A Closer View of District 2

August 2012 Quarterly Newsletter, Issue 10

Around the Community

What a wonderful summer in District 2! Learn more about efforts of the **Alamodome Gardens** neighborhood, and the **Ella Austin District 2 Scholarship**.

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Economic Development Projects

Review details of the Alamo Brewery and Red Berry Estate projects. Also learn about the new Wal-Mart on Foster Road.

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Redistricting & Pre-K 4 SA

The City of San Antonio has been hard at work on a variety of policy issues this summer. The **Redistricting** process is well underway and the Mayor is working to energize our community about the **Pre-K 4 SA** initiative.

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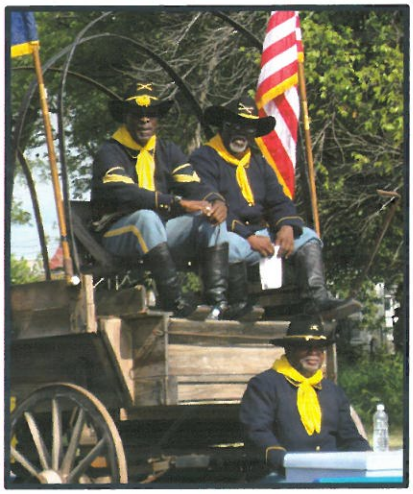

Note from Councilwoman Taylor

I hope you and your family had a spectacular summer! The next few months will be very exciting and very busy. The City Council will consider the proposed Redistricting map, the Pre-K 4 SA proposal, and the proposed Fiscal Year 2013 Budget. I encourage you to provide feedback to my office on these important issues so that I can voice your support or concerns and make the best decisions for District 2.

I am very excited about several wonderful events coming up in the District. San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside will host their first Annual Music Festival in October and Mark's Outing (formerly Fatty's Burgers) will host the 3rd Annual Hamburger Festival. I look forward to working with you over the next couple of months and hope to see you around the District.

Sincerely,
Ivy R. Taylor
Councilperson, District 2

Ella Austin District 2 Scholarship

On June 18th, students submitted their applications for the Ella Austin District 2 Scholarship. Two high school seniors—one from Sam Houston and one from Roosevelt High School—will each be awarded a $1,500 scholarship once they complete 50 service hours at the Ella Austin Community Center.

The scholarship recipients of the Ella Austin District 2 Scholarship are Tijuana Jones from Sam Houston High School and Victoria Garcia from Roosevelt High School. Tijuana was captain of the soccer team, a member of the National Honor Society and recipient of the 2010 Youth Against Gang Activity Coleman Achievement Award. She maintained an "A" average and would like to become a math teacher. She will attend the University of Texas at San Antonio in the fall and wants to pursue a Master's degree in education upon completion of her undergraduate degree.

Victoria Garcia graduated from Roosevelt High School in three years. She participated in the Roosevelt Theatre Company and volunteered for CPS Energy programs. Victoria was able to maintain a 3.95 GPA while working as a hostess and cashier at Shoney's Restaurant. Victoria will attend Our Lady of the Lake University this fall and would like to become a Child Advocacy Attorney and a social worker.

Members of the education subcommittee of the District 2 Accountability Committee selected the District 2 Scholarship recipients. Students were awarded based on financial need, academic achievement, community involvement and work experience.

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Alamodome Gardens

The Alamo Gardens neighborhood association began as a small group who went door-to-door to meet neighbors and ask for feedback about the area. Eventually a group formed that wanted to meet regularly to get to know one another, discuss issues of concern, and consider what they could do as community members to address those issues.

The structure of the group reflects their goal of working as a team and building leadership. A group of five works together to lead the association. Instead of "President" & "Vice President", they have a "Leadership Team." They do this so that no one person feels burdened by the weight of the organization, but also so that they are stronger and able to accomplish more.

Meetings are always positive and upbeat. They believe that all share responsibility, not only for the neighborhood association, but also for the community in general. Association members are there because they care about the neighborhood and want to make it a better place. Everyone feels like they have a voice and something to offer. The Alamodome Gardens Association is very proud of their neighborhood and look forward to seeing what they can continue to accomplish together on the city's near east side

District 2 Public Safety

The San Antonio Police Department (SAPD), City staff and Councilwoman Taylor are taking proactive steps to enhance safety in District 2. On June 5th Councilwoman Taylor held a community meeting at SJ Davis Middle School to provide updates on programs and initiatives that have been developed to combat crime and increase safety in District 2 neighborhoods. Some efforts include Operation Triple Beam, strategic placement of lights and cameras, Midnight Basketball and the possible implementation of gang injunctions in District 2.

Operation Triple Beam Alliance

Operation Triple Beam Alliance was an intense four-month multi-agency tactical approach that targeted violent street gangs in nine districts within the Eastside Substation. From January to May, Operation Triple Beam Alliance seized 72 guns, 33,614 grams of marijuana, 2,872 grams of cocaine, 367 grams of heroin, and 1,056 grams of meth. This effort also resulted in 344 felony arrests, 20 federal firearms/narcotics arrests, and the arrests of 310 gang members. Law enforcement agencies will continue to closely monitor key areas in District 2.

Midnight Basketball

At the January community meeting on community safety, several participants suggested re-starting midnight basketball. In response the Midnight Basketball League was reestablished in partnership with Eastside Promise Neighborhood to focus on outreach programming for at risk youth. Beginning in June, District 2 youth competed in basketball games on Friday and Saturday nights at the Davis Scott YMCA. Sponsors of the Midnight Basketball League include United Way, the Davis Scott YMCA, Generations Federal Credit Union, and Spurs Youth League. The Midnight Basketball League season ends August 4th. For more information please contact Daniel Zamora at 210-643-9539 or Todd Slaughter at 210-643-9532.

Gang Injunctions

Councilwoman Taylor and SAPD are exploring the possibility of using gang injunctions to prohibit gang related individuals from associating with one another inside a designated geographic area for a set period of time. Since January of this year, SAPD has been actively working to develop a list of people for an injunction in Wheatley Courts and IH-10/MLK Blvd area.

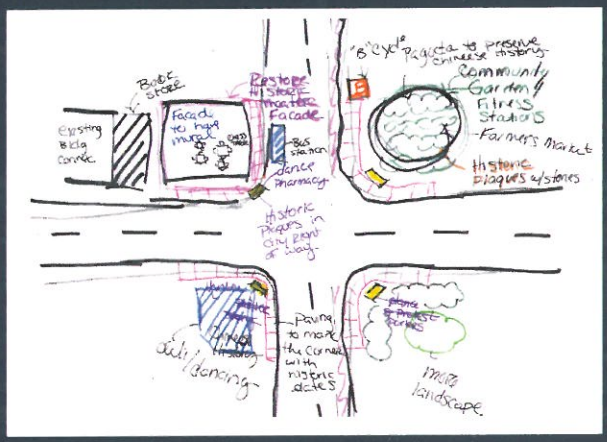
Councilwoman Taylor will continue to work with community members and city staff to increase safety in District 2 neighborhoods. Residents are encouraged to attend Captain's meetings each month to learn more about initiatives and safety trends in District 2. These meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of every month. The next Captain's Meeting is on August 8th at the Eastside Substation, 3635 E. Houston Street at 6:00 pm.

SPARK PARK

On April 12th, City Council approved the SPARK School Park Program. The SPARK Park Program is a partnership between San Antonio Sports, the City of San Antonio, local schools, and residents. The purpose of the SPARK Park Program is to improve school playgrounds by turning them into fitness parks the entire community can enjoy. Originally created in Houston in 1983, the SPARK Park Program has taken the initiative to convert existing green spaces on school campuses into community parks. The goal of the San Antonio SPARK Park Program is to build one park in each of the 10 council districts each year for the next decade. This equates to 100 new parks by 2022. The first SPARK Park in District 2 will be located at Camelot Elementary. The UTSA College of Architecture will hold a series of charrettes to develop the design for this community park. Nearby residents are invited to attend the first charrette meeting once it is scheduled.

Iowa/Pine Community Improvement Effort

In February the District 2 office was approached by two groups of citizens who thought the intersection of Iowa and Pine was ripe for reinvestment. After a few meetings with these groups and the Denver Heights Neighborhood Association what resulted was a community design opportunity with neighborhood residents and members of the San Antonio American Institute of Architects. In June citizens from across the Eastside and Denver Heights joined with Councilwoman Taylor and young architects and design professionals to discuss proposals for the corner of Iowa and Pine. The planning event examined the history, culture, and potential of the intersection.



The participants split up into separate tables and came up with several ideas for three of the four corners at the intersection. They focused on improving pedestrian and traffic interaction, community gardens, and ways to create interlinked but separate uses at each corner. Some groups suggested temporary staging for musical performances and outdoor movies, while others wanted to see food trucks, and another group suggested having outdoor exercise equipment. At the July meeting of the Denver Heights Neighborhood Association, the organizers of the planning event presented a summary of all the ideas and showed artist renderings of how the proposed designs would look and work. The neighborhood residents liked the community garden aspects and agreed to pursue that idea. The residents felt like building this garden was something they could do as a community and planned to pay for and install the garden as a community.

MLK Commission

Centered around Dr. King's teachings and philosophy of love, tolerance and nonviolence, the MLK Commission strives to demonstrate commitment to advance the San Antonio community spirit by encouraging awareness, acceptance and appreciation of the values of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Established on April 3rd, 1986, the Martin Luther King Commission is a volunteer organization that was enacted to serve as a coordinating center for the forthcoming birthday celebration in January. Councilwoman Taylor appointed Bishop David Copeland as Chair of the MLK Commission for 2012-2013.

For the 26th anniversary of the Martin Luther King March and Commemorative Program, the MLK Commission will award $2000 scholarships to high school seniors, continue the Rev. Callies Award, and present other community activities.

The 26th Anniversary Martin Luther King March is scheduled for January 21, 2013. The event will start at 10:00 a.m. at the MLK Academy located at 3501 Martin Luther King Drive. For more information on the Martin Luther King March or how you can become a committee volunteer, please visit (http://www.sanantonio.gov/mlk/) or call 207-0950.

2012-2017 District 2 Bond Projects

On Saturday, May 12, San Antonio voters approved the $596 million 2012-207 Bond Program. The 140-project bond program includes 41 Streets, Bridges & Sidewalks, 17 Drainage & Flood Control projects, 68 Parks, Recreation & Open Space projects, 11 Library, Museum & Cultural Arts projects, and 3 Public Safety Facilities projects. A City of San Antonio property tax rate increase is not recommended to fund the bond program. In addition, the bond program does not include funding or projects for VIA's streetcar program. A Citizens Bond Oversight Committee will monitor the progress of the 2012-2017 BOND Program. For a complete list of District 2 Projects for the 2012-2017 BOND Program, please see chart below.

Project Name	Funded	Description
Drainage		
Sapphire/Flora Mae (Billy to Alfred Drive)	$5,373,000	Installation of storm sewer system and reconstruction of roadways with curbs, sidewalks and driveway approaches
Menger Creek Drainage	$6,526,000	Channel improvements from N. Walters to Rio Grande and improvements to Rio Grande Crossing and Railroad Crossing
Facilities and Community Initiatives		
Fire Station 18	$6,098,000	Construction of a new fire station to replace the original built in 1957
Fire Station 30	$5,847,000	Construction of a new fire station to replace the original built in 1967
District 2 Library	$6,000,000	Development of branch library in District 2
Carver Cultural Center	$1,000,000	Parking lot expansion & improvements
Parks		
MLK Park	$2,000,000	Improvements to include site grading, entry and circulation enhancements
Copernicus Park	$300,000	Parking expansion
Lou Kardon Park	$650,000	Rehabilitation of walking trail and general park improvements
Pittman-Sullivan Park	$650,000	Walking trail development
Lakeside Park	$250,000	Park rehabilitation and improvements.
Coliseum Park	$175,000	Improvements to pavilion and security lighting
Northampton Park	$400,000	Development of walking trail and parking expansion
Herrera Park	$200,000	General park improvements
Lincoln Park	$200,000	Improvement of park infrastructure to include walking trail
Streets, Bridges and Sidewalks		
Cherry Street (Dawson to Milam)	$2,636,000	Reconstruct roadway with curbs, sidewalks, driveway approaches and underground drainage
E. Commerce (Rio Grande to Houston)	$7,455,000	Improve E. Commerce roadway, sidewalks, and drainage between Rio Grande to Houston street
Peggy Road Extension	$5,600,000	Construct new roadway with drainage improvements

Fiscal Year 2013 Budget

Each year, the City of San Antonio undergoes a process to develop a Balanced Operating and Capital Budget. This effort involves gaining input from the Mayor and City Council, residents and City Staff. This year the City held four community meetings prior to the development of the draft budget. The purpose of these meetings was to receive community input to help drive recommendations. The Mayor and City Council then participated in a budget policy and goal setting session to provide input on Council priorities.

The City Manager will present the proposed budget to the Mayor and City Council in August. City Council Budget work sessions will take place after the budget is proposed. During these sessions the Mayor and City Council will review the budget proposal in more detail. Two public hearings will be scheduled after the budget is proposed to allow for community feedback. After considering all recommendations and receiving input from residents and community groups, City Council will adopt a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2013 on September 13, 2012.

Pre-k 4 SA

San Antonio voters will consider an increase in the City's sales tax rate by 1/8th cent to fund the Mayor's Brainpower Initiative (now Pre-K 4 SA). This proposition will be on the November 6, 2012 ballot and must be approved by the voters to take effect.

Mayor Castro announced the initiative at the release of the SA2020 final report in March 2011. The role of education in community revitalization and sustainability has been an area of focus since the Eastside Reinvestment Summit meetings. As the SA2020 report explains, education is a crucial component in getting our City where we want it to be and keeping it there.

USAA President and CEO Joe Robles Jr. and H-E-B CEO Charles Butt were appointed chairman and honorary chairman of this initiative. The group researched best practices and successful models that demonstrate results based success in at least one of the following areas: kindergarten readiness, dropout prevention and college matriculation.

On June 20th, 2012, the task force presented their preliminary findings to the City Council. They reported that most gains in education happen at the pre-kindergarten level, which is in line with the research done for the Eastside Promise Neighborhood initiative. Over the summer the City staff worked on details of an implementation plan that City Manager Sheryl Sculley presented at B-session on August 1, 2012.

The proposed 1/8th cent increase in the City's sales tax rate would cost the median household $7.81 annually and would provide full-day pre-kindergarten services to 22,400 four-year-old children over eight years. Currently there are 5,750 children eligible for pre-kindergarten who receive no instruction or who only receive a half-day of instruction.

Other parts of the strategy include establishing two world-class early childhood learning centers that each serve 700 children and model best practices. Additional exemplary centers will be developed that will serve an additional 800 children.

The projected sales tax revenues are $31 million annually and the cost per child in the Education Excellence Centers is $11,096. The project provides a built in "cushion" for unexpected costs of program implementation.

An Executive Director and a Board of Directors appointed by the Mayor and City Council would manage Pre-K 4 SA. Please contact Francesca Caballero 207-2122 if you have additional questions or would like to provide input on this initiative.

Redistricting

The U.S. Constitution requires that election districts for governmental officials who act in a representative capacity have approximately equal populations. The 2010 Census shows a disproportionate population across City Council districts in San Antonio. As a result the City of San Antonio (COSA) is required to rebalance the population by re-drawing district boundaries. COSA hired Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP to assist with redrawing the boundaries. The following criteria was used as a guide for the consultant: adopting districts of relatively equal size, identifiable boundaries, maintaining communities of interest and neighborhoods, using whole voting precincts, basing plan on existing districts, drawing districts that are compact and contiguous, keeping incumbents in their districts, and narrowly tailoring plan to comply with Voting Rights Act.

Four redistricting meetings were held across the City to present the proposed redistricting map to the community. Additionally Councilwoman Taylor hosted a separate District 2 Redistricting meeting on July 17th. The consultants will analyze the input they receive and update the map if necessary. The City Council is expected to vote on the final redistricting map at the end of August. Once the map is adopted the COSA will submit the map to the Department of Justice for final review.

Alamo Brewery

On August 2, City Council unanimously approved the sale of 1.69 acres of land to Alamo Beer Company and three lease agreements. Alamo Beer Company plans to build an $8 million microbrewery near Dignowity Hill adjacent to the Hays Street Bridge.

In addition to producing beer, the brewery will create 10 jobs in the first year of operation and 30 jobs by the 7th year. Additionally, the brewery will also contain an event space and a restaurant overlooking the bridge and downtown.

The 10-year lease agreement will allow Alamo Beer Company to use the space under the Hays Street Bridge and connect a catwalk to the non-historic portion of the bridge, and for the restaurant to place limited seating on the bridge.

Red Berry Estate

For the last two years, Councilwoman Taylor and City staff have been focused on reinvestment in San Antonio's East Side. At the revitalization summit meetings in 2010 the community expressed disappointment that there had been no resulting development on the Eastside after the construction of the AT&T Center.

An opportunity presented itself for the City to jumpstart some development and investment in that area. City Council approved an ordinance authorizing the purchase of the Red Berry Estate for $2,250,000. The City will release a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify and select a development partner to redevelop the grounds around the estate, which is a hidden jewel right in the middle of the East Side.

Prior to the release of the RFP Councilwoman Taylor will host a community design meeting to help identify the community's vision for the estate. The feedback will be used to help develop the project criteria included in the RFP. The City is in the process of selecting a facilitator for the community meeting. Once selected, the meeting will be scheduled. Councilwoman Taylor hopes that this project will bring new housing into the area, more people into the area and result in new commercial or retail development in the vicinity.

New Wal-Mart on Northeast Side

Wal-Mart Stores Inc. recently announced that it plans to build a new store on San Antonio's northeast side. The Wal-Mart store will be located at 3940 N. Foster Road near Binz-Engleman. The store will be 150,000 square feet and will create 300 jobs. The grand opening is expected to take place by the summer of 2013.

Councilwoman Ivy R. Taylor
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August 2012

Find out what is going on around the community and learn how to become involved. Sign up for the eblast by emailing us at district2@sanantonio.gov. Also find on Facebook & YouTube.

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Calendar of Events

August 2012

8/20	Wheatley Heights Sports Complex Community Meeting
8/23	District 2 Open Door Walk-Ins (Eastside Office, 4458 E. Houston Street)
8/28	District 2 Town Hall Meeting
8/29	Public Budget Hearing (City Council Chambers, 103 Main Plaza)

September 2012

9/3	City Holiday – Labor Day
9/5	Public Budget Hearing (City Council Chambers, 103 Main Plaza)
9/13	Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Adoption (City Council Chambers, 103 Main Plaza)

October 2012

10/13	3rd Annual Hamburger Festival
10/20	San Antonio for Growth on the Eastside Music Festival (Wheatley Heights Sports Complex)
10/27	Dignowity Hill Pushcart Derby
10/31	Happy Halloween!

Special thanks go to Juan Garcia for providing photos for this edition of *A Closer View of District 2.*