

Palm School Steering Committee ULI Training Summary
June 13, 2025, 9am-3pm
700 Lavaca Street, Austin, Texas

Members Present: Present members included Anna Maciel, Linda Quintanilla, Nover Morales, Peggy Vasquez, Ted Eubanks, Toña Vasquez, Gilbert Rivera, Mercy Okoye, John Rosato, Efrain Velez, and Maria Solis.

Members Absent: Marcos de Leon, Andrew Gonzales

County Staff: Sally McFeron, Selena Muñoz, Christy Moffett, Amy McWhorter, Bill Wilson, Julie Mech, Kim Illife, Jacob Muehlbauer, Sergio Plaza, Erika Humke

ULI Representative Attendees: Caitlin Admire (Freese & Nichols) and David Smith (Austin Commercias, Dwayne Shoppa (Kimley-Horn), Pete Narvarte (Hines), Devin Williamson (Raba Kistner), Tricia Williamson (Kimley-Horn), and Jacob Calhoun (CapMetro).

The Steering Committee Charge

The Palm School Steering Committee (the Committee) will be an active partner in the Palm School Concept Plan development process and in efforts leading up to the restoration and reimagining of the Palm School property. Working in partnership with the County’s consultant and staff, the Steering Committee will:

1. Provide input for the design of a community engagement plan that will be used to inform a Concept Plan for the Palm School property
2. Review and offer feedback on processes, plans, and materials created by the consultant leading up to and including the Concept Plan for the Palm School property
3. Review and offer feedback on processes, plans, and materials created by staff and/or consultants related to any restoration and reimagining of the Palm School property
4. Provide a consensus recommendation to the Commissioners Court on the community engagement process used to inform a Concept Plan and the Concept Plan for the Palm School property

Meeting Summary

The Steering Committee met for an Urban Land Institute training on Friday June 13th. The ULI training is called UrbanPlan Exchange. The UrbanPlan Exchange provides an opportunity for participants to experience the many fundamental forces that shape development. This program is important to facilitate holistic approach to the growth

occurring in Central Texas. Attendees participate in a simulation of the planning process involving teams that work together using LEGOS, a site plan and a spreadsheet to respond to a hypothetical RFP for a fictional urban neighborhood. Teams must decide how dense to build out a 5½ block area, whether to keep or move a homeless shelter, what type of retail is appropriate, and which neighborhood groups to keep happy – all while meeting the financial projections of the City and the Developer. The exercise concludes with teams presenting to a mock City Council that awards the project to the Development Team with the best proposal.

Activity Summary

Three teams of 5-6 people were created for the activity. Due to the number of people needed, County staff from the Economic Development and Strategic Investments Division participated alongside Steering Committee members. The training activity went off as planned with positive feedback received on the experience.

Next meeting

- July 10, 2025, 1-3pm, 700 Lavaca Street