



Public Hearing & Resolution

San Marcos Blanco Gardens Neighborhood Area Plan

Receive a Staff presentation and hold a Public Hearing to receive comments for or against Resolution 2025-XXX, regarding the Blanco Gardens Neighborhood Area Plan, and provide direction to staff.

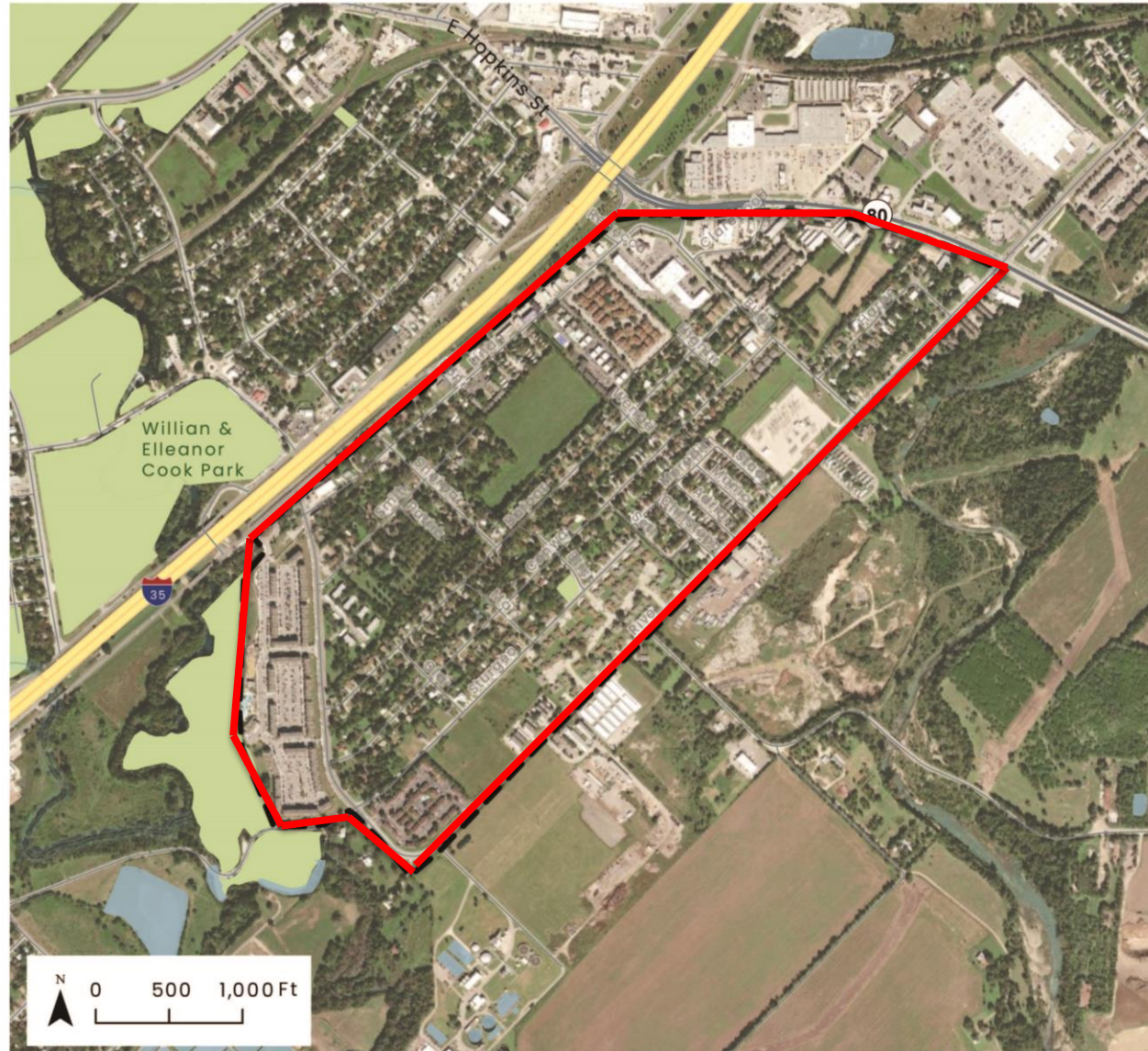
To view the Draft Plan, please visit <https://arcg.is/0ryPzW>

Area Plan Boundary



AERIAL

- Blanco Gardens
- Waterbodies
- Major Creek
- Parks



sanmarcostx.gov

Role of Neighborhood Area Planning



- Take a closer look at the **needs, challenges, opportunities, and vision** for specific neighborhoods
- Provide a study of the “DNA” or **character of the neighborhood**
- Facilitate **more localized conversations** on key topics
- Identify **specific projects and programs** for the neighborhood
- Engage in **dialogue with residents**



Project Timeline



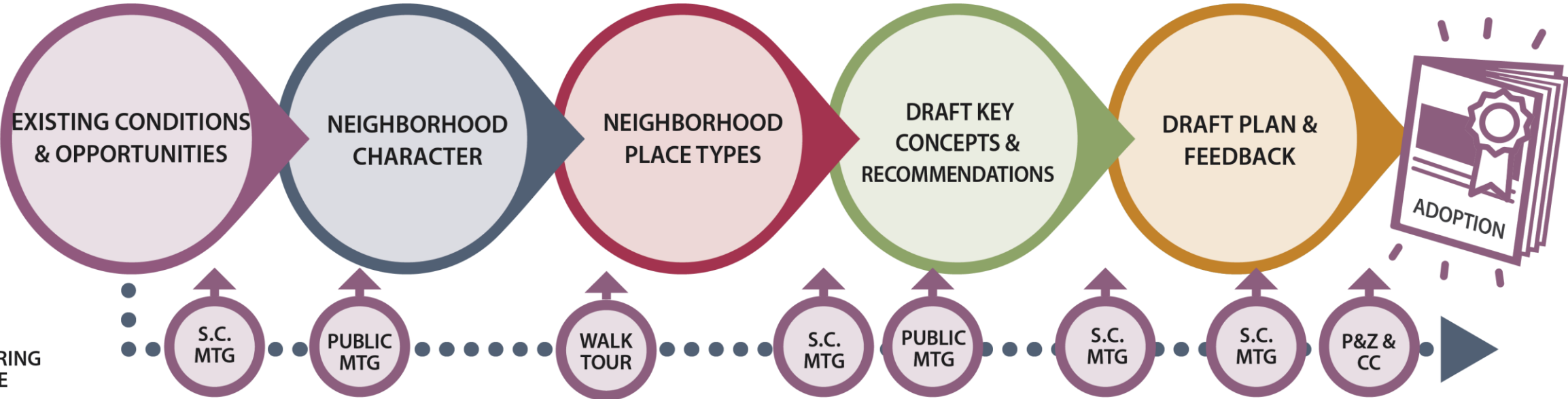
BLANCO GARDENS NEIGHBORHOOD AREA PLAN SCHEDULE

FALL 2022

WINTER 2022

SPRING 2023- FALL 2024

SPRING 2025



S.C. = STEERING
COMMITTEE

P&Z = PLANNING
AND ZONING COMMISSION

CC = CITY COUNCIL

ONGOING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**WE ARE
HERE!**

Summary of Community Outreach

- Hosted **5 Steering Committee Meetings**
- Hosted a **Steering Committee Walking Tour**
 - 55 total comments received
- Hosted **2 Community Workshops**
 - 105 attendees across the 2 workshops
 - 200+ comments received
- **5887 Postcards** sent - to every property owner & tenants
- **250 homes visited** during door-to-door outreach campaign
- Attended **2 Public Safety Meetings**
- **Draft Plan Public Review Period**
 - 125 comments received
- Hosted a **Neighborhood Presentation Meeting**



Anatomy of the Plan

With community & stakeholder events, meetings, and tours completed, the plan was developed with 7 key topics:

Key Topics in the Plan:



**Getting
Around**



**History, Art,
and Culture**



**Public
Spaces &
Amenities**



**Streetscape
Enhancement**



**Business &
Economy**



Housing



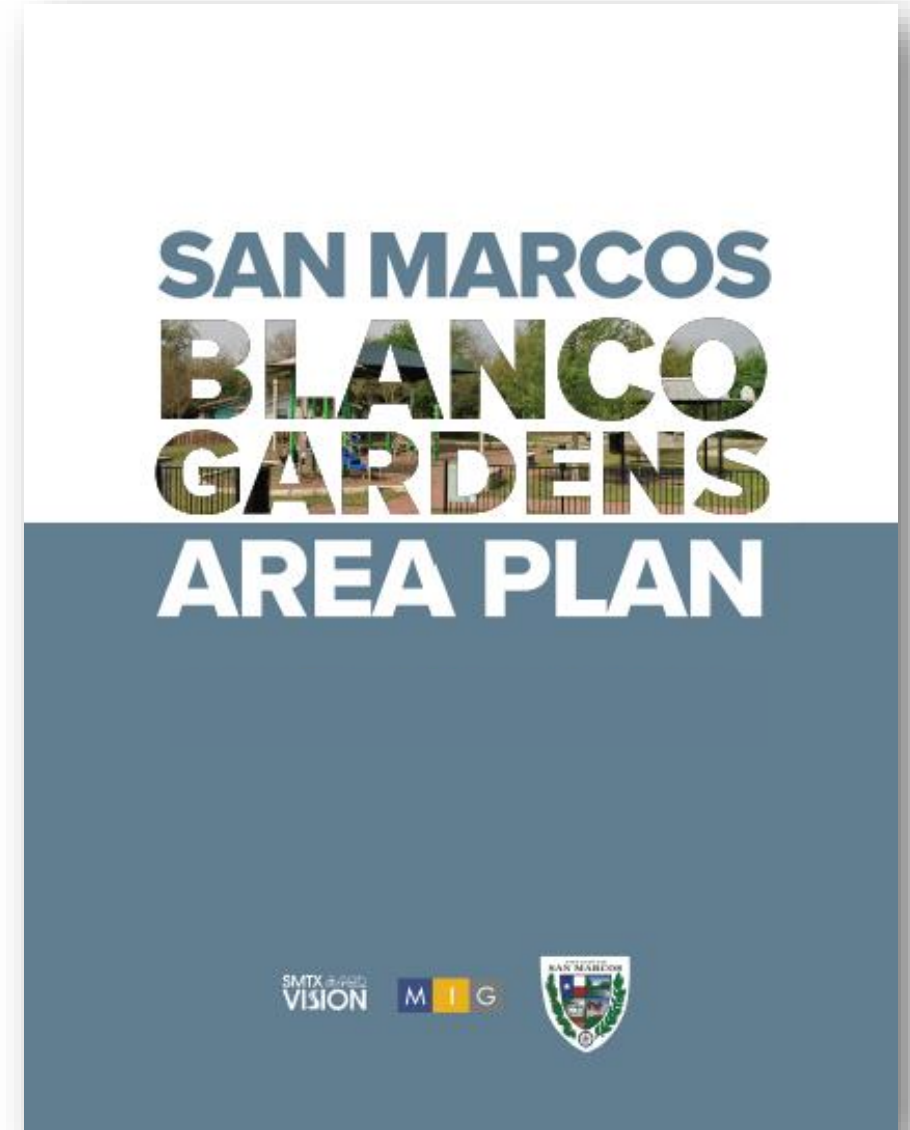
**Building Form
&
Development**

SE

Anatomy of the Plan

- Each of the 7 topics:
 - Describes **key concepts and existing conditions** in Blanco Gardens.
 - Describes **community and stakeholder feedback** received as part of the Plan's development.
 - Identifies specific **recommendations** for the Plan Area.

Some sections also include **case studies** of similar communities to San Marcos that have experienced success with a specific recommendation.



Anatomy of the Plan: Section Components

The components of each topic section include:

Key concepts and existing conditions

Community & stakeholder feedback

Specific recommendations for the
Plan Area

Recommendations are intended to be carried out by the City and/or identified partners

GETTING AROUND

4. TRANSIT

Transit service provided by the Capital Area Rural Transit System (CARTS) runs through Blanco Gardens daily, with stops on Linda Drive, Bugg Lane, and Sturgeon Drive. Buses run daily between 6:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. and about 1.9% of workers use this service for their daily commutes⁵. Figure 3.1 displays the bus routes and stops within the Plan Area.

Neighborhood residents indicated during the Area Plan development that they would be more interested in using public transportation if there were bus vehicle improvements, improved information on routes and timetables, and expanded service hours. Maintaining and enhancing transit service was identified as a priority for current and future residents.

Recommendations:

GA 4.1: Improve existing bus stops to provide shelters, lighting, and transit information such as bus routes/times and recommended stops.

GA 4.2: Increase the frequency of monitoring the condition of bus stops, benches, and shelters to ensure they remain usable. Report to CARTS any of these amenities in need of cleaning, repair, or replacement. Ensure that paths to bus stops are clear and accessible.

GA 4.3: Partner with CARTS to evaluate opportunities for additional transit stops within the neighborhood and increased frequency of buses along key routes.

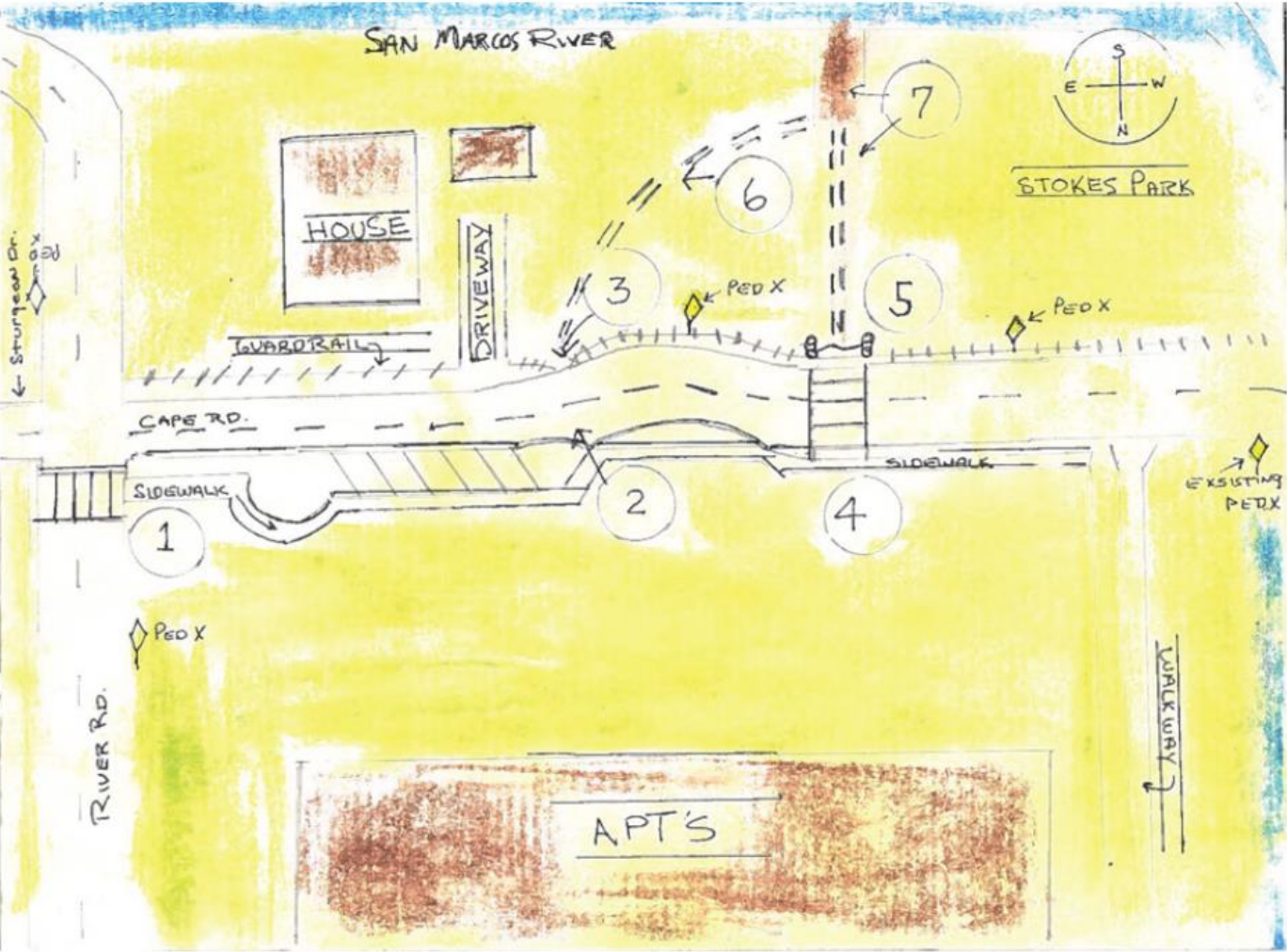


A shaded bus stop with waste receptacles.

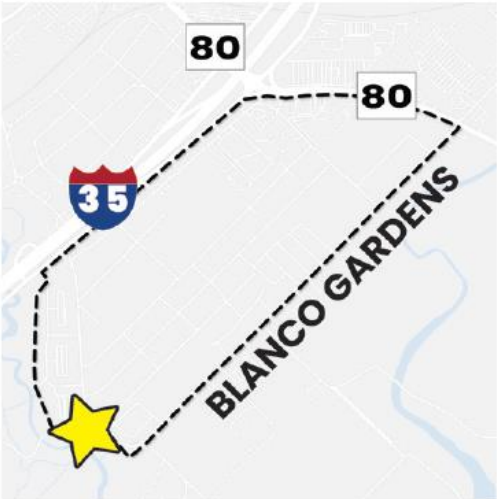
Refer to page 32 of the Plan

Example Recommendation

Figure 3.3. Sketch of potential pedestrian safety improvements to Cape Road near River Road. Courtesy of Michael Vernon, Blanco Gardens Neighborhood Area Plan Steering Committee Member.



- 1 Enhanced crosswalk
- 2 Unprotected pedestrian crossing
- 3 Unprotected pedestrian crossing
- 4 Enhanced crosswalk
- 5 Break in guardrail marking entrance to J.J. Stokes Park
- 6 Manmade path from unprotected crosswalk to park entrance
- 7 Unpaved entrance to J.J. Stokes Park



Anatomy of the Plan: Action Plan



For each Plan Topic & Sub-Topic:

- Short-term steps to implement recommendation
- Driver (Leader of the implementation)
- Potential leaders/partners needed

ACTION PLAN

PLAN TOPIC: HISTORY, ARTS, & CULTURE

Strategy	Short-Term Action Items	Driver	Potential Leaders/Partners
History	Adopt citywide Preservation Plan to provide guidance for historic preservation policy. Apply for Undertold Marker Program to tell underrepresented history.	COSM	COSM, Existing & Future Residents, Property Owners/Managers & Business Owners, Nonprofit & Grassroots Organizations, Hays County, State
Public Art	Evaluate and identify visible sites to install public art and interpretive materials to tell broader history of Blanco Gardens. Approach residents or businesses in the Plan Area about "adopting" nearby pieces of public art.	COSM	COSM, Existing & Future Residents, Property Owners/Managers & Business Owners, Nonprofit & Grassroots Organizations
Trails and Interpretive Signage	Evaluate and identify visible sites to install interpretive material in Stokes Park and along the existing San Marcos River trail. Collaborate with the Great Springs Project, San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance, and other organizations to explore opportunities for educational panels.	COSM/Hays County	COSM, Property Owners/Managers, Hays County, Nonprofit & Grassroots Organizations

Refer to page 80 of the Plan



Anatomy of the Plan: Financing Tools

- Information on funding/tools that could be applicable to recommendations not funded during normal City operations
- Additional funding sources may arise in the future.

Table 4.2

FINANCING TOOLS									
Category	Name	Sponsor or Administrator	Type of Financing	Value of Funding	Eligible Applicants	Eligible Uses	Requirements	How to Apply	Notes and Links
History, Arts, and Culture	Our Town Creative Placemaking Grants Program	National Endowment for the Arts	Competitive grant	\$25,000 - \$150,000	City of San Marcos	Arts, culture, and design projects or programs that strengthen communities and advance priorities including health, community development, environment/climate, and public safety.	Complete requirements for each annual cycle announced in the spring.	Apply online in two parts by late summer; annual cycle.	https://www.arts.gov/grants/our-town

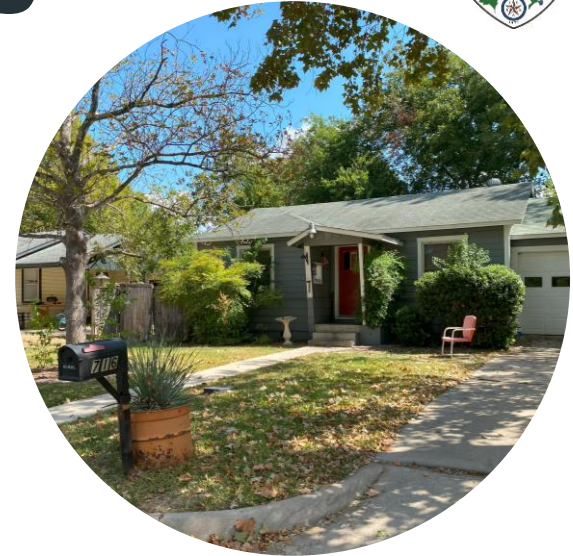
Refer to page 88-89 of the Plan

Neighborhood Character Study



Directed by City Council to complete with the Area Plan. It achieves the following goals:

- Documents factors that contribute to the neighborhood's character, such as **lot size and coverage, architectural style, building massing, and orientation.**
- Provides descriptions of **quantitative metrics and qualitative factors** that are difficult to express in numbers, to better communicate the Neighborhood's physical characteristics.
- Recommends how City regulations can be adopted or refined to ensure the **Neighborhood's character is respected and maintained.**



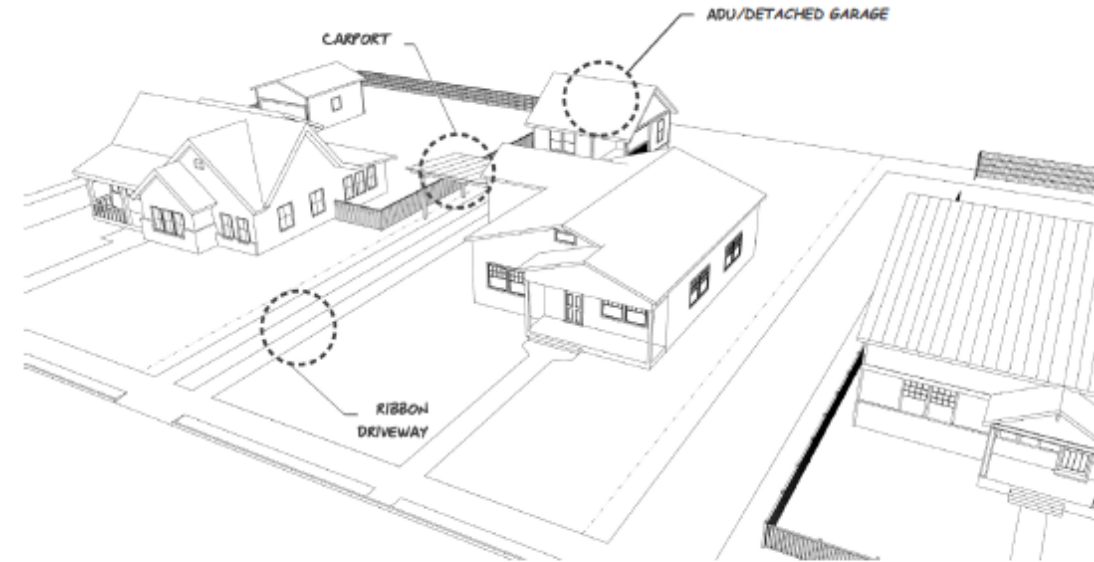
Using the Neighborhood Character Study



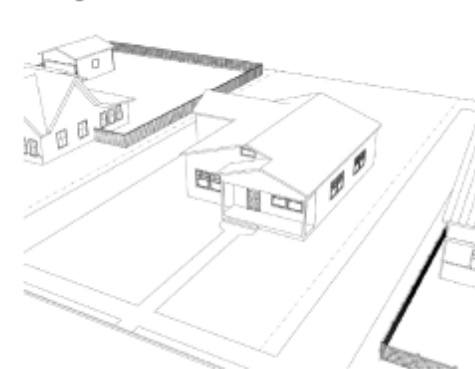
Scenario 3: Varied Parking Orientation/Accessory Structure

Once adopted, for proposed new homes or substantial renovations inside the Plan Area:

- Guidelines made available publicly
- Pre-development meeting with City will provide a chance to explain how to incorporate Character Study guideline(s) into proposed development
- Staff recommendation to P&Z will note if Character Study guideline(s) followed



Existing House for Reference



Following Adoption

- Evaluate & update the **Development Code** as necessary
- Incorporate the Plan into the **Capital Improvement Plan** project selection process
- Evaluate projects, plans, and policies **for short-term implementation**
- Create **Implementation Tracking Tool**



Steering Committee Recommendation



- SurveyMonkey survey provided to the 8-member Steering Committee
 - **4 replies received – all voted “Yes”** to recommending the Area Plan move forward to the Planning & Zoning Commission and City Council for consideration.



Adoption Process



Meeting Type	Date
Update to Planning and Zoning Commission	January 14
Update to Neighborhood Commission	January 15
Update to City Council	January 21
Neighborhood Presentation Meeting	January 22
Planning & Zoning Commission Public Hearing & Action	February 11
City Council Public Hearing (no action)	March 4
City Council Public Hearing & Action	March 18



P&Z Recommendation

- At their February 11, 2025 meeting, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended **approval** of the Blanco Gardens Neighborhood Area Plan with the following amendments:
 - Typographical, grammatical, and stylistic corrections
 - Page 61, fourth paragraph: A definition of Section 8 vouchers shall be provided within the paragraph.
 - Page 119, second paragraph: The fifth sentence regarding sidewalk coverage and connectivity barriers shall be removed.

(Continued on next slide)

P&Z Recommendation - Amendments



- Page 121, second paragraph, first sentence: The text shall be updated as follows: “To mitigate future flooding events of this scale and larger, the City completed the Blanco Riverine Flood Mitigation Project and the Blanco Gardens Drainage Improvements Project, as noted in the Infrastructure and Public Works section above.”
- Page 135, second paragraph, first sentence: The text shall be updated to reflect language used on page 121 regarding the same topic.

Staff Recommendation



The Planning and Zoning Commission Amendments have been included in the Blanco Gardens Neighborhood Area Plan.

No action will occur at this meeting. Action will occur at the March 18 City Council Meeting.

To view the Draft Plan, please visit <https://arcg.is/0ryPzW>