



Austin Avenue Bridges Project

Public Meeting Summary

June 29, 2016



Red Table



Safety and Connectivity Notes:

1. Would like to see forensic report evaluations
2. What is the lifespan?
3. Extend safety considerations all the way to Williams Drive
4. Turning traffic causes wrecks at San Gabriel Boulevard
5. Pedestrian traffic visibility problems
6. Increase connectivity routes for pedestrians
7. North side parking area needed
8. Cantilever or widen bridge for pedestrians/cyclists
9. Add pedestrian ramp access
10. Safety of downtown businesses
11. Slow traffic
12. Separate pedestrian bridges

Aesthetics and Character Notes:

13. Transition to more historic character
14. Preference shared for no significant aesthetic changes to existing bridges
15. Add lighting on & below consistent with downtown lights

CONTENTS

Meeting Details	1
Notices and Advertisements of the Public Meeting	1
Public Workshop	2
Presentation.....	3
Workshop Activities	3
Charrette Results	3

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Sign-in Sheets

Appendix B – Public Workshop Handouts and Photo Examples

Appendix C – Facilitator Guide

Appendix D – Walking Tour Guide

Austin Avenue Bridges Project

Public Meeting Summary

The City of Georgetown is studying Austin Avenue from Morrow Street to 3rd Street including the two historically significant bridges crossing the San Gabriel River. This study is evaluating a range of both short and long term solutions for Austin Avenue while balancing considerations such as safety, mobility, public input, impacts to property owners, and cost.

MEETING DETAILS

The City of Georgetown hosted the second public meeting for the Austin Avenue Bridges Project in a workshop format. The purpose of this meeting was to develop a vision for the future of the bridges that balances its needs and the wants of the community. A walking tour of the project was conducted prior to the meeting for interested attendees. At the workshop, the project team provided a brief presentation and then community members participated in a workshop to share input on the project. The team did collect RSVPs for the workshop and walking tour to help prepare for activities.



Austin Ave. Public Workshop

Wednesday, June 29, 2016
6 – 8:30 p.m.
San Gabriel Community Center
445 E. Morrow Street, Georgetown, TX 78626

NOTICES AND ADVERTISEMENTS OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

The following methods were used to inform the community of the meeting:

Direct Mail

A letter was mailed to 49 property owners abutting project limits on June 13, 2016, notifying them of the upcoming public meeting.

Email Notifications

Email notifications were sent to the stakeholder database including public officials, landowners, businesses, community organizations, and other interested parties who signed up for updates. Email notifications were sent on the following dates:

- June 2, 2016, to 592 individual email addresses
- June 23, 2016 to 594 individual email addresses
- June 28, 2016 to 594 individual email addresses.

The meeting was also promoted by Georgetown Online through emails sent to contacts in their database.



Austin Ave. Public Workshop Flyer

Media Advertisements

A media release was sent to local media outlets on June 24, 2016. Meeting announcements and reminders were posted to Facebook on June 22, June 27, and June 29, 2016.

Signage

Large signs were placed on the north and south end of the San Gabriel Trail on June 3, 2016. The signs displayed public meeting details and project contact information.

Notification signs were also placed at the Georgetown Public Library, the Georgetown Recreation Center, the Georgetown Municipal Complex, City Hall and the Williamson Museum. The meeting information was also shared on the digital display monitors at both the Recreation Center and Georgetown Public Library.

The City also utilized digital message boards the week of June 25th along Austin Ave., alerting north and southbound traffic to the public meeting.



Austin Ave. Meeting Notification – San Gabriel Trail

Additional Outreach

Public meeting flyers and project information contact cards were distributed to local business and City offices on June 23, 2016.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

A walking tour was conducted prior to the public workshop to explain existing conditions, maintenance considerations, and trail/pedestrian considerations through a hands on approach. A bus picked up approximately 15 citizens from the Community Center and dropped them off near the Blue Hole (close to the bridges). The City Project Manager, Nat Waggoner, and the team Project Manager, John Mutchler, led the tour and discussions including:

- A tour under the south bridge and discussion of the history of the bridges, components of the structures, recent inspection reports, City maintenance and structurally deficient components
- A tour of sidewalks on top of the south bridge and discussed functionally obsolete components, trail and pedestrian elements, and safety
- A quick Q&A session

The bus then brought attendees back in time for the public meeting. Reference Appendix E for the Guide that was used for planning purposes.

There were 69 RSVPs for the meeting and 58 attendees that signed in. Attendees were randomly assigned a color that corresponded with a workshop table and were provided with a handout that summarized public involvement collected to date. At each table there were graphic examples of different types of enhancements, improvements, and bridge design photos to be considered as the groups talked through possible improvements (reference Appendix B). Below is brief description of activities at the meeting.

Presentation

The presentation included the purpose and need, timeline, and process for the project. A review of the public input collected to date was shared followed by an overview of the ground rules and explanation of the workshop.

Workshop Activities

After the presentation, attendees divided into five groups (two blue groups, two green groups, and one red group) to participate in a charrette activity. For 20 minutes, groups brainstormed possible improvements to Austin Avenue related to safety and connectivity. Groups marked their suggestions on aerial maps with numbered stickers, and a table scribe noted detailed comments on easel paper. For another 20 minutes, groups repeated this process, focusing on aesthetic and character elements. Groups used colored dots (red for safety and green for connectivity) to represent considerations and cut out specific photo examples to share preferences. Reference Appendix D for the Guide developed for facilitators to generate discussions and collect feedback.

Charrette Results

Notes were taken by a volunteer at each table that corresponded with the maps. A volunteer from each group gave a short presentation highlighting the discussion from their table.

The notes below do not follow consistent numbering and bulleting. These were the notes submitted from each group and they represent comments and observations made by participants. The project team added some clarification where needed to explain the intent.



Austin Ave Public Workshop

Blue Table



Safety Considerations

- Turn lanes - 3 locations
 - 2nd St.
 - San Gabriel Village Blvd.
 - Morrow St.
- Enhanced Pedestrian Crosswalks
- Economic impact to downtown was big concern

Connectivity Considerations

- Path to Sheraton Hotel and Conference Center
- Blue Hole Park and Trail
- Two Rivers apartments to San Gabriel River Trail

Aesthetic Considerations

- Several in the group wanted to see a separate pedestrian bridge or one that appears to be separate
- Can make statement architecturally while still being sensitive to complementing the existing character of Georgetown

Character Considerations

- Possible event venue (e.g. weddings)
- Group was divided (some felt the bridges need replacement; others felt no replacement was necessary)
- Update and think about safety

Green Table



Safety and Connectivity Notes:

- R1: Better pedestrian access/walkways
- R2: Center turn lane to businesses
- R3: No left turn lanes to San Gabriel Village Blvd., due to cut through traffic and speed concerns
- R4: Pedestrian crossing at 2nd and Main with a traffic light
- G1: Drop pedestrian & bike bridge below traffic
- G2: Connections from south to north rivers with trail access
- G3: Replace low water crossings on North & South rivers (Picture 1)
- G4: Sidewalks on both sides of Austin Ave from downtown to rivers
- G5: Existing trails on both rivers to connect to pedestrian and bike bridge

Aesthetics and Character Notes:

1. Park area east of Austin on S. San Gabriel with access
2. Lighting (light features)
3. Scenic overlooks on bridges
4. Benches along new pathways & sitting areas
5. Separation between pedestrians and traffic
6. Remove billboards
7. Keep natural beauty of rivers
8. Landscaped areas entering river
9. Extend downtown aesthetics & streetscapes to rivers

Green Table



Safety Considerations:

1. Left turn stops flow of traffic; need turn lane
2. Sidewalks too narrow, no protection
3. Speed concerns
4. Traffic congestion -stopped traffic
5. Trail safety - falling debris
6. Overall safety for citizens of Georgetown

Connectivity Considerations:

1. Trail - Both bridges, both sides to Austin Avenue
2. Pedestrian bridge connection to Regional Trail and to Austin Ave

Character & Aesthetics

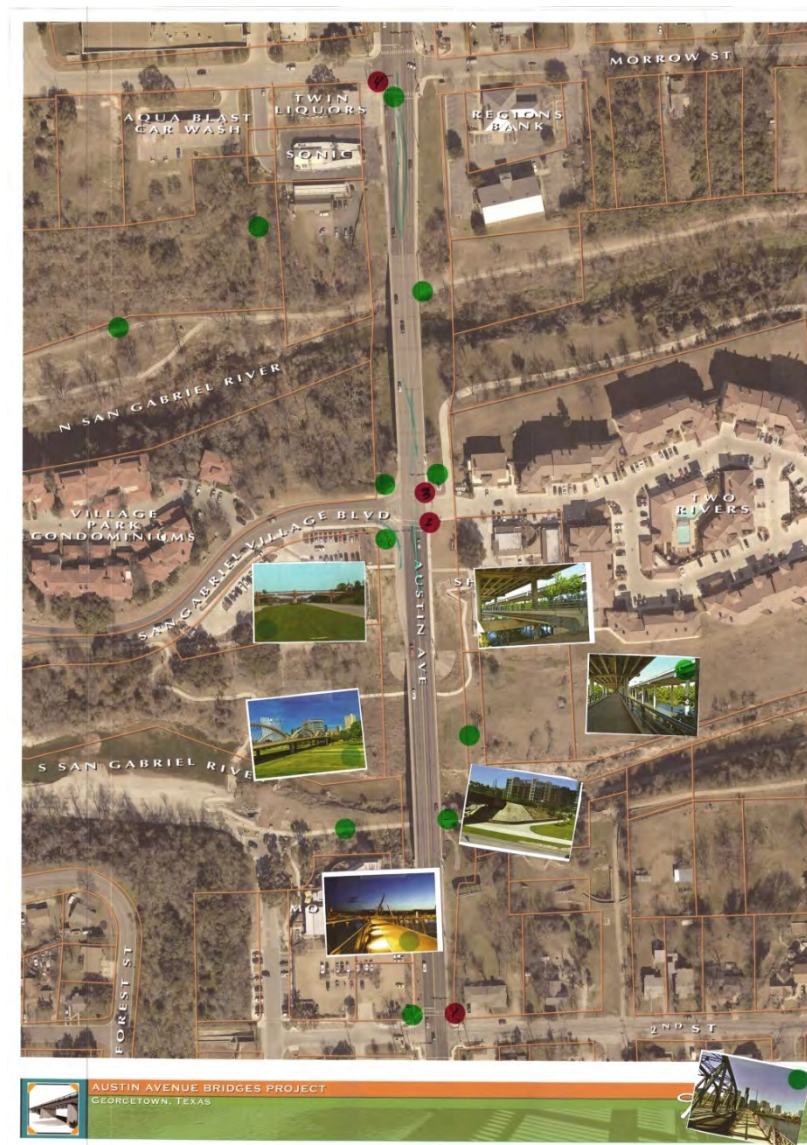
Considerations:

1. Architecture of downtown – incorporate into bridge
2. Current bridge railings
3. Lighting- preferably LED
4. Cathedral arches – like College Street Bridge
5. Need more uplighting
6. Use existing railings some way

Artistic Considerations:

7. Steers crossing the river (highlighting the Chisolm Trail)
8. Gateway signage

Blue Table



Safety and Connectivity

Considerations:

- Intersections - San Gabriel Village Blvd, 2nd St, & Austin Ave
 - Vehicular and pedestrian lanes
 - Turn lanes too short
 - Reduce the number of lanes but have one continuous turn lane
- Pedestrian Crossings
 - Separate bicycle & pedestrian corridors
- Consider lifetime of bridge

Character and Aesthetics

Considerations:

- Should some kind of Historic and Architectural Review Commission guidelines be applied?
- Lighting considerations (LED)
- Consider gateway to city
 - Reflect "old town" issues – while considering flooding, wider traffic lanes, fly overs