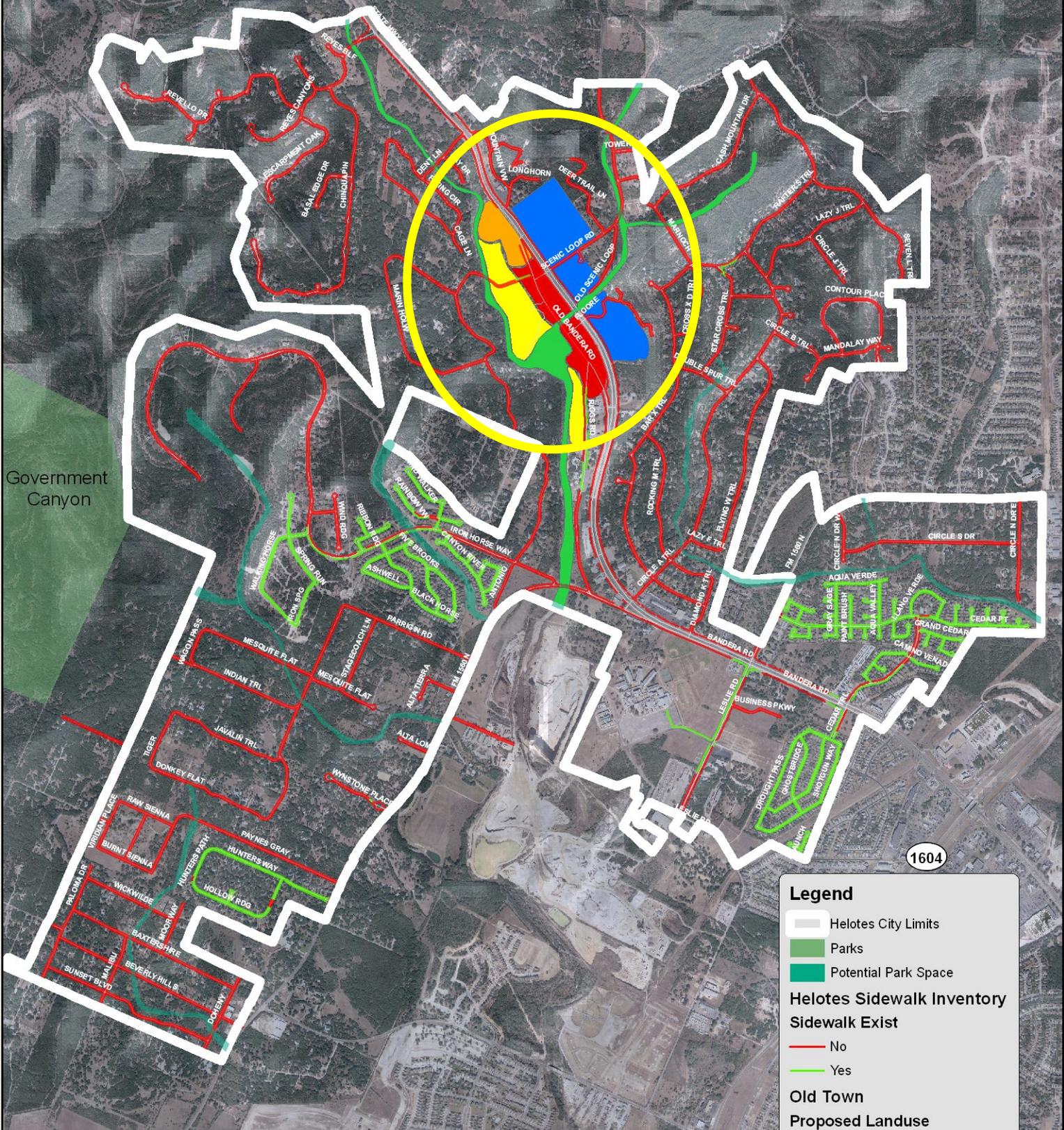


All Roads Lead to Old Town

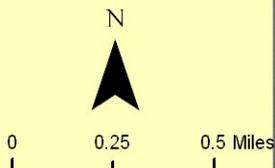


Government Canyon

1604

Helotes, Texas

Map showing Helotes city limits with Old Town proposed land use, to include sidewalk inventory.



Legend

- Helotes City Limits
- Parks
- Potential Park Space

Helotes Sidewalk Inventory

Sidewalk Exist

- No
- Yes

Old Town

Proposed Landuse

- Commercial Village Area
- Mixed - Use Village Area
- Parks and Open Space
- Residential Mixed-Use Area
- Transition Area

City of Helotes
Walkable Community Workshop Report
June 16, 2007

The San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Walkable Community Program is modeled after a national program that encourages communities to design for safer and more welcoming accommodations for pedestrians. Goals of our local Walkable Community Program are to:

- 1) Help the community better understand their walking and bicycling environment.
- 2) Help the community identify infrastructure improvements that can be made to improve walking and cycling.
- 3) Serve as an educational process for local infrastructure and operational programs that are available through the various public agencies.
- 4) Serve as a two-way communication forum between the community and the transportation agency staffs.

The program is intended to assist communities in identification of issues residents single out as important to the community. Transportation partners present at the "All Roads Lead to Old Town" workshop included Texas Department of Transportation, Bexar County, citizens and Helotes City Council members. It is the intent to have as many resources available at the workshops as possible. The workshops are an opportunity for residents to meet and discuss issues that may be limiting the mobility of the community.



Study Area Description and Background Information



The study area for the workshop was the City of Helotes. It is located twelve miles northwest of downtown San Antonio on State Highway 16. It encompasses 6.71 square miles and includes a diverse community make-up. There are 33.05 miles of streets within the City of Helotes and a number of different housing areas. Each neighborhood has its own identity and opportunities. This workshop was designed to bring those opportunities together to support the community.

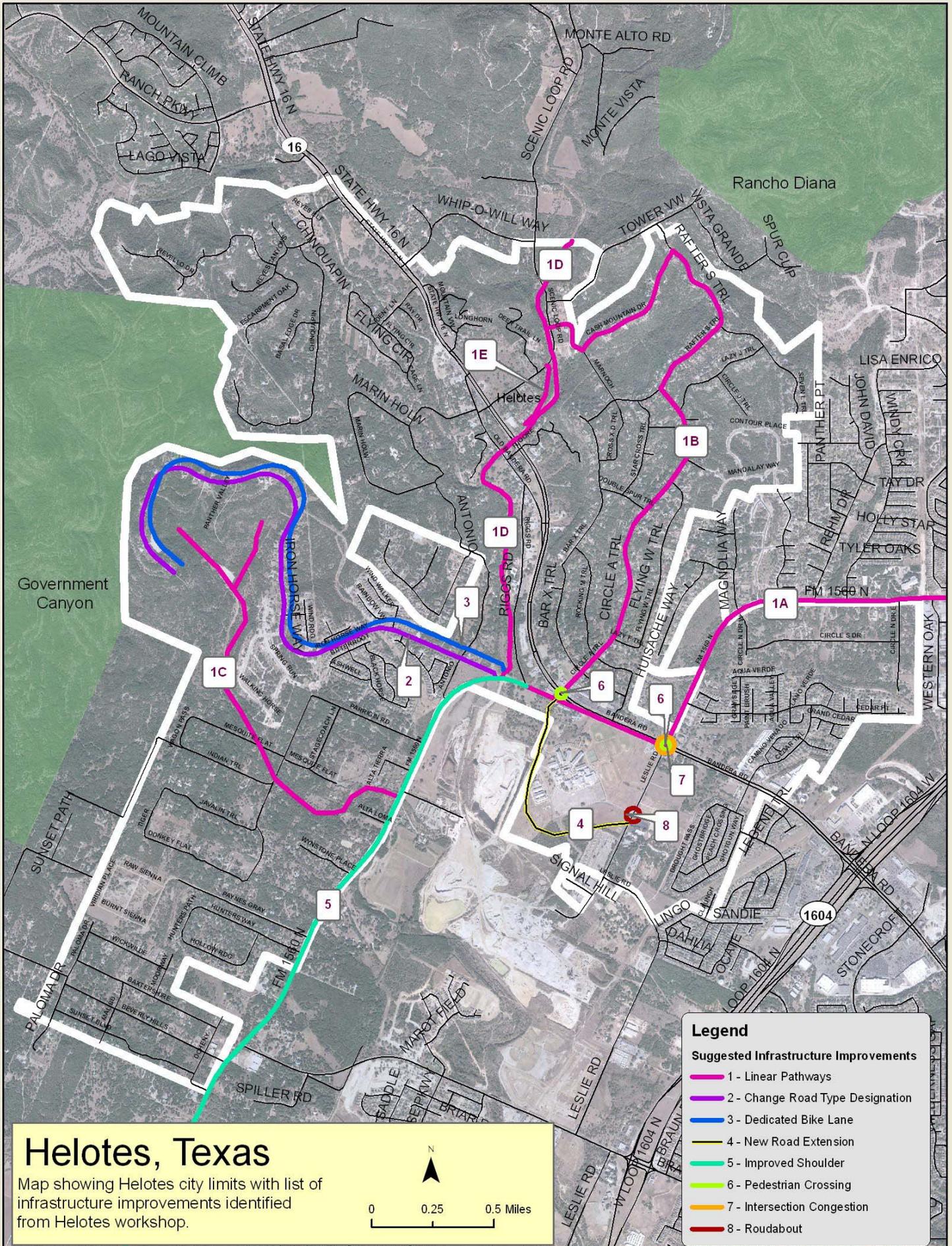
The governing body consists of the Mayor and five council members. Two council members, Alina Matutes-Eckhardt and Guillerma Contreras attended the workshop as observers to the process.

This workshop serves as an extension of the planning the City of Helotes Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has accomplished recently. A precursor to this workshop was the development of a plan to improve the hike and bike aspects of the city through the Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program. Unfortunately, no enhancement money was awarded for any projects anywhere in Texas. However, the projects are identified should funding become available in the future.

“All Roads Lead to Old Town” workshop sought to support a recent planning endeavor that will revitalize the Old Town area. Engaging the community to make the Old Town projects successful is very important to the Economic Development Corporation. This workshop supports the Old Town area as the center for community activities, as well as a place for economic growth.

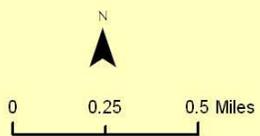


This workshop demonstrates the City of Helotes’ ongoing willingness to listen to residents in planning for the future. As this region expands the City of Helotes is showing its ability to lead in the effort to be a walking and bicycling friendly community. Smart growth supports healthy neighborhoods.



Helotes, Texas

Map showing Helotes city limits with list of infrastructure improvements identified from Helotes workshop.



Legend

Suggested Infrastructure Improvements

- 1 - Linear Pathways
- 2 - Change Road Type Designation
- 3 - Dedicated Bike Lane
- 4 - New Road Extension
- 5 - Improved Shoulder
- 6 - Pedestrian Crossing
- 7 - Intersection Congestion
- 8 - Roundabout

Community Outreach

Mr. Rick Schroder, Economic Development Specialist of the Economic Development Corporation of the City of Helotes, provided the outreach to the community. The goal was to attract residents from each neighborhood to the workshop. In addition to numerous electronic invitations and information posted on the City of Helotes and the EDC websites, Mr. Schroder issued the news release below, as follows.



News Release

City of Helotes and
The Helotes Economic Development Corporation
www.helotes-tx.gov
www.shophelotes.com

RELEASE DATE: IMMEDIATE **CONTACT:** RICK SCHRODER, ECON. DEV. SPEC.

PHONE: (210) 695-8877
FAX: (210) 695-2123
EMAIL: RSCHRODER@HELOTES-TX.GOV

**San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and
the City of Helotes Join Forces in Community Workshop**

The City of Helotes, the Helotes Economic Development Corp. (EDC), and the San Antonio-Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), along with many transportation partners, will host a Walkable Community Workshop on June 16, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. at the Helotes City Hall, 12951 Bandera Road, Helotes, Texas 78023.

A walkable community is one where residents and visitors are able to rely less on their cars by choosing to walk or bicycle in a safe environment. Walkable communities are well designed, with meandering sidewalks and well-marked streets that encourage walking and bicycling to restaurants, schools, businesses, and parks. Benefits of a walkable community include an improved quality of life, improved physical fitness and general health, and increased social interaction in the community.

Neighborhood residents, business owners, and other transportation partners are invited to discuss and plan walking, hiking, and bicycling trails throughout the City. A pedestrian-friendly master plan will be produced and will lend considerable weight to funding requests submitted by the City to state and federal agencies. Come help design Helotes so that all roads lead to Old Town!

Walkable Community Workshop

The workshop was held on June 16, 2007 from 10:00 a.m. until noon at the City of Helotes City Hall. The Economic Development Corporation provided refreshments. Transportation partners present in support of MPO staff included the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and Bexar County. Eleven residents participated in the workshop. The workshop began with thirty minutes of open discussion and a review of maps of the area. The maps were provided by the City of Helotes and the MPO. It served as an opportunity for an exchange of information between participants, staff and Helotes City Council members, Bexar County, TxDOT and the MPO about the roadway system and possibilities for the future.

After the open session two MPO presentations provided background information related to the workshop. One presentation utilized Google Earth to identify and highlight points of interest in Helotes. The other presentation by the MPO focused on the benefits of traditional urban planning, rather than planning for sprawl. The importance of green space for the health of the community was also reinforced. Both presentations are available on the City of Helotes' EDC website at www.shophelotes.com. The final activity allowed participants to use maps provided by the MPO to identify specifically what they envision for their community. They recorded concerns and desires they have for their neighborhoods and for Old Town. Two work groups presented their thoughts to the whole group. A common theme of the workshop was the desire for green space in the way of parks and also walking and bicycling paths throughout the area. Specific considerations are identified below. A common concern by all participants is the impact of State Highway 16 on the mobility of pedestrians, especially pedestrians around O'Connor High School.



Participants at the workshop displayed a sincere desire to be involved with their city. The discussion at both tables depicted interest in the Smart Growth type of development. The Smart Growth concept is an urban planning and transportation theory that avoids urban sprawl and advocates compact, transit-oriented, walkable and bicycle-friendly land use. Like the Old Town Plan it includes mixed-use

development with a range of housing and retail choices. This type of planning preserves and enhances natural and cultural resources and promotes public health.

**Table 1
List of Infrastructure Improvements Identified**

	Identified Objective	Proposed Project Description
1.	Identify roadways for bicycle facilities to encourage use of alternative modes of transportation. Linear pathways encourage pedestrian travel, as well as cyclists	<p>A. City of Helotes responsibility with cooperation of TxDOT: Kyle Seale Parkway to FM 1560 to Riggs Road</p> <p>B. Circle A Trail to Rafter Road to Scenic Loop Road</p> <p>C. City of Helotes responsibility: Linear park connecting Helotes Ranch Acres thru Iron Horse Way through drainage easement to Parrigin Playground</p> <p>D. Develop walking and biking path on Helotes Creek and connect FM 1560 and Old Town through donated private property by way of a paseo</p> <p>E. Utilizing Old Scenic Loop connect neighborhoods to Old Town Helotes</p>
2.	Iron Horse Way: Change designation from a local street to a Collector	City of Helotes responsibility: Propose change through the MPO
3.	Iron Horse Way: Dedicated bike lane and/or a linear parkway next to the road	City of Helotes responsibility: Site analysis required and all criteria needs to be met to determine appropriate action
4.	New road extending Leslie behind O'Connor High School and the quarry to meet FM 1560 (this could include bike/ped path)	Coordination of Bexar County, City of Helotes and TxDOT: Site analysis needed
5.	FM 1560: Dangerous for bicyclists	TxDOT responsibility: Site

	and pedestrians	<p>analysis needed; a number of possibilities exist such as a parallel pathway along the highway</p> <p>Participants suggested a wider shoulder which could ultimately be more dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians as motorists might drive on the shoulder thinking it an additional lane</p>
6.	Pedestrian crossing on State Highway 16 around O'Connor High School	TxDOT responsibility: Site analysis needed
7.	State Highway 16 and FM 1560 intersection: -congestion and difficult for pedestrian and bicycle travel.	TxDOT responsibility: Site analysis needed
8.	Roundabout entrance for O'Connor High School to filter traffic	Northside Independent School District responsibility

Pictures Representing Potential for Linear Parks and Dedicated Bike Lanes



Pictures Supporting the Need for Safe Pedestrian and Cyclist Crossings



Potential Funding Sources

There are no guaranteed funding sources for the Walkable Community Program (WCP). All parties understand that the implementation of any of the Walkable Community Workshop recommendations is dependent upon approval by the City of Helotes and on the availability of funding.

Nonetheless, good planning has its own rewards in that the affected community begins working together with transportation agencies to identify and prioritize their transportation needs for cars, buses, walking and bicycling. This report represents the community speaking with one voice to assist elected officials and potential funding entities in seeking solutions to their transportation needs. Sharing project costs among several funding sources may be the best opportunity for funding above mentioned projects. Potential funding sources might include:

San Antonio – Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization

- Surface Transportation Program – Metropolitan Mobility (after 2012)

Texas Department of Transportation

- Statewide Transportation Enhancement Program
- District Discretionary Funds
- Category 2 Metropolitan Corridor Projects

Bexar County

- Special Road and Bridge Fund
- Farm to Market and Lateral Road Fund
- Future Capital Projects Bond Fund

City of Helotes

Private Funding

- San Antonio Area Foundation
- The Meadows Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Local Private Companies

Next Steps

Copies of this report are being provided to the Economic Development Corporation of the City of Helotes, Bexar County and the Texas Department of Transportation. We encourage the City of Helotes to consider the recommendations in this report in planning for funded projects in the future. The MPO also suggests the report be shared with residents of Helotes.

The future is forever becoming the past. Planning for the future is a dynamic process. Planning for a healthy environment ensures a healthy community. The MPO supports the City of Helotes in planning for the future.

MPO Contact Information:

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