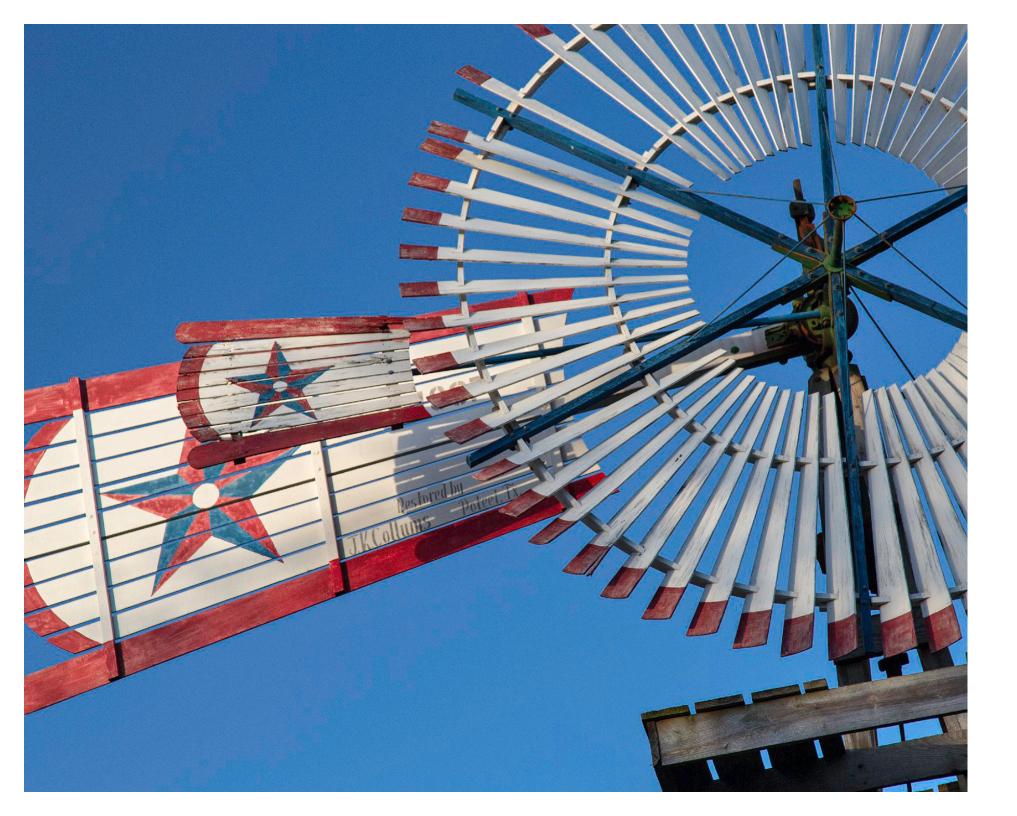


HIGHWAY 151 AND LOOP 1604 AREA REGIONAL CENTER PLAN



## **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. The uncertainty and complexity associated with planning for the next 25 years is daunting. 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 to help us 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 certainly 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 Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Area 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 reccomendations and implementation and investment priorities.







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## Citywide 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.



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 crosscutting themes were considered and integrated into each of the major components and elements of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan and the Multimodal 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 Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Area 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 higherdensity 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 and 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 homogeneous 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

# HIGHWAY 151 AND LOOP 1604 AREA REGIONAL CENTER PROFILE FROM THE SA TOMORROW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### **Existing & Aspirational Scores**

6% 100%

**Transit Utilization** 

12% 90%

Walkability

42% 80%

Median Commute Distance

40% 100%

Employment Density of Developed Land

30% 100%

Residential Density of Developed Land

50% 54%

Ratio of Employees to Residents

60% 66%

Per Capita Income

43% 65%

Housing + Transportation Index

43% 90%

Job Diversity Index

**Strengths:** The Highway 151 and Loop 1604 regional center has attracted major employers, an educational institution and entertainment destinations.

Population (2015 estimate): 11,859 Households (2015 estimate): 3,998

Single Family to Multifamily Housing Units Ratio: 7.74

Employment (2013 estimate): 14,200

**Largest Industries (by employment):** Retail Trade, Healthcare, Finance and Insurance, Education

**Acres:** 4,205

**Developed Acres: 2,546** 

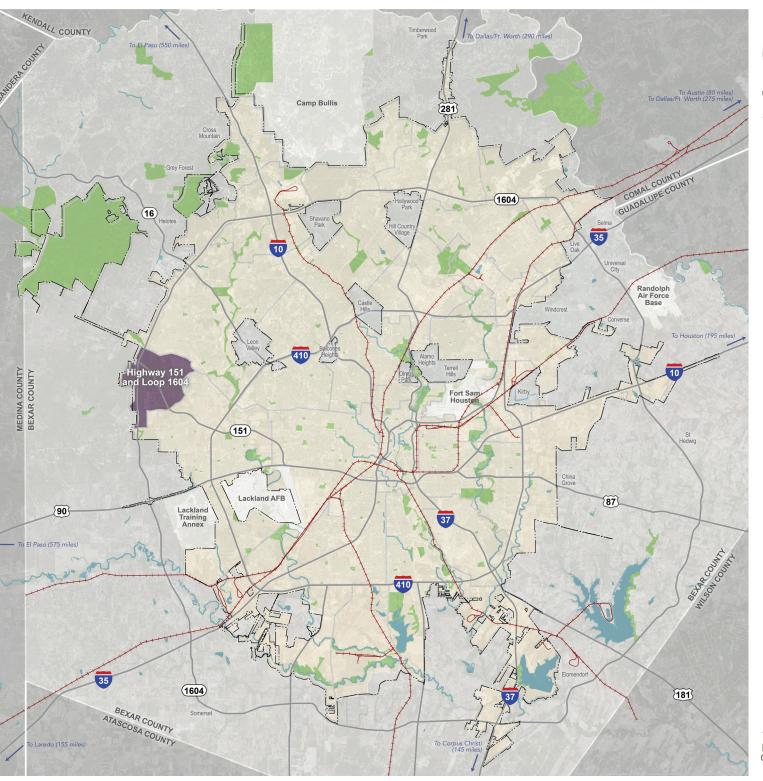
Home to several large employment campuses, including Wells Fargo, as well as the SeaWorld amusement park, this regional center is one of San Antonio's emerging centers. Located on the western edge of the City, it includes the Westover Hills area and portions of the large master planned community of Alamo Ranch. This area, including portions of unincorporated Bexar County has been a focus of major development activity during the past decade.

**Tasks Ahead:** This emerging regional center should prioritize transit service to link uses that are largely disconnected from each other.





The EMX bus rapid transit system connects several neighborhoods, employment centers, a new hospital and mixed-use districts in Eugene and Sprinfield, Oregon.





# PLAN LOCATION

**LEGEND** 

City Boundary

---- Major Highway

Rail Line

Park or Open Space

Water Body

Regional Center Boundary



## History of the Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Area Regional Center

From the 1800s to today, this area has transformed dramatically from ranchland to recreation to a regional center of economic activity. Spurred by the efforts of one master developer, the Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Regional Center is now home to a variety of uses, including large employers, major institutions, and new residential development.

### 1800s to 1970s: Ranchland

In the late 1800s, San Antonio's city limits were miles away from this sprawling ranchland. The Rogers family had traded land in Wisconsin for 2,000 acres outside of San Antonio, and ran the area as a cattle ranch. Eventually, the Rogers Family combined with the Wiseman family (two streets in the area are named after these first developers), creating the Rogers-Wiseman Ranch which was in operation for many more decades. The area started shifting, and the City of San Antonio started sprawling further outward. In the 1950s, when planning for Loop 410 was underway, there were very few residential developments in the area except for a few houses in the Mountain View Acres neighborhood which had dirt roads at the time. By the 1970s, there were plans for Loop 1604, and a few more houses in the area in the neighborhoods of North San Antonio Hills and Oak Creek.

### 1980s to early 1990s: Infrastructure and Tourism

The area was still outside of the city limits until the 1980s when it caught the eye of local developer, Charles Martin "Marty" Wender. Seeing potential in the area, over several years he amassed 3,500 acres outside of the city limits from Potranco Road to just below Culebra Road, and began installing necessary infrastructure and utilities for his "Westover Hills" development. He also proposed and donated land for a major highway through the area, State Highway 151, to connect with US 90 and Loop 1604. This highway would support new development, such as the budding plans for SeaWorld. On May 27, 1988, SeaWorld welcomed 75,000 visitors on opening day, becoming a regional and national attraction. In 1993, the Hyatt Hill Country Resort opened, and now incorporates the history of the Roger-Wiseman ranch into their hotel's décor.

### Late 1990s to 2000s: Economic and Residential Development

In 1998, Northwest Vista College opened, and now serves thousands of students each year aiming for higher education. By 2004, all four lanes of Highway 151 were completed and in 2005 a Gateway Corridor ordinance was adopted to ensure cohesive development around the corridor. In 2006, the first Alamo Ranch development broke ground outside of the city limits, bringing more growth to the area. In 2009 Christus Santa Rosa Hospital opened, pulling more medical offices toward the area, while other commercial campuses were developing as well. The area was quickly finding its footing in the market as a place with affordable land for the business, health, and technology sectors.

### 2010 to today: Rapid Growth and Economic Expansion

Since 2010, the area has grown considerably, both within and outside the city limits. In 2014, funds were approved to expand Loop 1604 south from Highway 151 to Highway 90, a project which is currently under construction since traffic has increased considerably in the area. In addition to the corporate campuses and medical offices developed in the early 2000s, the area has become a prime location for data centers. San Antonio is a safer choice for data centers and server farms due to our relatively low chance for major natural disasters, and this area in particular is well-suited since it has reliable electricity and high speed internet, and is removed from freight train and airspace vibrations. Companies such as GM Financial, Microsoft, QVC, and Kohl's have placed their data hubs in the area.







## Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Area Infrastructure and Institutions

# Major Landmarks and Infrastructure

Since the area was largely master planned, residents tend to refer to this part of the city as "Westover Hills." Besides that name, SeaWorld and the retail developments at Alamo Ranch (the corner of Culebra Road and Loop 1604) are the primary landmarks for this area, and residents and businesses frequently use them to give directions. The area has strong and reliable fiber optic internet, as well as reliable electrical provided by CPS Energy – both of which have contributed to the area becoming a hub for data centers in recent years.



# Neighborhoods and Institutions

### Neighborhoods

Within this regional center there are a number of registered neighborhoods and developments. The earliest neighborhood was the Mountain View Acres neighborhood (at Culebra Road and Rogers Road), which still had some dirt roads and a handful of houses in the 1960s. North San Antonio Hills (just west of Loop 1604) and Oak Creek (west of SeaWorld and south of Military Drive) were developed soon after in the 1970s and 1980s. These three neighborhoods have the "old" suburban development style with large lot sizes, no sidewalks, and customized construction.

Other major residential developments did not start happening until the 1990s, after the opening of SeaWorld and the Hyatt Hill Country. Stonegate Hills at Westover Hill, Westover Valley, and Mirabella at Legacy Trails were all developed in the 1990s and mid-2000s, with smaller lot sizes



and slightly more homes per acre. The Estates of Westover Hills, Creekside, and other Legacy Trails developments were also completed in the same time period, but do not have registered neighborhood associations. In recent years, numerous apartment developments have been built around the area, in addition to several senior assisted living centers.

### **Major Institutions**

Northwest Vista College is a significant asset for the area, and provides higher education opportunities for thousands of students each year. The College is increasing their engagement with local communities through events and the campus also includes a walking trail and a Frisbee golf trail, which are publicly accessible.

As a major medical institution, Christus Santa Rosa has locations throughout San Antonio and New Braunfels. Their Westover Hills location provides primary, emergency, and certain specialized care. As the area has many young families, they have a significant amount of pediatric and birth services at this campus as well.







Highway 151 and Loop 1604 REGIONAL CENTER

## STUDY AREA

Regional Center Area Boundary

Adjacent Regional Center or Community Area

Public or Private
Park or Open Space

River or Stream

----- Railroad Line





13







### **Area Overview**

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center is in located on the far western edge of San Antonio. The Regional Center is focused around eastern sides of Loop 1604 on either side of Highway 151. The area is commonly referred to as Westover Hills due to the master planned community in the area with the same name and Westover Hills Blvd which bisects portions of the center. The center is adjacent to a large master planned community, Alamo Ranch, which is located on the western side of Loop 1604 and is in unincorporated Bexar County. The focal points of the regional center are Sea World San Antonio, Northwest Vista College, and the Wells Fargo Wiseman Campus.

Overall, the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center:

- Has experienced significant population and housing growth
- Has higher educational attainment and income levels than the region as a whole
- Is emerging as a major employment node with a diverse employment base anchored by Sea World and Wells Fargo
- Has experienced significant retail and office development since 2005

Total Population (2018) | 13,542
Total Households (2018) | 4,871

### People

### Population and Households

In 2018, the population of the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center was approximately 13,500 with 4,900 households. The area experienced strong annual population growth of 5.2% from 2000 to 2010 and 4.5% from 2010 to 2018. The characteristics of households in this Center differ from the city overall, with 74% of all households defined as "family", while 65% of households in the City and 69% in the MSA are family households. Average household size in the Center is 2.78.

#### Age

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center population is slightly younger than the regional population overall; the median age in the area is 32.7 years, compared to 34 in the City and 35.4 in the MSA. Similar to the City and MSA, approximately 36% of the population in the Center is under the age of 20 reflecting the higher proportion of family households with children. The population of "Millennials" – those born between about 1980 and 1995 – in the Center is similar to the City and the MSA, with 25% of the population aged 20 and 34. The senior population in the Center is lower than the region, with 8% of the population over age 65, compared to 13% in the City and 14% in the MSA.



34.0 years - City of San Antonio Average



### Race and Ethnicity:

The population of the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center is 56% Hispanic, lower than the 65% in the City and 56% in the MSA, and 67% White, compared to 71% in the City and 74% in the MSA. The area has a Diversity Index score of 77 – measured from 0 to 100, this number represents the likelihood that two random persons in the same area belong to different race or ethnic groups. The City and MSA both have a Diversity index of 72. This indicates that the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center is more diverse than the region.



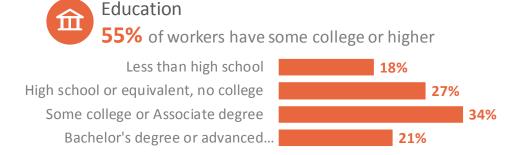
### Income

Personal and household income in the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center is higher than the region overall. The average household income in the Center is \$99,500, compared to \$70,000 for the City of San Antonio and \$80,200 for the MSA. Median household and per capita incomes in the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center are also higher than the surrounding areas.

\$ Average Household Income \$99,500 42% higher than City of San Antonio

### Education

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center has a more highly educated population than the region overall. Of the area population aged 25 and older, only 6% have less than a high school diploma (compared to 18% in the City and 15% in the MSA), and 52% have an Associate's, Bachelor's, or Graduate/Professional degree (compared to 34% in the City and 36% in the MSA).



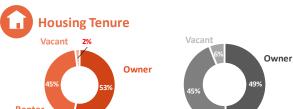
### Housing

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center has a high proportion of single-family detached homes – 72% compared to 64% in the City and 68% in the MSA. Structures with two or more units make up 25% of the Center's housing stock, and there are virtually no mobile homes or other housing types within the Center. However, the majority of new housing development since 2010 has been multifamily housing.

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center has a similar proportion of owner-occupied housing units to the City but a lower proportion than the MSA. In this Regional Center, 54% of housing units are owner-occupied (compared to 53% in the City and 63% in the MSA) and 46% are renter-occupied (compared to 47% in the City, 37% in the MSA).

Housing costs are higher in the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center than the County overall. The median home value in the area is \$166,200 (as estimated by Zillow for the 78251 zip code area). However, homes built in since 2010 in the area are selling for much higher amounts with homes forsale ranging between \$209,000 and \$589,000.

The average rental rate for an apartment unit in Highway 151 & Loop 1604 is \$1,115 per month or \$1.19 per square foot – higher than the countywide average of \$952 per month and \$1.11 per square foot. There have been three projects totaling over 700 units completed since 2017; there are no new projects proposed or under construction.



Housing targets:

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center is forecast to grow by 11,300 households between 2010 and 2040. The Regional Center has grown by approximately 200 housing units per year since 2010, which is a strong rate of housing development but less than the forecasted amount annual average.



Total Employment (2018) | 11,90

### **Employment**

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center had approximately 11,900 jobs in 2018. The center has a diversity of employment with large tourism, finance, health care and education anchors located in the regional center. Arts, Entertainment & Recreation is the Center's largest employment sector, accounting for 25% of jobs. This figure is substantially higher than the rest of the region due to Sea World's location within the Center. The next largest employment sectors are Retail Trade at 19% and Finance & Insurance at 18%; these proportions are also higher than the regional figures. The Finance & Insurance industry has grown substantially in recent years due the presence of a large Wells Fargo office campus and the attraction of other corporate campus developments to the area. The CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Hospital - Westover Hills and Northwest Vista College provided a large amount of health care and education employment, respectively.

Employment in the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center is mainly distributed between medium and high-wage jobs; 42% have earnings of between \$15,000 and \$40,000 annually (compared to 37% in San Antonio) and 36% have earnings of over \$40,000 annually (compared to 37% in San Antonio). Low-wage jobs with earnings of \$15,000 per year or less account for 22%, compared to 26% in San Antonio.

Annual Household Growth | 2010-2018

Highway 151 and Loop 1604

City of San Antonio

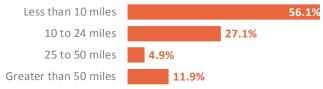
San Antonio MSA

2.0%



Most people employed in the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center do not live in the area – 98% of workers commute in from other places. Most workers come from relatively close by, with 56% commuting less than 10 miles, and another 27% commuting between 10 and 24 miles. Similarly, most people living in the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center do not work in the area – only 9% of residents are employed in the area, while 91% commute out to other locations.

# Commuting Patterns 2% of workers live in the center



# Commercial and Industrial Development

### Office

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center has approximately 3.9 million square feet of office space; inventory increased by nearly 7% annually (approximately 150,000 square feet annually) since 2005. The area has low vacancy of 1.2%, compared to 9.4% in Bexar County. The average rent of \$21.84 is higher than the \$20.93 County average and increased 1.5% annually since 2005. There is an additional 168,000 square feet of space under construction or proposed for 2019.

#### Retail

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center has 1.9 million square feet of retail space. Inventory grew rapidly from 2005 to 2018 at 9.9% and 100,000 square feet annually. Vacancy rates for retail in the area are 1.8%, lower than the County average of 4.3%. The Center's average rent of \$25.19 is significantly higher than the \$16.09 County average. There is an additional 168,000 square feet of space proposed in the Center for over the next three years. The Alamo Ranch shopper center is a large Power Center, with 464,000 square feet of retail, located just west of the regional center.

#### Industrial

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center has a small industrial inventory of 67,000 square feet. No new space has been added since 2008 and there is no industrial vacancy within the Center.

#### Hotel

There are 6 hotel properties spread throughout the Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Center including the

Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort. Four of the properties were completed between 2002 and 2009; the Marriott TownePlace was completed in 2018.

### **Employment Targets:**

The Highway 151 & Loop 1604 Regional Center is forecast to grow by 24,600 jobs from 2010 to 2040. The rate of office and retail development in the regional center, and the growth of other anchors, such as CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Hospital, indicates that the employment growth in the center is match or slightly exceeding forecast growth.

Largest Employers
Sea World
Wells Fargo
Northwest Vista College
CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Hospital





## **Previously Adopted Plans**

Unlike many areas of the city, the Highway 151 and Loop 1604 area has not had many formal city planning processes, likely due to the large amount of master planning involved in the development of Westover Hills. However, two plans have been completed: the Highway 151 Gateway Corridor Overlay District and the West/Southwest Sector Plan.

### Texas Highway 151 Gateway Corridor Overlay

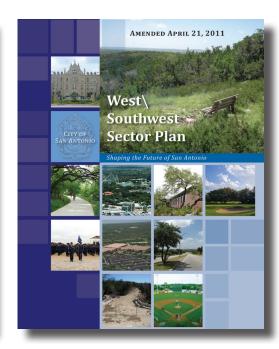
In 2005, the City of San Antonio adopted the Highway 151 Gateway Corridor Overlay District, after a planning process evaluating the desired aesthetics for new development along the corridor. This overlay designates the entirely of the Highway 151 corridor in order to protect it as a significant gateway to the city for its residents, visitors, and workers. The overlay requires front natural buffers, dark sky lighting, reduced sign height and area, masonry building materials, earthtone colors, and pedestrian circulation. These regulations extend 2,000 feet on either side of Texas Highway 151 from Highway 90 to Loop 1604. In addition to the regulations, there are points awarded to projects that meet certain criteria, such as shading their parking lots and preserving trees.

### West/Southwest Sector Plan

Prior to the adoption of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, the City of San Antonio adopted sector plans to consider future land use in broad strokes for large areas of the city. The Highway 151 and Loop 1604 area is within the West/Southwest Sector Plan, which was completed in 2011. The Sector Plan encompasses 317 square miles and includes land both within the City and within the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ).



The Plan's vision for the West/Southwest Sector was to "guide development to promote and reflect a sustainable growth plan for urban and rural areas in which the diverse resources - cultural, agricultural, military, historic, natural, recreational, and economic - are preserved and balanced to enable prosperity for all who live here today and will live here tomorrow." The Plan contains numerous recommendations for the area, and a future land use map showing, broadly, how development should proceed in the future. The land uses recommended for the area were generally focused on intensifying the existing economic and residential activity. Specific future land use designations included:



- Regional Center: included SeaWorld, the Hyatt Hill Country, Christus Santa Rosa Westover Hills Hospital, the major retail at the intersection of Culebra Road and 1604, and some parcels outside 1604 at Military Drive.
- Mixed Use Center: Most corporate campuses, and several parcels off Wiseman Blvd to the north and parcels near Northwest Vista College.
- General Urban Tier: Most of the business and apartment parcels along State Highway 151 between Ellison Drive and Rogers Road, other parcels along Westover Hills Blvd.



- Suburban Tier: Most of the newer residential developments.
- Civic Center: Northwest Vista College and Robert L Vale Middle School.
- Rural Estate Tier: Older residential neighborhoods such as Mountain View Acres, North San Antonio Hills, and Oak Creek as well as the Estates at Westover Hills neighborhood.
- Natural Tier: The golf courses around the Hyatt Hill Country and areas within the floodplain and drainage areas in the northern portions of the area.

Regional Plans with Recommendations for the Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Regional Center Area

• The SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan (2016) is a citywide plan that includes future road design alternatives for Culebra Road, from downtown out past Loop 1604. The plan includes strategies for improving access to transit, expanding the roadway to accommodate bike lanes and sidewalks, as well as improving pedestrian safety.

- The VIA Vision 2040 Long Range Plan (2016) is an update to VIA's Long Range Comprehensive Transportation Plan, which identifies priorities for the public transportation system that serves San Antonio and surrounding communities. VIA identified 12 corridors as candidates for "premium" transit their Primo bus service. The Huebner-Grissom Corridor runs from the Medical Center, to Leon Valley, and then terminates at Alamo Ranch.
- The SA Corridors Framework Plan (2017) was a collaborative effort with the community, the city and VIA and was prepared as one of the first steps in implementing VIA's Vision 2040 Plan and the City's SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. The Huebner-Grissom Corridor, identified by VIA as a candidate for Primo service in their 2040 Long Range Plan, runs from Alamo Ranch to Leon Valley and the Medical Center, along Loop 1604 from Wiseman Boulevard, and then down Culebra Road. One transit center is proposed in this Regional Center at Alamo Ranch, terminating the Huebner-Grissom Corridor. The stations in this area are categorized as "Nuture" - meaning there are limited amounts of transit-related activity nearby, but that this could be increased through partnerships and other non-development investments. The Corridors Framework Plan also recommended Medium and High Density Mixed Use along Loop 1604 at Wiseman Boulevard and Open Space in Culebra Creek.







# Natural Systems

This Regional Center still contains many acres of rolling green hills – leading to the name "Westover Hills." Other than this geographic feature and a few creeks and drainage areas, there are few natural features on the surface. Underground, however, there is a high possibility to encounter and possibly threaten certain endangered species known as karst invertebrates.

### Tree Cover

Adequate tree coverage helps an area remain cooler, even in the hot San Antonio summers. Although there has been considerable development within the Highway 151 and Loop 1604 area, from an aerial view the map is strongly green with good tree cover. The areas with the least tree cover are the Alamo Ranch retail developments (inside and outside of the city limits at Culebra and 1604) as well as the large parking lots surrounding SeaWorld. The older neighborhoods have good tree cover, as do the existing vacant parcels along Highway 151. Due to the setback and lot coverage requirements of the Highway 151 Gateway Corridor Overlay Plan, many of the developed properties have strong tree coverage, including Northwest Vista College, Wells Fargo's Wiseman Campus, and Nationwide.

### Floodplain and Watersheds

Understanding the flow of water across this area's topography is important to determining future sustainable growth patterns. The Regional Center is split between the Medina River Watershed and the Leon Creek Watershed, both of which eventually drain to the San Antonio River and ultimately to the Gulf of Mexico. The boundary between the two watersheds generally runs parallel to, and just west of, N Ellison Drive. This area is outside of the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone, which would require more strict development requirements. Three creeks run through the study area, and lie within FEMA 100 year floodplain areas. The Slick Ranch Creek runs through the southeastern portion of the area, through the Hyatt Hill Country golf course, and under Highway 151. The Caracol Creek

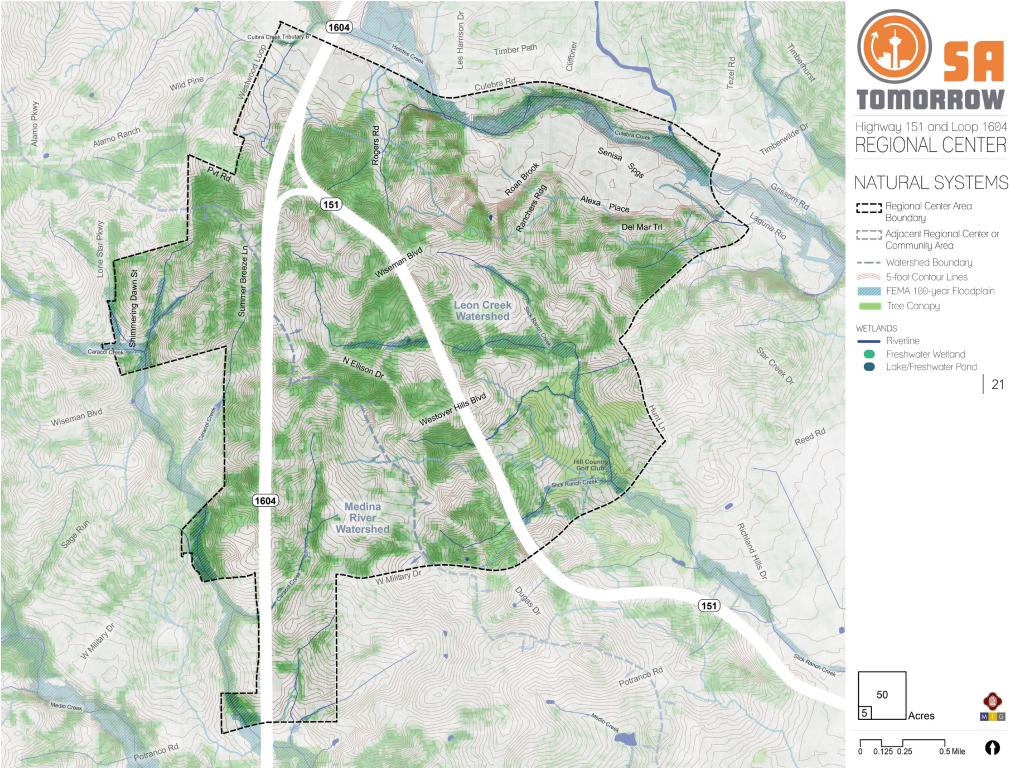
runs along the western portion of the area, through the North San Antonio Hills neighborhood. Culebra Creek is along the northern portion of the area, below Culebra Road. Other minor drainage areas and creeks are also present, but there are no major bodies of water or wetlands.

### **Endangered Karst Invertebrates**

In Bexar County there are nine endangered species of karst invertebrates, which are often referred to as "cave bugs" or sometimes "underground spiders." The small creatures spend their entire lives underground in caves and caverns formed by the erosion of limestone. The biggest threat to these species is habitat destruction, which can be caused by development on the soil surface or underground.

Due to being endangered, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has designated critical habitat areas for the invertebrates to protect them from extinction. Their known and possible habitat in Medina and Bexar County extends roughly from Castroville, across the northern part of San Antonio and almost to Bulverde and Scenic Oaks.

The Highway 151 and Loop 1604 area has an area known to contain endangered karst invertebrates (Zone 1) and an area with a high probability of containing endangered karst species (Zone 2). Zone 1 is shown outside 1604 between Military Drive and Wiseman Boulevard, and Zone 2 extends across the northern portion of the study area. Within Karst Areas 1 and 2, the City of San Antonio requires developments larger than two acres to submit a Habitat Compliance Form certifying that no species would be affected by the development activity. The confirmation of endangered karst species has modified previous plans for underpasses of Loop 1604, and changed the plans into overpasses in order to protect the karst invertebrates' habitat. The rest of the Regional Center is within Karst Zone 3, which is determined to likely not contain karst invertebrates.













## Land Use and Development Patterns

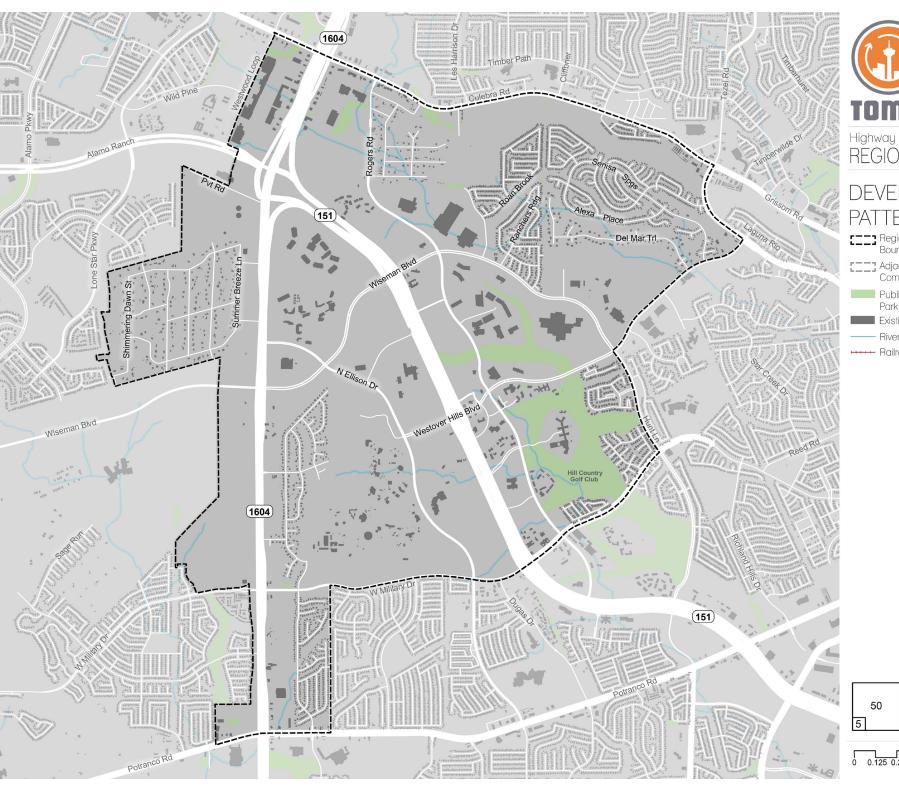
### **General Development Patterns**

The Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Regional Center is 8.5 square miles in size. Large-scale master planning accounts for much of the development in this regional center, including the Westover Hills community, as well as Sea World and the Hyatt Hill Country Resort.

Most of the existing development in this area began about 30 years ago. Sea World, Hyatt Hill Country Resort, Northwest Vista Community College and Wells Fargo Corporate Office were all built between 1985 and 2000. Westover Hills is the largest community development project in the planning area. Development began in the 1990s and has been conducted in phases. Most office campuses and corporate data centers have been developed in the past 15 years.

This planning area presents a range of employment opportunities including office campuses and data centers for companies such as Nationwide Insurance, Chase Bank, Frost Bank, and Microsoft. This area also provides healthcare services for the region, with hospitals and medical offices, including those of Christus and Baptist Hospital. Northwest Vista Community College is also located in this regional center.

Topography in this area is relatively flat, making the land conducive to conventional development forms. This, along with the availability of vacant land, indicates that this regional center is well-positioned to absorb future growth.





Highway 151 and Loop 1604 REGIONAL CENTER

## DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

- Regional Center Area Boundary
- Adjacent Regional Center or Community Area
- Public or Private Park or Open Space
- Existing Building Footprint
- River or Stream
- Railroad Line



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## Land Use and Development Patterns

### Distribution of Uses

Within the Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Area, there is a significant amount of unused vacant land, a high proportion of commercial and institutional uses along Highway 151, three or four clusters of industrial uses which include data centers, and residential areas on the edges of the Regional Center's boundary. Details on these uses and their distribution within the regional center are described below.

### Residential

Residential uses make up 25% of the land in the planning area, and the residential properties are primarily single-family homes. The older subdivisions (which were all started in the 1960s-1970s) are much lower density (North San Antonio Hills, Mountain View Acres, and Oak Creek), while newer developments since the 1990s have more of a traditional cul-de-sac pattern with slightly higher densities. Residential properties also include assisted living/retirement homes, as well as several multifamily developments. Examples of multi-family properties can be found along Highway 151 near the Hyatt Hill Country Resort, off of Loop 1604 between the highway and the Oak Creek Neighborhood, and across Highway 151 from Wells Fargo.

### Commercial

Commercial properties account for 27% of the land in the Hwy 151/ Loop 1604 Regional Center. There is major concentration of retail and restaurant activity at the intersection of Culebra Road and 1604, and a smattering of retail/auto-services/restaurants continues down Culebra Road into the city limits creating a visible, but not robust, commercial corridor. The major commercial entities within this area are either recreational (Sea World, Santikos, Hyatt Hill Country, with a few smaller hotels) or medical offices, corporate campuses, and call centers (such as Wells Fargo, Nationwide, GM Financial, Capital Group, etc). There is very little retail or restaurant activity in the middle of the study area except for Rudy's Country Store and BBQ at 151 and Westover Hills Boulevard.

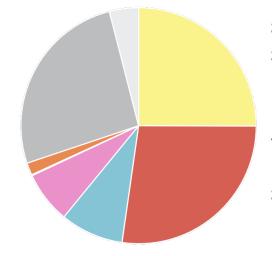
Most of the business campuses in this area have their own cafes on site. This indicate that, though there is a strong presence of office and general commercial, retail and restaurants may be lacking in the area.

#### Institutional

Properties designated as institutional uses make up 9% of the planning area, and include Northwest Vista College, Robert Vale Middle School, and Christus Santa Rosa. Christus' data center is shown as institutional as well (off of Rogers Run) and San Antonio Water System (SAWS) has a utility property west of the Highway 151 and Loop 1604 intersection.

#### Industrial

Although industrial uses account for only 7% of the total land area, this category includes data centers. Microsoft, Chevron and Valero all have data centers in this planning area. This area is particularly sutied for data centers because of several factors: low chance of natural disasters, reliable power source, high speed fiber-optic internet, and it is removed from rail and airpath vibrations. There are a few small industrial parcels on Rogers Road near Culebra, primarily auto shops. Much of TowerJazz's parcel, which contains metal manufacturing, is also undeveloped and green.

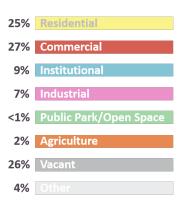


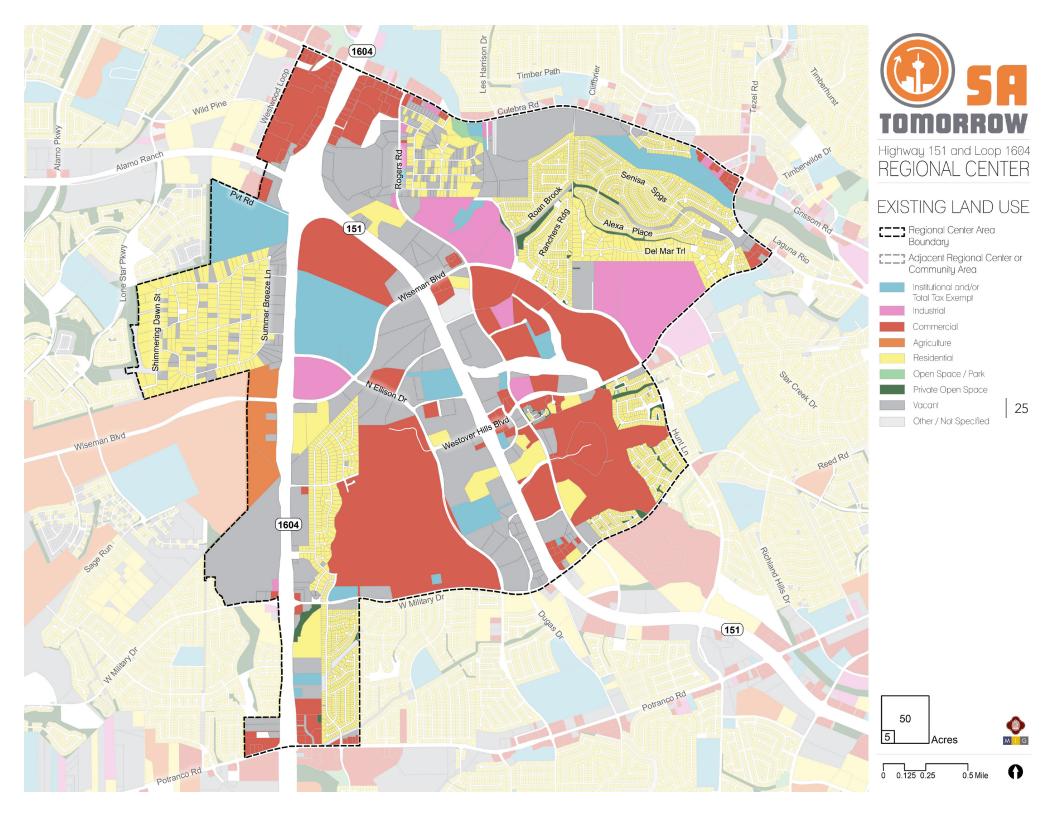
#### Vacant

Over 25% of the land in the planning area is vacant. Most of the vacant land is located along major thoroughfares: Highway 151, Loop 1604 and Culebra Road. This indicates that this area is positioned to absorb future growth, as available land is accessible and adjoining conditions complement residential and commercial uses. Methodist Hospital has an undeveloped tract east of the intersection of Hwy 151 and Loop 1604. Several properties within the older subdivisions of Mountain View Acres and North San Antonio Hills are also vacant, which provides opportunity for residential infill development. Other vacant properties in the area include a quarry behind the Mountain View Acres neighborhood land along Culebra Road which is located predominantly in the floodplain.

### Open space

Less than 1% of the land in this area is used for public parks and open spaces, although the Hyatt Hill Country golf course and Sea World's grounds provide a significant amount of privately managed open space. While there is a wealth of greenery and tree cover in the area, there are no formal parks other than small ones within the neighborhoods themselves. However, there are many more opportunities to create accessible open space as new development occurs. Northwest Vista College has some trails and a Frisbee golf course, which are publicly accessible but not well-known.











## **Mobility**

Given the amount of development that has occurred in and around this Regional Center in recent years, it is not surprising that one of the main complaints of residents, employees, and visitors is the traffic congestion. Culebra Road outside of 1604 has been listed as the 77th most congested roadway in Texas by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute. Often, cars will wait several light changes to cross Loop 1604 at rush hour. There are additional pressure points within the area, and plans to alleviate some of these with additional lane capacity along Loop 1604. But, there could be considerable improvements to the street and transit networks serving this area that would benefit drivers and pedestrians alike, resulting in less congestion and safer roadways.

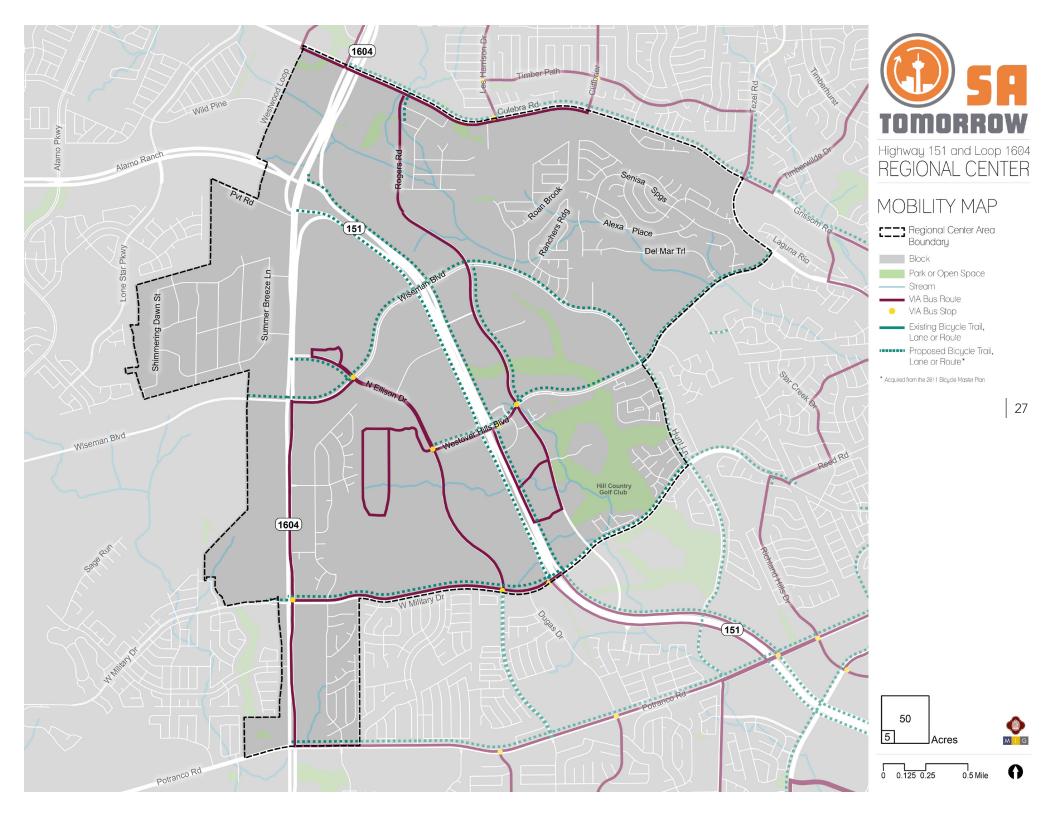
Street Network: This Regional Center is bisected by Highway 151 and bordered on the west side by Loop 1604. Both of these major highways provide access to the center, but also serve as barriers to those who need to move between different destinations within the area. The lack of a regular grid in the majority of the center creates considerable congestion on the roads that do cross the area, and has led to many neighborhoods feeling the congestion within their boundaries. The Mountain View Acres Neighborhood has stressed that their residential streets absorb much of the traffic from Culebra Road and Rogers Road, and the North San Antonio Hills Neighborhood has constructed fencing to prevent pass-throughs from the Alamo Ranch developments. Bexar County is in the process of pursuing plans to create an overpass from Alamo Ranch Parkway to Highway 151, which could help alleviate some of the congestion on Culebra Road.

Parking: There are large traditional parking lots at SeaWorld and many of the Alamo Ranch shopping centers, while other developments along Highway 151, such as Northwest Vista College, TowerJazz, and Capital Group, have more shaded and green lots, likely due to the Highway 151 Gateway Corridor Overlay District requirements and incentives.

VIA Bus Routes: There are existing VIA bus routes along Rogers Road, N Ellison Drive, and Westover Hills Boulevard serving many of the business campuses. Many students and employees of Northwest Vista College use the bus system, and there are several routes serving the campus. Additionally, Sea World has many employees who use the bus, and hosts a park and ride station at their employee parking lot. VIA and the City have worked on citywide plans to improve access to mass transit, and have identified that many of the land uses in this area could be improved to allow for increased service.

Bike Lanes: There are existing bicycle lanes along Ellison Drive and Rogers Road (below Westover Hills Blvd). These lanes are mostly "sharrows," which encourage drivers to share the road with cyclists. In certain places, these bike lanes end at the access roads to a major Highway, and are unprotected. Traffic on these streets move at rather high speeds as well, making these routes likely difficult for casual cyclists.

**Pedestrians:** It is rare to see people walking within this regional center, unless they are school children leaving a bus stop or a handful of folks walking their dogs. While the area, for the most part, has sidewalks throughout the major roads, the walking environment can feel unsafe due to long distances between destinations and fast-moving traffic on major arterials.









## **Amenities and Access**

Positioned at the intersection of two major arterials, this area has boomed with residential and economic activity and is one of the fastest-growing areas in San Antonio. Conceived in the 1980s as a significant tourism destination – with the attraction of SeaWorld and the Hyatt Hill County – the area has also created more locally-serving amenities for residents such as Northwest Vista College. However, the area still feels the effects of traffic and congestion from having multiple regional shopping, recreation, and job destinations, and substantial housing growth outside of the city limits.

Shopping

The Alamo Ranch, Culebra Market, Westwood Center, and other shopping areas at Culebra Road and Loop 1604 create a major shopping and restaurant destination for the residents of this area and those living in western Bexar and Medina counties. It features a large Santikos Casa Blanca movie theater (including bowling, arcade, bar, and restaurant) as well as major anchor retailers such as H-E-B, Target, Home Depot, Wal-Mart, and Lowe's. Local food chains such as Jim's, Summer Moon Coffee, and Kolache Factory are situated with major national restaurant and food chains throughout the center as well.

#### **Tourism**

Since SeaWorld opened its doors in 1987, this area has remained a major tourist destination for San Antonio. The 250-acre park draws over a million attendees each year, many of whom stay at nearby hotels. Major hotels such as the Hyatt Hill Country Resort and the Hilton San Antonio Hill Country are located in the area and provide convention, spa, and golf amenities as well.

#### **Education and Libraries**

Soon after the development of SeaWorld and the Hyatt Hill Country, the Alamo College district built Northwest Vista College at the intersection of Highway 151 and Loop 1604. The college provides classes primarily for part-time students looking to advance their careers, and has several relationships with nearby businesses for internships and other collaborations. The college additionally has trails and a Frisbee golf course, and is increasing their community engagement efforts.

The entirety of the Regional Center is located within the Northside Independent School District (NISD), which covers roughly from Highway 90 to Interstate 10 and from inside Loop 410 to outside Loop 1604. In addition to San Antonio residents, the district serves Helotes, Alamo Ranch, and several other developments outside the city limits. Robert L. Vale High Middle

School is located within the boundary of the Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Regional Center area, across N Ellison Drive from Sea World, with several elementary and middle schools nearby.

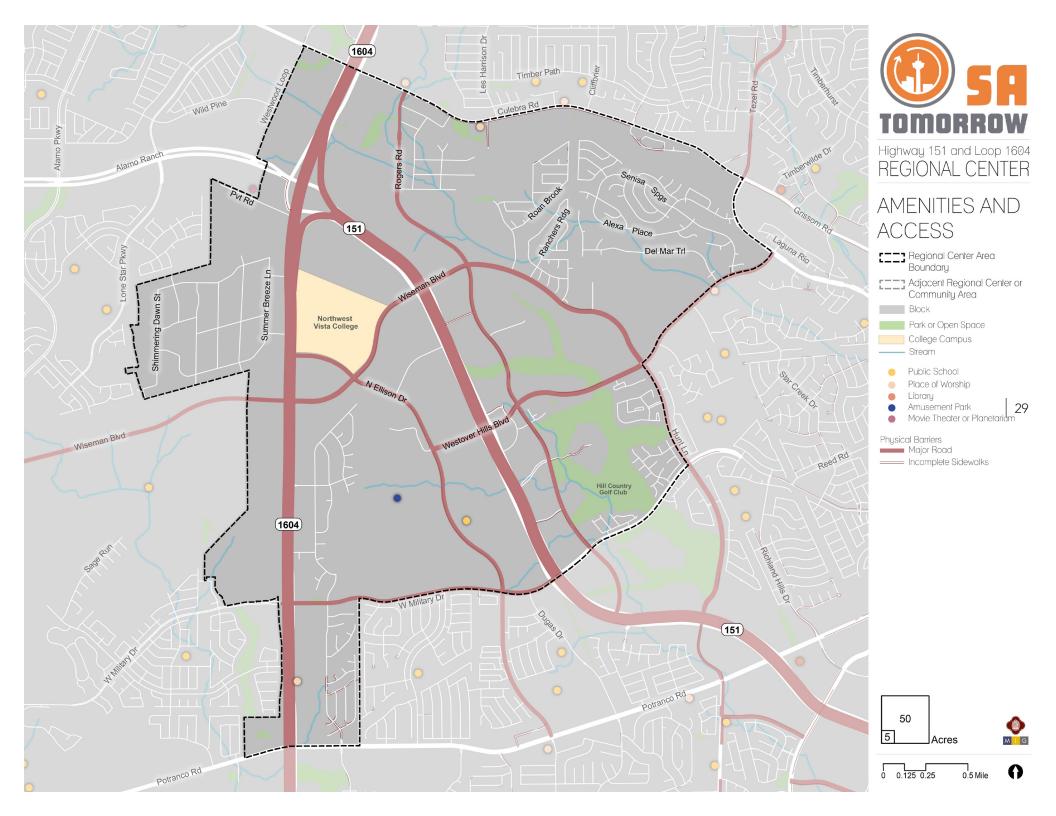
While there are no public libraries located within the boundary of this Regional Center, the Potranco Library is located a short distance south and the Great Northwest Library is across Culebra Road to the north. Both of these locations provide internet access, and other community amenities.

### Parks and Open Space

This Regional Center does not have much publicly accessible open space within its boundary. Individual neighborhoods tend to have their own park and recreation amenities provided by their homeowner associations or developments. While there are walking trails at Northwest Vista College, they are not widely known by residents to be publicly available. Outside of the study area to the north, there is a spur of the Leon Creek Greenway that begins at Culebra Road to Culebra Creek Park and also extends to Terra Oak Trailhead. There are plans to extend the greenway through the Culebra Creek right of way within the Regional Center, connecting at Cathedral Rock Park. This could add some much needed recreation space for the Regional Center. Additionally, the Government Canyon State National Area is a short distance away, and provides many recreation and outdoor activities.

### **Access and Barriers**

While there are considerable amenities available to residents and visitors of this Regional Center, accessing these amenities can be a challenge. Despite the proximity of numerous shopping destinations at Culebra Road and Loop 1604, moving between the shops can prove extremely difficult given the traffic congestion at this intersection, causing Loop 1604 to serve as a barrier. Many similar issues arise in crossing Highway 151 between the major institutions and campuses along the corridor. There is a lack of a street grid network within this Regional Center, and many residents of older suburban developments with traditional grids have complained that cars will use their streets to bypass the congestion on major roads, leading to congestion within their neighborhoods. The North San Antonio Hills neighborhood has even set up fencing to prevent cars from the Alamo Ranch developments traveling through their neighborhood to access Loop 1604. As construction is completed on the enhancements to Loop 1604, these conditions could be lessened, but creating more transit supportive land uses and transportation options would help alleviate future pressures.









## **Public Investments**

This regional center has been a significant site of public investment since the 1980s. From the creation of State Highway 151, to the attraction of SeaWorld, to the construction of reliable high speed internet and electrical systems to support the data and finance sectors. Currently there are several plans to invest in the area's transportation and utilities, in addition to other bond projects approved in 2017.

### Transportation

Perhaps the most apparent project currently under construction in the area is the expansion of Loop 1604 from a four-lane divided highway to a four-lane expressway between Culebra Road and Potranco Road. This project will also construct overpasses at Wiseman Boulevard, Military Drive West and Potranco Road. This is part of a five-year regional transportation plan announced in 2014, which funds the project through \$62.5 million in local funds from the Advanced Transportation District. The expansion should be completed in 2019.

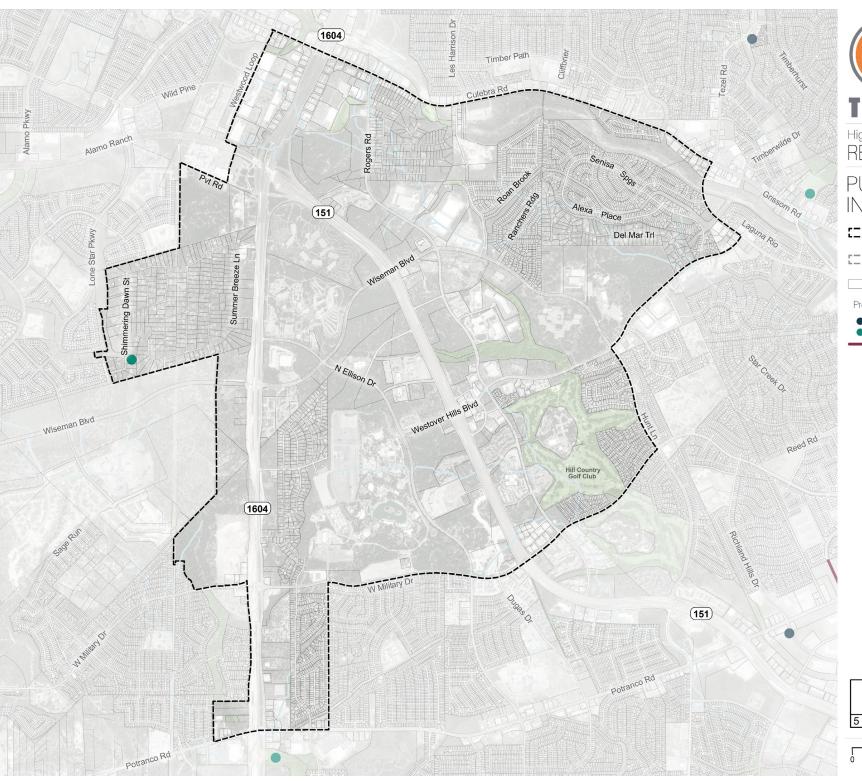
### **Electricity and Internet**

Due to the location of high-speed fiber optic internet and reliable electricity, the Highway 151 and Loop 1604 Regional Center has become a hub for data centers and operations centers. CPS energy, which provides power to residents of San Antonio

and the surrounding area, has located their own data center within Westover Hills, and has begun marketing the City of San Antonio as a prime location for data centers. Their own data center, opened in 2015, was the third of its kind nationally to become LEED certified due to its energy efficiency. Fiber-optic internet has been available in the area for many years, and was provided by Southwestern Bell, with plans for Google and other fiber providers to expand to the area.

### **Bond Projects**

The voter-approved 2017-2022 Bond included one project within the regional center, a park within the North San Antonio Hills neighborhood was approved with a cumulative budget of \$532,000. The project is still in the design phase. Adjacent to the regional center, there are several other bondfunded parks projects planned, such as Sports Facilities near the Potranco Branch Library with a cumulative budget of \$2M, Caracol Creek Park at Loop 1604 and Potranco Road with a budget of \$400,000, Culebra Creek Park north of Culebra Road with a budget of \$368,000, and Oscar Perez Park north of Culebra Road with a budget of \$368,000. There are also several planned streets projects outside the area: Ingram Road (Potranco Road to Dead End), West Military Drive & Ingram Road connectors, and the intersection of Heath Road and Grissom Road.





Highway 151 and Loop 1604 REGIONAL CENTER

## **PUBLIC** INVESTMENTS

Regional Center Area Boundary

Adjacent Regional Center or Community Area

Parcels

Proposed 2017 Bond Program

Facility Park

Street

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