

MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting: Medical Center/UTSA area Community Meeting #1
Date: September 18, 2017
Time: 5:30 – 8:00 PM
Location: John Igo Branch Library, Meeting Rooms A&B

MEETING OVERVIEW

The City of San Antonio Planning Department began the first joint Community Meeting for the Medical Center and UTSA area Regional Center Plans with the following main objectives:

- Introduce the planning processes
- Review initial existing conditions findings
- Map both areas strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
- Identify a vision and goals
- Learn about further opportunities to get involved in planning for the Medical Center and UTSA area Regional Center Plans

Approximately 40 community members and students attended the meeting to offer their ideas and perspectives. Community input from this meeting, along with additional feedback from the respective planning team members, future intercept events, and video vision clips, will be used to create a vision and goals for the future of the Medical Center and UTSA areas. Public input and technical analyses will also inform the more detailed parts of the Plan in the coming months.

Meeting Format

Attendees were encouraged to view the Open House gallery of maps and provide their input. Staff was available to assist or answer any questions pertaining to the maps of the respective planning areas. The meeting was organized into 3 main parts:

- I. Open House: 30 minutes
- II. Presentation: 50 minutes
- III. Group Discussions: 60 minutes

Open House

The Open House portion of the meeting included a gallery of existing conditions maps on large poster boards and a resource table with copies of the SA Tomorrow Plans. The maps for each regional center were assembled by regional center: the Medical Center area maps were on one side of the room, while the UTSA area maps were located on the other. Participants were invited to: identify any corrections to the existing conditions maps using sticky notes, and mark on a map their common destinations, as well as, the vicinity of where they live, work, or visit frequently.

Presentation

MIG, Inc. Principal Jay Renkens and City of San Antonio Project Manager Carlos Guerra provided background on the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan that was adopted by the City in 2016. Following the SA Tomorrow presentation; Matt Prosser, Economic Planning Systems (EPS) project manager for the Medical Center reviewed the existing conditions in Medical Center, and described the process for

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creating the Regional Center Plan. After an overview of the Medical Center area, Mark De La Torre, MIG Inc. Project Associate, for the UTSA area Regional Center Plan, provided a summary of the existing conditions highlights for the UTSA area. Following the formal presentation, meeting participants were separated according to their preferred regional center: UTSA area and Medical Center area. After the room was divided in two, the respective planning areas were divided into smaller group tables.

Group Discussions

Project Team members from City of San Antonio Planning Department and the consulting team MIG, Inc. led small group discussions with participants gathered around tables with maps of the Medical Center Area or UTSA Area plan. The group discussions were divided into three main parts. In Part 1, participants used a map, color-coded stickers, and sticky notes to discuss and document the elements in the area that they would like to preserve, add, remove, or keep out of their respective planning area. In Part 2, participants discussed their vision for the future of the Medical Center or UTSA area using a facilitated writing and discussion activity. Project Team leaders documented discussion points on a large sheet of paper on the wall. In Part 3, participants distilled their main ideas onto a “Madlib” style summary worksheet. Then, one representative from each small group shared discussion highlights aloud to the larger Community Meeting audience.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY (Medical Center Area)

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

Part 1: Preserve, Add, Remove or Keep Out (PARK exercise)

Using a map of the Medical Center Area as a starting point for discussion, participants identified the area’s primary strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Preserve

- *Walking Trail (SAMF)*
- *Medical Services*
- *Bus Transportation*
- *Green spaces/Trees*
- *Neighborhoods*
- *Parks*
- *Multi-Cultural Amenities*

Add

- *Connected sidewalks*
- *Pedestrian way finding (signage)*
- *Outdoor amenities*
- *Circular shuttle*
- *Retail spaces*
- *Schools*
- *Parks/ open public spaces*
- *On-street parking*
- *Large canopy trees*
- *More food options*
- *B-Cycle Stations*
- *Dog Park*
- *Mixed-Use nodes*
- *Linear Greenways*
- *Incentives for renewable energy*



Remove

- Vacant Buildings
- Dark areas
- Fast food chains
- Neighborhood divestment

Keep-out

- Large Billboards
- Adult Businesses
- Low-Quality Amenities
- Industrial Uses
- Pollution
- Zero-Set back lines

Part 2: Vision Themes

Participants shared the following aspirations for the future of the Medical Center area.

“The vision of SA should be built on **history**. There are people who have lived in early part of SA built up business like Red McCombs etc. SA is **unique** because of history of developers can’t forget when developing the expanding-looking into future because Texas has **lot to offer** not have a state tax if the president gets his way to remove the deduction on Federal Tax. **Housing** is much more **affordable** for a bed/2 bed home in NW side-families look @ schools for their children to grow up-and eventually to college get into.”

“More **enhanced** for those who might want to live and work in the area (longer member of these who live/work in the area?); More **green space/parks** and **outdoor amenities** for families/neighborhoods and those who work throughout or within the area; more **connectivity** with bike lanes in particular, including buses and sidewalks for outdoor amenities; **more grocery stores** for the area.”

“An area of a **diversified community** with **excellent public space**, including parks, bikes and sidewalks, excellent transportation; widely diversified shopping experiences (food) entertainment accessible by the grater medical center area population.”

“The core of the Medical Center by the hospitals, UT health, etc. should be a place to live, play and work with an environment similar to ‘the Pearl Area.’ I see green space access by **walkways**, shopping, small **retail outlets**, etc. for those non-residents who work there, we need **easier access** perhaps shuttles, etc.”

“A center for medical services; neighborhoods that are walkable and encourage **sustainable living styles**; allow opportunities for multi-family living; with urban forms that promote **good urban design**”

“**Enhanced public transportation** within the Medical Center; **greater connectivity** along the health care centers; **controlled growth of alimentary business** that support the center; such as day cares, schools, and community markets; **improved infrastructure (streets & signal systems)**”

“It will be **environmentally friendly**, a **diverse** cultural center, and a destination for fitness based entertainment (sports/running). I hope to see more; more solar panels on buildings, green spaces, trees, shade, running trails, healthy food options, diverse food options and **bike use.**”

“To be a **vibrant living**, eating & working, learning, social living region where other residents come **NOT ONLY TO HAVE A PATIENT VISIT** or be healed by a healthcare professional.”

“...is an **attractive, inviting** are where students, residents and visitors feel energized and comfortable. The Medical Center will be **aesthetically appealing**, easy to get around thanks to transportation options and a gathering place for interesting people.”

“Medical will be a **revitalized mixed use** area with a **distinct sense of place** based on multicultural diversity and **connected greenways and linear parks and trails**.

Part 3: Small Group Report Out

The purpose of the fill-in-the-blank “Madlibs” style summary worksheet activity was for each small group to identify the most notable themes from the PARK and vision discussions to share with the larger group of Community Meeting participants. The worksheet prompted each group to identify the three most significant opportunities for the Plan Area, the greatest threat to taking advantage of those opportunities, and the group’s top vision and goal priorities. In general, the responses conveyed a range of ideas, from additional transit options to more green spaces and outdoor amenities, to achieve the overall vision of the Medical Center Area.

*The **vision and goal priorities** are articulated in the previous “Part II: Vision Themes” section. A particularly strong common theme that emerged is **a future for the Medical Center Area with vibrant mixed uses, opportunities for informal recreation, and transportation options.***

*Significant opportunities noted by the groups small vision report-out discussion under the “Preserve and Add” heading above. Some examples of participants’ **priority opportunities** for the Medical Center Area include:*

- *Proving parks and green spaces*
- *Transportation connectivity*
- *Circulatory transit system*
- *Creation of a “focal point” (Ex. Community Center)*
- *Multi-modal transit options (bike lanes, “Green Streets,” Etc.)*

Participants identified the following elements that ultimately provide a challenge to achieving the opportunities noted during the small group activity:

- *Lack of connectivity (sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.)*
- *Lack of visionary leadership*

NEXT STEPS

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

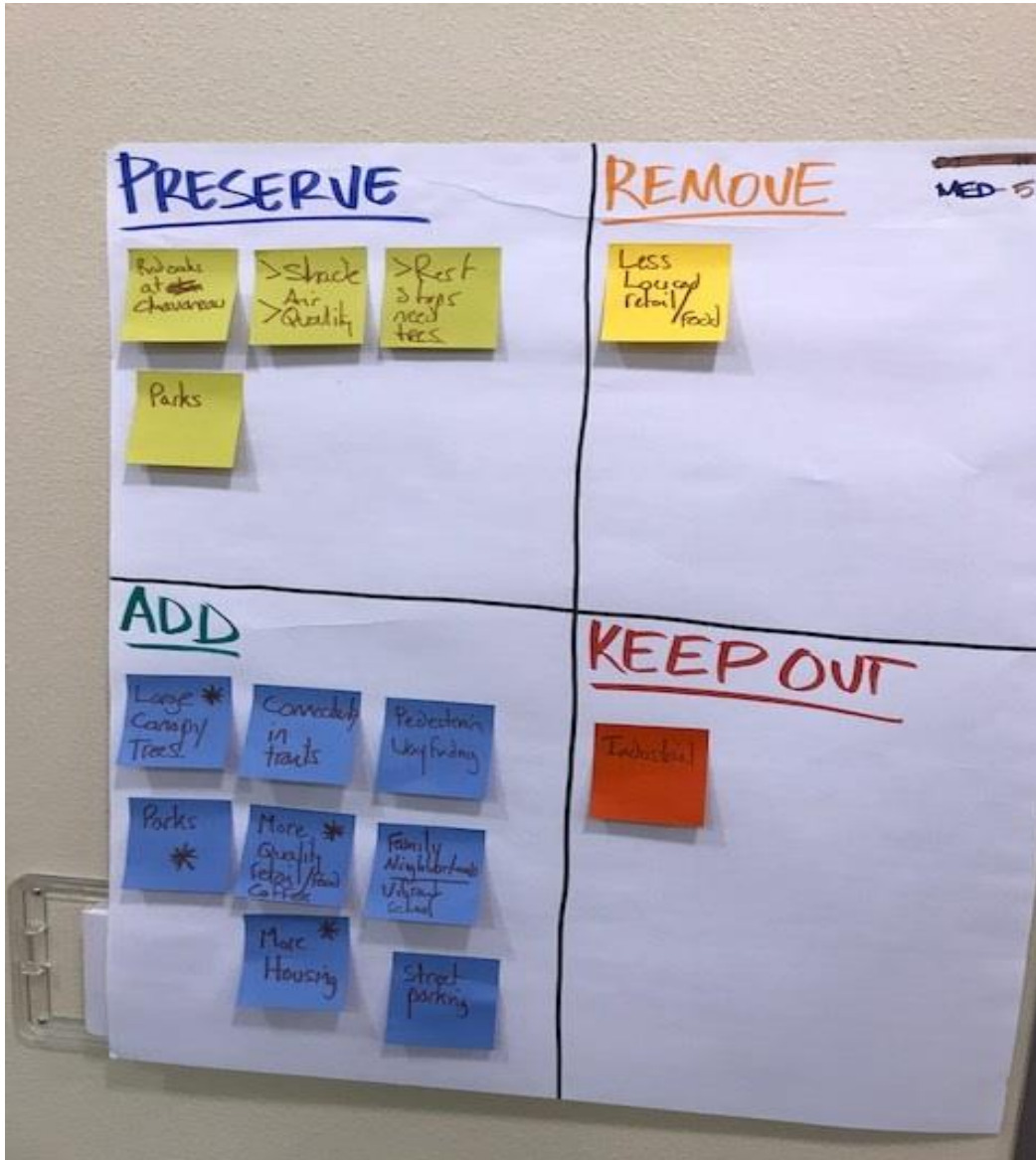
- The second Community Meeting will be held in December 2017. Objectives for this meeting will include: Review the emerging Medical Center Area Plan Area vision and goals
- Gather input to inform more detailed plan recommendations
- Provide more information on how the Medical Center Area Plan is being created and further opportunities to get involved



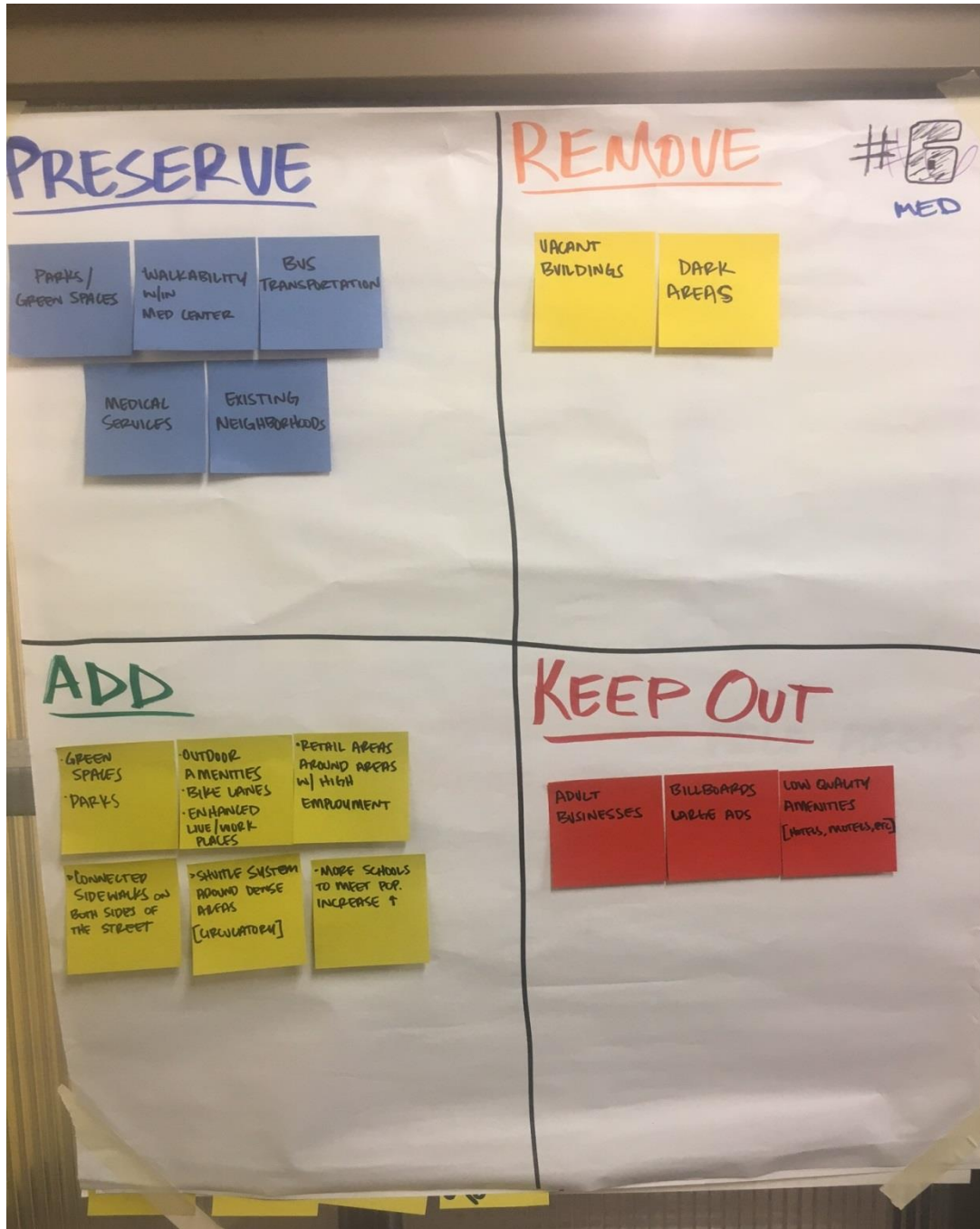
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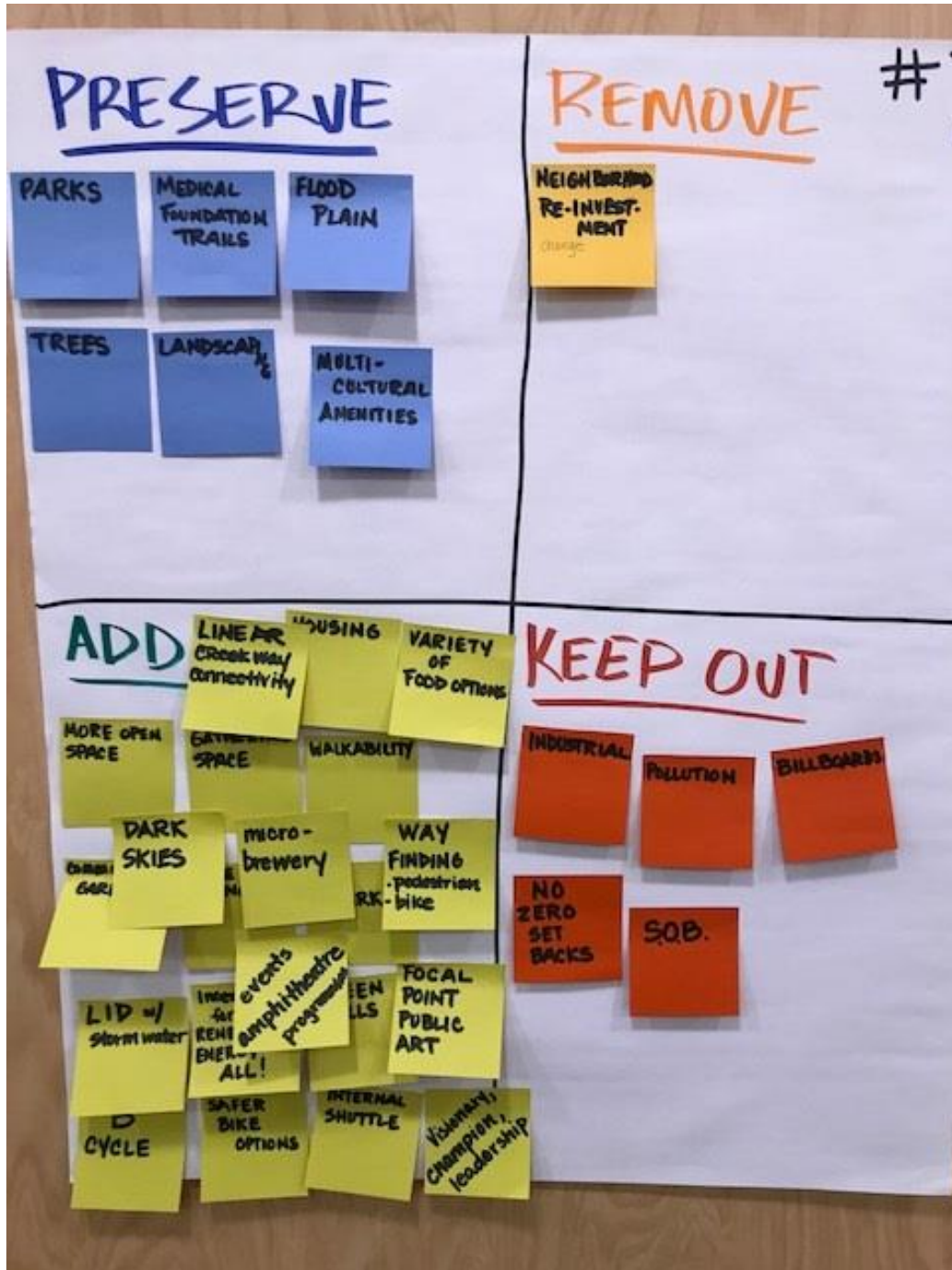
If you have questions about the Medical Center Area planning project, please contact Project Manager Carlos Guerra II, City of San Antonio Planning Department.
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PARK Exercise Results



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Visioning Exercise Results





