

# Neighborhood News

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Est. 1973 | August 2021

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**SRCC**

## A Note from the President

As current SRCC President, I am happy to welcome you to the SRCC Newsletter, the first to be published after many months of silence. I am happy to contribute to this effort and to encourage our readers to join us on-line for meetings. We are all looking forward to the time that we can once again safely meet in person.

I moved into the neighborhood in 1974 and into my house on Mariposa Drive in 1977. In some ways the neighborhood is the same – friendly, beautiful, and historic. In other ways it is very different. It is important for us to know the history of our neighborhood and learn the stories of residents who have lived here for many years. Change is good, but pride in our shared experiences is also good.

I was fortunate to meet the woman whose family was the first to buy my house when it was built in the 60's. When I met her she was 92 years old and still active in the exercise class I attended. She and her

husband raised two children here in less than 1000 square feet, without a dishwasher, clothes washer or dryer. The water heater is still on the back porch. Her children's hand prints are visible in the concrete topping of the retaining wall in the back yard. I count myself so fortunate to live in this house and this neighborhood.

Talk to your neighbors. Find out about them and let our editor know your story and theirs! This is your newsletter, and I can hardly wait to hear your story and learn even more about our wonderful neighborhood.

—Cynthia Milne

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## Sign Up for Neighborhood News

Our neighborhood has long had its own listserv for exchanging neighborly advice, finding lost pets, getting referrals for household repairs and much more. Last December, Yahoo pulled the plug on all its groups, including ours. Thankfully, the listserv manager who had maintained our Yahoo listserv account, set

up a parallel group on IO Groups, which is now operational.

To sign back up or sign up for the first time, take the following steps:

- go to [groups.io/g/SouthRiverAustin](https://groups.io/g/SouthRiverAustin) and ask to join
- respond to an email you will get to verify your identity
- follow prompts to join the IO Groups listserv

You will then be reconnected with many of your SRCC neighbors to begin debates on who is the best house painter or best lawn service provider, etc.

Note that this listserv is NOT controlled by SRCC. It was set up and is managed by one of our good neighbors. If you have questions, please click on the above IO Groups site for further help.

—Betty Weed

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# Transport & Mobility

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## Light Rail in Travis Heights

The Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Cap Metro) is developing a transit plan that includes a new rail system, two lines of which will border our neighborhood. We should all inform ourselves on what is being proposed, as it will very much affect our neighborhood.

The proposed Orange Line is a 20-mile light rail corridor that would travel along Lamar Boulevard and Congress Avenue from the Tech Ridge Park & Ride at Howard Lane south to Slaughter Lane. There would be a stop on South Congress. More information is available at [capmetro.org/project-connect/system-plan/orange-line](http://capmetro.org/project-connect/system-plan/orange-line)

The proposed Blue Line is an 8.2-mile light rail corridor that would operate from Republic Square in downtown Austin to the Airport. The transitway is proposed to operate in a tunnel through downtown under 4th and Trinity Streets. The transitway would cross Lady Bird Lake on a new dedicated transit bridge, and travel along East Riverside Drive and State Highway 71 to the airport. For the latest information, go to [capmetro.org/project-connect/system-plan/blue-line](http://capmetro.org/project-connect/system-plan/blue-line).

—Betty Weed

## Neighborhood Parking News

Parking hassles within the neighborhood have been managed using the Residential Permit Parking (RPP) system for many years. The system allows neighbors, generally on a block-by-block basis, to petition and pay a fee to the city, in return for the exclusive use of parking spaces along the street. Despite its good intentions, the current permit system essentially just moves the problem parking to the next block in the neighborhood, continually jamming up the free-

parking streets and leaving the permit-only ones nearly empty. The neighbors who live adjacent, but just outside, of the permitted boundaries bear all the burden for the neighborhood parking demand. This inequality among neighbors has spurred the push for parking reform.

Consultants from Nelson Nygaard were hired by the Downtown Austin Alliance to survey local parking data and propose reforms. It turns out free parking in our neighborhood is really popular. Some commuters, seeking to avoid the high cost of downtown parking, use our neighborhood's free spaces, and walk or scoot the last mile to work. Overnight hotel guests also love the free neighborhood spaces when compared to paying for parking at the hotel's garage. The current intermingling of free and permit-only spaces indulges hopeful drivers to circle our narrow streets while waiting for a free space to open. Even lucky residents with a permit to park find the varied rules from block-to-block confusing. For more information about the parking study, See: [srccatx.org/2021/05/15/south-congress-parking-study-and-recommendations/](http://srccatx.org/2021/05/15/south-congress-parking-study-and-recommendations/)

The consultants' proposal is to create a Parking Transportation Management District (PTMD) to manage parking and other transportation issues within the neighborhood. This approach is already used successfully for parking management in several areas within Austin: Downtown, Mueller Area, Saltillo Plaza Area, and the Hike and Bike trail near Austin High School. Paid parking will be instituted along South Congress and adjacent streets that handle the spillover parking. Residents will be able to purchase a permit, cost similar to current RPP, which will enable them to park without paying. The paid parking area will be marked with regular street signs. Most people will pay using the Park ATX app but some free-standing kiosks will be sparsely placed for folks choosing to pay by card. The revenue from parking will pay for enforcement, and the parking data will help match parking demand to parking rates. Another benefit of PTMD managed parking is that a portion of parking revenue will be used for neighborhood mobility improvements like sidewalks or a circulator like the old Dillo.

Not every street within the PTMD will have paid parking implemented. Selecting areas for paid parking is under review, so, please review the proposal and the maps within and provide your feedback to Mark Thompson at [mobility@srccatx.org](mailto:mobility@srccatx.org).

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# Our Community

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## Travis Heights Art Trail

19th Annual

Travis Heights Art Trail

November 6-7, 2021, 11AM-5PM

[travisheightsarttrail.org](http://travisheightsarttrail.org)

There's nothing else like it...

Travis Heights Art Trail (THAT), a two-day interactive art, music, and literary event in its 19th year, is a collaborative effort that engages community businesses, schools, visual and performing artists, and the public in an enriching cultural experience. The 15-stop tour will feature arts and crafts from 42 professional Austin artists, including the Ann Richards art school program and the Christ Lutheran Church Congregation Quilt Group.

THAT is a grassroots show, entirely run by the artists. It is one of the oldest neighborhood shows in Austin. Each year, this city gem showcases some of the city's best professional artists as they open up their homes, backyards, and studios to the public. THAT has become an area tradition, with fans enjoying walking along the beautiful and historic streets of the Travis Heights neighborhood.

This year, THAT also provides the Ann Richards School's young artists program an opportunity for a hands-on marketing experience. Specifically, the Art Trail is designed to:

- Create a stronger community of fine artists and craftspeople in the Austin area by providing artists with commercial and educational benefits;
- Invite visitors to tour the studios of local artists, view their art, and have the opportunity to discuss art with the creating artists;
- Improve the income of area artists and to contribute financially to the local South Congress businesses through increased tourism.

THAT, a non-profit organization, welcomes local business support with all proceeds going directly to event promotion. It receives financial support from SRCC and is sponsored by the City of Austin's Cultural Arts Division of the Economic Development Department.

In 2021, the Travis Heights Art Trail takes place the weekend of November 6-7 from 11 am-5 pm.

For more information about the Artists and Sponsors plus a map, go to: [travisheightsarttrail.org](http://travisheightsarttrail.org) or contact Art Trail Director, Charlotte Bell, [info@travisheightsarttrail.org](mailto:info@travisheightsarttrail.org).

## Neighborhood Watch

We are seeking new volunteers to patrol or keep watch on areas of the SRCC neighborhood as part of our continuation of the Neighborhood Watch Program. Our goal is to get all 8 SRCC areas covered by patrols at some point. We have sign-ups for walking, bicycling, or driving for periods of 30 minutes to an hour. There are different viewpoints on what type of patrol is most effective, e.g., patrolling the area around the volunteer's street so that recognition of something/someone out of place is easier to spot, or random patrolling. Whichever you pick, the primary goal is to have all the areas patrolled, particularly at times and in areas where the most criminal activity is occurring. We do, however, recognize that most volunteers are not able to patrol late into the night. And, everyone should understand that when one is on a watch patrol, it is not our job to stop crimes or apprehend criminals. The goal of the program, as demonstrated by the placement of Neighborhood Watch signs in all 8 areas, is to provide a deterrence by our roving presence and to alert the police to any observed suspicious persons or activity.

In the meantime, everyone is encouraged to be vigilant at all times, whether at home, out and about, or on a neighborhood patrol. We have noted several kinds of criminal activities in our neighborhoods, including car break-ins, home burglaries, and package thefts from front porches. To curb these, we all need to be aware of our surroundings: look, listen, and watch and report anything or anyone that seems out of place. Austin Police representatives for our area have emphasized that we should not hesitate to report something by calling 911, even if it turns out to be nothing: it is "better to be safe than sorry." In addition to being keenly observant, we should also make it difficult for criminals to operate in our neighborhoods; be sure to lock doors and windows of homes and vehicles; do not leave valuables in vehicles or where they can easily be seen and taken; turn porch and other outside lights on at night, particularly in dark or secluded areas. It is also wise to keep bushes and shrubbery trimmed around windows and doors close to the house, and install security systems and security lights, if possible. In this way, we will keep our neighborhoods safe.

Please contact me if you wish to volunteer or have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Tom Groce, Chair, Public Safety; [tgroce71@gmail.com](mailto:tgroce71@gmail.com)

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# Our Community

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## Norwood Project Update

Great news to share: after a frustrating delay, the Norwood Project is moving forward again! Per the PARD Director in June, we have a green light to proceed toward Phase 2 construction at the site. The professional team is now actively engaged on items that must be finalized before we can get our building permit and start turning dirt on the hill.



**A new terrace will allow visitors to take full advantage of a spectacular, revenue-generating view of the city. Image courtesy Elizabeth Day.**

Phase 1 was finished in 2016 and covered stabilization and site work at Norwood, including moving of the house to its correct historical location. The initial work of Phase 2 construction (Phase 2/Sub-phase A) will:

- restore the exterior of the Norwood House to its original 1922 appearance, and
- provide the parking lot, sidewalks and street infrastructure work required by the city

We are not able to issue a schedule just yet, but we will keep everyone apprised of plans for groundbreaking. In the meantime, we continue to work challenges like pending changes at Norwood Park related to the future Blue Line (anticipated to stop, conveniently, right in front of the Norwood House!) and the ongoing TxDOT Mobility35 work at I-35 & Riverside Drive. There is always a lot going on to complicate things at this dynamic location in our red-hot city.

Norwood has never been easy, but we persist! Restoring this Arts & Crafts gem for our kids and future generations - and for use and enjoyment by EVERYONE in Austin - will be worth the wait.

New to Austin? Want to know why Norwood matters? Please visit our revamped website for lots of new photos and fun info: [norwoodparkfoundation.org](http://norwoodparkfoundation.org)

—Colleen Theriot

## A Trail for You and You and You

Some of you might have noticed the revived activity on the wannabe trail that wraps around Little Stacy Park, from East Side Drive and the park pavilion over to the alley near Alameda Drive.

Janna Renfro, the engineer with Watershed Protection who has been overseeing the project, recently explained how the trail will soon be finished out. The plan calls for a mulched 8-foot-wide path that will be bordered with cedar logs, which will help keep the mulch in place. Outside of the trail, on either side, the city will spread topsoil to bring the ground up to grade and then seed it with native grasses and forbs. Watershed Protection also plans to scoop out small drainage swales to carry runoff water to the low point on the east end of the trail. It is estimated the work will be finished this summer.

So that's the plan! Many thanks go to the City's engineering and construction crews for their work. Thanks also to Jeff Kessel for his years of effort on behalf of SRCC to see the project through from a collapsing asphalt road to a shady path good for the creek, dogs, people, and other assorted neighbors.

—David Todd

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# More News

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## How the City of Austin's Land Development Code Revision Could Impact SRCC

Austin's Land Development Code Revision represents a push to create more housing for the City of Austin (COA) by allowing much denser development (up to 10 multifamily units on what is currently zoned a single-family lot). COA purports to want affordable housing, yet new builds are rarely affordable. Moreover, SRCC stands to lose a lot of "market affordable" housing (meaning affordable without a government subsidy), such as our many garage apartments, duplexes and older condos. Therefore, SRCC formed an *ad hoc* committee to explore how the revised code would impact our neighbors' quality of life.

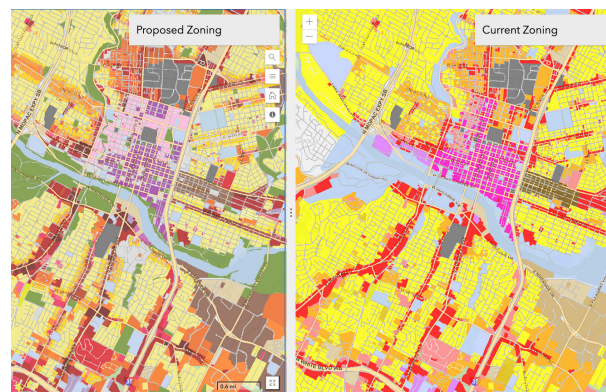
The *ad hoc* committee met every two weeks for several months. Here are some of our key activities:

- We researched the rental rates of old duplexes that had been replaced by new units. Not surprisingly, the rents often tripled. The COA Land Development Code Revision does not seem to be able to produce affordable housing, at least not in SRCC and Austin's urban core areas.
- We researched how lot values soared in price after multifamily developments replaced single-family dwellings. Despite the City's reassurance that our appraisals would not include new builds as comps, our lot values rose steeply and quickly as developers paid big bucks to scrape a house and sell new duplexes. This inclusion of new builds as comps for older housing leads to big increases in property taxes that especially burden our lower- and fixed-income neighbors.

- We surveyed the neighborhood for market-rate affordable housing and reported the results to Council Member Tovo. Many of the current garage apartments and casitas are quite affordable, especially when the landlord includes the utilities in the base rent.
- We created maps moving the proposed up-zoning (increasing the number of units from the current 1-3 dwellings to 4-10 dwellings) to other areas, such as to the main corridors of SRCC along Riverside, Congress, and IH 35.
- We distilled our research and clarified our position into seven points (the 7 Points) that state how SRCC agrees with the City and where we propose an alternative plan. These seven points were unanimously approved by SRCC at a meeting and serve as a record of our position.
- COA is currently facing legal challenges to its proposed Land Development Code Revision.

Our committee is monitoring the COA's proposals that would allow big zoning changes in our neighborhoods, such as permitting a 10-unit multi-family building to tower over our single-family homes. We aim to inform you of future developments. In the interim, if you want to review SRCC's position on the proposed Land Development Code Revision, see the Outline of the 2019 Position Paper Regarding the Proposed Land Use Code Revision at: [srccatx.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/07/LDCRposition.pdf](https://srccatx.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/07/LDCRposition.pdf)

—Paula Kothmann



# South River City Citizens Meetings

3rd Tuesdays of most months starting at 7:00 p.m.

See [srccatx.org](http://srccatx.org) for details about how to attend.

We thank all of our officers, area coordinators, committees, and representatives for their dedication to our community! Contact your area coordinators for SRCC questions, volunteer opportunities, or to help out at a meeting.

## Area Coordinators

### Area 1

Claudette Lowe 512-447-1514  
Marylin Orton 512-924-7836

### Area 2

Russell Fraser 512-771-9736  
Eugene Kubelka 512-441-9262

### Area 3a

Jo Webber 512-441-3117  
Sara Newsom 512-444-8292

### Area 3b

Brooks Kasson 512-444-8100  
Marc Davis 512-656-2841

### Area 4a

Sam Martin 512-470-1494  
Carol Martin Csmartin4@icloud.com

### Area 4b

Kris Asthalter 512-443-4963

### Area 5

Neal Nuwash 512-462-9093  
Elloa Mathews 512-442-6986

### Area 6

Rachel McClure 512-326-5572  
Laura Gass Weaver  
gassweaver@sbcglobal.net

### Area 7

Open

### Area 8

Kim Lanzillotti 512-658-8565  
Vicky Moerbe 512-442-5678

## Standing Committees

### Planning & Zoning

Russell Fraser (*Chair*)  
russell\_fraser@msn.com

### Historic Preservation

Paula Kothmann (*Chair*) 512-470-2405  
paula.kothmann@gmail.com  
Michele Webre (*Co-Chair*)  
512-422-1262  
Angela Reed (*Co-Chair*) reed.as@gmail.com

### Finance

Sam Martin (*Chair*) 512-470-1494  
financecommittee@srccatx.org

### Mobility

Mark Thompson (*Chair*)  
mobility@srcc.org

### Public Safety

Tom Groce (*Chair*)  
tgroce71@gmail.com

### Parks & Environment

David Todd (*Chair*) 512-416-0400

### Schools

Gretchen Otto (*Chair*) 512-227-1507

### Communications

Betty Weed (*Chair*)  
communications@srccatx.org  
Ruth Casarez (*Newsletter Editor*)  
newsletter@srccatx.org  
Meghan Fernandes (*Newsletter Designer*)

## Representatives

### Austin Neighborhood Council

Betty Weed [ancrep@srccatx.org](mailto:ancrep@srccatx.org)

### East Riverside (EROG)

Toni House 512-447-8090

### Greater South River City NPCT (GSRC)

#### South Central Coalition

Elloa Mathews 512-442-6986

### South Central Waterfront

Tom Croce [tgroce71@gmail.com](mailto:tgroce71@gmail.com)

### St. Edwards

Elloa Mathews 512-442-6986

### Travis Heights Art Trail

Charlotte Bell 512-447-2150

### Travis Park Apt/Austin Interfaith

Terry Franz 512-447-8786

### South Central Affordable CDC

Gretchen Otto 512-227-1507

## SRCC Officers

### President Cynthia Milne

[president@srccatx.org](mailto:president@srccatx.org)

### Vice President Megan Spencer

[vicepresident@srccatx.org](mailto:vicepresident@srccatx.org)

### Co-Vice President Kenneth Burnett

[covicepresident@srccatx.org](mailto:covicepresident@srccatx.org)

### Secretary Dan Fredine

[secretary@srccatx.org](mailto:secretary@srccatx.org)

### Treasurer Will Andrews

[treasurer@srccatx.org](mailto:treasurer@srccatx.org)

### Membership Secretary Mary Friedman

[membership@srccatx.org](mailto:membership@srccatx.org)

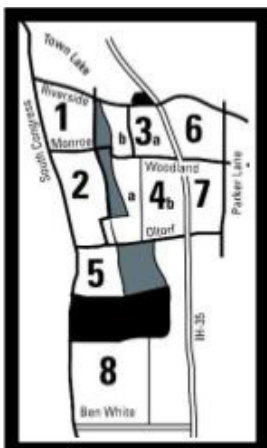
## Membership

Become a member and be eligible to vote! Join or renew online at [srccatx.org](http://srccatx.org). To pay via PayPal, go to [srccatx.org/membership-dues/](http://srccatx.org/membership-dues/) or send a check made payable to SRCC, along with this completed form to:

**SRCC, Attention: Treasurer, P.O. Box 40632, Austin, TX. 78704**

Family memberships: provide names of each family member (adults residing at the same address). When paying via PayPal, include the names of family members in the Instructions to Merchant or Shipping Details areas.

Dues are not tax-deductible. If dues lapse, renew before a meeting and be eligible to vote. New members can vote after 28 days.



### Membership Levels

# Years	Individual	Family
1	\$20	\$35
2	\$35	\$65
3	\$50	\$95

Membership Fees Due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Donation  
to SRCC General Fund: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

SRCC Area (*see map*): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years (circle one): 1 2 3

Membership (circle one): Individual Family