

Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop Report



December 2020



DOWNTOWN NEW BRAUNFELS WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP REPORT

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December 15, 2020

The Honorable Rusty Brockman
City of New Braunfels Mayor
550 Landa St.
New Braunfels, TX 78130

Dear Mayor Brockman:

The Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) was created by federal law to provide a comprehensive, cooperative and continuous transportation planning process for cities with a population of 50,000 or greater. The MPO's mission is to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods consistent with the region's overall economic, social and environmental goals. The Active Transportation Program is one initiative by the MPO to move the region towards a system that supports active transportation such as walking, bicycling, and transit as safe, viable alternatives to driving in a single occupancy vehicle.

The MPO's Active Transportation Program is designed to encourage physical activity by identifying issues that prevent people from walking, bicycling, and using transit. On November 23, 2019, the MPO staff, in cooperation with the City of New Braunfels, conducted a Walkable Community Workshop at the New Braunfels Farmers Market. MPO staff collected walkability and bikeability concerns from farmers market visitors via an online crowdsourcing map developed by MPO staff. Overall, 127 walkability and bikeability concerns were collected on the crowdsourcing from between November 19 – December 13, 2019. Findings from the workshop are summarized in the attached report.

Please consider this report as you identify future projects for funding, such as the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) and the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Funding Program. AAMPO's current project call began October 1, 2020 and project submissions will be accepted through April 1, 2021. We would appreciate the opportunity to visit with you about our Active Transportation Program, the specific findings of this report, and funding programs mentioned above. For more information, please contact Joey Pawlik, Active Transportation Planner, at 210-230-6931 or by email at pawlik@alamoareampo.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Isidro G. Martinez".

Isidro G. Martinez

cc: The Honorable Kevin Wolff, Chair, AAMPO Transportation Policy Board
The Honorable Shane Hines, New Braunfels City Council, District 1
The Honorable Jason E. Hurta, New Braunfels City Council, District 5
The Honorable James Blakey, New Braunfels City Council, District 6
The Honorable Kevin Webb, Comal County Commissioner, Precinct 3
Mr. Greg Malatek, Director, City of New Braunfels Public Works
Mr. Tom Hornseth, P.E., County Engineer, County of Comal
Mr. Mario Jorge, P.E., San Antonio District Engineer, Texas Department of Transportation

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INTRODUCTION

The Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) developed the Active Transportation Program to support planning for a balanced and inclusive transportation system for the Alamo Area. The program recognizes the need to plan for people of all ages and abilities, and for all transportation modes. A system that is designed to support people walking and biking improves safety for these users and for all users of the transportation system.

The MPO's Active Transportation Program is designed to engage residents in the planning process for their neighborhoods. It is modeled after a national program that encourages communities to design a comprehensive and coordinated system that is safe and welcoming for people walking and biking. Under this program, community residents and leaders who identify a need within a specific geographic area may apply for a Walkable Community Workshop. Workshops are intended to:

- Educate participants about the benefits of active transportation;
- Assist communities in identifying infrastructure improvements that support walking and bicycling; and
- Provide the community with an opportunity for two-way communication with local transportation agency staff.

The Active Transportation Program supports the following MPO goals:

- Meet growing needs while advancing alternative modes of transportation and increasing accessibility for all users.
- Facilitate the involvement and participation of communities, agencies, organizations and the general public in the transportation planning process.
- Maintain a focus on safety.

The City of New Braunfels submitted an application to the MPO to organize a Walkable Community Workshop for Downtown New Braunfels. The workshop was held on November 23, 2019.

Benefits of Walkability

Neighborhoods and streets that are safe and welcoming for people walking have many broader benefits for the community. They can:

- Improve health by providing more opportunities for exercise
- Improve air and water quality by reducing the need to drive
- Conserve energy and natural resources
- Reduce automobile costs
- Provide opportunities for social engagement
- Support local economic development
- Increase safety for all roadway users
- Provide transportation choices
- Increase quality of life

Walkable communities typically have sidewalks, pedestrian amenities such as benches, sufficient lighting, shade, and good access to destinations.

BACKGROUND

STUDY AREA

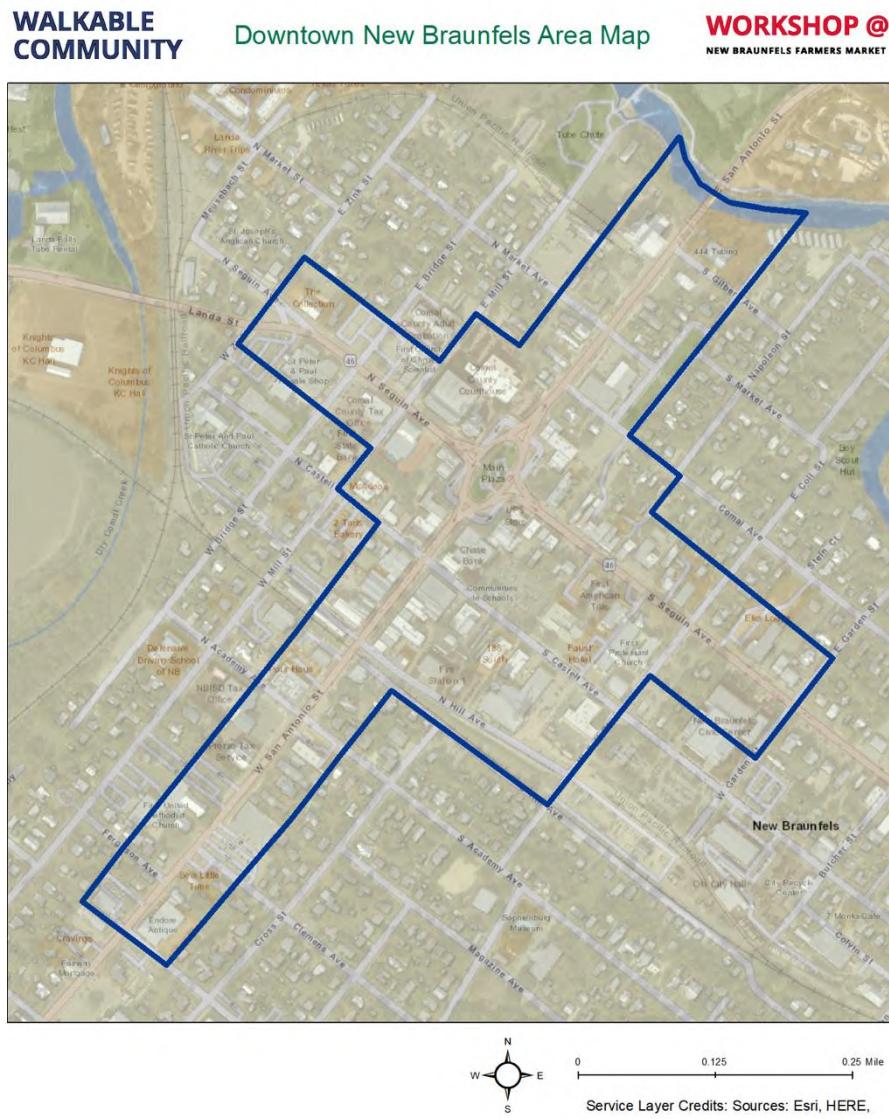


Figure 1.
Downtown New
Braunfels is bound by
Garden Street to the
east, the Comal River
to the north, West
Zinc Street to the
west, and South
Guenther Avenue to
the south.

Downtown New Braunfels is bound by Garden Street to the east, the Comal River to the north, West Zinc Street to the west, and South Guenther Avenue to the south. The neighborhood lies within City of New Braunfels Districts 1, 5, and 6 and Comal County Commission Precinct 3.

This area is largely a mix of various types of retail, professional services, governmental entities, and entertainment options. Anchored by Main Plaza, Downtown New Braunfels is a place of commerce, but also an important center in the city where the community gathers to celebrate multiple large events throughout the year. One of the City's most prominent natural tourist attractions, the Comal River, is a short walk down San Antonio Street. Market Plaza also offers respite as a neighborhood park a block off of San Antonio Street. As New Braunfels is the county seat of Comal County, the historic Comal County courthouse is prominently placed on Main Plaza.

BACKGROUND

CRASH MAP

In order to assess the walkability of a community, it is also important to assess where crashes happen within the community.

AAMPO staff reviewed crash data reported by police officers to the Texas Department of Transportation. Fortunately, just two crashes involving drivers and a pedestrian and a bicyclist were reported over the three-year period (2016-2018).

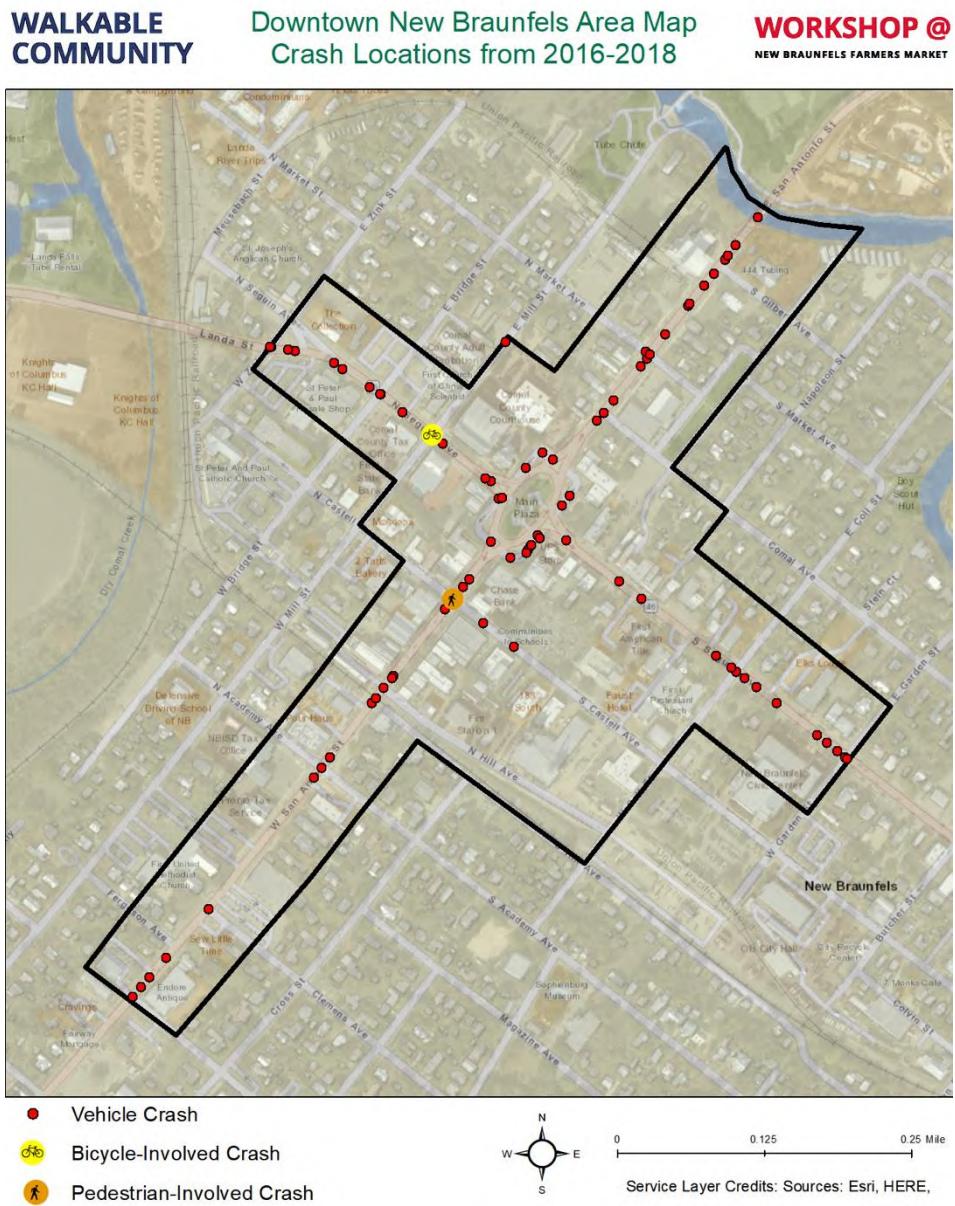


Figure 2.
The map above depicts crashes involving pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists from 2016-2018.

WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Leading up to the workshop, MPO and City of New Braunfels staff shared materials to encourage participation in the initiative. The MPO created a webpage about the Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop, flyers and a Facebook event for the workshop. The MPO Active Transportation Planner also presented to the City of New Braunfels Downtown Board on November 19, 2020 about the upcoming workshop and the walkability/bikeability crowdsourcing initiative. Leading up to the workshop, MPO and City of New Braunfels staff shared materials to promote the event. While the crowdsourcing tool could be used on one's own time, the Walkable Community Workshop at the New Braunfels Farmers Market was a good way to gain a diverse perspective from Downtown area residents and visitors.



A screenshot of a Facebook event page. The event is titled 'Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community' and is hosted by 'New Braunfels Farmers Market'. The event details are: Saturday, November 23, 2019 at 9 AM CST – 1 PM CST. The hosts are 'Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization' and 'City Of New Braunfels - Government'. The event has 52 people responded, 5 went, and 23 people are interested. The description encourages people to join the City of New Braunfels and the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) in helping to identify infrastructure improvements in Downtown New Braunfels to encourage walking. The hosts are 'Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization' and 'City Of New Braunfels - Government'. The event page has 550 likes and 1,200 views. The right side of the image shows a larger version of the flyer from Figure 4, featuring the same woman at the farmers market and the event details.

Figure 3.
A Facebook event page was created to help raise awareness of the Walkable Community Workshop. The event page reached over 550 Facebook users who viewed the page nearly 1,200 times.

Figure 4.
Flyers were distributed to neighborhood residents advertising the workshop.



WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

WEBPAGE

A landing page for the Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop was created to help citizens understand how to use the crowdsourcing tool, what makes a complete street, and how to access the Walkable Community Workshop Crowdsourcing Tool.

DOWNTOWN NEW BRAUNFELS WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

We want to hear from you!

Join the City of New Braunfels and the Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) in helping to identify infrastructure improvements in Downtown New Braunfels to encourage walking and bicycling to restaurants, schools, businesses and parks.

The program brings you together with transportation partner agency staff to discuss transportation issues and concerns in the area that pose a barrier to the community being walk- and bike-friendly. You'll be able to input issues involving transportation or allied concerns, like code compliance issues or lighting, in person or online, whichever is more convenient!

Following the public input period for the Walkable Community Workshop (WCW), AAMPO will summarize the WCW results and provide this to elected officials and our transportation partner agencies for planning purposes. The reports can launch a meaningful dialogue between you and your community leaders.

1. Watch

Watch this short video explaining why we're conducting this survey, how your data will be used and how to complete the online public input.

2. Review

Learn more about how road design could impact walkability and bikeability.

- Complete Streets Help Keep Kids Safe
- Complete Streets Promote Good Health
- Complete Streets Improve Mobility for Older Americans
- Complete Streets Improve Safety

3. Participate

Map locations where you regularly experience issues with active transportation, public transportation, traffic congestion and traffic safety.

WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP @
NEW BRAUNFELS FARMERS MARKET

The MPO's Walkable Community Program helps build a safer, healthier, and greener transportation system to improve our community's quality of life.

Family Friendly | Learn about walkable, bikeable neighborhoods | Join a walkability at 10:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. | Map your concerns

Saturday, November 23, 2019
9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.
186 S. Castell
New Braunfels, TX

Map your concerns & more info: alamoareampo.org/wcp/nbdowntown

AAMPO

Figure 5.
Downtown New Braunfels
Walkable Community
Workshop webpage.

<http://alamoareampo.org/wcp/nbdowntown/>

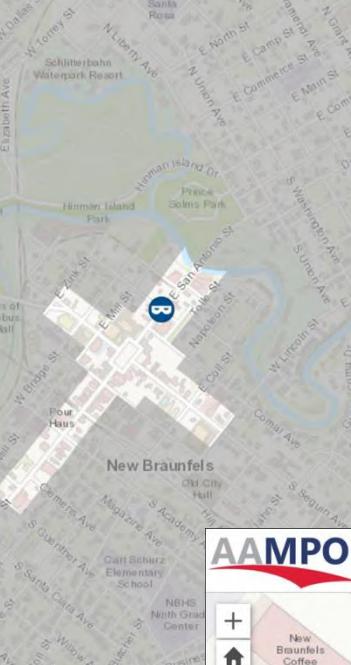
WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

CROWDSOURCING MAP



Downtown New Braunfels

Aesthetics and Geography





Aesthetics and Geography



Bicycle Facility Issues



Driver Behavior



Intersection Safety



Pedestrian Facility Issues



Pedestrian or Cyclist Behavior



Downtown New Braunfels

Pedestrian Facility Issues





Pedestrian Facility Issues

Click on the map to draw the facility.

W San Antonio St,

The Alamo Area MPO created a crowdsourcing map that allows users to mark a location of walkability or bikeability concern via GPS location. Users could also upload a photo of their walkability / bikeability concern!

Figure 6.
Screenshot of the crowdsourcing map splash page. On this page, participants can choose which category applies to their concern.

AAMPO CITY NB Downtown New Braunfels



Pedestrian Facility Issues

Click on the map to create a location marker
Click the map to draw the location.

W San Antonio St, New Braunfels, Texas, 78130

Select from the drop down menu ▼ Tell us more below

Pedestrian Facility Issues

Select...

Sidewalks or paths started and stopped
Sidewalks were broken or cracked
Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, shrubbery, dumpsters, etc
No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
Curb ramps needed or ramps need repair
Too many driveways along sidewalk or path
Too much traffic

Name (optional)

E-mail (optional)

Location

Date Submitted
 11/18/2019 5:49 pm

Click Browse button to add photos, or documents from your phone, tablet, or computer

Figure 7.
Screenshot of the data input page of the crowdsourcing tool where participants can log the location of their concern, drop box to specify issue, contact information, location, photo of their concern, and date submitted.

WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

WORKSHOP @ THE NEW BRAUNFELS FARMERS MARKET

A walk-up workshop was held at the on November 23, 2019 at the New Braunfels Farmers Market (186 Castell Dr, New Braunfels, TX 78130) from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Participants were given the opportunity to talk with MPO staff about the benefits of a walkable and bikeable community, along with voicing their concerns via the crowdsourcing app and a paper map.



Figure 8.

MPO staff invited visitors at the market to provide comments on maps, either a physical one or using MPO iPads to log comments directly into the workshop's online crowdsource page.

WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

WALKING AUDIT WITH CITY OF NEW BRAUNFELS STAFF

A walking audit was conducted on December 11, 2019 with City of New Braunfels staff members from various departments, including Parks & Recreation, Planning and Development Services, and Public Works. Each city department has a unique focus, services provided to citizens, and feedback they receive from citizens, thus providing unique perspectives on the walkability and bikeability of Downtown New Braunfels.

MPO and City of New Braunfels staff broke into three groups and walked various routes across the downtown area to find transportation issues and concerns that pose a barrier to comfortable and safe pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Walking audits record the walkability and bikeability concerns of the community and in this case; these concerns were then logged in the MPO's Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop crowdsourcing tool.



Figure 9.

MPO and City of New Braunfels participated in a walking audit of the Downtown New Braunfels to document transportation issues and concerns in the area that pose a barrier to the community being pedestrian and cycling friendly.

WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

WALKABILITY CONCERN

Once participants input their data into the MPO crowdsourcing app, walkability issues and concerns were aggregated into a viewer such as the one below (Figure 10). These issues and concerns could be anything that may pose a barrier to the community being pedestrian and cycling friendly.

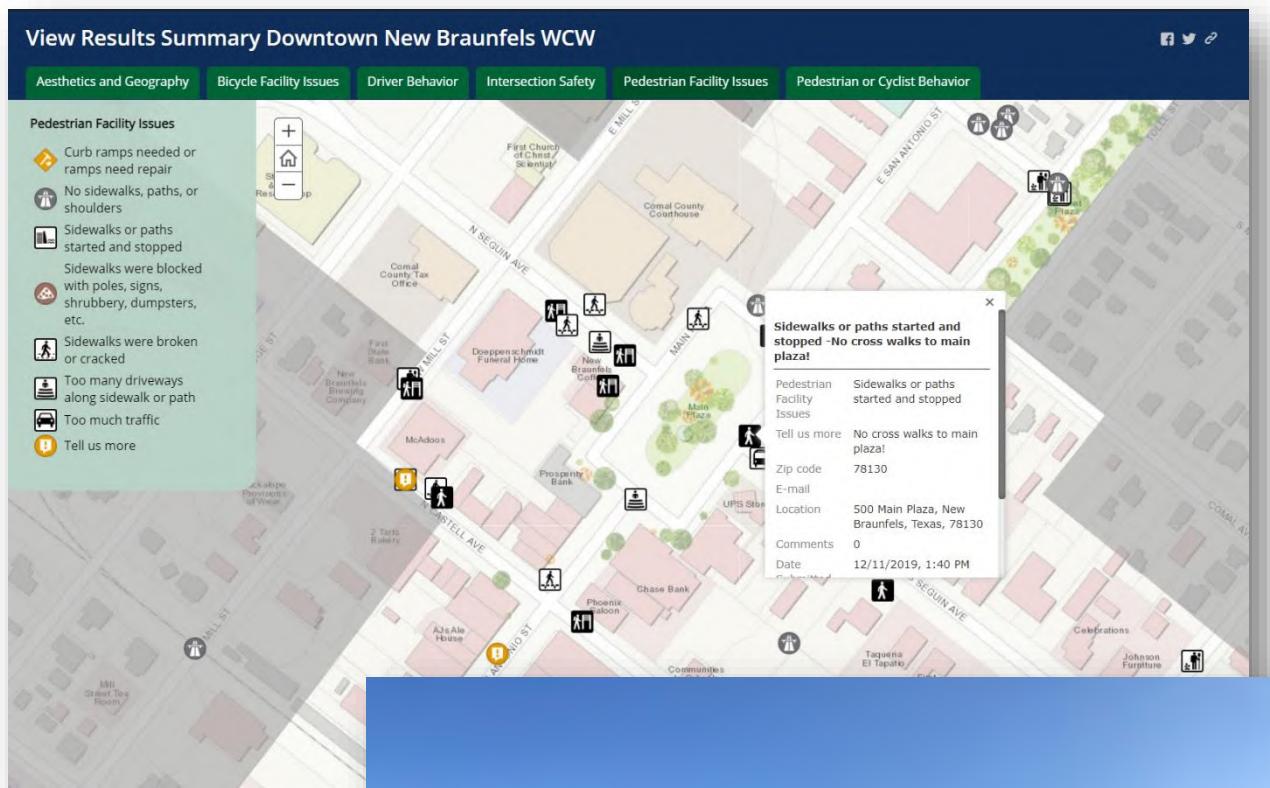


Figure 10.

Participants were asked to identify concerns related to walking and biking in the area. Results from participant audits are aggregated in this map.

Figure 11.

Participants had the opportunity to upload an image of their walkability / bikeability concern. The image on the right helped to convey the message of "No crosswalks to main plaza!" from the comment displayed in Figure 10.



List of Walkability/Bikeability Concerns in Downtown New Braunfels

The following comments and feedback were aggregated from public feedback provided via the AAMPO Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop crowdsourcing map.

Area of Interest	Concern/Strategy
Pedestrian Facilities	<p>Limited sidewalks, despite a good amount of foot traffic. Sidewalk gaps. New or repaired sidewalks are desired throughout the neighborhood, but especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coll Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between S Seguin Avenue and Comal Avenue. • Hill Avenue • Market Avenue • San Antonio Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between Clemens and Academy Avenues. • Seguin Avenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between W Mill Street and Main Plaza. ○ Between Main Plaza and W Garden Street. <p>Sidewalk repairs are needed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castell Avenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between W Mill and W San Antonio Streets, east side of street. ○ Between W San Antonio and W Coll Streets. • San Antonio Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between Clemens and Academy Avenues. ○ At the intersection of Castell Avenue – different sidewalk elevations are difficult to navigate. ○ At Comal River Bridge – E San Antonio Street sidewalk does not continue past S Gilbert Avenue. <p>ADA accessible ramps are needed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S Market Ave and Market Plaza. • W Mill Street and alley behind McAdoo's Restaurant. • W Coll Street and S Castell Street. • On Seguin Ave between Main Plaza and E Garden Street. <p>ADA accessibility issues can be found at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castell Avenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Delivery trucks blocking driveway at McAdoo's Restaurant. • Coll Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between Castell Ave and Hill Ave. • Garden Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At New Braunfels Civic Center – deliveries block sidewalk. • Mill Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between Castell Ave and Seguin Ave (shrubbery). • Seguin Avenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Between W Mill St and Market Plaza (signs blocking sidewalks). <p>Too many driveways interrupted the pedestrian experience along San Antonio St.</p>

List of Walkability/Bikeability Concerns in Downtown New Braunfels

The following comments and feedback were aggregated from public feedback provided via the AAMPO Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop crowdsourcing map.

	<p>A paved shortcut between Castell and Seguin Avenues, within the block bounded by W San Antonio Avenue and W Coll Street, could help cut down on pedestrian travel times.</p> <p>High activity of both pedestrian and driver interactions pose potential conflicts on Hill Avenue near the fire station.</p>
Crossing and Intersection Safety	<p>Wide roadways with limited safe crossing points pose risks to pedestrians. Safe crossings are needed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coll and Comal Streets (especially unsafe during peak river season). • Main Plaza (no pedestrian crossing present). • E San Antonio Street and N Gilbert Avenue • Hill Avenue and W San Antonio Avenue • Seguin Avenue and Coll Street. • Zink and Landa Streets (vehicular traffic also has difficulties in navigating this intersection). <p>Additional pedestrian safety measures could be taken at the San Antonio Avenue and Coll Street railroad crossings.</p> <p>Crossing signals did not provide enough time to cross at the following intersections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castell and San Antonio Avenues.
Bicycle Facilities	<p>Bicycle facilities are desired on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castell Avenue. • Comal Avenue (current bike lanes are deteriorated, often contain water puddles, and are typically parked on). • Landa Street (space is especially difficult to traverse near railway). • Around Main Plaza. • Market Avenue. • E San Antonio Avenue. • San Antonio Avenue bridge over the Comal River. <p>Wayfinding signage is needed along:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Antonio Avenue to provide direction to bike route on Mill Street. <p>Safe and secure bike parking is requested at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The intersection of San Antonio and Castell Avenues. • Market Plaza. • Mill Street near Seguin Avenue (bike route).
Micromobility Facilities	Residents expressed interest in providing infrastructure that accommodates parking for golf carts in the downtown area.
Parks & Public Space	<p>Traffic calming around Main Plaza would dramatically improve pedestrian safety and comfort.</p> <p>Pedestrian infrastructure needs to be improved in order to provide safer, ADA access to Main and Market Plaza.</p>

List of Walkability/Bikeability Concerns in Downtown New Braunfels

The following comments and feedback were aggregated from public feedback provided via the AAMPO Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop crowdsourcing map.

Lighting	<p>Improvements of lighting has been requested for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hill Avenue.• San Antonio Ave at the railroad crossing.
	<p>While lighting is important for visibility and safety in an urban environment, a resident expressed concern for light pollution near Main Plaza.</p>
Aesthetics & Geography	<p>Needs more landscaping (grass, flowers, trees, shrubbery, etc.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• S Castell Avenue between San Antonio and Coll Streets.• Comal Avenue near Market Plaza.• S Seguin Avenue at Coll Street.• N Seguin Avenue at W Zink and Landa Streets. <p>Residents are afraid to walk on Comal Avenue due loose dogs.</p>

IMPROVING WALKABILITY & BIKEABILITY

POTENTIAL TREATMENTS FOR WALKABILITY

The MPO's Pedestrian Safety Action Plan contains street treatments for improving the safety of people walking. The full plan can be viewed at <http://www.alamoareampo.org/Bike-Ped/docs/PedestrianSafetyActionPlan.pdf>.

Based on residents' desire to improve pedestrian access and safety within downtown, the following treatments may be appropriate:

Sidewalks and Walkways

Sidewalks and walkways provide people with space to travel within the public right-of-way that is separated from motor vehicles. Wider sidewalks should be installed near schools, at transit stops, in downtown areas, or anywhere high concentrations of pedestrians exist. Sidewalks should be continuous along both sides of a street and sidewalks should be fully accessible to all pedestrians, including those in wheelchairs. Sidewalks would increase pedestrian comfort in the Downtown New Braunfels.



Sidewalks provide a safe space to travel on foot.

Marked Crosswalks

Marked crosswalks indicate optimal or preferred locations for pedestrians to cross and help delineate where vehicles are to stop so as not to interfere with the pedestrian crossing. Marked crosswalks can increase visibility of people walking and encourage yielding among people driving. Marked crosswalks can be especially useful at transit stops or other pedestrian generators located on long blocks where the distance between existing marked crosswalks is greater than 1,000 feet. This treatment would facilitate safe travel to nearby businesses and other destinations.



Marked crosswalks indicate a preferred crossing location and increase pedestrian visibility.

Raised Crosswalks

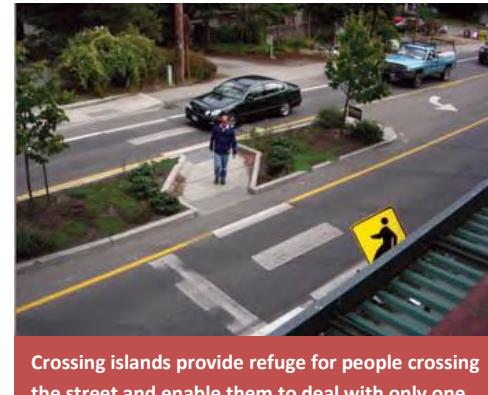
Typically used at mid-block crossing locations, raised crosswalks can enhance the visibility of pedestrians crossing a street and also help slow vehicle speeds when approaching the crossing. Elevated crossing makes the pedestrian more prominent in the driver's field of vision, and allows pedestrians to cross at grade with the sidewalk. Raised crosswalks are typically installed on 2-lane or 3-lane roads with speed limits of 30 mph or less.



Raised crosswalks can enhance the visibility of pedestrians crossing a street and also help slow vehicle speeds when approaching the crossing.

Crossing Islands/Pedestrian Refuge Islands

Crossing islands (also known as pedestrian refuge islands) are raised islands placed in the center of the street at intersections or mid-block. Crossing islands allow pedestrians to deal with only one direction of traffic at a time by enabling them to stop partway across the street and wait for an adequate gap in traffic before crossing the second half of the street. They are especially effective at reducing crashes at uncontrolled locations on busy multi-lane roadways where gaps are difficult to find, particularly for slower pedestrians, such as pedestrians with disabilities, older pedestrians, and children. Crossing islands would increase pedestrian comfort when crossing wide roadways.



Crossing islands provide refuge for people crossing the street and enable them to deal with only one direction of traffic at a time.

Pedestrian Signal Indicators

Pedestrian signal indicators ensure pedestrians will know when the signal phasing allows them to cross and when they should not be crossing. Countdown pedestrian signals inform pedestrians of the amount of time in seconds that is available to safely cross during the flashing "DO NOT WALK" phase. This device is particularly useful at crosswalks with long crossing distances. The walk phase should allocate enough time for pedestrians of all abilities to safely cross the roadway. Additional pedestrian signals along Seguin Avenue in Downtown New Braunfels would facilitate safer crossing of major streets.



Pedestrian crossing signals provide clear guidance on when people walking may cross the street.

Leading Pedestrian Interval

The Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) is a signal phasing strategy to improve pedestrian visibility in locations with heavy volumes of turning traffic and frequent pedestrian crossings. During the LPI, motor vehicles expecting the next green phase are stopped for four to seven seconds while pedestrians are given the WALK signal. This is designed to allow pedestrians to begin crossing in advance of vehicular turning movements, which allows them to clearly establish themselves in the crosswalk in a position that is more visible to the motorist. New Braunfels residents indicated that it was difficult to cross at various intersections along Seguin Avenue. An LPI treatment could enable safer crossing here.



LPIs allow people walking to enter the crosswalk before vehicles are given the green phase.

Chicanes

Chicanes are a traffic calming measure that divert the path of travel along a roadway, causing vehicles to slow in order to make lateral shifts and/or pass through a narrowed section of roadway. Chicanes can take the form of curb extensions, center islands, or staggered on-street parking. On lower speed and lower volume residential streets, chicanes are often mid-block curb extensions used to slow traffic by narrowing the roadway to the width of one lane (choker). Chicanes could help address these concerns.



Chicanes compel people driving to slow down on neighborhood streets.

Mini-Traffic Circles

Mini-traffic circles are circular islands that are installed in the center of appropriate residential street intersections to reduce traffic speeds and collisions. Traffic circles require people driving to slow down while allowing continuous traffic flow. They can be installed in lieu of signals or stop signs. Mini-traffic circles can be an effective traffic calming measure where cut-through or speeding traffic is common. This treatment could be a useful tool for reducing speeding and cut-through traffic within Downtown New Braunfels.



Mini traffic circles help slow vehicular traffic on residential streets.

Illumination Along Corridors

Illumination along corridors that is intended to greatly increase motorists' ability to see pedestrians walking along the road at night is particularly important on arterial streets where there is transit service or land uses that generate pedestrians during evening hours. Without sufficient overhead lighting, motorists may not be able to see pedestrians in time to stop. Illuminating key corridors with transit stops would help address visibility and security concerns raised by neighborhood residents.



Streetlights help increase visibility of people walking to people driving and increase pedestrian comfort.

Railroad Crossings

Pedestrian and bicycle enhancements at railroad crossings include the following:

- *Location of pedestrian facility.* When a pedestrian facility crosses railroad tracks, the facility should be located outside of the railroad gate arms that block vehicles in the roadway, since the gate arms are counter-weighted and can be manually raised by pedestrians if they pass under the gate.
- *Cross at a perpendicular angle to the tracks.* To reduce the potential for narrow bicycle or stroller wheels getting caught in the tracks, sidepaths and sidewalks crossing the tracks should do so at a 90 degree angle.
- *Concrete planking.* Concrete planking that meets the rail line owner's specifications should be installed. The planking for the road and the pedestrian facility should be continuous, which allows for better drainage and prevents debris buildup that would occur in a "gap" between roadway and pedestrian planking.
- *Separate pedestrian crossing arms or gates.* Consideration could be given to installing separate pedestrian barrier gates or arms. Triggered to close when a train is approaching, these may be appropriate at a double track condition. However, a separate gate at sidewalks or sidepaths is generally unnecessary since pedestrians and bicyclists can go around the gates fairly easily.
- *Pedestrian level signals.* Visual signals such as flashers specifically designed to alert pedestrians should be considered. These enhance safety for users who are hearing impaired, such as the deaf or individuals who are listening to headphones. Warning signs should be installed that direct pedestrians and other sidepath users to look both ways before crossing the tracks.



Properly designed railroad crossing approaches and surfaces (above) may be further improved by bicycle and pedestrian-specific signalization or gates.

A combination of these treatments as well as others designed for a specific location may be considered. Each individual crossing should be separately designed to take into account the unique constraints of the area.

IMPROVING WALKABILITY & BIKEABILITY

POTENTIAL TREATMENTS FOR BIKEABILITY

The MPO's Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Planning Study contains street treatments for improving the safety of people biking. The full plan can be viewed at <http://alamoareampo.org/Studies/#rbpps>.

Based on residents' desire to improve pedestrian access and safety within downtown, the following treatments may be appropriate:

Protected Bike Lanes

A protected bicycle lane is a bicycle lane that is physically separated from traffic with a row of parked cars, a raised curb, planters, or other physical separation. A protected bicycle lane is intended for bicycle use only, and is separated from a sidewalks or paths intended for pedestrian use.

Protected bicycle lanes are similar to buffered bicycle lanes except that the painted buffer zone is replaced with a physical barrier. Two-way protected bicycle lanes may also be developed.



Protected bike lanes provide the highest level of comfort and safety for cyclists.

Buffered Bike Lanes

A buffered bicycle lane sometimes called a “comfort lane” is defined as a bicycle lane that is paired with a designated buffer space separating the bicycle lane from the adjacent motor vehicle lane and/or parking lane (NACTO Guide 2014). The buffer typically consists of a zone with diagonal striping or chevrons.



Although integrated into the street surface, buffered bicycle lanes improve bicyclist's comfort by creating a greater separation from motor vehicles.

Bike Lanes

Bicycle lanes are designated by a lane stripe, pavement markings, and signage. Bicycle lane stripes promote the orderly flow of traffic by establishing specific lines of demarcation between areas reserved for bicycles and lanes to be occupied by motor vehicles. Typically, the solid stripe of the bike lane is either dropped or dashed prior to and through intersections, to allow for both bicyclist and motorist turning movements.



Bicycle lanes are suitable for streets with and without on-street parking, but variations in design will be necessary.

Bike Intersection Crossing Markings

Intersection crossing markings indicate the intended path of bicyclists. They guide bicyclists on a safe and direct path through intersections, including driveways and ramps. They provide a clear boundary between the paths of through bicyclists and either through or crossing motor vehicles in the adjacent lane. Green painted bicycle lanes can be applied to many intersections in Downtown New Braunfels to mark bicycle lanes or mark the extension of a bicycle lane through intersections and other traffic conflict areas, to allow for both bicyclist and motorist turning movements.



Colored pavement within a bicycle lane increases the visibility of the facility, identifies potential areas of conflict, and reinforces priority to bicyclists in conflict areas and in areas with pressure for illegal parking.

Bike Boxes

A bike box is a designated area at the head of a traffic lane at a signalized intersection that provides bicyclists with a safe and visible way to get ahead of queuing traffic during the red signal phase. This also increases the visibility of cyclists and reduces signal delay for bicyclists. At intersections where bike boxes extend across the entire intersection, it can help facilitate bicyclist left turn positioning at intersections during red signal indication. Pedestrians also benefit from reduced vehicle encroachment into the sidewalk.



Bike Boxes increase visibility of bicyclists and can facilitate bicyclist left turn positioning at intersections during red signal indication.

Bike Signals

Bicycle signals and beacons facilitate bicyclist crossings of roadways. Bicycle signals make crossing intersections safer for bicyclists by clarifying when to enter an intersection and by restricting conflicting vehicle movements. Bicycle signals are traditional three lens signal heads with green-yellow and red bicycle stenciled lenses that can be employed at standard signalized intersections and Hybrid Signal crossings. An intersection with bicycle signals may reduce stress and delays for a crossing bicyclist, and discourage illegal and unsafe crossing maneuvers.



An intersection with bicycle signals may reduce stress and delays for a crossing bicyclist, and discourage illegal and unsafe crossing maneuvers.

Bike Parking

While accomodating bicycle travel in a location, it is also important to plan how and where bicyclists will end their trips. There two types of bicycle parking to consider: *short-term parking* and *long-term parking*. In the case of Downtown New Braunfels, good short-term bike parking can be with bike rack styles such as the *Inverted U* and *Post & Ring*. It's okay to start small—but bear in mind that perceived demand may be lower than the demand that develops once quality parking appears. Some cities with limited sidewalk space and strong bicycle activity place bike parking in on-street “bike corrals” located in the street area adjacent to the curb.

INVERTED U

also called
staple, loop



POST & RING



The *Inverted U* and *Post & Ring* bike racks can both provide safe and secure location for bicyclists to lock their bike for short-term storage as long as they are designed, installed and used correctly.

IMPROVING WALKABILITY & BIKEABILITY

FUNDING SOURCES

Funding is not guaranteed for projects identified through the Walkable Community Workshop Program. Rather, the workshop is intended to bring together community members, transportation agency representatives, and other stakeholders to identify and prioritize the transportation needs for the neighborhood. This report is a way for the community to speak with one voice to assist decision makers in identifying transportation solutions specific to the local community.

Leveraging various funding sources can be helpful in getting desired projects implemented. Some examples of various funding sources are listed below. This is not an exhaustive list, and some funding sources may only be relevant for certain types of projects. Community members are encouraged to work with local government representatives and staff to identify funding opportunities for projects that address the needs listed in this report.

As Walkable Community Workshops result in an official MPO report, Downtown New Braunfels projects submitted for funding from the MPO may receive additional points in the MPO's technical scoring process. These are projects that would provide solutions to walkability and bikeability concerns identified from the Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop.

Potential Project Funding Sources		
Source	Program	Description
City of New Braunfels	Bond Program	As a part of the current 2019 Bond Program, \$50 million for transportation improvements across New Braunfels, including improvements for bike and pedestrian infrastructure. For details of current bond projects within Downtown New Braunfels, visit https://nbtexas.org/2190/2019-Bond-Program
	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program	The City uses its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement funds to revitalize neighborhoods, expand affordable housing, provide economic opportunities and improve community facilities and services, primarily aimed and low and moderate-income persons. For more information, visit https://www.nbtexas.org/90/Community-Development---CDBG-Program
	New Braunfels Economic Development Corporation (EDC)	A City Council appointed corporation (known as Type B) oversees a 1/2¢ sales tax collection for economic development, which is utilized for infrastructure needs and for low interest loans for qualified businesses looking to expand or relocate to New Braunfels. A private 501c foundation also supports the economic development

Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization		<p>strategy along with the staff from The Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>For more information, visit: https://www.businessinnewbraunfels.com/nbedc/about-us/</p>
	Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT)	<p>The proceeds of the hotel occupancy tax (minimum of 35 percent of the total hotel occupancy tax revenue) can be used for the following: maintenance and improvement of the civic center; and funding of historical preservation of the historic downtown area and other buildings with historic significance; in accordance with the contract between the city and the Greater New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce for the use of hotel occupancy tax.</p> <p>For more information, visit: https://nbtexas.org/2470/Tax-Information</p>
	Pavement Management Program	<p>The Pavement Management Program is based on applying the right treatment to the right roadway at the right time. Roadways are identified by needs ranging from preventive maintenance to rehabilitation or roadway reconstruction. Most maintenance performed on neighborhood streets is budgeted for in the City's general fund while bond dollars support medium and major street projects. For more information, visit https://www.nbtexas.org/1847/Pavement-Management-Program</p>
	Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) Transportation Alternatives	<p>The STBG is the MPO's broadest federal funding program. Projects are selected on a competitive bases. Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, improvements to major roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and public transportation projects. STBG is a reimbursable program and all applicable federal rules apply. For more information, visit www.alamoareampo.org/callforprojects.</p> <p>Transportation Alternatives is a federal funding program that is specifically for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects. This is a reimbursable program and all applicable federal rules apply. For more information, visit www.alamoareampo.org/callforprojects.</p>
Texas Department of Transportation	District Discretionary Funds	<p>These funds address miscellaneous projects selected at the TxDOT San Antonio District's discretion. Projects must be on the state highway system. For more information, visit http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/district/sanantonio.html.</p>

IMPROVING WALKABILITY & BIKEABILITY

NEXT STEPS

The MPO will provide copies of this report to the elected officials and appropriate departments within the City of New Braunfels, Comal County, and Texas Department of Transportation. This report will also be available on the MPO's website at www.alamoareampo.org/WCP/.

Here are some steps community members can take after the Walkable Community Workshop to build momentum and get desired results:

- Share the report. Talk to neighbors, community leaders, and other stakeholders who could not attend the workshop.
- Identify community and individual actions that can help move ideas toward implementation.
- Use this report as a resource. It includes contact information for agencies and individuals who can answer questions and provide guidance.
- Take small steps towards accommodating safe walking and biking, such as promoting safe crossing behavior.
- Partner with local groups on events that promote safety and accessibility for non-motorized transportation.
- Advocate for policy changes that support safe and walkable communities.
- Work with the City to include provisions for non-motorized facilities in future plans and projects.
- Attend government meetings to express interest in improving walking and biking infrastructure.
- Contact your legislators to voice specific concerns in your area.

Improving a neighborhood takes time, money, and dedication, and planning for the future is an ever-changing process. Planning for a safe walking and biking environment contributes to a healthy and vibrant community. The MPO supports Downtown New Braunfels in its efforts to improve walkability, safety, and quality of life for its residents.

For more information on the Walkable Community Workshop Program, contact Joey Pawlik at (210) 230-6931 or pawlik@alamoareampo.org.

APPENDIX B

DOWNTOWN NEW BRAUNFELS BOARD WALBABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

NOVEMBER 19, 2019



Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop

City of New Braunfels Downtown Board |

November 19, 2019

1

We plan to keep you
moving



Cooperative: No single agency has responsibility for the entire transportation system



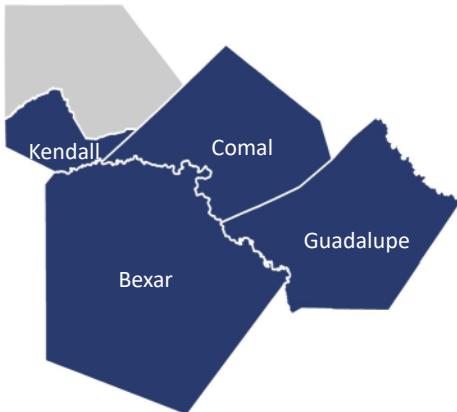
Comprehensive: Encompassing all transportation modes, as well as local land use/economic development plans



Continuous: Ongoing planning to address short and long term transportation vision and needs

2

Study Area



2 million
residents

10,000
lane miles

50 million
miles traveled daily

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MPO Plans and Documents



Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP):
MPO staff budget and smaller regional planning studies over a two year timeframe (adopted June 2017)



Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):
Funded transportation projects within a four year timeframe (adopted in April 2018)



Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):
Future goals, strategies and transportation projects for 25 years (adopted December 2014); new Plan horizon year is 2045



Transportation Conformity Document (TCD)
Evaluates future transportation projects to ensure they cause no further harm to air quality; approved through a significant interagency consultation process (new requirement)

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Overview

What is a Walkable Neighborhood?

Why is Walkability Important?

Principles of Walkability

Planning for Walkable Neighborhoods

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What is a Walkable



6

3

Why is Walkability Important?

- Exercise
- Cleaner air
- Cleaner water
- Reduced automobile costs
- Energy & natural resource conservation
- Social engagement
- Economic development
- Increased safety
- Transportation choices/equity
- Greater quality of life

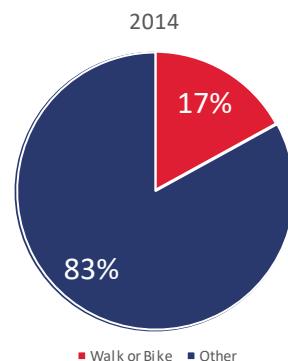
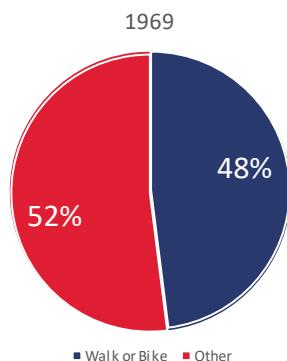


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Children Walking to School



Source: The National Center for Safe Routes to School

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4

Walkable Neighborhoods & Safety

10-15 mph



30-35 mph



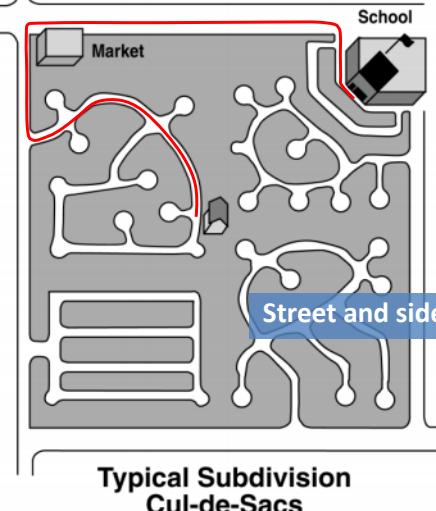
40+ mph

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Principles of Walkability



Well-Connected Street Network

Source: Oregon DOT

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Principles of Walkability



Short distance to destinations

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Principles of Walkability



Design features that encourage walking and/or calm traffic, such as sidewalks, marked crosswalks, shade, and bulb-outs



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Principles of Bikeability

On neighborhood streets with slow speeds, shared lane markings ("sharrows") can be appropriate



On higher speed neighborhood streets, a dedicated lane for bicyclists can increase safety and encourage more people to ride a bike



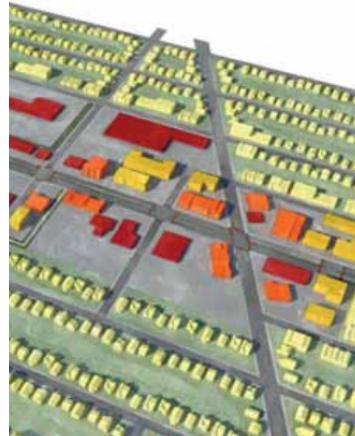
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Community Planning

Planning helps guide growth & development in a given area



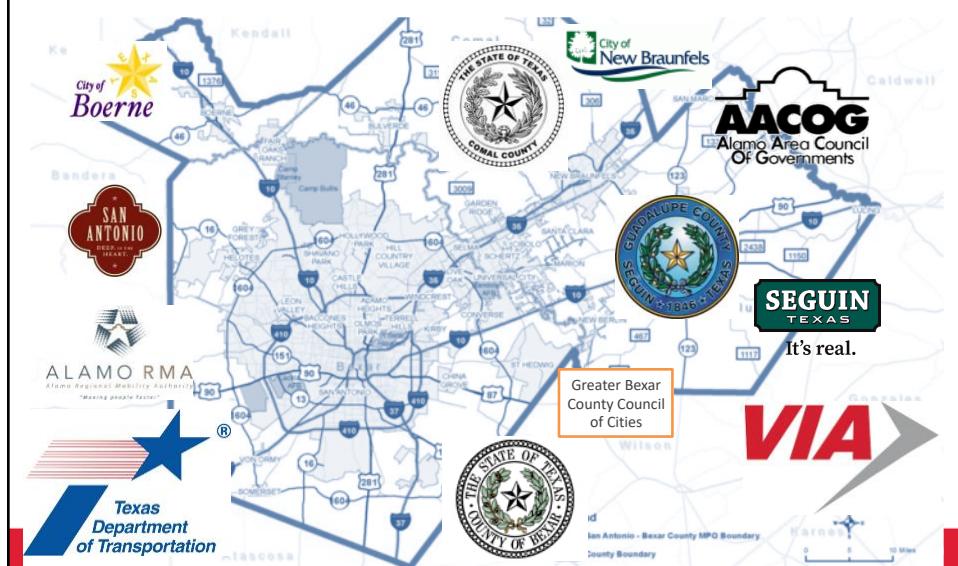
The MPO plans to meet the future long transportation needs of our region

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The MPO works with a variety of partner agencies who have different roles to play in transportation planning



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Walkable Community Workshops

Walkable Community Workshops are part of the MPO's Walkable Community Program.

Workshops bring together neighborhood residents and other stakeholders to discuss barriers to walking and biking in their neighborhood.

Documenting these issues in an MPO study raises awareness. It is not a guarantee that projects will be completed.

But, if a project from this workshop were to be submitted for MPO funding, it would receive extra points for being in an MPO plan.

Downtown New Braunfels WCW



WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP @
NEW BRAUNFELS FARMERS MARKET

The MPO's Walkable Community Program helps build a safer, healthier, and greener transportation system to improve our community's quality of life.

Family Friendly! | Learn about walkable, bikeable neighborhoods | Join a walkabout at 10:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. | Map your concerns

Saturday, November 23, 2019
9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.
186 S. Castell
New Braunfels, TX

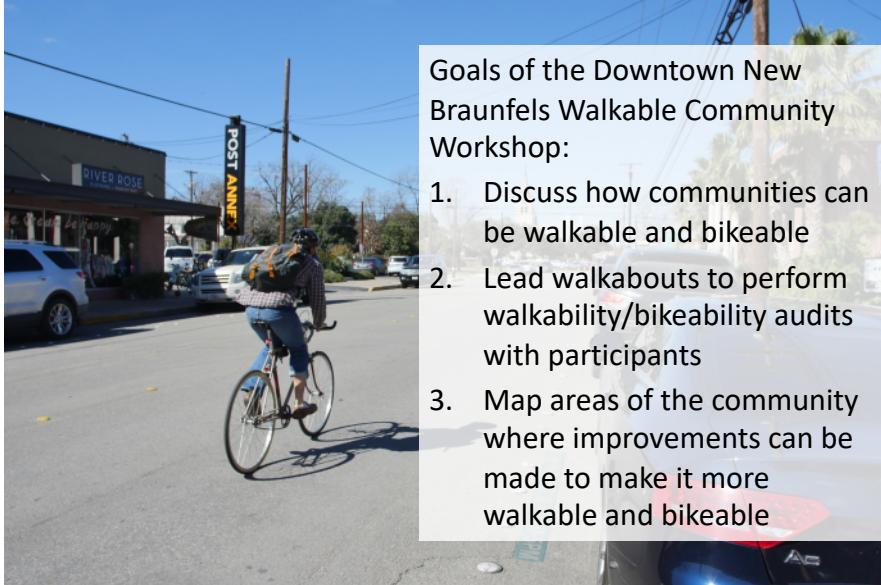
Map your concerns & more info: alamoareampo.org/wcp/nbdowntown

For more information contact, Joey Pawlik, the MPO's Active Transportation Planner, at (210) 227-8551 or at pawlik@alamoareampo.org

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Downtown New Braunfels WCW



Goals of the Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop:

1. Discuss how communities can be walkable and bikeable
2. Lead walkabouts to perform walkability/bikeability audits with participants
3. Map areas of the community where improvements can be made to make it more walkable and bikeable

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Mapping Your Concerns

AAMPO CITY Downtown New Braunfels

<http://alamoareampo.org/wcp/nbdowntown/>

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19



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San Antonio, Texas 78205

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Questions?

Joey Pawlik | Active Transportation Planner
p: 210.230.6931 | e: pawlik@alamoareampo.org
w: alamoareampo.org/WCP/

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APPENDIX C

DOWNTOWN NEW BRAUNFELS WALKABLE
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP, FLYER
NOVEMBER 23, 2019



WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP @

NEW BRAUNFELS FARMERS MARKET



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Join a walkabout at 10:00 a.m. or 12:00 p.m. | Map your concerns



Saturday, November 23, 2019

9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

186 S. Castell

New Braunfels, TX



Map your concerns & more info: alamoareampo.org/wcp/nbdowntown



For more information contact, Joey Pawlik, the MPO's Active Transportation Planner, at (210) 227-8651 or at pawlik@alamoareampo.org

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APPENDIX D

DOWNTOWN NEW BRAUNFELS WALKABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP *WALKABILITY / BIKEABILITY AUDIT* AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2019



Downtown New Braunfels
Walkable Community Workshop
Walkability / Bikeability Audit
Wednesday, December 11, 2019
12:30 – 2:00 pm

Background

As a part of the Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop (DT NB WCW), today's walkability audit seeks to find transportation issues and concerns in the area that pose a barrier to the community being pedestrian and cycling friendly. The DT NB WCW can help take the 2010 Downtown Implementation Plan to the next level by identifying or prioritizing the recommendations in the plan either based on need or feasibility (per DT NB WCW application).

Everyone benefits for a community that is walkable and bikeable! Some of these benefits include:

- improved fitness,
- cleaner air,
- reduced risks of certain health problems,
- economic returns,
- and a greater sense of community.

For more information about the DT NB WCW, please visit:

- <http://alamoareampo.org/wcp/nbdowntown/>

Today's Audit

Goals for today's walkability audit:

- Seek walkability and bikeability concerns in Downtown New Braunfels.
- Map walkability and bikeability concerns in the MPO's online crowdsourcing tool.
- Debrief with team afterward to discuss top concerns found in audit.

QR code with direct link to crowdsourcing tool:

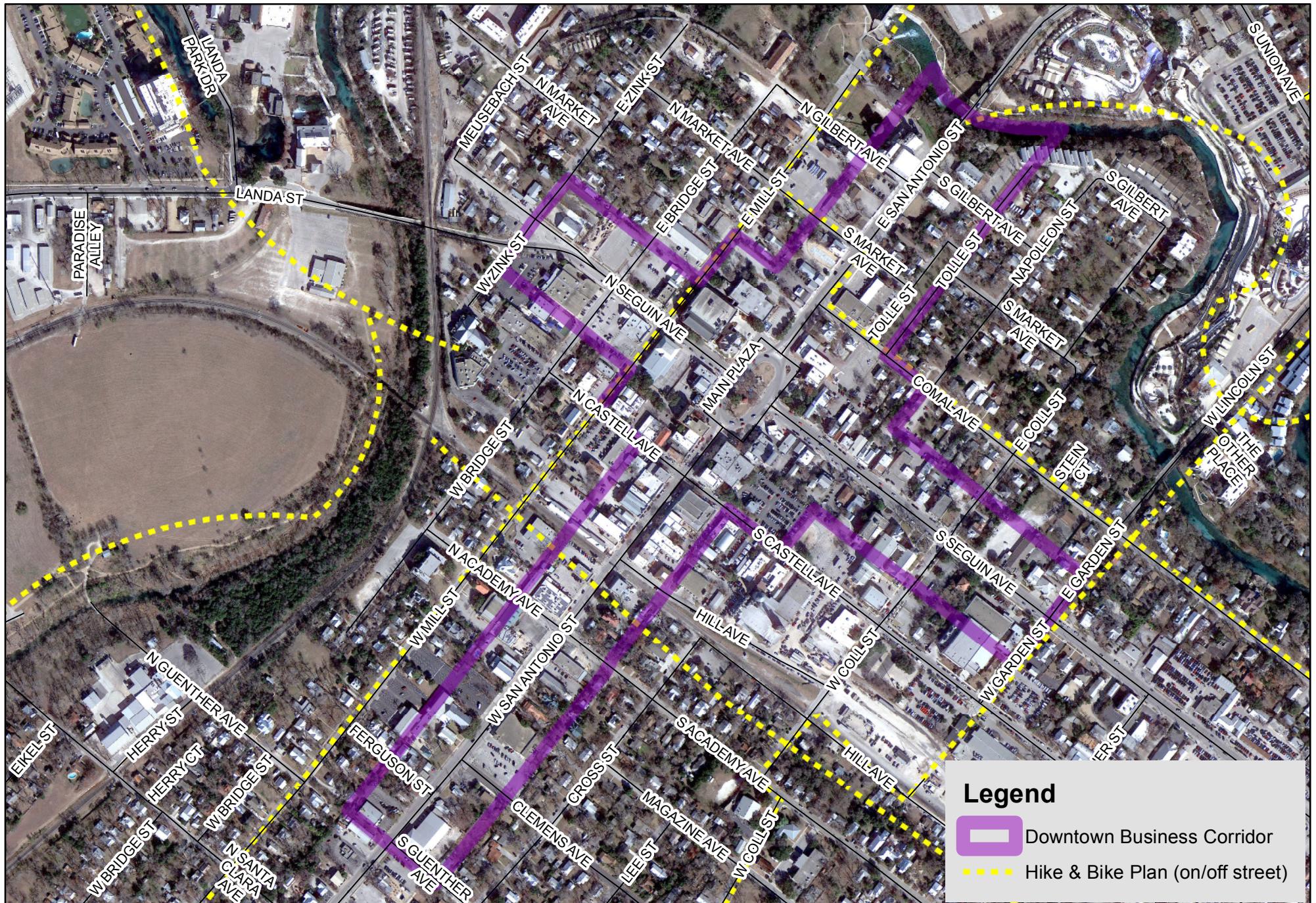


**A direct link to the crowdsourcing map can also be found on the web link above.*

A few things to keep in mind during today's audit:

- In addition to your own point of view, think of what walkability / bikeability challenges a young child, elderly adult, person with a disability, pedestrian, or bicyclist may encounter.
- Take note of current conditions – even if there are plans to improve conditions soon.
- Since we have a large group, try to capture a unique audit item! If someone captured something you also feel strongly about, feel free to like or comment on the audit item later on!
- Safety first! When taking pictures or logging information in the crowdsourcing tool, please be aware of your surroundings and help make sure everyone stays safe and sound.

Downtown Business Corridor



Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop

Walkabout Routes

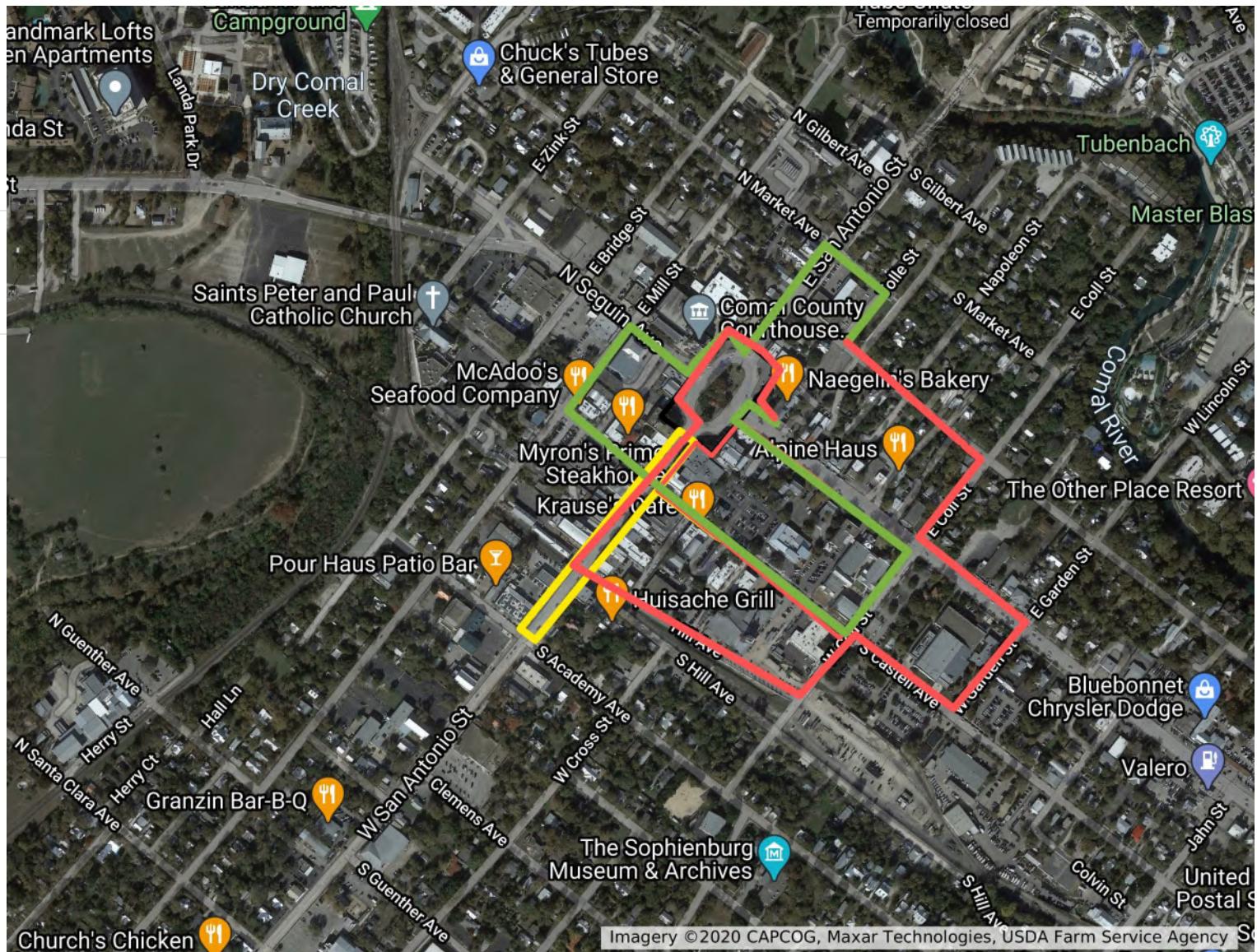
- Walking Route - 1
- Walking Route - 2
- Walking Route - 3

Audit Walking Route 1

- Walking Route

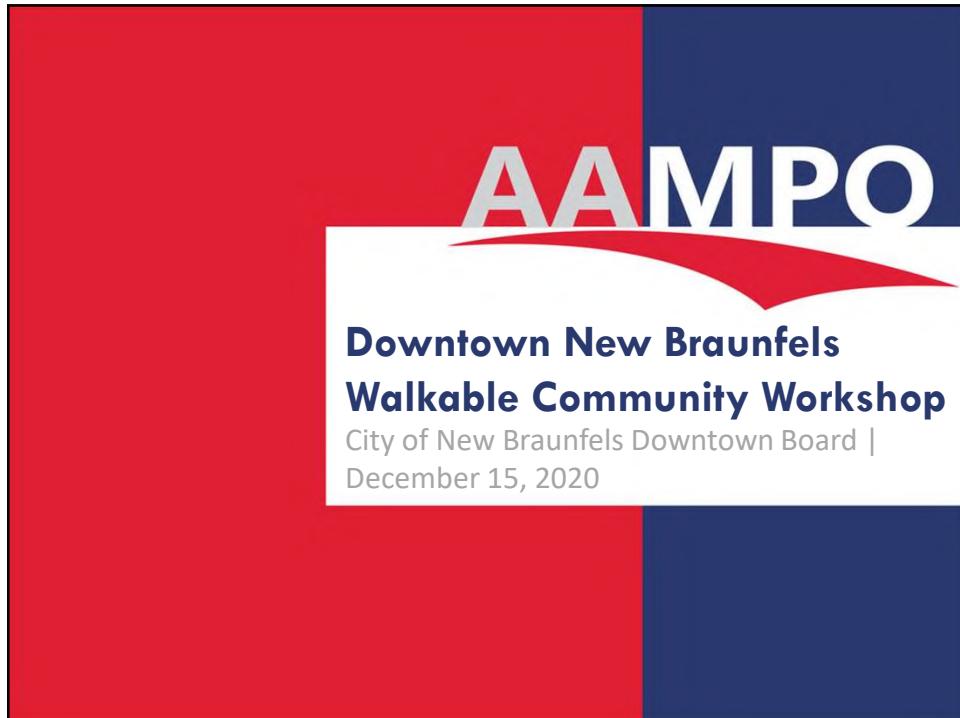
Audit Walking Route 2

- Walking Route



APPENDIX E

DOWNTOWN NEW BRAUNFELS BOARD
WALBABLE COMMUNITY WORKSHOP
REPORT PRESENTATION
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2020



Agenda

- Overview of the MPO
- What is a Walkable Community Workshop (WCW)
- Downtown New Braunfels WCW
 - Goals of the DT NB WCW
 - Walkability / Bikeability Crowdsourcing Map
 - DT NB WCW at the New Braunfels Farmers Market
 - DT NB WCW Walking Audit w/ City of NB Staff
 - DT NB WCW Results & Report
- Next Steps

What is AAMPO?



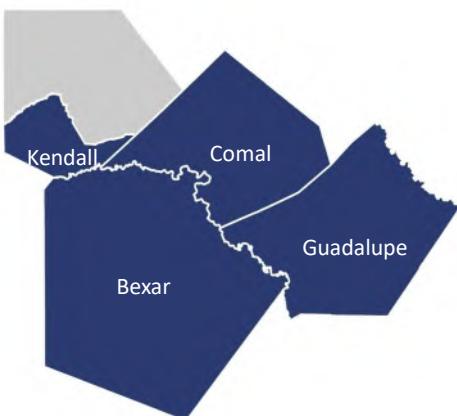
The Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO)

acts as a regional forum to ensure coordination between the public and local, state and federal agencies regarding transportation.

The MPO develops transportation plans, selects and approves projects for federal funding based on regional priorities and administers programs to improve mobility options, safety and air quality.

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Study Area



2 million
residents

10,000
lane miles

50 million
miles traveled daily

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Walkable Community Workshops

Walkable Community Workshops (WCW) are part of the MPO's Walkable Community Program.

Workshops bring together neighborhood residents and other stakeholders to discuss barriers to walking and biking in their neighborhood.

Documenting these issues in an MPO study raises awareness. It is not a guarantee that projects will be completed.

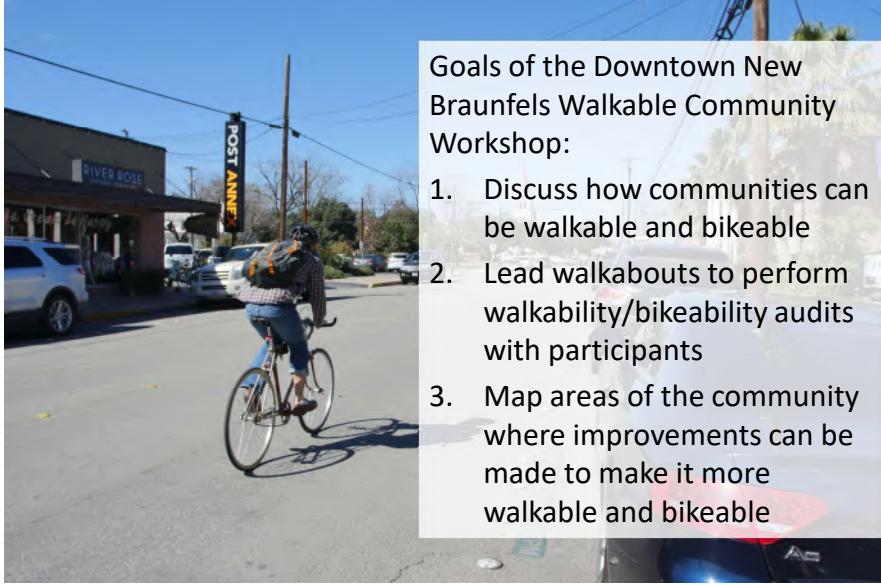
But, if a project from this workshop were to be submitted for MPO funding, it would receive extra points for being in an MPO plan.

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Downtown New Braunfels WCW

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Downtown New Braunfels WCW

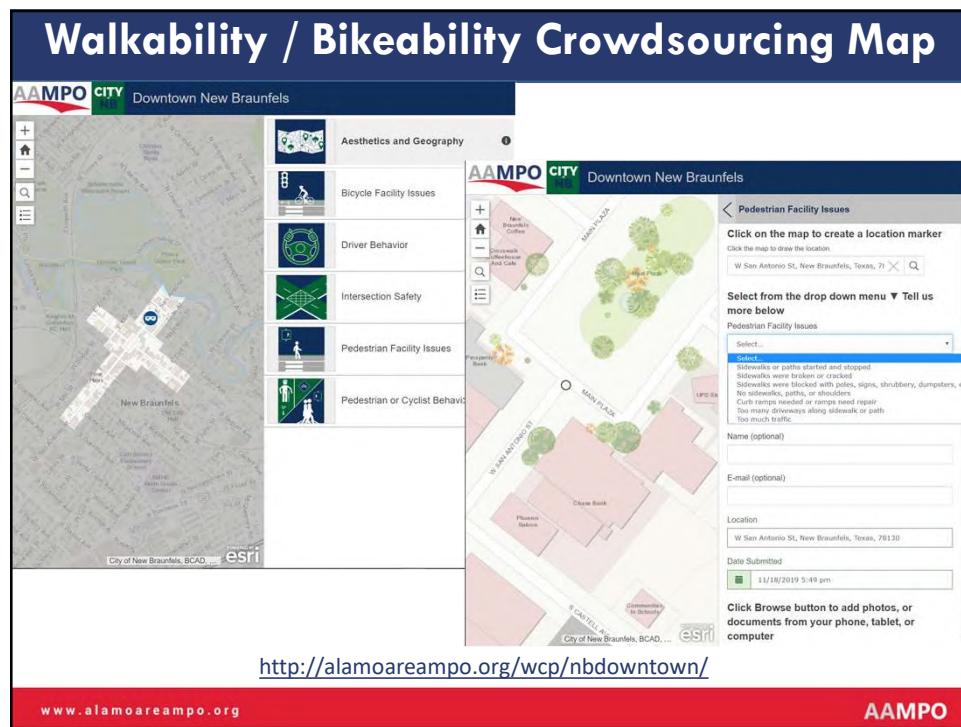


Goals of the Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop:

1. Discuss how communities can be walkable and bikeable
2. Lead walkabouts to perform walkability/bikeability audits with participants
3. Map areas of the community where improvements can be made to make it more walkable and bikeable

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Walkability / Bikeability Crowdsourcing Map



<http://alamoareampo.org/wcp/nbdowntown/>

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Downtown NB WCW at the Farmers Market

Goals of WCW:

- Talk with citizens and visitors about what makes a community walkable and bikeable;
- Receive feedback on what are current walkability and bikeability issues;

*There was an option to conduct walking audits.



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DT WCW Walking Audit w/ City of NB Staff

Goals of Walking Audit:

- Assess and log walkability and bikeability issues in different areas of downtown;
- Have a direct conversation with City of NB staff about what are walkability and bikeability issues in their downtown.

Members of City of NB Parks & Recreation, Planning and Development Services, and Public Works Departments were present.



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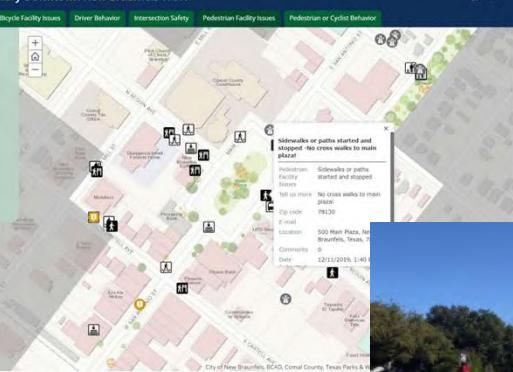
DT NB WCW Results & Report

[View Results Summary Downtown New Braunfels WCW](#)

[Aesthetics and Geography](#) [Bicycle Facility Issues](#) [Driver Behavior](#) [Intersection Safety](#) [Pedestrian Facility Issues](#) [Pedestrian or Cyclist Behavior](#)

Pedestrian Facility Issues

- Curb ramps needed or repaired
- No sidewalks, paths, or shoulders
- sidewalks or paths started and stopped
- Sidewalks were blocked with poles, signs, trash, or dumpsters, etc.
- Sidewalks were broken or cracked
- Too many driveways along sidewalk or path
- Long stretch of sidewalk
- Tell us more



Scan the QR code for more details!



The Alamo Area MPO created a crowdsourcing map that allows users to mark a location of walkability or bikeability concern via GPS location. Users could also upload a photo of their walkability / bikeability concern!

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DT NB WCW Results & Report

Downtown New Braunfels Walkable Community Workshop Report

 December 2020



Main Topics of DT NBW WCW Report:

- Background of DT NB WCW Report
 - Study Area
 - Crash Map
- The Workshop
 - Community Outreach
 - Webpage
 - Crowdsourcing Map
 - Workshop @ the farmers market
 - Walking audit with City of NB Staff
 - List of Walkability and Bikeability Concerns
- Improving Walkability & Bikeability
 - Potential Treatments for Walkability & Bikeability
 - Funding Sources
 - Next Steps

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Next Steps

- Share the report. Talk to neighbors, community leaders, and other stakeholders who could not attend the workshop.
- Identify community and individual actions that can help move ideas toward implementation.
- Use this report as a resource. It includes contact information for agencies and individuals who can answer questions and provide guidance.
- Take small steps towards accommodating safe walking and biking, such as promoting safe crossing behavior.



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Next Steps

- Partner with local groups on events that promote safety and accessibility for non-motorized transportation.
- Advocate for policy changes that support safe and walkable communities.
- Work with the City to include provisions for non-motorized facilities in future plans and projects.
- Attend government meetings to express interest in improving walking and biking infrastructure.
- Contact your legislators to voice specific concerns in your area.



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Questions?

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w: alamoareampo.org/WCP/