

## January News

### Georgetown to vote on 2030 plan

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The city of Georgetown's comprehensive 2030 plan is nearing its final stages, set to go before the City Council for its first reading on Jan. 22. The plan could be adopted by February.

The new comprehensive plan has been more than a year in the making and is meant to completely modernize the current comprehensive plan, called the Century Plan, which was adopted in 1988. Georgetown city officials have been working with Philadelphia-based design firm Wallace Roberts and Todd on the plan.

The plan estimates that within the next five to 10 years the city will see the development of approximately 12,000 acres and 28,000 living units, and names the management of fringe area growth and minimizing of sprawl development as goals.

The plan also calls for open space retention, more mixed use in development, well integrated public transportation and more affordable housing choices. In order to promote investment in Georgetown's older developed areas like its downtown, the plan also calls for infill and reinvestment in downtown and historic areas.

### Street Scapes - Georgetown

*Austin Business Journal*  
Friday, January 18, 2008



Georgetown's downtown square has undergone a renaissance of sorts, thanks to the region's blossoming population. As the core of Georgetown, city leaders have worked hard to bring the square back to its former glory after it fell into disrepair in the '70s.

Replete with several historic buildings, the square is now home to several tenants, ranging from restaurants to software companies.

The Williamson County Courthouse is the most recent building to get a facelift, with a \$9 million renovation. The courthouse reopened in December 2007.

The Evans Building, built in the early 1900s, houses The Escape gift shop and was nominated for a statewide Best Rehabilitation Award.

# Georgetown's growth plan gets first nod

1/3/08 Proposal calls for city to triple in population and become "community of choice" by 2030

By ANDREA GONZALEZ

At a joint workshop for Georgetown's city planners this week, a comprehensive blueprint to monitor and control the city's expansion got a thumbs-up from the first panel that needs to OK it.

The new plan features a vision statement for the city -- calling for Georgetown to become a "community of choice" -- and a land-use element for the next 20 years. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission and awaits two final readings by the City Council before being officially approved. The readings are expected to occur at regular council meetings at 6 p.m. January 22 and February 5 in the Municipal Courts building on the corner of 7th and Main Street on

the Square.

The consulting firm Wallace, Roberts and Todd, LLC, gave its final presentation of the plan to the council and P&Z during the public workshop Monday.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan was created to replace the Century Plan and its three components: policy, development and future land use.

The process to replace the outdated Century Plan began last year. It needed a complete revision of requirements, mainly due to the large amount of growth in the area. The process has included many public comment and workshop sessions.

According to the company's calculations, the population in 2030 will be about 150,000, almost triple the number of residents living here now. More than 28,000 residential

units will be needed to accommodate everyone.

During the presentation, council members and planning commissioners were told that Georgetown has the land to meet upcoming needs, both residential and industrial, but that the city still needs to be very cautious about approving new developments. There are already enough in the pipeline to meet these projected needs.

The purpose of the plan is to incrementally expand the city and not grow too fast, according to Wallace, Roberts and Todd. There needs to be assurance that the city can continue to provide services and not be overstretched, their statement said.

It is also a component of the plan that it be updated every five years in order to stay current with changing trends. A full copy of the new

plan can be found on the city's Web site, [www.georgetown.org](http://www.georgetown.org).

Residents of Georgetown will not be seeing an increase in garbage disposal fees any time soon. The Georgetown City Council voted during a workshop meeting held Monday afternoon to change the Sanitation Fund into a Special Revenue Fund.

The fund that will allow for designated revenues to be used for specific purposes, such as expanding the recycling program and hazardous household waste disposal program. With the fund restructured into this new Special Revenue Fund, there would be no rate increase, and funds would be provided to implement new programs and expanded services. This new fund will be included in the 2008-2009 annual budget.

## Georgetown considers bus system

By Bob Banta

AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Thursday, January 10, 2008

GEORGETOWN — City officials are on their way toward establishing Georgetown's first traditional bus system, but they have a long way to go before residents can start riding buses from one end of the city to the other.

City planners envision a system that would take riders to major shopping centers, hospitals and social services agencies. Mayor Gary Nelon said Georgetown has grown enough that a bus system is needed. The city had a population of 14,800 in 1990; it has grown to nearly 47,000.

"With all the growth we've had in this city and all the cars out there, we need a good transportation alternative," Nelon said. "At this stage, we're just looking at recommendations, so it is important we have all the public input we can get."

### Georgetown bus proposals

The city is studying two scenarios. A three-bus scenario would serve the routes shown on the map at left. The four-bus scenario would run the routes indicated on the map at right. The routes shown are conceptual and could change as transit plans develop.

#### Proposed routes

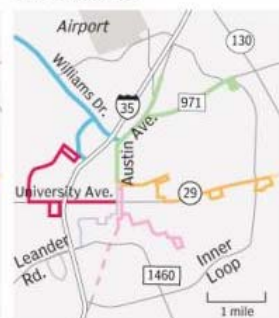
- East
- North
- Sun City
- Southeast
- Southwest
- Shopper Shuttle
- Future service
- Select trips

#### 3-bus scenario



Source: City of Georgetown

#### 4-bus scenario



Mary Coppinger AMERICAN-STATESMAN

City officials are nearing the end of a series of public hearings on a proposal to create a system that could be run with three or four buses. A final hearing is scheduled for today.

Nelson said the costs of a bus system and how it would be paid for have yet to be determined.

"The way it works is you determine how many buses you need, what routes you run, how many people you have as possible riders, and then you come up with the costs and ways to fund it," he said.

The cost of a typical bus is \$100,000, according to preliminary research done for the city by consultant KFH Group Inc.

Running three buses weekdays on a 12-hour daily schedule is estimated to cost \$450,000 a year, according to initial studies, but that does not include the purchase price of each vehicle, the cost of erecting bus stops and other expenses associated with a bus service.

The mayor said he has no time line for setting up a bus program.

The idea of having a local fixed-route system for Georgetown is not new. It got a push in 2005, after the Texas section of the American Society of Civil Engineers issued a report card on the city's infrastructure. Georgetown's lowest grade was a "D" for public transportation, compared with an average grade of "C-minus" for other Texas cities.

Currently, transit needs for Georgetown residents are handled by the Capital Area Rural Transportation System, a system of buses that serves riders in surrounding counties as well as non-urbanized areas of Travis and Williamson counties. Riders phone in reservations for services.

CARTS would manage Georgetown's new bus system under the current proposal, CARTS general manager Dave Marsh said. The major difference between the proposal and the current CARTS system is that the proposed service would run longer hours. It would be confined to the city limits and would run at least five days a week and possibly weekends, for at least 12 hours a day.

A committee of residents and city staff members has proposed two main scenarios for the bus system:

The first uses three buses. One would run north on Austin Avenue and to Sun City Texas northwest of Georgetown. The other routes would cover all major destinations. The second, more expensive scenario employs four buses. This scenario would provide what the staff describes as excellent service for residents east of Interstate 35 to major destinations west of I-35.

"My personal opinion is a full-service bus system is long past due," Georgetown City Council Member Patty Eason said.

Round Rock officials are planning a fixed-route bus service, Round Rock city spokesman Will Hampton said. Leander uses the Austin-based Capital Metro bus system.

## **Offices, condos slated for Georgetown's historic downtown**

*Austin Business Journal*

*by Kate Harrington, Contributing writer*

*January 12, 2007*

Georgetown's historic charm has attracted yet another development—and its tallest to date.

A 127,000-square-foot mixed-use project is slated for a block just north of Georgetown's historic downtown square, an area where city leaders have strived to blend traditional architecture with modern style.

Sun Star Plaza's first phase, a \$5.5 million project that broke ground Jan. 8, will be Georgetown's first four-story building, catering to medical professionals. Architect Francisco Choi and his wife Maryann, whose geriatric practice will be located in the 37,000-square-foot building, say they picked Georgetown for their project because of Georgetown's mix of tradition and growth in an urban setting.

The medical plaza is 75 percent pre-leased, and will feature professionals ranging from optometrists to dentists and lawyers specializing in the medical field.

The second phase will measure about 90,000 square feet with underground parking and is scheduled to break ground later this year. That phase of the project will also be four floors high and will contain a mix of offices and condos.

The Chois plan to work with at least one of the new hospitals opening in Williamson County to bring more localized health care to Georgetown residents in a setting that allows many to bypass the car in order to get to their doctor appointments.

The new project is in line with the long-range vision Georgetown business and city leaders have for the historic downtown area. With the courthouse serving as a centerpiece, the surrounding historic buildings have been spruced up to reflect a mix of old-school architecture with a modern twist. The city also is encouraging development that allows residents to eat, lounge and be entertained, all within downtown's confines.

As part of Georgetown's downtown master plan, the city has poured \$6.26 million into renovating the area in the past two years—from facades and signs to sidewalks and street improvements.

Georgetown's city spokesman, Keith Hutchinson, says in 2004 city officials—with an eye to the growing population—realized the five blocks around the courthouse had the potential to spark an urban renewal with the right investment and attention. To some developers, it's that vision that has made Georgetown an attractive place to build.

While suburban sprawl has been the main mode of growth in Williamson County's towns for the past 10 years, cities like Georgetown have started to look toward existing urban centers as they plan for future growth. It's a model that's paying off in Georgetown as a slew of new downtown developments prepare to break ground and open their doors around the town's historic square in the coming months.

"With the competition that comes from development along the highway, they're trying hard to draw people to the shopping back in town," says Jay Hailey, an Austin lawyer who has invested in the development of a housing and retail property in downtown Georgetown. "This is an investment that will bring tax dollars back in." Hailey says homeowners are attracted to the downtown style of living Georgetown's new square offers.

"The notion of pushing shops up to the street and trying to get people out of their cars and living and walking downtown, there's some very real social issues with that that are positive," says Jay Hargrave, an owner of Cottam Hargrave, the architects behind the new Monument Café on the square. "It means you're getting more revenue with less investment."

## **Georgetown annexes SH 130 land**

Austin Business Journal

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Georgetown's city limits have expanded further.

Annexation of more than eight miles of interstate and tollway right-of-way became effective on Dec. 29. The Georgetown City Council approved the annexation in November.

With the annexation, a 5.8 mile section of State Highway 130 on the east side of town is now in Georgetown's city limits. Also included in the annexation is a 2.5 mile section of I-35 that includes a part of the interstate on the north side of Georgetown from State Highway 195 to CR 143.

The city council chose to annex the area to regulate the commercial and residential development that is expected in these growing areas.

In 2006, Georgetown grew 41 percent in total area, with the city annexing 8,909 acres. City limits now span 48 square miles, compared to 34 square miles at the end of 2005.