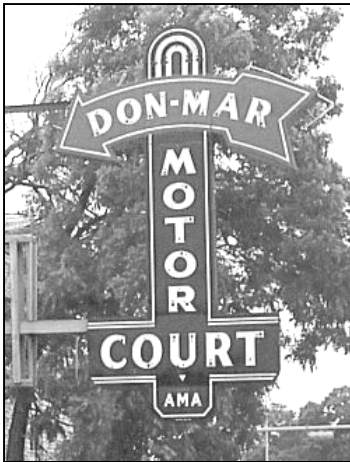
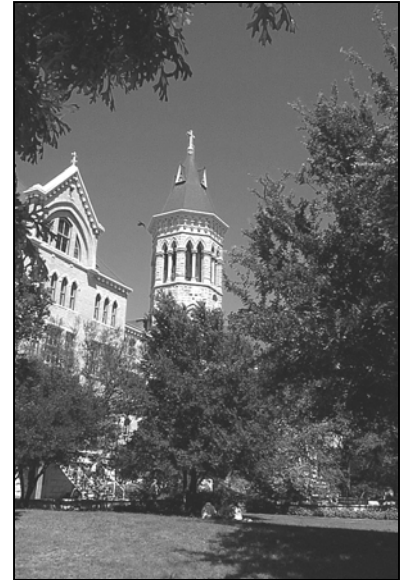


# Greater South River City Combined Neighborhood Plan

**PLAN ADOPTED:** September 29, 2005

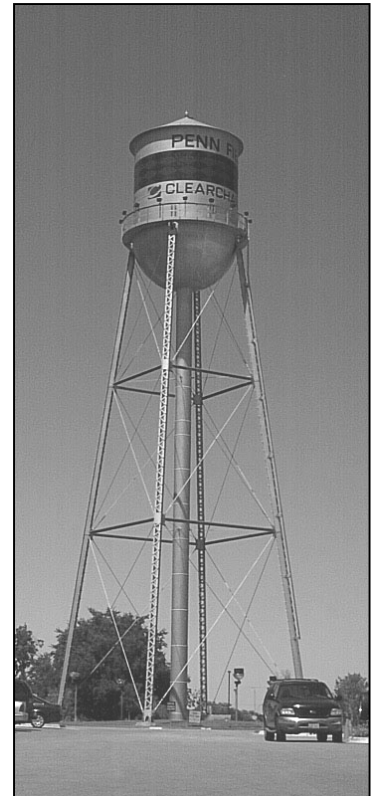
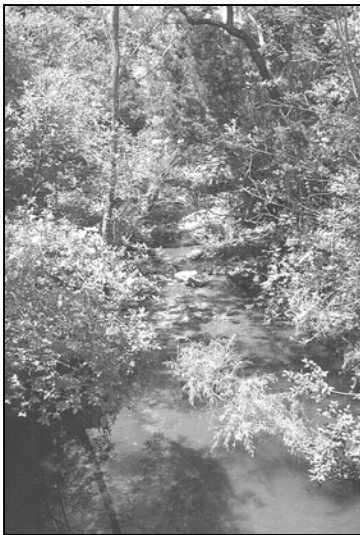
This Neighborhood Plan has been amended by City Council. These amendments may include text changes or Future Land Use Map (FLUM) changes. Please refer to the Ordinance Chart on the planning area webpage for more information on amendments. Planning and Development Review staff updates the Ordinance Chart on a regular basis; however, newly adopted amendments may not be reflected on the chart.





**The Greater South  
River City  
Combined  
Neighborhood  
Plan**

**South River City  
&  
St. Edward's Neighborhoods**



**September 2005**



# **The Greater South River City Combined Neighborhood Plan**

South River City and St. Edward's Neighborhood  
Planning Areas



An Amendment to the City of Austin's Comprehensive  
Plan

The Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 5  
Section 22  
Exhibit

September 29, 2005

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## CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Will Wynn  
Mayor Pro Tem Danny Thomas

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Jennifer Kim  
Betty Dunkerley  
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## NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

Alice Glasco, Director

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By adopting the plan, the City Council demonstrates the City's commitment to the implementation of the plan.

***However, approval of the plan does not legally obligate the City to implement any particular action item, nor does adoption of the plan begin the implementation of any item.***

The implementation of every action item will require separate and specific actions by the neighborhood, the City and by other agencies. The Neighborhood Plan will be supported and implemented by:

- City Boards, Commissions and Staff
- City Departmental Budget
- Capital Improvement Projects
- Other Agencies and Organizations
- Direct Neighborhood Action



# Acknowledgements

The following volunteers served as members of the Advisory Committee and dedicated countless hours to the development of this plan. Without their deep, tireless commitment to the vitality of their neighborhood, this plan would not have been possible:

Sherri Ancipink  
Danette Chimenti  
John Donisi  
Bill Fagelson  
Terry Franz  
Teresa Griffin  
Susan Helgren  
Blair Helgren  
Kenny Hilbig  
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Sam Martin  
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Elloa Mathews  
Garret Nick  
David Swann  
J. Sage White

The Advisory Committee would like to thank everyone in the neighborhood who assisted in the preparation of the plan. The committee would especially like to thank those people who walked the neighborhood to distribute information, performed fieldwork and encouraged their fellow neighbors and local business persons to participate.

The following organizations and institutions made significant contributions to the creation of this plan:

Grace United Methodist Church  
South River City Citizens Neighborhood Association\*  
St. Edward's University  
Travis High School

\*To find current contact information for the neighborhood association within the planning area, contact the Public Information Office at 974-2220 or go to [www.cityofaustin.org](http://www.cityofaustin.org) (select "Community Registry" under the Select a Service pull-down menu.)

# City Staff Acknowledgements

## **Lead Neighborhood Planning Staff were:**

Adam Smith  
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## **Other City Staff who lent assistance and support of this plan include:**

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# Introduction

Just south of Town Lake, across the river from downtown, you will find a community replete with uniqueness, character, sense of place, and passion for home and business. In this community you will find a neighborhood rich with historic homes, a vibrant South Congress Avenue, the natural beauty of the Blunn Creek Preserve, the grandeur of the Main Building at St. Edward's University, and a community of residents and business owners dedicated to making this neighborhood thrive and flourish.



Blunn Creek (NPZD staff)



South Congress Businesses (NPZD photo)

Yet, this neighborhood is like many other communities in the urban core struggling to define itself in an ever-changing City encountering tremendous growth. Residents struggle to maintain the character of their neighborhood against growing redevelopment pressures. South Congress is once again in



transition as rising rents and change in consumer attitudes threaten the very thing that has contributed to the uniqueness of South Austin – small, eclectic, locally-owned businesses. The banks of Blunn Creek – a creek with the largest amount of preserved riparian area of any urban creek in Austin – have been eroding in recent years due to increased upstream development and inadequate detention controls.

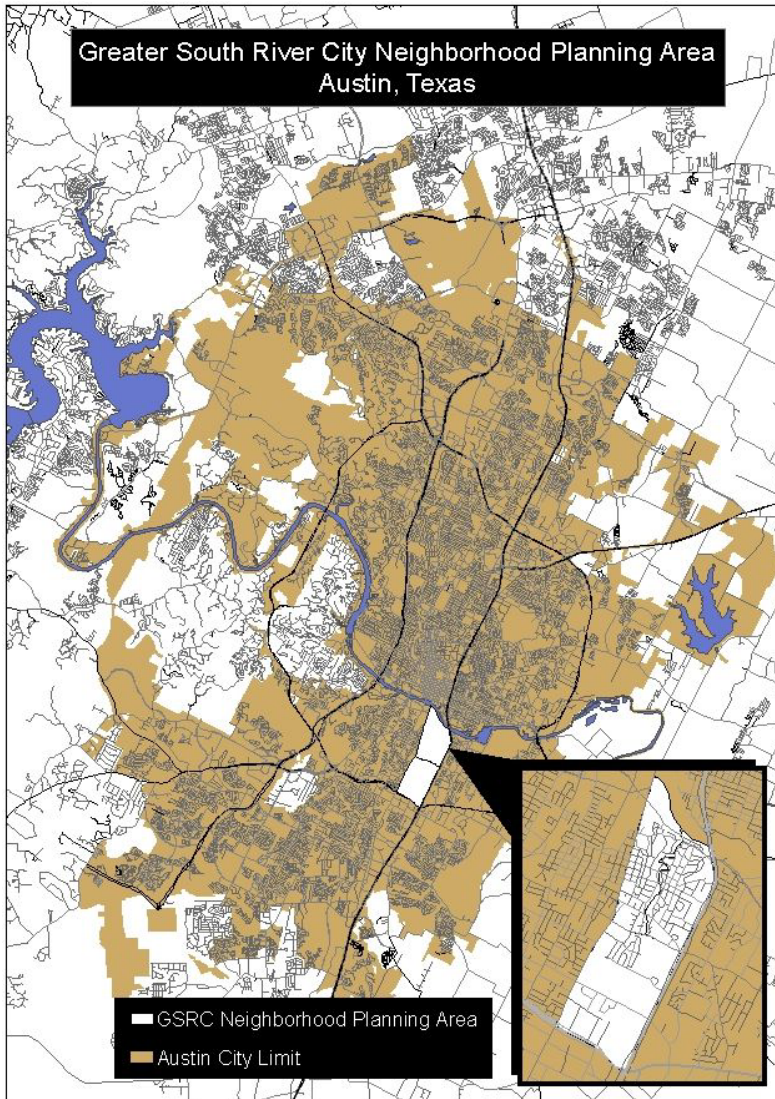


FIGURE 1.1: Greater South River City Neighborhood

The Greater South River City Neighborhood Planning Area is located just south of Town Lake in the heart of central Austin. The planning area is approximately 1,500 acres and represents 3% of the Urban Core and less than 1% of the total area of the City of Austin.

For well over 1½ years, the City’s neighborhood planning staff worked with stakeholders who lived, worked, or owned property in the neighborhood – including residents, business owners and representatives from institutions – in developing a plan for how the neighborhood will grow into the future.

The Greater South River City (GSRC) Combined Neighborhood planning process was initiated on November 6, 2003 by City Council resolution and completed on September X, 2005.

GSRC is comprised of two neighborhood planning areas: South River City and St. Edwards. The boundaries of the combined planning area are Town Lake on the north, Interstate Highway 35 South on the east, Ben White Boulevard on the south and South Congress on the west. Both areas were planned and reviewed as one unit.

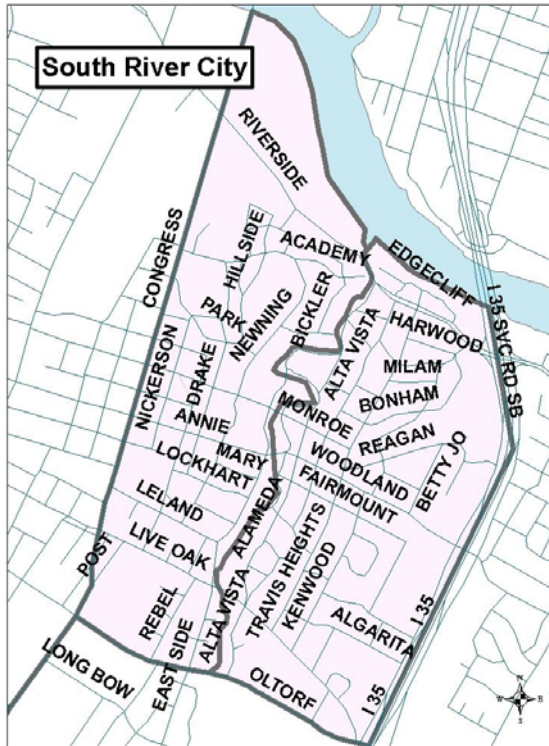


FIGURE 1.2: South River City Neighborhood

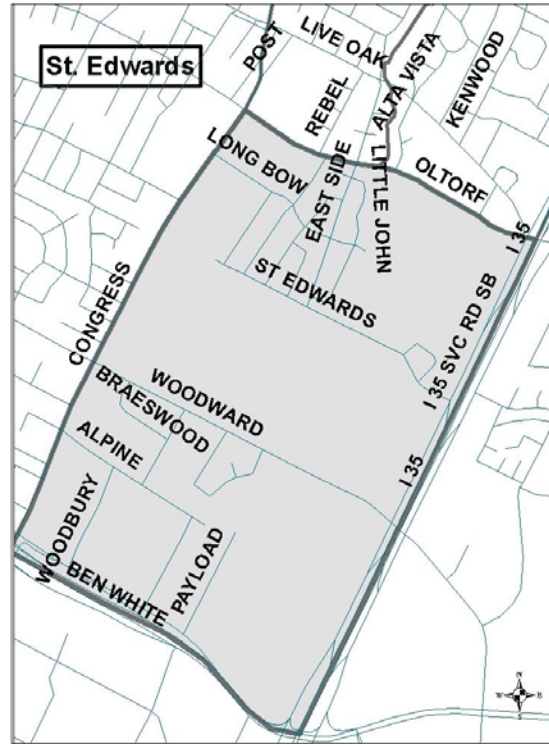


FIGURE 1.3: St. Edward's Neighborhood

Three associations represent GSRC: South River City Citizens (SRCC), the South Austin Commercial Alliance (SACA) and the Avenue Merchants.

The GSRC plan focuses on six areas: land use, transportation, urban design, zoning, creeks and the environment, and parks and open space. Each component with the exception of zoning is described in greater detail in this document. The rezonings were processed in conjunction with the neighborhood plan and are reflected in a separate ordinance.

# Vision and Goals

The vision describes how the community ought to grow and what it should look like in the near and distant future.

The goals are general statements that encapsulate the community's desired outcome of the neighborhood plan. In a subsequent chapter of this plan, the goals are described in greater detail through a series of objectives and recommendation. The plan's objectives and action items are measurable and state which department or primary party is responsible for implementing a recommendation.

## **Vision**

As responsible trustees, preserve, protect, and improve the quality and diversity of residential life in the Greater South River City neighborhood and support the success of institutions and locally owned businesses.

## **Goals**

1. Maintain the historic fabric and respect the established neighborhood character and natural assets.
2. Identify and develop criteria for the interface between residences and commercial development.
3. Identify and develop criteria for density that result in a net benefit to the neighborhood.
4. Enhance the transportation network to allow residents to walk, bike, roll, ride, and drive safely.
5. Protect and enhance creeks, greenbelts and watershed systems.
6. Preserve and enhance the natural beauty, open spaces, and air quality of the neighborhood.
7. Improve safety and reduce crime.
8. Foster a locale where each person has the greatest possible opportunity to pursue individual, family and community goals—whether academic, economic, cultural, artistic, athletic, recreational, or spiritual.

# Top Ten Planning Priorities

The top ten planning priorities were determined by results from the final survey. See Appendix B for a complete record of the final survey results.

1. New construction and remodeling should be built in proportion to surrounding homes. This includes limiting height, massing, and maintaining appropriate setbacks.
2. Encourage a bicycle and pedestrian friendly neighborhood.
3. Limit industrial activities in the neighborhood to protect the creeks, environment, and nearby homes.
4. Protect and clean the creeks in the neighborhood.
5. Minimize impact on residential areas by providing adequate parking, landscaping, and other buffers against noise, lighting, and garbage.
6. Protect and enhance the Blunn Creek Greenbelt.
7. Protect historic resources such as buildings, bridges, and gateways.
8. Make the neighborhood a safer place to live with less crime.
9. Make the shopping centers at the corner of Congress Avenue and Oltorf Street more walkable neighborhood centers.
10. Monitor for the spread of oak wilt and implement additional strategies as needed.

# Plan Development Process

## Introduction

An open, inclusive, accommodating, and fair process will lead to a plan that is in large part, supported by the community and as a result, more sustainable. The Advisory Committee and staff strove to create an atmosphere that welcomed every stakeholder, regardless of their interest in the plan, to participate in the process. A constant effort was made to structure the decision-making process to be as democratic and representative as possible.

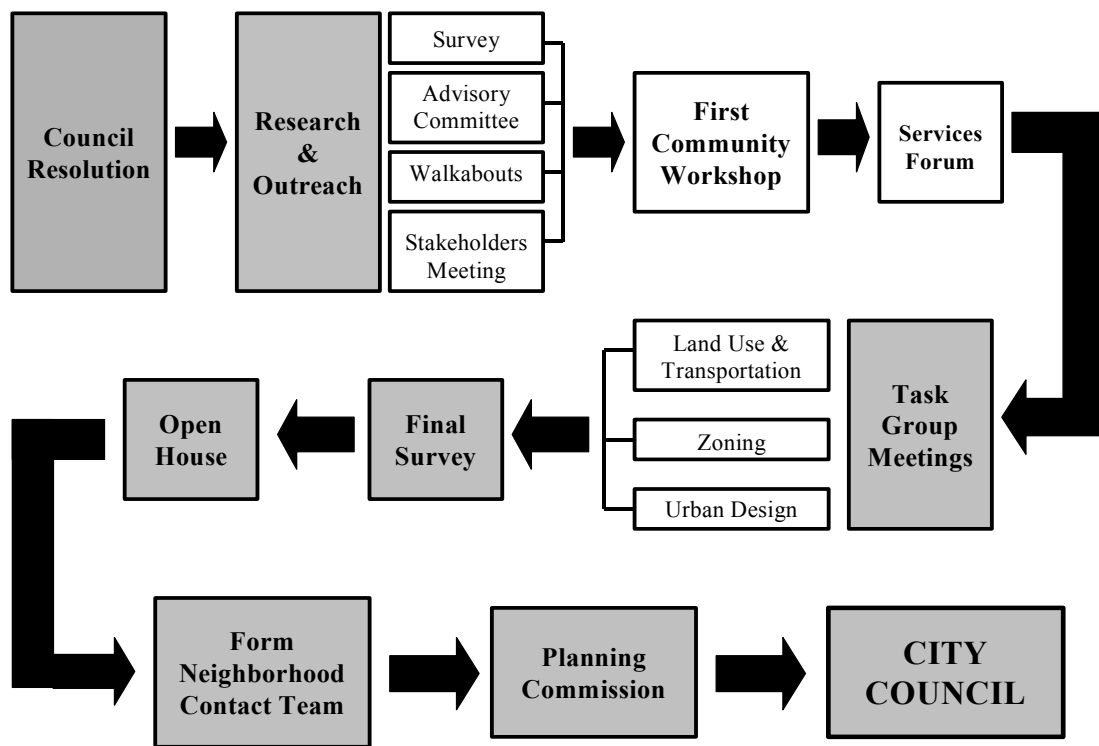


FIGURE 4.1: Greater South River City neighborhood planning process 11/03 – 10/05

## Council Resolution

City Council initiated the Greater South River City neighborhood planning process November 6, 2003.

# Research & Outreach

## Notification

*Date conducted: Prior to every neighborhood planning meeting*

Critical to the success of any neighborhood planning effort is staff and neighborhood stakeholders working together in getting the word out. The Advisory Committee and staff used the following methods to notify stakeholders of upcoming meetings:

- *Postcards* – mailed to commercial property owners and people on interest list without e-mail prior to each land use and zoning meeting.
- *Letters* – individualized letters were mailed to every property owner prior to each zoning task group meeting whose property was being recommended for a rezoning.
- *Door-to-door* – members of the Advisory Committee went door-to-door to many of the businesses, churches, and other institutions in the neighborhood with flyers notifying owners about the First Community Workshop. Staff conducted more than five door-to-door ventures targeting those businesses whose land use and/or zoning are being recommended for some sort of change.
- *Yard Signs* – Area coordinators with the South River City Citizens Neighborhood Association posted signs in their yards prior to every task group meeting.
- *Website* – staff maintained a Greater South River City website that was updated frequently and listed the dates and locations of upcoming meetings. SRCC also posted information about the planning process on their own website.
- *Newsletter* – SRCC posting meeting information and updates on the planning process in their newsletter.
- *Television* – News 8 Austin did a piece on the Neighborhood Walkabouts (see below) as part of their “In the Neighborhood” series.

## Initial Survey

*Dates conducted: November 2003 – April 2004*

An initial survey was distributed to residents along with their SRCC newsletter in late November 2003. The survey was made available online several months later. The results of the initial survey can be found in Appendix B.

## Advisory Committee

*Date initiated: February 23, 2004*

The Advisory Committee was formed out of an interest on behalf of the residents to remain involved and engaged throughout the process and staff's

desire to gather stakeholder input on procedural issues and community outreach strategies. The Advisory Committee was open to anyone interested in getting more involved in the process, but regular attendees included representatives from SRCC, the Avenue Merchants Association, and St. Edward's. The Advisory Committee met on an as needed basis throughout the planning process.

### Walkabouts

*Date of first walkabout: March 23, 2004*

*Date of last walkabout: February 15, 2005*

*Total number of walkabouts: 12*

Shortly after the Advisory Committee began meeting, “walkabouts” were arranged with the Area Coordinators as a way for staff to learn more about the neighborhood from those who live and work there. The walkabouts also served as a great way for staff and residents to get to know one another. Staff charged the Area Coordinators with notifying the residents in their area, gathering input from their neighbors and determining the route. See Appendix for summaries of the walkabouts.



Strolling along Blunn Creek (NPZD photo)

## Stakeholders Meetings

*Dates conducted: April 7 & 10, 2004*

The purpose of the Stakeholders Meetings was to inform the leaders within the neighborhood of the planning process so that they may serve as liaisons to the community. The meetings were open to anyone who lived, worked or owned property in the neighborhood, but were directed primarily to members of the Advisory Committee, representatives of institutions and major property owners.

## First Community Workshop

*Date conducted: May 15, 2004*

The purpose of the workshop was to:

- 1) Orient neighborhood stakeholders on what neighborhood planning is and the process by which the plan will be developed
- 2) Conduct a small group activity with stakeholders to find out what they feel are the strengths and weaknesses of the neighborhood. The results of this activity served as a foundation for future task group meetings and plan recommendations.



Small Group Activity at the First Community Workshop (NPZD photo)

## Services Forum

*Date conducted: June 16, 2004*

The Services Forum was an opportunity for stakeholders to ask representatives from various City departments and outside agencies their service related questions. The concerns expressed at the Services Forum are typically beyond



the scope of the neighborhood plan. Representation at the Services Forum included the City of Austin’s Police, Fire, and Watershed Protection Departments, Austin Energy’s Energy Conservation division and the Texas Department of Transportation.

## Task Group Meetings

The majority of the plan’s recommendations were developed at a series of task group meetings that focused on land use, transportation, zoning and urban design.

The neighborhood was divided into three areas in order to focus discussions, to allow adequate time to discuss area-specific issues, and to make the meetings more relevant for those people interested only in certain areas of the neighborhood. At least one meeting was held for each area for each plan component.

<b>Plan Component</b>	<b>Dates conducted</b>	<b>Number of meetings</b>
<b>Land Use &amp; Transportation</b>	July 14, 2004 – October 26, 2004	7
<b>Zoning</b>	November 9, 2004 – April 6, 2005	7
<b>Infill Options &amp; Urban Design</b>	March 2, 2005 – April 6, 2005	3

## Final Survey

*Date conducted: June 3, 2005 – July 8, 2005*

The recommendations from the Task Group Meetings were compiled and distributed to the neighborhood stakeholders for their comment. Stakeholders were also asked to rank their planning priorities. Neighborhood Planning staff incorporated changes to the draft neighborhood plan and calculated the neighborhood’s top ten planning priorities based on responses to the survey. The results of the final survey can be found in Appendix B.

## Open House

*Date conducted: June 22, 2005*

The draft Greater South River City Combined Neighborhood Plan was presented to the neighborhood for their review and comments.

## Formation of Neighborhood Plan Contact Team

*Date conducted: July 13, 2005*

The Greater South River City Neighborhood Plan Contact Team (NPCT) will act as stewards of their neighborhood plan. The NPCT is comprised of representatives from various interests including homeowners, tenants, and business owners. Upon adoption of the neighborhood plan by City Council, the roles and responsibilities of the NPCT will be to: 1) work toward implementing the plan's recommendations; 2) take positions on proposed plan amendments; and, 3) initiate plan amendments.

## Plan Approval Process

### Planning Commission

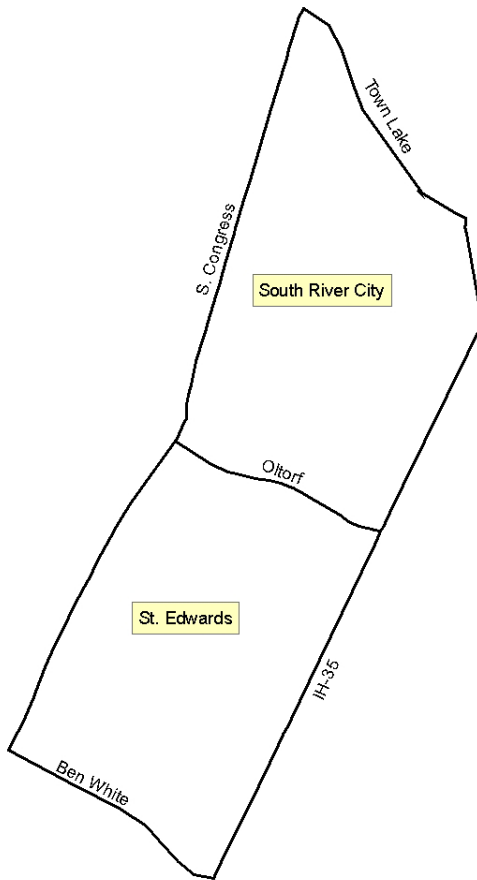
The Planning Commission recommended approval of the neighborhood plan with amendments on September 13, 2005.

### City Council

City Council adopted the Greater South River City Combined Neighborhood Plan on September 29, 2005 with consideration of contested cases to take place at a later date.

# Neighborhood Profile

## Introduction



### **Greater South River City Combined Neighborhood Planning Area**

**Neighborhoods:** South River City & St. Edward's

**Boundaries:** N – Town Lake; S – Ben White; W – S. Congress; E – IH-35

**Size:** Approximately 1,500 acres (each neighborhood is approximately 750 acres)

**Population:** Approximately 10,300

**Associations:** Avenue Merchants Association, South Austin Commercial Alliance, South River City Citizens

**Places of note:** Austin American-Statesman, Continental Club, Blunn Creek Greenbelt & Preserve, St. Edward's University, Penn Field & the Fairview Park, Travis Heights, & Sherwood Oaks Subdivisions

## Population

While the Greater South River City Neighborhood grew modestly between 1990 and 2000, the neighborhood's percentage increase was only one-half that of the City of Austin as a whole and slightly less than the urban core's rate of growth. Between the 1990 and 2000 Census, the City of Austin's population increased by forty-one percent (41%), or nearly 200,000 people. During that same period, Austin's Urban Core grew by twenty-two percent (22%) - an increase of 64,590 people. The Greater South River City Combined Planning Area grew by eighteen percent (18%) - an increase of 1,563 people.

**FIGURE 5.1: Population of GSRC, Urban Core, & City of Austin**

Area	1990	2000	% Change
Austin/San Marcos MSA*	846,227	1,249,763	+48%
Austin	465,622	656,562	+41%
Urban Core**	291,423	356,013	+22%
Greater South River City Combined Planning Area	8,796	10,359	+18%
South River City	5,666	6,380	+13%
St. Edwards	3,130	3,979	+27%

Source: 1990 and 2000 Census

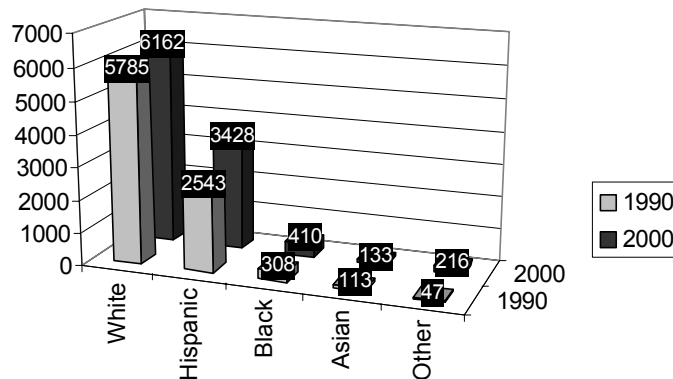
\* The MSA (metropolitan statistical area) includes Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson Counties

\*\* See Appendix for Urban Core Map

## Ethnic Makeup

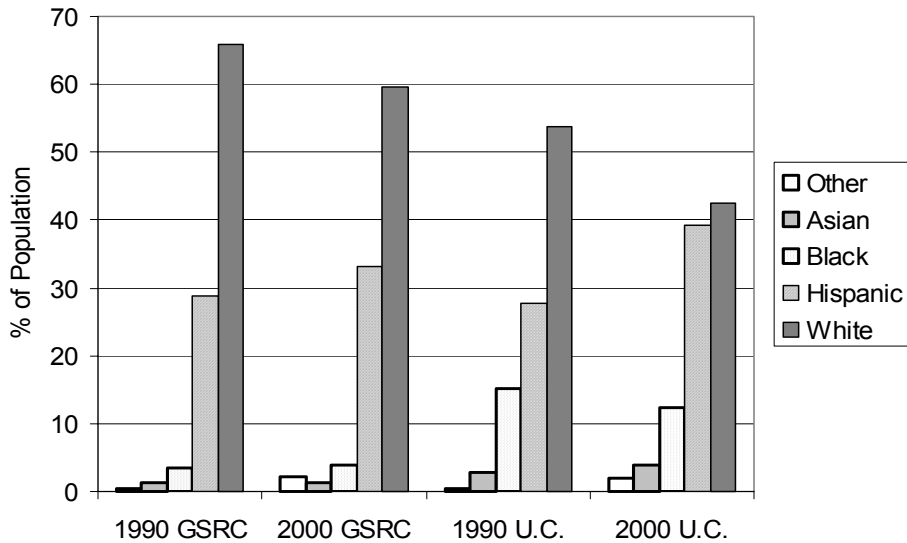
Tables 5.2 & 5.3 show that the trends in the Greater South River City Planning Area and Austin’s Urban Core are similar wherein the overall representation of Whites is decreasing and minorities (Black, Hispanic, Asian and others) are increasing. In the Greater South River City Neighborhood, Hispanic representation increased the most in regards to their percentage of overall representation (4.3 percentage points). However, this is still well below the 11.6 percentage point increase experienced within the Urban Core (see Table 5.3).

**FIGURE 5.2: Ethnic Composition of the GSRC Neighborhood**



Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

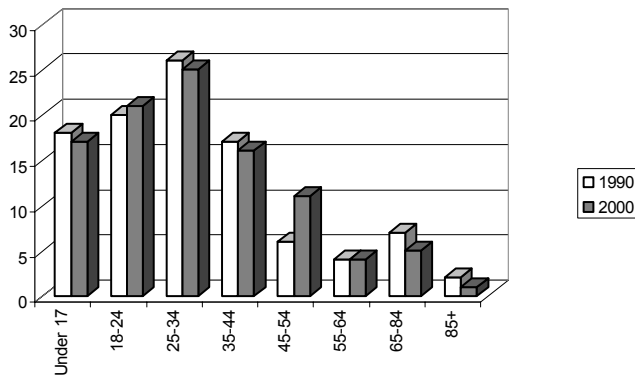
**FIGURE 5.3: Ethnic Breakdown by Percentage of Population with GSRC and the Urban Core**



Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

## Age

**FIGURE 5.4: Age Groups in the GSRC Neighborhood**



Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

The percentage of the overall population within each age group remained relatively consistent from 1990 to 2000. The largest gain occurred in the 45 to 54 age group. This age group increased by 555 people, or 111%, from 1990 to 2000.

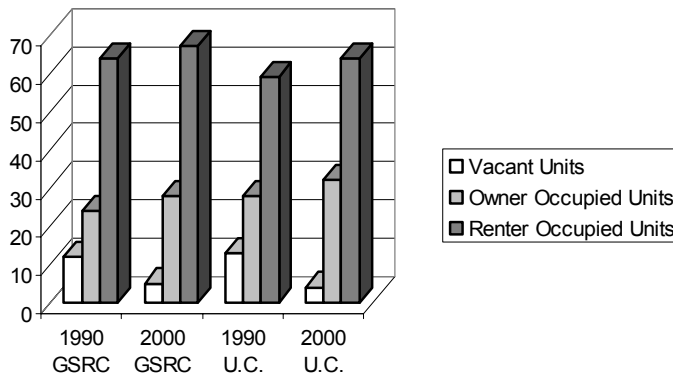
# Housing

**FIGURE 5.5: Changes in Household Occupancy Between 1990 and 2000 in the Greater South River City Combining District**

	GSRC			Urban Core		
	1990	2000	Change (%)	1990	2000	Change (%)
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	4,609	5,010	<b>+9</b>	142,582	150,469	<b>+6</b>
<b>Vacant Units*</b>	580	237	<b>-60</b>	18,853	5,708	<b>-70</b>
<b>Owner Occupied Units*</b>	1,098	1,397	<b>+27</b>	40,209	48,373	<b>+20</b>
<b>Renter Occupied Units*</b>	2,931	3,376	<b>+15</b>	83,520	96,388	<b>+15</b>

Source: 1990 and 2000 Census

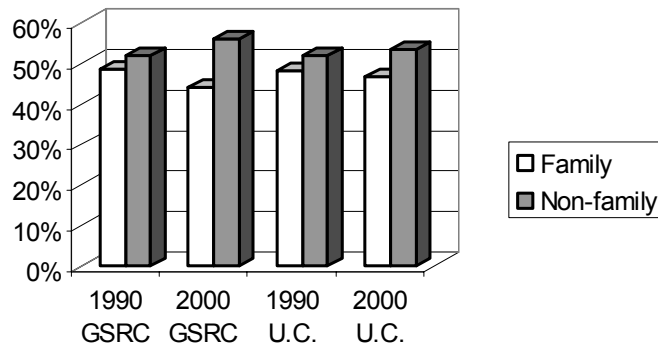
**FIGURE 5.6: Percentage of Occupancy Types in GSRC and the Urban Core**



Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

The percentages of owner- and renter-occupied units within the Greater South River City Combined Planning Area are similar to those of the Urban Core. A significant decrease in the number of vacant units has led to modest increases in both the owner and renter-occupied units.

**FIGURE 5.7: Percentage of Household Types in GSRC and the Urban Core**



Source: 1990 & 2000 Census

Family households are defined as those households comprised of partners, married couples, parent-child or relatives. Non-Family households are defined as those households comprised of singles, roommates or boarders.

While the total number of family households increased by 100, or 7% since 1990, they overall percentage decreased by 4 percentage points from 1990 to 2000. Conversely, the percentage of total households considered non-family, increased by 4 percentage points from 1990 to 2000. The total number of non-family households increased by 27% - well above the Urban Core's increase of 20%.

**FIGURE 5.8: Density in the Greater South River City Combined Planning Area and Urban Core**

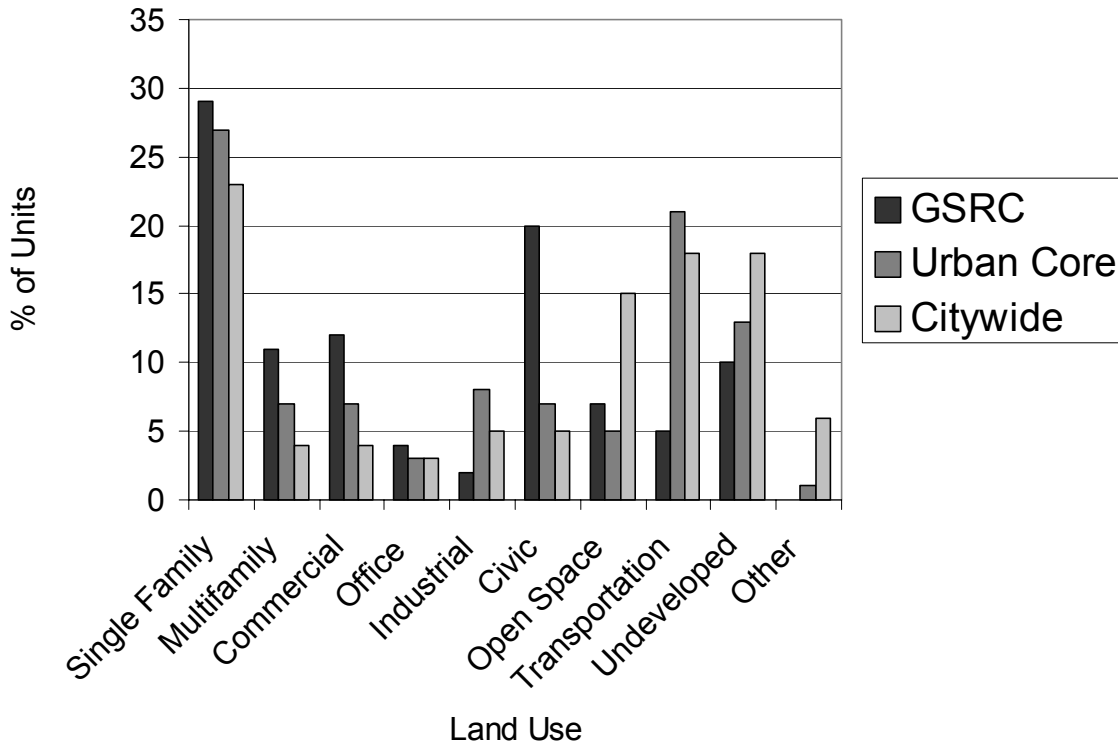
	South River City	St. Edwards	Urban Core
<b>Persons Per Household</b>	1.9	2.2	2.3
<b>Persons Per Acre</b>	8.3	5.4	7.42

Source: 2000 Census

While the number of persons per household in the Greater South River City Combined Planning Area is less than the Urban Core, the South River City Neighborhood Planning Area has more persons per acre than the Urban Core.

## Land Use

**FIGURE 5.9: Current Land Use Comparison Between the GSRC Planning Area, the Urban Core and the City of Austin**



Source: 2000 Land Use Survey, TPSD, City of Austin

The Greater South River City Combined Planning Area is largely a single-family neighborhood. However, it is not much more so than the Urban Core.

St. Edwards University accounts in large part for GSRC having nearly three times more of its land area used for civic land uses than the urban core and citywide averages.



# Planning Area History

## Bridging the Divide

---

There was a time when the development of cities was largely constrained by the physical limitations posed by the lay of the land, availability of water and climate. The growth of Austin south of the Colorado River is demonstrative of the reality of these constraints.

While most of the jobs, agricultural land, and trade routes to ports in Houston were north of the river, the greatest barrier to the expansion of Austin south of the river was the Colorado River itself.

Before the system of dams was built, the Colorado River posed an unpredictable and formidable barrier for southward expansion of the city. Floods periodically ravaged parts of Austin adjacent to the Colorado River. Homes were destroyed and lives were lost. At points the river could be crossed on foot, at others, it could only be crossed by bridge or ferry. Flooding in 1900 killed dozens of people and in 1935 devastated South Congress between Barton Springs Road and the Texas School for the Deaf.



PICA 03987, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library  
McDonald Dam, 1900 Colorado River Flood

For over 130 years, Austin has built, rebuilt, widened, and enhanced ways to bridge the divide in an effort to join the promise and potential south of the river to the area north of the river. While the river could be crossed at several low water crossings, ferries provided reliable passage as early as 1846. By 1862,

Captain Swisher had the only remaining ferry which made crossing near East Avenue, or as it is known today, Interstate Highway 35.

Starting in the late 1860s, bridges began replacing the need for ferries. The first pontoon bridge was built in 1869 and rebuilt after each flood, but the tolls were so prohibitive (\$.05 to walk, \$.10 for horse) that the City and County built a free iron bridge in 1886.

Despite all the difficulties in expanding the City south of the river, the land itself had many positive qualities. It had fertile fields, high hills for lookouts to spot foreign armies or Indian war parties, and easy access to San Antonio.

By the 1880s, South Austin already had several subdivisions, Texas' first professional ballpark, the Texas Deaf and Dumb Asylum (now known as Texas School for the Deaf), St. Edward's Academy, and the beginnings of South Congress as a commercial strip.

Platted in 1877, the Swisher Addition was the earliest subdivision in the Greater South River City Neighborhood. Monroe, Mary and Johanna Streets are all named after various Swishers. Wealthy Austinites saw promise south of the river and snapped up the parcels as investments.

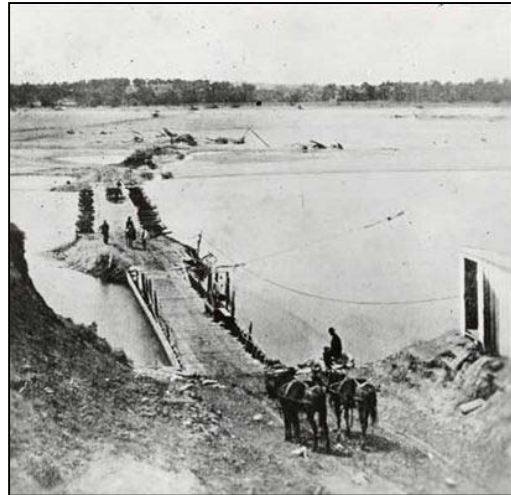


Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Austin File-Biography, Swisher, John Milton.

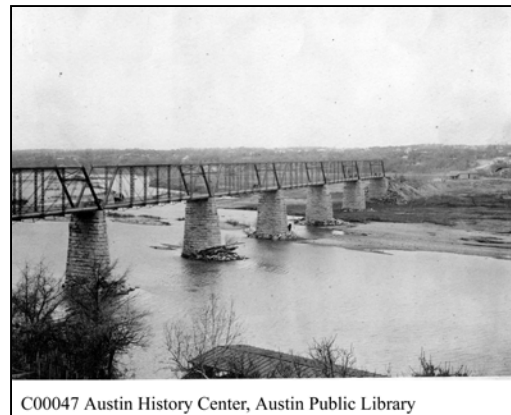
John Milton Swisher.

The same James Swisher who created the Swisher subdivision was also integral creating the South Congress we know today. It was Mr. Swisher who generously donated 120 feet of right-of-way for a road through his farm. His generosity preserved an incredible view of the Capitol and a major approach to the City center and the Capitol for future residents and visitors.

In 1878, Charles Newning, a banker from the East Coast, purchased 200 acres northeast of the Swisher subdivision with plans of building an "upscale, owner-occupied 'garden suburb.'" He envisioned large houses on large lots, rambling streets and laid the lots



PICA CO1694, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library. Pontoon Bridge, 1869.



C00047 Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

out to take advantage of the natural elements. Newning’s vision became Fairview Park – named because this area offered a “fair view” of the City from the bluffs.

Mr. Newning’s ideal development was never realized in large part because he did not anticipate the extent to which commercial development would occur on South Congress, the difficulty of crossing the river and the distance from town. Before the turn of the century a number of Victorian homes were built on the large lots. Development, however, was so sparse that starting in the 1910’s lots were subdivided into smaller parcels. In the 20’s and 30’s, small bungalows and cottages were built on these smaller lots. A much altered and downscaled Fairview Park was not built out until the 1940s.

In 1913, General William Harwood Stacy (Charles Newning’s partner) and Stacy’s sons began development of Travis Heights. Travis Heights was designed with a range of lot sizes, a street system of both grid and curvy streets, and deed restrictions that prohibit multifamily and commercial uses. Travis Heights was the most heavily promoted subdivision of its time. Stacy provided streetcar service from Travis Heights Boulevard to the Capitol for prospective buyers to see the area before the homes were even built. He also gave away Ford Touring cars as part of a promotional campaign.

Perhaps the greatest contribution Stacy made to the future livability of not only Travis Heights, but the entire Greater South River City Neighborhood, was the dedication of land adjacent to Blunn Creek and the bluff which drops down to Town Lake as public parks. Stacy’s sons, Harwood and Gillespie, added more land along Blunn Creek. This parkland later became known as Stacy Park. While Stacy Park was intended as a major recreational area, it also served as a natural divider between Travis Heights and the Fairview Park and Swisher subdivisions.

The last major residential subdivision in the Greater South River City Neighborhood to be developed was the Sherwood Oaks Subdivision starting in the late 1960’s.



Sherwood Oaks Subdivision, 1967.  
(Photo provided by Elloa Mathews)

# Automotive-Inspired Growth on South Congress Avenue

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Prior to the completion of the Colorado River’s concrete bridge in 1910, development along the southern end of South Congress remained fairly sparse. Businesses along South Congress served local residents and included groceries, bakeries, blacksmiths, liveries and horse sales.<sup>1</sup>

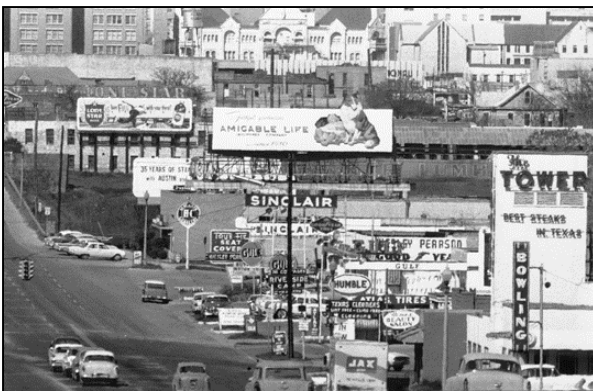


PICA 20583, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library Congress and Barton



PICA 02549, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

With the bridge’s construction and extension of the electric trolley line over the river, South Austin became much more accessible and steadily grew. By the 1920s, automobile ownership became feasible for many adults and leisure travel became common in the United States. With the advent of the automobile, South Congress became the major highway into Austin. The emergence of tourist courts, restaurants, and service stations along South Congress reflected this shift.



PICA AS-61-31073-8, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library. South Congress circa 1965.

In 1952, between Ben White Boulevard and the river, South Congress had 21 motels and motor courts, 14 restaurants and hamburger stands, 12 gas stations, 9 building material stores and 9 grocery stores.

Auto-centric development continued along South Congress until the 1960s when IH-35 began to draw visitors away.

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<sup>1</sup> McGraw Marburger & Associates. (2003, May 30) South Congress Avenue Preservation Plan. Austin, TX: City of Austin.

During the 1960s and 1970s, business slowed along South Congress and buildings went into disrepair. Declining commercial rents attracted small eclectic shops, artists, and musicians to move into the area. Today, the eclecticism created during the 60s, 70s, and 80s are being threatened by rising rents and other market forces.

## Historic Places

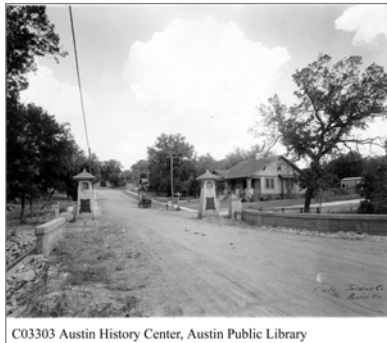
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The following sections include brief descriptions of a selection of City of Austin designated historic buildings and other places of historic value in the Greater South River City Planning Area. The selection does not offer a comprehensive listing of all historic structures in the area. However, it does provide the reader with a glimpse of the ways in which decades of development affect the area today through existing and demolished historic buildings and places.

### Residential

Charles Newning's Fairview Park neighborhood and the Travis Heights neighborhood contain most of the remaining historic residential structures in the Greater South River City planning area. There are some historic properties which remain on South Congress but most have been demolished over the years to clear space for commercial expansion.

Remaining historic homes include Victorian-era structures with gingerbread trim, Craftsman-influenced bungalows, and Prairie School influenced houses. Many houses have gabled or hipped roofs and deep porches.<sup>2</sup> Many of the historic homes shown below have been in neighborhood home tours in recent years.



Alameda and Riverside, 1917.



PICA 13968, Austin History Center,  
Austin Public Library.  
View north, South Congress.

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<sup>2</sup> McGraw Marburger & Associates, (2003, May 30) South Congress Preservation Plan, Attribute Analysis. Austin, TX: City of Austin. 12.

FIGURE 6.1: Designated Historic Landmarks (refer to Figure 6.2 for location)

Greater South River City Neighborhood Planning Area			
Designated Historic Landmarks			
1	The Bergen-Todd House, 1403 South Congress Avenue	10	The Moore-Williams House, 1312 Newning Avenue
2	The Brunson House, 200 The Circle	11	The Stacy House, 1201 Travis Heights Boulevard
3	The Miller-Crocket House, 112 Academy Drive	12	The Brass-Milam House, 1409 Newning Avenue
4	The Red-Purcell House, 210 Academy Drive	13	The Dumble-Boatright House, 1419 Newning Avenue
5	"The Academy", The Mather-Kirkland House, 400 Academy Drive	14	The Lewis-Thomas House, 1508 Newning Avenue
6	The W.H. Davis House, 1203 Newning Avenue	15	The Hill-Searight House, 410 E. Monroe Street
7	The Wilkins-Heath House, 1208 Newning Avenue	16	The Ross-Moore House, 405 E. Monroe Street
8	The Preston-Garcia House, 1214 Newning Avenue	17	The Travis Heights House, 1007 Milam Place
9	The Gullett House, 1304 Newning Avenue	18	The Reuter House, 806 Rosedale Terrace
St. Edward's University's Main Building and Holy Cross Hall at 3001 South Congress Avenue are also designated historic landmarks.			



The Gullett House, 1304 Newning. NPZD Staff.



"The Academy", 400 Academy Dr. NPZD Staff.



The Red-Purcell House, 210 Academy Dr. NPZD Staff.

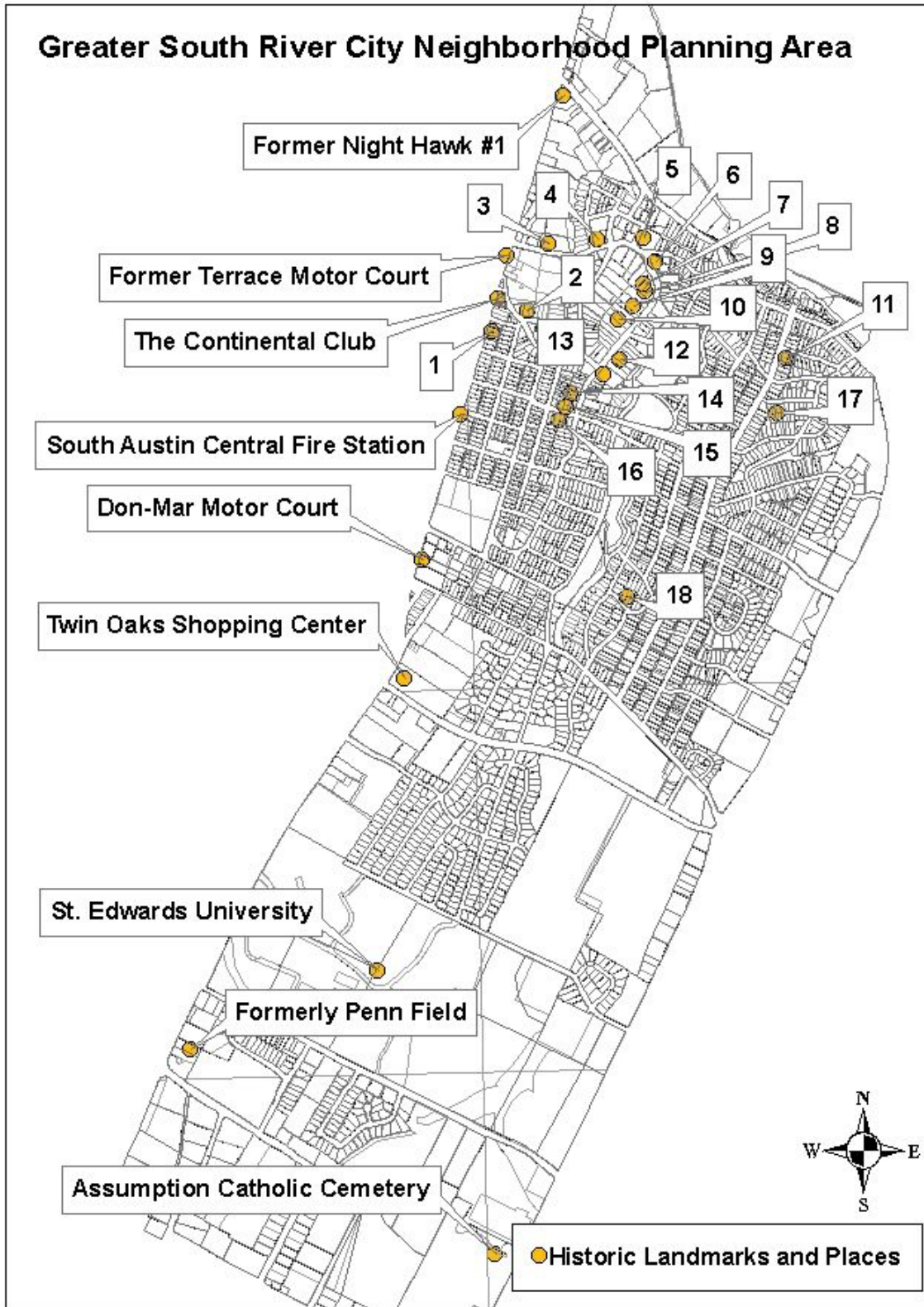


FIGURE 6.2: Historic places in the Greater South River City Area

## Commercial



The Mascots (3)

### *The Continental Club*

The now nationally known “retro roots, rockabilly, country and swing” bar opened in 1957 under the ownership of Morin Scott. It featured touring groups like Tommy Dorsey and Glenn Miller as a “swank private supper club.” The Club’s documents report that although it was originally a BYOB it may have been the first establishment in Travis County to serve liquor by the individual drink.



COA Archives

During the 1960s it offered burlesque shows as the first club of its kind. New owners booked such legendary musicians as Stevie Ray Vaughan, Joe Ely, The Cobras, D-Day, and the Skunks in the 1960s. The Club was renovated and retrofitted in 1987 to resemble the décor of its original 1950s incarnation by current owner Steve Wertheimer.<sup>3</sup>

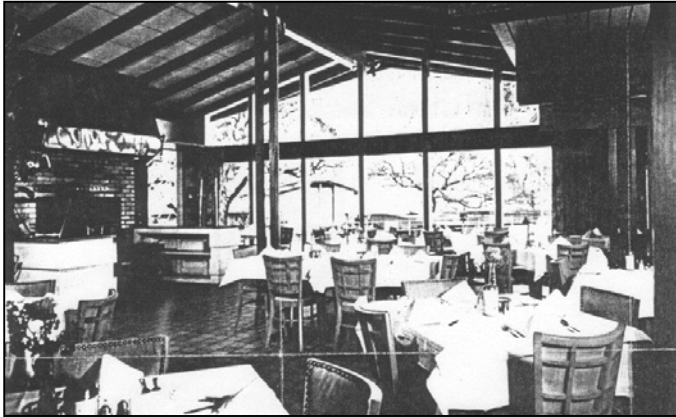
### *Motels and Tourist Courts on Congress*

Motels dating from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century lining South Congress were numerous. The GSRC planning area does not include many of these. Most of them are located on the west side of South Congress Avenue and south Ben White Blvd. These include the Austin Motel, the San Jose Court, the Bel-Air Motel, the St. Elmo-tel, the Goodnight Court Motel, and the Acorn Lodges. These hotels advertised modern amenities including air-conditioning, carpets, carports, radios, television sets, and tile baths.

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<sup>3</sup> The Continental Club. (2005) *Welcome to the Continental Club*. Retrieved on February 22, 2005. Web site: <http://www.continentalclub.com/Austin.html>





Austin File- Motels-Sheraton-Terrace Motor Hotel M7700 (12), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.  
Terrace Motor Hotel Restaurant

The Terrace Motor Hotel, formerly located at 1201 South Congress, was designed by the Texas architectural firm Niggli and Gustafson (1952-1955).<sup>4</sup> The Terrace Motor Hotel was considered one of the best places to stay while visiting Austin and was once the largest motel on South Congress. It boasted 256 rooms, two restaurants, two pools, and a banquet hall.<sup>5</sup>



The Don-Mar Motor Court is located at 2109 South Congress and is one of the few remaining original motels in the Greater South River City Planning Area.

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<sup>4</sup> American Institute of Architects. (1986) *Austin, Its Architects and Architecture (1836- 1986)*. Austin, Texas.

<sup>5</sup> McGraw Marburger & Associates. (2003, May 30) South Congress Avenue Preservation Plan, Historic Overview. Austin, TX: City of Austin.



PICA 09547, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library  
Night Hawk Restaurant

### *The Night Hawk Restaurants*

Harry Akin opened Night Hawk No. 1 to sell hamburgers on the corner of South Congress and Riverside in 1932.<sup>6</sup> The converted fruit stand featured two booths, a counter, and eight stools. Customers enjoyed a relaxed atmosphere and were allowed to bring in their own home brews despite prohibition and carve their initials into the Night Hawk's wooden countertop. Fifteen cent hamburgers were so popular that Akin opened a second restaurant the next

year. Akin expanded to sell his specialty dish, "Top Chop't Steaks" to local grocery stores' frozen foods sections. Quality and consistency made businessmen, celebrities, and politicians loyal customers.

Known as a civil rights advocate, Akin was invited to Washington to meet with President John F. Kennedy along with other nationally known restaurant owners to discuss the desegregation of public facilities.<sup>7</sup> He freely defied common bias and served African American patrons in the 1950s. He was elected mayor in 1967 and helped pass laws prohibiting segregation in public places.<sup>8</sup>



AF-PICA2805 Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

<sup>6</sup> Wood, V.B. (2001, January 26) Harry Akin and the Night Hawk Legend; The Flight of the Night Bird. *The Austin Chronicle*. Retrieved on February 22, 2005 from The Austin Chronicle. Web site: [http://www.austinchronicle.com/issues/dispatch/2001-01-26/food\\_fe](http://www.austinchronicle.com/issues/dispatch/2001-01-26/food_fe).

<sup>7</sup> Wood, V.B. (2001, January 26) Harry Akin and the Night Hawk Legend; The Flight of the Night Bird. *The Austin Chronicle*. Retrieved on February 22, 2005 from The Austin Chronicle. Web site: [http://www.austinchronicle.com/issues/dispatch/2001-01-26/food\\_fe](http://www.austinchronicle.com/issues/dispatch/2001-01-26/food_fe).

<sup>8</sup> Same as above.



AF-PICA-28696 Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

Night Hawk residents and its frozen foods division expanded through the 1970s with steakhouses in San Antonio and Houston. After 40 years of commercial success, Akin died in 1976. Akin's wife, Lela Jane, ran the business until its decline in the 1980s. The original Night Hawk No. 1 building burned in 1985 and when it finally was rebuilt and reopened, its customer base had disappeared. Although the restaurants have now closed and changed hands, the frozen foods division is still in operation in San Antonio and remains successful. Harry Akin remains a legendary Austin entrepreneur in the eyes of many.<sup>9</sup>

### *Twin Oaks Shopping Center*

Local entrepreneur Odus Jung developed the Twin Oaks Shopping Center on the northeast corner of Oltorf and South Congress Avenue in the 1950s. Its ample parking lots reflect the strip's automobile-centric design inspiration, a concept still at its early stages at that juncture in U.S. architectural history. The complex takes its name from the two Live Oaks preserved in the middle of the strip center.<sup>10</sup>

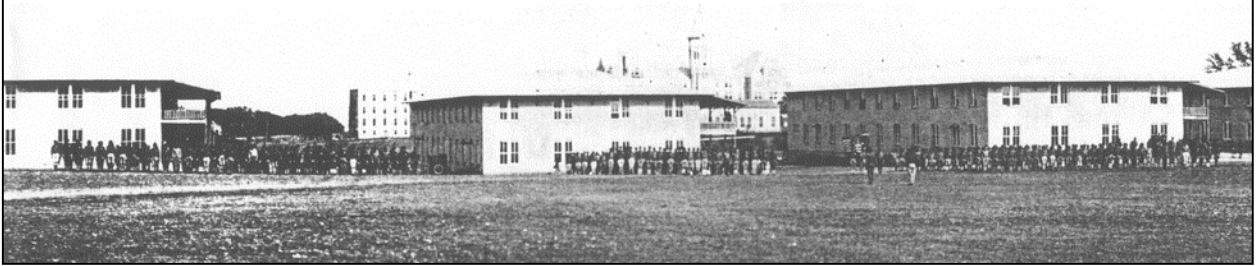
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<sup>9</sup> Same as above.

<sup>10</sup> McGraw Marburger & Associates. (2003, May 30) South Congress Avenue Preservation Plan, Historic Overview. Austin, TX: City of Austin. p. 16.

## Industrial

### *Penn Field Airstrip*



*Wings Over Austin*, Walter Long  
Penn Field



PICA 19533, Austin History  
Center, Austin Public Library.  
John A. McCurdy

In 1918 planes began to land in Penn Field. The 318 acre parcel was secured by the Austin Chamber of Commerce for Army Air Corps training during World War I.

John A. McCurdy (shown at left) managed military flights from Penn Field.<sup>11</sup> The rough airstrip was developed with a 140,000 square foot warehouse building and several spacious two story brick buildings designed to support aviation needs and a University of Texas radio school. The buildings were used as a military school for only 18 days before they were decommissioned in late 1918 as the war came to a close.<sup>12</sup> After 1920, the buildings were used for various purposes including automobile parts manufacturing, furniture making, and fireplace construction.<sup>13</sup> In 2000, the buildings were renovated and now include office and retail space.

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<sup>11</sup> Austin History Center, (2005) *Wings Over Austin, The History of Austin Aviation*. Retrieved on March 31, 2005. Web site:

<http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/library/ahc/exwings.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> McGraw Marburger & Associates. (2003, May 30) South Congress Avenue Preservation Plan, Historic Overview. Austin, TX: City of Austin. p. 17.

<sup>13</sup> Austin Explorer. (2005) *Penn Field*. Retrieved on March 4, 2005. Web site:

<http://www.austineexplorer.com/History/SiteDetails.asp?SiteID=22> Accessed on the World Wide Web on March 4, 2005.

## Civic

### *Assumption Cemetery*

This Catholic cemetery and mausoleum, located on IH-35, was first opened in 1952 and is owned by the Brothers of Holy Cross (the founders of Notre Dame and St. Edward's University). A historical marker on site tells the story of Austin stonemason James Doyle, who in 1872 deeded 398 acres of his farm to the Brothers; part of the pasture later became the Assumption Cemetery.

### *Blunn Creek Wilderness Park*

This park was named for Joseph Blunn, a victim of a flash flood that knocked out a bridge he was crossing in 1860. Once a dairy farm, the park dodged conversion to both a middle school and a condominium, and was at last bought by the city for \$1.8 million in 1982. Now a small nature preserve in the midst of a big town, Blunn's 38.5 acres include a short hike and bike trail and an outdoor classroom.



*Fire Station at 1705 Congress*

This station was designed by Edwin Kreisle in 1932. Its Tudor Revival design elements were popular in the 1920s and 1930s.

Hank T. Smith, Austin: Its Architecture... (1836-1986) (McGraw Marburger & Associates)  
Fire Station No. 2, 1932

### *Fulmore Middle School*

Founded in 1886 as a "one-room, white-frame school house with a bell tower and a few eager students," Fulmore was built up to its present-day form in 1986. John Henry Faulk is an alum and former governor Ann Richards taught here.

### *St. Edward's University*

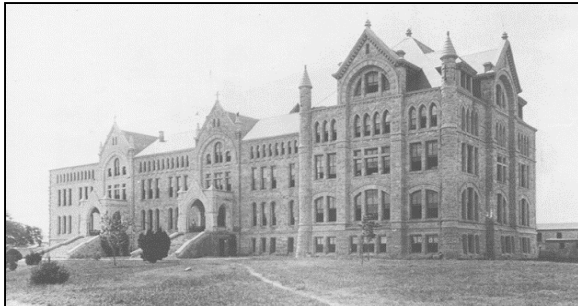
St. Edward's Academy, a Catholic school, was founded in 1878 by Reverend Edward Sorin, the Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross. The school spanned two properties - the hilltop Robard's estate and the 498 acre

farm deeded to Rev. Sorin by owner Mary Doyle. The school's first three students studied in a single hilltop two-story wood frame building.<sup>14</sup>

In 1881 the original Main Building was designed by well-known Galveston architect Nichols J. Clayton. This structure burned in 1903 but was quickly restored.



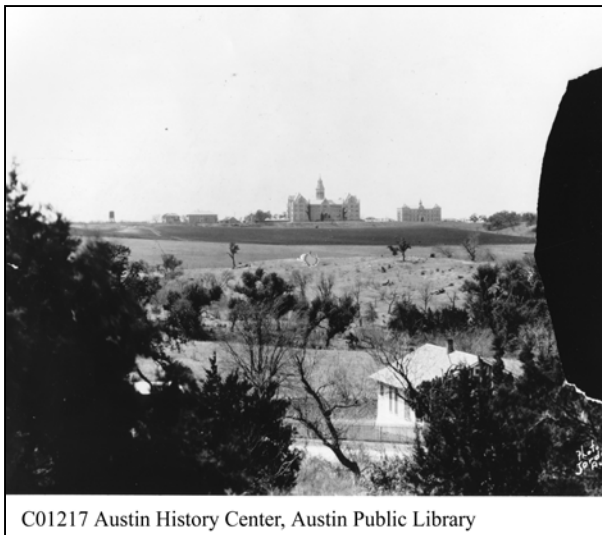
Barker Texas History Center (McGraw Marburger & Associates)  
St. Edward's College 1889



NPZD Archives  
Original St. Edwards Administration Building, constructed 1881.

The Main Building and campus were severely damaged in 1922 by a passing tornado but were also rebuilt. The college achieved its university charter in 1925.

Women first attended the school in 1966 and St. Edward's became a fully co-educational institution in 1970.<sup>15</sup>



C01217 Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

View of St. Edwards University



Main Building today  
(Photo: NPZD)

<sup>14</sup> H2L2/ Barnes Architecture and Planning. (2000, September 15) St. Edward's University Campus Master Plan, Executive Summary. Austin, TX: St. Edward's University.

<sup>15</sup> St. Edward's University (2005). *St. Edward's University- History*. Retrieved on March 25, 2005. Web site: <http://www.stedwards.edu/history.htm>.

# Citizen Planning Efforts in Greater South River City

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The South River City Citizens (SRCC) neighborhood association was founded in 1972 with major support from Jean Mather, Harriet Buxkemper and members of area churches and parent-teacher associations.<sup>16</sup> As a result, the GSRC neighborhood has been home to organized and active residents for over three decades.

Residents have worked to establish the Blunn Creek Wilderness Area, to protect Harper's Creek, and to maintain the character of the historic residential Fairview Park area by successfully urging City Council to enact a Neighborhood Conservation Combining District. Residents have coordinated with city officials to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular safety in the area. They have participated in city Planning Commission and City Council hearings. They provided impetus for the existing City of Austin Town Lake Ordinance, which manages development surrounding the urban waterway. They have also helped find solutions to issues such as school overcrowding in the Greater South River City planning area.

The SRCC has been involved in planning efforts since 1973.<sup>17</sup> SRCC officials first worked to synthesize residents' concerns and proposals for the area with the intention of incorporating these desires into the City's Austin Tomorrow Plan.<sup>18</sup> Meetings were held throughout the SRCC's area, and each of the SRCC's eight designated Area Coordinators compiled lists of neighborhood-wide and area-specific concerns.<sup>19</sup> After four years, the SRCC presented their plan to the public with the help of University of Texas faculty and students. The plan was then presented to the Planning Commission in 1978 and relevant aspects of the plan were approved at that time by the Commission.



Blunn Creek Preserve  
Photo: NPZD



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<sup>16</sup> South River City Citizens Newsletter. June 1976.

<sup>17</sup> South River City Citizens Newsletter. November 1976.

<sup>18</sup> South River City Citizens Newsletter. June 1976.

<sup>19</sup> South River City Citizens Newsletter. Fall 1999.



Blunn Creek Walkabout  
Photo: NPZD

In 1993, the SRCC once again took initiative to update their 1976 plan with a focus on zoning changes and additional neighborhood amenities. They used tools such as ballot voting and a survey to compile resident concerns. Primary issues of concern included traffic, Blunn Creek and Stacy Park, and interest in implementing a South Congress view corridor.<sup>20</sup>

SRCC has a history of collaborating with others on preserving the creeks in the neighborhood. SRCC has worked with the City on developing recommendations for preserving Blunn Creek. In addition, SRCC has enlisted the help of Glenrose Engineering to provide technical expertise on water quality and drainage when negotiating development agreements with developers.

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<sup>20</sup> Jean Mather.



# Goals, Objectives & Recommendations

## Orientation

*Over a 16-month period, stakeholders identified ways in which they would like to see the Greater South River City neighborhood improve. Every recommendation in this section has been reviewed and is supported by the City of Austin. Recommendations not supported by the City may be found in the appendix.*

*Implementing these recommendations is the next step; however, doing so is going to require everyone's (residents, business owners, the City, etc.) participation, collaboration, innovativeness, and willingness to compromise.*

*This section is organized into groups of likeminded topics. Each group is marked by a goals statement and subdivided into Objectives. Each Objective is described in greater detail by a series of Recommendations.*



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## Land Use and Historic Preservation

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Goal (A): Maintain the historic fabric and respect the established neighborhood character and natural assets.

***Objective: New single-family construction in residential areas should complement, reflect, and respect the character of the single-family houses in the area.***

Recommendation A1: The scale and massing of new and remodeled houses should be consistent with the surrounding residences. (NPZD)

Recommendation A2: Design tools should be applied where needed to promote new development that is in character with existing single-family houses (Figure 7.1). (NPZD)



***Objective: Protect historic resources including buildings, bridges, gateways and other structures.***

Recommendation A3: Seek local landmark designation for individual resources that are eligible and meet intent of the landmark ordinance. (SRCC & NPZD)

Recommendation A4: Nominate eligible structures and districts to the National Register of Historic Places. (NPZD)

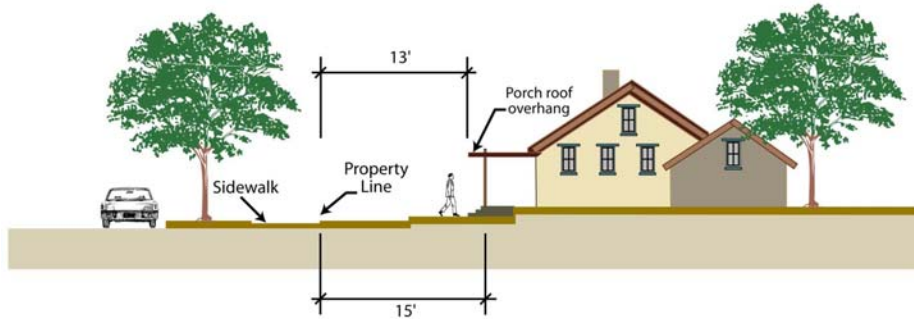
Recommendation A5: Conduct an architectural survey of the South River City planning area to determine which portions of the neighborhood are historically significant. Designate those areas as Local Historic districts. (SRCC & NPZD)

**FIGURE 7.1: Design Tools applied to the Greater South River City Neighborhood Planning Area**

Front Porch Setback		Impervious Cover & Parking Placement		Garage Placement	
SRC	SE	SRC	SE	SRC	SE
	X	X	X	X	X

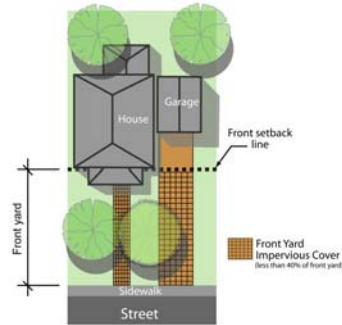
SRC = Applies to the Travis Heights-Swisher Subdistrict within the South River City Neighborhood  
 SE = St. Edwards Neighborhood

**Front Porch Setback** Allows a front porch to project into the required front yard, but the porch must be at least 15 feet from the front lot line. The porch roof overhang or porch step must be at least 13 feet from the front lot line. The minimum front setback in most single-family districts is 25 feet. See diagram below.



**Impervious Cover and Parking Placement**

Impervious cover in a front yard may not exceed 40%. No more than four parking spaces may be located in the front street yard, or for a corner lot, not more than four parking spaces may be located in the front street yard and side street yard combined. See diagram at right.



**Garage Placement**

Requires that a garage may not be closer to the front lot line than the building façade. If the parking structure is less than 20 feet behind the building façade, the width of the parking structure may not exceed 50 percent of the width of the principle structure, measured parallel to the front lot line. See diagram at left.



# Current Land Use South River City Neighborhood Planning Area

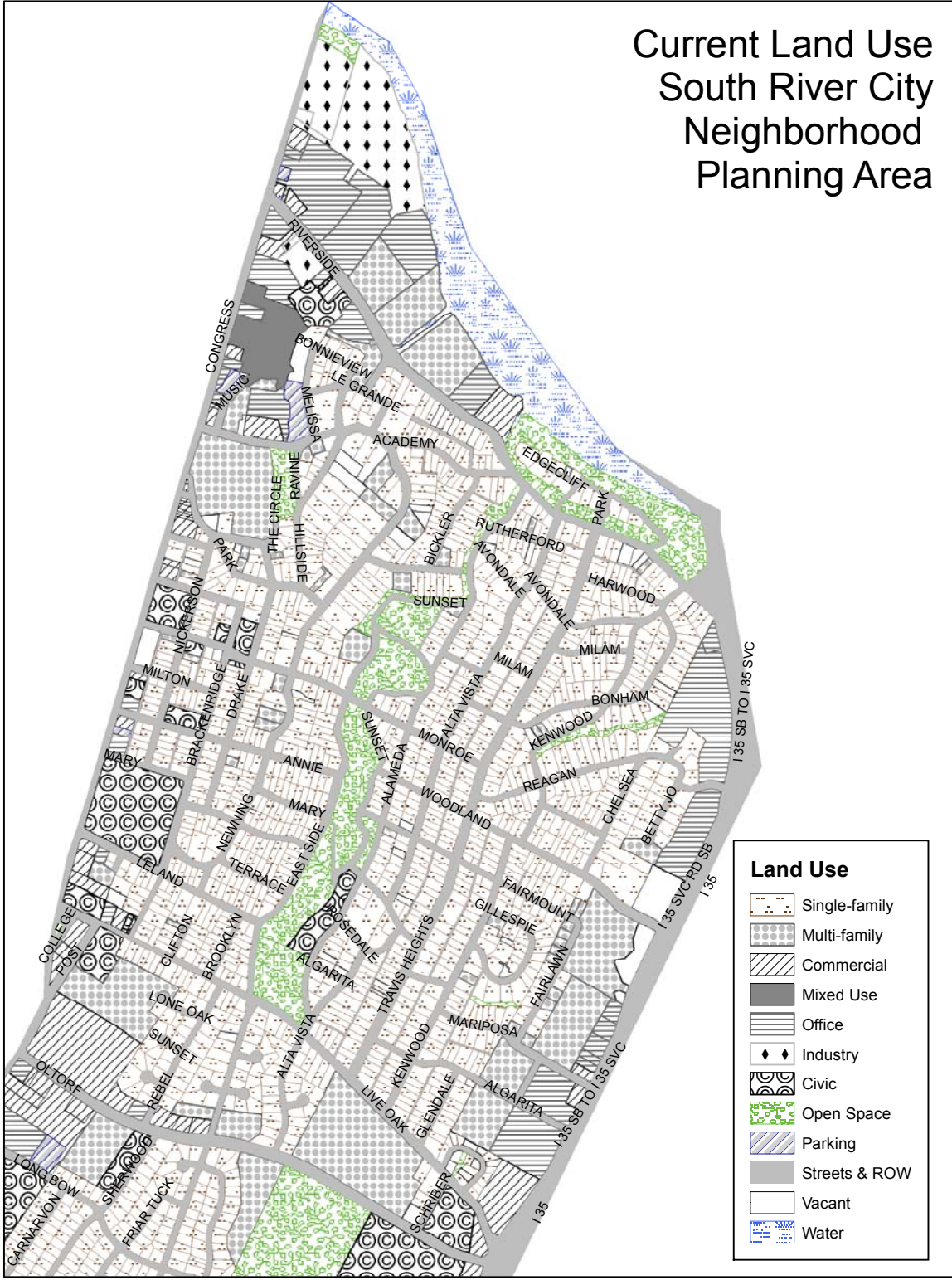









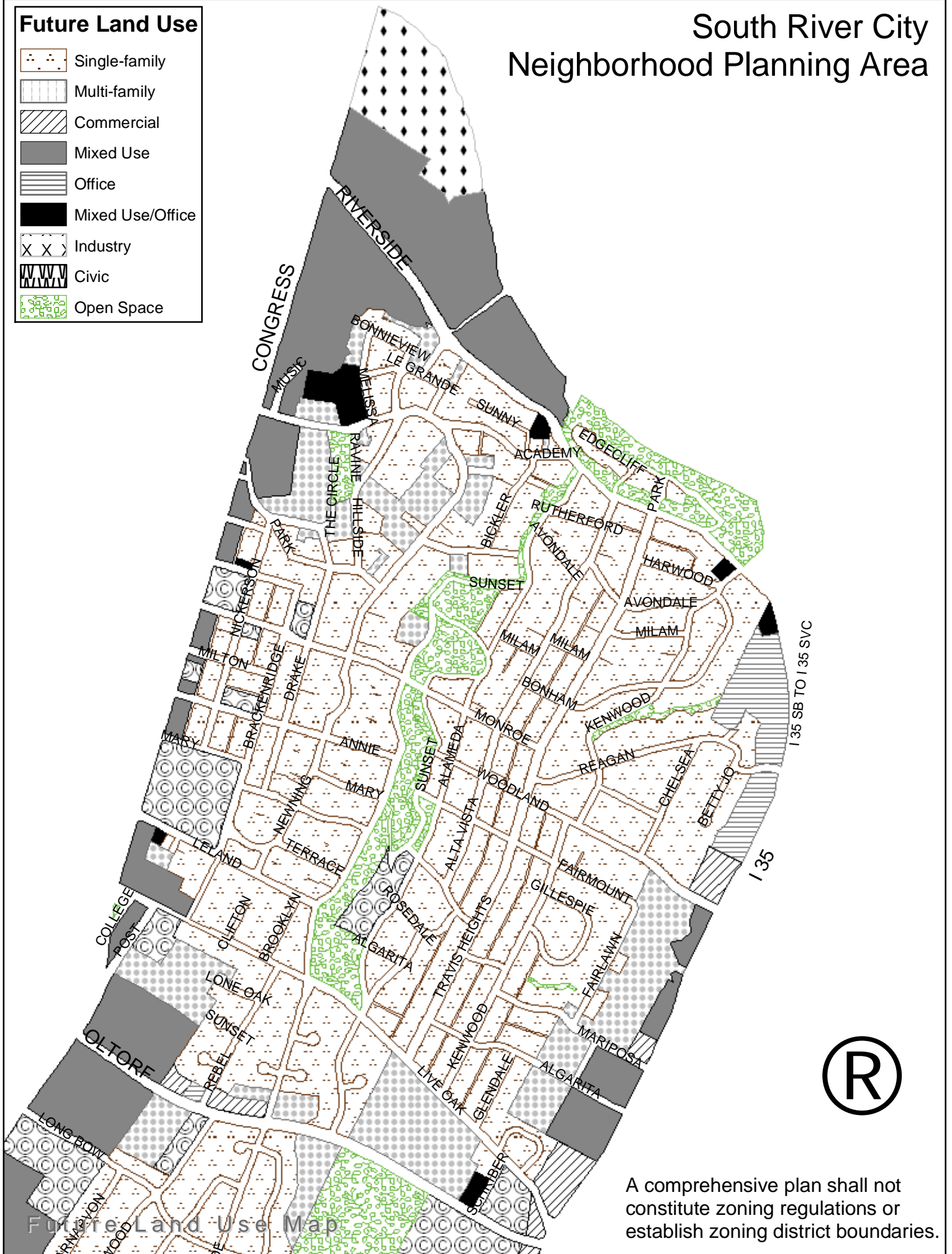


FIGURE 7.2: South River City Neighborhood Planning Area – Current Land Use

# South River City Neighborhood Planning Area

## Future Land Use

-  Single-family
-  Multi-family
-  Commercial
-  Mixed Use
-  Office
-  Mixed Use/Office
-  Industry
-  Civic
-  Open Space



A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.

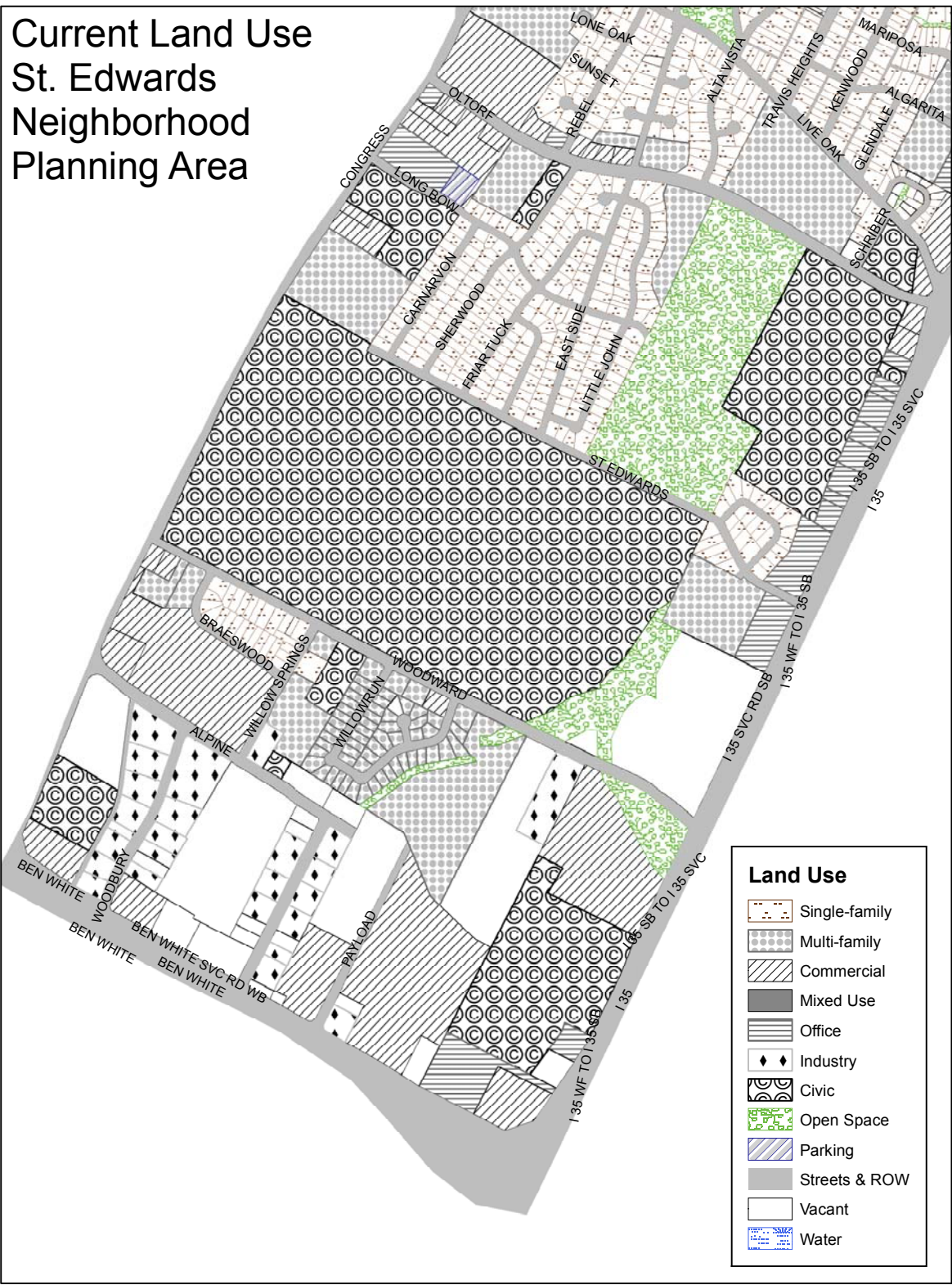


FIGURE 7.4: St. Edward’s Neighborhood Planning Area – Current Land Use

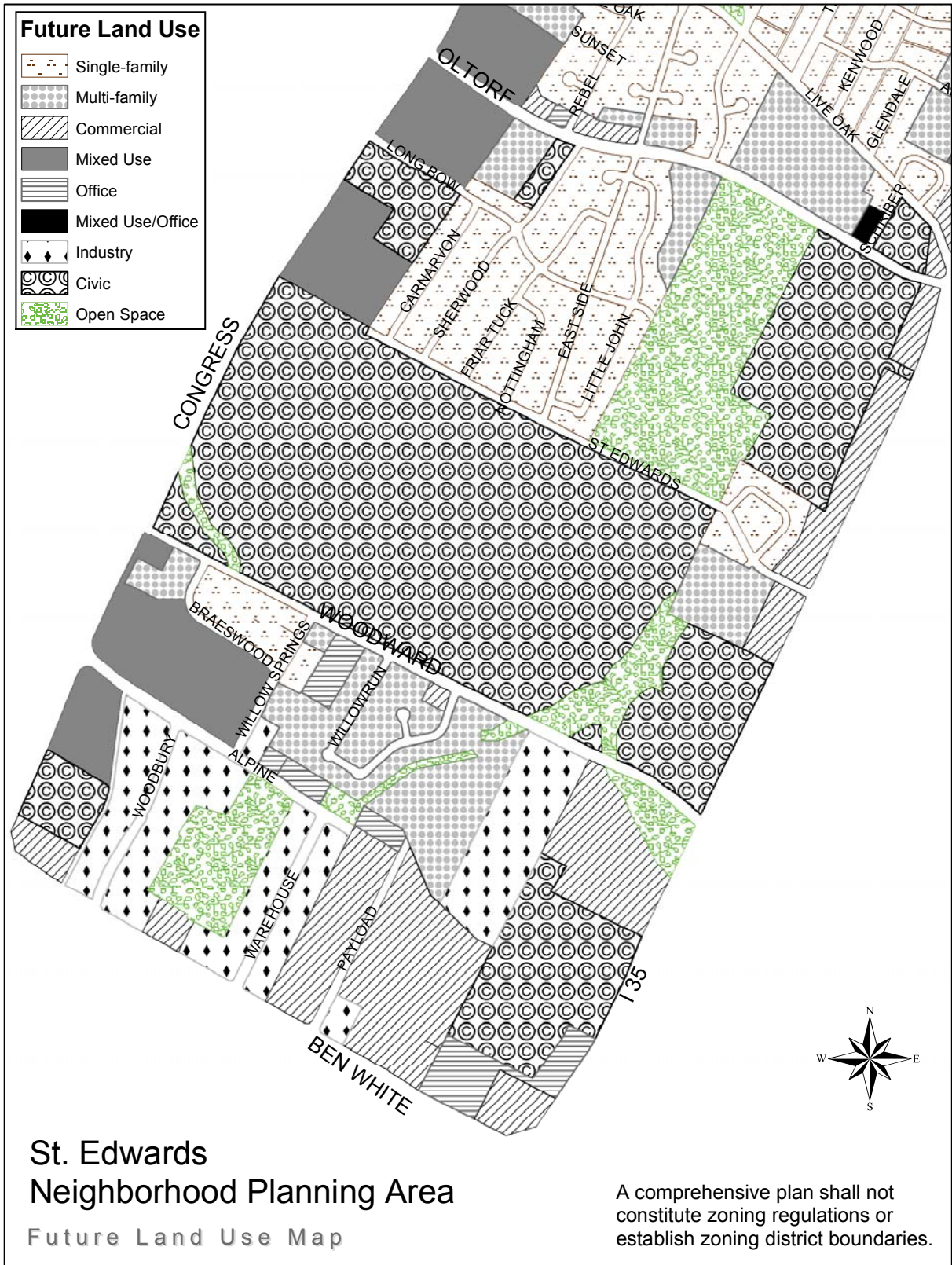


Figure 7.5: St. Edward’s Neighborhood – Future Land Use Map (City adopted)

# Existing Zoning South River City Neighborhood Planning Area

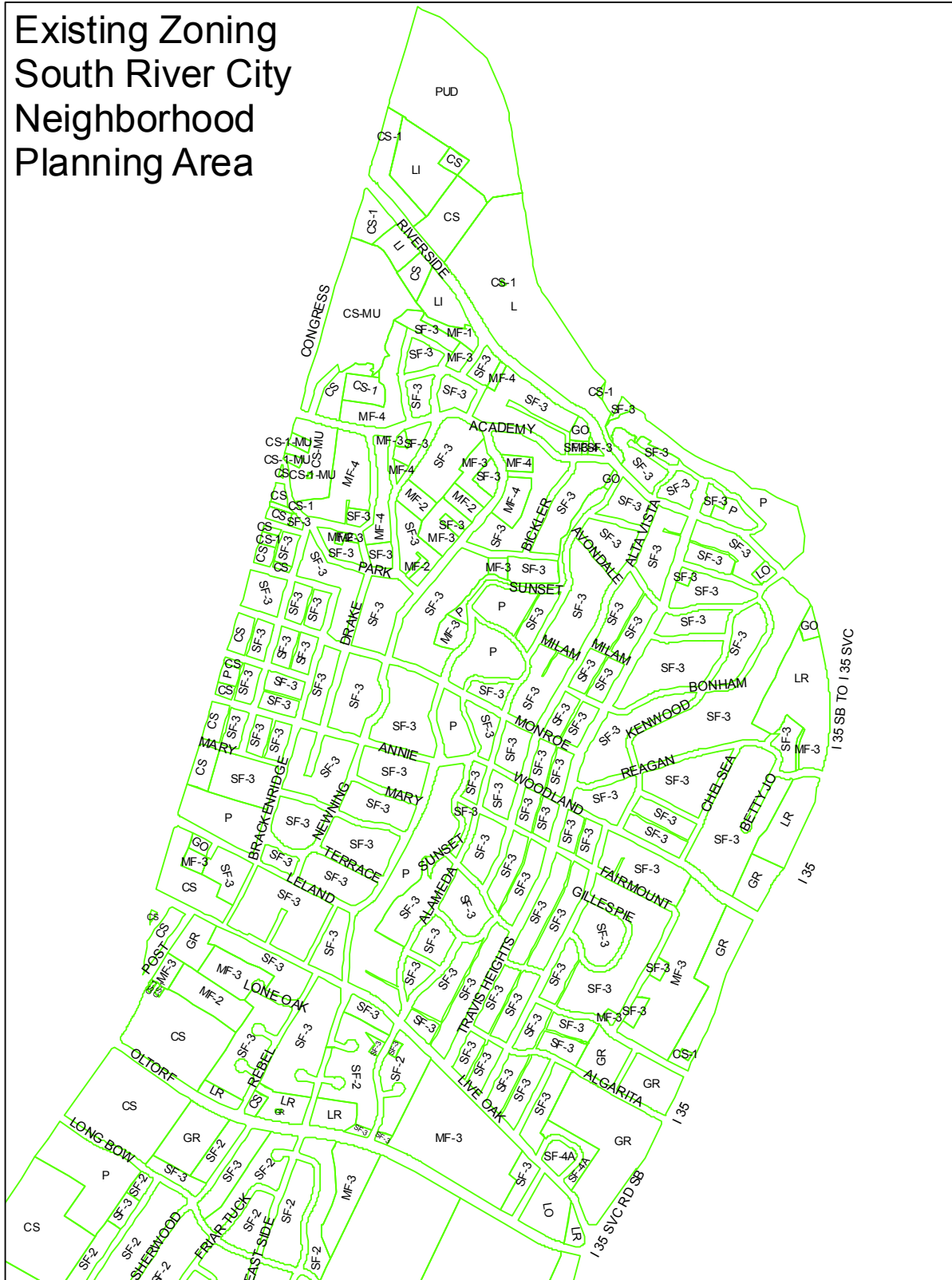


FIGURE 7.6: South River City Neighborhood Planning Area – Existing Zoning



# Existing Zoning St. Edwards Neighborhood Planning Area

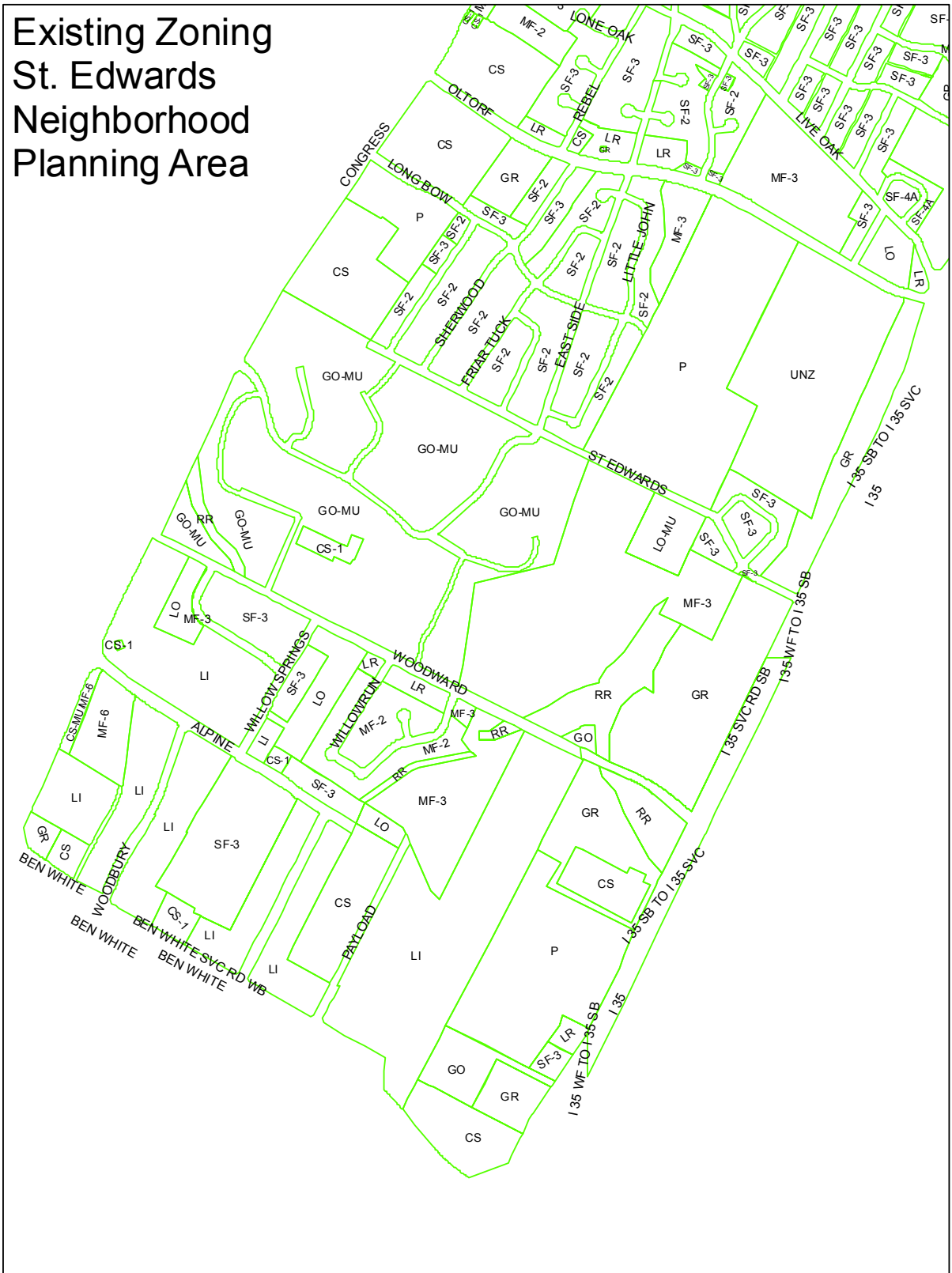


FIGURE 7.7: St. Edward's Neighborhood Planning Area – Existing Zoning

Recommendation A6: Continue to regularly monitor and amend the Fairview Park Neighborhood Conservation Combining District (NCCD) (Figure 7.8) to address unforeseen consequences, changing situations, and appropriate land use changes. (SRCC)

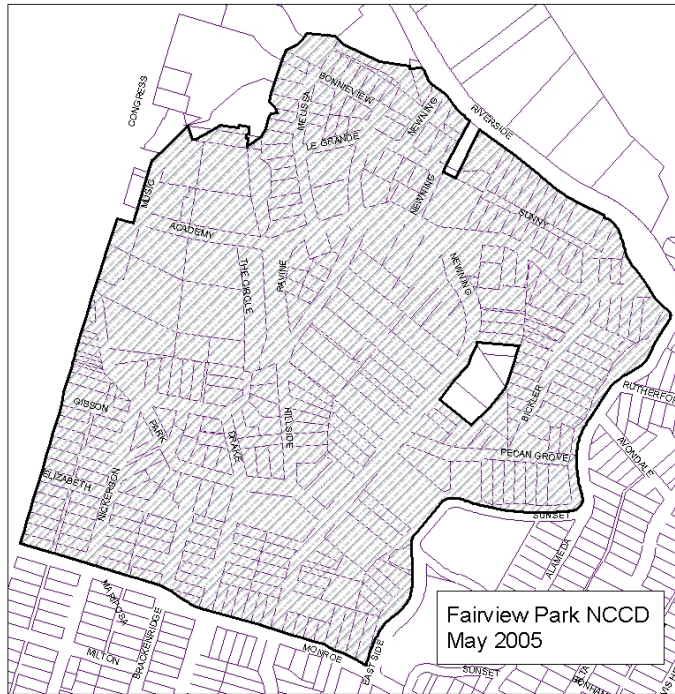


FIGURE 7.8: Fairview Park NCCD Boundaries

Recommendation A7: Pursue voluntary down-zoning of multifamily zoned properties in the Fairview Park NCCD area to single family. (SRCC)

Goal (B): Identify and develop criteria for the interface between residences and commercial development.

***Objective: Continue to allow office and limited commercial uses along IH-35, encouraging new development to respect the natural setting and to provide ample landscaping.***

***Objective: To the greatest extent possible, limit commercial development along Oltorf St. and Woodward St. to its current location and intensity.***

**Objective: Encourage redevelopment of the shopping centers at the intersection of Congress Ave and Oltorf St. as pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use “neighborhood centers”.**

Recommendation B1: Add the “Neighborhood Urban Center” special use to the Twin Oaks and Beall’s shopping centers (Figure 7.10). (NPZD)

Recommendation B2: Limit the number of curb cuts taking access onto Long Bow and Oltorf from the Beall’s Shopping Center in an effort to limit traffic from cutting through the neighborhood and to improve traffic flows and safety. (WPDR)

**Objective: Maintain the Woodward industrial district in the southern portion of the planning area while protecting the environment as well as nearby residential areas.**

Recommendation B3: Whenever possible, encourage new development or redevelopment in the Woodward industrial district (Figure 7.9) to develop with attributes of an office and industrial park, including unified development, better interface between the building and the street, and ample landscaping and open space. (Property owners, NPZD & WPDR)



FIGURE 7.9: Woodward Industrial District

Recommendation B4: Ensure that all commercial and industrial uses comply with all local, state, and federal permitting requirements, especially in regards to hazardous materials, industrial pre-treatment, and stormwater discharge permits. (AFD, AWU, & WPDR)

**Objective: Identify and develop criteria to encourage business along South Congress Avenue that serves and is compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood.**

Recommendation B5: Develop strategies fostering an eclectic blend of locally-owned businesses along South Congress. South Congress should not become a restaurant and bar district similar to downtown's E. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Such strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Recommend denial of any variance to minimum parking requirements (SRCC)
- Hold a forum with residents and business owners from both sides of S. Congress, economic development specialists, and other experts to conduct a study, make recommendations, and develop an implementation strategy (SRCC, Bouldin Neighborhood, AMA, SACA, NPZD, EGRSO)

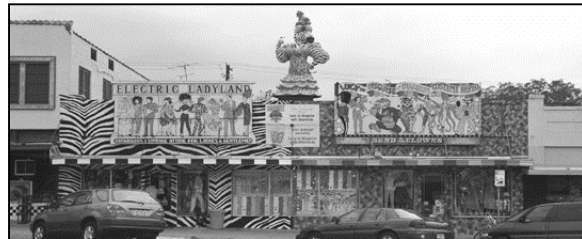
Recommendation B6: Encourage the development of services on S. Congress needed by local residents (grocery store, deli, etc.). (AMA, SRCC, & NPZD)



Recommendation B7: Encourage dialogue between the South River City Citizens, Bouldin Neighborhood Association, and the Avenue Merchants Association to find ways to make street festivals such as First Thursdays mutually beneficial to all parties. (SRCC, Bouldin, & AMA)

Recommendation B8: Collaborate with South Congress business owners and tenants to protect residents in abutting neighborhoods from noise, litter, vandalism, destruction of public property, increased traffic, and parking problems associated with First Thursday. (SRCC, AMA, APD, & PW)

Recommendation B9: Require events like First Thursday to provide security and additional parking in attempt to minimize these events impact on the surrounding neighborhoods. (PW)



Recommendation B10: Assign a crew to pick up litter left behind in the neighborhood after First Thursdays. (AMA)

Recommendation B11: Amend the noise and amplified sound ordinance to lower the maximum decibel limit in those areas in proximity to residential uses. (APD)

Recommendation B12: Explore ways to maximize compliance with the noise and amplified sound ordinance, particularly for those businesses along South Congress. (SRCC, AMA & APD)

***Objective: Develop ways to ensure that agreements between the neighborhood and developers are abided by.***

Recommendation B13: Develop an effective and efficient way for the South River City Citizens Neighborhood Association and property owners to work together to ensure the terms of any development agreements are enforced. (SRCC & Property owners)

Goal (C): Identify and develop criteria for density that result in a net benefit to the neighborhood.

***Objective: Preserve housing affordability and increase diversity of housing types.***

Recommendation C1: Identify areas where mixed use would enhance the livability of the neighborhoods and rezone accordingly. (NPZD)

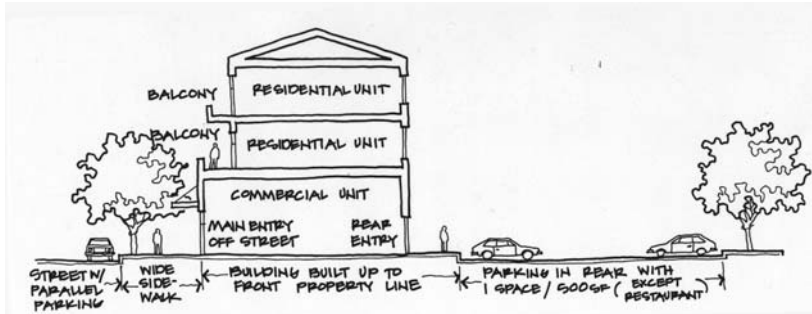
Recommendation C2: Preserve existing multifamily housing. (SRCC)

Recommendation C3: Allow infill development to occur as indicated in Figure 7.10. (NPZD)

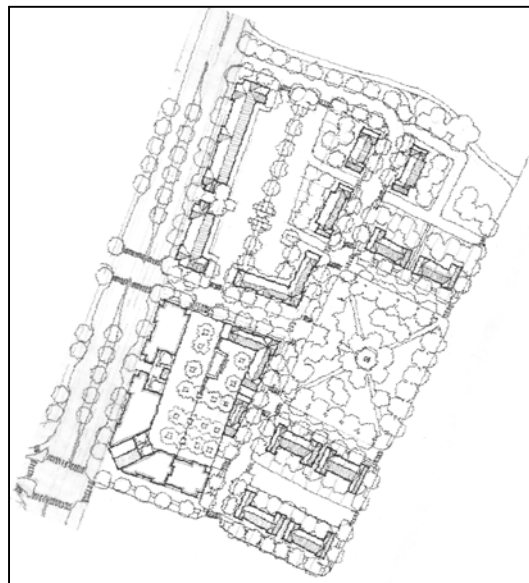
FIGURE 7.10: Infill Development Options for the Greater South River City Neighborhood

Neighborhood Mixed Use Building

This tool encourages the development of buildings that have both commercial and residential uses and pedestrian-oriented features. These structures can add to the mix of housing types in the neighborhood and decrease dependency on automobiles by housing people within walking distance of work, services, and transit stops.



Neighborhood Urban Center This tool encourages mixed use development including commercial uses, townhouses, condos, and multifamily units which bolster lively, pedestrian oriented streetscapes.



# Transportation

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Goal (D): Enhance the transportation network to allow residents to walk, bike, roll, ride, and drive safely.

**Objective: Improve pedestrian safety and mobility throughout the neighborhood.**

Recommendation D1: Construct the following priority sidewalks in the South River City planning area (listed in order of priority) (PW):

1. Annie St./Woodland Ave. between S. Congress Ave. and IH-35
2. Monroe St. between S. Congress Ave. and Travis Heights Blvd.
3. Travis Heights Blvd. between Riverside Dr. and E. Live Oak St.

Recommendation D2: Construct the following priority sidewalks in the St. Edwards planning area (listed in order of priority) (PW):

1. Long Bow Ln. between S. Congress Ave. and Little John Ln.
2. St. Edwards Dr. between Carnarvon Ln. and IH-35
3. Carnarvon Ln. between St. Edwards Dr. and Long Bow Ln.

Recommendation D3: Construct sidewalks on the following additional streets in the South River City planning area (PW):

- Alta Vista Ave.
- Kenwood Ave.
- Lockhart Dr. between Brackenridge St. and East Side Dr.
- Newning Ave. between Academy Dr. and Annie St.
- E. Oltorf St. – widen and move the existing sidewalk away from the street where E. Oltorf crosses Blunn Creek.
- Riverside Dr. between Newning Ave. and Alta Vista Ave. on the south side of Riverside Dr.
- S. Congress Ave. between Academy Dr. and Elizabeth St.

Recommendation D4: Construct the following additional sidewalks in the St. Edwards planning area (PW):

- Willow Springs Rd. between Woodward St. and Alpine Rd.

Recommendation D5: Ensure curb ramps are provided at all intersections and on Ben White Boulevard sidewalks. All ramps should meet accessibility requirements to accommodate all neighborhood residents and workers. (PW)

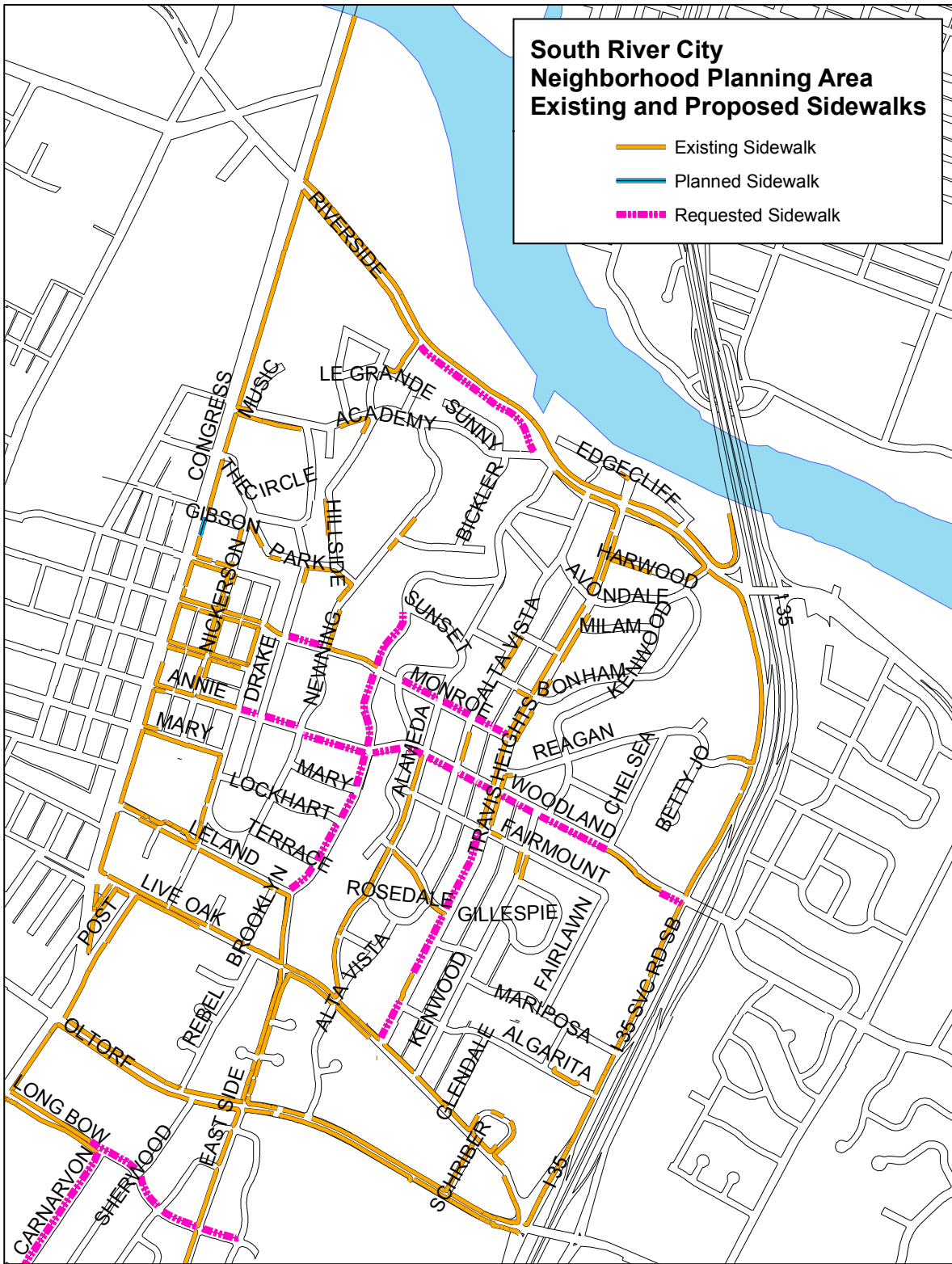


FIGURE 7.11: South River City Neighborhood Planning Area – Existing and Proposed Sidewalks



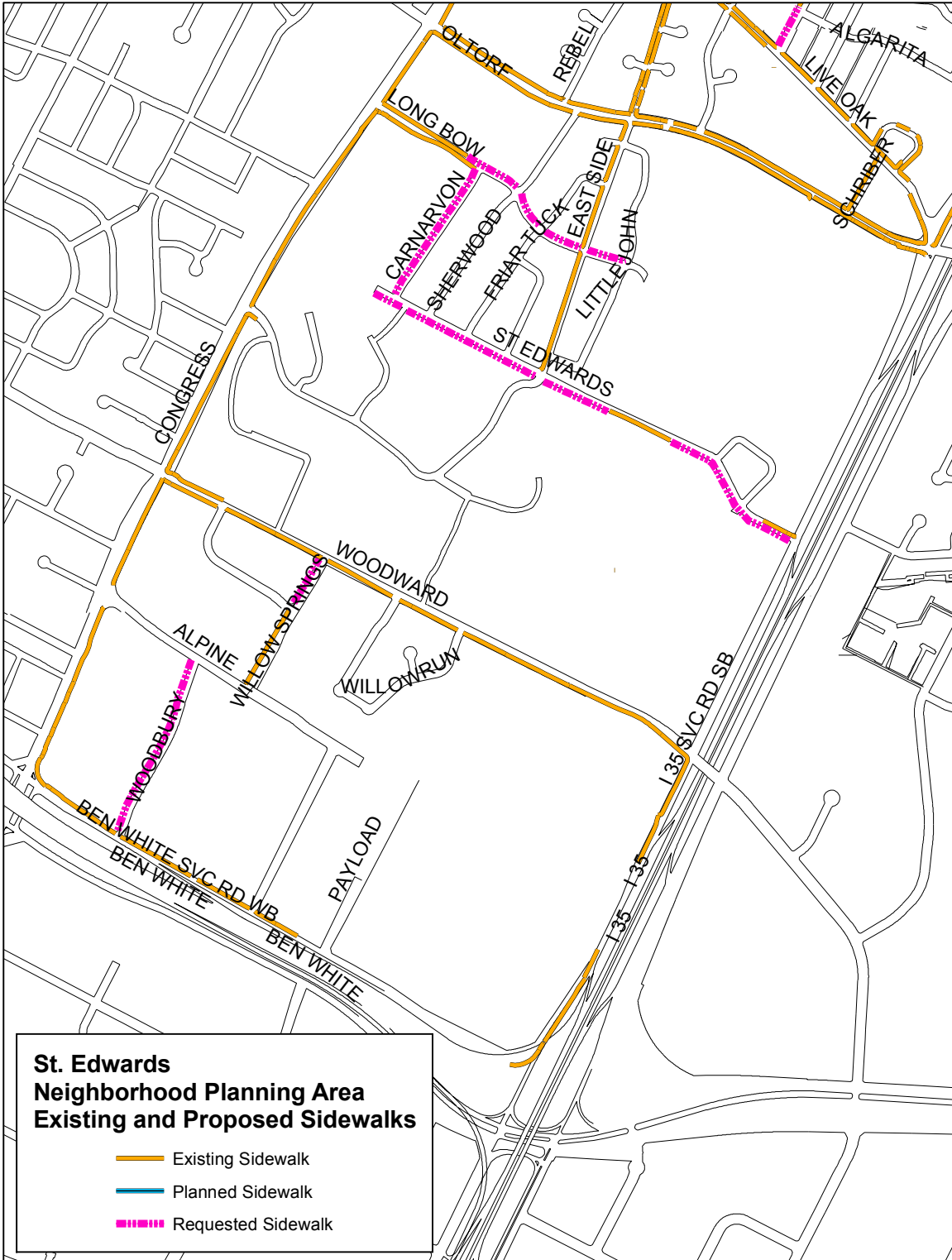


FIGURE 7.12: St. Edward’s Neighborhood Planning Area – Existing and Proposed Sidewalks

Recommendation D6: Construct curb and gutter on the following streets (PW):

- The Circle between Drake and the Ravine Park,
- Alpine
- Woodbury
- Warehouse Row
- Payload Pass

Recommendation D7: Install signage on Annie St. and Woodland Ave. near the Blunn Creek Greenbelt warning motorists of pedestrian crossings. (PW)

***Objective: Improve bicycle safety and mobility throughout the neighborhood.***

Recommendation D8: Amend the Austin Bicycle Plan to designate Live Oak St. from Oltorf St. to S. Congress Ave. and an alternate to Oltorf St. (PW)

Recommendation D9: Amend the Austin Bicycle Plan to designate Brackenridge and Nickerson Streets as an alternate to Route #47 (Congress Avenue). (PW)

Recommendation D10: Add striped bike lanes to Willow Springs Road from Woodward St. to Alpine Rd. (PW)

***Objective: Improve the accessibility of public transit.***

Recommendation D11: Improve the bus stop at Riverside Dr. and Travis Heights Blvd. to include a cover. (Capital Metro)

Recommendation D12: Increase the frequency of route #14. (Capital Metro)

***Objective: Improve auto safety and efficiency***

Recommendation D13: Conduct a traffic calming study in the Sherwood Oaks subdivision (within the St. Edward's Neighborhood Planning Area), particularly on Long Bow Ln. and St. Edwards Dr. (PW)

Recommendation D14: Make improvements as needed to improve traffic safety at the intersection at Post Rd. and College St. at Congress. (PW)

Recommendation D15: Do not extend Alpine Rd. east to Payload Pass. (PW & WPDR)

Recommendation D16: Close the illegal road into St. Edward's University from St. Edwards Dr. (PW)

Recommendation D17: Prohibit access to St. Edward's University from Eastside Dr. in an effort to reduce the amount of cut-through traffic through the Sherwood Oaks subdivision. (PW)

Recommendation D18: Clear the storm drains in the area of Annie St. and Eastside Dr. to prevent clogged inlets from flooding and creating a safety hazard. (AWU & SW)

***Objective: Minimize the impacts of parking and arterial roadways on the neighborhood.***

Recommendation D19: Prohibit parking on lawns as part of the NPCD ordinance. (NPZD)

Recommendation D20: Develop ways to mitigate noise emanating from IH-35 from impacting the surrounding neighborhoods. (TxDOT & PW)

Recommendation D21: Relocate the IH-35 on-ramp near St. Edward's Dr. to increase safety hazard and reduce cut through traffic. (TxDOT)

Recommendation D22: Keep the neighborhood informed of plans to expand IH-35. (TxDOT)

Recommendation D23: Identify parking spillover problems into neighborhoods from commercial and multifamily developments and support petitions for residential-parking-only designation on these streets. (SRCC)

Recommendation D24: Discourage any variances or waivers for parking reduction on any new or expanding developments and discourage off-site parking, particularly across arterial roadways such as Riverside Dr., S. Congress Ave., IH-35, Ben White Blvd. and Oltorf St. (SRCC & WPDR)

Recommendation D25: Develop and implement actions to discourage motorists and delivery trucks from cutting through the neighborhood on local streets and speeding through as an alternate route to the arterial roadways between S. Congress Ave. and IH-35. (PW)

Recommendation D26: When properties north of Riverside Dr. near Town Lake redevelop, provide internal streets to improve vehicle circulation and reduce the stress on S. Congress Ave. and Riverside Dr. (Developer & WPDR)

***Objective: Promote multi-modal approaches to improve mobility.***

Recommendation D27: Conduct a comprehensive transportation study of the neighborhood and develop recommendations to promote multi-modal transportation choices. (PW)

# Environment

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Goal (E): Protect and enhance creeks, greenbelts and watershed systems.

**Objective: Preserve and improve the water quality, base flow and natural quality of all creeks and waterways throughout the neighborhood.**

Recommendation E1: Consistent with the ROMA Town Lake Master Plan, new development along East Bouldin Creek should provide a 80-foot natural buffer from the creek centerline. Variances or waivers to this should only be considered if the proposed development incorporates design and/or environmental features further preserving and enhancing the creek. (WPDR)

Recommendation E2: Improve the base flows and water quality of Harper’s Branch Creek. (WPDR)

Recommendation E3: Encourage the City to adopt greater water quality protections for urban watersheds consistent with the proposed Headwaters Protection Ordinance developed by Watershed Protection and Development Review staff. (WPDR)

Recommendation E4: Identify, promote, and subsidize detention measures for private lots, including rainwater collection, berm and swale use, soil amendments, etc. (WPDR & City’s Greenbuilding Program)

Recommendation E5: Encourage future commercial and multifamily development to incorporate Low Impact Development devices shown below. (Figure 7.13). (WPDR)

<p><b>FIGURE 7.13: Low Impact Development</b></p> <p>Low Impact Development is an innovative approach to managing runoff close to its source through small-scale controls such as rainbarrels, bioretention ponds, and open drainage swales. LIDs mimic a site’s predevelopment hydrology by using design techniques to infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff. LIDs are more environmentally friendly and more versatile than traditional end-of-pipe facilities.</p>	
<p>Bioretention Pond at Blunn Creek Apartments</p>	

Recommendation E6: Install cedar logs or other measures, including planting native grasses and forbs, along creek banks and in the floodplain to slow the flow of water down banks in an effort to ease problems with erosion. (WPDR)

***Objective: Preserve and improve the water quality, base flow and natural quality of Blunn Creek.***

Recommendation E7: Work with property owners along Blunn Creek to maintain conservation easements, natural buffers, and pedestrian connections to the greenbelt. (SRCC & PARD)

Recommendation E8: As part of the Austin Clean Water project, relocate wastewater lines out of Blunn Creek. (AWU)

Recommendation E9: Reorient storm water pipe outlets into Blunn Creek to not cause or exacerbate erosion. (AWU)

Recommendation E10: Explore the possibilities of constructing regional detention and water quality ponds or other measures on privately owned properties, particularly the Austin Independent School District property off Alpine Rd. and the St. Edward's University property near the Woodward/IH 35 intersection, in order to control downstream flooding and resulting erosion of the stream banks. (WPDR)

Recommendation E11: Maintain the vacant AISD property on Alpine Rd. as a water-quality preserve to protect the headwaters of Blunn Creek. (WPDR)

Recommendation E12: Include an outdoor educational facility, should a detention and infiltration system is constructed on the AISD tract. (WPDR & PARD)

Recommendation E13: Encourage the City to acquire and maintain the property located on Alpine Drive (identified as Tract 120 in the neighborhood plan rezoning ordinance) as a conservation easement. (WPDR)

Recommendation E14: Explore ways to stabilize the trees along Blunn Creek to prevent them from collapsing into the creek until detention ponds or other erosion measures are implemented. (PARD & WPDR)

Recommendation E15: Explore and implement methods to capture and release the run-off from the Travis Heights Elementary School site in a more effective manner. (WPDR)

Recommendation E16: Implement recommendations from the City's Watershed Protection Master Plan for Blunn Creek to prevent flooding and erosion problems and improve water quality (Figure 7.14). (WPDR)

<b>FIGURE 7.14: Preferred Watershed Protection Solutions Blunn Creek Watershed</b>	
Erosion and Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforced Earth (erosion side slope projects)</li> <li>• Gabions/Concrete Riprap (erosion side slope projects)</li> <li>• Geomorphically-Referenced River Engineering (GRRE)</li> <li>• Erosion Detention</li> <li>• Erosion Detention + Wet Ponds</li> <li>• Erosion Detention + Wet Ponds + Baseflow Extended Detention</li> </ul>
Flood Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Property Acquisition (buyouts) for Flood Control</li> <li>• Flood Detention</li> <li>• Replacements of Structural Constrictions</li> </ul>

Recommendation E17: Uncap the springs located near Big Stacy Pool as a means to ensure minimal flow in Blunn Creek. (WPDR)

Recommendation E18: Compile and make available to the public the results of previous studies and inventories measuring the base flows and water quality of Blunn Creek. (WPDR)

Recommendation E19: Notify the neighborhood association prior to conducting dye testing in Blunn Creek to explain the reason for the testing and how to obtain results of the testing upon its conclusion. (WPDR)

Recommendation E20: Close Sunset Lane between East Side Dr. and Alameda Ave., remove the pavement and extend Little Stacy Park to mitigate the increasing erosion problem in the area (Figure 7.15). (PARD, PW, & WPDR)



FIGURE 7.15: Location of Proposed Sunset Lane closure

Recommendation E21: Work with faculty and students at Travis High School and St. Edward's University to develop a Blunn Creek research project. (SRCC & WPDR)

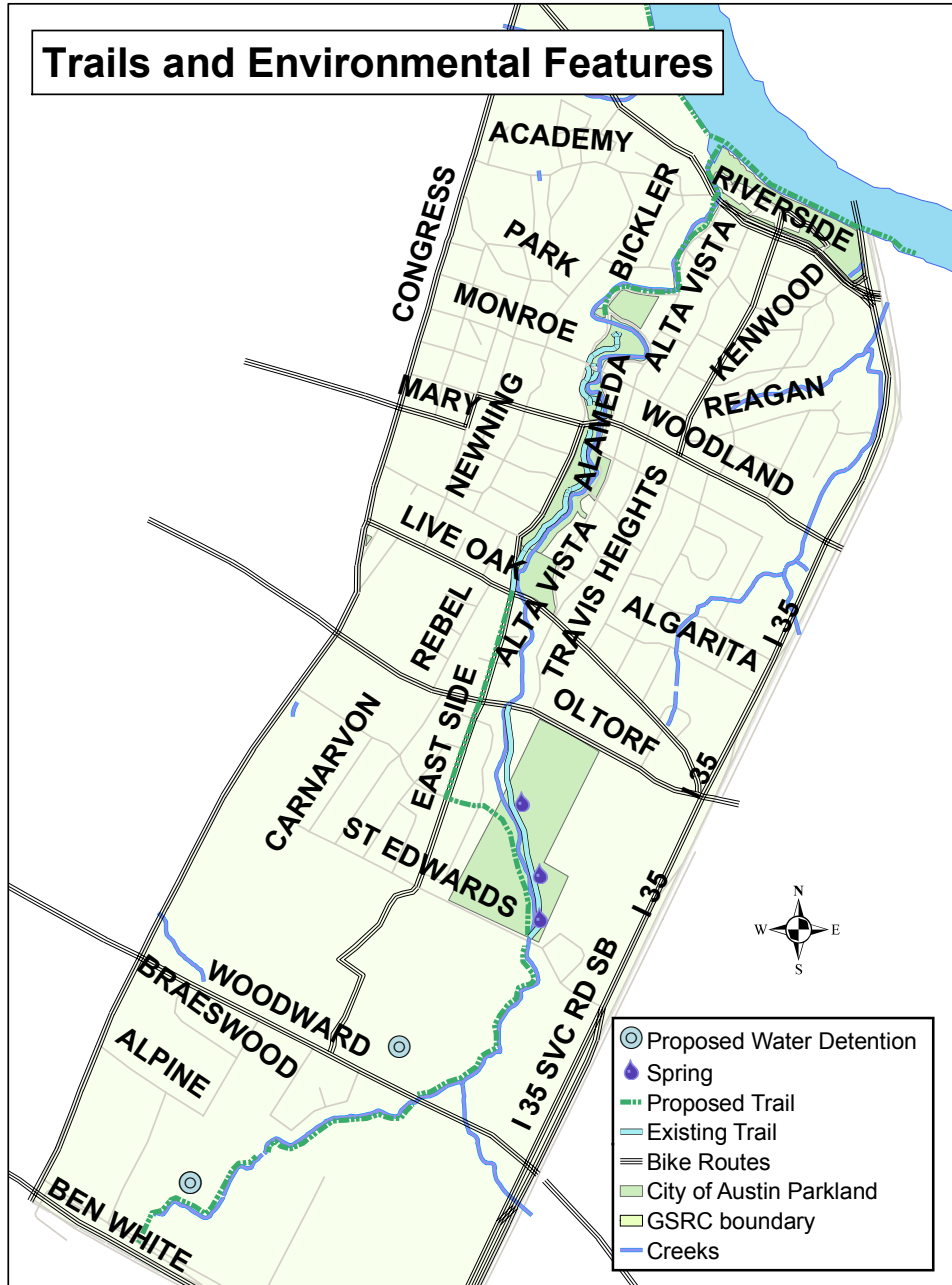


FIGURE 7.16: Bike Routes, Trails, Parkland and Water Resources

Recommendation E22: Collect survey information indicating location and size of trees along the Blunn Creek Greenbelt. (SRCC)

Recommendation E23: Create a volunteer water quality testing program. (SRCC)

Recommendation E24: Find and index historical photos of Blunn Creek and park to track changes over time. (SRCC)

***Objective: Mitigate problems with localized flooding in the St. Edward's Neighborhood planning area.***

Recommendation E25: Resolve the localized flooding problems on St. Edwards Drive between Sherwood Lane and Friar Tuck Lane. (PW)

***Objective: Preserve and protect the live oak trees in the neighborhood by mitigating the spread of oak wilt.***

Recommendation E26: Monitor for the spread of oak wilt and implement strategies as needed to prevent further contamination.

## Parks and Open Space

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Goal (F): Preserve and enhance the natural beauty, open spaces, and air quality of the neighborhood.

***Objective: Preserve and enhance the Blunn Creek Greenbelt &***

***Objective: Work to create a continuous hike and bike trail along Blunn Creek from Town Lake to Ben White Boulevard.***

Recommendation F1: Provide a pedestrian/bicycle connection from the Blunn Creek Greenbelt to Town Lake Trail (Figure 7.16). (PARD)

Recommendation F2: Construct a pedestrian/bicycle trail adjacent to Blunn Creek to the largest extent possible from Ben White Boulevard to Town Lake Trail and designate an alternate improved route along Eastside Drive between Live Oak and St. Edwards to maintain the natural surface of the trail through the Blunn Creek Preserve (Figure 7.16). (PARD)

Recommendation F3: Install pedestrian connections to the Blunn Creek trail from the surrounding neighborhood when an improved trail is constructed. (PW)



Recommendation F4: Improve the design and aesthetic of the park tables throughout the Blunn Creek Greenbelt, particularly in the section of the greenbelt on the west side of Blunn Creek across the creek from Travis Heights Elementary. (PARD, KAB, & AIPP)

Recommendation F5: Reconfigure the parking lot at Big Stacy Park to improve ingress, egress, and internal circulation. (PARD)

Recommendation F6: Remove nonnative trees and vegetation, such as ligustrum, bamboo, and nandina, along Blunn Creek and replace with native trees and vegetation. (PARD & WPDR)

Recommendation F7: Make repairs as needed to the footbridges crossing Blunn Creek, in particular the bridge near Travis Heights Elementary School and Big Stacy Park. (PARD)

Recommendation F8: Improve the design of bridges crossing Blunn Creek to ensure they do not block flow, exacerbating eddying and erosion. (PARD)

Recommendation F9: Use native materials such as limestone in bridge construction. (PARD)

Recommendation F10: Reduce the width of the south access road to Little Stacy Park. (PW)

Recommendation F11: Create a Citywide bird watching location list, including recognition and protection of Blunn Creek as prime site. (SRCC & Local chapter of Audubon Society)

***Objective: Preserve and improve the Town Lake Hike and Bike trail.***

Recommendation F12: Extend Town Lake Trail east of the Austin American-Statesman property to IH-35 (Figure 7.16). (PARD)

***Objective: Preserve and improve Norwood Park***

Recommendation F13: Work with neighborhood stakeholders to find a viable use for the Norwood House. (PARD)

Recommendation F14: Address the vandalism and graffiti problems at the Norwood House. (APD)

Recommendation F15: Provide needed infrastructure, such as water fountains, restrooms and a public telephone, at the Norwood House and park. (PARD)

Recommendation F16: Enhance Norwood Park to include park space and a fenced leash-free area for dogs. (PARD)

Recommendation F17: Provide bag stations at every park in the neighborhood and along the Blunn Creek Greenbelt to encourage owners to clean up after their dogs. (PARD)

Recommendation F18: Provide access to Town Lake Trail from the Norwood Park area. (PARD)

***Objective: Preserve passive open space and easement known as “Ravine Park.”***

Recommendation F19: Maintain “Ravine Park” as permanent open space. (SRCC)

***Objective: Minimize the effects of lighting on the aesthetic and character of the neighborhood.***

Recommendation F20: Install lower, smaller-scale, dark-sky compatible park lighting, particularly in the area near Little Stacy Park. (PARD)

Recommendation F21: Collaborate with TxDOT to provide appropriately-scaled lighting along IH 35 near Ben White Blvd. (TxDOT)

## Public Safety

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Goal (G): Improve safety and reduce crime.

Recommendation G1: Develop strategies to prevent speeding and drag racing through the neighborhood, including directed patrols on St. Edwards Drive during the lunch hour and planting of trees along roadway to diminish open sight lines. (APD & PW)

Recommendation G2: Post speed limit signs on St. Edwards Drive. (PW)

Recommendation G3: Address problems with automobile break-ins and vandalism in the southern portion of the Travis Heights neighborhood near Oltorf and IH-35. (APD)

Recommendation G4: Address the problems with loitering and consumption of alcohol in the “Triangle” Park on South Congress and E. Live Oak. (APD)

## Community Support

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Goal (H): Foster a locale where each person has the greatest possible opportunity to pursue individual, family and community goals—whether academic, economic, cultural, artistic, athletic, recreational, or spiritual.

Recommendation H1: Use planning process to build community, promote youth projects, and avoid typical land use conflicts. (SRCC, AMA, SACA, Property Owners, & NPZD)

# Greater South River City Combined Neighborhood Plan Design Guidelines

The following Neighborhood Design Guidelines provide a common basis for making consistent decisions about building and streetscape design that may affect the character of a neighborhood.

***Adherence to the guidelines is voluntary.***

They are not intended to limit development within the Greater South River City Combined Neighborhood Planning Area. The intent is to provide ideas for the appearance of new development, redevelopment, or remodeling.

These guidelines focus primarily on the streetscape – the publicly viewed area between the fronts of buildings along the street. This area includes the streets, sidewalks, front yards, building facades or fronts, porches, and driveways. The guidelines are separated into residential and commercial guidelines.

The purpose of the design guidelines is to encourage any new development in the neighborhood to:

- **Respect the prevailing neighborhood character.**
- **Ensure compatibility and encourage adjacent land uses to complement each other.**
- **Enhance and enliven the streetscape.**

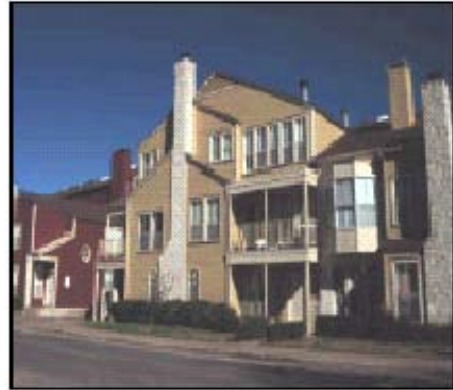
# RESIDENTIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

## Neighborhood Character

**NC-1:** New single family and multi-family construction should be compatible with existing and historic home architecture. Building heights, construction materials, and architectural details should enhance the existing character of the neighborhood.



4-plex in single family neighborhood (Detroit)



Infill development in Lafayette, IN



Secondary Apartments in GSRC



**NC-2:** Where allowed, secondary apartments should be compatible with existing and historic architecture. One-story structures set back from the street respect surrounding residences.

**NC-3:** Utilize the Green Home Checklist whenever possible. Use local materials, consider water needs for landscaping, maintain efficient heating and cooling systems, and consider consulting with green building professionals for structural details and site plans.

[www.ci.austin.tx.us/greenbuilder/](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/greenbuilder/)



**NC-4:** Landscaped front yards with porches or balconies and a walkway connecting the building to the street sidewalk are encouraged. Front doors and windows facing the street encourage neighborliness and enhance security by putting “eyes on the street”. Ground floor suites should have exterior doors facing the street.



Single-family homes in Austin (upper left), St. Paul, MN (lower left), & Chattanooga, TN (lower right)

**NC-5:** Duplexes should have at least one framed entrance that faces the street and should reflect the scale, height, and appearance of homes around them. Multifamily building facades that express the interior organization of suites or structural bays relate better to the scale of single-family houses.



Duplexes (above); Duplex in Calgary, Canada

**NC-6:** Mechanical equipment (air conditioners, electric meters, gas meters, etc.) and garbage cans or garbage storage areas are best located to the side or rear of the house where they cannot be seen from the street. Equipment should be screened if the location is visible from the street.



## **Landscaping**

**L-1:** Provide ample space in side and front yards for trees, landscaping, or open space. Use native landscaping (xeriscaped) in the front yards of houses whenever possible. City of Austin Preferred plant list may be found at [www.ci.austin.tx.us/growgreen/landscaping.htm](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/growgreen/landscaping.htm).



**L-2:** Trees should be preserved and protected to the greatest extent possible. Trees not only enhance the character of homes and the neighborhood, but they also provide shade, which helps cool homes, streets, and sidewalks and reduces the urban heat island effect.



Residential Streetscape (Cleveland, OH)



Trees provide shade and help keep this house cool



## Pedestrian Assets

**L-3:** If a fence along the front property line (and side property line if a corner lot) is desired, it should be low enough to see over the top (less than 4 feet) or made of a see-through material in order to avoid creating a walled-off appearance.



House with picket fence (Santa Monica, CA)



**PA-1:** Multifamily parking lots along the street detract from the pedestrian-oriented character of the neighborhood and are discouraged. Locate parking lots to the side or rear of the building or buffer the lot from street view by a fence or hedge. The fence or hedge should be high enough to screen the cars, yet low enough to allow visibility for security purposes and to help preserve the quality of the streetscape.



Apartments with parking in the back

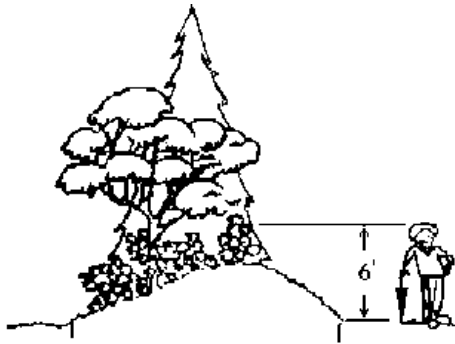


**PA-2:** The sidewalk should provide a continuous safe zone for pedestrians with as few curb cuts as possible. Sidewalks and curb ramps should be designed to meet all accessibility requirements. Building driveways to the minimum dimensions allowed by City of Austin Transportation Criteria Manual improves pedestrian comfort and safety.

# COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

## Compatibility

**CC-1:** Respect residents living in multi-family zoning districts with the same vegetative buffers and setbacks afforded to single family residences.



**CC-2:** Where sufficient right of way exists, landscaped buffers including earthen berms should be used to screen and acoustically insulate residential areas abutting commercial corridors.

**CC-3:** South Congress businesses with outside patios can minimize disturbances to adjacent residential neighborhoods by limiting late night operational hours and directing speakers away from homes. Vegetative buffers can help to diffuse noise.





**CC-4:** New and existing businesses can support enhanced public transportation along commercial roadways to reduce the stresses of parking and automobile noise on adjacent neighborhoods. Providing bike racks and supporting alternative transportation reduces the need for parking.

## Streetscape

**S-1:** New structures and renovations on South Congress should maintain existing and historic architectural details. Attention to building heights and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes enhance the compatibility of commercial strips with residential areas.



Streetscape in Minneapolis, MN



South Congress



Little Italy (Cleveland, OH)



**S-2:** Dividing building facades into 30-foot (more or less) wide bays helps reduce the overwhelming size of large buildings. Using different materials and colors or recessing the alternating bays of the building are effective ways to create human-scale streetscapes. Ground floor windows provide a more inviting, pleasant place for pedestrians.

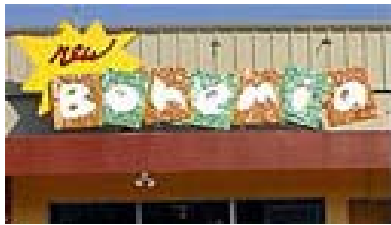
**S-3:** Incorporating locally produced art into commercial architecture brings the unique character of the neighborhood to its business district.



Clockwise from top: East 11<sup>th</sup> St. mosaic; Yard Dog; Austin mural; Lucy in Disguise



**S-4:** Signs along Congress Avenue, Oltorf Street, and Riverside Drive should be at pedestrian scale and attached to built structures.



## **Landscaping**

**L-1:** Parking and service areas are best located at the rear of commercial buildings with limited uses at the side. Parking adjacent to residential areas is discouraged. Parking areas should be screened with ample vegetation. Curb cuts should be minimized. Landscaping should provide shade and shelter for pedestrians, bike rack areas, and parked automobiles.



## Pedestrian Assets



**PA-1:** Provide human-scaled lighting to light commercial sidewalks and public areas. Provide shade trees or awnings on buildings along sidewalks of commercial streets to protect pedestrians.



**PA/S-4:** Consolidate street furnishings and utility equipment necessary for the function of the street on the edge of the easement to make walking easier and safer. Mount street signs, traffic control signals, and lights on one pole to reduce the number of impediments along a sidewalk.



Utility equipment conflicts with pedestrian movement

**PA-5:** Buffers should include a pedestrian and bicycle path if sidewalks and bike lanes are not provided adjacent to the traffic lanes.



# Appendix A: Affordability Impact Statement



City of Austin

MEMO

P.O. Box 1088, Austin, TX 78767  
[www.cityofaustin.org/housing](http://www.cityofaustin.org/housing)

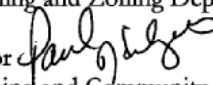
## Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department

Paul Hilgers, Director

(512) 974-3108, Fax: (512) 974-1063, [paul.hilgers@ci.austin.tx.us](mailto:paul.hilgers@ci.austin.tx.us)

Date: August 16, 2005

To: Alice Glasco, Director  
Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department

From: Paul Hilgers, Director   
Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department

Subject: Affordability Impact Statement: South River City Neighborhood Plan

The Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Departments finds that the proposed neighborhood plans from the St. Edward's Planning Team and the South River City Planning Team do not promote housing affordability.

The South River City Planning Team establishes an objective related to preserving housing affordability in Goal ( C ) and then offers recommendations that will not expand housing affordability opportunities in the neighborhood:

1. Recommendation C1 suggests that areas be identified "where mixed use would enhance the livability of the neighborhoods and rezone accordingly". This recommendation does not link increased development entitlements to housing affordability goals. The pattern of mixed-use and multi-family development in this planning area has not yielded a single S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ since the City Council adopted the S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ Policy Initiative on April 20, 2000. The failure to link multi-family or mixed-use entitlements in the proposed neighborhood plan to housing affordability is likely to reinforce the pattern of the past five years.
2. Recommendation C2 seeks to "preserve existing multi-family housing and discourage redevelopment to higher-density housing or other uses". This recommendation does not acknowledge the link between increasing density and creating housing affordability. Existing multi-family housing can not be replaced with new housing that meets all current City codes unless the rental housing is more expensive than the housing it replaces or a level of affordability is achieved by linking new entitlements to housing affordability. Examples of this approach include the adopted University Neighborhood Overlay governing the West Campus area near the University of

*The City of Austin is committed to compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. Reasonable modifications and equal access to communications will be provided upon request.*



Texas and the proposed North Hyde Park Neighborhood Conservation Combining District (NCCD). In order to achieve the stated goal of housing affordability, the Neighborhood Plan could incorporate these types of linkages between density and development entitlements and housing affordability. The challenge would be making this linkage without either an overlay (such as University Neighborhood Overlay) or a NCCD (such as North Hyde Park). The Community Preservation and Revitalization Implementation Recommendations submitted to the City Council on July 28, 2005 call for density bonuses linked to housing affordability to be examined in all neighborhood planning areas.

3. Recommendation C3 does not adopt the secondary apartment infill option in most of the planning area. This option would allow garage apartments on residential lots that are greater than 5,5750 square feet and less than 7,000 square feet except in the neighborhood's Fairview Park NCCD. If the garage apartments are constructed and serve families at 80% Median Family Income or below, then approval of this element of the proposed neighborhood plan could promote housing affordability. Neighborhood Planning and Zoning staff is recommending small lot amnesty and secondary apartments throughout the planning area.

The St. Edward's Neighborhood Plan does not adopt any infill options that are likely to promote housing affordability. The garage apartment infill option is rejected throughout the planning area. In addition, the proposed rezoning would limit several multi-family sites to redevelopment at a maximum height of 40 feet. Lessons learned from redevelopment in the University Neighborhood Overlay is that construction pursuant to the 2003 International Building Code allows a concrete and steel parking garage at ground level and a four-story full sprinklered wood frame multi-family above. This means that the redevelopment results in safer housing, since sprinklered apartments are replacing unsprinklered housing. In addition, the amount of impervious cover is reduced by providing some of the required parking under building. This design reduces costs associated with on-site detention and creates opportunities for housing affordability. Given the neighborhood's location adjacent to St. Edward's University and the projected increase in enrollment there, adopting a change to the neighborhood plan that would eliminate the 40 foot height restriction for development that met S.M.A.R.T. Housing™ standards could create increased opportunities for housing affordability.

Please contact Gina Copic at 974-3154 if you need additional information.



Paul Hilgers, Community Development Officer  
Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department

Cc: Ricardo Soliz, NPZD  
Gina Copic

## Appendix B: Initial Survey Results

The Initial Survey was conducted between November 2003 and May 2004. The survey was initially distributed as an insert to the South River City Citizens neighborhood association newsletter. It was later made available on-line.

What is the name of your neighborhood?

<b>Travis Heights/Areas 3 &amp; 4</b>	144	63%
<b>Sherwood Oaks/Area 5</b>	32	14%
<b>Bluebonnet Hills/Area 2</b>	13	6%
<b>Fairview Park/Area 1</b>	13	6%
<b>St. Edwards</b>	5	2%
<b>Ben White/Area 8</b>	2	1%
<b>South River City</b>	19	8%

What things do you like most about your neighborhood? (Top 10 responses)

- |                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Homes/Architecture    | 6. Location                   |
| 2. Proximity to downtown | 7. Parks and Preserves        |
| 3. Stacy Pool/Park       | 8. Close to Congress/Shopping |
| 4. Trees                 | 9. Diversity/Community        |
| 5. Neighbors/People      | 10. Quiet                     |

What are the most important issues in the neighborhood? (Top 10 responses)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Traffic/Speeding                     | 6. Noise  |
| 2. Land Use/Zoning/Growth Management    | 7. Historic Preservation/Neighborhood Character |
| 3. Crime/Safety                         | 8. Pedestrian Safety/Sidewalks                  |
| 4. High Taxes/Property Values           | 9. Housing Affordability                        |
| 5. Environmental Protection/Blunn Creek | 10. Parking                                     |

Are there adequate shops and stores to serve your neighborhood? **Paper Survey Only**

Yes	81%
No	19%

Are there adequate professional offices to serve your neighborhood? **Paper Survey Only**

Yes 65%  
No 35%

New professional or business office would be acceptable in the following parts of the neighborhood: **Online Survey Only**

<b>Along major roads</b>	46
<b>Along some local streets</b>	6
<b>Anywhere</b>	2
<b>Nowhere</b>	20

New local/neighborhood stores would be acceptable in the following parts of the neighborhood:

Along major roads	149
Along some local streets	10
Anywhere	8
Nowhere	50

New apartments, townhouses, and/or condominiums would be acceptable to me in the following parts of the neighborhood:

Along major roads	81
Along some local streets	17
Anywhere	13
Nowhere	87

New office complexes or industrial parks would be acceptable in the following parts of the neighborhood:

Along major roads	69
Large vacant tracts	4
Anywhere	1
Nowhere	124

Do you support lowering the lot size for new garage apartments and granny flats?

<b>Agree</b>	84	36%
<b>Neutral</b>	29	13%
<b>Disagree</b>	119	51%

Do you support lowering the lot size for new single-family homes?

Agree	71	31%
Neutral	30	13%
Disagree	131	56%

Could you support the corner store infill option for your neighborhood? **Online Survey Only**

Agree	44	60%
Neutral	6	8%
Disagree	23	32%

Are there any important historic buildings or places that deserve special recognition and preservation?

1. S. Congress storefronts
2. Stacy Park and Pool
3. All of Travis Heights
4. St. Edwards Building
5. All pre-WW II houses

Which streets in the neighborhood need sidewalks the most? (Top 8 responses)

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Woodland/Annie | 6. Eastside    |
| 2. Monroe         | 6. Live Oak    |
| 3. Travis Heights | 8. Congress    |
| 4. Riverside      | 8. St. Edwards |
| 5. Long Bow       |                |

Does your neighborhood lack any of the following? **Online Survey Only**

Through Streets	4
Sidewalks	44
Trails	12
Bike Lanes	27
Convenient Bus Routes	8

Are any of the following in need of major repair or reconfiguration? **Online Survey Only**

Street Network	14
Sidewalks	22
Bus Routes	9
Bike Lanes	13
Trails	9

Which Austin Park do you use most frequently?

Big & Little Stacy	168
Zilker	16
Town Lake	14
Blunn Creek Greenbelt/Preserve	9
Riverside Dog Park	2

If a nearby park, greenbelt, or recreational area was to be developed or improved, what would your priorities be?

- |                                 |                                       |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Preserve/Improve Blunn Creek | 3. Preserve/Reestablish Natural Areas |
| 2. Hike & Bike Trails           | 5. Maintenance                        |
| 3. Landscaping/Beautification   | 5. No improvements needed             |

Are there parts of the neighborhood that experience flooding during heavy rains?

Yes 31%  
No 69%

Top 3 responses:

Sherwood Oaks Subdivision	21
Eastside/Live Oak/Oltorf area	5
Congress @ Riverside	5

Do you wish to prohibit front yard parking in your neighborhood?

Yes 60%  
No 40%

How long have you lived in the neighborhood?\*

<b>Less than 1 year</b>	15	8%
<b>1 to 4 years</b>	37	19%
<b>5 to 9 years</b>	61	31%
<b>10 to 14 years</b>	27	14%
<b>15 to 20 years</b>	32	16%
<b>21 or more years</b>	27	14%

What type of housing do you live in?\*

House	190	86%
Duplex/Fourplex	15	7%
Townhouse/Condo	8	4%
Apartment	9	4%

Are you a homeowner or renter?

Owner	192	88%
Renter	27	12%

What is your age?\*

15-24 yrs	1	0%
25-35 yrs	38	17%
36-45 yrs	71	32%
46-65 yrs	91	41%
Over 65	19	9%

What is your ethnic background?\*

African-American	1	0%
Anglo	181	84%
Asian	4	2%
Hispanic	18	8%
Multi-racial	10	5%
Other	1	0%

\* The percentages for these results do not total 100% due to rounding.

## Appendix B: Final Survey Results

Total Number of Surveys - **109**

Selected Dates **05/31/2005 - 07/15/2005**

<b>Part A. Issues</b>	
<b>Percentage Selected</b>	<b>Issue Description</b>
78.0%	New construction and remodeling should be built in proportion to surrounding homes. This includes limiting height, massing, and maintaining appropriate setbacks.
56.0%	Protect historic resources such as buildings, bridges, and gateways.
42.2%	Maintain affordable housing and diversity of housing types.
59.6%	Minimize impact on residential areas by providing adequate parking, landscaping, and other buffers against noise, lighting, and garbage.
18.3%	Limit future growth of businesses along Oltorf and Woodward.
67.9%	Limit industrial activities in the neighborhood to protect the creeks, environment, and nearby homes.
30.3%	Foster a diverse mix of locally owned businesses along South Congress that maintains retail and limits the number of bars and restaurants.
69.7%	Encourage a bicycle and pedestrian friendly neighborhood.
41.3%	Calm automobile traffic and reduce the number of vehicles that cut through the neighborhood.
41.3%	Support and enhance public transportation.
66.1%	Protect and clean the creeks in the neighborhood.
50.5%	Monitor for the spread of oak wilt and implement additional strategies as needed.
61.5%	Protect and enhance the Blunn Creek Greenbelt.
30.3%	Create a trail along Blunn Creek from Town Lake to Ben White Boulevard.
30.3%	Extend the Town Lake Hike and Bike Trail to IH 35.
11.9%	Preserve and improve Norwood Park.
17.4%	Maintain open space and the area known as "Ravine Park."

51.4%	Make the shopping centers at the corner of Congress Avenue and Oltorf Street more walkable “neighborhood centers”.
17.4%	Take care of backyard flooding problems in the St. Edwards neighborhood area.
51.4%	Make the neighborhood a safer place to live with less crime.
11.0%	Make sure the neighborhood helps everyone reach their personal, family and community goals.

"Other" Issues Comments

## B. Support

Rate your level of support for the plan based on how well the items listed in Part A represent your concerns.

Percentage Selected	Issue Description
32.1%	Full Support
56.0%	Generally Supportive
8.3%	Generally Unsupportive
0.0%	No Support

Support Comments

Most of the items listed above involve expenditures of tax-payer money for what should be purely private initiatives. It is not an appropriate function of city government to pick winners and losers, or to make esthetic judgments with respect to (non-hazardous) uses of private property.
The plan needs a final proof read. For example, in the Executive Summary and on page 3 of the introduction (perhaps elsewhere, too), "GSRC is comprised of two neighborhood planning areas:" should read, "GSRC comprises two neighborhood planning areas:"
Generally supportive but plan does not distinguish priorities very well except sidewalks. too little info ,too late undecided
I appreciate your efforts to involve me, and I think you do as well as one could expect to keep me informed. Thank you for your efforts on my behalf. If the final plan presented to the city council meets my 10 choices in Part A, I would Fully Support it. I find this "Part B" vague and deceptive. It should be a stronger statement: "Rate your level of support of the plan based on how well the items you selected in Part A are addressed by the plan." Only parts A & B will be used by City staff to seriously claim that the neighborhood supports the plan. Items in Part A underrepresent the associated



<p>recommendations in the plan. Apart from that the "Mark the 10" exercise will produce satisfactory useless results. And Part B?? Come on...the directions tell respondents to ignore the plan and evaluate the items in Part A once again.</p> <p>I oppose any limitation on restaurants on South Congress and limitations on businesses on Oltorf. Trail development should be low priority in today's economy.</p>
<p>Only Part a &amp; B will be used by City staff to claim that the neighborhood supports the plan. Items in Part A underrepresent the associated recommendations in the plan. Apart from that the "mark the 10" exercise will produce statistically useless results. And Part B? Come on! the directions tell respondents to ignore the plan and evaluate the items in Part A once again.</p>
<p>Only Part a &amp; B will be used by City staff to claim that the neighborhood supports the plan. Items in Part A underrepresent the associated recommendations in the plan. Apart from that the "mark the 10" exercise will produce statistically useless results. And Part B? Come on! the directions tell respondents to ignore the plan and evaluate the items in Part A once again.</p> <p>They are pretty close.</p> <p>What plan are you referring to, since the COA planners came up with a land use plan that differs from the plan by people who live here? How do I know what you're referring to?</p>
<p>City Staff appear to have had their own agenda throughout this process. The neighborhood overwhelmingly rejected small lot amnesty and secondary "apartments" but staff is determined to impose them on our neighborhood. According to staff's map, our house is on two lots --and one is a VERY small lot. If small lot amnesty is imposed on Travis Heights, after I die a developer could tear our wonderful house down and throw up a multiunit monstrosity. We're not stupid; we know the City wants an excuse to get more property taxes from this area. Destroying the character of the neighborhood is not the way to do that.</p>
<p>Less Peter Calthorpe coastal urbanism more Texas/climate centered considerations.</p>
<p>full staff support</p>
<p>I am generally supportive of the items that I marked. I am not supportive of all of the items on the list.</p>
<p>I can't complain if I don't offer help.</p> <p>I do not support staff positions that differ from the Greater South River City Neighborhood plan.</p>
<p>I do not support staff positions that differ from the recommendations of the South River City Neighbor plan.</p>
<p>I love Travis Heights, but we need to see ourselves as part of the city, not</p>

stand alone neighborhood.

## Part C. Help us improve the neighborhood planning process by answering the questions below.

1. How did you participate in the neighborhood planning process?

Percentage Selected	Description of Participation
66.1%	Survey(s)
16.5%	Workshop(s)
17.4%	Neighborhood Planning Meeting(s)
11.0%	Correspondence with staf
18.3%	Neighborhood Association Meetings
19.3%	I was not involved

2. What did you think about the neighborhood planning meetings? What worked? What didn't work?

The process was fine, but I worry about the result. I think it is important to ensure that the recommendations of the neighborhood, those immediately affected by zoning, are adopted and enforced.

N/A

n/a

useless

2 little , 2 late

Great idea. Sorry to miss this one.

one or two people controlled the meeting, mostly older neighborhood group members, They did not necessarily represent the neighborhood, just their personal interest.

Attended some of early meetings.

n/a

I was unable to attend.

Issues were well presented and there was adequate opportunity for discussion and compromise.

Your own meeting schedule and notes show that lots was wrong. I do not believe that your "SOC" list came from us. I think city staff dummied it up.

Your own meeting schedule and notes show that lots was wrong. I do not believe that your "SOC" list came from us. I think city staff dummied it

up.			
poor notification; low differentiation between what a plan is and an ordinance-and what's extraneous to it and irrelevant.			
N/A - Although I have communicated my concerns to our rep (from Great Outdoors)			
The same small group of amateurs are controlling the process and making decisions detrimental to city-wide interests.			
Dividing into groups for making recommendations did not work. More focus needs to be placed on FLUM and stated upfront if that is what really matters.			
Good idea to have planning meetings which communicates information to the neighbors; the walkabouts were a great help; perhaps a basic meeting with definitions would be helpful.			
good ; sometimes lengthy			
I think it was unfortunate that the COA planners (Adam & Scott,esp.) were point people for a particular "manifest destiny" of increasing the density in our neighborhood. They were in a sense set-up to introduce a concept unfavorable to the residents' conception of the area's future. Nonetheless, all the planners stayed on point and didn't take the animosity personal. Otherwise, it was nice to meet new to me people who were neighbors.			
I was unable to attend one.			
N/A			
difficult to keep from being grips sessions. Need more constructive criticism to generate solutions.			
Find ways to curb monologues to save time.			
open communications; well planned.			
You must get broader participation some how. The voting process suffered from a lack of broad participation and the one-off approach of having a single voting meeting.			
I did not like having people from outside the area having a say in the plan.			
I felt the meetingd were dominated by a few individuals that intimidated new people to the process. Not sure how you can improve. The city staff were very respectful of everyone.			
3. If you did not attend any workshops or meetings, why not? What would have encouraged you to participate?			
N.A.			
I would be encouraged to attend meetings of a private homeonwers association, rather than public meetings designed to determine the disposition			

of other people's property.		
did not know about it.		
Not interested in public meetings		
I did not know about them.		
Evenings are not good for us...weekends would be better		
Meeting times did not fit my work schedule.		
Scheduling conflicts. I travel a lot for work.		
had other obligations, so could only get to an occassional meeting		
My repeat situation is calendar conflict.		
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE HEARD OF THIS. I JUST MOVED TO THE AREA.		
schedule conflicts - work/other commitments		
I was not sure that as a renter I was included, I thought it was only for owners.		
business travel schedule		
Insufficient notice.		
Often city planners are not concerned about the views of their constituents ... they already have a plan rooted in political quid pro quo ... this makes constituents like myself a bit skeptical about the efficacy of workshops and meetings.		
I temporarily live in another state, not in my home there.		
I work full time and I'm trying to attain an MBA at St. Edward's. My classes always seem to coincide with the meetings.		
I almost always have class during the evening.		
Have severe time limitations - would have liked to attend more meetings.		
nothing		
see above		
Many of us fear SRCC. We don't want to be considered the enemy for disagreeing.		
Work interfere's with meeting times		
Time constraints; did not know when they occurred		
Work late in day		
Monday nights (and Wed.) scheduled work night. Would help if meetings could alternate between maybe First Monday and... First Tuesday?		
The timing of the meetings did not match my schedule well, but I think they were probably put at a good time for most others. I appreciate this survey		

very much.		
Plan is pretty much maintaining what already exists. If there were multiple plans/ideas might have had more interest.		
have survey's online		
itinerary for the meeting		
Hard to remember when they are. Signs in yards seem unclear as to timing sometimes. Newsletter usually comes to close to, or after a meeting time to plan		
As an owner representative of a commercial property located within the Greater South River City Neighborhood Association, we were not informed of any planning sessions and/or meetings until June, 2005. We are concerned regarding the lack/delay in notification.		
I own property in the neighborhood, but do not live there. Also, many of the meetings were held when I had previous commitments.		
schedule conflict - prior committment for Wednesdays		
Having a babysitter and not running a business! The only reason is time constraints. I rely on talking with neighbors and using our neighborhood website/list to keep up on things.		
Didn't know about them or Busy already when they came about.		
Unfortunately, my job requires me to travel unpredictably on a moments notice. Perhaps more opportunities/meetings would have helped.		
Frustration from past meetings having lived in the area 25 years.		
I pay seven council members to do what's right by us or get out of office. I resent it that they hide behind this sham neighborhood process. Are all involved subject to public info law?		
I pay seven council members to do what's right by us or get out of office. I resent it that they hide behind this sham neighborhood process. Are all involved subject to public info law?		
Why not?? No time; high bulls@!% quotient; the few and the loud speaking for the many		
Didn't know about them.		
being better informed about meeting times and places would have encouraged me to come and be more involved		
I didn't know about them. Info when, where and what would be discussed.		
Time factor - a varied work schedule.		
Didn't know dates of workshops or meetings.		
Lack of time		
I attended all planning meetings except the first.		

not sure, lack of time is always an issue for working people.	
N/A	
N/A/	
<p>1. Not sure how to involve people who don't speak English, but start would be to have bilingual or translated meetings at which all cultures are comfortable. 2. People who thought something would actually matter by their attendance, i.e., that by participating they could make a difference might get involved if they got the impression that participation meant being heeded.</p> <p>I was busy &amp; I did not plan enough time into my calendar. I will try for the next one.</p>	
I live out of state. Written surveys during process. (I was not aware of any, if there were some.	
N/A	
<p>Did not know about.</p> <p>Meetings on Saturdays would help.</p>	
4. How did you hear about upcoming meetings?	
<b>Percentage Selected</b>	<b>Description of Notification</b>
11.0%	Postcards
45.0%	Letters
8.3%	Word of mouth
2.8%	Door-to-door
15.6%	E-mail
2.8%	Walkabouts
0.0%	City Website
0.0%	Signs Posted throughout neighborhood
0.0%	SRCC Website
0.0%	SRCC Newsletter
1.8%	Phone calls
2.8%	Other
6.4%	I have never heard about any neighborhood planning meeting.
Items entered in "Other"	
5. In the Greater South River City Planning Area, I am a...	
<b>Percentage Selected</b>	<b>Description of Role</b>
15.6%	Renter

69.7%	Homeowner		
8.3%	Business Owner		
11.9%	Non-resident Property Owner		
3.7%	Other		
Items entered in "Other"			
30 yr homeowner			
I grew up in the house I still own there, so am very concerned about the future of the neighborhood.			
long time 12.5 years			
I am a homeowner of 47 years. This question is phrased to exclude interested citizens from other parts of the city.			
work on Riverside Drive			
work in the neighborhood			
future home owner			

# Appendix C: Strengths, Opportunities, & Challenges Exercise Results

The Strengths, Opportunities, & Challenges (SOC) Exercise was conducted during the First Community Workshop held on May 15, 2004. Stakeholders were separated into small groups and charged with brainstorming what the strengths and weaknesses of the neighborhood are. The results of this exercise served as a basis for discussion at subsequent plan development meetings and helped guide the future direction of the planning process.

The results are listed alphabetically.

## STRENGTHS

*Definition: positive attributes, things you want to preserve (i.e. parks, residential areas)*

Alexan Apartments

Artists

Assumption Cemetery

Austin American-Statesman

Bag supply stations for responsible pet owners

Blunn Creek

Blunn Creek Preserve

Bridge over Blunn Creek at Travis Elementary School

Bus service and bus stops on South Congress

Character of South Congress

Churches

Community involvement during large-scale development discussions

Convenience

Day cares

Diversity of housing types

Dog park

Existing street widths in residential areas

Farmer's Insurance

First Thursdays



Friendly neighbors  
Harper's Branch Creek  
Historical and architectural significance  
78704<sup>th</sup> of July  
Median/garden at East Side and E. Live Oak  
Mix of residences and businesses  
Neighborhood services, retail, entertainment  
Owner-occupancy  
Parking lot at apartment complex on Oltorf near Alta Vista (skateboard area)  
Parks and open space (Little Stacy, Big Stacy, Circle, and "Triangle")  
Paved alleys  
Pedestrians  
Penn Field  
Post office  
Proximity to downtown, Town Lake, small businesses, HEB and St. Ignatius  
Redevelopment potential in Area 8  
Schools  
Sense of community  
SF-2 zoning in Sherwood Oaks  
Sidewalks on Riverside  
Single-family residential areas  
South Congress (locally owned, small businesses; future improvements)  
St. Edward's University (vicinity to neighborhood, good access for walking/biking, adult education, entertainment)  
Tolerance  
Topography  
Town Lake and Town Lake Trail  
Treehouse Restaurant  
Trees/Biodiversity/Wildlife

Twin Oaks Library  
Underutilized land and buildings  
Vegetation and natural areas

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

*Definition: area where there is an opportunity for improvement or something that is missing/lacking in the area (i.e. redevelopment of retail center)*

Access to Town Lake from the Norwood House  
Additional trees in parking lots when constructed to mitigate urban heat island effect  
AISD tract in Area 8  
Appropriate infill and potential for increased density  
Area 8 – environmentally sensitive development, connectivity, detention pond, attention to creek  
Art shows in park  
Bealls Shopping Center  
Bike lanes – Area 4a  
Brush pickup schedules  
Capped springs in the median on Riverside near the dog park  
Clarification of what First Thursday is and the opportunity for businesses and neighbors to work together to resolve issues  
Close access to St. Edward's off St. Edwards Drive  
Close off The Circle at Nickerson  
Community structure  
Connect trail from Big Stacy to Blunn Creek Preserve  
Connect Blunn Creek trail to Town Lake trail  
Corner store  
Dead end of St. Edwards Drive  
Deli shops  
Develop more retail, less bars and restaurants  
Educate residents and City when to trim trees  
Extend Town Lake trail to I-35 and beyond

Four-way stop at Woodland and I-35  
Gardner Betts Juvenile Justice Center  
Green space  
Harper's Branch Creek  
Historic zoning through the Neighborhood Conservation Combining District  
Housing affordability  
I-35 – limits of expansion and consistent land uses  
More small businesses  
More trees on greenbelt  
Movie theaters  
No more tree removal by Austin Energy  
Norwood House  
Oltorf – overall improvement (wider lanes, turn lanes, 2 more lanes, mixed use)  
Park maintenance and clean-up by residents  
Protect scenic gateway to City south of Town Lake along I-35  
Protect single-family residential areas  
Riverside/S. Congress/Town Lake "Triangle" or Superblock – potential for redevelopment  
Save trees from oak wilt  
Schools  
Sidewalks (Travis Heights and Woodland among others)  
Signage to distinguish Woodland from Woodward for St. Edward's access  
South Congress – consistent land use, potential for redevelopment with high density, neighborhood services, confine retail to South Congress and to not extend into neighborhood, limit pubs and work to reduce nuisances with residents  
Southeast corner of South Congress and Riverside – potential for redevelopment  
St. Edward's University – athletic fields at Woodward and I-35  
Streambank stabilization  
Street lighting – low intensity, not intrusive  
Twin Oaks Shopping Center – opportunity to attract businesses serving larger area, pedestrian-oriented, living space, park land  
Vacant property owned by Baptist Church – redevelop with mixed use and parking  
Water detention pond at St. Edward's University on northern part of campus

Woodbury Drive

Woodward at I-35 – clarify entrance to St. Edward's

Work to improve compatibility between residential and commercial uses

## CHALLENGES

*Definition: issue prevalent throughout the neighborhood (or significant area) that would take the coordination of various groups and possible significant capital to resolve (i.e. overabundance of particular land use that has negative impact on area or redevelopment of a major corridor)*

Apartments (apartments off Mariposa near I-35, Alexan, Forest Creek Village and Heights)

Area 8

Beall's Shopping Center – misused, neglected, possible redevelopment with mixed use

Ben White – no big box developments, traffic and congestion, redevelopment potential, interchange

Better or more police patrol of Blunn Creek trails and preserve

Better/more sidewalks throughout neighborhood

Better/faster transit from St. Edward's University

Blunn Creek – revive and restore

Bus stops

Comprehensive transportation planning

Consultation from the Parks and Recreation Department

Crime (drug dealing, prostitution)

Cut through traffic (students cutting through Sherwood Oaks area to get to South Congress)

Do not extend Alpine Drive

Dog park – how to make user friendly?

Expose – relocate?

Gardner Betts Juvenile Justice Center

Gentrification and affordability

Hire.com

Ho Chi Minh Trail

Home Depot

Homelessness

I-35 – noise, air pollution, expansion plans, entrance ramp at St. Edward's Drive,  
removed grassy knoll hill at Reagan and replaced with concrete wall

Lighting

Liquor sales near schools

Neighborhood communication

Noise – Riverside, Auditorium Shores, Fiesta Gardens, nightclubs

Non-resident parking in neighborhood off South Congress limited to 2 hours

Oltorf and Oltorf/Congress – difficult access, need continuous turn lane

Pedestrian bridge across Oltorf at Travis High School

Preservation of historic homes

Restaurants/bars

Riverside – noise, speeding, trash

Sachem – uncertainty about future use/zoning on vacant property

Schools

Signage

South Congress – high rents leading to lose of small, funky retail; do not make into  
entertainment district; keep local; redevelopment/densification that provide neighborhood  
services and daily needs (grocery store); traffic; trash receptacles needed

St. Edward's University – ball fields at Woodward and I-35

Taxes

Traffic calming

Transportation – more parking, widen arterial roadways in order to decrease cut through  
traffic on local streets within neighborhood

Twin Oaks Shopping Center – misused, neglected, possible redevelopment with mixed  
use

Utilities – bury underground

Villas at Expose – appropriate density and use

Wal-mart

Willowrun - increase environmental awareness of tenants not to dump oil and trash into  
creek

# Appendix D: Summary of the Walkabouts

## 12 walkabouts

March 23, 2004 – February 15, 2005

### Area 1 Walkabout – Summary

March 23, 2004

**Attendees:** Claudette Lowe, Danette Chimenti, Magen Morse, Paul Michals  
**City Staff:** Adam Smith, Tom Bolt, Scott Whiteman

The following is a list of concerns expressed during the walkabout:

1. Oak wilt – killing live oak trees in the neighborhood. The estimated cost of implementing a preliminary plan to stop the spread of oak wilt is between \$100,000 - \$200,000
2. Noise ordinance needs to be amended and enforced to protect nearby residents from excessively loud music coming from clubs on South Congress
3. More sidewalks are needed
4. Additional signage is needed on Academy notifying motorists that Academy does not have access to Riverside Dr.
5. Storm sewers near the end of Academy pose a potential hazard for children since the openings are large and there are no grates
6. Transient population living under the Riverside/Academy bridge
7. Crime – car break-ins
8. Shattered glass on streets - caused by glass falling off City recycle trucks
9. Poison ivy along the sidewalk on Sunset prevents residents from using the sidewalk and walking in the street
10. Curb and gutter needed along Sunset
11. Leaking water line at 302 Academy
12. Lack of parking for businesses along South Congress creating parking problems in neighborhood. Business owners disregard fire hydrants and safe distances from intersections when parking their vehicles
13. Trash left behind in the neighborhood by S. Congress business owners
14. The State House Apartment's rear gate is occasionally left open despite agreeing to opening the gate only for emergency vehicles

The following concerns were provided via email to Ms. Lowe:

1. Cut through traffic and increased speeds on East Monroe due to traffic calming on Live Oak. Stop signs and Newning have helped slow speeds, but speeding still a problem.
2. Visibility on Academy as residents back out of their driveways
3. Lack of businesses on South Congress that provide “everyday” services such as grocery stores, delis, etc. Would like to see a greater diversity of

businesses on S. Congress beyond entertainment, high-end clothing and hair salons.

## **Area 1 (Part 2) Walkabout – Summary**

**April 12, 2004**

Attendees: Danette Chimenti, Claudette Lowe, Mary Lovell, Tim Mahoney, Jim Ballard, Peg Box, Rick Krenzke, Myra Goepp, Valerie Fremin, Mare Hopkins, Ellen Ward, Gloria and Mason Lee, Jennifer [with daughter Marianna (sp?)] Bousquet, Pam Henderson, Linda Ahern and Kevin McPherson.

City Staff: Adam Smith

- 1. First Thursday** – Parking on residential streets, trash left behind in the neighborhood (SoCo businesses are supposed to rotate clean-up duties, but have not done so recently) and ongoing issues with noise in violation with City’s noise ordinance.
- 2. Statehouse Apartments** – gate off The Circle has remained open due to construction on South Congress.
- 3. Deliveries to businesses and apartments** – delivery trucks park in the middle of the streets (often with the engines idling) for up to several hours at a time. Creates traffic safety, noise and environmental concerns. Particularly a problem on Gibson near St. Vincent de Paul’s, The Circle behind Texas Music Café and Academy Drive near the apartments. Delivery trucks also making deliveries and pickups for St. Vincents on Gibson through new constructed gate where wall and hedges used to be.
- 4. The Circle** – possibility of dead-ending Circle at Gibson?
- 5. Sidewalks** – continuous sidewalk along South Congress (particularly south of Gibson). Monroe one of the main streets to park, used heavily by pedestrians.
- 6. Runoff** – 1) From the Circle into “Ravine” – no curb and gutter along section of road, water discharges out of pipe onto The Circle. 2) Hillside Drive – drainage easement running through residential properties
- 7. Oak Wilt** – check on possibility of inoculating trees against oak wilt
- 8. Ravine** – pocket park possibilities; several people said they would like Ravine area to stay the way it is; “smallest watershed” in the neighborhood.
- 9. Signage** – additional signage needed in neighborhood indicating “no parking” areas; stop signs
- 10. 5 Oceans/Car Repair on South Congress** – are there any redevelopment plans? Parking already deficient and would be exacerbated if restaurant or bar moved in.

## Area 2 Walkabout – Summary

April 28, 2004

**Attendees:** Rick Low, Myra Goepp, Dan Vickers, Tim Mahoney and Danette Chimenti

**City Staff:** Adam Smith and Scott Whiteman

1. **Pedestrian safety** – more sidewalks and safer intersection crossing needed; particularly on routes to Fulmore Middle School
2. **Fulmore Middle School and Day Care on Brackenridge** – bad traffic congestion and circulation on Brackenridge in morning especially when parents dropping children off
3. **Twin Oaks Shopping Center** – too much pavement, prime for redevelopment, not enough basic services provided
4. **Post/South Congress/E. Live Oak Triangle** – traffic circulation study needed, hazardous traffic situation, one suggestion given to alleviate some of the problems would be to change Post from a 2-way to one-way street
5. **East Live Oak** – 1) discontinuous sidewalks and curb and gutter; 2) clogged inlet near Eastside and Live Oak causing drainage issues; 3) combination of inadequately sized storm sewer pipes and heavy storm event causes manhole cover to pop-off which creates a potential hazard to motorists and children; 4) pothole worsening due to position of speed hump; 5) cut-thru traffic and speeding
6. **Blunn Creek** – 1) Increased algae growth and stagnant water since Big Stacy no longer discharging into creek; 2) retaining wall near pedestrian underpass in disrepair
7. **Hidden creek** – where's its source, what path does it take?
8. **Restaurants on East Oltorf** – while seen as positive attribute to neighborhood, customers forced to park in the neighborhood since there is not enough parking provided
9. **More and more homeowners building high fences in front yard** – one thought this is being done is to mitigate increasing traffic noise
10. **Lack of street cleaning** – in some areas weeds, grass and debris in street impede run-off

## Area 3a Walkabout – Summary

April 5, 2004

Attendees: Sherri Ancipink, John Donisi, Bill Fagelson, Tim Mahoney, Susan and Winston Harwell, Kathleen Littlepage, Don Kersey, Jennie Burger and Martha, Graham and Lucas Stockton



City Staff: Adam Smith

1. **Infill development** – residents feel Area 3a already has plenty of infill. There are many garage apartments, duplexes and houses converted into multifamily.
2. **Uniqueness of the area** – mix of housing types, trees, creeks, topography
3. **Young families** – largest concentration of children under 5 in Area 3a. Many young families have moved in recently.
4. **Chelsea Lane and Reagan Terrace** – cut thru traffic, motorists fail to stop at intersection, drainage problem
5. **Progressive Insurance** – employees cutting through neighborhood, 3 shifts a day/24 hours employees go in and out
6. **Oak wilt** – has not spread east into Area 3a, but still concerned that it has not been dealt with yet.
7. **Harper's Creek** – illegal dumping at Reagan and I-35, neighborhood coordinated with City in cleaning up shrubs and brush along tributary of Harper's Creek
8. **Redevelopment out of scale with adjacent homes**
9. **Norwood House/Dog park** – No infrastructure at the park (no bathrooms, water or phones). Underutilized. Gateway to City. Needs to be redesigned.
10. **Edgecliff Street** – homeless camp out down near banks of Town Lake, crime – car break ins, streets not cleaned by City, street not paved when Travis Heights done, concern that a couple of homes are prime for redevelopment and will be replaced by McMansions, Code enforcement issues with a couple of houses (one operated as business, other put fill on property to meet height requirement), Ziller Estate
11. **Connection to Hike and Bike Trail** – closest neighborhood to Town Lake, yet there is not a direct, safe connection to hike and bike trail. The trail has not been extended to I-35. Crossing Riverside is dangerous. More and safer pedestrian crossing needed on Riverside.
12. **Use of pontoons to extend hike and bike east to I-35 and beyond**
13. **Travis Heights Boulevard** – Stacy House, 1204 Travis Heights, speeding
14. **I-35 expansion and noise** – It is uncertain whether TxDOT's proposed plans include noise barriers. As it is now, I-35 generates a lot of noise that can be heard deep into the neighborhood. There is also general concern over the proposed plans (ingress, egress, cut-thru traffic, etc.)

## **Area 3b Walkabout – Summary**

**March 31, 2004**

Attendees: Brooks Kasson, Jean Mather, Kenny Hilbig, Bill Fagelson, Clarke Hammond and Phil, Winston and Emiline Harwell

City Staff: Adam Smith and Scott Whiteman

1. **Erosion along Blunn Creek** – thought to be caused by a combination of runoff and flooding
2. **Resubdivision of approximately ½-acre lot at the end of Nickerson** – house on site is in disrepair. Concern among neighbors what is proposed for the site after resubdivision.
3. **Water/wastewater leak near intersection of Woodland and Eastside**
4. **Oak wilt** – has not spread east into Area 3b, but still concerned that it has not been dealt with yet.
5. **Norwood House** – considered a sad loss (or missed opportunity) to the neighborhood. House has been gutted, fenced off, vandalized and abandoned. Cost estimates to renovate house - \$500,000. Residents want to see the City resolve what is going to happen to the Norwood House.
6. **Dog Park** – mixed feelings about the dog park. Some like it, others feel the park should be utilized in other ways. Many people who use the park live outside the neighborhood. In fact, some people in the neighborhood don't bring their dogs to the park. Concern about dog fights.
7. **Connection to Hike and Bike Trail under bridge at Riverside and Alameda** – see Area 1 summary. Connection to hike and bike never completed. Transients now live in the tunnel.
8. **Redesign of Riverside** – Brooks and Jean told staff the history of Riverside Drives redesign. CAMPO's proposed 2030 plan proposes that Riverside east of I-35 be expanded to 8 lanes. What are the proposed plans west of I-35?
9. **Use of pontoons to extend hike and bike east to I-35 and beyond**
10. **Capped springs in the median on Riverside near the dog park**
11. **Pool at dog park has been filled in** – compacted soil may be killing pecan trees nearby
12. **Multifamily zoning in NCCD area** – some of the multifamily zoning was downzoned to single family approximately 2 years ago. What is the possibility of downzoning other multifamily zoned properties?
13. **Travis Heights Boulevard** - speeding

## **Area 4 a/b Walkabout – Summary**

**April 24, 2004**

**Attendees:** Teresa Griffin, Tim Mahoney, Terry Franz and Sam Martin

**City Staff:** Adam Smith

1. **Woodland Avenue** – speeding, blind spots, missing or hard to see street signs, large delivery trucks use as cut-thru despite signs posted prohibiting them
2. **Sunset between Fairmont and Mariposa** – cars still cut thru area despite barriers, crime and cars parking on closed portion
3. **Trees along Blunn Creek** – trees marked with orange spray paint, others tagged. *[Parks and Recreation staff told me that the orange spray paint was put on the trees by disc golfers using the park as an*

**unofficial disc golf course.]** Is the City conducting a study or those trees marked for trimming or removal? Felled trees due to erosion. Is ball moss harmful to trees? **[See below response]**

4. **Dye testing** – Is the City conducting a study of Blunn Creek?
5. **Travis Heights Elementary School** – pick-up/drop off problematic, one-way sign missing at Alameda and Mariposa, street switching from 2-way to one-way causes some confusion and possible safety risks. Improve main pathways to the school.
6. **Footbridge near Travis Heights Elementary** – used as vehicular crossing in the past, possible fire damage, is it possible to get bridge historic status
7. **East Live Oak Street** – speeding. Are there ways that East Live Oak can be changed to give the street a more local feel rather than its current collector/arterial feel? What were the trees on the south side of the street in front of the apartments removed? Lack of curb ramps on sidewalks to allow access to people in wheelchairs or with strollers
8. **Cascade Apartments** – currently zoned Community Commercial (GR). Residents enquired whether a rollback to a multi-family zoning district is possible.
9. **Crime** – additional police patrols needed to handle traffic violations and burglaries throughout the neighborhood with frequency near park.
10. **Noise from I-35**
11. **Lack of sidewalks on major streets** – Alta Vista, Travis Heights
12. **No crosswalk at Annie and Stacy Park**
13. **Visibility obstructed due to shrubs or parked cars** – Fairmont and Alta Vista; Fairmont and Travis Heights Blvd.

*I asked my friend Marty Maas to help answer whether ball moss is harmful to trees. Ms. Maas is a doctoral student in biological sciences at UT. Her response is provided below:*

Adam,

Ball moss is not harmful to trees- it is an epiphyte, not a parasite! It is like a bird's nest- it just uses the tree as a place to sit, but not as a food source. This type of relationship is called commensalistic.

Ball moss is probably the result, not the cause, of a tree's declining health. As a tree ages, or perhaps because of disease or competition, it will begin to have more openings in its canopy. Ball moss uses those existing openings to perch. It does not affect the tree's ability to photosynthesize. At least this is the current theory on ball moss (*Tillandsia recurvata*).

It is very closely related to Spanish Moss which most people find quite attractive. So try to see the Ball Moss in that light. It is a graceful little plant- look at its sweet little leaves- they have a soft, furry, light green surface. They have beautiful little flowers too.

It is also closely related to the pineapple, which is a symbol of friendship. So perhaps your neighborhoods could adopt Ball Moss as their mascot plant, as a

symbol of friendship to all!

Your friend to epiphytes,

Marty

## **Area 5 Walkabout – Summary**

**March 25, 2004**

Attendees: David Swann, Elloa Mathews, David Karoly, Tim Mahoney Sr. and Jr., Neil Nuwash, Eileen Rovira, Bob Stewart, Tamira Konkin Garcia, Garret Nick, Louis and Marge Janosek and Myra Kepford.

City Staff: Adam Smith and Scott Whiteman

Places and people in Area 5 identified as being positive attributes:

1. Blunn Creek Preserve
2. St. Edwards (see below for things that can be improved)
3. Views of downtown and Hill Country
4. Neighborhood – there must a reason why so many people have lived in the area 40+ years, right?
5. Eula Matthews – has walked to senior rec center for over 42 years
6. Proximity to retail and services

The following is a list of concerns expressed during the walkabout:

### **1. Gardner Betts Juvenile Justice Facility**

expansion of facility (estimated to be 10X its original capacity)

parking garage not being used by employees and visitors; using Long Bow for parking

2. **Bealls Shopping Center** – no trees/landscaping, needs better mix of businesses
3. **Driveway access near Oltorf/Long Bow and Congress** – too many curb cuts along S. Congress creates traffic hazards
4. **Long Bow/Carnavon/St. Edwards** - used as cut through by students and employees in the area from S. Congress to I-35; excessive traffic speeds
5. **Condos on Carnavon** – out-of-scale with rest of neighborhood
6. **St. Edwards Dr.** – flooding, traffic speeds, drag racing, illegal driveway leading into St. Edwards
7. **I-35 access ramp at St. Edwards** – cause of the cut through traffic, ramp closure may not happen for another 5 years
8. **Home Depot** – underbrush is not being cleared out per private restrictive covenant with neighborhood

9. **St. Edwards** – future plans of increasing the number of students means added traffic and compatibility concerns on surrounding neighborhoods; locating parking on lots on perimeter of campus can create more cut through traffic
10. **Eastside Drive between St. Edwards and Oltorf** - probably the worst traffic problem in the neighborhood. Students from St. Ed's travel at very high speeds, to and from the University, on Eastside Drive from seven in the morning until very late at night. One of the problems I hope we can solve through neighborhood planning (or through any other avenues you can recommend) is to install traffic calming, ideally speed bumps, on Eastside Drive. Eastside Drive already has speed bumps north of Oltorf, so extending those south of Oltorf is a logical next step. (Scott Marks)

## **Area 8 Walkabout – Summary**

**April 13, 2004**

**Attendees:** Frank Richter, Janine and Jim Koch, Maria Martinez, Bill Fagelson, Sherri Ancipink, John Donisi, Brian Cottom, Kenny Hilbig, Jean Mather, Russell Stearns, David Swann, Elloa Mathews, David Karoly, Tim Mahoney and Garret Nick

**City Staff:** Adam Smith

1. **Alpine Rd.** – currently dead-ends at Willow Springs Rd. Is there a possibility that Alpine could be extended through to Ben White/I-35? Has the right-of-way been vacated? Who is responsible for enforcing? There appeared to be consensus that the neighbors do not want Alpine going through. Explore possibility of trail. Homeless camp. Illegal dumping. Broken drainage pipes.
2. **Walmart** – Site plan approved.
3. **Payload Pass** – will not be extended through to Alpine. SRCC negotiated an agreement with the property owner providing for additional water quality.
4. **AISD property** – one of the larger sites in Area 8. Concern that the site could be redeveloped and lead to extension of Alpine. One resident described property as the “lynchpin” for that area.
5. **TxDOT lights at Ben White and IH-35** – too tall, too bright, too many. Why are they needed?
6. **Penn Field** – overall, seen as attribute to area, but still some question whether incorporating residential into project would not also be desirable.
7. **Cut-thru traffic on Woodward** – Ben White/I-35 construction causing increase in cut-thru traffic
8. **Woodward** – speeding, limited visibility (in particular, entering/exiting Blunn Creek Apartments), cut-thru traffic, no pedestrian crossings. What is possibility of installing 3-way stop at Woodward and Willow Springs Road? Flashing pedestrian crossings?
9. **Status of W/WW line near Ben White and Warehouse Row**

10. **Warehouse Row** – concern about it being extended through to Alpine
11. **Volleyball Court** – finished product doesn't meet what was agreed upon with neighbors. Building too close to street; supposed to be setback further.
12. **Blunn Creek Apartments** – bioretention ponds
13. **Home Depot site** – clarify what private restrictive covenant says about keeping the conservation easement clean and cleared.
14. **Lindy's Landing** – supposedly Charles Lindbergh landed in area where Lindy Landing Apartments and Penn Field are now.

## **Blunn Creek Walkabout – Summary**

**April 21, 2004**

**Attendees:** David Todd, Karen Marks, Esther Matthews, Lorrie DeHaas, Kenny Hilbig and Tim Mahoney

**Others:** Ted Siff (Austin Parks Foundation)

**City Staff:** Adam Smith and Scott Whiteman

1. **AISD property** – one of the larger sites in Area 8. What is the possibility of easement being purchased to put a headwater detention/water quality facility on site?
2. **On site improvements** – cisterns, rain gutters, french drains, swales. Residents and business owners are encouraged to add any improvements to their property that capture water on-site and allow infiltration into the soil and groundwater rather than simply running off site.
3. **Inventories** – in order to figure out the best way to help Blunn Creek, the history of the creek needs to be known. Past studies (hydrological, biological, wildlife) studies done in the past are needed, as well as, photos.
4. **Prioritizing resources** – how can the neighborhood assist in future projects? Tapping neighborhood resources may serve as social/community building project as well as helping the creek.
5. **Pedestrian bridge near Big Stacy** – undersized, too low, not compatible with flows
6. **Dye testing** – fluorescent green liquid seen in creek. Is the City conducting dye testing?
7. **Is there a watchdog group for Blunn Creek?**

**Staff discontinued minutes for this walkabout since David Todd prepared minutes of the walkabout. Refer to “Blunn Creek (David Todd)” document for more details.**

# Blunn Creek Walkabout

May 21, 2004

3:30-6PM

The Walkabout started at 3:30PM at 709 East Monroe Street, and visited the creek from Monroe to Riverside, and West Live Oak to Mariposa. Lorrie Dehaas, Kenny Hilbig, Tim Mahoney, Karen Marks, Esther Matthews, Ted Siff, and David Todd attended. Adam Smith and Scott Whiteman of the City of Austin planning staff helped lead the discussion and walk.

## GENERAL GOALS:

Restore Blunn Creek to a functioning ecosystem with adequate stream flows, good floodwater detention and erosion protection, safe water quality, robust aquatic life, native plants, intact banks, and stable canopy trees.

## CONCERNS:

### *Erosion:*

- Accelerated erosion of creek in past five years since expansion of Ben White / 71 bypass, construction of Home Depot store, and additions to Gardner-Betts Juvenile Justice Center without sufficient detention or other mitigation.

### *Water:*

- Capping and loss of spring flows
- Disappearance and pollution of swimming holes
- Loss of aquatic life, including frogs, turtles, snakes, fish in Creek
- Diversion of Big Stacy pool return flows

### *Vegetation:*

- Invasion of nonnative plants, including bamboo, nandina, ligustrum, etc.
- Loss of major canopy trees

### *Trails:*

- Breaks in Blunn Creek hike and bike trail: disconnected from Town Lake trail and Blunn Nature Preserve

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### *Stormwater detention:*

- Protect AISD tract at Payload Pass from development and additional impervious cover.
- Have City or TXDOT receive fee simple title to, or place conservation easement on all or floodplain portion of AISD tract
- Construct detention and infiltration structure on AISD tract.
- Include outdoor educational access and/or facility at AISD tract.
- Explore options for alternative drainage and infiltration for parking in Twin Oaks, Beall's and Bank of America parking lots

### *Stormwater drainage:*

- Orient drainage pipe outlets more to direction of streamflow

- Install energy dissipators on drainline outlets
- Install cedar logs to slow flow down banks and hold soil
- Remove curbs and curb cuts along East Side road, ringing Little Stacy Park to reduce creek bank erosion

*Baseflow improvement:*

- Remove paving and install swale and trail along Little Stacy Park, and along Sunset, between Fairmount and Travis Heights Elementary School
- Uncap spring flows, especially spring at Big Stacy
- Explore legality and cost of using pool return flows, city treated water, or pumped groundwater to ensure minimal flow in Creek

*Inventory:*

- Use USGS/City of Austin website tracking flows:  
[http://nwis.waterdata.usgs.gov/tx/nwis/nwisman/?site\\_no=08157700&agency\\_cd=USGS](http://nwis.waterdata.usgs.gov/tx/nwis/nwisman/?site_no=08157700&agency_cd=USGS)
- Collect survey information indicating location and size of trees in park
  - Create volunteer water quality testing program
- Find and index historical photos of creek and park to track changes
- Create City-wide birding location list, including recognition and protection of Blunn Creek as prime site

*Construction:*

- Improve design of bridges crossing Blunn Creek to ensure that they don't block flow and exacerbate eddying and erosion
- Ensure that bridge construction materials match local landscape, i.e., laid limestone rather than poured-in-place concrete
- Tap art-in-public-places funds to improve park tables, benches, waste cans

*Vegetation:*

- Plant native grasses and forbs in floodplain to slow flow and hold soil
- Remove nonnatives, e.g., ligustrum, bamboo, nandina

*Transportation:*

- Connect Blunn Creek trail from Little Stacy Park to Town Lake, and from Big Stacy to Blunn Creek preserve
- Reduce width of Little Stacy Park south access road
- Encourage parking along entirety of park, rather than concentrating in areas along Creek, especially near Little Stacy
- Install sidewalks running east-west, meeting at park, to take advantage of north-south park trail

*Utilities:*

- Divert wastewater flows to lines outside of creek bed
- Bury above-ground electrical utilities
- Install lower, smaller-scale, dark-sky compatible park lighting

*Private lands:*

- Identify, promote, and subsidize detention measures for private lots, including rainwater collection, berm and swale use, soil amendments, etc. (see Bull Creek study by Jeff Kessell and Matt Holland)

*General:*

- Use planning process to build community, promote youth projects, and avoid typical land use brawls



*Next meetings*

- April 23, 2004, 8:40AM - Planning Advisory Committee meeting at 1 Texas Center, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 505 Barton Springs Drive
- May 15, 2004, 9AM-12noon- Community workshop for Greater South River City Planning Area, with SOC (Strengths, Opportunities, and Challenges) study, meeting at St. Edward's University Jones Auditorium

## **Blunn Creek Walkabout 2 – Summary**

**May 6, 2004**

**Attendees:** David Todd, Karen Marks, Tim Mahoney, Monte Youngs, Neal Nuwash, David Swann, David Karoly, Dawn Cizmar, Matt Hollon and Garret Nick

**Others:** Mike Lyday, the City's Creek Biologist (City of Austin's Watershed Protection and Development Review Dept.)

**City Staff:** Adam Smith and Scott Whiteman

**Overview:** This is the second of three Blunn Creek Walkabouts. It is hoped that the third will be scheduled later in May. It appears that the Creek is healthier, as to wildlife and natural vegetation, in the upper watershed area than in the areas around Big and Little Stacy Park.

The walkabout started near the intersection of the creek with Ben White Boulevard and ended just north of Woodward within St. Edward's property.

In an effort to avoid redundancy, only those topics not discussed at the previous, April 21, 2004 Blunn Creek walkabout (which covered the area from Pecan Grove to Fairmount) will be given here.

### **Headwater Protection Ordinance**

A Headwater Protection Ordinance is currently being developed. The goal of the Headwater Protection ordinance is to protect more waterways by reducing the minimum drainage basin area requirements. The details of the proposed ordinance are still being discussed. It is hoped that Mike Lyday will be able to assist with some technical aspects of watershed protection.

The Southeast Combined Neighborhood Planning Area incorporated principles of the Headwater Protection ordinance into their plan. Attendees at the walkabout expressed interest in doing something similar in the Greater South River City plan.

### **Headwater Detention Facility**

There is strong interest among the SRCC members and residents in exploring protection of the AISD parcel as an undeveloped site, with detention facility, to the south of the east end of Alpine, to the north of Ben White, and west of IH-35 and Payload Pass, at the headwaters of Blunn Creek. This parcel appears to offer the largest detention basin site to protect the water quality of the Creek, reduce stormwater flows, and allow infiltration and baseflow support. This protection seems particularly important due to the pending development of the Wal Mart site at the northwest corner of Ben White and IH-35, the proposed construction on the adjoining Payload Pass site to the immediate west of the Wal Mart property, and the large-scale, largely unmitigated (beyond installation of energy dissipators) expansion of IH-35 and Ben White. The detention structure installed at the Blunn Creek apartment complex appears to be functioning well, and gives encouragement for the value of a detention basin of some kind on the AISD site.

Please find several related documents attached, including two maps of the Blunn headwaters area, and a spreadsheet comparing various detention sites and demonstrating the high benefit/cost ratio for an AISD detention area.

### **Critical Water Quality Zones**

In an urban watershed (of which Blunn Creek is considered), a critical water quality transition zone is established along each waterway with a drainage area of at least 64 acres. Development within these zones is severely limited. According to Matt Hollon's new estimate of the boundaries of the Blunn basin, especially with the addition of contributing watershed south of Ben White, the basin now easily exceeds the 64-acre threshold.

### **Wetland hydrology and vegetation**

An area will be extended greater protections if it is identified as being a wetland. From time to time there is debate on determining if an area truly is a wetland. The types of vegetation growing in an area is used in determining whether a wetland is present. Obligate vegetative species (species that only grow in wetlands as opposed to facultative species that can grow in wet and dry conditions) is a strong indication that wetlands are present. Some obligate species are growing along Blunn Creek, including juncus, water primrose, water dock, cattail, spike rush, watercress, and water hyssop. The wetland vegetation appears to be supported by base flow, since it has been more than a week since the last rain, and the creek is 4 to 12" deep in water, with the stream ranging from 2 feet wide (near Alpine) to 4 feet wide (near Woodward).

### **Wildlife**

It was encouraging to see a good deal of wildlife in the creek, including small fish (mosquitofish, perch, perhaps), three large, 16-inch long snapping turtles, and a green heron, suggesting that the water quality is good and the base flow consistent. In addition, numerous crawfish burrow holes were spotted in this

section of the Creek, no doubt feeding on small fish populations and in turn providing a food source for the turtles. Such habitat could be replicated downstream in the Stacy Parks with the additions of such technical structures as grade controls and riffle-pool complexes. These structures, which are being planned for Boggy Creek and the creeks through Mabel Davis Park, would not only reinforce the natural stability of the Creek, but allow a more dynamic return of wildlife, fauna and flora.

### **St. Edward's University**

There is concern that St. Edward's is planning to double the campus enrollment, and expand parking and ballfields in the eastern part of the campus, perhaps in the area that forms the Blunn Creek riparian zone. There is hope that St. Edward's new biology building and program will incorporate use and study of the Creek. It is unclear what the current status of the St. Edward's detention project is, though one is rumored to be under development.

## **Blunn Creek Walkabout**

**February 15, 2005**

**Organized by the several residents, the purpose of this walkabout was to show City Parks and Recreation staff areas of concern along the Blunn Creek Greenbelt. Major concerns include streambank erosion, the increasing number of non-native, invasive plants, and deteriorating conditions along certain sections of the trail and retaining walls.**

## Appendix E: Record of Meetings

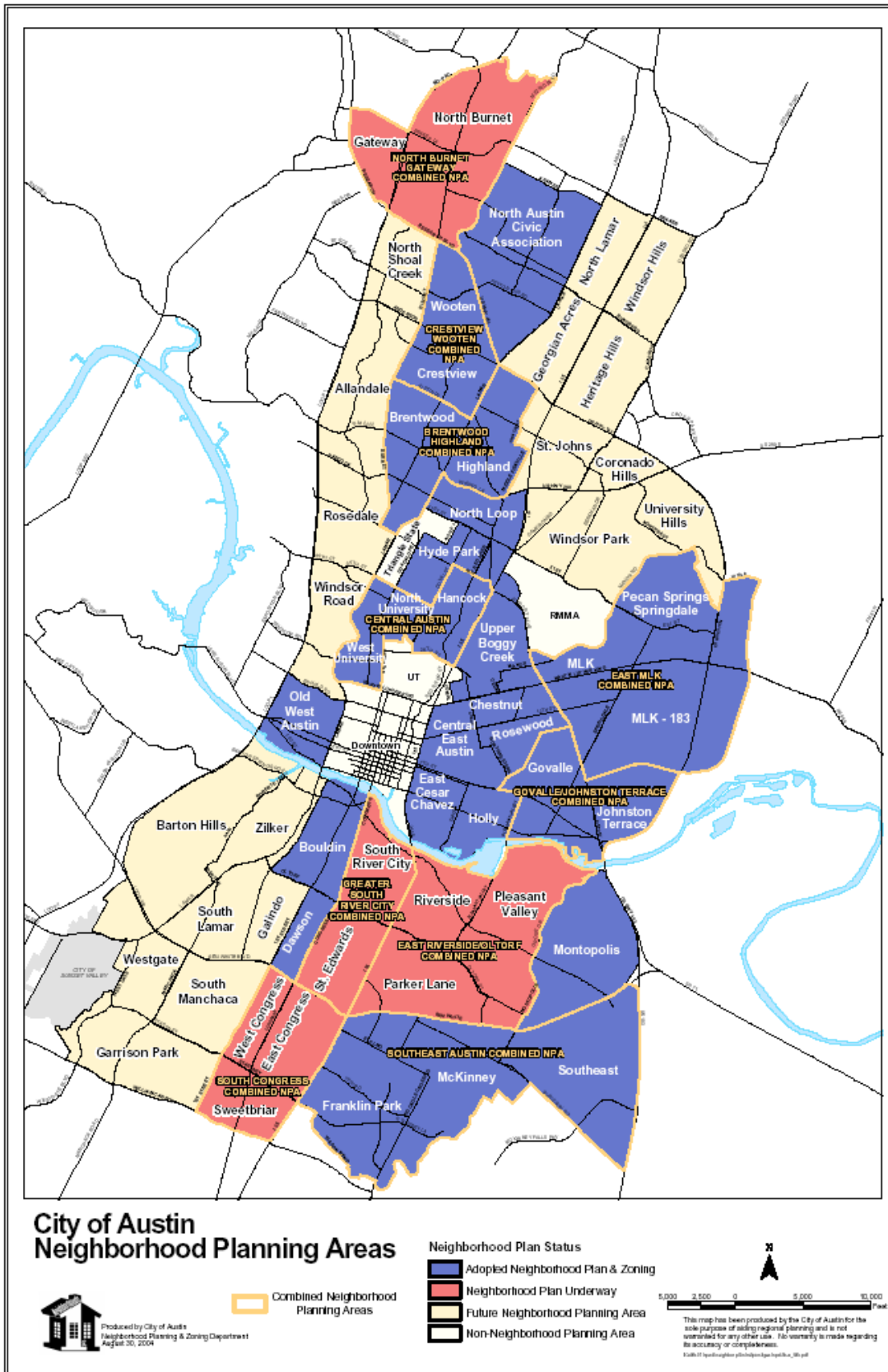
<b>Date</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Attendees (Staff)</b>	<b>Other Attendees</b>	<b>Notes</b>
2/23/04	Initial meeting with Executive Committee of SRCC	Texas French Bread – South Congress	4 (2)		Introductions, primary concerns of SRCC, brief overview of schedule, community outreach
2/26/04	Initial meeting w/Gail Armstrong – President of the South Congress Business Association	Off the Wall – 1704 South Congress	1 (1)		Introductions, general discussion about S. Congress concerns
2/27/04	Meeting with Mike Lyday (ERM) to discuss Blunn Creek	2 Commodore	4		
3/3/04	Meeting with Executive Committee	El Sol y La Luna	6 (2)		Schedule, stakeholder meeting, community outreach, first workshop
3/3/04	Meeting with Ginny Rohlich to discuss Blunn Creek	Little Stacy Pool and Blunn Creek Greenbelt	2		Ginny showed me where some of the erosion and water quality problems are and plans being considered to address them
3/10/04	The Avenue Merchants Association	Guerro's	12 (2)	Travis County Commissioner Gerald Daugherty	Introductions, tentative schedule, stakeholder meeting
3/12/04	GSRC Advisory Committee	OTC, Room 500	18 (3)	Committee has expanded to include area coordinators, rep from Avenue Merchants Assoc. and other interested residents	Intent/purpose of advisory meetings, Stakeholder meeting, Walkabouts
3/15/04	Meeting with Dick Kinsey	SEU	1 (2)		Tour of campus, overview of SEU's Master Plan
3/19/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, 5 <sup>th</sup> floor	13 (2)		Stakeholder meeting agenda/outreach to businesses, finalize walkabout schedule
3/23/04	Area 1 walkabout	400 Academy	4 (3)		See "Area 1 walkabout – summary"
3/25/04	Area 5 walkabout	Gardner/Betts Juvenile Correctional Facility parking	13 (2)		See "Area 5 walkabout – summary"

		garage			
3/31/04	Area 3b walkabout	Little Stacy	8 (2)	James Keith – News 8 Austin	See “Area 3b walkabout – summary”
4/2/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, 5 <sup>th</sup> floor	15 (2)		Communication, schedule workshop, walkabout – update, children participation, communication outreach committee, noise ordinance
4/5/04	SRCC Association meeting	First United Methodist Church	35 (1)		Presentation about what has been done up to date re: GSRC NP; discussion quickly spun off into creating NP committee and parliamentary procedures
4/7/04	Stakeholders Meeting #1	Travis High School library	15 (2) + 1 guest speaker	Mark Coffey (guest speaker from Bouldin Neighborhood); Susan Helgren (Avenue Merchants); Jeff Jack (Zilker)	Overview of NP process; not well attended; questions focused mostly around zoning
4/10/04	Stakeholders Meeting #2	St. Edwards University, Maloney Room	17 (2) + 1 guest speaker	Rick Iverson (guest speaker from North University)	Overview of NP process; questions about tangible results of plan
4/12/04	Area 1 – Part 2 walkabout	200 The Circle	18 (1)		See “Area 1 (Part 2) walkabout – summary”
4/13/04	Area 8 walkabout	Ruta Maya	15 (1)		See “Area 8 walkabout – summary”
4/21/04	Blunn Creek walkabout	709 E. Monroe	6 (1) + 1	Ted Siff (Austin Parks Foundation)	See “Blunn Creek walkabout – summary”
4/23/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 525	8 (2)		Community Outreach teams; workshop; walkabouts
4/24/04	Area 4a/b walkabout	1111 Woodland	4 (1)		See “Area 4a/b walkabout – summary”
4/28/04	Area 2 walkabout	1700 Newning	5 (2)		See “Area 2 walkabout – summary”
5/3/04	SRCC Association Meeting - workgroup	Grace United Methodist Church, 205 E. Monroe	16+ (1)	Ron Thrower; Susan Helgren	Community Outreach Teams
5/6/04	Blunn Creek walkabout	Ruta Maya	10 (3)	Mike Lyday, WPDR	See “Blunn Creek walkabout 2 – summary”
5/7/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 525	6 (2)		Services Forum – schedule date; First Community Workshop
5/15/04	First Community Workshop	St. Edward’s University, Jones Auditorium	50 (9)	Alice Glasco	See S.O.C. exercise maps
5/19/04	Area 6 & 7 walkabout	Holy Lutheran Church			See E. Riverside Plan folder

6/4/04	Neighborhood Association Planning Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 525	2 (1)		Proposal to combine land use and transportation components
6/11/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 525	8 (3)		Proposal to combine land use and transportation; Vision and goals
6/16/04	Services Forum	SEU, Maloney Room	19		See Services Forum summary; 18 departments/programs represented
6/25/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 525	9 (3)		Development of vision and goals
6/29/04	Final Blunn Creek Walkabout	Big Stacy Pool	2 (1)	Mike Lyday (WPDR)	See "Final Blunn Creek walkabout – summary"
7/9/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 523	7 (3)		Vision and goals & preview of 7/14 presentation
7/14/04	Introduction to Land Use and Transportation Planning	Travis High School	35 (2)		Educational component on land use and transportation planning including a brief history of the GSRC area
8/6/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm. 523	7 (2)		Vision and goals; land use and transportation task group meeting; Noise Ordinance
8/11/04	Develop Land Use and Transportation Recommendations – Area A	Grace United Methodist Church	28 (3)		Recommendations for Area A – see Meeting Notes
9/1/04	Develop Land Use and Transportation Recommendations – Area B	Grace United Methodist Church	54 (3)		Recommendations for Area B – see Meeting Notes
9/14/04	Develop Land Use and Transportation Recommendations – Area C	Travis High School	24 (3)		Recommendations for Area C – see Meeting notes
9/24/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 523	7 (2)		Scheduling additional land use meetings and zoning meetings
9/28/04	Develop Land Use and Transportation Recommendations – Area B (Part 2)	Travis High School	26 (2)		Recommendations for Area B – see Meeting Notes
10/12/04	Develop Land Use and Transportation Recommendations – Area C (Part 2)	Travis High School Theater	13 (2)		Recommendations for Area C – see Meeting Notes
10/15/04	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 523	10 (2)		Distribute notes from 10/12 meeting; format and handouts for 10/26 meeting
10/26/04	Complete Draft Future Land Use Map – Entire Neighborhood	Grace United Methodist Church	45 (2)		Neighborhood and staff draft FLUMS and transportation recommendations presented and completed
11/4/04	Hazardous	AFD	6 GSRC	Carl Wren; Ron	Hazardous materials

	Materials w/AFD		4 AFD 2 NPZD	Buys; Cora Urgena; Yvonne Espinoza	permitting process
11/9/04	Introduction to Zoning	Grace United Methodist Church	43 (2)		Introduction to zoning
12/7/04	Developing Zoning Recommendations – Area A	Grace United Methodist Church	31 (2)		See Zoning Recommendations – Area A
1/10/05	Developing Zoning Recommendations – Area B	Grace United Methodist Church	48 (3)		See Zoning Recommendations – Area B
1/26/05	Developing Zoning Recommendations – Area C	Travis High School	25 (3)		See Zoning Recommendations – Area C
2/15/05	Blunn Creek Greenbelt Walkabout	709 E. Monroe	4 (4 – 2 from PARD; 2 from NPZD) + 3	3 students from UT	
2/15/05	Zoning Wrap-Up Meeting – Areas A & B	Grace United Methodist Church	31 (3)		See Zoning Wrap-Up Recommendations – Areas A & B
2/25/05	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 523	8 (3)		Update from SRCC zoning committee, overview of hazmat permits
3/2/05	Infill Options & Urban Design	Grace United Methodist	34 (3)		See Urban Design Guidelines
3/23/05	Zoning Wrap-Up Meeting – Area C + Infill Options for Area C	Travis High School library	22 (3)		See Zoning Wrap-Up and Infill Option Recommendations – Areas C
4/6/05	Zoning Wrap-Up Meeting – Area B + Infill Options for Area A & B	Grace United Methodist	69 (3)		See Zoning Wrap-Up and Infill Option Recommendations – Areas A & B
5/27/05	Advisory Committee Meeting	OTC, Rm 523	7(2)		Open House, formation of contact team, preview of plan
6/22/05	Open House	Travis High School	63(5)		Review and comment on draft neighborhood plan
7/05/05	Formation of Neighborhood Contact Team	Grace United Methodist	16(2)		Provide information re:NPCT
8/10/05	Neighborhood Planning Committee	One Texas Center, Rm. 240			Plan presented to subcommittee of Planning Commission
9/13/05	Planning Commission	City Hall			PC approved staff's recommendation with modifications
9/29/05	City Council	City Hall			Approved PC's recommendation on uncontested cases on 3 readings
10/20/05	City Council	City Hall			Discussion on contested cases

# Appendix F: Urban Core Map





## Appendix G: Recommendations Not Supported by City Departments

Recommendation	Department Comments (if provided)
<b>Land Use</b>	
Limit the height of single- and two-family structures in the South River City planning area to 30 feet or 2-stories in order to ensure that new and remodeled buildings are not constructed out of proportion with the adjacent residences. (NPZD)	Rather than address this issue neighborhood-by-neighborhood, NPZD will process a code amendment in the Fall of 2005.
<b>Transportation</b>	
Provide signage and lighting similar to those in school zones for pedestrian crossings along the section of S. Congress Ave. north of Annie St. (PW & South Congress Improvement Project)	All signs, markings and flashing beacons that we install must be in accordance with the Texas Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Overhead flashing lights and warning signs, such as those in the school zone adjacent to Fulmore Middle School, are appropriate for a school zone. However, all pedestrian crosswalks north of Annie Street are north of the school zoned and are located at intersections controlled by traffic signals. Traffic signals are the most positive form of traffic control to stop drivers for a crosswalk. Signs and markings typical of a school zoned would not be appropriated, would confuse drivers, and would detract from the effectiveness of the school zone. If there are other high pedestrian areas, please identify specific times and locations so that we can investigate whether pedestrian warning signs are appropriate.
Provide crosswalks across S. Congress Ave. at Elizabeth St., Leland Ave., and Long Bow Ln. (PW & South Congress Improvement Project)	If the neighborhood informs us of a specific location, time period, and day of the week we could observe the most pedestrians at each locations, we can investigate whether pedestrian warning signs would be appropriate, and whether the number of pedestrians crossing is at least 100 per hour for each of four hours of a typical day or 190 in one hour of a typical day, which can warrant a crosswalk with protection.
Change the timing of the traffic signals on S. Congress in the hopes it will lower	Traffic signal synchronization is, based upon polls of the public, a top concern of

<p>traffic speeds and allow other modes of transit, like bicycling and walking to fit within the transportation network more safely. (PW &amp; South Congress Improvement Project)</p>	<p>citizens of Austin. Traffic signals synchronized to maximize the chances that a driver proceeding at the speed limit will encounter green signals as they reach each signalized intersection on the major roadway provide optimal traffic flow and safety and reduce air pollution and fuel consumption. Given that signals are optimized for the speed limit, this would also tend to discourage speeding well above the limit, because drivers would then reach some intersections before the green phase.</p>
<p>Extend route #14 south of Oltorf St. (Capital Metro)</p>	
<p>Conduct a traffic calming study on Leland Ave. between S. Congress Ave. and Brackenridge St. due to safety issues regarding Fulmore Middle School. (PW)</p>	<p>This was not identified by the neighborhood working group in the recently completed Travis height Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan. This area will not be eligible for additional traffic calming until all other areas of Austin in which traffic calming is desired have had an opportunity to identify and implement traffic calming solutions. Currently there is no funding to study or implement traffic calming in new areas. Funding to implement traffic calming in a total of three neighborhoods in South Austin may be included in the next bond election. Given that three are 60 to 80 neighborhood areas in South Austin in which traffic calming is desired, if funding is approved it will be necessary to prioritize neighborhoods based on our traffic calming request database and speed and traffic volume data to select areas for study and implementation of traffic calming.</p>
<p>Add angled, striped parking on S. Congress Ave. where space is available, particularly in front of the Congress Avenue Baptist Church, the former funeral home, and Fulmore Middle School. (PW)</p>	<p>Angle parking interferes with traffic flow and negatively impacts roadway capacity and safety on busy streets like Congress Avenue. While this Department is taking no action to remove existing angle parking which presents problems to which drivers have become accustomed to and upon which existing businesses have come to depend on, no additional angle parking is recommended for this busy arterial roadway.</p>

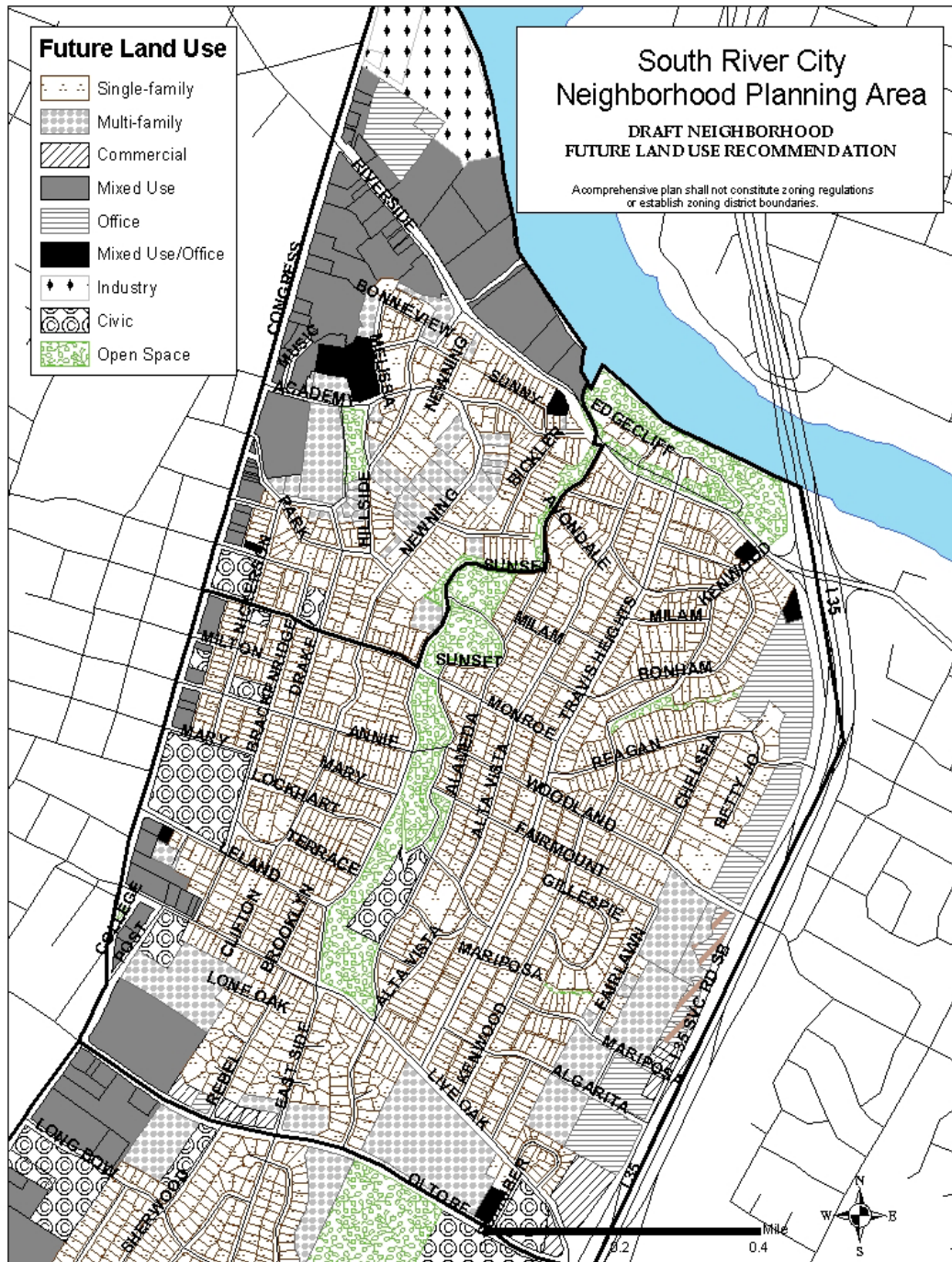
<b>Environment</b>	
<p>Require onsite water quality and detention with any further redevelopment or expansion of St. Edward's University. (WPDR)</p>	<p>Staff recognizes and appreciates the neighborhood's concerns about the damaging effects of increased development and unmanaged stormwater runoff. On-site detention of flood and erosion control is currently required for redevelopment that increases existing impervious cover. Staff currently has discretion regarding on-site water quality controls or allowing "fee-in-lieu". Staff has required on-site water quality controls for St. Edward's in recent years. Staff does not support eliminating this flexibility, which allows construction of larger, off-site regional WQ ponds that may provide more creek benefit downstream of St. Edwards. Staff is in negotiation with St. Edward's to construct a regional WQ wet pond and erosion control pond on St. Edward's property.</p>
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>	
<p>Provide additional parking for the Blunn Creek Greenbelt. Provide this parking at several points along the greenbelt rather than concentrating it at Little and Big Stacy Parks</p>	<p>There is adequate on-street parking along the Greenbelt and to scarce land to build parking lots for this primarily walk-to park.</p>
<p>Utilize art-in-public-places funds to improve park tables, benches, and waste cans. (AIPP &amp; KAB)</p>	<p>The Art in Public Places Program receives 2% of CIP construction costs. As per the Ordinance Chapter 7-2, the Arts Commission is charged with identifying public art projects based on recommendation for the Art in Public Places Panel. Recommended public art projects may be functional by artist's intent or serve as an artistic enhancement to an architectural structure, but must not be restricted streetscape amenities in order to realize the City's intent for the Percent for Art Program.</p> <p>It is the goal of the Public Art Program to expend the percent funds to commission artists for original works of art of redeeming quality, which advance the public's understanding of Visual Art &amp; to commission a broad range of works of art, reflective of the overall diversity of current works in the field of public art (AIPP Guidelines)</p>

**Neighborhood Character**

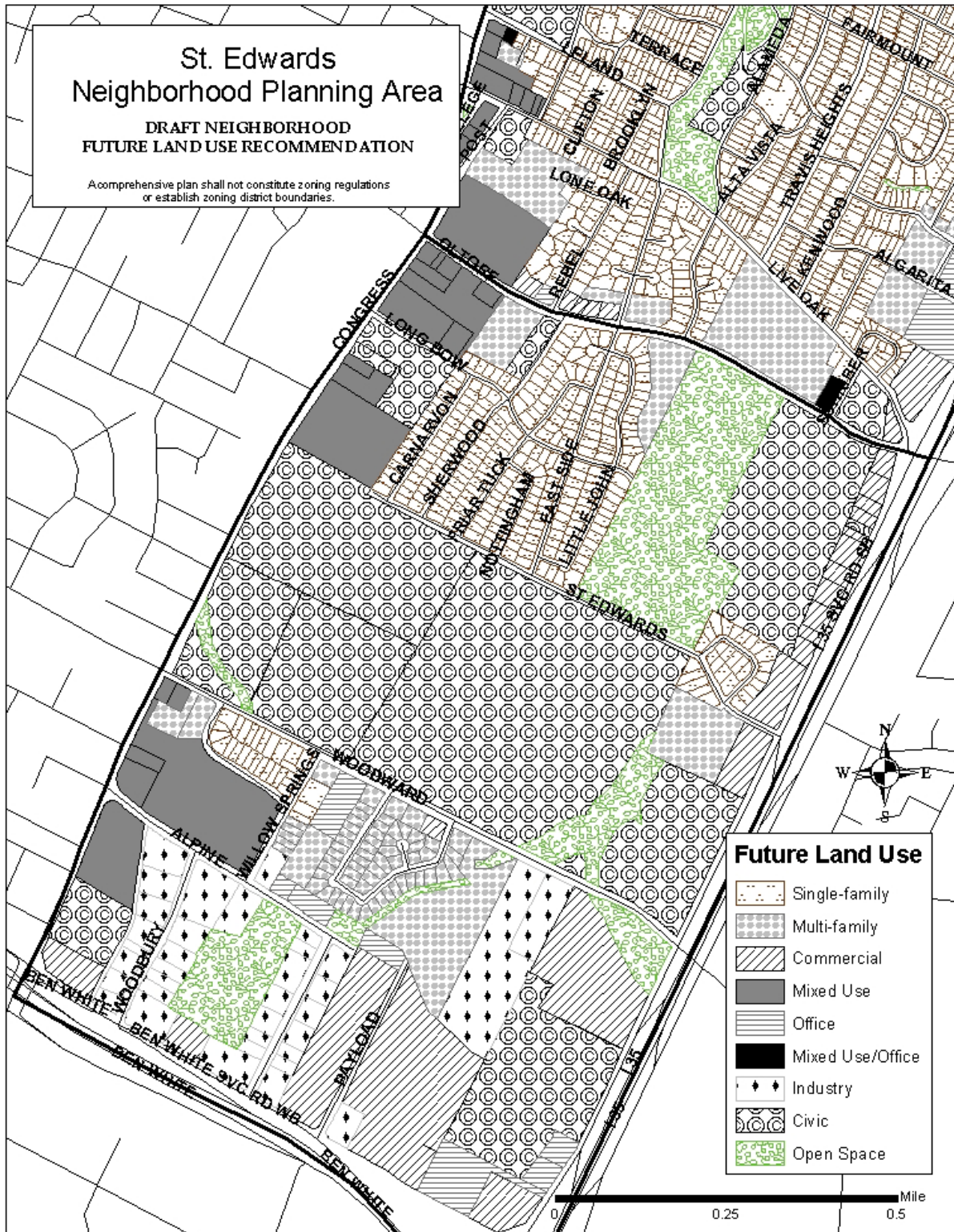
<p>When clearing vegetation from utility lines, trim trees in a more sensitive, aesthetically-pleasing way rather than the “Y” cuts typically done.</p>	<p>The alternative to “Y” cuts is removal of the tree. AE works with individual property owners who prefer “Y” cuts to complete loss of the tree.</p>
<p>Bury above-ground electrical utilities and cable throughout neighborhood, especially along the Blunn Creek Greenbelt and the south side of East Live Oak between Alta Vista and Schriber.</p>	<p>The costs run about \$350/foot. All customers would have to change out services which could trigger bringing service up to code. Additionally, other provider would have to have their work paid for and each of their costs can run over \$200/foot.</p>

# Appendix H: Neighborhood Recommended Future Land Use Maps\*

**\*The maps shown in Appendix H are not Council adopted future land use maps. The maps in this section are for informational purposes only. The Council adopted FLUMS may be located in the Recommendations section of the plan on pages 38 & 40.**



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# Appendix I: List of Abbreviations

<b>AE</b>	Austin Energy
<b>AIPP</b>	Art in Public Places
<b>AFD</b>	Austin Fire Department
<b>AMA</b>	Avenue Merchants Association
<b>APD</b>	Austin Police Department
<b>AWU</b>	Austin Water Utility
<b>BOA</b>	Board of Adjustment
<b>CAMPO</b>	Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
<b>CEF</b>	Critical Environmental Feature
<b>CIP</b>	Capital Improvement Project
<b>EGRSO</b>	Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services
<b>ER/O</b>	East Riverside/Oltorf Neighborhood Plan
<b>GSRC</b>	Greater South River City neighborhood
<b>KAB</b>	Keep Austin Beautiful
<b>HHS</b>	Health and Human Services Department
<b>NHCD</b>	Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department
<b>NPA</b>	Neighborhood Plan Area
<b>NPZD</b>	Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department
<b>PARD</b>	Parks and Recreation Department
<b>PC</b>	Planning Commission
<b>PW</b>	Public Works
<b>SACA</b>	South Austin Commercial Alliance
<b>SRCC</b>	South River City Citizens Neighborhood Association
<b>SWS</b>	Solid Waste Services Department
<b>WPDR</b>	Watershed Protection and Development Review Department

# Appendix J: Neighborhood Planning Glossary

**Accessory Use:** A building or a usage of land that is additional to primary use. A [garage apartment](#) or [granny flat](#) located behind the main house is an example of an accessory use.

**Activity Center:** A central area within a neighborhood or at the intersection of several neighborhoods, that serves as a formal and/or informal gathering place. An activity center can be a commercial area with a variety of different types of retail establishments, often with public [open space](#), a formal park, or any area that promotes interaction with other people on a personal and impersonal level and is [pedestrian-oriented](#).

**Base District:** A zoning district that establishes regulations governing land use and site development in a specific geographic area. For example, the base zoning district of **SF-1** requires

- A minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet
- A minimum lot width of 60 feet
- That the house cover no more than 35% of the lot
- That all of the improvements (the house, driveway, sidewalk, etc.) cover no more than 40% of the lot
- That the house be no taller than 35 feet
- That the house be at least 25 feet from the street front

**Buffer or Buffer Strip:** Landscaped areas, open spaces, fences, walls, berms, or any combination of these, used to physically separate or screen one land use or piece of property from another. Buffers are often used to block light or noise.

**Built Environment:** The urban environment consisting of buildings, roads, fixtures, parks, and all other improvements that form the physical [character](#) of a city.

**Capital Improvement Program (CIP):** A community's plan for matching the cost of large-scale improvements—such as fixing roads, water and sewer mains—to anticipated revenues, such as taxes and bonds.

**Character:** The image and perception of a community as defined by its built environment, landscaping, natural features and open space, types and style of housing, and number and size of roads and sidewalks.

**Combining District:** A zoning designation, similar to a zoning overlay, that is used to apply additional regulations and restrictions in combination with existing zoning regulations for a geographic area such as a neighborhood. It is adopted by an ordinance passed by the City Council. Combining and overlay districts are designed to achieve special goals such as downtown design, economic redevelopment, and parkland protection. See [Neighborhood Plan Combining District](#)

**Compatibility Standards:** Development regulations established to minimize the effects of commercial, industrial, or intense residential development on nearby residential property. These standards usually include

- Regulation of building height



- Minimum and maximum building setbacks
- Buffers
- Building design
- Controls to limit the impact of lighting on adjacent properties

**Comprehensive Plan:** A document, or series of documents, that serves as a guide for making land use changes, preparation of capital improvement programs, and the rate, timing, and location of future growth. It is based upon establishing long-term goals and objectives to guide the future growth of a city. It is also known as a *Master* or *General Plan*. Elements of a Comprehensive Plan include

- Economic Development
- Environment
- Housing
- Land Use
- Recreation and Open Space
- Transportation

**Conditional Use:** A land use that is inconsistent with the current zoning for its location but is allowed on a discretionary and conditional basis by the Planning Commission and City Council. Examples of conditional uses are a day care facility in a residential area that cares for fifteen or more children, a club or lodge such as an Elks Lodge or Lions Club in residential areas, or a bar in any commercial area other than in the Central Business District.

**Conditional Overlay:** A zoning tool that modifies land use and development regulations to address specific circumstances presented by a particular geographic area or site. It usually imposes further requirements in addition to those required by the [base district](#). A conditional overlay is a restrictive tool in that it can prohibit, or make conditional, specific uses, but it cannot add uses.

A conditional overlay may be combined with any base zoning district to

- Promote compatibility between competing or potentially incompatible uses
- Ease the transition from one [base district](#) to another
- Address special concerns with specific land uses
- Guide development in unique circumstances

A conditional overlay may

- Prohibit permitted, conditional, and accessory uses otherwise allowed in a **base district**
- Make a permitted use a conditional one
- Decrease the density that may be constructed
- Decrease building heights
- Increase minimum [setback](#) requirements
- Decrease the maximum [impervious cover](#)
- Restrict access to adjacent roads and require specific design features to minimize the effects of traffic

**Corner Store:** A small retail establishment (3,000 sq. ft. maximum) located in a residential area. It may include a single residential unit. This land use is limited to areas with adopted neighborhood plans that specifically permit them.

**Cottage Lot:** A [substandard](#) or [nonconforming](#) lot of 2,500 square feet or larger. It is permitted only in areas with adopted neighborhood plans that specifically allow them. To build a house on this size lot outside of an adopted neighborhood plan area requires a [variance](#).

**Density:** The number of dwelling units (houses, apartments, townhouses, duplexes, etc.), or buildings per unit of land. In Neighborhood Planning, this is often expressed as dwelling units per acre or du/ac.

**Desired Development Zone (DDZ) & Drinking Water Protection Zone (DWPZ):**

As part of the **Smart Growth** Initiative, the City of Austin was divided into two basic areas. The first area is the Desired Development Zone (DDZ.) The DDZ is composed of the central part (urban core) of Austin and areas to the east, north, and south of central Austin. The DDZ is where the City encourages redevelopments, and new infill development to occur. The Drinking Water Protection Zone (DWPZ) is composed of areas with sensitive environmental features and [watersheds](#) that contribute to the City's drinking water supply, such as the Barton Creek Watershed. The City discourages and seeks to limit development in the DWPZ.

**Downzone:** To change the land use of a tract or parcel of land from a greater to less intense usage. An example would be a change in zoning from Light Industrial (LI) to Commercial Services (CS) or Mixed Use (MU). See [Zoning](#) for a more complete description of different zoning districts.

**East Austin Overlay:** A zoning district established by the Austin City Council on July 17, 1997 to control the types of development going into the area bounded on the west by IH-35, on the north and east by Airport Blvd, and on the south by Town Lake—what is commonly known as East Austin. The goal of the passage of this overlay was to ensure public input into development proposals that fall into three categories:

- Limited Industrial (LI)
- Commercial Services (CS)
- Commercial-Liquor Sales (CS-1)

The overlay addresses the concentration of intensive commercial and industrial uses in close proximity to residential areas, schools, churches, parks, playgrounds, and day care centers in East Austin. As neighborhood plans are adopted and the [Neighborhood Plan Combining District \(NPCD\)](#) for each plan is put in place, the adopted **NPCD** will remove that portion of the city from the East Austin Overlay.

**Façade:** The exterior walls of a building that can be seen by the public.

**Flood Zone—100 year:** The land along a creek, dry wash, river, lake, seaside, swamp, bay, estuary, or in a low lying area or depression that has a one in one hundred chance of flooding every year.

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR):** The total floor area of all buildings or structures on a lot divided by the total area of the lot.

$$\text{FAR} = \frac{\text{Total Building Floor Area}}{\text{Total Lot Area}}$$

Example: FAR of 0.2 =  $\frac{8,712 \text{ sq. ft. (Building Size)}}{43,560 \text{ square feet (One Acre Lot)}}$

FAR is a measure often used to determine the intensity of land use for a zoning district.

**Future Land Use Map (FLUM):** The graphical representation of recommendations for future growth patterns in an area. It depicts where different types of development should occur (e.g. parks, schools, houses, offices) by color.

How to read a [Land Use Map](#)

**Garage Apartment:** A single-unit apartment located above a garage and sited behind the main house. It is permitted in areas with adopted neighborhood plans that specifically allow them. It is also conditionally permitted in zoning districts SF-3 and SF-5 if the lot is larger than 7,000 square feet. In areas that do not meet these criteria, a [variance](#) is required for construction.

**Granny Flat:** A freestanding, single-unit (usually single-story) apartment building located behind the main house in a residential area. It is permitted in areas with adopted neighborhood plans that specifically allow them. It is also conditionally permitted in zoning districts SF-3 and SF-5 if the lot is larger than 7,000 square feet. In areas that do not meet these criteria, a [variance](#) is required for construction.

**Growth Corridor:** A corridor where new development or redevelopment is practical and/or desired.

**Impervious Cover** Anything that stops rainwater from soaking into the ground, including roads, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots, swimming pools, and buildings.

**Infill Development:** A type of development occurring in established areas of the city. Infill can occur on long-time vacant lots or on pieces of land with dilapidated buildings, or can involve changing the land use of a property from a less to a more intensive one—i.e. from a parking lot to an office building.

**Land Development Code (LDC):** Rules, regulations, and ordinances that govern how and where certain types of development may occur.

**Land Use:** The manner in which a parcel of land is used or occupied.

**Mixed Use (MU):** A type of development that combines residential, commercial, and/or office uses, within a commercial or office zoning district, into one development or building. For example, a mixed-use building could have several floors. On the bottom floor, the space could be dedicated to retail or offices. The remaining two or three floors could be for apartments or condominiums. A *Mixed Use Combining District* allows residential, commercial, retail, and office uses to be combined in a single development.

Under the Smart Growth Infill Ordinance passed in the Spring of 2000, two types of Mixed Use development are now possible in those neighborhoods with adopted neighborhood plans that include these uses as part of their plans:

- Neighborhood Urban Center allows a variety of residential types (condos, apartments, townhouses) and commercial, office, and retail uses clustered together in a development of less than forty acres.
- A Neighborhood Mixed Use Building allows residential uses above ground floor commercial uses.

**Multi-Family:** A building that is designed to house more than one family. Examples would be a four-plex, condominiums, or apartment building.

**Neighborhood Plan Combining District:** This is a combining district that includes the zoning recommendations in an adopted neighborhood plan. See [Combining District](#).

**Neighborhood Design Guidelines:** Guidelines developed during the neighborhood planning process that serve as recommendations as to how future residential, commercial, and industrial development should be constructed to be more compatible and better blend into an existing neighborhood.

**Neighborhood Planning:** A two-phase process by which members of the community develop plans to manage future development in their neighborhoods. The first phase of the process involves establishing goals and objectives and the actions required to address neighborhood issues.

The second phase implements the land use and zoning changes recommended in the neighborhood plan in the form of a [Neighborhood Plan Combining District](#).

**Nonconforming Use:** The use of any land, building or structure that does not conform with current zoning regulations, but was lawful or not required to comply with zoning regulations at the time a zoning district was established. They may be permitted to continue or be given time to come into compliance with the existing zoning ordinance. In addition, specific code requirements address the ability to make major substantial changes to structures designated as nonconforming uses. This is also known as a *Grandfathered Use*.

**Open Space:** An area set aside or reserved for public or private use with very few improvements. Types of open space include include:

- Golf Courses
- Agricultural Land
- Parks
- Greenbelts
- Nature Preserves

In many cases, land designated as open space lies within the 100-year **flood zone**, has sensitive environmental features such as wetlands or aquifer recharge features such as caves and fault lines, or has unstable slopes.

**Overlay:** A set of zoning requirements that is applied to an area that may place further development restrictions on a zoning district. Development in an overlay district must conform to the base district as well as the overlay zoning requirements. An example is the East Austin overlay - in areas designated **LI** (See [Zoning](#)), new industrial uses became conditional uses.

**Pedestrian-Scaled:** Development designed so a person can comfortably walk from one location to another, encourages strolling, window-shopping, and other pedestrian activities, provides a mix

of commercial and civic uses (offices, a mix of different retail types, libraries and other government and social service outlets), and provides visually interesting and useful details such as:

- Public clocks
- Benches
- Public art such as murals and sculptures
- Shade structures such as canopies and covered walkways
- Decorative water fountains
- Drinking fountains
- Textured pavement such as bricks or cobblestones
- Shade trees
- Interesting light poles
- Trash bins
- Transit system maps
- Covered transit stops
- Street-level retail with storefront windows.

**Permitted Use:** A use that is allowed in a zoning district and is subject to the applicable restrictions of the district.

**Plat:** A map that shows tracts of land, boundaries, and the location of individual properties and streets. It is also a map of a subdivision or a site plan.

**Planning:** The process of setting development goals and policy, gathering and evaluating information, and developing alternatives for future actions based on the evaluation of the information.

**Prohibited Use:** One that is not permitted in a zoning district.

**Redevelopment:** The conversion of a building or project from an old use to a new one. Examples are the conversions of old warehouses to bars or coffee shops or converting an old industrial complex into a shopping center like the Quarry Market in San Antonio. It is also known as *Adaptive Reuse*.

**Rezone:** To change the zoning classification of particular lots or parcels of land.

**Setbacks:** The minimum distance between the building and any lot line.

**Small Lot Amnesty:** The ability of a property owner to request a building permit without submitting a subdivision application to construct a single family home that will have sixty-five percent impervious cover on a 2,500 square foot lot. Small lot amnesty is applied when the lot in question is neither a legal nor a grandfathered lot and does not meet the current minimum standards of the base zoning district where it is located. Small lot amnesty is limited to areas with adopted neighborhood plans where it is permitted by the plan.

**Smart Growth:** A perspective, method, and goal for managing the growth of a community. It focuses on the long-term implications of growth and how it may affect the community, instead of viewing growth as an end in itself. The community can vary in size; it may be as small as a city block or a neighborhood, or as large as a city, a metropolitan area, or even a region. Smart Growth promotes cooperation between often diverse groups to arrive at sustainable long-term

strategies for managing growth. It is designed to create livable cities, promote economic development, and protect open spaces, environmentally sensitive areas, and agricultural lands.

**SMART Housing:** An initiative of the City of Austin to promote sustainable and equitable housing development for low- to moderate-income households.

Housing developed under this program would serve the needs of a variety of income levels and be accessible to people with disabilities. The **SMART** Housing Initiative also requires that housing developed under the program have ready access to transit.

**SMART** stands for

S	afe
M	ixed-Incom
A	accessible
R	easonably Priced
T	ransit-oriented

**Sprawl:** A haphazard and disorderly form of urban development. There are several elements that characterize sprawl:

- Residences far removed from stores, parks, and other activity centers
- Scattered or “leapfrog” development that leaves large tracts of undeveloped land between developments
- Commercial strip development along major streets
- Large expanses of low-density or single use development such as commercial centers with no office or residential uses, or residential areas with no nearby commercial centers
- Major form of transportation is the automobile
- Uninterrupted and contiguous low- to medium-density (one to six du/ac) urban development
- Walled residential subdivisions that do not connect to adjacent residential development.

**Streetscape** The space between the buildings on either side of a street that defines its character. The elements of a streetscape include

- Building Frontage/Facade
- Landscaping (trees, yards, bushes, plantings, etc.)
- Sidewalks
- Street Paving
- Street Furniture (benches, kiosks, trash receptacles, fountains, etc)
- Signs
- Awnings
- Street Lighting

**Substandard Lot:** A lot that once was of legal size and shape, but due to the revision of zoning ordinances, does not conform to the current zoning standards. This is also known as a Nonconforming Lot.

**Sustainability:** A concept and strategy by which communities seek economic development approaches that benefit the local environment and quality of life. Sustainable development

provides a framework under which communities can use resources efficiently, create efficient infrastructures, protect and enhance the quality of life, and create new businesses to strengthen their economies. A sustainable community is achieved by a long-term and integrated approach to developing and achieving a healthy community by addressing economic, environmental, and social issues. Fostering a strong sense of community and building partnerships and consensus among key stakeholders are also important elements.

**Traditional Neighborhood Corridor:** The combination of an [activity center](#) and the transportation connections linking it to the rest of city. These links may be made by frequent public transit service, walking, cycling, or by car. The major thoroughway into a traditional neighborhood corridor should be wide enough to accommodate all modes of vehicular transportation, on-street parking, as well as provide space for safe and inviting sidewalks for pedestrians. A Traditional Neighborhood Corridor is characterized by a mixture of various uses and densities such as stores, offices, and different types of housing.

**Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):** A form of development that emphasizes alternative forms of transportation other than the automobile - such as walking, cycling, and mass transit - as part of its design. Transit-Oriented Development locates retail and office space around a transit stop. This activity center is located adjacent to a residential area with a variety of housing options such as apartments, townhouses, duplexes, and single family houses. Similar to a *Traditional Neighborhood Development*.

**Transit Nodes:** Stops along a public transportation route where people board and disembark, often where one or more routes intersect with each other. These sites can provide ideal locations for [mixed use](#) development as well as **transit-oriented development**.

**Upzone:** To change the zoning of a tract or parcel of land from a lesser to greater intensity of usage. An example would be a change in zoning from Single Family (SF) to Multi-Family (MF) or Mixed Use (MU). See [Zoning](#).

**Urban Home:** A [substandard](#) or [nonconforming lot](#) of 3,500 sq. ft. or larger. An urban home is required for a [substandard](#) corner lot. It is permitted only in areas with adopted neighborhood plans that specifically permit them. To build a house on a lot this size outside of an adopted neighborhood plan area requires a **variance**.

**Variance:** The relaxation of requirements of a zoning district for a specific parcel or tract of land. Variances are often issued to avoid unnecessary hardships to a landowner.

**Watershed:** A relatively large area of land that drains water into a river, creek or into an aquifer (an underground reservoir or lake). In Central Texas, water draining into an aquifer usually flows into recharge features such as caves or fractures in the ground.

**Zoning:** The method used by cities to promote the compatibility of land uses by dividing tracts of land within the city into different districts or zones. Zoning ensures that a factory is not located in the middle of a residential neighborhood or that a bar is not located next to an elementary school.