

# Implementing the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan

## How Did We Get Here?

The City of San Antonio has made long-range plans going as far back as the 1930s. The City's approach to planning and working with communities has evolved throughout this time to reflect changing conditions, challenges, and urban planning best practices.

### I 1988-2013

From 1988 to 2013, over 30 neighborhood and community plans were developed by the City with active neighborhood and community participation.

### II 2010-2011

In 2010 and 2011, the City adopted Sector Plans. This was the City's first attempt to address growth and development in a consistent manner across all areas of the City, including areas left out of previous Neighborhood and Community Plans.

### III 2013

In 2013, City Council was presented with demographic projections that showed the projected growth of an additional 1.1 million residents by the year 2040.

### IV 2014

In 2014, San Antonio began the momentous effort of developing a modern Comprehensive Plan that recognized previous planning efforts, and strategically planned for the anticipated growth of San Antonio's population over the next 25 years.

### V 2016

In August 2016, City Council adopted the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan, SA Tomorrow Multimodal Transportation Plan, and SA Tomorrow Sustainability Plan.

## Building on SA 2020

The Comprehensive Plan engaged the community in the refinement and implementation of the vision for San Antonio established by SA 2020.

## Development and Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan

The planning process for the Comprehensive Plan began in Fall of 2014 and extended over a year and a half. A variety of opportunities were offered for key partners, stakeholders, and the larger community to provide input and feedback. The planning effort was supported with stakeholder interviews, Plan Element Working Groups, neighborhood workshops, public meetings, and other outreach events.

## What is the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan?

The SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan is the City's long-range policy document for future growth, development, land use, infrastructure, and public services for the entire City of San Antonio.

The Comprehensive Plan shapes the places we will live, work, shop, and play. The Plan provides City departments, residents, institutions, businesses, and other stakeholders with a strategic direction for decision-making and community investment.

The entire comprehensive plan can be found online in e-format at [www.sacompplan.com](http://www.sacompplan.com).

# New Planning Framework

The new Comprehensive Planning Program (CPP) builds on a rich history of plan-making and is responsive to new challenges and opportunities.

## A New Comprehensive Planning Program

Under the new approach adopted by City Council in 2016, the Planning Department is developing a series of Sub-Area plans, which include:

- Regional Center Plans
- Community Area Plans
- Corridor Plans

Sub-Area plans are detailed plans prepared for smaller geographic areas within the city. The areas can encompass neighborhoods, corridors, or other types of special districts with cohesive characteristics and similar challenges. Sub-Area plans deal with many of the same topics as a Comprehensive Plan, but include a greater level of detail and specificity.

With an updated planning framework, Sub-Area plans allow every community in San Antonio an opportunity to participate in making and updating plans for a defined regional, community, or corridor area of San Antonio every ten years, ensuring that plans stay responsive to the current needs of each community.

With over 300 registered neighborhood and homeowner associations in the City, it proved ineffective to create and update a plan for each in a reasonable amount of time. This new approach allows the City's Planning Department to equitably plan for all areas of the City including:

- Registered neighborhoods that are within an adopted land use plan;
- Registered neighborhoods not within an adopted land use plan area; and
- Neighborhoods that are not part of a registered neighborhood or homeowner association.

## Neighborhood Planning

While the new approach to San Antonio's Comprehensive Planning Program (CPP) does not include creating new neighborhood plans or facilitating neighborhood plan updates, the program emphasizes respect for and integration of key aspects of existing neighborhood plans into the new Regional Center and Community Area Plans.

Chapter 17 of the adopted Comprehensive Plan states:

Sub-Area Plans are intended to provide a more coordinated, efficient and effective structure for neighborhood planning. Existing and future neighborhood planning will be integrated into the planning for regional centers and community planning areas. Neighborhoods will become integral sub-geographies of these sub-areas while also receiving special attention through chapters and/or sections reflecting specific opportunities, challenges, recommendations and priorities from each participating neighborhood. Neighborhood and community plans should be respected as they are integrated into the sub-area plans. (Sec. 17.10)



Above: Brooks Area Regional Center Community Meeting #3 at Stinson Airport.

# Sub-Area Plans



Upon adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in 2016, the Planning Department initiated development of 30 Sub-Area plans based on the updated Comprehensive Planning Program (CPP), beginning six plans per year for five years.

## Sub-Area Plans: Phase 1

Implementation of the SA Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan began in Spring 2017 with the following six Sub-Areas:

- Brooks Area Regional Center
- Downtown Area Regional Center
- Midtown Area Regional Center
- Medical Center Area Regional Center
- UTSA Area Regional Center
- Westside Community Area

## Community Involvement

A diverse range of residents, neighborhood associations, businesses, institutions, and community organizations have been involved in developing the Sub-Area plans. Input is welcome and encouraged in order to make the plans the best that they can possibly be.

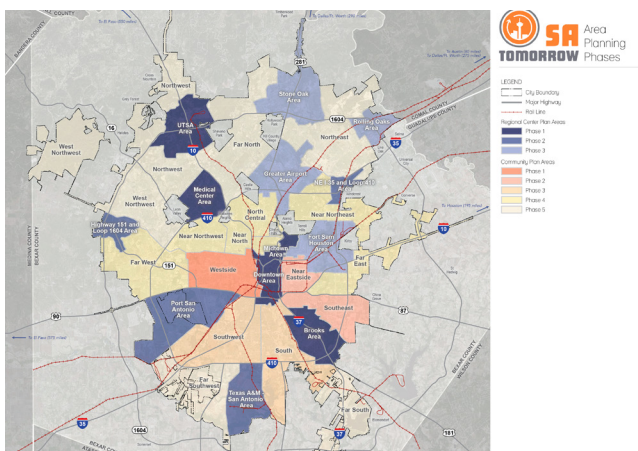
In Spring 2017, every registered neighborhood association in one of the six Sub-Areas was invited to appoint a representative to the planning team for their area. As with the first set of six plans, the Planning Department will contact registered neighborhood associations before each new phase of plans to share information and begin learning about local issues and concerns.

The Planning Department has involved the public and neighborhoods as follows:

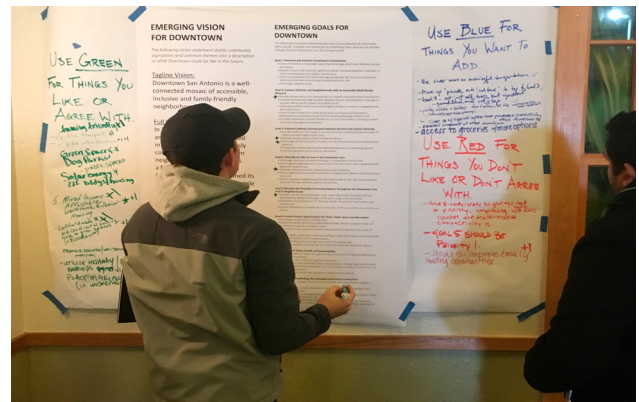
- Community meetings
- An advisory planning team comprised of community members and neighborhood association representatives
- A project webpage that provides information on the planning process and an online comment function to weigh in on components to the draft plan
- Email and social media updates
- Visits to neighborhood association meetings
- Focus group interviews

## Ongoing Work Plan

Once each group of plans are completed, city staff will implement a series of large-area rezoning cases and update the City's Unified Development Code to ensure consistency with the adopted land use maps of each Sub-Area plan.



Above: Map of SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Planning



Right: Downtown Area Regional Center Community Meeting #2 at Roosevelt Park

# Integrating Neighborhood Plans

Although many neighborhoods in San Antonio were never part of neighborhood planning, neighborhood residents who participated in creating neighborhood and community plans prior to SA Tomorrow have told the City's Planning Department that, where they exist, the original plans should continue to serve multiple roles:

- Inform City policy, unless the previous plan conflicts with the SA Tomorrow Sub-Area Plan.
- Provide information for new residents, new neighborhood leadership, and city staff to understand past neighborhood priorities and issues.
- Relay history from the neighborhood perspective.
- Advocate for City services, resources, and local priorities for neighborhoods.

Sub-Area Plans will honor and integrate previously adopted neighborhood and community plans while providing an equitable path for all neighborhoods to participate in planning, to create priorities, and to advocate for implementing their priorities in the future. Previous neighborhood and community plans will be respected and integrated into sub-area plans in three ways:

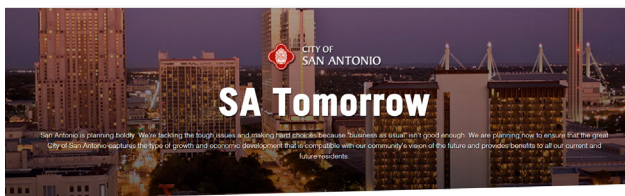
- The previously adopted neighborhood and community plans will be highlighted as a foundational part of each

Sub-Area Plan. Where a previous plan and the rest of the Sub-Area Plan have conflicting policies or priorities, the Sub-Area Plan will be the City policy.

- The Neighborhood Profile and Priorities Chapter for each neighborhood in a Sub-Area Plan will identify unique local issues and priorities from each neighborhood, drawing both from the original neighborhood or community plan (if one exists), and current neighborhood engagement.
- Recommendations from neighborhood plans will be integrated into the subject matter sections of the Sub-Area plan. For example, the amenities section of a Sub-Area Plan may include a priority project from a neighborhood plan, such as construction of a greenway trail, if the project is significant to several neighborhoods or the city as a whole. Otherwise, such a project can be highlighted in the Neighborhood Profiles and Priorities chapter if input from neighborhood residents indicates the project is a high priority for the neighborhood. In any case, the recommendation would remain in the original neighborhood plan that will be highlighted as a foundational part of the Sub-Area plan.

In addition to the extensive conversations that the Planning Department has had with neighborhood residents and neighborhood associations, and the reading and learning about neighborhood and community plans that has already occurred, the following steps are being taken to understand neighborhood priorities from prior neighborhood and community plans:

- Thorough review of the previously adopted plans.
- Hold additional meetings with neighborhood residents.
- Meet with neighborhood association boards and former planning team members that contributed to the neighborhood planning process.



Stay involved online at  
[www.SATomorrow.com](http://www.SATomorrow.com) or  
[www.sanantonio.gov/planning](http://www.sanantonio.gov/planning)