

TEXAS HISTORIC BRIDGES

SPECIAL EDITION 2015



Open houses in Bastrop, Victoria (top right) and Waco.

PROJECT MISSION STATEMENT:

Identify ways to retain historic truss bridges as viable assets open to vehicular traffic or repurposed for new uses.

MISSED THE OPEN HOUSE?

You can attend virtually!

[Online Open House](#)

September 2015

CLICK [HERE](#)

- ~ See the open house display boards
- ~ View an interactive map of truss bridges
- ~ Vote on Bridge Solutions
- ~ Share Your Success Story
- ~ Find out what happens next

Your input will guide our bridge mitigation and management planning efforts. Take the online survey now!

THC and TxDOT will be hosting webinars about historic truss bridges in early October. Stay tuned for details.



This Historic Truss Bridge Open House in Abilene drew participants from six counties.

TRUSS BRIDGE FANS TRAVEL FAR TO SHARE STORIES, PLAN AND ENGAGE

Texans from 28 counties and backgrounds as varied as the general public to the U.S. Congress traveled to the four open houses this summer. Attendees learned about the bridges and began a conversation about management and preservation options. Each year, more of these historic bridges are lost due to changing traffic needs or deterioration. In response, TxDOT and its partners at the Texas Historical Commission (THC) and the Historic Bridge Foundation (HBF) are developing a management plan to guide decisions on these bridges for future generations.

Hosted in the communities of Abilene, Bastrop, Victoria and Waco, these open houses featured interactive exhibits and opportunities to chat about challenges the bridges face. Staff members from TxDOT, the THC and HBF were on hand to answer questions and provide guidance to local residents interested in preserving the bridges. As a result of the discussions, participants voted on ways to manage deteriorating truss bridges. Finally, participants shared their stories and photos of their favorite truss bridges to be archived with local history collections.

Of all the participants statewide, Denton County Historical Commission representatives traveled the farthest (230 miles) to attend the Bastrop open house! Other attendees included mayors, county judges, county commissioners, the media, a state representative, and staff for a U.S. Congressman. If you missed the open house nearest you, don't worry! In September, TxDOT will be posting an online version at www.txdot.gov and the THC will be hosting a webinar in early October.



GET INVOLVED: STAY CONNECTED!

THC summer interns, Sarah Cuk (University of Texas-Austin) and Ben Jones (Rice University) posted stories, photographs, and drawings of Texas' historic bridges on THC's [website](#). Find a timeline of bridges across Texas, an interactive photograph of a metal truss bridge, and learn about truss builders and more. Thank you to Sarah and Ben for their work to tell the story of Texas' engineering heritage!

Truss Bridges Timeline

- **1884-1887.** State legislation provides for county bond funding, leading many counties to build their first metal truss spans.
- **1895-1910.** The Pratt truss design emerges as the predominant bridge type on Texas roads for spans under 150 feet.
- **1910-1920.** Texas' steel fabricators dramatically reduce bridge construction costs by standardizing steel components for Parker and cambelback trusses.

Join our email list!

Email TxDOT's environmental consultant Maryellen Russo to start receiving project updates to your inbox!



TxDOT, in partnership with Texas Historical Commission and Historic Bridge Foundation, conducted open houses this summer to continue the conversation with the public about management and preservation options for historic metal truss bridges. One of the exhibits of the open houses invited participants to vote on the best solutions for deteriorating truss bridges. Results show overwhelming support for bike/pedestrian access if the bridge can remain at its current location. If the bridge must be moved, results show fairly even support for moving it to a public park or to a hike and bike trail.

