

October 2020

KUTS Planning Group:

Meetings are still a little tricky, so please accept this email update instead. After two years of planning efforts, work on KUTS implementation is finally underway.

Clay/Water

The Clay/Water intersection has been the focus of phase 1 implementation for KUTS-ClaySouth, where we are trying for three things: the string lights that span Clay St between Voelkel/Parking Garage; artist-designed crosswalks; mural on Water St side of Voelkel Building.

Masonry/Painting crews start on the Voelkel building today. The artists (Hand In Hand - Sarah and Andrew) are set to arrive from FL in November, when they will immerse themselves in Kerrville through interaction and observation to create a concept design. KPUB is on track to install the string lights by June 2021. The City will be installing crosswalks, which will be artist-designed with the Voelkel mural in mind.

Clay/Jefferson

The City intends street work on Jefferson in support of HEB development, and has initiated a traffic engineering study to assess feasibility for angled street parking (which already occurs on other sections of Jefferson) and a 4-way stop. Because of this and KPUB's enthusiasm for KUTS, we will be targeting this intersection with the same three pieces at the same time as Clay/Water. We have a concept and an artist for a mural on the Napa building, and Napa's blessing. It's a cool concept - looking forward to sharing when we finalize a contract with the muralist.

Clay/Schreiner

It sounds like the City will not be moving forward on the proposed roundabout any time soon, mostly due to costs, which have been re-prioritized due to COVID. This roundabout was a critical feature to bring pedestrians up Clay to McFarland, then over to Doyle.

The City is moving forward with the Neighborhood Development Plan for Doyle, which will include resurfacing McFarland and adding sidewalks and I think a bike lane. With the roundabout on hold, it is unsafe to direct ClaySouth users north of Schreiner St. However, with proposed traffic calming improvements on Jefferson, and existing controlled intersections across Schreiner St. at Hays St, an alternative route will probably be more desirable.

Doyle

KUTS interest in Doyle is a new development since the last KUTS mtgs. For several reasons. Pint & Plow has donated hot food there weekly since April, as part of their Wednesday food distribution efforts. Big Seed participant Alyson Amestoy received a grant to create a film interview archive for that neighborhood, documenting stories before they're lost forever. A collaborative of nonprofits secured a massive grant for the community center (Hope for Health) which has created new community programming and will begin renovations this year. The City is creating its first ever "neighborhood plan" with Doyle residents, and has already started pumping energy there. It's also, arguably, the culturally and historically richest area in town.

Discussions with Doyle Community Center Board members and volunteers about a possible KUTS trail in Doyle are in progress. The KUTS-Doyle concept would connect all 7 of the historic "juke joints" in the neighborhood (Famous Door, The Cabin, The Dream, Ella Phelps, Pleasure Garden, Green Door, Pruneda's). The idea has been received well.

A draft trail location has been mapped out, using the City's plans for street/sidewalk improvements, and will be presented to the Community Center Board later this month. The conceptual idea is to install KUTS designed markers at each juke joint site, with a purple thermoplastic stripe painted on the street/sidewalk connecting all the sites. If the Doyle Community Center Board supports the concept, we will move forward with finalizing the route through the City, and work with the neighborhood to develop content for the KUTS markers.

We already have a uniform design for KUTS markers as part of the OUTPOSTS contract, and we are working on a bid for fabrication and installation. Thanks to support from KPUB, and also other sources, I'm confident that we can fund all three projects without additional fundraising: Clay/Water; Clay/Jefferson; and KUTS-Doyle.

ClaySouth

As for implementing remaining parts of the ClaySouth design concept. The roundabout, the Heritage Center development, and the Parking Garage renovation were key pieces of ClaySouth, and it's connectivity to Doyle and the River Trail. With all three projects in limbo, it makes sense to give time for ClaySouth design to adapt. The planned work for the Water and Jefferson intersections is a great start.

I am confident and hopeful that we'll get back on track eventually, especially with a much improved River Trail connection behind the library - we just don't know when that will be.

In the meantime, I think we can use these three KUTS projects as a "big reveal" for the KUTS program, coordinated to be completed by June 2021. Demonstrating our ability to incorporate public art, improved public safety, and history using design to engage a variety of users in a meaningful way will only give additional momentum to keep progressing. So perhaps after

that (summer 2021), we'll have a clearer heading on another fundraising campaign and ideas on what to do next, based on community desire and need.

Feel free to share any thoughts, ideas, or questions and I'll do my best to respond.

Jeremy