WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE_phase one: site analysis + discovery

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WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE_project team

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STAKEHOLDER MEETING #1 - Agenda

- Project Introduction
- Analysis
- Priorities
- Goals and Opportunities
- Design Palette
- Next Steps
Phase 1
Site Analysis + Discovery

- identify character-defining features and materials
- analyze and review previous planning and programming studies
- address the recommendations outlined in the Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan
- investigate recent and future adjacent upgrades
- incorporate an active stakeholder process formulated to allow participation and involvement
- understand and recognize the historic relevance of the project site

Phase 2
Preliminary Plan

- create a programmatic plan and landscape design vision in engaged coordination with stakeholder groups and PARD
- create a design vision that incorporates an economic phasing plan based on Class D Estimate of Construction Cost
Edwin Waller designates Wooldridge Square as one of four public squares in Austin proper.

City installs an eighteen inch culvert to collect and reroute Shoal Creek through the Square.

Mayor Wooldridge successfully campaigns the community to rehabilitate the Square.

Mayor Wooldridge installs Greek Revival Bandstand.

City adds sidewalk from southeast to northwest corner.

Travis County Courthouse opens to the public at 10th and Guadalupe.

Square experiences severe decline.

Square revival inspires longstanding community participation and investment.

Local and national politicians host rallies at the bandstand.

Community hosts weekly concert series.

Period of Historic Significance.

1839
1900
1909
1910
1917
1930
Governor Lee O'Daniel holds last political rally at the bandstand.

Travis County Historical Survey Committee erects Historical Marker.

National Register of Historical Places nominates the Square.

Texas Historical Commission dedicates the Square as a Texas State Antiquities Landmark.

PARD closes square for rehabilitation.

PARD reopens square in March, nine months after it was closed for rehabilitation.

Square experiences decline in public interest.

Square revival.
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (NPS)
PRESERVATION BRIEF

Wooldridge Square has been designated at both the national and state level as a place of historic and cultural significance. *The National Park Service’s Preservation Brief* for cultural and historic landscapes provides a step-by-step guide to ensure a successful balance between historic preservation and change.

**NPS Preservation Guide**

1. Inventory existing conditions
2. Evaluate historic integrity
3. Establish a treatment approach
4. Develop a maintenance strategy
TREATMENT FOR CULTURAL LANDSCAPES
The National Park Service outlines four treatment standards for cultural landscapes: 1. preservation, 2. rehabilitation, 3. restoration and 4. reconstruction. Rehabilitation is recommended for cultural landscapes that have contemporary needs and uses.

Rehabilitation 1.0
Rehabilitation recognizes the need for landscape modifications to meet continuing and developing needs while retaining historic integrity. Collaboration with the Texas Historical Commission and other stakeholder groups will aid in sensitive and compatible design solutions.

Rehabilitation 2.0
Rehabilitation is a flexible treatment option that allows for change over time. Landscape modifications are compatible with the historic character and use, striking a balance between change and historic conservation.
SITE ANALYSIS + DISCOVERY
Wooldridge Square has a robust tree canopy made up of young and mature trees. In 2012, PARD prepared a comprehensive conditions assessment and proposed tree planting plan for the Square.

**Existing Heritage**
Over half of the existing trees in the Square are granted heritage designation.

**Future Heritage**
The 2013 landscape improvements included the introduction of 13 new shade trees of various species into the Square. Once mature, these trees will significantly enhance canopy and species diversity coverage on site.

**Tree Loss**
In November 2015, a cedar elm in the northwest corner of the Square fell and was subsequently removed. An ArborPro study conducted in 2013 found the tree to be in declining health.
Tree Restoration

PARD initiated a fertilizer and soil treatment program for the existing trees in 2011 to improve soil chemistry, soil compaction and keep moisture in the critical root zone.

**Soil Treatment**

Cultivate the soil to a depth of six inches around the stem of the tree to the extent of one half of the critical root zone. Incorporate compost and other amendments per soil analysis.

**Mulch**

Native hardwood mulch applied to a depth of three inches to the extent of the 1/2 critical root zone.

**Tree Loss**

In November 2015, a cedar elm in the northwest corner of the Square fell and was subsequently removed.
UTILITIES

The 2013 improvements upgraded the power supply. Lighting remains limited to a small area leading to safety concerns. The introduction of a reclaimed water line provides an opportunity to connect to the network and irrigate the landscape with reclaimed water.

Reclaimed Water Network
The Mains to Capitol Complex project will expand the reclaimed water pipe network in Fall 2015 that will run parallel to 10th. This gives Wooldridge the opportunity to connect to the network.

Power Supply
Both the Bandstand and Plaza have 100 amp service. This is enough to individually power a small lighting and sound event. A generator could provide additional power if needed.

Lighting
Existing lighting is limited to the bandstand, central pathway and ROW street lighting, limiting night use to these three areas.
An ADA accessibility study performed in September 2015 found the pathway and some site furnishings do not meet ADA standards outlined in the TAS Code.

**Pathway**
The pathway exceeds 8.3% slope at multiple points, the maximum slope acceptable for an accessible path. The stairs at the east end also limit accessibility into the site.

**Site Furnishings**
Any site furnishing including benches and trashcans are required to be ADA accessible. To date, there are a limited number of fixed trashcans and benches that are ADA accessible on site.

**Bandstand**
The Bandstand is considered a significant element of the Square. As a significant element accessibility is a requirement per current ADA standards.
ADJACENT LAND USE

When the Square was founded, the adjacent land use was mostly residential. Today, the majority of the surrounding land use is public or private office buildings making the primary user a 9 to 5 office employee.

Residential
Single and multi-family residences make up less than 20% of the existing land use within a block of the square.

Surface Parking
There are ten surface and covered parking areas within a block radius of the Square, nine of which are closed to the public.

Historical Designation
The Square is located next to three structures recognized locally and nationally for their historic significance - Travis Country Courthouse, Austin History Center and the Moon Tower.
In the next ten years, the fabric of the neighborhood will change. As Travis County looks to expand, Aspen Heights, a new apartment high rise will dramatically increase residential density in the area.

Capitol View Corridor

Travis County

2011 Travis County Central Campus Study proposes two additional buildings with retail and open space.

Austin History Center

In 2016, the Austin Public Library will relocate to its new location on Cesar Chavez. The Austin History Center proposes to expand their operations into the former library.

Aspen Heights

Aspen Heights will add 196 new apartment dwellings with 22 stories and parking garage scheduled for completion in 2015.
Potential Joint Development
Cap Metro proposed a joint development to bookend the transit center. The Capitol View Corridor limits future development in this area, with respect to height.

Potential Transit Center
All local and terminating routes would be within a one to one and a half block of each other, which would significantly ease transfers for bus users.

Proposed Bus Stop
A bus stop on the west side of Guadalupe would be located across the transit center for bus lines continuing southbound.

Cap Metro Service Plan 2020, proposes a transit hub in downtown Austin. Two possible sites are adjacent to or near the square.
PARKING
Wooldridge Square relies primarily on paid street parking for vehicular access. While there are a number of surface parking garages and lots in the vicinity, most are reserved for private use.

On-Street Parking
There are 122 paid parking spots within a block of the Square, most of which are occupied during working hours.

ADA
Currently there are only two ADA on-street parking spots within one block of the Square.

Garage + Surface Parking
There are two parking garages and one surface parking lot available for public use within one block of the Square.
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Wooldridge Square is in a prime location for major bus and bike routes. Proposed expansions would add additional bike lanes and a B-Cycle station.

Bus Routes
Guadalupe currently serves as a major bus route for both local and rapid lines as well as a sharrow lane for bus and bicycle traffic.

Bike Route
The COA 2009 Bike Master Plan proposes two additional bike routes on the north and south end of the square.

B-Cycle
The nearest B-Cycle station is at least four blocks from the Square. The preliminary expansion plan would add two additional B-Cycle stations near the site.
LESSONS LEARNED - THE 2013 REOPENING OF WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE REPORT

The report identified short and long term park infrastructure that supports and sustains both spontaneous and intentional use.

Short-Medium Term Investment
Short term infrastructure is identified by public and programming groups as basic park infrastructure needed to support basic programming.

Long Term Investment
Long term investment identifies to a long range master plan to integrate permanent and designated infrastructure for ongoing programming.
proposed short term infrastructure investment

proposed long term infrastructure investment
implemented short term infrastructure investment

implemented long term infrastructure investment

security

event sponsorship

movable seating

temporary toilets

event signage

mobile vendor

contact person

alcohol sales

lighting + electricity

communication + outreach

public art

drinking fountain

loading + parking

ada access

dedicated parking

tree canopy

dedicated staff support