

Palm School Steering Committee Meeting #4 Summary
August 14, 2025, 1-3pm
700 Lavaca Street, Austin Texas

Members Present: Andrew Gonzales, Anna Maciel, Linda Quintanilla, Marcos de Leon, Novert Morales, Peggy Vasquez, Ted Eubanks, Toña Vasquez, Gilbert Rivera, Chad Sharrard, John Rosato, Colette Pierce Burnette, Maria Solis

County Staff: Christy Moffett, Amy McWhorter, Selena Muñoz, Sergio Plaza, 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 binder 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 summary for the last Steering Committee meeting on July 10, 2025 after a couple minor edits. The meeting summary will be added to the Palm School Project website. It will also be re-printed and added to the binders.

3. Partner Organization Updates

City of Austin

The City of Austin is moving forward with the Central City Plan and updating the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan. There is a community engagement event planned for August 23, 2025 for Imagine Austin.

Save Palm School Coalition

No updates.

Travis County Historical Commission

The Commission has been working for 4 years to get historical markers set up in East Austin. Steering Committee member and TC Historical Commission representative Gilbert was named head of the Mexican American Committee. 6 historical marker requests have been approved in East Austin. They are: 1) Richard Moya; 2) Oswaldo “A.B.” Cantu Pan American Recreation Center; 3) The Herrera Family (Dianca Herrera Castañeda); 4) Father Joe Znotas; 5) Cisco’s Restaurant and Bakery; and 6) Green and White Grocery.

Urban Land Institute – Austin

No updates.

Waterloo Greenway Conservancy

The project is progressing and the Confluence is expected to open in May 2026. There is a workshop for design of Palm Park for the community and the architects on September 9th. The workshop is open to the public and is the second step of development for the Park.

Additional Updates from Steering Committee Members

AISD has sent out a survey from the parent engagement department. If you have children in school or are a taxpayer, please feel free fill out the survey on the AISD website and invite your neighbors to do the same.

4. Group Charter Discussion

- **Consensus Decision-Making**

The Steering Committee passes a consensus check on not moving forward with a decision as a group if someone has a red light during a consensus check. The group will check in with folks who present yellow or red during a consensus check, and if someone presents a red, the group will not move on.

- **Norms and Guidelines**

The Steering Committee came to consensus on several meeting norms listed in this summary. The meeting facilitator will ask the group to silence phones and technology at the beginning of each meeting. During various stages of Steering Committee meetings, different groups may lead the group. The Steering Committee will explore this more during the committee structure part of the chartering process. At the start of each meeting, the facilitator will ask if interruptions are permissible during the meeting if people get off track. Staff should also continuously monitor the time and if the agenda is running long, staff can ask to extend the meeting by 5 minutes if the group is close to making a decision. If the decision cannot be reached in 5 minutes, the issue will be tabled and taken up at the beginning of the next meeting. The Steering Committee asked staff to include group questions/exercises in the meeting agendas sent ahead of each meeting so Steering Committee members can contemplate them in advance of each meeting. The Steering Committee discussed the possibility of establishing subcommittees based on expertise to bring decisions to the whole committee for consensus. The Committee will have to opportunity to formally establish the potential for subcommittees during the community engagement process. Finally, the Steering Committee passed the Ground Rules to serve Steering Committee meetings until the charter is passed.

- **Meeting & Attendance Agreements**

The Steering Committee decided that there is no minimum attendance required for meetings and discussions to be held. However, a simple majority of 7/13 members must be present to make decisions.

Absences

If you are unable to attend a meeting, please either “decline” the meeting calendar invite or email palmschool@traviscountytx.gov. If a member misses three consecutive meetings, it will trigger a conversation between that member and County staff – staff will reach out to the member to check in and inquire about continued ability to participate in the Steering Committee.

Backups and Proxies

No backups or proxies will be able to attend in place of a sitting Committee member because of the extensive selection process.

Technology and Devices

All phones and technological devices should be put on *silent* at the beginning of each meeting. Laptops, tablets, and phones are permitted during the meeting as long as the technology does not interrupt the meeting and members remain engaged. Members should step out any time they need to take a phone call. The group will discuss virtual meeting options later on in the chartering process.

Meeting Logistics

The Steering Committee will continue to meet monthly on the second Thursday of the month from 1-3pm at 700 Lavaca. The Committee came to a consensus that meetings will start promptly at 1pm. Community engagement events may be held in locations other than 700 Lavaca. Regular Steering Committee meetings will be on the 7th floor of 700 Lavaca through November; starting in December, meetings will be held on the 1st floor of 700 Lavaca.

Additional Committee Time Needed

The minimum commitment is 2 hours per month. If committee business requires additional time commitment for community engagement events, Commissioners Court briefings, etc., Committee members can rotate attendance responsibilities to attend these events. For regular meetings, staff will attempt to arrange additional time for room reservations if committee members reach consensus to stay late to handle committee business. For community engagement events, the Committee may want to extend time commitment to include a 30-minute debrief following the engagement event. Staff will let the Steering Committee know at least 1-2 months in advance of any community engagement events, Commissioners Court briefings, etc. that will require the attendance of Committee members for planning purposes.

5. Meeting Schedule and Follow Up

- Future Meeting Schedule:
 - September 11, 2025, 700 Lavaca, 7th floor
 - October 13, 2025, 700 Lavaca, 7th floor
 - November 13, 2025, 700 Lavaca, 7th floor
- Action items for next meeting:
 - Review example group charters provided by staff