area by merging the River North TIRZ into the Midtown TIRZ. It has had considerable success encouraging redevelopment in the northern portion of the Downtown Plan area. The Houston Street TIRZ was initiated in 1999 and is presently approved to run through September 2034. The purpose of this TIRZ is to provide a source of funding for public improvements primarily along Houston Street as part of the broader plan to reinvigorate the center of the central business district. The Hemisfair TIRZ term began in 2017 and extends through 2037 and was created to help facilitate the development of the Hemisfair Park. Designated in 2000 with a termination date of 2025, the Inner City TIRZ was created to support redevelopment and public infrastructure improvements, to achieve the goals and objectives of adopted city plans.

The 2017-2022 Bond Program includes street and sidewalk improvements along Commerce Street, the Commerce Street Bridge, Santa Rosa, San Saba Street, Camaron Street, Broadway, South Alamo Street, Main Avenue, Soledad Street, Lamar Street, Probandt Street, Lone Star Boulevard, and Roosevelt Avenue. Rehabilitation and improvements to Columbus, Maverick, Milam, and Travis Parks are also included in the bond programs, as is support for improvements with drainage aspects of the San Pedro Creek Restoration Project. Hemisfair Civic Park, an approximately 13-acre site previously home to a wing of the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, is also a beneficiary of the bond program.

Perhaps the most visible Downtown project in the bond program is the redevelopment of the Alamo Plaza area. Implementing the Alamo Master Plan, this endeavor will reestablish the historic mission footprint through interpretive installations, street closures, and other improvements. Other bond projects include library upgrades, Market Square improvements, and a police substation.

Another component of the 2017-2022 Bond Program is the Neighborhoods Improvements Bond, intended stimulate distressed neighborhoods by increasing workforce and affordable housing opportunities. The Neighborhood Improvement Bond program aims to facilitate new development on targeted sites through property acquisition and site preparation activities, in order to prepare properties for resale to nonprofit or private developers. Portions of the Downtown Plan area are located in the Near-West Five Points and Near East areas of the program.











## Preliminary Opportunities

Opportunity abounds for the Downtown Planning Area. The abundance of parking lots and garages present a substantial inventory of underutilized land that may be redeveloped for more beneficial uses such as housing and office space. Likewise, the vacant land and industrial sites found mainly around the periphery of the plan area are prime redevelopment opportunities that can help provide more mixed use places, residential options, and 18-hour amenities. It is essential that these redevelopments be sensitive to the context of the areas surrounding them. While Downtown is physically separated from adjacent neighborhoods by the elevated highways that ring and in some cases divide the plan area, the space beneath them presents opportunities for the creation of creative public spaces and safer, more comfortable links the surrounding neighborhoods.

As it grows, Downtown can enhance and sustain its existing assets and become a place of even more options to live, work, and play. The historic grid street pattern, future high capacity transit options, and improvements from 2017 Bond Program on Commerce Street, Broadway Street, Roosevelt Avenue, and others means that Downtown can have a truly multimodal transportation system that is convenient and safe, and that will help San Antonio be more sustainable and healthy.

### Focus Areas

The following are preliminary opportunity sites in Downtown:

- River North
- St. Paul Square Area
- Lone Star Brewery Area
- West of IH-35/UTSA
- East of IH-37/North of Commerce Street















# *neighbourhood* Profile and Priorities



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