

Westside

AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Focus Group Meetings Summary

January 21 & 22, 2021



Meeting Details

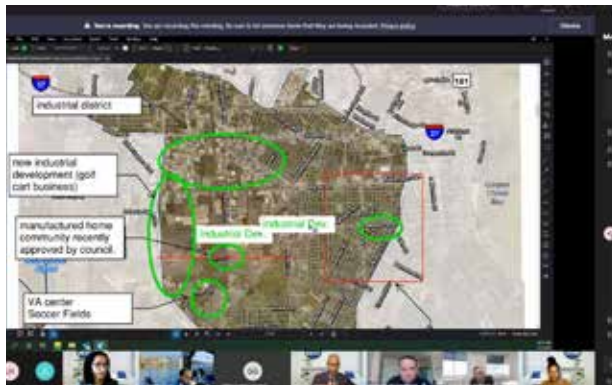
A series of four focus group meetings were held on January 21 and 22, 2021, to discuss specific topics related to the Westside. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss topics that are significant to the future development of the Westside. The focus group topics were:

- » Development, Redevelopment, and Economic Development,
- » Housing and Community Services,
- » Transportation and Public Safety, and
- » History, Culture, and Healthy Living.

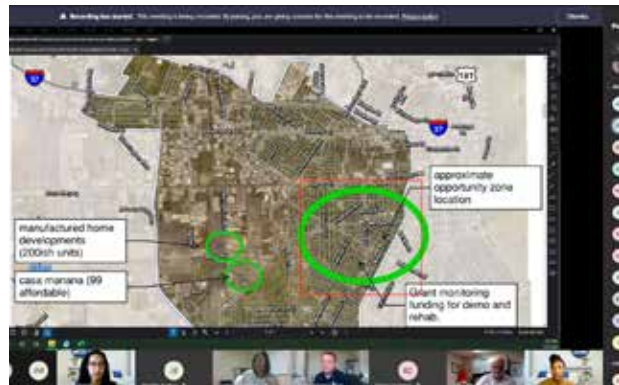
Stakeholders and experts related to each topic were invited to attend each meeting; however, meetings were open to the public to attend. The meeting discussions were facilitated by the consultant team from Freese and Nichols, Inc., with City staff from the Corpus Christi Planning Department also in attendance. Participation ranged from 9-14 people in each of the four focus group discussions throughout the day, with several people participating in multiple discussion sessions. This document provides a summary of the discussion from each focus group session.

Screenshots from Focus Group Meetings

Development and Economic Development



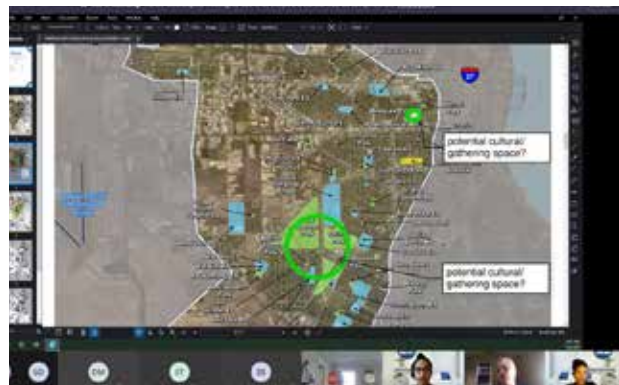
Housing and Community Services



Transportation and Safety



History, Culture, and Healthy Living



Development, Redevelopment, and Economic Development Focus Group

The Development, Redevelopment, and Economic Development Focus Group took place on January 21, 2021 at 10 AM. There were fourteen (14) participants in attendance for the discussion in addition to the consultant team and Planning Department staff. The following is a summary of the discussion and any map notes taken during the discussion.

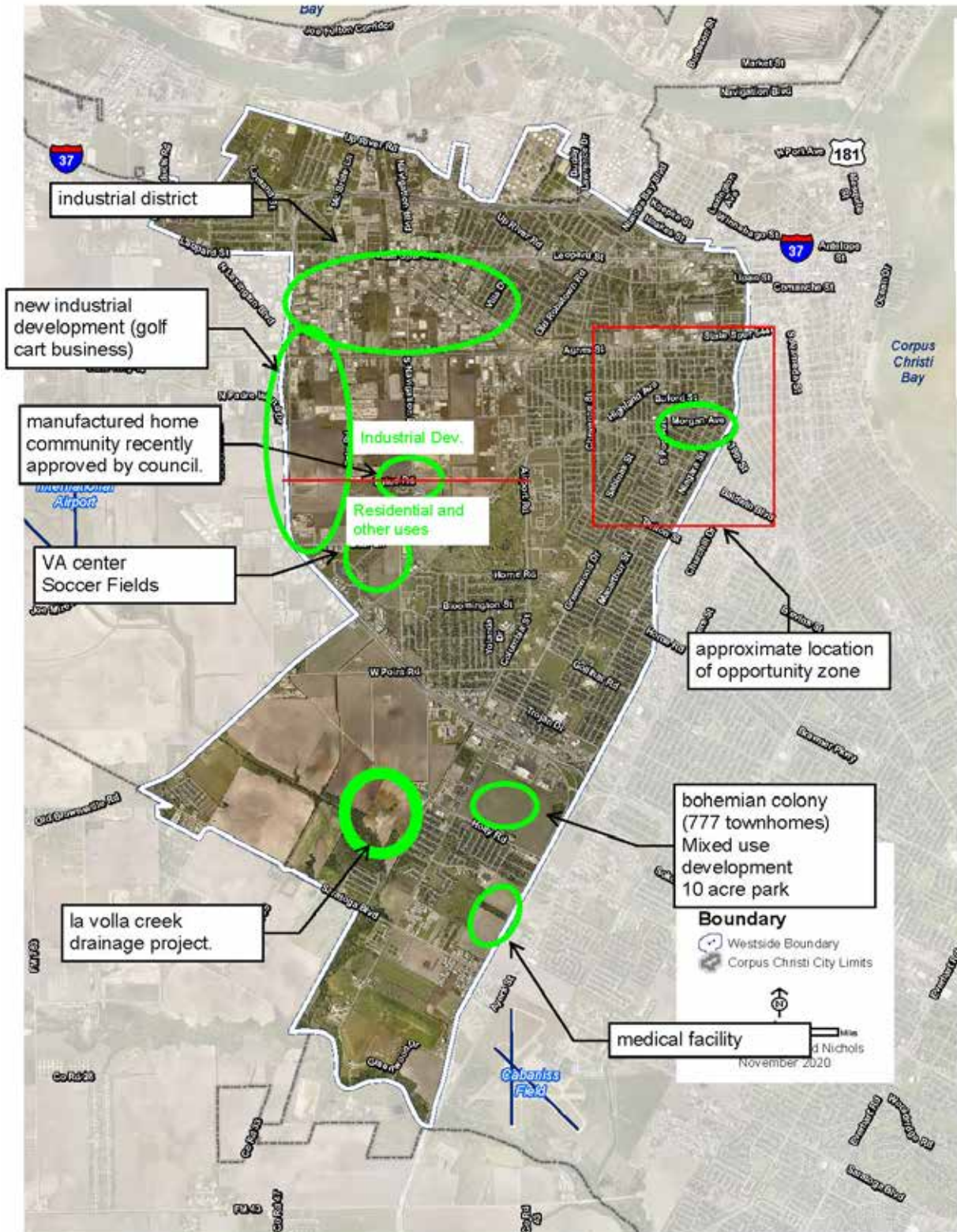
Meeting Notes

- » Affordable housing is an issue here as well as across the nation.
 - It's hard to get a starter home under \$200K in Corpus Christi.
- » Modular construction vs. manufactured housing
 - Manufactured housing in this market has significant ramifications in this market because of the moisture and salt in this coastal environment.
 - Home buyers of these properties cannot insure them.
 - After Hurricane Harvey, many people who own mobile homes couldn't get assistance to rebuild.
 - The City should learn how to manage these aesthetically and pay attention to the financing and understand what programs are available to home buyers.
- » One area that needs attention is the corridor from Morgan Ave. to the Hospital District in downtown. It's an important medical corridor with lots of medical center and related businesses.
- » Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation just released a target area study; which lists the following target industries for the region:
 - Small and mid-size manufacturing
 - Plastic product manufacturing
 - Fabricated metal products manufacturing
 - Aerospace manufacturing
- » Corpus Christi Regional Economic Development Corporation's target area study also reported:
 - There are no large industrial spaces available in the Coastal Bend market.
 - There are some options for small and mid-size industrial space users.
- » We lack the industrial flex space (roughly 10,000-30,000 sq ft.). This is really attractive to companies coming from California. They like to lease first before establishing a long-term presence in the community. We see this as a potential opportunity to do smaller

industrial parks. This type of development will bring primary jobs into the area.

- We should define an area in Westside that is a specific industrial district could generate synergy and help economic development.
- » The industrial district is from the Agnes St. corridor to Leopard Street. There is more industrial along Navigation Blvd. as well.
 - Improvements can be made to the appearance of the industrial area to make it more appealing especially for companies that are relocating here.
- » Consider including buffers between residential and industrial. Especially for undeveloped properties.
 - Anything that can be done to better define the boundaries of these areas will help.
 - Consider ways to protect single family areas; some are currently zoned as industrial or multifamily and they could be rezoned to the appropriate district.
 - Explore options for buffering residential from industrial north of Leopard St.
 - The neighborhoods of Oak Park and Saxet have historic potential and could establish a program for tax abatement for historic rehabilitation to help preserve and revitalize those districts.
- » There are Type A and Type B funding opportunities depending on the project.
- » The SCORE offers resources for small businesses. The resources are there for start-ups and existing businesses.
- » Other improvement ideas include:
 - Improvements to lighting.
 - Improved landscaping.
 - Gateways to enhance the area.
 - Park Improvements.
- » La Volla Creek drainage project will improve drainage in the southern portion of the study area and includes some park-type amenities.
 - A better model is currently being run to show the future impact of the improvements to the surrounding properties.

Map Notes



Housing and Community Services Focus Group

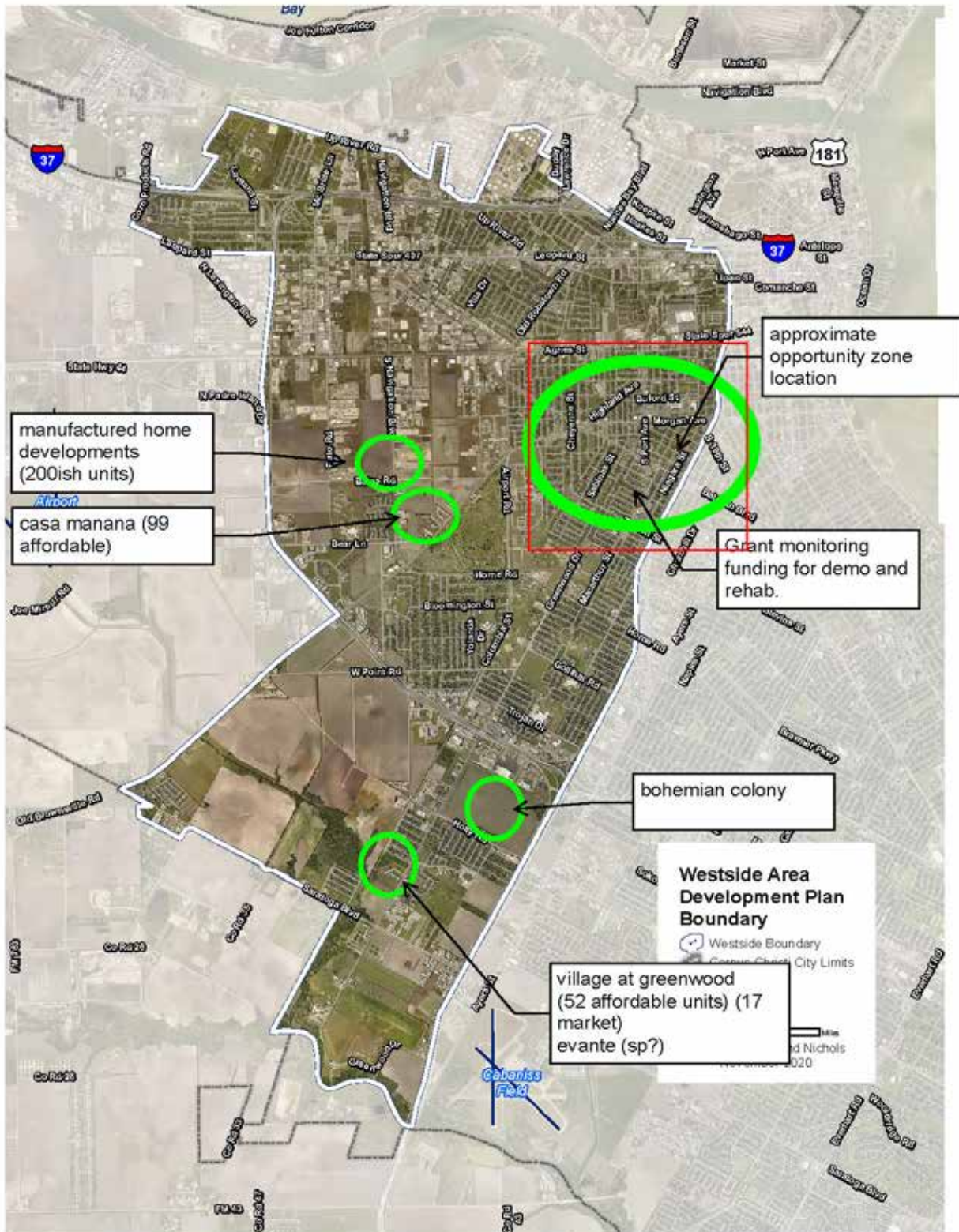
The Housing and Community Services Focus Group took place on January 21, 2021 at 2 PM. There were nine (9) participants in attendance for the discussion in addition to the consultant team and Planning Department staff. The following is a summary of the discussion and any map notes taken during the discussion.

Meeting Notes

- » There is currently new housing being introduced with the construction of Casa Manana just west of the golf course (99 units).
- » Near the intersection of Greenwood Dr. and Frio St., there are two properties Avanti and Village at Greenwood have been redeveloped. These are multifamily housing units. Most of them serve under 60% AMI.
- » Recent manufactured home development near Navigation Blvd. and Bear Ln. has 270 units.
- » There is an opportunity to provide incentives to pick up tax sale properties to promote infill development in single family neighborhoods.
 - There are many vacant lots available to build on in this area, but those lots are hard to get a hold of. The City should consider identifying lots available for private developers.
 - Current efforts by private developers such as Thanksgiving Homes have been successful.
- » Bohemian Colony townhomes - Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) #5 used for road improvements and some utilities in development of the site. The TIRZ #5 is specifically for infrastructure improvements.
- » Grant Monitoring Department has funding from HUD for demolition or reconstruction of homes.
 - The demand is huge there are waiting list for the programs because some areas have an older housing stock.
 - Each home to demolish and reconstruct costs about \$100,000-\$200,000. About 5 to 6 homes completed per year.
- » Minor home repair program - rehabilitation work on homes that need repairs for people who are 65 and older or have a disability. About 50 to 75 homes are served per year.
- » What is Type B funding used for?
 - Single family infill development on vacant lots.
 - Houses on the tax sale that are boarded up and dilapidated.
 - We have funds for roof repair both minor and substantial renovations.

- Rehab or purchasing properties that are financially strained.
- Development subsidies and direct subsidies are provided to the homeowner.
- » Opportunity zones are worth exploring as an economic development tool. There may need to be education component for developers. Funds can be used to up to 50% of housing cost.
- » Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) may provide opportunity to leverage funding.
 - Need to keep an eye on policy changes.
- » Potential Housing Strategies
 - Vacant lot study that maps vacant properties. Further analysis of best sites for redevelopment and highlight other buildable property.
 - Relax requirements for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) this could be a great opportunity to increase density.
 - New homes, revitalization, repair and rehab are all part of the solution.
 - Consider ADUs for a solution to address the homeless issue. Place them around a central shower station. It would be fairly easy to put these in a small area without sending a huge amount of money doing it.
 - Individual tiny homes end up being too expensive. Building kitchens and bathrooms is the most expensive part.
- » Community Services
 - The homeless population has been identified along Agnes St. and Leopard St.
 - People go where the resources are and resources get compounded on the areas of need.
 - Good Samaritan Rescue Mission is the largest over night shelter in the community.
 - Relocating the resources for people experiencing homelessness is not an option.
 - There are several organizations that provide services in this area. Metro Ministries, Mother Theresa, and Catholic Charities are all located near Corpus Christi Regional Transit Authority (RTA) bus routes.
 - The Garcia Center has been crucial when it comes to providing programming for the community during the pandemic. The Garcia Center offers English as a Second Language (ESL) and Education Service Center (ESC) classes assisting adults with attaining their diploma. They offer after-school programs too.
 - The Garcia Center offers counseling, auto check, and a food drive once a month. The center is operated by the Texas A&M Corpus Christi College of Education and Human Development. They have been practicing safety precautions by accommodating a maximum of 20 individuals to adhere to COVID restrictions.
- » Garcia Center looking at potential expansion opportunities in the future.

Map Notes



Westside

AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN



Transportation and Public Safety Focus Group

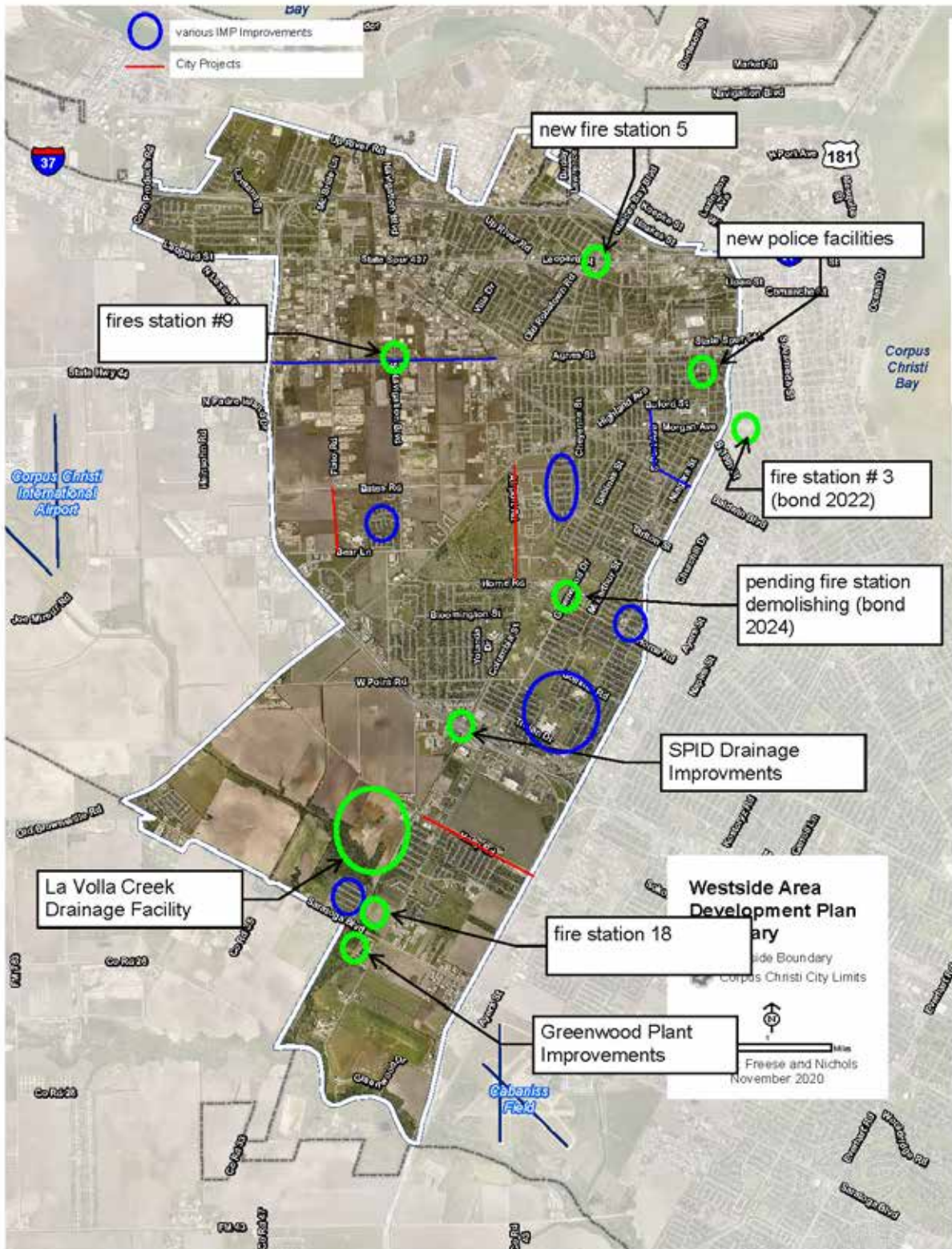
The Transportation and Public Safety Focus Group took place on January 22, 2021 at 10 AM. There were nine (9) participants in attendance for the discussion in addition to the consultant team and Planning Department staff. The following is a summary of the discussion and any map notes taken during the discussion.

Meeting Notes

- » What are the transportation challenges and needs?
 - There is not a lot of automobile ownership in this area. It has been a good area for to invest in transit.
 - The City is looking at past historic data to improve services in this area.
 - One of the challenges the transit had in recent years is managing population density in certain areas. Corpus Christi Regional Transit Authority (RTA) covers a large area, so it is hard to focus efforts in-demand areas like the Westside.
 - The RTA is thinking about an on-demand service that works through an application on the users phone. This is something we would pursue in the future. This could help outside of peak hours when people still need mobility options, but the ridership levels aren't high.
 - There is a need for a network for cycling for those who don't have vehicles. Create a transportation network for cyclist beyond just sharrows on the side of the road.
 - The Metropolitan Planning Association (MPO) has a bicycle plan, but there isn't a network for cycling in other areas, rather than just having it on the side of the road.
 - When looking at transportation issues, don't just look at traffic. Also, look at equity. Bringing public feedback to the table can help bring support to enhance mobility in the area. It's not always about vehicular traffic.
 - Consider a complete streets approach.
 - The City has adopted Vision Zero which is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and injuries by increasing safe and healthy mobility.
 - One way to achieve the Vision Zero goal is to provide signals and mid-block crossings for long blocks.
 - Update the Urban Transportation Plan map and Future Land Use Map to connect land uses with the transportation plan.
 - The City is looking at Austin's last bond program as a model for allocating funds for different kinds of projects.
- » Are there missing trail connections?
 - There are residential neighborhoods between SH 37 and Agnes St. that need improvements to connect pedestrians across Leopard St. to the school.

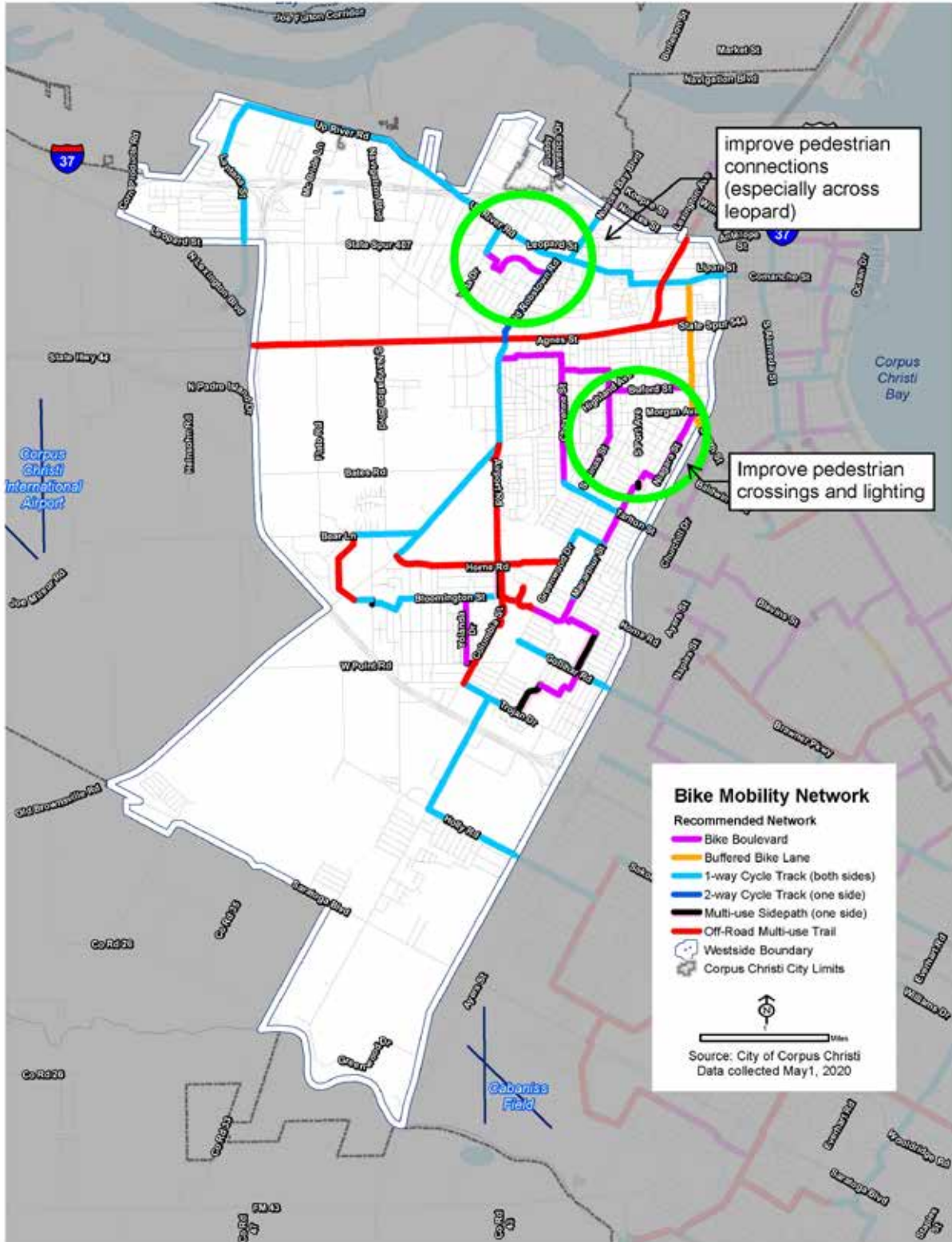
- The crossing near Oak Park, is a current project with signage.
- Improve crossings and lighting at Morgan Ave. and Baldwin Blvd. area. These are high activity generators.
- » Safety
 - One way to address the safety issues in this area is crime prevention through environmental design. This focuses on making the area less inviting for criminals.
 - There have been changes in requirements for public lighting in the streets, better cameras, and better coverage.
 - Another idea is cleaning up blight. This can be achieved by addressing absentee owners, partnered with neighborhood improvements projects.
- » Plans for new fire stations:
 - Built a new fire station on Leopard St. at Nueces Bay Blvd.
 - Another station is slated for construction near Crosstown Expy. on Morgan Ave.
 - Plans to demolish and replace the station at Horne Rd. and Greenwood Dr.
 - Move hazmat team facilities to station at Leopard St. and Nueces Bay Blvd. to serve industrial partners.
- » One of the fire station concerns is that an ambulance facility was moved to the Westside a few years ago and became the busiest ambulance in the City. More assets will continue to be moved to this area.
 - The Fire Department is reinvesting in the Lamar Elementary. The City will utilize that building to help in that neighborhood.
- » There are plans for a new Corpus Christi Police Athletic League (CCPAL) building at Brownlee Blvd. and Morris St. It will serve nearly 4,000 at-risk youth through sports per year. It's outside of the planning area, but serves the kids in the area. This will be a great asset for the community.
- » Key narrative is the City is investing in the Westside with public safety facilities. Police and Fire are firmly committed to being a partner in the community and we intend to stay here.
- » Other Emergency Management Concerns
 - During a hurricane, the City utilize the compress buildings.
 - The City houses equipment here to protect the assets during the storm.
 - Maybe gulf compress is a place to store safety assets.
 - Before a storm, the fleet of buses is dispersed to multiple place across town including Bear Creek, Staples Station, and Southside Station. Then buses are ready to get people evacuated

Map Notes



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History, Culture, and Healthy Living Focus Group

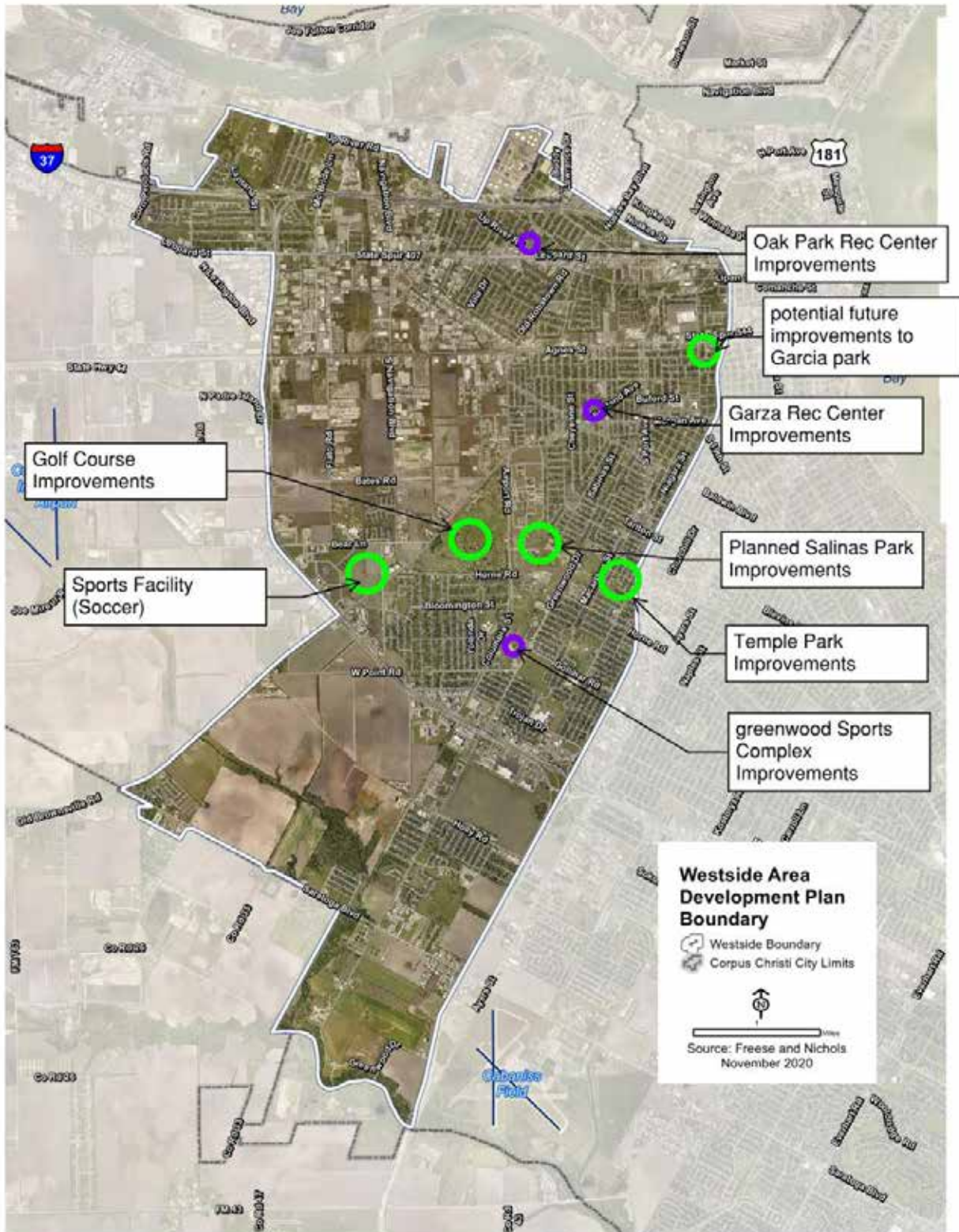
The History, Culture, and Healthy Living Focus Group took place on January 22, 2021 at 2 PM. There were nine (9) participants in attendance for the discussion in addition to the consultant team and Planning Department staff. The following is a summary of the discussion and any map notes taken during the discussion.

Meeting Notes

- » What is the identity of the Westside?
 - The Westside has changed in many ways over the years. Yet, culture remains the same it's about family and unity.
 - The Garcia Center sees a lot of families come to events.
 - Events like Dia de las Muertos, and church events, sports, family celebrations and fellowship in general are important to this community.
 - Families gather in the parks.
 - Community gardens at the Garcia Center foster healthy living. The Center offers financial literacy, education, and cultivates the culture while giving visitors respect and dignity.
 - The Garcia Center offers diabetes classes and also has partnered with Kids Get Fit for the after school camp. They will be working with the children twice a week offering yoga and fitness.
 - Multiple generations in one home is common in this area. Separate structures could be built to accommodate other members of the family.
- » Is there a location where a cultural district would be best?
 - In the past, there was an idea to create a plaza between the Zavala Senior Center and Joe Garza Recreation Center. (Highland Ave. and Osage St.)
 - Plaza has not been constructed due to various factors.
 - Salinas Park has a pavilion that provides space for events and family gatherings.
 - Some of these items can be identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan
- » Ways to Support Local Businesses
 - Provide facilities for entrepreneurs that pop-up at Morgan Ave. and Baldwin Blvd.
 - Create space for people to sell their craft, food, etc. on the weekends.
 - Design buildings to better connect with the fabric of the community.
 - Bring the farmers market to the Westside.

- » The Hazlewood Act is an opportunity to provide school funding for military families
 - A great portion of Corpus Christi's residents may not have heard of the Texas Hazlewood Act. That particular law provides that veterans or children of veterans are entitled to 150 hours free of tuition or associated fees at any state supported school. If the veteran has two children they would be eligible for 75 hours apiece.
 - If a veteran preferred to learn trades rather than academic fields, those are eligible. For instance, the Del Mar West Campus teaches carpentry, plumbing and probably electrical skills. Also, the East Campus includes nursing, medical lab work and not telling what else.
 - The point is that Hazlewood will pay for nearly anything provided by a state supported college or university. It's simply an opportunity that should not be missed. It's amazing the number of possible students who are not aware of it.
- » The Garcia Center has always been a valuable resource for the Westside.
- » Westside needs an infrastructure like the Downtown Management District.
 - We need an organization focused on this area to make changes happen.
- » Find funding to get a branding campaign for the Westside of town that list businesses, resources, and has a slogan.
 - If we had a branded identity, we'd get more support and showcase the amenities that are here.
- » Public space is what defines an area. This pandemic has taught us the value of public space.
 - Improve walkability by creating streets and sidewalks where people have access to these public spaces.
- » We should have something like Cole Park in this area of town. We need an amphitheater where the movie nights and concerts can be hosted.
 - An example is Rosewood Park in east Austin.
- » For people to understand the history and significance of this area it needs to start with leadership.
- » Bring arts to the community.
 - Meet with the Garcia family to better understand his legacy and share his artwork at the Garcia Center.
 - Connect the center with the Antonio Garcia's legacy.
- » Embrace the youth culture scene.

Map Notes



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