

TRACK

RIDGE

GRASSHOPPER

Neighborhood Plan

"Piecing together Past and Present to Build a Better Future"





ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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GLOSSARY

Area Median Income: The midpoint in an area's income distribution. Half of the households earn more than this amount, and half of the households earn less.

Assessment Value: The value assigned to a home for property tax purposes.

Average Home Value: Central point of all the home values.

Homestead Exemptions: A reduction on the assessed value of a property if it is owner-occupied.

Median Home Value: The "middle value" where half of the values are higher, and half are lower.

Over-burdened Households: Households that spend more than 30% of their income on rent.

Price Appropriate Housing: Housing that only costs 30% of a household's yearly income.

Zoning: A planning method that divides land into zones that each have a different set of regulations that guides what can be developed in each zone.





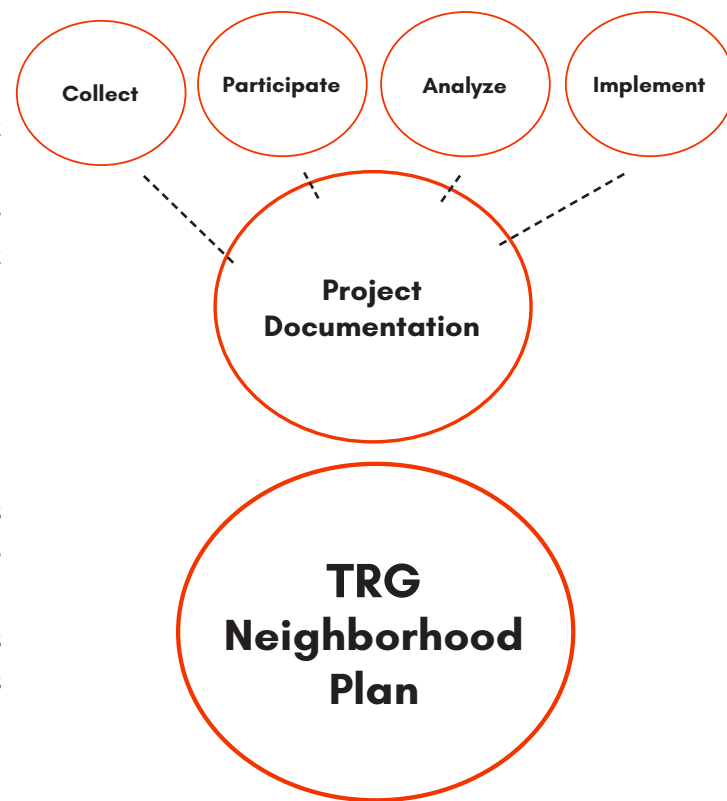
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Incorporated in 1848, the area along the San Gabriel River that would become Georgetown has been influenced by several regimes, from the Native Tonkawa tribe to the Independent Republic of Texas. TRG, previously three neighborhoods known as the Track, Ridge, and Grasshopper, developed between the banks of the river and downtown Georgetown. As the city developed, it experienced limited dynamic shifts in population and demographics. That changed over the past decade as Georgetown has seen substantial population growth. In August 2020, the City of Georgetown conducted a neighborhood-wide survey in TRG and San Jose to understand the neighborhood concerns for consideration in formulating a neighborhood plan. Information from this survey was used to craft a Request for Proposal (RFP) to create two Neighborhood Plans, one for the TRG neighborhood and one for the San Jose neighborhood. The primary goal of the TRG Neighborhood Plan is to build consensus for a neighborhood plan that supports infrastructure improvements and compatible development while sharing the history and culture of the neighborhood and supporting existing residents' ability to stay in their homes. This plan, guided by the vision and goals created by the neighborhood, aims to achieve this goal. The TRG Neighborhood Plan is divided into four (4) sections.

Learning about TRG

Existing conditions were collected to validate concerns and input from the residents as well as ensure that recommendations made in the plan are based on current data. The neighborhoods strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, background information, and neighborhood level demographic data were collected and analyzed. Findings from existing conditions include:

- Residents in TRG are more likely to be rent-burdened compared to the rest of Georgetown;
- Median household income in TRG is 34% less than the median household income for the City of Georgetown;
- Detached single-family homes are the dominant existing land use in TRG; and
- 72% of all TRG structures are in good or fair condition.



Vision Statement

The TRG neighborhood will be a safe, healthy and diverse multigenerational community that promotes and protects it's rich and varied heritage, residential character, and cultural community assets for future generations and all citizens of Georgetown.

Community Voices

The TRG community guided the creation of the TRG Neighborhood Plan. Residents and stakeholders were involved in every stage of the planning process by:

- Vetting existing conditions;
- Developing the neighborhood vision and goals;
- Reviewing and verifying the data presented in the analysis phase;
- Reviewing recommendations for both neighborhood preservation and development; and
- Setting priorities for implementation.

A Community Outreach and Engagement Plan established parameters for outreach, meetings and engagements. The City of Georgetown, working with the TRG Steering Committee, conducted extensive outreach that resulted in significant meeting participation from both residents and stakeholders. Community engagement efforts conducted during the planning process include:

- Conducted extensive outreach including mailed notices and posted signage
- Three (3) open house community meetings;
- Over thirty (30) meetings with stakeholders; and
- Eight Steering Committee meetings.

Understanding the Local Market

This section of the Neighborhood Plan provides the findings from the Residential Market Scan. It highlights challenges existing residents face to remain in their neighborhood. Results from the Market Scan are summarized below:

- The City of Georgetown has seen a 42% increase in population since 2010. Population growth is projected to continue through at least 2026;
- The current average home sale price in the City of Georgetown has grown 35% in 2021;
- The current average sales price in TRG is \$557,751, higher than the average home value in the City of Georgetown; and
- It requires an income of nearly \$180,000 to purchase a house near TRG. The average household income in TRG is \$44,891.



Neighborhood Preservation Plan

The Neighborhood Preservation Plan section provides recommendations to address issues and concerns raised through community engagement and challenges observed during the existing conditions and analysis phases. The Preservation Plan's recommendations are divided into two sections, community retention, and Neighborhood protection, which are further defined below. This section also includes an Implementation Plan with actions to move the effort from planning to reality.

Conservation

Preserving and developing affordable housing for TRG residents. Sharing and celebrating the history and culture of the TRG neighborhood.

Accessibility

Guides improving infrastructure that increases pedestrian access throughout the neighborhood, and addresses traffic and parking concerns.

Restoration

Proposes opportunities for compatible neighborhood development, and additional greenspace, while promoting community building to support neighborhood safety and stability.

TRG Goals

community retention

The community retention section focuses on retaining TRG residents, as the City of Georgetown and the TRG neighborhood continue to grow. These policies and strategies are important to prevent displacement of current residents as TRG experiences growth pressures.

Neighborhood protection

The Neighborhood protection section of the report outlines transportation and infrastructure recommendations that support neighborhood development. It also includes recommendations for future land use and zoning regulations to positively guide continued development in TRG

Implementation

The implementation matrices function as guides to the implementation of the TRG Neighborhood Plan. Each matrix includes:

- The priority of the action item;
- A timeframe for implementation of each action item;





INTRODUCTION

What is the purpose of this Plan?

Over the past decade, The City of Georgetown, like many other metropolitan regions in Texas, experienced tremendous population and economic growth. Growth resulted in significant development across the city to accommodate incoming residents and retain existing ones.

A part of the City's charge is to ensure that ongoing growth and development does not adversely impact its citizens. To accomplish this, the City of Georgetown regularly completes studies and plans to guide growth and identify any potential issues and their solutions.

The Track Ridge Grasshopper (TRG) Neighborhood Plan establishes long-range goals and objectives for the development and stabilization of the neighborhood. It provides a decision making framework and establishes implementation strategies to direct the neighborhood towards its vision as **"a safe, healthy and diverse multigenerational community that promotes and protects**

it's rich and varied heritage, residential character, and cultural community assets for future generations and all citizens of Georgetown."

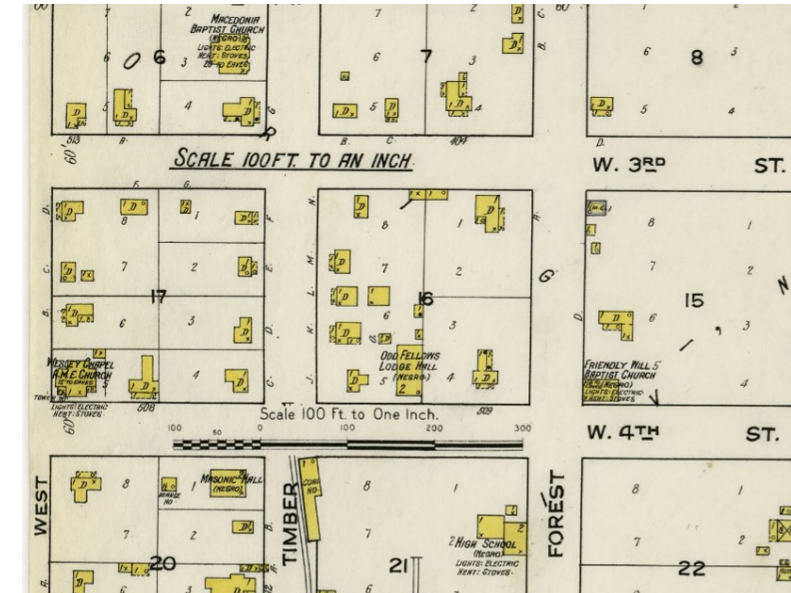
It is intended for use by the City of Georgetown and its agencies, TRG residents, property owners, commercial and not-for-profit organizations concerned with people, planning, development, and neighborhood improvement. The creation of this plan supports goals identified in the Georgetown 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update to "Reinvest in Georgetown's existing neighborhoods and commercial areas..." and "Ensure access to diverse housing options and preserve existing neighborhoods for residents of all ages, backgrounds and income levels."

The Plan is neither an official zoning map nor does it create or deny any rights. Zoning and land-use changes proposed must be actioned by legislative procedures established under the City of Georgetown Municipal Code.



Portion of TRG From a 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

Figure 1: 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



THE HISTORY OF TRG

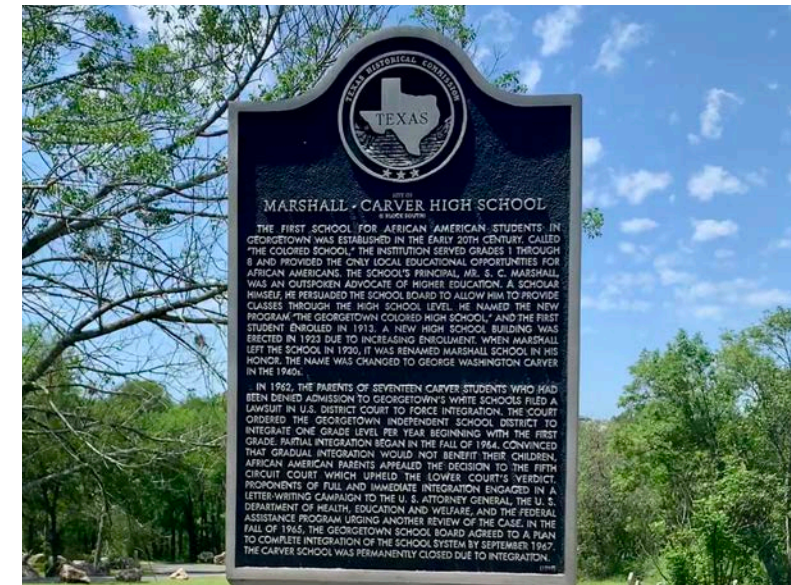
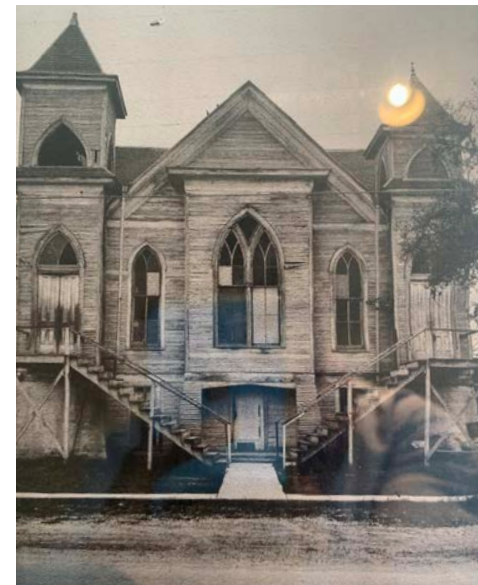
How did we get here?

Georgetown incorporated in 1848. The area was previously inhabited by the Native Tonkawa tribe. The region was controlled for a time by Spain before Mexico won its independence. Eventually, the Republic of Texas formed after separating from Mexico in 1836.

The TRG, originally three separate and distinct neighborhoods Track, Ridge and Grasshopper, were established prior to the 1870s. The Ridge and Grasshopper Neighborhoods, located north of the current University Avenue/State Highway 29, developed to the west of the Downtown area and along the eastern curve of the San Gabriel River. The Track neighborhood developed southwest of downtown along the rail line and close to the cotton gin and oil mill, which provided employment opportunities for early residents.

Under Mexican law in the early 1800's and after the Civil War, there was a significant population of free Blacks in Texas. The Black community created autonomous community institutions, such as churches and schools. Evidence of these establishments

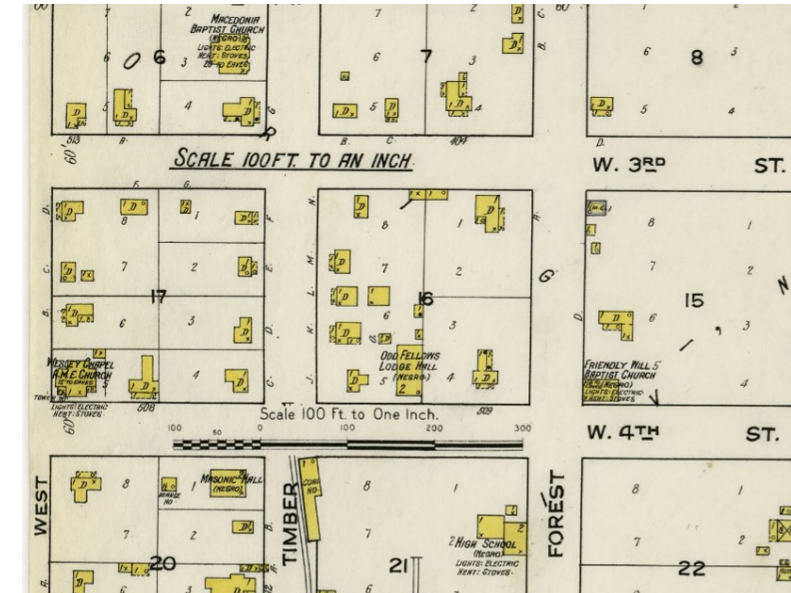
in the early days of the area that would become the TRG can be found in existing structures as well as Georgetown city records. Wesley Chapel A.M.E. Church congregation organized in 1869, just west of Georgetown's Courthouse Square. A photo from circa 1878 shows the St. Paul United Methodist Church building in the background along what is now Martin Luther King Jr. Street. The congregation is currently in its third building in the same location. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps dating to 1889 show "Negro Tents" on blocks west of the railroad track that terminated at George Irvine's lumber yard, which later became the noted Belford Lumber Yard. Sanborn Maps from 1894, 1900, 1905, 1910 and 1916 show residential development west of the railroad tracks, with St. Paul included in the map area for the first time in 1900, noted as a "Negro Church" on Timber Street, which is now Martin Luther King Jr. St. The 1916 Sanborn map, at left in Figure 1, expanded to show the initial "High School (Negro)", "Macedonia Baptist Church (Negro)", "Wesley Chapel A.M.E. Church", "Friendly Will Baptist Church (Negro)" and "Masonic Hall (Negro)" and "Odd Fellows Lodge Hall (Negro)", reflecting the separate church and





Portion of TRG From a 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

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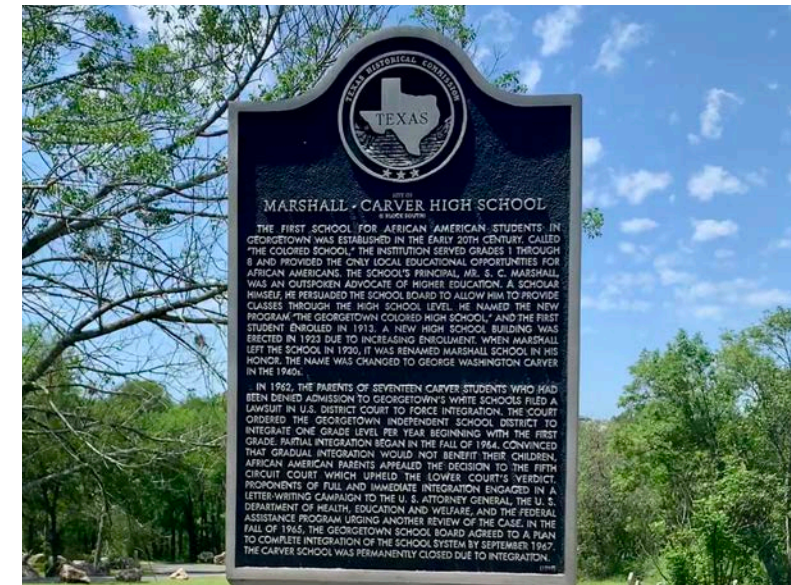
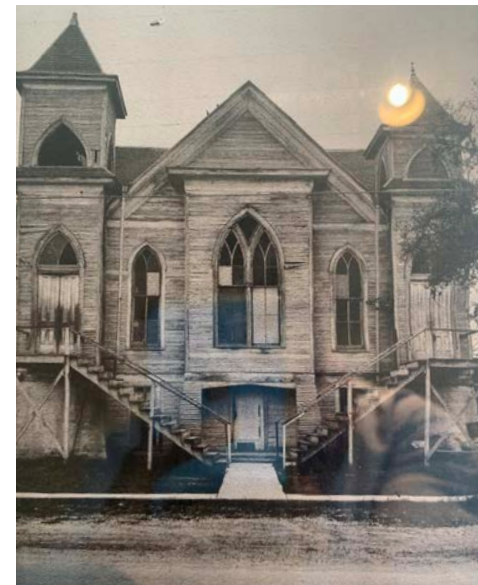
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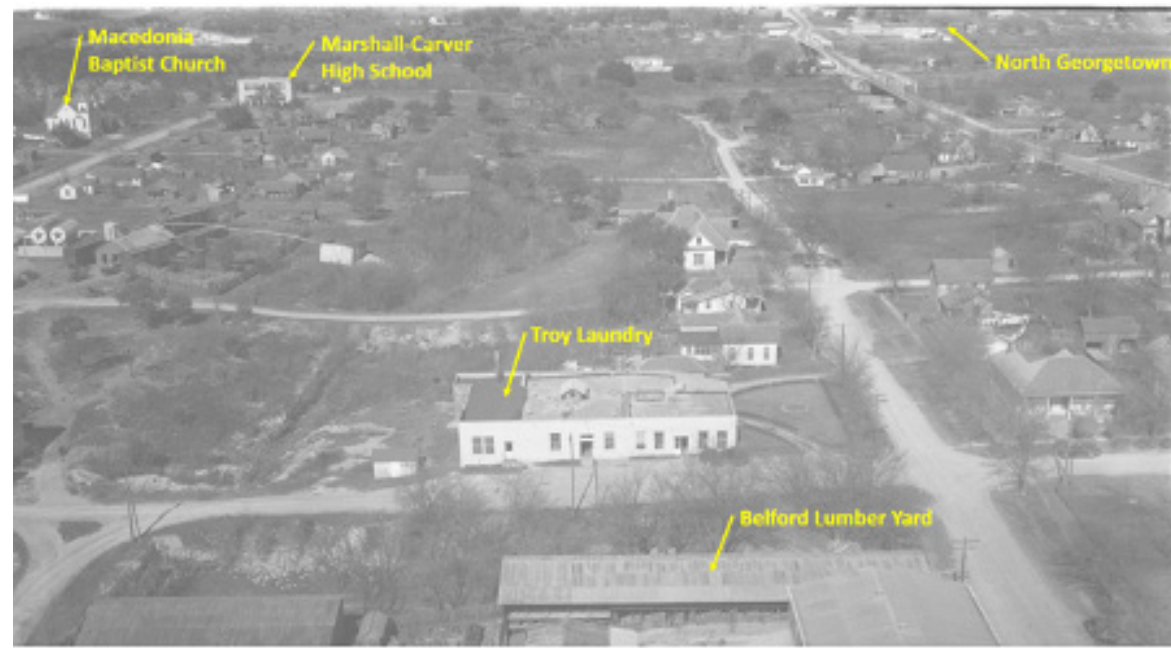
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Source: Photo from the Williamson County Courthouse looking east, c. 1878.



Source: Special Collections Library at Southwestern University. C. 1934

civic groups in a segregated Georgetown. The individual listing of these structures on the Sanborn maps highlights the presence of the African American community and the importance of the structures to the early built environment of the City of Georgetown.

Although the neighborhood was primarily African American, it was not exclusively so, and the three neighborhoods combined were the home of poor white and Mexican American residents as well.

The 1925 Sanborn Map illustrates a larger expanse of the TRG neighborhood, including houses west of the rail tracks, the Mexican

Methodist Church at 9th Street and Laura Place (what is now Bridge Street) and at the Mexican School at the west end of 10th Street next to the river bluffs. By this time several African American church congregations had constructed prominent wood buildings, purchasing lumber and materials from the Belford Lumber Company. The Blue Hole served as both a swimming hole and a sacred place for baptisms in the community through the mid-20th century. City parks and swimming areas remained segregated until civil rights legislation desegregated public facilities.



In 1968 the City of Georgetown adopted the Urban Renewal Plan for the area of town west of the railroad tracks. Overseen by the Urban Renewal Agency, the plan affected the acquisition and demolition of dozens of properties across the neighborhoods, with new streets, lots and houses developed to meet newly adopted zoning standards. The plan resulted in the relocation of residents, demolition of historic and culturally important structures and followed on the relocation of the Marshall Carver High School. The high school moved from the north end of the neighborhood near Blue Hole to the southwest end of town. A new segregated school, Southside High School was built shortly before Brown versus Board of Education desegregated schools. A thriving African American business community was documented in a publication by the Gay Hill Missionary Baptist Church (now Calvary Hill). The document provided church history, a history of notable members and an accounting of the businesses in the TRG neighborhood. TRG included a gas and filling station, a funeral home, a meat market, a grocery store, a barber shop, a tailor, a beauty shop and several cafes. Other notable persons included contractors, carpenters, plumbers and athletes. Unfortunately, like in many cities across the US, urban renewal disproportionately impacted low income communities many of which were home to largely minority residents.

Today, the neighborhood reflects a mix of structures with a dominant development pattern of historic and redeveloped single-family homes originally built during Urban Renewal to the north, and public and multi-family housing developments to the south. The Historic A. M. E. Church remains, but most of the historic church buildings were demolished and replaced with new structures either in the historic location or new locations in the neighborhood.

PREVIOUS PLANS + STUDIES

A list of previous plans and studies that affect TRG are shown below on a timeline, with a brief description of each plan. Previous recommendations from these plans were considered in the planning process.



THE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN: SOUTH SAN GABRIEL AREA (1968)

The Urban Renewal Plan: South San Gabriel Area created an updated zoning code that established specific requirements for land uses. These updated requirements led to the acquisition and redevelopment of several structures in the Urban Renewal Area and significantly shaped the current built environment in the area today.



GEORGETOWN PARKS RECREATION AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN (2009)

The Parks and Trails Master Plan highlighted recommendations and priorities to guide the growth of parks and trails in the City. The recommendations were divided into five sections: acquisition of parkland, development of new facilities, improvements to existing facilities, trail corridor development, and the San Gabriel Park plan for renovation and enhancements. The Parks and Recreation Department is currently performing an update to the Master Plan; anticipated adoption in 2022.



GEORGETOWN TRAILS AND GREENWAY MASTER PLAN (2009)

The Trails and Greenway Master plan was designed to determine key corridors for trails in the City to ultimately connect one end of Georgetown to the other. Proposed trails will create safe pedestrian access and increase recreation options in the City. Recommendations focused on determining the most efficient ways for the City to invest in trails that would lead to full connectivity.



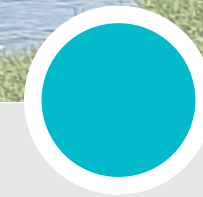
GEORGETOWN DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN (2014)

The Downtown Master Plan was created to guide the future growth of Downtown Georgetown. The plan analyzed existing conditions and provided recommendations to make Downtown Georgetown a more pedestrian-friendly and economically diverse area with various entertainment options.



CITY OF GEORGETOWN OVERALL TRANSPORTATION UPDATE (2015)

The Overall Transportation Plan was created to guide the future growth of the City around the construction and improvement of roads and facilities. The plan considers the relationship between land use and transportation to create a multi-modal transportation network that is both efficient and safe.



TOOLS FOR PREVENTING DISPLACEMENT IN TRG NEIGHBORHOOD (2019)

Completed by the University of Texas at Austin, the plan evaluated the risk of displacement by reviewing demographic and market factors. Stakeholder interviews were conducted with residents. Programs and policies to combat the displacement of long-term residents were created, such as a Neighborhood Association for TRG, creating a neighborhood overlay district, and implementing a targeted tax stabilization program for qualifying residents.



TRG NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN SURVEY REPORT (2020)

In preparation of future planning efforts the City of Georgetown conducted this survey to guide the request for proposal and understand the needs of the neighborhood. Responses indicated that protecting longtime residents of the neighborhood should be a top priority of the neighborhood plan. Residents voiced concerns about development pressure, and rising property taxes, a loss of neighborhood character, the potential loss of longtime residents, and the history, and culture of TRG.



GEORGETOWN 2030 PLAN (2020)

The Georgetown 2030 Plan is the updated comprehensive plan for the City of Georgetown. The plan reflects on growth patterns since 2008, when Georgetown completed its last comprehensive plan. Additionally, the plan crafted a new vision for the City of Georgetown and created guidelines for the City's future growth based on community input.

Vision - Georgetown: A caring community honoring our past and innovating for the future.

PREVIOUS PLANS + STUDIES



THE URBAN RENEWAL PLAN: SOUTH SAN GABRIEL AREA (1968)

Recommendations

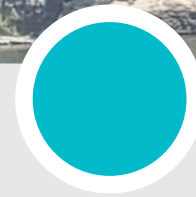
- Property in the area that were not going to be rehabilitated to the Rehabilitation Standard set forth in the plan were subject to acquisition.
- Some properties subjected to aquisition were chosen for right-of-way access for highway development.
- All lots had a minimum of 6,000 square feet and 60 feet minimum width.
- Established a 25 foot front setback, 15 feet to a side yard and 5 feet to an interior lot line



GEORGETOWN PARKS RECREATION AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN (2009)

Recommendations

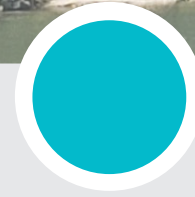
- Adopt and enforce pedestrian-related complete streets policies;
- Update city ordinances to support bicycle and pedestrian mobility;
- Add bicycle parking requirements to commercial, multifamily, residential, institutional, and government land uses;
- Picnic tables and restrooms are essential facilities in parks, and their construction should be prioritized;
- As the City continues to grow, more neighborhood and pocket parks should be developed; and



GEORGETOWN TRAILS AND GREENWAY MASTER PLAN (2009)

Recommendations

- Trail Development Ordinance—state that trails should replace sidewalks which means that their creation would not add significantly to the budget.
- Develop Trail Cost Sharing Ordinance that requires developers to fund a portion of trail development adjacent to their development—similar to a sidewalk ordinance
- Preserve access to creek corridors.
- Consistent trail maintenance is important to ensure that they remain useful and safe .



GEORGETOWN DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN (2014)

Recommendations

- There should be a focus on creating heritage tourism.
- Add interpretive markers talking about the history of the city and various areas
- There should be transition zones between the more intense downtown uses and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- Transitional infill should be developed along the edges of downtown that are respectful of the single-family nature of the established There residential neighborhoods.



CITY OF GEORGETOWN OVERALL TRANSPORTATION UPDATE (2015)

Recommendations

- Georgetown residents want local and regional transit service provided in the City;
- Currently, Georgetown residents have to travel to Round Rock or Leander to access bus lines to Austin and other locations;
- The Capital Area Rural Transit System (CARTS) provides door-to-door service, but advance notice and a reservation are required; and
- A physically protected bike lane along Maple Street was included as a high priority project.



TOOLS FOR PREVENTING DISPLACEMENT IN TRG NEIGHBORHOOD (2019)

Recommendations

- Establish a Neighborhood Association for the TRG neighborhood.
- Educate the entire City of Georgetown on the origins and importance of the TRG neighborhood.
- Educate residents about the benefits of Homestead and how to apply.
- Create a neighborhood overlay for the TRG neighborhood.
- Implement a Targeted Tax Stabilization Program for qualifying residents in the TRG neighborhood.



TRG NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN SURVEY REPORT (2020)

Recommendations

- Strengths of the neighborhood include the strong sense of community, proximity to downtown, neighborhood parks and schools;
- Residents are concerned about traffic and parking, new development, and current infrastructure; and
- Community Outreach:
 - 47% prefer email contact for ongoing conversations
 - 34% prefer phone/ texts and
 - 33% prefer mail/ fliers



GEORGETOWN 2030 PLAN (2020)

Recommendations

- Georgetown has grown significantly since 2008 when the City adopted the last Comprehensive Plan.
- There have been significant infrastructure investments as a result of the bonds issued in 2008 and 2011.
- New development has been the most pronounced in the southeast quadrant of the City.
- Residents are increasingly concerned about housing prices in Georgetown and are afraid that current residents might not be able to afford Georgetown in the future.
- Identifies San José and TRG as two areas where small area planning should be completed.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

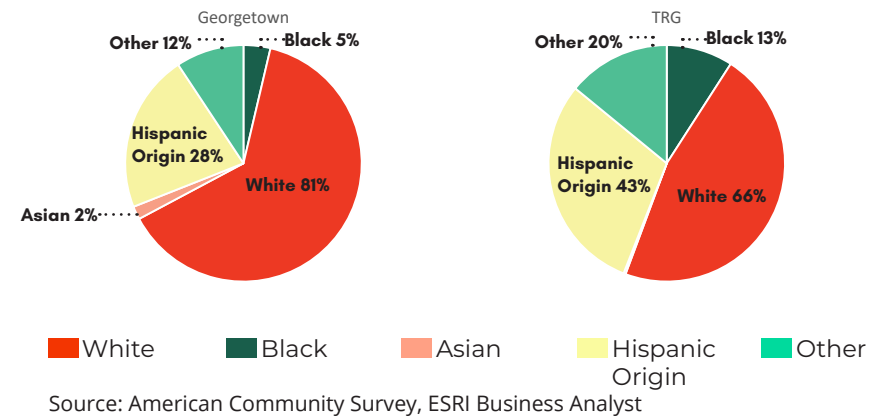
Who calls TRG home?

Stakeholders and residents are familiar with the overall demographic makeup of their city. However, they may be unaware of the unique situation in the TRG neighborhood of Georgetown. This section highlights the current demographic picture of TRG using the City of Georgetown as a counterpoint. The neighborhood profile section is used to create a snapshot of the TRG neighborhood and the City of Georgetown to summarize and compare demographics.

The statistics for the two areas are split into five categories; location, population, income, housing and education, and employment (which are combined).

TRG is a Diverse Neighborhood

Figure 2: Demographic Profile



POPULATION AND INCOME

The TRG neighborhood is a historic community in Georgetown. The population of this neighborhood is small, accounting for 3% of the overall population of Georgetown, which is 67,176 (2020). TRG is a diverse community with 23% of residents identifying as either black (13%) or other (20%). The majority of residents, approximately 66%, identify as white, as shown in Figure 2, with 43% claiming Hispanic origin. Because residents can identify their Hispanic origin, and choose a race category, the charts in Figure 1 add up to more than 100%. The average age in TRG is exactly a decade younger than the average age of the City of Georgetown at 35 years old, as seen in Table 1. The City conducted survey revealed that 58% of participants have lived in TRG for over 20 years, with 26% living there 30 years or more.

The median household income of the TRG study area is \$27,438, which is \$51,576 lower than the median household income of the City of Georgetown. Lower incomes directly contribute to the higher poverty rate in the TRG neighborhood, 14.2%, compared to 6.3% for the City of Georgetown. The difference translates into approximately 3 in 20 residents living in poverty in TRG to 1 in 20 in poverty in Georgetown.



IN TRG ...

Figure 3: Household Size

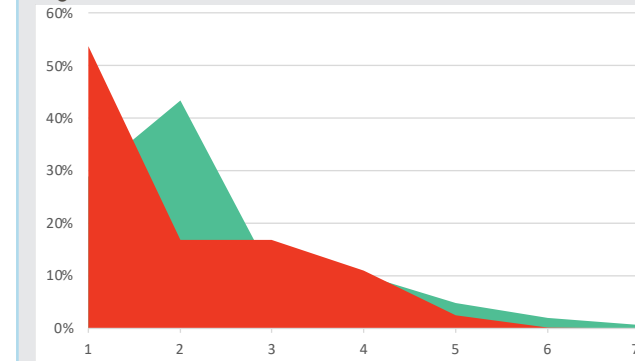


Figure 4: Rent Distribution

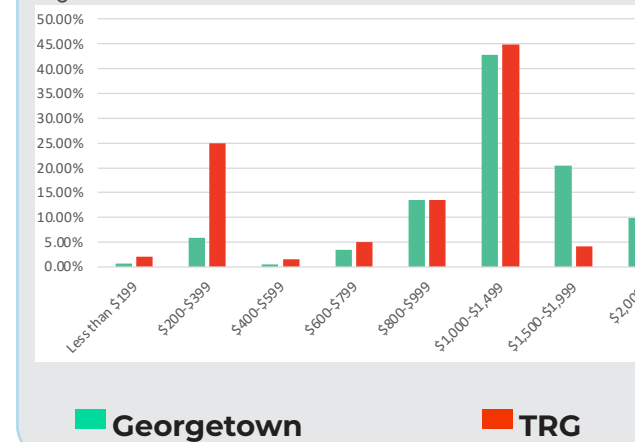


Table 1: Demographic Summary

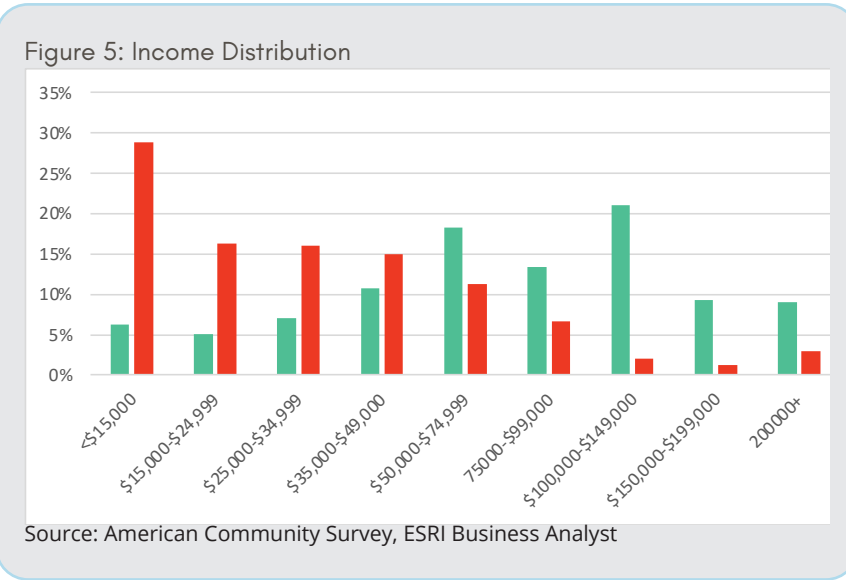
Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census

Demographic Category	City of Georgetown	TRG
Location Characteristics		
Square Miles	60	.05
Acres	38,400	32
Population Characteristics		
Total Population (2000)	30,378	2,093
Total Population (2010)	47,400	2,201
Total Population (2020)	67,176	2,317
Total Households	27,129	859
Median Age	45	35
Below 18 Years of Age	20%	19.2%
Above 65 Years of Age	27%	22.5%
Average Household Size	2.8	2.15
Income		
Median Household Income	\$79,014	\$27,438
Average Household Income	\$103,180	\$44,891
Poverty Rate	6.3%	14.4%
Housing		
Median Homeowner Property Value	\$291,340	\$133,796
Average Household Rent	\$1,332	\$861
Renters paying more than 30% of income in rent	50%	54.3%
Renters paying more than 50% of income in rent	20%	12.6%
Ownership Rate	75%	27.20%
Vacancy Rate	6%	8.8%
Access to Internet	90%	65%
Education and Employment		
At least High School Diploma	94%	72.7%
At least Bachelor's Degree	42%	12.6%
At least Graduate/ Professional Degree	17%	4.9%
Unemployment Rate	8%	7.6%

Figure 5 shows the difference in incomes between residents in the Georgetown neighborhood and the City of Georgetown. 45% of residents in the study area make less than \$25,000 a year, compared to 11% of residents in the City of Georgetown. Over 50% of residents in TRG spend more than 30% of income on rent, compared to 50% in the City of Georgetown. The percentage of rent-burdened households in TRG is higher than in the City of Georgetown, even though the average rent is 35% lower than the average rent in Georgetown. This difference is likely due to the lower incomes in TRG compared to the City of Georgetown.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Approximately 73% of residents in the TRG neighborhood attained a high school diploma compared to 94% of residents for the City of Georgetown. The percentage of residents who achieved a bachelor's degree in the TRG neighborhood is 13% compared to 42% for the City. The unemployment rate of TRG and the City of Georgetown are both 8%.



POPULATION KEY FACTS

13 of 100 residents have at least a bachelor's degree in TRG, compared to roughly 43 of 100 for the City of Georgetown.

Residents in TRG are more likely to be rent-burdened compared to the rest of Georgetown.

Median household income in TRG is 34% less than the median household income for the City of Georgetown.

The poverty rate in the study area is approximately double the rate of the City of Georgetown.



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