

## Vision & Development Framework – Group I

\*Notes based on discussion of the River North District Master Plan, sections:

River Corridor, pages 2:7 - 2:12

Pearl Brewery Connection, pages 2:19 - 2:20

Museum Neighborhood, pages 2:21 - 2:24

Madison Sq. Park Neighborhood, pages 2:37 - 2:38

### I. Opening Questions:

A. Why does the TIRZ not have the same boundaries as the River North District Master Plan?

1. The boundaries can change
2. TIF tools can also be used outside of the boundaries for the following reasons:
  - a. Public Spaces
  - b. Affordable housing
  - c. Mass Transportation

B. Does this reconfigure the districts in the Downtown Neighborhood Plan?

1. Yes, parts A, B, C and R
2. there are also other plan amendments going on - - this change is not happening in a vacuum

C. Did we agree to using the current appendix?

1. No – they can be changed because they are just guiding principles

### II. Comments from Comment Cards

A. The towers on the river should be reviewed

1. Concerns:
  - a. is this appropriate?
  - b. Is everyone being treated equally?
2. Other sub-committees should address this issue as well

B. Affordable housing should be considered and at least 15% should be affordable

C. The parking plan is very important and should be addressed

### III. General vision comments

A. we should decide what this area should look like before we plan for it

B. How do you address property owner's concerns about how their property can be used in the future?

1. Reminder: this is not a taking, there needs to be a community will to purchase their lands at Fair Market Value if any parks are to be created
  - a. However – is there a WILL to create more open space or should there be something else in the area?
2. Perhaps it would be better to have the language in the plan but the exact locations not pinpointed on the map

3. One of the proposed plans in on a church parking lot, the continued viability of the congregation could be harmed if a park is built on their parking lot. They will not be able to expand.
- C. This is an opportunity to make buildings and organizations more than “weekend uses”
- D. This area is dead, how do we get out of the mess that we are in now/
- E. The plan states that ultimately this will be done.
  1. This is a problem because we do not want to declare that once the plan is passed there is no leeway for small changes

**IV. River North District Master Plan pg 1.6 – River Corridor**

- A. The 20 story buildings along the river create a problem and can become cavernous
  1. the Rio 2&3 located in the area should protect it
    - a. Is this plan meant to supersede the RIO Overlay?
  2. This 20 story building concept is a deviation from the current Downtown Neighborhood Plan
- B. Why is this project linking to Pearl Brewery, it can provide a pedestrian link in other places. The development at Pearl is not the only one that should be called out.
  1. the link should be addressed as IH 35 and IH 37 and no specific name should be suggested
- C. This should be linked to RIO-1
  1. there is already a pedestrian linkage planned due to the visitor’s tax
- D. There should not be a uniform expression along the river and more changing atmospheres as you go
- E. The setbacks expressed are a problem
  1. they should remain the same as they already are for equal opportunity among property owners
  2. Would the consistent setback among all properties lead to tunneling?
  3. Perhaps the setback would harm smaller property owners
  4. This section of the plan does not even refer to setbacks is actually referring to open space that is evenly distributed along the river.
- F. The plan is very hard to understand and should not be written in “planner-speak”
- G. We should take a tour of the river as a planning team. There is as much as a 18 foot difference between the river and the street so a linear park system and sidewalks at street level would not make sense because they would not link to the river.
- H. There are also pocket parks in the River Improvements Projects that are not noted in this plan
- I. Another bullet should be added that states:
  1. The plan should build on existing and planned open space

Tim Cone will Report out to the group

**Consultant Questions**

1. Are you aware that the River can be as far as 18 feet below street level at some points?
  - a. Knowing this, would you change the location of the sidewalks and linear parks at the street level?
2. Was this plan created with the notion that it would supersede all aspects of the RIO overlays?
3. Do you feel that the 20 story buildings along the river will create a tunneling effect at the river level?
4. Once the plan is adopted, is it the final say in the River North District or is there some wiggle room (especially pertaining to the location of parks)?

**Vision & Development Framework – Group II**

\*Notes based on discussion of the River North District Master Plan, sections:  
Performing Arts Neighborhood, pages: 2:13 - 2:18  
Broadway Corridor, pages: 2:25 - 2:28  
Avenue B, pages: 2:29 - 2:32  
Alamo Corridor, pages: 2:33 - 2:34  
Maverick Park, page: 2:35 - 2:36

**QUESTIONS FOR CONSULTANTS**

Was property availability considered?  
Why was the trolley routed down Avenue B instead of Broadway?  
Was angled parking considered for Broadway?

**2.1.2 PERFORMING ARTS NEIGHBORHOOD**

- Discussed proposed location for “park once” garages & repertory theatre
  - Have property owners agreed?
  - Staff reminded group that the drawings in the plan are concepts
- Team members suggested adding additional “park once” garages to better serve Municipal Auditorium and other venues
- Staff raised question: Is the Performing Arts plan concept appropriate and agreeable for that particular area?
  - Group discussed: Are venues too scattered?
    - Plan works with existing facilities and building stock
    - OK, if route between venues is interesting and designed for pedestrians
  - Area is already attraction to visitors, could be attraction for new residents in the area
  - Was property availability considered?
- Staff asked if plan should better clarify that drawings are concepts
  - Group agreed there is confusion about what is a concept and what will be required

- Group agreed the vision (Performing Arts Neighborhood) makes sense
- Group discussed and suggested the need for more public art woven throughout the area (both permanent and temporary) to give area character

## 2.1.5 BROADWAY CORRIDOR

- Concern was expressed with reducing the number of vehicle travel lanes. Other group members suggested it might be beneficial:
  - Would be good for traffic calming
  - Slower cars improve pedestrian environment
  - Broadway may eventually get light rail or other mass transit. Will cars always be as necessary?
- Why was the trolley routed down Avenue B instead of Broadway? Avenue B dead-ends at McCullough – Is that the most fluid and appropriate route for the area?
  - Transit should be focused on Broadway
  - Group concurred that prohibiting parking during rush hour is an unmanageable proposal
  - Suggested that plan incorporate angled parking on Broadway (works well in Fredericksburg and along other main streets)
  - Back-in angle parking may be another option to reduce travel speed along Broadway
- Group discussed mid-rise, mixed-use buildings proposed for Broadway Corridor. Some disagreement about appropriate building height.
  - Concept of school in neighborhood is good – but is Broadway an appropriate location?
  - Reuse of existing buildings is good idea
  - Some property owners may want high rise
  - Concept for Broadway Corridor is agreeable but buildings should not be limited to mid-rise
  - Need for height continuity between buildings
  - Market will dictate appropriate height
  - Height is not important if the street level is designed for pedestrians
  - Potential for setting buildings back from street facade as height increases (pyramid) reduces visual impact of greater height

## 2.1.6 AVENUE B (Discussion truncated by break-out group time limit)

- Concern expressed – Plan as currently written is a big shift from existing conditions, to a residential and transit-oriented neighborhood
- It makes more sense to locate transit lines along Broadway rather than Avenue B

## NEXT STEPS

\*Sub-committee group members agreed that additional meetings would be useful to continue the discussion and review the remaining Plan sections.

## Parks and Open Space

\*Notes based on discussion of the River North District Master Plan, pages 2:41 – 2:54

### Group Discussion

- Discussed property owner rights and whether or not they were consulted during the process; wanted to know how the specific placement of parks, land acquisitions, and improvement projects would impact property owners.
- Discussed the implementation and placement of pocket parks.
- Discussed parking and whether or not the development of River North will have a negative impact on San Antonio family traditions like camping out for fiesta seats.
- Discussed the consequences of having the River Walk at a level lower than the businesses on the River Walk.
- Discussed potential issues with placement of wastewater treatment facility (planning team wanted more information regarding this)

### Questions for Consultants

- Why was Travis Park left out of the plan?
- Regarding parks and open spaces, will property owners be restricted as to how their property will be used?
- Where are the bike and walking lanes?
- Who regulates the linear parks along the river?
- Regarding Community Park A) why was that particular space designated for water treatment?
- Will there be an increase in law enforcement once the parks and open spaces are built?
- Can or will the larger parks be broken up into pocket parks?
- Please elaborate on the water recycling aspect.
- Will there be enough open spaces to walk to?
- Will the development of Freeway Park H) hinder the Fiesta family tradition of families camping out to watch the parade?
- Will the water features be of a smaller scale and conserve water?

## Mobility Plan

\*Notes based on discussion of River North District Master Plan, pages 2:55 - 2:66\*

### 2.3.1 Context Sensitivity Solutions

The Vision and Plan section of the RNDMP will ultimately influence the Mobility Plan section.

Question: "Does City maintain inventory of sidewalk conditions?"

Answer: "The City is currently conducting inventory".

Question: "Who is responsible for maintaining sidewalks?"

Answer: "Staff is researching a response".

\*CQ= To what extent does the RNDMP accommodate all wheelchair users?

### 2.3.2 Recommended Interventions

McCullough Avenue is equally as important as Broadway Street. It's accessible to Interstates 35 & 37.

*SUGGESTED EDIT:* First sentence on p 2:56 should be edited to read: "Broadway is to be more heavily reconstructed" (P 2:56)

Question: "How will the new proposed streets be built?"

Answer: If property owners find that the proposed street on their property is beneficial, the RNDMP will support developing property in this manner.

Some property owners have expressed opposition to proposed road along the River in RNDMP.

\*CQ=Why was road along the River proposed in RNDMP?

Some proposed streets may reduce property's value.

Some PT members support new streets but feel they must be contingent on property owners' approval.

Property owners should be notified about proposed streets.

RNDMP shouldn't automatically yield to property owners' opposition to new proposed streets and believes it may set precedent for planning implementation.

\*CQ: Would eminent domain be used to build new streets?

**2.3.3 Connectivity**

RNDMP doesn't clearly show connectivity recommendations.

*SUGGESTED EDIT:*

Include a map or map(s) showing:

- existing connections across/under freeway
- existing freeway access routes
- proposed new connections across/under freeway

**2.3.4 Street Design**

Ensure follow through the implementation section of RNDMP.

**2.3.5 Park Once**

\*CQ=How does park once plan coordinate with overall intensity of RNDMP?

Notify property owners of parking garage proposals.

\*CQ=How will the proposed garages get built? Will eminent domain be used?

How has the COSA addressed similar master plan issues in previous plans?

\*CQ= Do we really need a site specific parking map? Or can a formula based approach be utilized?

**2.3.6 Parking Plan**

\*CQ= Does the requirement for all parking for dwellings provided on site include guest parking?

\*CQ=Is residential community parking encouraged in RNDMP?

Businesses in RNDMP area could utilize and benefit from shared parking.

**2.3.7 Transit, Pedestrians, & Cyclists**

NONE

**Consultant Questions from Comment Cards**

1. In reference to p 2:11, what information is available concerning any noise level for steel-wheel-track-based street trollies?
2. In reference to p 2:49, who yields the property for the Alamo Streetscape? What are the right-of-way-issues?
3. In reference to p 2:38, what is the purpose of the Park-Once at St. Mary's and Baltimore?
4. In reference to p 2:33, who gives up the real estated for the proposed Alamo Corridor?
5. In reference to p 2:13, concerning the area in paragraph 4 dealing with parcels of land currently used for the surface parking-What is meant by "recycling some of that land for high-density structured parking" and how will that be accomplished?

6. In reference to p 2:6, explain how the Park-Once strategy (which is said to, "Multiply the value of the existing and future investments in parking infrastructure") will work.
7. In reference to p1:6, what type of entity is Park-Once?
8. In reference to p1:IV, does Park-Once Utility have the right of Eminent Domain?
9. Should we consider street car on Broadway?
10. Should we consider hiring additional expert on transit (IE street car)?
11. In reference to section 2.1, Vision and Plan, p 2:11:
  - 2nd paragraph, 1st Line: "Two such modes of transit are already in operation in the Downtown..."  
Why is existing bus service not being considered as current transit?
  - 3rd paragraph, 3rd line: "and a coordinated system of signage and transit stop shelters will be designed to make navigation..."  
Is the intent to coordinate w/ VIA?
  - 5th paragraph, 5th line "...alleviate in part the parking crisis Downtown."  
What crisis? Do any of the COSA sponsored parking studies support this comment?
  - 6th paragraph - last lines "The Street Trolley can become the economic engine for the development of River North."  
Should VIA be considered "player" for integration of this important transit element? Or intent is for private developer to operate as well?

**Suggested Edits from Discussion**

First sentence on p 2:56 should be edited to read: "Broadway is to be more heavily reconstructed"

Include a map or map(s) showing:

- existing connections across/under freeway
- existing freeway access routes
- proposed new connections across/under freeway

**Suggested Edit From Comment Cards**

Delete Park-Once Plan from the RNDMP

**Additional Suggested Edits & Questions**

In reference to 2.3, MOBILITY PLAN, p 2:65:

A. Transit

1st paragraph: "VIA Metropolitan Transit in cooperation with the COSA plans to significantly enhance transit options and services within Central San Antonio through development of a multi-modal system that will first serve the core and ultimately mature into a regional system using a potential combination of buses, streetcars, river bus, and bus rapid-transit."

- What plan to enhance Central SA?
  - "regional system" should also mention Light-Rail

Transit Policies

1. "Leverage ridership through Transit-Oriented Housing"

Suggestion: "through Transit Oriented Development w/ enhance housing opportunities." Other options of walking (within district) and bus (commute from outside district) may be more likely

5th line: "...numerous benefits is to provide housing..."

Suggestion: "provide housing and services that cater to..."

2. Increase Transit Service

"The commitment toward providing maximum access to and from the plan area while minimizing the need to provide parking for everyone in the region is fundamental to the revitalization effort."

Question: Is "region" used here as SA region?

Suggestion: delete "for everyone in the region"

3. Diversify Transit Service.

Suggestion: insert "transit" to read "...through a diverse and responsive array of transit choices."

4. "Coordinate transit routing and stops with the location of parking supplies".

Comment: Very important issue! Should be coordinated with ridership demands and destinations.

**Additional Comments Pertaining to Vision and Plan**

- In reference to 2.1, VISION & PLAN, p 2:11, 5th paragraph, 3rd Line, "would use the street trolley for their daily commute." If the trolleys are being used for internal RN circulation, the "commute" option will be limited within such a finite district. Other options of walking (within district) and bus (commute from outside district) may be more likely.
- In reference to Chapter 3 Implementation, 4. The Street Trolley - pg 3:6, 3.e: This section (as well as many others in plan) notes that the River North Plan is heavily associated with/dependent upon AT&T's expansion plans/impact. AT&T recent announcements may have significant impact on development catalyst, parking issues

# RIVER NORTH DISTRICT MASTER PLAN

2<sup>nd</sup> Planning Team Meeting, 7/28/2008

Sub-Committee Notes Compiled

## Additional comments submitted in Excel Spreadsheet form below:

Street Name/# w/ Existing Bus Routes	ROW	Eff. Radius	Travel Lane Width	# of same direction lanes	Adjacent Transit Lane use	Movement	Design Speed	Existing Bus Route on Street	Notes
Broadway 1	80'	18'	10'	1	Pkg	Free	35	Yes	Adjacent Pkg lane = 10'. Recommendation: Revise Traffic lanes to 11', and reduce parking lane to 9'; this would, however, also reduce the effective radius to 17'.
Avenue B 2	60'	23'	10'	1	Pkg	Free	25	No	Bulbouts at mid and end block.
Alamo 3	72'	18'	13'	1	Pkg	Free	30	Yes	Effective Radius may be of issue at new intersection condition. Traffic lane width could be reduced by 2' each (to 11') and either a) give 2' to each sidewalk realm, or reduce one sidewalk by 1', add the add'l 4' from traffic lanes and provide Class II bike lane.
McCullough 11	80'	23'	16'	1	Pkg	Free	35	Yes	Existing bus route for one block. Excessive Travel lane widths (16') allow passing condition. Recommendation: Reduce Traffic lanes to 11' and provide 5' Class II Bike lane in each direction
River Bridges 12	50'	n/a	18'	1	Bridge	Free	25	Yes	Recommendation: Reduce traffic Lanes to 13' and provide 5' Bike Lane each direction
St. Mary's 19	55'	23'	12'	1	Pkg	Free	30	Yes	Adequate. Sidewalk (existing) on each side is not same width. Future condition could reduce traffic lane to 11' and provide 2' of additional sidewalk and/or parking.
<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	Some street sections noted on the Street Network Plan (#1,3,12,19) will also serve existing bus fleet. These sections have been reviewed for appropriate bus accommodations. Comments noted above.								
	QUINCY - ROW is indicated as 20' on Street NewWork Plan chart on page 3:22								
	Use a 30' clear no parking zone at intersections for increased Transit turning radii								