

Agenda

8:30 am Registration opens

9:00 am Welcome- Randi Shade, Austin City Council Member

9:15 am Why Public Space Matters

Parks, trails, streetscapes and other public spaces – we know we love them, but why? Beyond being places for day-to-day enjoyment, great public spaces are a critical piece of great cities because they are the vehicles through which a city's public identity is created, acted out, and preserved. Without spaces like Barton Springs, Lady Bird Lake, Zilker Park, South Congress, would Austin have ever become the creative, outdoor city that it is known as today? Recognizing this identity-forming nature of public space is elemental to any discussion of planning public spaces, because, in shaping public space, a city is shaping its identity for the future. The collection of speakers on this panel offer different perspectives on how public space preserves and inspires the public life that defines the identity of a community and a city.

Speakers:

Earl Broussard, Founder and President, TBG Partners

Beth Ferguson, community artist and ecological designer, University of Texas
Alex Gillium, architect and design educator

Stephanie Perrone, Sustainable Project Manager, Foundation Communities

Chris Riley, Austin City Council Member

Moderator:

Greg Esparza, Green Doors

10:30 am The Do's and Don'ts of Public Space Design

As Austin continues to grow, preserving, rehabilitating, and creating public spaces will remain integral to maintaining our sense of community and our unique identity. When designing these spaces, it is important to understand why do some public spaces bustle with activity, while others sit empty? Designers will share the secrets of great public space design. This session will explore the physical design elements that create safe and inviting public spaces.

Principles in Action: Green Doors

Green Doors is currently developing a public space plan for an affordable housing project in Northeast Austin. Greg Esparza of Green Doors will introduce the project, then the panelists, joined by participants from Panel 1, will explore how to apply the principles discussed in their sessions to this real-world project.

Speakers:

Sinclair Black, FAIA, Principal, Black & Vernooy

Eleanor McKinney, ASLA and City of Austin Design Commissioner

Robert Pilgrim, ASLA, Associate AIA, TBG Partners

Steven Spears, Associate, Design Workshop

Moderator:

Marisa Ballas, CNU

12:15 pm Box Lunch and Lessons from San Antonio River Improvements Project

The San Antonio River Improvements Project is a \$279 million on-going investment by the City of San Antonio, Bexar County, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the San Antonio River Foundation in flood control, amenities, ecosystem restoration and recreational improvements along 13 miles of the San Antonio River. The project began a decade ago, and has involved extensive community dialogue, creative partnership ideas, and innovative funding strategies. What can Austin learn from this project?

Lori Houston, Special Projects Manager, City of San Antonio

Irby Hightower, Principal, Alamo Architects, and Co-Chair of the River Oversight Committee

1:15 pm Public Spaces in Private Developments: Why, What, How.

Public spaces are not only good for the community – done right, they can be good for a developer's bottom line. Two developers and an architect who have included significant public spaces into greenfield and infill project explain the thought process that goes into evaluating and maximizing the value of public spaces. What are some bang-for-the-buck ideas for cost-effective public spaces? How do public policies shape development decisions regarding public space design?

Speakers:

David Singleton, Southwest Land Services

Larry Speck, FAIA, Page Southerland Page

Tom Terkel, Executive Vice President, Cencor Realty Services

Moderator:

Rachel Proctor May, CNU

2:30 pm Policy Tools: Best Practices in Public Space Strategies

The public sector's traditional model of public space implementation – find some land and buy it – remains a valuable tool, but is an incomplete one in the era of urban infill and high land prices. Increasingly, cities are looking to density bonuses, public-private partnerships, design guidelines, and other strategies to build out their public space networks. This panel explores lessons from Boston, Denver, Round Rock and other cities to seek out and evaluate new ideas for Austin.

Speakers:

David Buzzell, RLA, ASLA, Park Development Manager, City of Round Rock

Joan Hyde, City of Austin Design Commissioner

Garner Stoll, Assistant Director, Neighborhood Planning and Zoning, City of Austin

Moderator:

Sarah Dooling, Assistant Professor, UT School of Architecture

3:45 pm Capstone Session: A Vision for Austin

After a full day of ideas, experts in various aspects of public space implementation and advocacy evaluate potential strategies for Austin. The panel looks ahead to initiatives like the Waller Creek redesign, the Downtown Plan, the Waterfront Overlay, and the Comprehensive Plan to seek opportunities for new ideas and cutting-edge strategies.

Speakers:

Dave Anderson, Waller Creek Citizen's Advisory Committee

Bobby Garza, Office of Council Member Mike Martinez and Live Music Task Force

Sarah Krause, Urban Transportation Commission

Alex Tynberg, Principal, Tynberg LLC

Steve Zettner, Sustainable Neighborhoods Association of Northwest Austin

Moderator:

Charlie McCabe, Austin Parks Foundation

5:00 pm End

