

Palm School Steering Committee Meeting #3 Summary
July 10, 2025, 1-3pm
700 Lavaca Street, Austin Texas

Members Present: Marcos de Leon, Anna Maciel, Linda Quintanilla, Ted Eubanks, Toña Vasquez, Chad Sharrard, John Rosato, Efrain Velez, and Maria Solis

Members Absent: Andrew Gonzales, Novert Morales, Peggy Vasquez, and Gilbert Rivera

County Staff: Bill Wilson, Sergio Plaza, Selena Muñoz, Christy Moffett, and Addison Ptomey

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

1. Welcome & Announcements

Facilitators put together binders for Steering Committee members. Travis County staff will keep the binders at 700 Lavaca. Members are free to take notes in the binders and take materials home as they see fit. Staff will continue to add materials to binders before each Steering Committee meeting.

2. Review and Approve Meeting Summaries

A consensus was reached to approve the meeting summaries of the past two Steering Committee meetings on May 29, 2025 and June 13, 2025. The Palm School Project website is still a work in progress, but the approved meeting summaries and agendas will be added as soon as possible.

3. Partner Organization Updates

City of Austin

Chad provided an update about the Central City Plan Downtown Planning District. It is moving forward and includes West Campus and the South Central Water Front.

Save Palm School Coalition

The Save Palm School Coalition met with Waterloo Conservancy on Tuesday July 1, 2025. The meeting was considered a success because people left on friendly terms.

Waterloo Greenway

The Conservancy onboarded a new CEO who has expressed interest in meeting with the Palm School Steering Committee. Meetings with design architects for Palm Park design are occurring, and Waterloo Conservancy also met with the Historical Commission for the shelter design, which will be converted to restrooms while still preserving the original shelter structure.

Urban Land Institute – Austin

ULI had nothing new to report.

Travis County Historical Commission

Not present.

Additional Updates from Steering Committee Members:

Travis County is looking for advisory committee members for new childcare initiatives for out of school time.

TxDOT held a meeting with a variety of stakeholders about the I-35 Expansion Project. The Steering Committee requested information about the implementation of decisions, particularly in reference to the TXDOT cap and stitch project. Travis County staff explained that work related to Palm School will happen concurrently as by County staff in various departments while the Steering Committee focuses on their charge. County staff will find out who attended the meeting referenced and make sure internal work is coordinated across Departments. The Waterloo Conservancy is also coordinating closely with TXDOT in parts around Palm Park and Palm School.

Finally, a Steering Committee member inquired about opportunities to become members of other organizations. County staff confirmed that participating in other organizations is fine if it is as a community member and not as a Steering Committee representative.

4. Group Charter Discussion

Sergio led an exercise discussing what Steering Committee members found helpful and detrimental about working in groups in the past. What worked and what did not work. A strong charter is a critical tool for organizing and implementing group work.

A charter is a set of agreements about how you will work together. It can also be called group agreements or group protocols. The charter the Steering Committee passes will help

deal with conflict and navigate decision making. The Steering Committee will be able to update and amend the charter as necessary throughout its lifetime.

During the charter topic discussion, several areas of interest were identified as important. These topics included backups/proxies, member attendance requirements, the role of Steering Committee members to achieve the Charge, a mission statement, a charter amendment process, and assessment and timeline.

- **Consensus-Based Decision Making**

Steering Committee members decided to use the “traffic light” method for consensus checks. Green indicates that a voting member is fine with a proposed decision. Yellow indicates that more discussion is needed before a final decision is made. Red means that members still have much to discuss before a decision is reached. One question that remains is how much alignment the Steering Committee needs on a decision before the group can move forward. Consensus is not a voting system and therefore the Steering Committee will not operate on a majority system for making decisions.

5. **Meeting Schedule and Follow Up**

- Homework:
 - Read through the example charters provided
- Next Meeting:
 - August 14, 2025
 - 1-3pm
 - 700 Lavaca Street, Conf. Room 725