

APPENDIX G: thinkEAST MASTER PLAN

thinkEAST

AN URBAN CREATIVE DISTRICT
DESIGNED FOR EQUITABLE ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT IN EAST AUSTIN

COMMUNITY VISION & MASTERPLAN
JANUARY 2016

pedestrian
connection

mercado

amphitheater

riparian crossing

01 | CONTEXT + GOALS

02 | PROJECT LOCATION

03 | SITE HISTORY + EAST AUSTIN

04 | ENGAGEMENT STORY

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THINKEAST COMMUNITY VISION & MASTERPLAN

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**FIGURE 2.2 THINKEAST
LAND USE & FLOOD
ZONES**

CONNECTIVITY

According to the BBC Research & Consulting 2014 Comprehensive Housing Market Study, residents of the 78721 ZIP code surrounding thinkEAST spend an average of \$668 each month on transportation alone.⁹ While statistics do not tell the whole story, this figure implies that residents of 7872 need to travel far to get to work and that mass transit options are not properly serving the needs of these residents.

Because the industrial facilities operated for over 40 years, thinkEAST and the rest of the tank farm properties--over 50 acres of the city's urban core—are left unconnected to fabric of the city. The existing infrastructure limits interconnectivity within the Govalle-Johnston Terrace neighborhood. Specifically, the Southern Pacific railroad track disconnects the Govalle neighborhood from the Johnston Terrace neighborhood. Few roads currently exist in the immediate area where thinkEAST is proposed, forcing people to take longer routes than necessary and, in many cases, routes that are unsafe.

LA LOMA

La Loma (or the Place Sometimes Called Hungry Hill) is a documentary produced as a part of the Living Charette to demonstrate the lack of connectivity in this part of

town. Following two Eastside Memorial High students, the documentary traces the improvised footpaths that have been taken by their parents and other members of the neighborhood for decades. Members of the community have few options, as the main boulevard is a major arterial street and no pedestrian pathway nor bus service is offered.

JAIN LANE IMPROVEMENTS

Jain Lane is an unfinished neighborhood collector road through the planned thinkEAST community. The road has been on the City of Austin's Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) list since 1986, yet needed City investment is yet to have taken place. If the road is finally completed by the city, and an at-grade crossing is installed on the railroad track, it would connect the neighborhoods north of the railroad to amenities south of the tracks. This Masterplan envisions Jain Lane as a complete street that includes wide sidewalks, bike lanes, and that encourages interaction between all members of the community.

ARTS AT THE CENTER

More than half of the events at the Living Charrette were designed and led by artists. Placing arts and culture at the center of this effort was critical in maximizing engagement from the community and stakeholders. The most effective approaches found a remarkable balance between the creation of a new high-quality work of art with deep and meaningful involvement from the neighborhood.

Deep collaborations between artists and residents created unique opportunities to bring unlikely and uncommon groups of people together to address concerns in a community. The issues and aspirations of both artists and residents inspired the best examples of this approach, including:

LA LOMA... OR THE PLACE SOMETIMES CALLED THE HUNGRY HILL

La Loma is a documentary film made by a noted filmmaker and two local high school students that share their stories of just walking to school each day in this community. The film brought attention to the plight of children who have to climb under railroad cars to get to school. This work sparked front-page coverage in the local paper and months of meetings by city and school officials to develop a solution to this 50-year old problem.

TREES OF GOVALLE

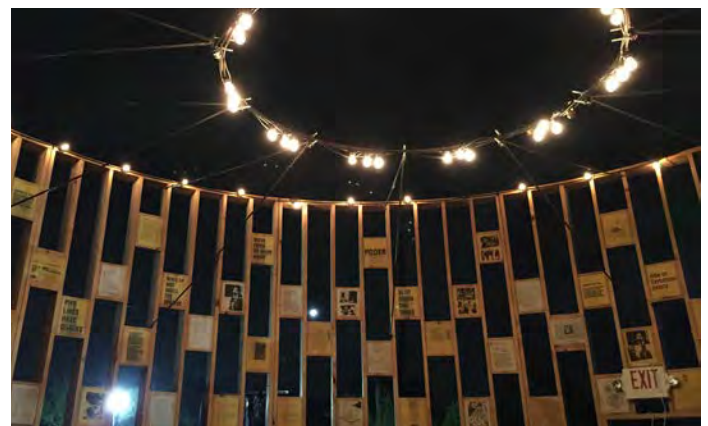
Austin's Forklift Danceworks built a performance in the adjacent Govalle Park featuring employees of the City of Austin Urban Forestry Division. The work was inspired by their work caring for Austin's trees and incorporated stories and interviews that showcased the neighborhood's rich history and celebrated some of East Austin's longest-standing families.

GHANA THINKTANK

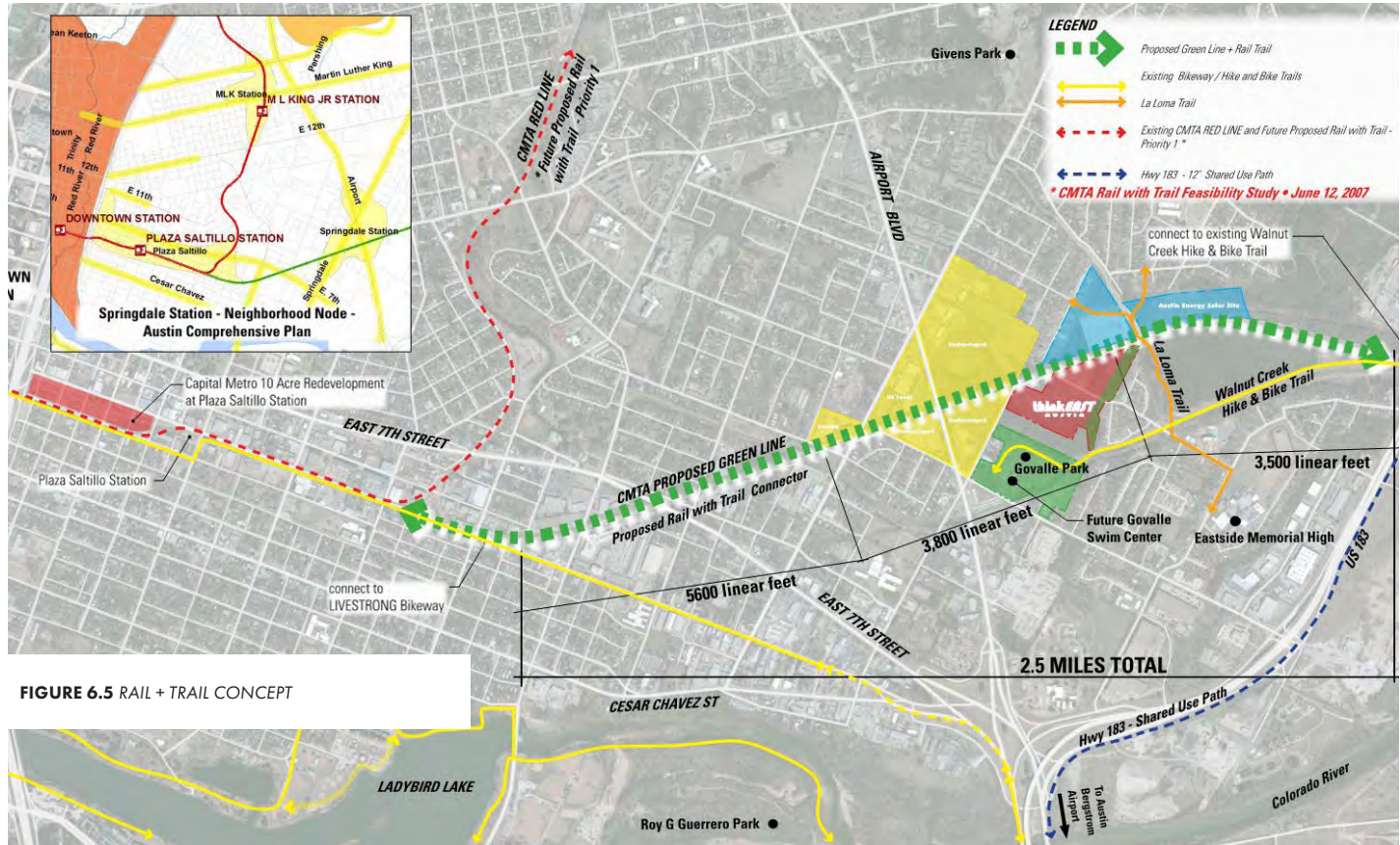
Using a pop-up wooden structure based on the Mexican folding block toy "Tablitas," NYC-based Ghana ThinkTank ran a series of on-the-street events throughout Austin, asking residents to submit their problems related to gentrification to be considered by a global network of think tanks they have set-up in "third-world" countries.

THOUGHTBARN TANK INSTALLATION

East Austin-based design studio Thoughtbarn presented a sculpture evoking the history of the thinkEAST site as a former home for large above-ground gasoline storage tanks. The interior of the sculpture featured documents, images, and video chronicling the incredible (and successful) grassroots effort by neighborhood residents to close the tank farm and clean the site.

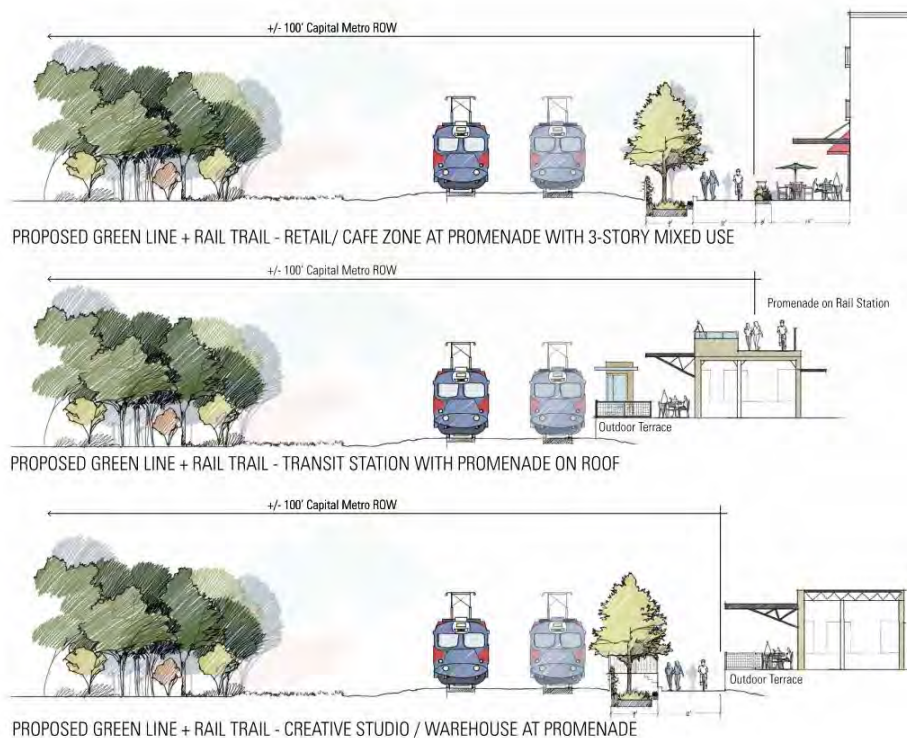


FIGURES (TOP-BOTTOM): (4.14) LA LOMA; (4.15) TREES OF GOVALLE; (4.16) GHANA THINK TANK; (4.17) THOUGHTBARN TANK INSTALLATION



PROPOSED GREEN LINE + RAIL TRAIL

THE SPRINGDALE STATION NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER TO LINK THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER



LA LOMA SITE PLAN

