

Community Meeting Number One

The first public meeting for the San José Neighborhood Plan was an open house held on Wednesday, June 30th, 2021, at the Getsemani Community Center. Six (6) stations covered several major topics identified by the Steering Committee and through previous surveys.

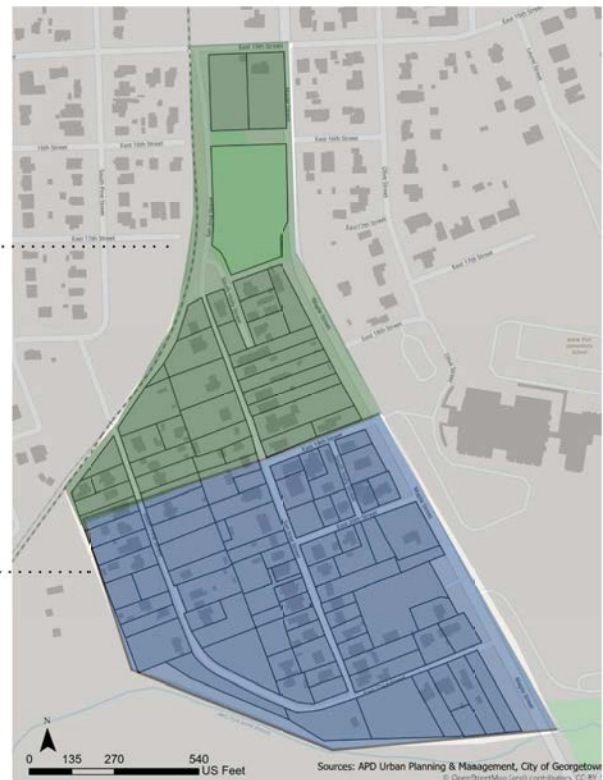
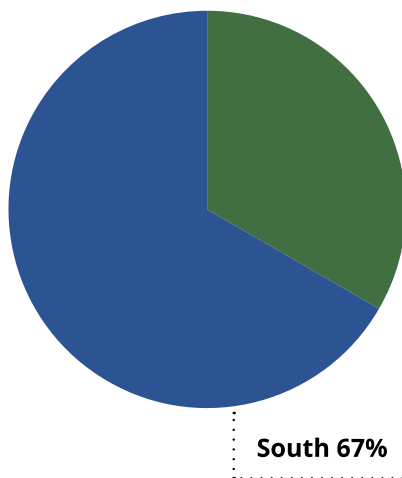


The meeting was held between 6:30 pm and 8:30 pm in a flexible format that allowed participants to give input on different stations related to the above topics. The six (6) stations consisted of a total of ten (10) exercises. Members from the consulting team and the City of Georgetown facilitated the station discussions and documented comments received.

Upon arrival, attendees were asked to sign in and answer several questions. The first question asked attendees to place a sticker on a map to show where they live and work. Results from this question are shown in Figure 28. All attendees who participated in this exercise live in the San José neighborhood. The majority of attendees who participated in this exercise stated they also work in San José.

Where Do You Live?

Figure 28: Where Do You Live Results





Most and Least

The Most/Least exercise asked attendees to describe what they like the most and least about San José. The table below summarizes the results from this exercise.

What you like the MOST
Good neighbors
Location
Everyone knows each other
Neighborhood feel
The neighbors
The people
The park
The culture

What you like the LEAST
Empty Lots
Abandoned homes
People do not clean their homes
Traffic
Speeding on Pine Street

Major takeaways

Attendees like the strong sense of community in the San José neighborhood and dislike the high number of undeveloped lots. Input received at this station was used to ensure that the plan recommendations help reinforce what stakeholders like most about their community and address what they like the least about the neighborhood.



Source: APD Urban Planning and Management



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Make a Wish for San José

Figure 29: Attendees Comment Summary Word Cloud



Vision

The vision station had two (2) different exercises. Exercise 1 asked attendees to make a wish for the San José Neighborhood. The results are summarized below, into four (4) general categories.

Infrastructure

- Streetlights
- Sidewalks
- More parking on Maple Street for the park

Community Development

- Help to repair homes in need
- Community mural or historic plaque
- Cultural awareness
- Community block parties
- Financial education on property ownership
- Events that draw visitors and locals to share the neighborhood's history
- Do not raise taxes

Recreation

- Soccer goals
- Summer program for kids
- More covered picnic tables and a cover for the playground area
- More gazebos

Access to Goods and Services

- Community garden
- Grocery store

In Exercise 2, attendees created their own vision statement for the San José neighborhood. Thirty-six (36) cards were presented to attendees, and they arranged their top twelve (12) cards on a large board and then recorded their top twelve (12) cards using pens and a tiered placemat. The top ten (10) words selected by participants are below.



Multigenerational



Affordability



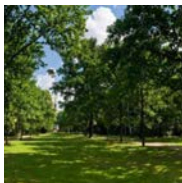
Family



Community



Traditional



Green Space



Culture



Safety



Heritage



Parks

Major takeaways

Both exercises at Station One prompted attendees to depict their desires for the future of San José. The results helped develop a vision statement and goals for the San José Neighborhood Plan, which guide recommendations.



History

The history station asked attendees to share a memory of San José. This exercise was intentionally left open-ended so attendees could share any memory they wanted, no matter how big or small. Memories shared at the public meeting are included below and identified in Figure 30.

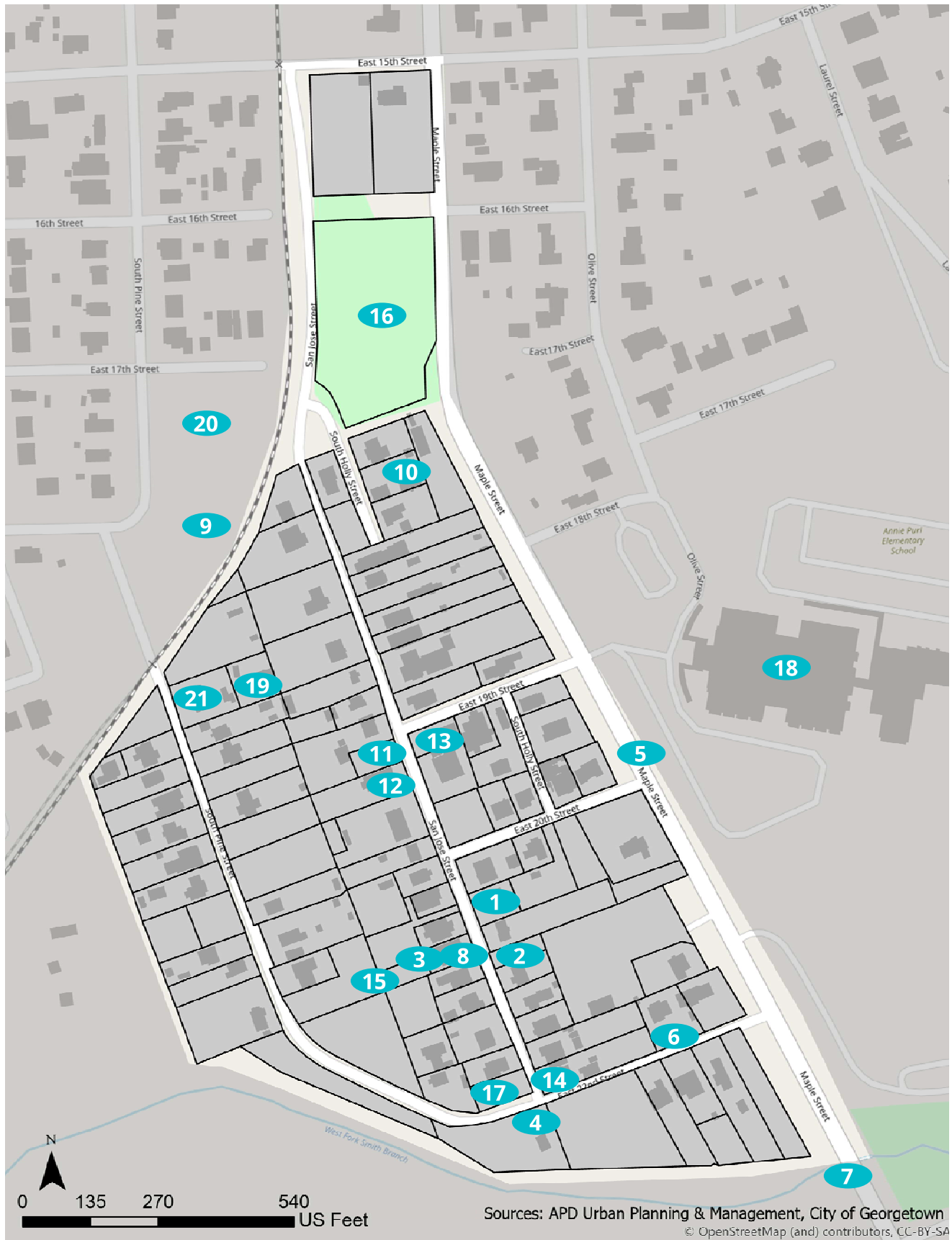
1. San José Grocery Store (Lopez Grocery).
2. Grocery Store (Maldonado).
3. Empty lots where kids from both streets could gather and play.
4. Unidos Club Little Saint.
5. Maple Street used to be the railroad track and the kids would cross the tracks and field to get to school. They made their own trail.
6. Lived in the same house for 40 years. Had four girls and three boys who all attended Annie Purl.
7. Burned out train bridge.
8. Baseball and football field.
9. Original houses from 1936 were here. Families came from Mexico in the 1930's, sometimes stayed with existing families.
10. Lopez family-grandfather and aunt lived here.
11. Where Shorty grew up. The home is no longer there.
12. Valdez family lived here.
13. Church was constructed in 1956. Pentecostal Church was for everyone.
14. 1954 Valdez was born on the corner of San José and 22nd. Built a church then lived across the street (see number 11).
15. Alter used to be a vacant lot.
16. Was a park but mostly vacant land with some swings before the City of Georgetown built a new park.
17. St. Helen's owns this property. Donated by the Zavales.
18. Used to be a Halloween Carnival at Annie Purl with hayrides and costumes.
19. House was built in 1937.
20. Used to be a two-story farmhouse.
21. Grandparents lived here in a farmhouse and had cows, chickens and goats.

Major takeaways

Attendees shared a wide variety of memories that showcase the history of the neighborhood. Comments from attendees show that existing residents have extensive and fond memories of San José, and remember when the community had local neighborhood markets for neighborhood residents. This information can be used to promote the neighborhood's history through marketing and branding and cultural tourism.

Community Memories of San José

Figure 30: Summary of History Comments





Transportation

The transportation station provided attendees with the opportunity to give input about areas of concern within the neighborhood.

Attendees located intersections and areas of specific safety concerns within San José. Three (3) roads and three (3) intersections stood out, as shown in and Figure 31, and Figure 32. The number of instances an attendee mentioned the safety concern is indicated in parenthesis.

Roadways

1. Maple Street
 - o Speeding (4)
 - o Blind spot (1)
 - o Dangerous intersection (3)
2. San José Street
 - o Speeding (9)
 - o Dangerous pedestrian crossing (1)
 - o Blind spot (3)
3. East 22nd Street
 - o Speeding (6)
 - o Dangerous pedestrian crossing (2)
 - o Blind spot (2)

Intersections

4. East 15th Street and Maple Street
 - o Dangerous intersection (1)
5. Maple Street and East 19th Street
 - o Speeding (1)
 - o Dangerous intersection (1)
6. Maple Street and East 22nd Street
 - o Dangerous pedestrian crossing (2)

Major takeaways

Most transportation concerns are on Maple Street and San José Street, particularly around San José Park and between East 19th Street and East 20th Street. Safety concerns near the park, and Purl Elementary include the lack of pedestrian infrastructure and speeding. Speeding is also a concern on East 22nd Street between San José and Maple Street.

Roadways of Concern

Figure 31: Transportation Concerns



Intersections of Concern

Figure 32: Transportation Concerns





Housing Typologies and Housing Concerns

The housing typologies and housing concerns station had two separate activities designed to understand participants' specific preferences on housing types and the particular concerns about housing in the neighborhood.

Housing Typologies

The first exercise asked participants to rank their preferred housing density and style. Four (4) styles of housing were provided for three (3) different housing types. The three (3) housing types included on the board were single-family, duplex, and triplex, and are shown in Figure 33. Attendees were provided 1-6 stickers and asked to place a sticker next to the housing style they most preferred with sticker number one (1) and the housing style they least preferred with sticker six (6).

Points were then allocated to each ranking. For example, a style with one 1st priority vote would have 10 points in total. The scores for each ranking are shown in Table 9.

Overall, attendees prefer single-family homes, with image three (3) receiving both the highest number of first preference votes and the highest number of votes overall. Image four (4) received the second-highest votes overall, but received fewer first preference votes than image number one (1), which received the second-highest number of first priority votes. Both image three (3) and four (4) are existing homes in San José.

Image six (6) received the third-highest number of votes, primarily driven by attendees' second preference.

Major takeaways

- Single-family homes that resemble existing housing stock in San José is most preferred; and
- A duplex ranked in the top three (3). However, upon reviewing the results of the first community meeting with the Steering Committee, it was determined that attendees liked the style of house six (6) but did not understand it was a duplex and do not support duplexes in the neighborhood.

Image 3 Ranked the Highest

Figure 33: Housing Typologies



What is Your Most Preferred Housing?

Figure 34: Housing Typologies Voting Chart

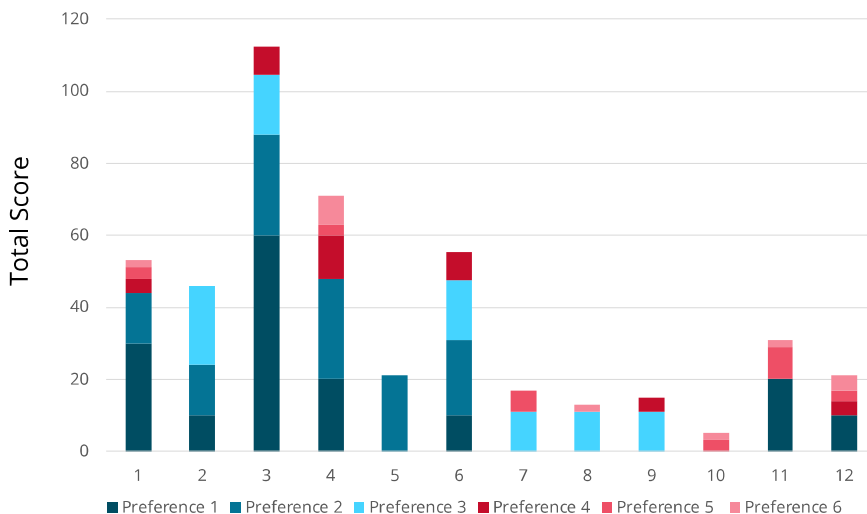


Table 9: Ranking Points

Preference Rank	Points
1st	10
2nd	7
3rd	5
4th	4
5th	3
6th	2

Housing Concerns

The second exercise at this station asked participants to select their top housing concerns. Participants were allowed to choose six (6) concerns from nine (9) options and rank these six (6) concerns by priority preference. Points were then allocated to each ranking. For example, a concern with one first-priority vote would have 10 points in total (Table 10). The scores for each ranking are shown in Figure 35.

The nine (9) concerns for ranking by the community included:

1. Back taxes: homeowners are behind on their property taxes;
2. Property tax increases: concern about existing homeowners ability to pay increased property taxes;
3. Unclear titles: concern about the number of homes that do not have a clear title;
4. Single-family home deferred maintenance: homeowners are unable to afford routine maintenance on their home;
5. Lack of a will for property disposition: homeowners do not have a valid will that details the disposition of their property and other assets when needed;
6. Lack of affordable for-sale housing: there is a lack of affordable housing in the neighborhood for first-time home buyers;
7. Lack of affordable rental housing: there is a lack of affordable rental housing in the neighborhood;
8. New development: concern about the way new homes look; and
9. Rental property deferred maintenance: landlords are not providing routine maintenance on their property.

Property tax increases were the most significant concern for meeting participants, receiving all but one first-priority vote. Single family deferred maintenance was the second-highest concern, followed by a lack of a will for property disposition. Third-priority votes drove the high ranking of both of these concerns. Single-family deferred maintenance received one first priority vote and lack of a will for property disposition received no first priority votes.

Major takeaways

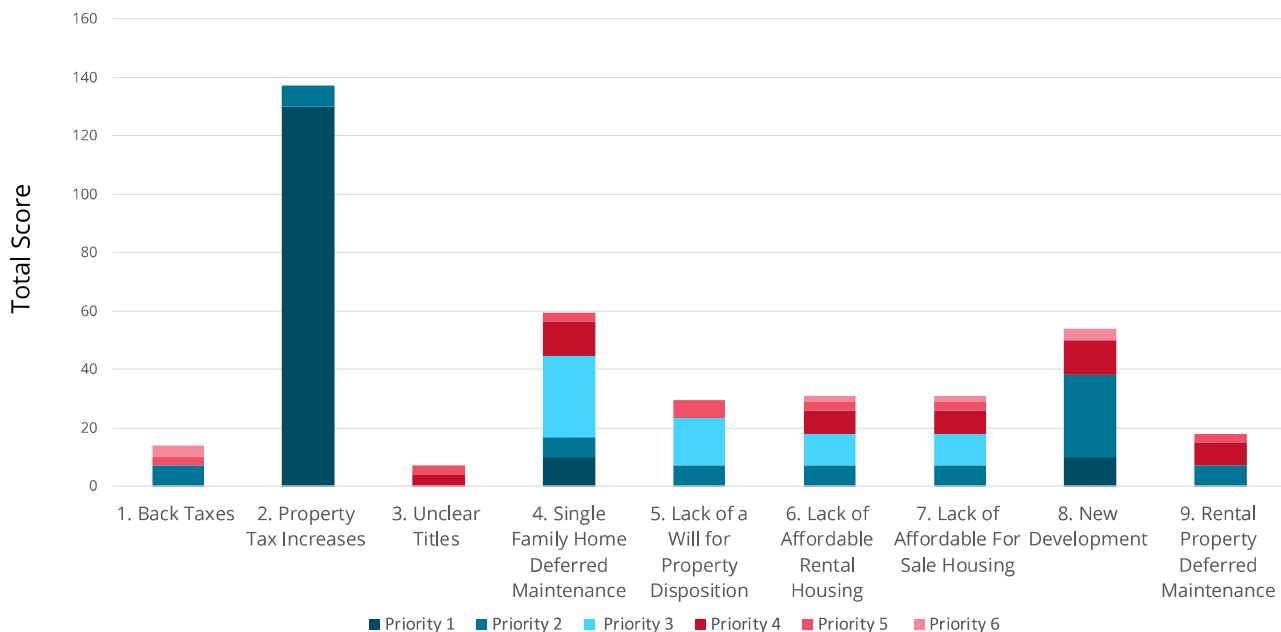
- Property tax increases are a major concern;
- Single-family home deferred maintenance is the second highest concern;
- Unclear titles and back taxes received the least number of votes; and
- These results suggest that residents are concerned about being able to stay in their homes and pass ownership down to their heirs.

Table 10: Ranking Points

Preference Rank	Points
1st	10
2nd	7
3rd	5
4th	4
5th	3
6th	2

What are Your Housing Concerns?

Figure 35: Housing Concerns Voting Chart





Public Investment

The public investment station sought input using two (2) exercises on major areas where tax dollars should be spent. The first exercise introduced participants to the topic through categories, and the second exercise sought more specific public investment ideas.

Public Investment Opportunities

This exercise asked participants to identify one (1) specific issue or opportunity for public investment within the study area. Participants then identified the location of the issue or opportunity on the map. The issues and opportunities are summarized below, and located by number in Figure 36. The number of instances an attendee mentioned the public investment opportunity is indicated in parenthesis.

Infrastructure

1. Flooding (6).
2. Drainage (1).

Transportation

3. Airport style broad speed bumps to prevent speeding through stop signs (1).
4. Traffic along Maple Street (2).
5. Sidewalks along Maple Street (1).
6. Sidewalks east and west of park (1).
7. Blind spot on curve is very dangerous (1).
8. Parking (3).
9. Traffic from parents waiting on children at the elementary school (1).

Recreation

10. San José splash pad (1).
11. More gazebos at San José Park (1).
12. More parking needed at San José Park (2).
13. Walking trail for the neighborhood (1).
14. Opportunity for green space (1).
15. Family friendly exercise course for fitness at San José Park (1).

Safety

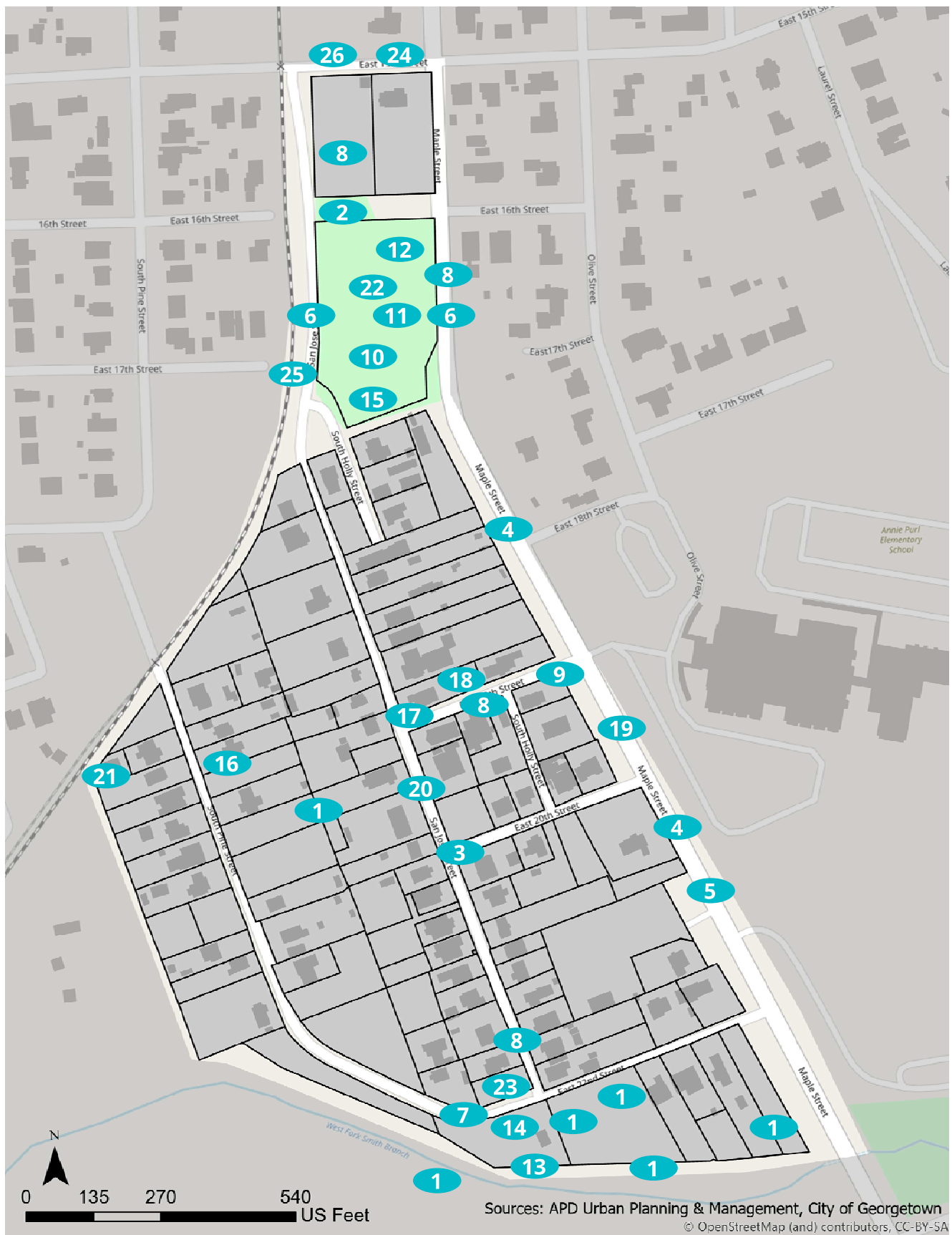
16. Blighted property (1).
17. Drug activity (1).
18. Loud music from cars (1).
19. Trash and dumping (1).
20. Drag racing on San José / speeding ignoring stop signs (1).
21. Access to property is closed. The old road has been blocked (1).

Community Development

22. Community events/ celebrations (3).
23. Community garden (1).
24. Neighborhood cleanups (1).
25. Historic markers along railroad tracks (1).
26. Keep all residents single-family (1).

Community Events are an Opportunity to Bring People Together

Figure 36: Summary of Comments



Public Investment Preferences

This exercise asked participants to rank their preference for ten (10) categories of public investment. Participants could choose six (6) of the ten (10) categories and rank these six (6) by priority preference. Points were allocated to each ranking (see Table 11). For example, a category with one first-priority vote and one second priority vote would score seventeen (17) points in total. These scores are shown in Figure 37.

Flood mitigation received the most first priority votes. Still, it ranked sixth overall, signaling that this investment option elicits a very strong response among those concerned with the issue, with many participants not concerned. Historic preservation received the most votes overall, but only received one first priority vote. This indicates that it is a priority for a significant amount of attendees but was not their highest priority.

Major takeaways

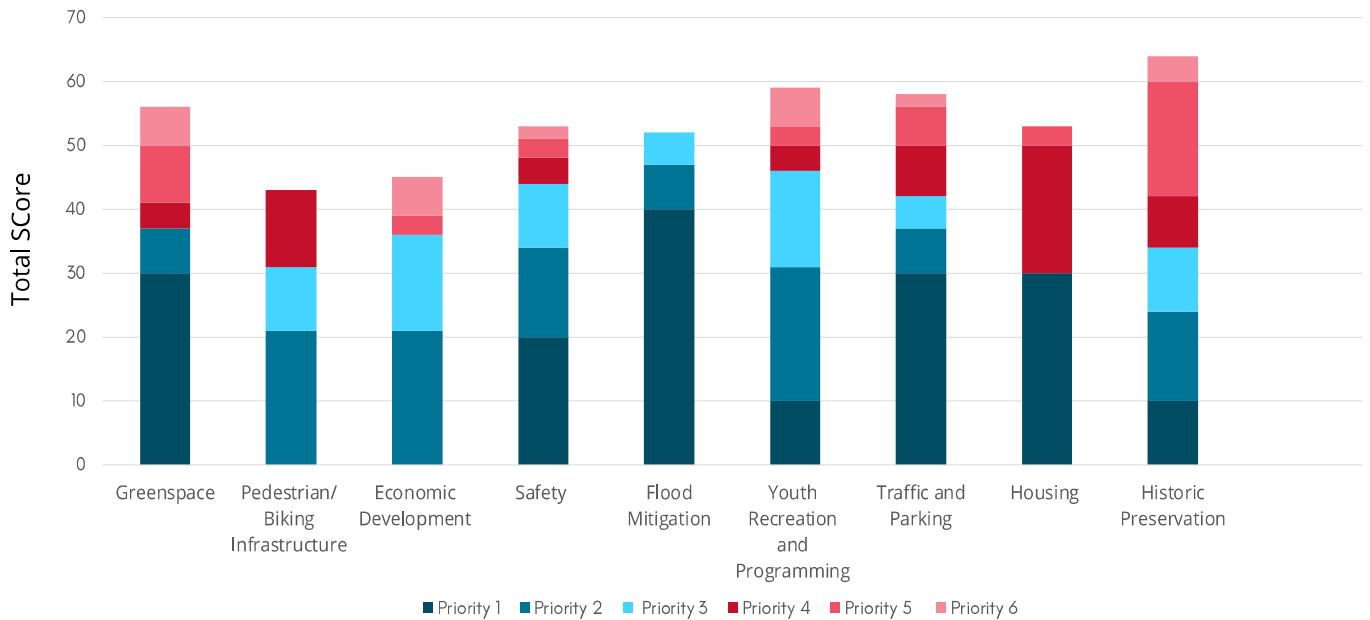
- Attendees are concerned about flooding in the neighborhood;
- Respondents want more community events, such as block parties, that allow neighbors to connect with one another;
- Speeding is a concern in the neighborhood, specifically on San José Street and Maple Street; and
- There is a strong preference to maintain the existing character of the neighborhood.

Table 11: Ranking Points

Preference Rank	Points
1st	10
2nd	7
3rd	5
4th	4
5th	3
6th	2

What is your Most Preferred Public Investment?

Figure 37: Public Investment Voting Chart



Conclusion

The findings from the first community meeting will guide the direction of the plan. Policy and implementation recommendations are outlined that directly affect existing residents. The participants feedback on the vision and goals is developed into a vision statement to guide the Plan priorities. The responses received from the remaining meeting exercises are utilized by the consultant team to determine critical opportunities for action.

