



District 2 **NEWSLETTER** **MARCH '26**

COUNCILMAN JALEN MCKEE-RODRIGUEZ



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**LET US KNOW WHAT
YOU WANT TO SEE IN
THE D2 NEWSLETTER.
CALL OR EMAIL US!**



Dear neighbor,

Can you believe it's already March? It's been a busy year already, and we're excited to share updates from across District 2.

In January, we hosted the largest MLK March in the nation, featuring Grammy-nominated gospel artist Melvin Crispell III, Grammy Award-winning R&B singer Coco Jones, and three-time Olympic Gold Medalist Gabby Douglas. An estimated 150,000 people attended the march and program, welcoming visitors from across the country to experience our community from our perspective. It remains one of the most powerful moments of the year for District 2.

Though it is the largest event in the district, the work of the MLK Commission extends far beyond one day. It includes a Youth Empowerment Summit, the Freedom Bike Ride, the Interfaith Worship Service, a Wreath-Laying Ceremony, the Baptist Ministers' Union Worship Service, the Public Awards Ceremony, and the MLK Scholarship Program. Deep gratitude goes to every commissioner, volunteer, sponsor, and participant who

made these events a success. January also brought difficult news, as the federal government advanced plans to create an ICE Detention Center on the Eastside. Upon learning of the potential sale, an effort was launched urging Oakmont Industrial Group not to move forward. Despite more than 13,000 emails, phone calls, and messages from people across the country, the sale proceeded without notification to the community.

While the federal government is not required to follow City zoning or permitting processes, and the Supremacy Clause limits local authority, City Council is actively working to ensure the community remains safe and informed. Two City Council sessions have been held to explore possible local actions, and updates will continue at each A-Session as part of the City Manager's Report. Residents are encouraged to remain vigilant, know their rights, safeguard due process protections, and engage with state and federal leaders to express concerns.

Across District 2, particularly on the northeast side, there is a clear need for new parks, green

space, and community and recreation centers. Land is actively being identified and acquired, and two major projects are already in the design phase. Last month, City Council approved \$2 million for the design of a park and community center at Eisenhower and Midcrown, as part of a broader master plan for the vacant site next to Pre-K 4 SA East. This represents a significant step toward long-awaited investment in that growing area.

The master planning process for Copernicus Park has also concluded. Plans include improvements to Copernicus Park and Community Center, a new District 2 Senior Center, and a site for affordable housing for seniors. Phase one, the new Senior Center, is now in the design phase and will include community engagement meetings at the existing senior center to ensure the project reflects the needs and vision of older adults in the district. Additional details about this transformational project can be found in the following pages.

As Chair of the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, I am excited to share a major shift in

how the City delivers projects. A new Capital Delivery Department has been created to oversee major capital investments, such as Bond projects, street reconstructions, drainage improvements, and other high-priority initiatives. This change allows the Public Works Department to focus more efficiently on routine and smaller-scale infrastructure needs, including traffic calming and street maintenance. Looking ahead to the 2027 Bond Program, preliminary community conversations will begin in the coming months to ensure resident priorities are reflected from the outset.

City Council has also authorized \$6 million for design and engineering services to eliminate the at-grade railroad crossing at Rittiman and Gibbs Sprawl. The design is expected to be completed in 2028, resulting in a shovel-ready project positioned to compete for federal and state construction funding.

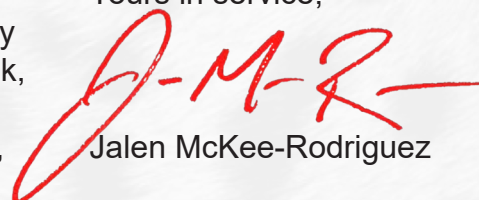
Have you ever approached an intersection only to realize a train is about to cross and wished there were an app or notification system to warn you? Last month, our office filed a Council Consideration Request calling for the development of a Real-Time Railroad Crossing Notification System. District 2 is the most train-impacted district in the city, and blockages disrupt daily travel, increase congestion, delay emergency response, heighten crash risk, and place disproportionate burdens on working families,

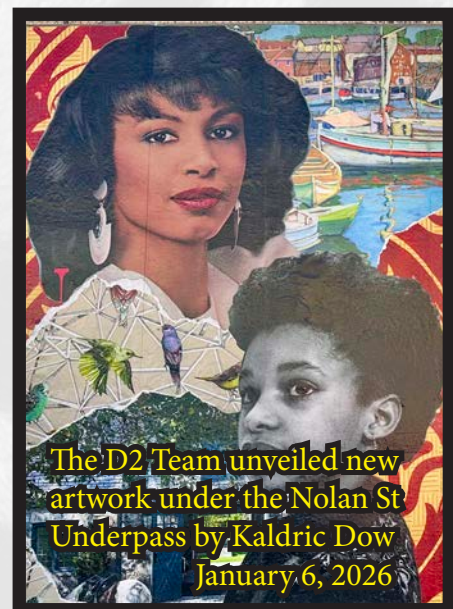
transit riders, and small businesses. A notification system is a smart, innovative, and practical solution to reduce that burden and make the community safer. In addition to chairing the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, I also serve as Chair of the Municipal Court Advisory Committee, overseeing a department that often represents one of residents' first interactions with local government. This month, Municipal Court Judge candidates will be interviewed and recommended for appointment by City Council. In preparation, comprehensive data across dockets has been reviewed, including cases involving animal welfare, domestic violence, traffic, code violations, and more. The goal is to recommend judges who are fair, balanced, compassionate, and dedicated to justice.

District 2 continues moving forward with investments in safety, infrastructure, parks, and community services. This progress is possible because residents show up, speak out, volunteer, organize, and stay engaged.

As always, it is a privilege to serve you. Thank you for continuing to stay involved and informed. Questions, ideas, and concerns are always welcome, please reach out to our team at any time.

Yours in service,


Jalen McKee-Rodriguez



COPERNICUS PARK

Master Plan

In 2024, in an effort led by Councilman McKee-Rodriguez, the City Council approved \$1.8M in funding to fully design a new senior center and to begin the master planning process for improvements to Copernicus Park and Community Center, and development of the affordable housing complex to serve seniors.

When meeting with residents, we heard overwhelmingly that the wishlist for a multi-generational complex included opportunities for existing amenities to be enhanced, including tripling the amount of available parking, improving the community center, and re-working the trails, adding lighting, as well as new features, like a splashpad, pickleball courts, an amphitheater, free green space, and a natatorium (indoor pool). We also discussed how to address the infrastructure and transportation challenges surrounding the park, where activities would be best suited (i.e. active play further from the senior center, and pickleball courts central for everyone's use), opportunities for sustainability efforts and considerations, as well as ways to integrate improvements to the overall feeling of safety within the footprint for those who use any of the amenities.

The first phase of the Master Plan is design and construction of the Senior Center. Design will take place over the next year and will culminate with a shovel-ready project. Concurrently, Councilman McKee-Rodriguez will work with City staff to identify funding opportunities. The rest of the complex will be addressed in phases and will incorporate leveraged funding. The Senior Housing development will be a partnership with the Housing Trust, and the natatorium, community center, and park upgrades will be prioritized in the 2027 Bond Program.

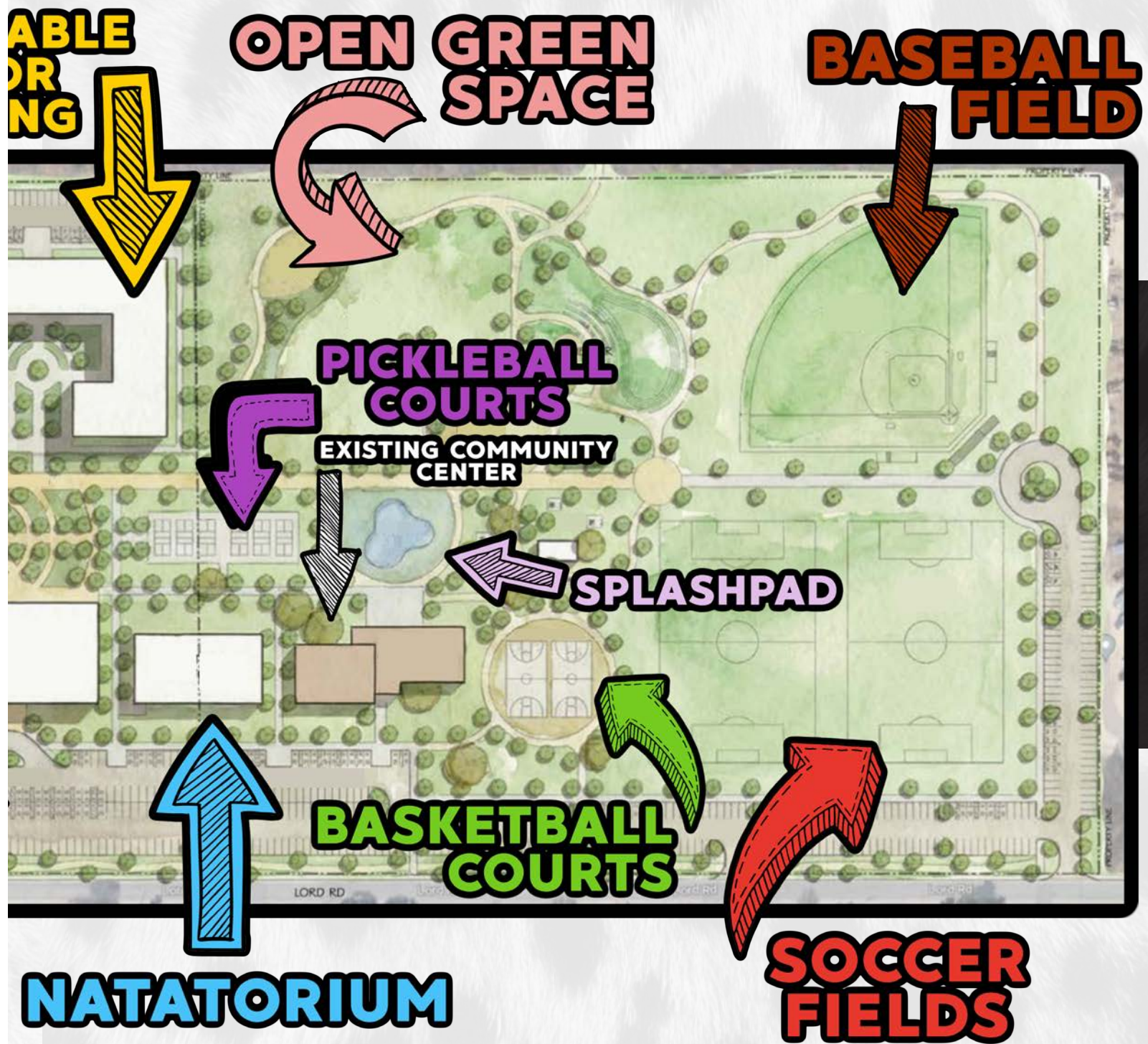
**AFFORDABLE
SENIOR
HOUSING**



**SENIOR
CENTER**

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The Carver Library Bond Project is officially underway, marking a historic \$12.8 million investment in one of the East Side's most treasured institutions — the largest capital investment in Carver Branch Library's history. Approved by voters as part of the 2022–2027 Bond Program and unanimously advanced by the San Antonio Public Library Board of Trustees, the project includes \$12.5 million in renovations and expansion, along with a dedicated \$300,000 public art initiative. Guided by extensive community input and designed by Alta Architects, this transformational renovation honors Carver's deep cultural roots while reimagining the space to better serve future generations.

When completed, the renovated library at 3350 E. Commerce will feature reconfigured and expanded spaces, a larger community meeting room with capacity for approximately 100 people, enhanced technology and media capabilities, a gallery space for local artists, improved security features, potential single-use restrooms, and thoughtfully designed outdoor areas better suited for San Antonio's climate. Community feedback has also shaped efforts to preserve and elevate Black history within the building, including recognition of leaders such as Norcell Heywood and Rev. Samuel Horace James, as well as opportunities for public art that reflects the identity and legacy of the neighborhood.



PHASE ONE: \$12.8M



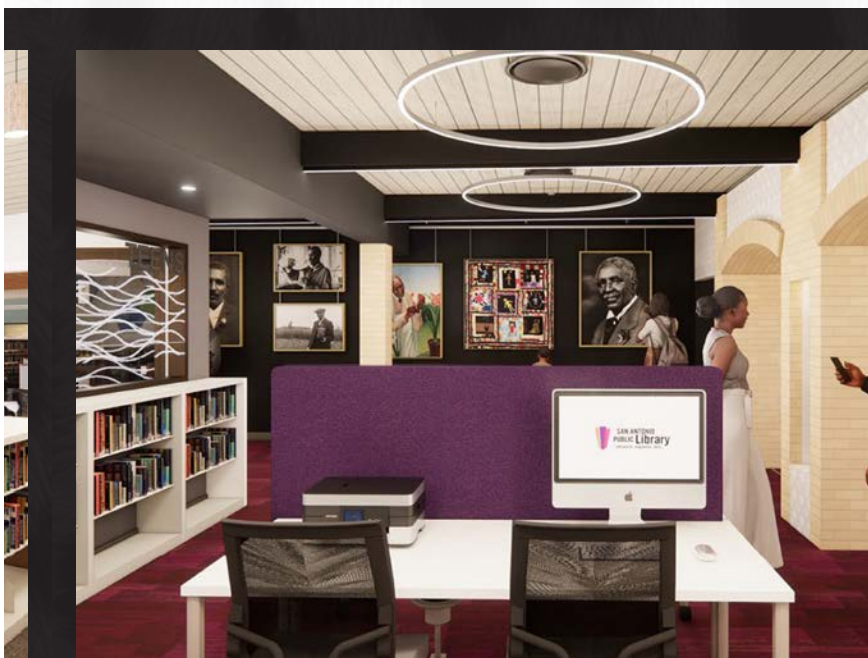
Estimated Completion: Spring 2027

Carver Branch Library closed for construction on August 11, 2025, and is currently in the major renovation phase. During construction, library services are available nearby at the Denver Heights Community Center (300 Porter St.), offering holds pickup and returns, a collection of books and materials, public computers, and curbside pickup upon request. Interim services began August 11, with hours Monday and Tuesday from noon to 8 p.m., and Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Construction will continue throughout 2025 and into 2026, with reopening anticipated following completion of the renovation phase. This project represents not just bricks and mortar,

but a renewed commitment to preserving history, expanding opportunity, and investing boldly in the future of District 2.

For questions about the Bond renovation project, residents may contact the City of San Antonio Public Works Department's Senior Architect Evelyn Gamez by phone at (210) 207-1454 or by email at evelyn.gamez@sanantonio.gov.

For library services and materials, San Antonio Public Library staff are available at 210-207-2500 or online at ask.mysapl.org.



PUBLIC ART IN D2

On this page, you'll find some of the public art that exists across District 2. Then, the following Word Search contains words and phrases about this art. Enjoy!



Illuminados – Los Dos: Mural beneath Hays Street Bridge exploring borders, migration, & cultural identity.



Neon Drive – Iker Muro: Colorful underpass mural using refracted light to energize the corridor.



Powder – Daniel Eime: Large-scale mural blending stencil and realism to honor Texas history.



Heirlooms: Eastside Pride – Kaldric Dow: Celebrates Civil Rights activism and enduring Black cultural pride.



Afterglow of Honor – Autumn Saleh: A tribute at Fire Station 24 honoring firefighters and EMS.



Open Hand, Open Mind, Open Heart – Douglas Kornfeld: Monumental sculpture inspired by Martin Luther King, Jr.



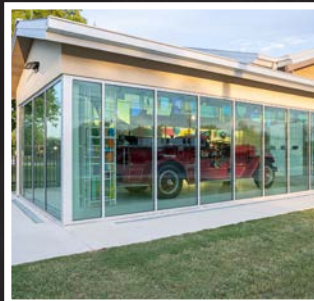
Walters Street – Oscar Alvarado: Sculptural mosaics highlighting neighborhood history and cultural identity.



Rooted in Love & Grandma's Garden – Kat Cadena: Murals celebrating intergenerational love, native plants, and community care.



Spheres of Reflection – Kaldric Dow: A sculpture honoring Martin Luther King Jr. and self-reflection.



Spirit of the Phoenix – Cathy Cunningham-Little: An installation symbolizing renewal, resilience, & service.



Past, Present, and Future – Cakky Brawley: Schaefer Library installation reflecting community history & growth.



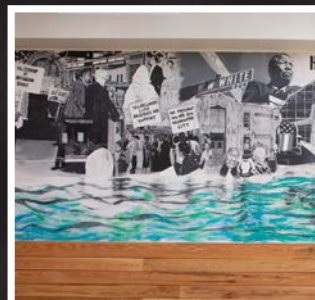
Welcome to the Tone: Grassroots mural honoring Eastside legends and neighborhood pride.



Houston Street Bridge – Kaldric Dow: Ceramic panels featuring Indian Blanket wildflowers & Adinkra symbols.



Victor Wembanyama Mural: Tribute near Frost Bank Center celebrating the Spurs.



A Small History of the Eastside – Ronney Stevens: Mural tracing history, civil rights, and local landmarks.



Healy Murphy Park: A newly renovated street art park, the first of its kind in the city.

WORD SEARCH

Challenge

YWKB I K V Q V P P T W Z U B C Y R B O H I N L V T S E O
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 X S J A K U J F C V V Z N U R U M K O Z F I Y I U H C Q C O
 H F V F W S O Q G L Y E A S T S I D E P R I D E T C N V Y S

Celebrate the vibrant creativity of District 2 with this Public Art Word Search featuring murals, sculptures, and cultural landmarks from across the Eastside. As you search for each title and landmark, discover the stories of pride, resilience, and community that shape our neighborhood.

Iluminados | Neon Drive | Powder | Eastside Pride | Afterglow of Honor | Open Hand
 Walters Street | Rooted in Love | Grandmas Garden | Spheres of Reflection | Wemby
 Spirit of the Phoenix | Past Present Future | Welcome to the Tone | A Small History
 Healy Murphy Park | Hays Street Bridge | Pittman Sullivan Park | Schaefer Library | Spurs
 Fire Station 24 | St Philips College | ZerNona Black | Claude Black | Tuckers Lounge

'26 INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM

District 2 has some of the largest infrastructure need in San Antonio. As a result of our Equity Funding Formula, in which dollars are allocated based on need rather than split evenly across all Council Districts, District 2 receives some of the highest amounts of infrastructure funding. In 2026, District 2 is slated to have 429 projects begin this year, representing \$18M+ in investment this year alone. We look forward to the transformational results of this program!

For an interactive map of the Infrastructure Program scan the QR Code!



Our office is launching the District 2 Community Canvas Mural Program, a new small business support initiative that will provide five independently-owned District 2 businesses with a custom indoor mural painted by Councilman Jalen McKee-Rodriguez at no cost. Each mural will be designed in collaboration with the selected business to reflect its story, culture, and connection to the District 2 community. Murals will be painted inside the business and are intended to enhance interior spaces, celebrate neighborhood identity, and uplift local entrepreneurs.

COMMUNITY CANVAS

SMALL BUSINESS MURAL PROGRAM

WE ARE EXCITED TO BRING FIVE NEW MURALS TO DISTRICT 2 BUSINESSES. SCAN THE QR CODE TO ACCESS THE APPLICATION. [DEADLINE: APRIL 30, 2026]



SHARE WITH YOUR FAVORITE D2 BUSINESS



**Councilman Jalen
McKee-Rodriguez**

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**Councilman Jalen and members of the
Mahncke Park Neighborhood Association**



**Residents gather for a Project Marvel Town
Hall at Wheatley Heights Sports Complex**



**Members of the D2 Senior Center dance at
our annual D2 Valentine's Day Dance**