

Steering Committee Meetings

Project Kickoff

The first Steering Committee meeting, held on May 3rd, 2021, served as a project kick-off to educate members on the project's scope and responsibilities. Steering Committee members provided information on stakeholders, goals, expectations, issues, and concerns. Input exercises from the meeting are summarized below.

Exercise: What are your Goals & Expectations for this project?

The Steering Committee wants to see the history and culture of San José shared and celebrated, and have an improved space to hold community events. They would also like to see a vision for the neighborhood with action steps that help reach that vision. Additionally, the Steering Committee wants to see home values and property taxes stabilized to the neighborhood resident's current incomes and create additional safety measures to ensure the neighborhood is safe for both cars and pedestrians.



Source: APD Urban Planning and Management

Exercise: What are your goals for successful outreach and community engagement during this project?

Members felt that mailouts, flyers, and email are the most effective way to reach San José residents, in addition to door-to-door contact. Members thought that an open house meeting and focus groups were the most effective way to facilitate community feedback from residents in San José. Members view online engagement as the least effective way to engage residents in San José.

Exercise: What do you like the most and the least about your neighborhood?

Members like the history and culture of San José, including the family oriented atmosphere of the neighborhood. Members also like their neighbors in San José.

Members dislike the rising property taxes, trash, and vacant lots in the neighborhood, and traffic issues such as parking and speeding. Members also dislike the reputation that San José has a lot of crime, as this is a misconception.



Source: APD Urban Planning and Management

Exercise: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

Members feel that San José Park, the rich history and culture of the neighborhood, and its residents are all strengths of San José. Weaknesses include the trust factor between neighborhood residents and the City of Georgetown, and unclear property titles, which the Steering Committee sees as a significant issue in the neighborhood.

Opportunities for San José include celebrating the history and culture of the neighborhood through events and other means, better activating the underutilized railroad track, and homeowner education that teaches residents how to appeal property taxes and the importance of having a clear title and a will. Threats to the neighborhood include rising property tax assessments, and storm-water management issues throughout the neighborhood.

Steering Committee Asset Mapping Activity

Steering Committee members completed an asset mapping activity to help identify important areas in the community. Steering Committee members identified assets, such as places of worship, gathering spaces, community centers, historic sites or events, and concerns such as crime, litter, and traffic issues. These assets and concerns are summarized below, and numbered with their locations illustrated in Figure 27. The number of instances a Steering Committee member mentioned the community asset or concern is indicated in parenthesis.

Community Assets

1. San José Park (5).
2. Splash pad in San José Park.
3. Annie Purl Elementary School (2).
4. San José Community Church (5).
5. Historic Altar to San José (4).

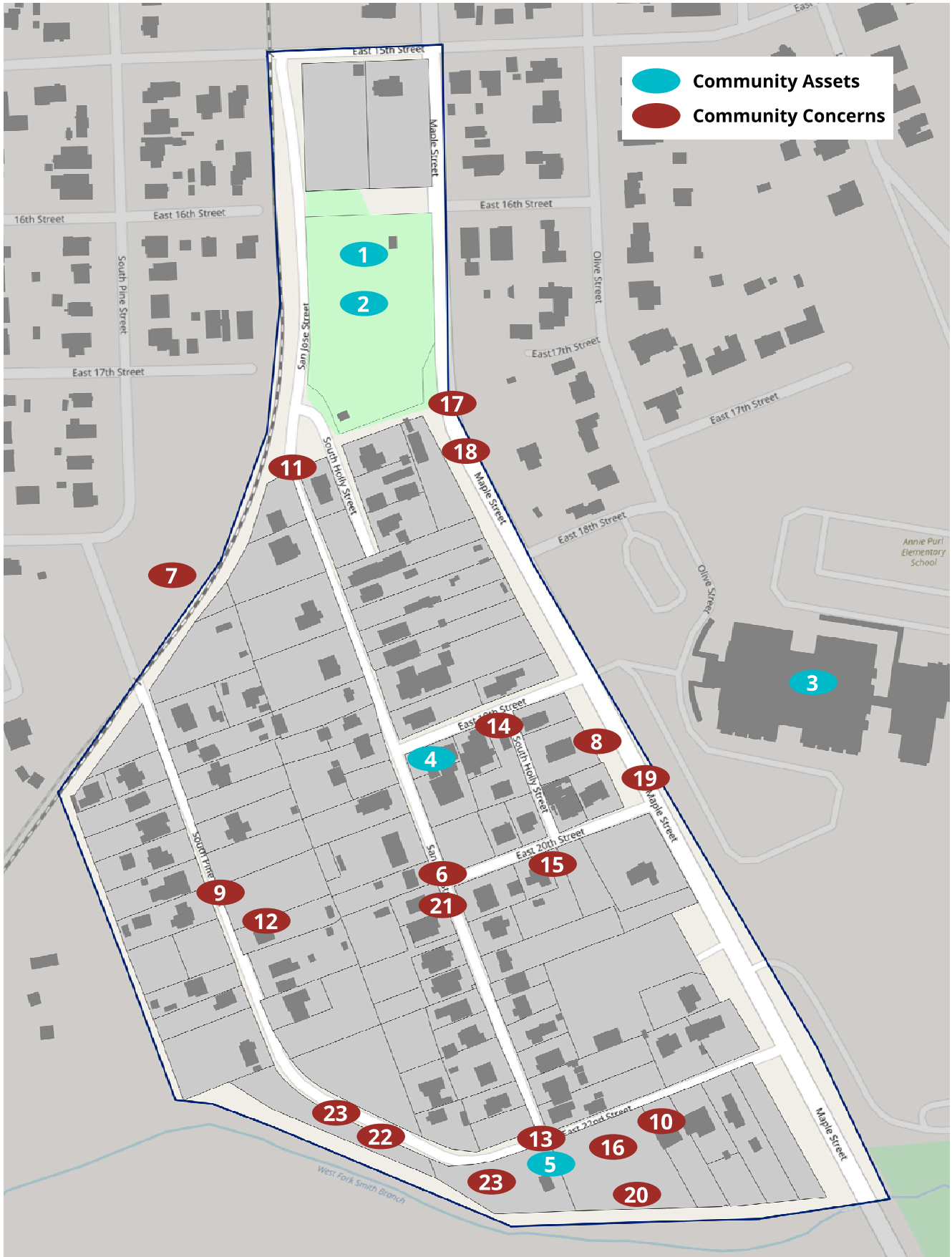
Community Concerns

6. Vacant lots.
7. Litter along railroad tracks.
8. Litter in ravine along Maple Street.
9. Litter in vacant lots on Pine Street (2).
10. Number of cars parked along East 22nd Street (2).
11. Traffic along San José Street (2).
12. Vacant and abandoned property along South Pine Street (2).
13. Infrastructure issues (2).
14. Infrastructure issues on East 19th Street.
15. Infrastructure issues on East 20th Street.
16. Litter along East 22nd Street.
17. Speeding along Maple Street near San José Park.
18. Drainage issues.
19. Traffic congestion in the mornings and afternoons.
20. Drainage issues.
21. Traffic.
22. Crime (2).
23. Litter (3).

Neighborhood-Wide Concerns

- Narrow streets.
- Limited pedestrian infrastructure.
- Litter.
- Vacant and abandoned lots throughout the neighborhood.
- Limited parking.
- How to highlight the history and culture of the neighborhood in an equitable way.

Figure 27: Summary of Comments

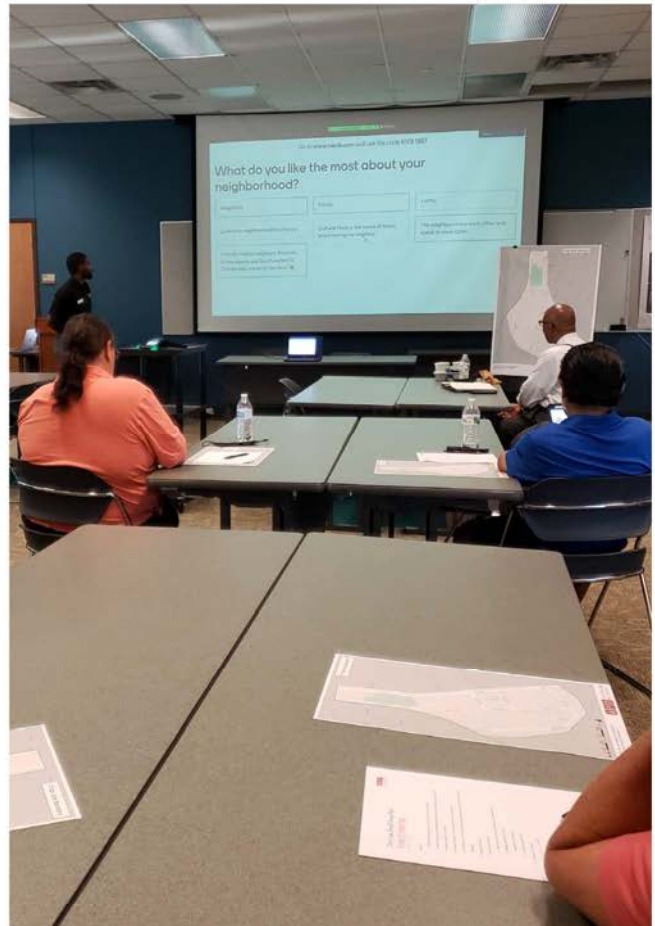


Conclusion

Feedback from the Steering Committee helps illuminate the assets and concerns in San José and the strengths and weaknesses of the neighborhood, as well as opportunities and threats. Their feedback also guides the creation and distribution of outreach material and the public meeting format. Initial takeaways from the kickoff meeting include:

- There should be bilingual and direct communication with the neighborhood;
- There is a strong desire for community building and the Steering Committee to be heavily involved in the process; and
- Major concerns for neighborhood residents include rising property taxes, drainage issues, and traffic.

Additionally, Steering Committee feedback was used to craft materials shared at the first public meeting.



Additional Steering Committee Meetings

Steering Committee Number Two

At the second Steering Committee meeting, members reviewed the initial findings from APD-U's first visit to Georgetown, the draft Community Outreach and Engagement Guide, and the stations created for the first public meeting.

Steering Committee Number Three

At the third meeting, the San José Steering Committee reviewed the project kick-off and the first community meeting summary, existing conditions, and the material for the upcoming community meeting number two.

Steering Committee Number Four

At the fourth Steering Committee meeting, community meeting two results were shared, the draft vision and goals were discussed, and a discussion was held on flooding that occurs in the neighborhood.

Steering Committee Number Five

The San José Steering Committee confirmed the vision and goals and reviewed the neighborhood's market analysis and land use and zoning recommendations at the fifth Steering Committee meeting.

Steering Committee Number Six

The sixth Steering Committee meeting provided members with market scan updates and reviewed the material for the final public meeting. The next steps in the planning process were also reviewed.

Steering Committee Number Seven

The seventh Steering Committee meeting was a joint meeting between the TRG and the San José Steering Committees. The joint meeting provided an opportunity for the two Steering Committees to meet and discuss the planning process and learn more about the specifics of each neighborhood plan. A review of the overall planning process and a preview of the third public meeting was completed. Then, the TRG and San José committees split up and reviewed the draft recommendations and implementation plan.

Steering Committee Number Eight

At the final Steering Committee meeting, members reviewed and provided feedback on the draft plan.

The San José Steering Committee provided invaluable feedback throughout the planning process and helped shape the recommendations included in the final plan. As the San José Neighborhood Plan transitions into implementation, the continued support of Steering Committee members is essential. The ultimate goal is for each member of the Steering Committee to become a champion of the plan and support its implementation.



Source: APD Urban Planning and Management



Source: City of Georgetown



Source: City of Georgetown



Source: APD Urban Planning and Management

Stakeholder Engagement

An important task of the engagement process was meetings and interviews with specific stakeholders, with groups and other individuals who live and work in the San José neighborhood and the City of Georgetown. Both one-on-one meetings and focus groups were held with the stakeholders. The following stakeholders were engaged*:

- Boys and Girls Club;
- The Caring Place;
- Catholic Charities of Central Texas;
- City Council Members;
- City of Georgetown Parks and Recreation Department;
- City of Georgetown Police Department;
- City of Georgetown Planning and Zoning;
- City of Georgetown Public Works Department;
- Georgetown Public Library;
- City of Georgetown Arts and Culture Department;
- Georgetown Health Foundation;
- Georgetown Housing Initiative;
- GTX Connect;
- Habitat for Humanity;
- Local Banks;
- Local Developers;
- Local Churches;
- Private Property Owners;
- Salvation Army; and
- YMCA.

*The Stakeholder list provides an idea of the type of organizations involved in the planning process but is not an exhaustive list of all stakeholders involved.