



March 10, 2009

POSITION

River North District Master Plan

The San Antonio Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA San Antonio) supports City Council adoption of the recommended update to the Downtown Neighborhood Plan with the Inclusion of the River North District Master Plan.

In April 2006, The San Antonio Chapter of The American Institute of Architects (AIA San Antonio) endorsed the concept of the creation of a River North District. Since that time, an inclusive planning process has taken place which has produced a plan that is aligned with the AIA's "10 Principles for Livable Communities" (http://www.aia.org/liv_principles).

The intention of the River North District Master Plan is to create an "urban village" with a strong residential component. The plan advocates creation of pedestrian-friendly mixed-use area of mid-rise development consisting of new residential units, storefront retail space, office space, infrastructure improvements, discreet structured parking, on-street parking, landscaping, and public spaces connecting to the River. In doing so, this urban center will help reduce congestion and sprawl, promote managed growth, enhance neighborhood identity, utilize existing infrastructure, reduce energy consumption and produce a more sustainable economy.

Action Sought

- The City will adopt an update to the Downtown Neighborhood Plan with the Inclusion of the River North District Master Plan
- The City will support the intentions of the Master Plan with implementation of an appropriate, form-based Development Code.
- The Development Code should respect the City's existing River Improvement Overlay (RIO) District, which addresses development along the section of the San Antonio River included within the boundaries of the River North District.
- The City should assist the TIRZ board in securing initial funding sources to begin focused infrastructure improvements and provide immediate incentive to development of residential properties.
- The City should take the lead on developing a parking plan for the District, and fund initial parking infrastructure improvements / garages.

Explanation and Justification

Successful actions taken by The City of San Antonio, other institutions and individual stakeholders toward the production of the Plan included:

- Open planning process, inclusive of public input
- A highly qualified team of professional planners, architects, landscape architects, transportation planners and economists were commissioned.
- Local stakeholders and city staff worked to ensure the development code recommendations are "calibrated" for this neighborhood, in this city.