Our Congress Avenue is a great Texas people place - the cultural, historic and commercial spine of downtown Austin where people come to share, celebrate and create a bright future.

Values

The Vision will be achieved and maintained through loyalty to a set of Values related to Character, Function and Management. A great street needs to do many things well but a street asked to perform too many tasks is likely to perform none of them well. Our efforts to achieve the Congress Avenue Vision will adhere to these Values that will guide what we ask of the Avenue and how we direct our work.
LISTENING TO AUSTIN
Vision, Values & Process

PUBLIC EVENT 1
April 5 - 6, 2017
Over one hundred fifty residents, employees, visitors and friends joined the City, the Downtown Alliance, and the design team to “walk the Avenue”.

517
In-person question cards received

PUBLIC EVENT 2
June 2 - 3, 2017
Over the course of two days Austinites were able to take walking tours led by seasoned professionals, bike along mocked-up streets, test the performance of materials, and even build their own Avenue with strips of paper.

248
Comment cards received

48
Street section models created

ONLINE
April - July, 2017
Online engagement included the Our Congress Avenue survey, online comment cards, and the XYZ Atlas.

572
Our Congress Avenue surveys taken

FOCUS GROUPS
May - July, 2017
In-depth focus group conversations took place with over a hundred stakeholders across diverse interest groups.

19
Focus groups conducted

103
Attendees reached

500+
Attendees at in-person events (PI, P2, Focus Groups)

765
In-person comment cards received

>3000
Total comments received

Geographic reach of online engagement (Online comment cards + Our Congress Ave) by zip code

While many comments came from downtown residents, online engagement did significantly extend outreach to parts of Austin beyond downtown.
PUBLIC EVENT 1: LAUNCH!

Vision, Values & Process

The first public event—Launch!—was held at 800 Congress Avenue on April 5-6, 2017. Over one hundred fifty residents, employees, visitors and friends joined the City, the Downtown Alliance, and the design team to “walk the Avenue” (laid out in colorful tape across the floor) and to engage in lively discussions about the future of this urban corridor.

161 Attendees

2,320+ Comment Cards
517 in person
1,830+ online
PUBLIC EVENT 2: TRANSFORM!

Vision, Values & Process

The second public event—Transform!—was held at various locations along Congress Avenue on June 2-3, 2017.

180 Attendees

248 Comment Cards

48 Street Section Models
WHAT WE HEARD

What We Heard & What We Saw

Through your input and our urban design analysis, we developed a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Congress Avenue around five themes:

- social equity
- mobility & connectivity
- culture & history
- economics
- environment
GOALS AND STRATEGIES
What We Heard & What We Saw

Goals
These goals reflect the issues and challenges that we uncovered during the community engagement process and urban design analysis, and represent tangible outcomes of this process.

- Social Equity
  Ensure a welcoming, accessible, and representative space

- Mobility & Connectivity
  Balance mobility options along Congress Avenue

- Culture & History
  Enhance Congress Avenue as a historic and cultural destination

- Economics
  Amplify the economic strength and diversity of Congress Avenue

- Environment
  Celebrate biodiversity and urban habitat in a functional, resilient streetscape design

Strategies
These are examples of potential specific actions to achieve the goals. Thanks for being here today, and please help us imagine other possibilities!

- Social Equity
  - Accessibility
  - Telling the stories
  - Diverse programming
  - Connectivity to neighborhoods
  - Civic engagement (protest and representation)

- Mobility & Connectivity
  - Bike lanes
  - Pedestrian zones and crosswalks
  - Circulator
  - Accessibility
  - Parking management
  - Signalization
  - Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge improvements
  - Right sizing vehicular right-of-way

- Culture & History
  - Lighting
  - Public art
  - Wayfinding and signage
  - Place branding
  - Interpretative markers
  - Events and performances
  - Cultural anchors (north and south of Lady Bird Lake)
  - Great design

- Economics
  - Ground floor activation
  - Diversity of retail options
  - Pop-up food & beverage / retail opportunities
  - Enhanced café zones

- Environment
  - Shade and thermal comfort
  - Street trees
  - Stormwater management
  - Permeable paving
  - Connection to Lady Bird Lake ecology
  - Habitat diversity

Station 3
Public Event 3: Imagine! Our Congress Avenue
SOCIAL EQUITY
What We Heard & What We Saw

SAMPLE COMMUNITY INPUT

Do you or someone you know ever experience difficulties physically navigating Congress Avenue? (1 = never, 5 = very frequently)

2.5
Average of 113 responses

"Get in ADA compliance and install benches every block so folks can have a resting spot."

Do you think Congress Avenue can be made more welcoming to racial and other minorities? (1 = no, 5 = yes)

3.8
Average of 137 responses

"Ensure that there are public spaces that are free, accessible, and welcoming to all..."

ADA Accessibility Issues Sample (above)
Issues to resolve in order to achieve wheelchair-accessible and walkable sidewalks for all

- Cross-slope exceeds 2%
- Curb ramp slope exceeds 8.3%
- Horizontal opening on walking surface exceeds 1/2"
- Accessible parking is non-compliant
- Push button reach range or level clear floor is non-compliant

Our Congress Avenue Survey (left)
Places where respondents go to exercise freedom of speech
MOBILITY & CONNECTIVITY

What We Heard & What We Saw

Existing Conditions

120' ROW
Section 1: @ Eighth Street

120' ROW
Section 2: @ Second Street

120' ROW
Section 3: @ Barton Springs

Sample community input

Fully connected sidewalks and bike lanes with no breaks, better directional signage, and beautification along the entire corridor...widen the sidewalks to allow for more street cafés and public events...

For one thing, I think we need to move toward incentivizing the usage of mass transit (plus adding mass transit to get people around town)...and charge for the [parking] spots we do have.

SAMPLE COMMUNITY INPUT

Pedestrian Right-of-way (above right)

- Pedestrian path
- Not accessible to pedestrians

Samples from “Build Your Avenue” at May 2017 “Transform” Event

Station 3
Public Event 3. Imagine!
CULTURE & HISTORY
What We Heard & What We Saw

Key Destinations
- Key Destinations
- Nodes of activity
- Key Districts

Do you consider Congress Avenue an arts and culture destination?
(1 = disagree, 5 = agree)

3.2
Average of 163 responses

What is the most memorable civic event you’ve attended on Congress Avenue?

46%
March / Protest
Out of 153 responses

20%
Parade

We should be very ambitious to create a great avenue worthy of a world class city. We should be looking towards the great avenues of the world for inspiration and example.

Identify the history and make it more visible and obvious to the public. Incorporate building signage, incorporate elements of diverse culture that funded and developed and contributed to Austin history.

Sample Community Input
ECONOMICS
What We Heard & What We Saw

SAMPLE COMMUNITY INPUT

How important is it that local and small businesses can afford to stay on Congress Avenue? (1 = not at all, 5 = very)

How do you rate the quality of Congress Avenue as a working environment? (1 = not good, 5 = very good)

Offer rent subsidies or other financial incentives, including free or low cost business training for local entrepreneurs.

...Build walking traffic on Ave. Activate abandoned buildings for more synergy and less holes in the landscape.

4.1 Average of 146 responses

3.1 Average of 50 responses

Ground Floor Use (left) Publicly Accessible Ground Floor Use (above)

- Study Area
- Office/Commercial Lobby
- Retail/Hotel
- Cultural
- Vacant/Construction
ENVIRONMENT
What We Heard & What We Saw

SAMPLE COMMUNITY INPUT

How important is it to control flooding and use rainwater wisely?
(1 = not at all, 5 = very)
4.4
Average of 153 responses

How important is it to protect the bats?
(1 = not at all, 5 = very)
4.6
Average of 150 responses

“The bridge is SO HOT and we were almost run over by cyclists on the sidewalk.”

“Would love to have more nature integrated and more of Austin’s history reflected.”

“I wish South Congress could have more green space or pocket parks. The North Congress re-design from the state looks awesome.”

Sample Tree Survey (above)
- Quercus fusiformis
  Live Oak
- Quercus virginiana
  Southern Live Oak
- Quercus muehlenbergii
  Chinkapin Oak
- Quercus shumardii
  Shumard Oak
- Fraxinus velutina
  Arizona Ash
- Quercus polymorpha
  Monterey Oak
- Ilex vomitoria
  Yaupon
- Ulmus crassifolia
  Cedar Elm

Taxodium distichum
Bald Cypress

Condition - Good

Condition - Fair

Condition - Bad

Summer Shadow Analysis (left)
Average amount of shade during the longest days of the year

Sunny
Shady
Uncomfortable
SOCIAL EQUITY
Potential Strategies

Ensuring a welcoming, accessible, and representative space for all

• Accessibility
• Telling the stories
• Diverse programming
• Connectivity to neighborhoods
• Civic engagement (protest and representation)

Celebration of Arts and Culture
2013 Day of the Dead Parade, Austin

Accessibility
ADA-friendly walkway, Austin

Cultural Events & Installations
Mme. Maurice Origami Installation, Paris

Civic Engagement
Women’s March, Austin

Diverse Programming
Yoga on Sixth Street, Austin

Telling the Stories
Historic Map of Austin
MOBILITY & CONNECTIVITY
Potential Strategies

Balance Mobility Options along the Avenue

• Bike lanes
• Pedestrian zones and crosswalks
• Circulator
• Accessibility
• Parking management
• Signalization
• Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge improvements
• Right sizing vehicular right-of-way

Separated Bike and Ped Lanes
Bay Bridge. Oakland, CA

Wider Sidewalks
The Avenue. Washington, DC

Circulator
Circulator. Bethesda, MD

Pedestrian-Focused Intersections
Street Color. Chicago, IL

Parking Management
SF Park Mobile App. San Francisco, CA

Bike Lanes
Raised Bike Lane. Cambridge, MA
CULTURE & HISTORY
Potential Strategies

Enhance Congress Avenue as a Historic and Cultural Destination

- Lighting
- Public art
- Wayfinding and signage
- Place branding
- Interpretative markers
- Events and performances
- Cultural anchors
- Great design

Wayfinding
Legible London Wayfinding, London, UK

Distinctive Lighting
18 Nuances de Gal, Montreal, QC

Engaging Public Art
Market Street, San Francisco, CA

Interpretive Markers
Pitt Street Mall, Sydney, Australia

Great Design
Parklet, London, UK

Connection to Cultural Anchors
Heritage Trails, Washington, DC
**ECONOMICS**

Potential Strategies

Amplify the economic strength and diversity of Congress Avenue

- Support small, local businesses
- Ground floor activation
- Diversity of retail options
- Pop-up food & beverage / retail opportunities
- Enhanced café zones

**Food Truck Space**
Klyde Warren Park, Dallas, TX

**Street Festivals**
South Street Festival, Philadelphia, PA

**Temporary Places**
Lawn on D. Boston, MA

**Enhanced Café Spaces**
Market Street, Philadelphia, PA

**Temporary Retail**
La Fashion Truck, Los Angeles, CA

**Support for Local Businesses**
Royal Blue Grocery, Austin
ENVIRONMENT
Potential Strategies

Celebrate biodiversity and urban habitat in a functional, resilient streetscape design

- Shade and thermal comfort
- Street trees
- Stormwater management
- Permeable paving
- Connection to Lady Bird Lake ecology
- Habitat diversity

Diverse Native Species
Pollinator Garden, Portland, OR

Permeable Pavers
Seaport District, Boston, MA

Shade Structures
Huotan Park, Shanghai, China

Rainwater Sculptures
Boston Harbor Pavilion, Boston, MA

Visible Water Story
Uptown Circle, Normal, Illinois

Shade Trees
Las Ramblas, Barcelona, Spain