
4-PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE CIRCULATION & STREETScape DESIGN

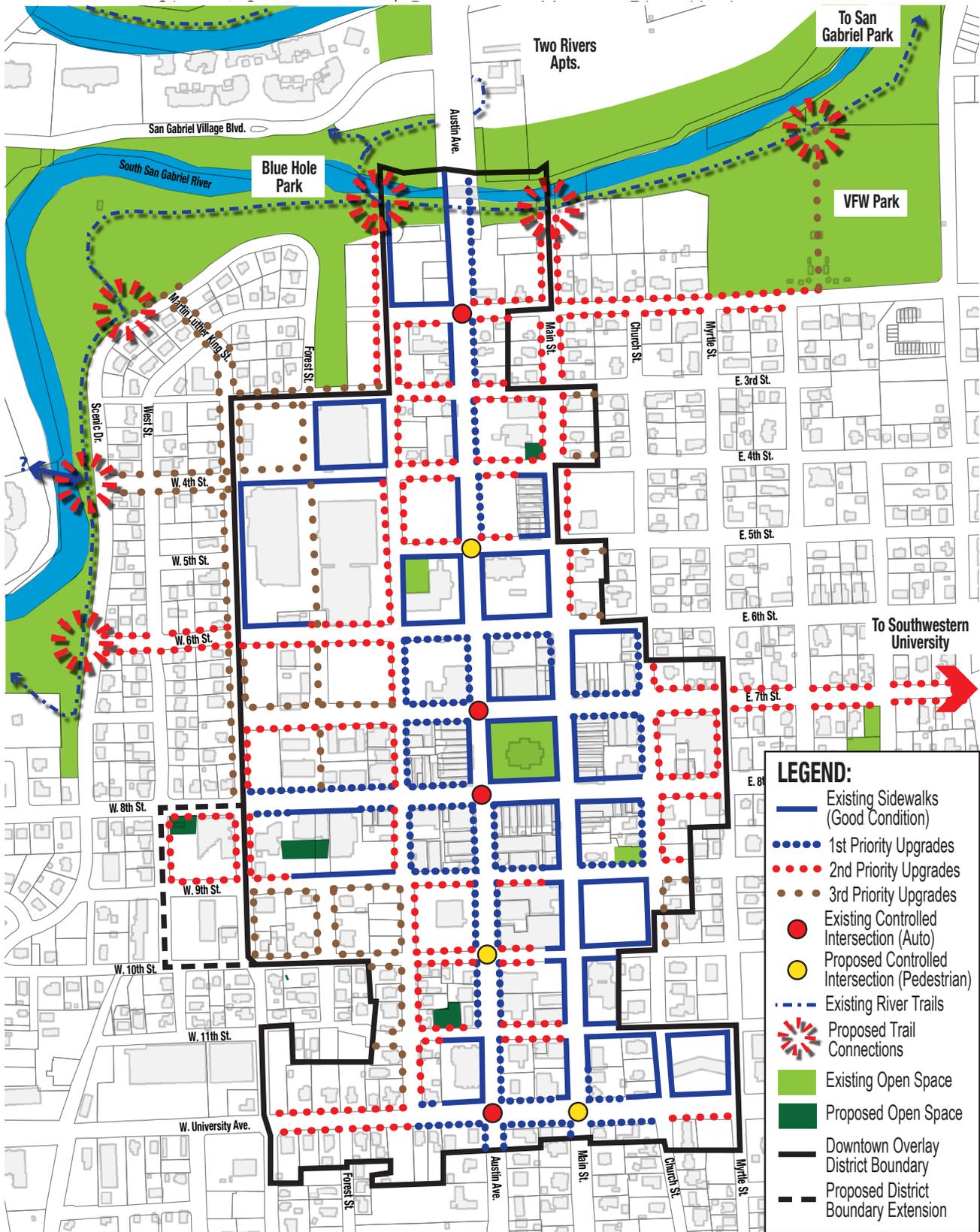
In recent years, the City has constructed new sidewalks and enhanced existing ones in the historic core with brick pavers, lighting, benches, signs and plantings. This has established a distinct and attractive image around the square. In addition, the city has been working diligently to implement pedestrian and streetscape improvements elsewhere throughout downtown as recommended in the original master plan. This chapter seeks to update the pedestrian and bicycle circulation needs throughout downtown and offer priorities for implementation.

Presently, sidewalks are still intermittent in the downtown, with substantial gaps in the overall system. This discontinuity in the pedestrian system is a major impediment to development of a healthy retail sector and it also negatively affects the ability to attract offices and residences into the area. The sidewalk system should be extended to all block faces within the planning area. Priorities for constructing sidewalks are shown on Map #10.

PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION ROUTES

Pedestrian ways, bike trails and streets should be considered in a broad context. They should facilitate non-motorized circulation that strengthens business centers and link neighborhoods. Therefore, roadways, sidewalks and trails should be coordinated in a comprehensive system that assures continuity of circulation for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Links for pedestrian and bike circulation between downtown development anchors are defined in the basic framework strategy. These links should be enhanced to connect established improvements to nearby neighborhoods. Connections should also be expanded to regional trail connections.



MAP 10 | PEDESTRIAN PRIORITIES

Georgetown Master Plan Update

Georgetown, TX

March, 2014



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ESTABLISH PRIORITIES

Priorities for upgrading sidewalks in the Downtown Overlay District are shown on Map #10. Some of these block faces have sidewalks that exist, but are in poor condition or have significant grade change issues that need to be addressed. Others do not have sidewalks at all.

1st priorities (dotted blue line) include:

- “connecting the dots” within the **historic overlay district**
- extending sidewalks along **Austin Avenue** north to the river and south to University
- improving **University Avenue** at the major intersections, and
- connecting to the library and future Municipal Center along **8th Street**.

2nd priorities (dotted red line) include:

- “connect the dots” within the **opportunity areas**
- connect to **Southwestern University via 7th Street**, and
- **link into the San Gabriel River trails** at various locations.

3rd priorities (dotted brown line) include:

- filling in all the **missing links** within the Downtown Overlay District, including more connections to the river trails.



A 1st priority should be improving connections along 8th Street to the Library.

ESTABLISH HIERARCHY

The primary routes that pedestrians are expected to use the most should receive hierarchy for design and streetscape detail. Improved intersections with pedestrian controls are proposed along Austin Avenue based on hierarchy of the pedestrian system to help facilitate crossing Austin Avenue. Map #11 shows the level of sidewalk designs that should be used downtown in order to establish a hierarchy of primary, secondary and tertiary pedestrian routes. Within this hierarchy, the amount of decorative paving used varies, in response to the levels of use anticipated. The city has already begun implementing upgrades as a response to the 2003 Downtown Master Plan. This plan updates those recommendations.

STRENGTHEN FUNCTIONALITY

The pedestrian system is a complex network of sidewalks, paths, trails, alleys, and crosswalks. Lighting, benches, waste receptacles, bicycle racks and signs accompany the pedestrian systems and strengthen their functionality. These components should be assembled in various ways, from block-to-block to respond to specific conditions. Expanding the pedestrian system “kit of parts” throughout much of the downtown will strengthen the role pedestrians play in Georgetown’s economy.

To strengthen functionality, the pedestrian system should include:

- **Plazas, parks** and other places to rest and refresh
- **Directional signs and wayfinding devices** tailored to the pedestrian, including possible integration of signs that indicate walk times and distances for “healthy walking trails” and,

- A **series of destinations** that make downtown a fun place to explore at all times during the day, week, and year.



A series of destinations and mini plazas and parks with amenities for pedestrians will help strengthen the overall functionality of the system.

TRAIL CONNECTIONS

The City of Georgetown's Parks and Recreation Department has an expansive trails system in and around Georgetown. Connections to these trails to and from the downtown area should be provided. Priority should be given to trail improvements that would link downtown to outlying neighborhoods. Of particular importance are the trails found along the banks of the North and South San Gabriel Rivers.

Providing better connections from apartment complexes and overnight accommodations located to the north of the river from downtown is an important action. Presently there are no convenient routes for these residents and visitors to walk to the downtown, which is conveniently close. Because connections to downtown are less attractive and accessible, these residents may be more inclined to patronize other commercial areas of Georgetown.

Trail improvement actions:

- Provide clearly defined paths between the **river and downtown**.
- **Install markers** as important parts of these regional trail connectors.
- Study the feasibility of providing **pedestrian connections across both the rivers**, that are separate from those used by automobiles.
- Study the feasibility of adding a **cantilevered sidewalk** with a look-out area to the historic bridge over the South San Gabriel River with a grand staircase and accessible ramp to the existing trail.
- Study the feasibility of installing a **pedestrian bridge across the river** to link downtown with development to the west.



Provide clearly defined paths between the river and downtown.

BICYCLE CIRCULATION

Bicyclists do use the many regional trails in and around Georgetown. Strengthening the linkages to the downtown and improving signage to key destinations will improve the role in which this user group plays in the economy. This includes linking existing and planned trails, as well as providing designated routes for bicyclists on some streets. Map #11 indicates suggested on-street bicycle routes within downtown. (Bicycle routes are indicated with signs or sharrows and do not necessarily mean that bikes have their own dedicated lanes. Shared streets are often a part of this system.)

Bicycle system actions:

- **Bike routes** should be clearly defined and implemented to provide continuity of access from outlying areas to the downtown.
- **Bicycle racks** should be provided at activity centers.



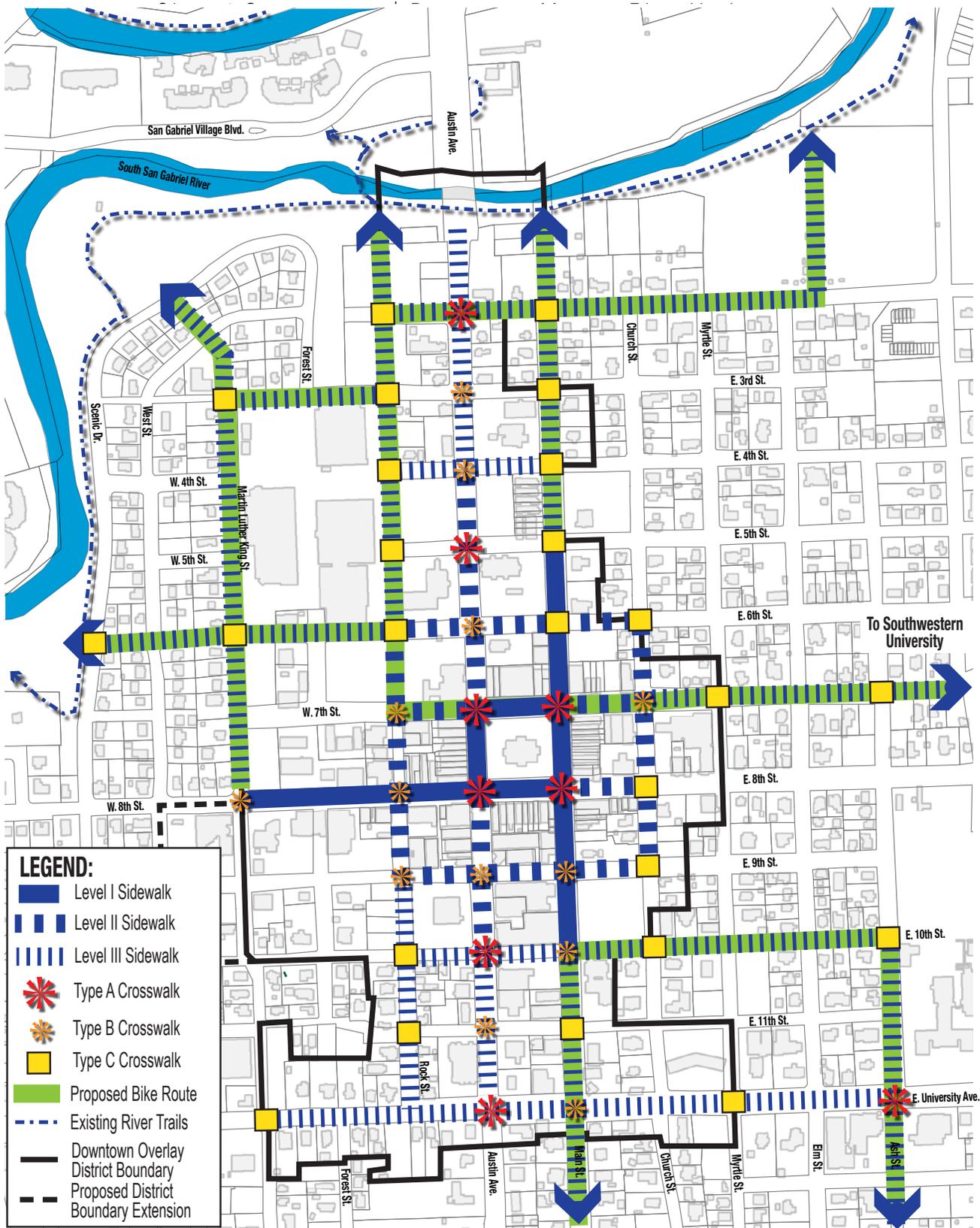
Bike routes should be clearly defined with sharrows and signs on specific city streets.

CONNECT TO UNIVERSITY

An important asset to the community and market for the downtown businesses is the student body at Southwestern University. Clear and safe pedestrian routes should be provided. The most popular pedestrian route from Southwestern to downtown is 7th Street, which has been labeled as a 2nd level priority and is shown as a suggested bike route to serve students. Note that this particular pedestrian connection should be well lit as an extra measure of security for those students who travel this route at night.

University connection actions:

- Improve walking conditions to the university with **new sidewalks**, where conditions permit.
- Install **decorative lighting and directional signs** along the route.
- **Improve crosswalks** as indicated on the intersection improvements plan.



MAP 11 | SIDEWALK AND CROSSWALK DESIGN

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SIDEWALK DESIGN

To help guide pedestrian activity in and around the downtown, four types of sidewalk designs are recommended. The designs range from basic scored concrete to routes with brick pavers, benches and decorative lighting to help establish the hierarchy of the pedestrian system. Map #11 illustrates where these different levels of sidewalk designs should occur.

Decorative paving should be used strategically, to express a visual theme for downtown. Decorative paving should denote special activity zones, such as intersections and pedestrian crossings, street furniture areas and public plazas. The decorative paving design proposed in the sidewalk typologies that follow are based upon those developed for the Town Square Historic District. The basic approach here is to expand these existing elements into the surrounding blocks.

In some areas of intense pedestrian activity, decorative paving should be installed throughout the entire intersection. This will help to identify these intersections as places of major pedestrian use and will establish the downtown as a strongly pedestrian-oriented area.

LEVEL I SIDEWALK

In this classification, the entire sidewalk is constructed of brick paving, in order to indicate its high level of pedestrian use. These sidewalks offer the highest level of pedestrian enhancement. This design is currently in place on the four blocks facing the Courthouse Square and along Main Street from 5th to 10th Streets. It should be continued along 8th Street from the courthouse to the new library and proposed Municipal Center festival street.

KEY FEATURES

- **Brick pavers** laid in a herringbone bond
- **Brick paver bands** on both sides of central pavers, laid in a stack bond (use of both single and double bands of these accent bricks are seen)
- **Concrete band** (curb and gutter) on street side of pavers
- **Tree and flower planters**
- **Decorative lights, benches and waste receptacles**
- A **10' width** is preferred in Level I.



Level I sidewalk

LEVEL II SIDEWALK

This sidewalk has a band of brick pavers at the outside edge of the walk. The remainder of the walk is finished concrete, scored in 2-foot square modules. This provides texture and interest in a more economical manner, and helps to distinguish these streets from those that are all brick.

KEY FEATURES

- **Modular pavers** along the sidewalk edge, laid in a common bond
- **Concrete bands** (curb and gutter) on street side of pavers
- **Tree and flower planters**
- **Decorative lights, benches and waste receptacles**
- An **8' width** is preferred in Level II.



Level II sidewalk

LEVEL III SIDEWALK

In this classification, the sidewalk is constructed of scored concrete, in the 2-foot square module. Brick pavers would be used for accents, at special seating areas or corner landscape features. These sidewalks can either be installed detached from the street and separated by a landscaped planting strip or attached to the street with a concrete curb and gutter. Installation is dependent upon the existing streetscape character along the block.

KEY FEATURES

- **Scored concrete** in 2-foot modules
- **Decorative lights, benches and waste receptacles** should be installed on the **7th Street route** to Southwestern University, which is one route designated for this application.
- A **6' width** is preferred in Level III.



Level III sidewalk

LEVEL IV SIDEWALK

In this classification, the entire sidewalk is constructed of scored concrete. These sidewalks may be installed as detached from the street and separated by a landscaped planting strip or they may be attached to the street with a concrete curb and gutter. Installation depends upon the existing streetscape character along the block.

KEY FEATURES

- **Scored concrete** sidewalk
- A **6' width** is preferred in Level IV.



Level IV sidewalk

SIDEWALK IMPLEMENTATION

A key issue in downtown is how a consistent sidewalk layout can occur when irregular setbacks exist and parking varies from diagonal to perpendicular to parallel. On-street parking configurations are described in Chapter 5 and should be consulted in conjunction with this chapter for establishing a cohesive street design and sidewalk system. Because of varied conditions throughout downtown, each situation must be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The sidewalk system may be extended incrementally, as properties redevelop. When this occurs, the site should be evaluated to determine which sidewalk layout is most appropriate, taking the use of the property and the setback of the building into consideration. Wherever feasible, pull-in parking that obstructs pedestrian flow should be eliminated or redesigned. Sidewalks with curb and gutter should then be installed, and on-street parking should be re-established.

While incremental construction of the sidewalk system is possible, a preferred alternative is to construct several blocks of sidewalks at one time. In order to do so, an improvement district should be considered, as described in Appendix A.

ACTIONS

- Develop an **improvement district** to construct sidewalks. (See Appendix A for potential funding tools.)
- Construct sidewalks in a **phased program**, as described in Map #10.

CROSSWALKS AND INTERSECTION DESIGN

Safe street crossings are essential for a pedestrian-oriented environment. Crosswalks should be clearly identified and ample space should be provided to allow groups of pedestrians to cross.

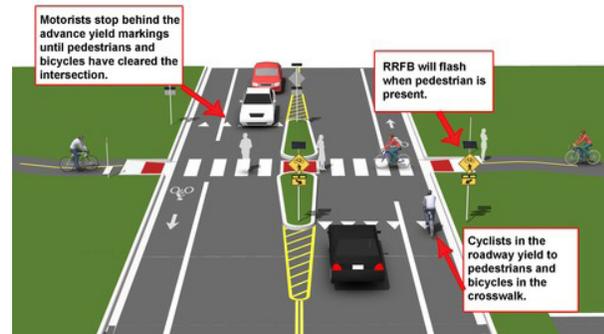
Attractive crosswalks are especially important in encouraging downtown patrons to use off-street parking lots. Because sidewalk amenities and pleasant street crossings enhance the walking experience from these locations, they can help to reduce traffic congestion and relieve demand for on-street parking spaces.

In particular, Austin Avenue crossings should be given high priority, as crossing Austin Avenue has been stated as a major barrier to pedestrian movement downtown. There are a few simply marked pedestrian crossings along Austin Avenue, including signalized auto intersections at 2nd, 7th, 8th and University. A couple pedestrian-controlled signals along Austin Avenue should be placed at key intersections. These should include detailed and highly visible intersection treatment with flashing lights and signage to direct autos to slow down when a pedestrian is present. One popular method that could be considered is using rapid rectangular flashing beacons (see illustration.)

This maps and diagrams within this Plan shows pedestrian controls at 5th and 10th Streets, as they are evenly spaced between the traffic lights at 7th and 8th Streets. However, more traffic and pedestrian analysis should be studied to

place them at the best possible location for pedestrian usage and safety. For example, 4th, 6th and 9th Streets could also be viable options. The questions to ask when deciding on pedestrian control placement is:

- How do the priorities for auto traffic flow and pedestrian system continuity interact?
- How do current pedestrian crossing patterns relate to future patterns?
- What are the policies for traffic flow and speeds, pedestrian counts, etc.?
- What is the benefit of slowing traffic to make a more pedestrian-friendly environment?

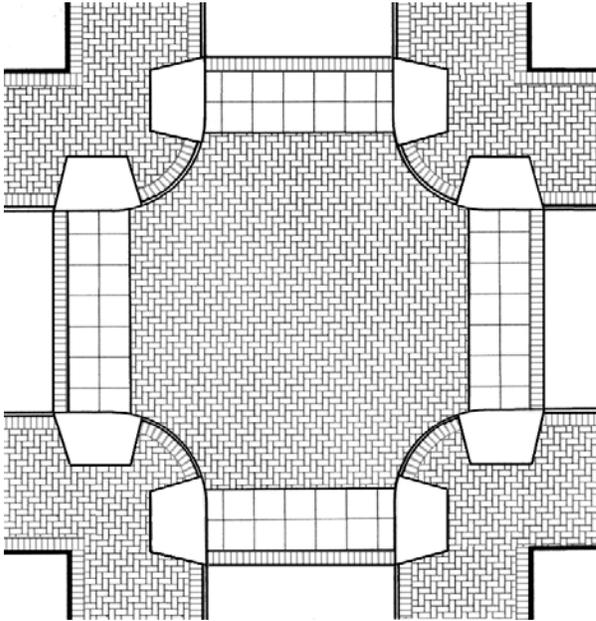


An RRFB pedestrian crossing control signals to autos to slow down when pedestrians are present and allows them to safely cross at their leisure.

In response to the varying levels of use of intersections within Georgetown, a range of crosswalk designs should be employed. Many of the intersection designs include the use of decorative paving to more clearly identify the crossings, establish visual continuity and enhance the pedestrian experience downtown. Intersection typologies are identified on Map #11.

The following intersection design categories should be used:

TYPE A INTERSECTION



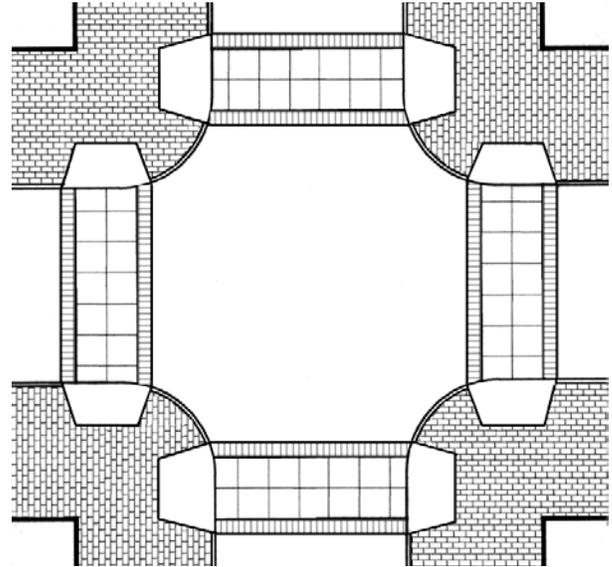
Type A intersection

In this classification, the intersection is constructed of decorative paving, in order to indicate its high level of pedestrian use. In some cases, the existing curb line and corner radius should be retained, but in some special conditions, “bulb-outs” at corners may be expanded to better delineate parking lanes and provide additional area for street furniture and plantings, similar to those around the square. This also increases visibility and decreases pedestrian crossing time, thereby improving pedestrian safety. The radius of the expanded corner should also be designed to facilitate turning for large delivery trucks.

KEY FEATURES

- Decorative paver at corners
- Decorative paver in center of intersection
- Scored concrete crosswalks
- Pedestrian controlled crossing signals

TYPE B INTERSECTION



Type B intersection

In this category, either decorative pavers or scored concrete is used within the sidewalk boundaries at corners. The crosswalk areas are defined by scored concrete. The “paver” treatment is dependent upon the type of sidewalk designation for the intersection and should be consistent.

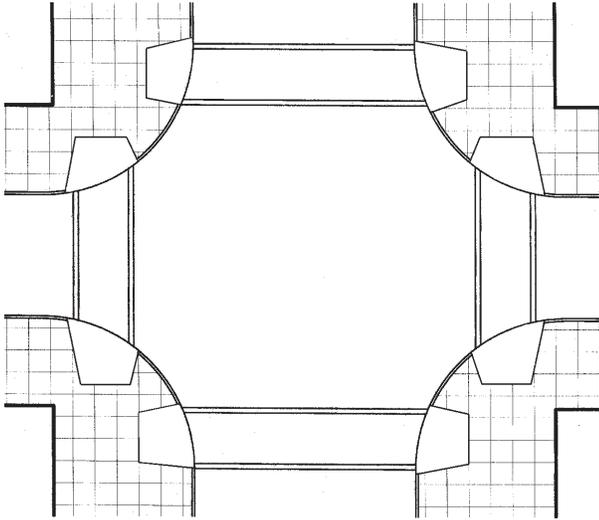
KEY FEATURES

- Decorative pavers at corners
- Scored concrete crosswalk



Type B intersections include a band of pavers with scored concrete crossings.

TYPE C INTERSECTION



Type C intersection

In this category, scored concrete is used within the sidewalk boundaries at corners only, while the crosswalk areas are defined by conventional stripes. This level of intersection design is appropriate in areas of lower crossing conflict.

KEY FEATURES

- Striped crosswalk
- Scored concrete corners



Type C intersections include a striped crosswalk.

TYPE D INTERSECTION

In this category, intersections appear as conventionally designed. No upgrades or enhancements are necessary.

INTERSECTION IMPLEMENTATION

ACTIONS

- A series of intersections should be constructed at one time, as a set, such that one of the key pedestrian routes is completed. These may be financed as a part of the city's capital improvements program, or through a special improvement district. These techniques are described in the appendix.
- As an initial step, detailed designs must be developed, based on the conceptual sketches provided in the plan.

STREETSCAPE STRATEGY

Streetscapes refer to elements that complement pedestrian circulation. Elements include benches, trash receptacles, lighting, public art, trees and landscaping.

The design recommendations for sidewalks and crosswalks are based on hierarchy of how much they are currently used in addition to their anticipated future use based on new development and destinations. The streetscape strategy should also relate to this hierarchy with varied design and content based on its location within downtown (see Map #12.)

STREETSCAPE KIT OF PARTS

The Town Square Historic District has several streetscape features that give it a distinct identity: street trees in grates, period lighting fixtures with banners, decorative paving and landscape elements at several corners. While these elements contribute to an identity for a few blocks in the downtown, extending these elements into the surrounding blocks would enhance the overall pedestrian experience. The design and treatment should help create a more pleasant downtown experience, and help identify the downtown area as a cohesive, inviting place to work, live, shop and conduct business.

Different combinations and materials of street furniture should be placed in the two sub-areas of downtown to distinguish the historic core from the surrounding areas of downtown.

FURNITURE COMBINATIONS

#1 - Historic District

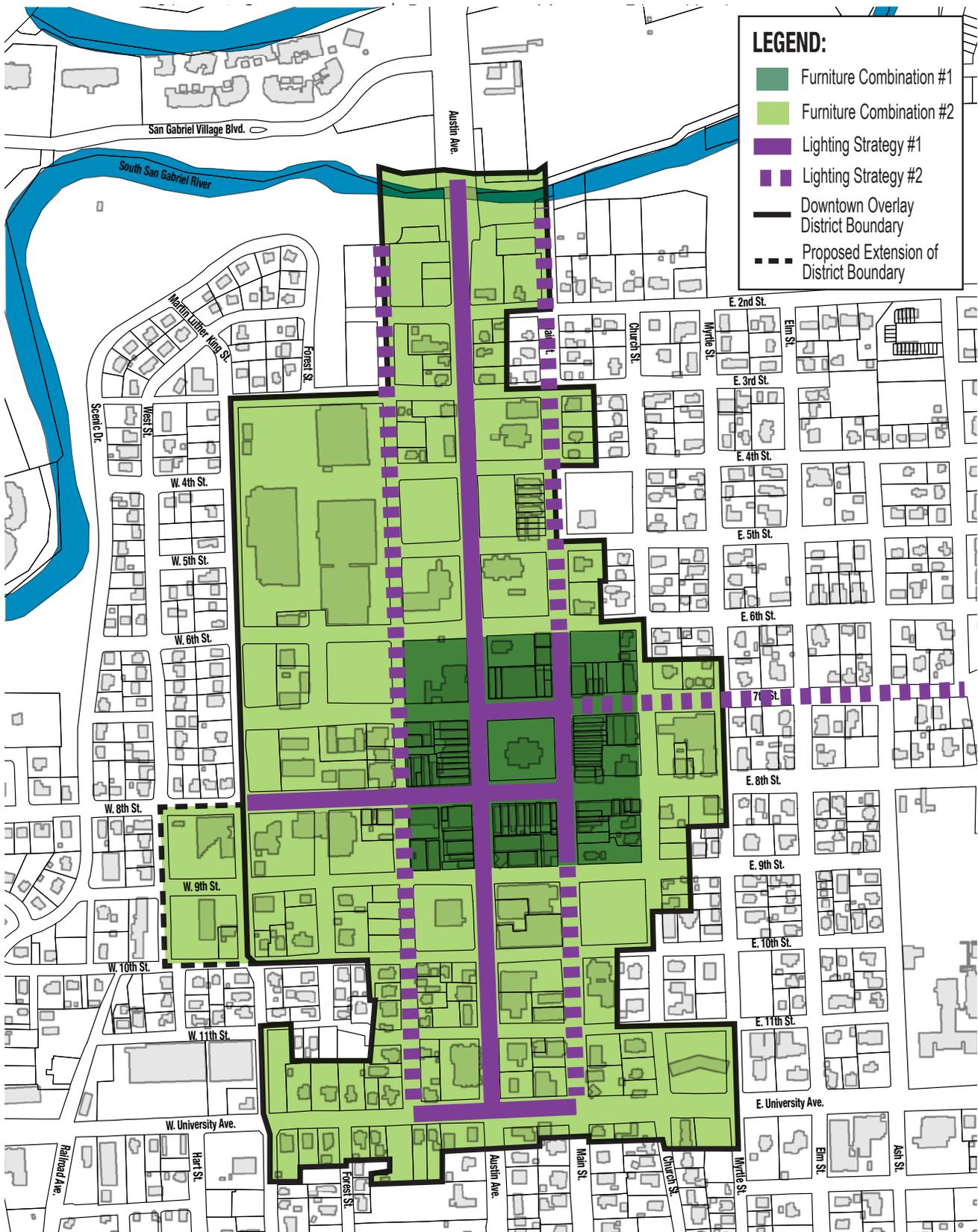
Street furniture within the historic district should continue the use of the wood slat benches and wood slat waste receptacles, along with the historic acorn street light design. Ornamental hanging flower baskets and banners should be used within the historic district.



Street furniture throughout the historic district should continue to use wood slat benches and waste receptacles.



The courthouse square has implemented this streetscape strategy, but the surrounding blocks of the historic district are lacking formal streetscape elements.



MAP 12 | STREETScape STRATEGY

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#2 - Downtown District

Street furniture outside of the historic district, but within the Downtown Overlay District, should continue to use black metal slat benches and waste receptacles, along with the historic acorn street light design. These should remain simple, without use of hanging baskets. This will provide a subtle distinction between the two areas.



Street furniture in area 2 should use black metal slat benches and waste receptacles.



Portions of area 2 have incorporated the black metal streetscape furniture, which should be continued.

LIGHTING STRATEGY

Lighting is one of the most important methods of creating a sense of place within a streetscape environment. Hierarchy in where certain lights are placed within downtown can send important wayfinding messages. For downtown Georgetown, lighting should consist of 3 types:



Lighting Strategy #1 - historic lights with banner.



Lighting Strategy #1 - historic lights without banner.

#1 - Historic Lights with Banners

These lights are currently present only around the courthouse square. They should be extended throughout Austin Avenue, on University from Main to Rock Streets, along 8th Street to the Library/Municipal Center and along Main Street from 6th to 9th Streets. These lights will include banners to give a unique identity to these streets and alert visitors of special events coming up.

#2 - Historic Lights

Continuation of the historic light design, without banners, will provide a secondary hierarchy of lighting design. These lights will highlight certain streets as “pedestrian-focused” and direct people to the downtown core.

#3 - New Lights

A new light design should be incorporated everywhere else throughout downtown. These lights should be noticeably different from the historic lights, but still complement them.

PUBLIC ART

Public art should be a part of the streetscape enhancement program. As such, it may be integrated into sidewalks, street furnishings and signage. A few contemporary sculptures, such as *Growing Old Together* (shown to the right,) have been wonderful additions to the Georgetown streetscape around the square and library. A new effort to wrap utility boxes with artwork has also been initiated downtown, which positively contributes to the streetscape. These efforts should be continued.

When public art is to be part of the streetscape, it should be designed to complement the basic urban design principles set forth in this plan. That is, it should help to reinforce the visual continuity of the downtown at large, while also expressing the distinguishing characteristics of the different character areas that are envisioned. It also should be consistent the hierarchy of sidewalk and intersection designs and should be compatible with the palette of paving materials and street furniture that are set forth in the plan.

Public art in a broader sense should also be installed in plazas and other gathering spaces. A description of range of types of public art to be used in downtown appears in Chapter 7.

4-Pedestrian & bicycle Circulation & Streetscape Design



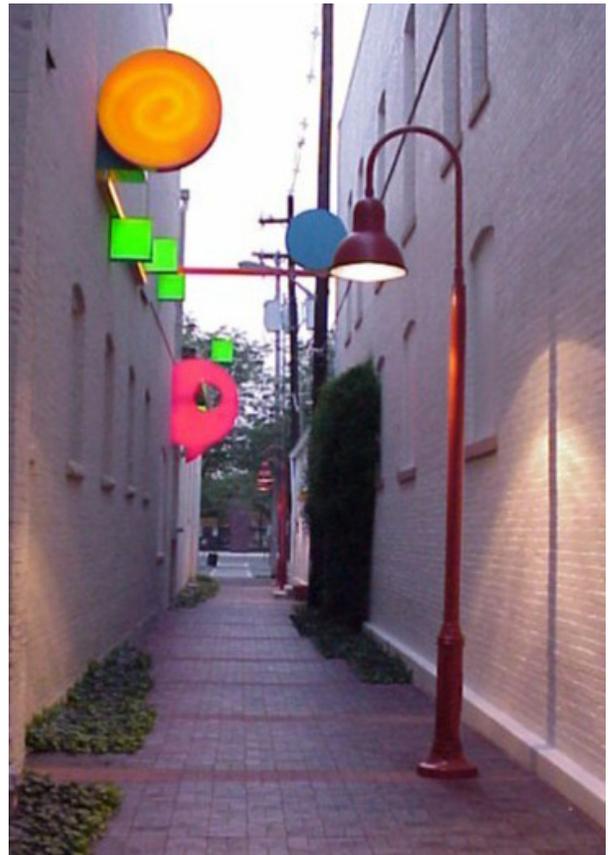
Contemporary sculptures have added to the downtown streetscape and should be continued.



The effort to wrap utility boxes with artwork positively contributes to the streetscape and should be continued.



Streetscape elements such as bike racks can be designed in an artful manner.



Whimsical lighting can add an artistic sense to an otherwise "overlooked" space.

TREES AND LANDSCAPES

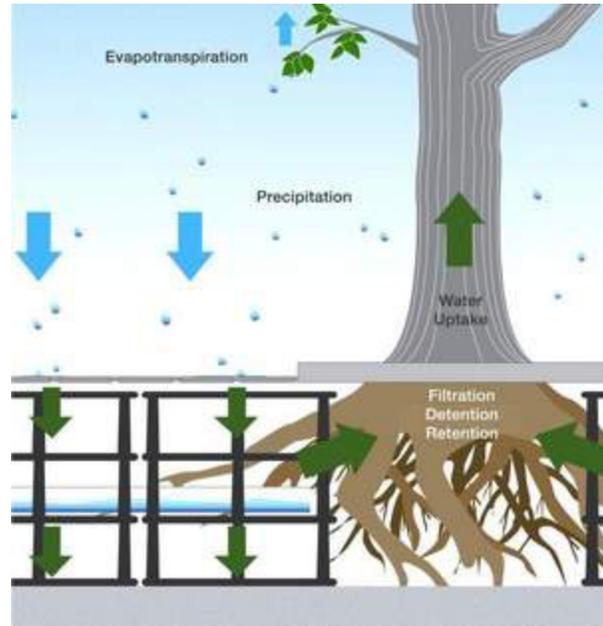
The hot and humid Georgetown climate needs to be considered when designing trees and landscapes for the downtown. Shade is highly desirable and therefore, more street trees were a popular recommendation in public meetings. Integrating more shade into the streetscape by planting more trees will increase the willingness of patrons to walk longer distances.

Street trees should be installed in mid-block locations wherever possible. However, in some cases, room may only exist at corners where expanded “bulb-outs” provide additional room.

One particular treatment for new street trees that should be considered is the use of Silva Cell technology. Urban conditions do not allow for the best tree life due to constrained conditions and compacted soil, which constrain air and water. The Silva Cell is a modular underground frame that uses lightly compacted soil volumes to support larger tree growth. It also manages stormwater efficiently at the same time.



Street trees, and more shade in general, were highly recommended in public meetings.



Silva Cell technology is a modular underground frame that uses lightly compacted soil volumes to support larger tree growth.