

The Fall 2015

# Neighborhood Newsletter

An occasional printed publication of the South River City Citizens' Neighborhood Association, Established 1973



## Letter From the President

Greetings Neighbors! I hope you're all enjoying the cool, fall weather we're starting to get. It's been a fairly quiet summer since our last issue, so consider this one an update and recap of what's been going on in the neighborhood. I also want to highlight that there has been some interest from several people in rebooting the Neighborhood Watch program. Please read about it in this newsletter if you're interested in getting involved. We're a 100% volunteer-driven organization, dedicated to bettering the lives of our residents and city, but we couldn't do it without the help of our neighbors.

This is our last issue for 2015, and I wish everyone a happy holiday season!

—Sounthaly "Tune" Outhavong,  
SRCC President



## TRAVIS HEIGHTS ART TRAIL

November 7-8  
Saturday and Sunday,  
11am-5pm

Our annual neighborhood art trail is coming up! This is a grassroots art show, created by and for the artists of Austin. Each year showcases some of the city's longest practicing artists as they open up their homes and studios to the public.

Highlights of the show include the Travis Heights Elementary School Arts Program (parents and children

from the school display and sell "kid" art as a way to fundraise for the school art program), a literary house at the

Fairview on Newning Ave. featuring local authors with book readings and signings, a music house on Travis Heights Blvd. featuring Fulmore Junior High

music students, and art cars with a mini car parade and cars featured at various houses. More information can be found on the website,

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

—Charlotte Bell



## NORWOOD HOUSE UPDATE

Have you been up on the hill at Norwood lately? The site of the house is looking great and the Norwood Park Foundation is moving steadily forward in its mission to restore and repurpose the Norwood House for everyone. In June, we wrapped up Phase 1 of the project and filed our completion report with the City. Phase 1 represents years of effort and several hundred thousand dollars in gifts and other private funding toward the project. What did Phase 1 achieve? For the house: environmental remediation, a brand-new foundation on piers drilled

to bedrock, moving of the bungalow (twice, in our case) to its correct historic location, and complete stabilization and bracing of the wood structure. "Norcliff" is now completely dried in with temporary roofing, and the old walls are protected with sheathing and paint. No more deterioration for this Arts & Crafts landmark!

Upgrades to the Norwood site began last March, when dead and invasive trees were removed to reveal the spectacular, historic, view over Lady Bird Lake. Overgrowth was cut back from other vintage elements

like the gazebo foundation and the old garden walls. The grounds work will finish by November when decades of deadwood and ball moss are pruned from the heritage oaks surrounding the house. We sincerely thank SRCC for the generous grant that allowed us to pursue site work. It will play a crucial role in attracting future financial support for the project.

Concurrent with these accomplishments, NPF has completed schematic design of the integrated Norwood plan. The overall concept for the restoration of the house and gardens, new accessory

structures, and the landscape is absolutely outstanding. We look forward to more broadly sharing the vision in 2016. Huge thanks to our volunteers from Travis Heights and beyond, who show up on cleanup days and help our board in ways big & small. Our collective Norwood effort demonstrates that, together, we can "keep Austin original" and bring this cultural treasure back to a useful & self-sustaining new life for future generations.

—Colleen Theriot, Norwood  
Park Foundation



Illustration by Elizabeth Day.



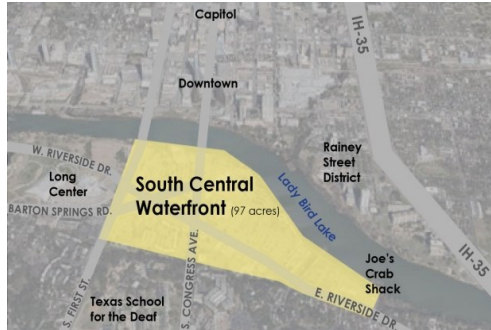
Illustration by Elizabeth Day.

# SOUTH CENTRAL WATERFRONT

There are three projects currently underway affecting the South Central Waterfront (SCW): an environmental proposal, an economic analysis, and a streetscape effort. The South Central Waterfront encompasses 97 acres located just south of downtown and bounded by South First on the west, Blunn Creek to the east, Lady Bird Lake on the north, and East Riverside Drive and Bouldin Creek on the south and includes the South River City Citizens (SRCC), and Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association (BCNA) as well as having portions included in the Downtown Public Improvement District (PID) which is administered by the Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA).

On September 3, at the Texas School for the Deaf, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) "Greening of America's Capitals" team and their consultant CMG

Landscape Architecture from San Francisco, CA concluded a 3-day Design Workshop and Open House. Scott Cataffa, PLA, a principal with CMG, presented options that would



establish a pedestrian precinct, create public open space, and enhance waterfront connections within and across the 97-acre South Central Waterfront (SCW). According to Alan Holt, AIA, Principal Planner with the City of Austin Planning and Zoning Department, "Those design concepts will provide the skeleton for the envisioned physical network of connected new and improved streets, streetscapes, trails, and open

spaces (i.e., green infrastructure) for the SCW."

The final report for the design plan should be available in November 2015 and highlights are expected to include a scheme to connect South First Street to South Congress Avenue with a pedestrian and bike trail along Bouldin Creek at the Texas School for the Deaf, a proposal for the Ann W. Richards Congress Avenue Bridge, and a civic gathering space within the proposed street grid

overlay. Funding for the implementation of this design overlay is not secured but could prove feasible in the future.

Concurrent with this project, Abe Farkas, PhD with the firm ECONorthwest, has begun work on a City of Austin contract to develop economic models of the SCW which compare the baseline buildout to an alternative buildout that includes the options discussed above in

addition to affordable housing. The timeline for the economic study suggests meetings and presentations in December 2015 to be followed by a presentation to City Council in February 2016. To view the presentations and keep current with new information please consult <http://www.austintexas.gov/waterfront> and subscribe to the SCW list serve.

Early 2016 will also see the kick-off for the public engagement and design team work for the Congress Avenue Urban Design Initiative. The \$2 million 2012 bond initiative begins at Riverside Drive and terminates at the Capitol. South River City Citizens, while not identified as stakeholders, should consider involvement in this project since the Austin American Statesman property owned by the Cox Media Group is within SRCC boundaries in addition to being a part of the Downtown Public Improvement District (PID).



—Wendy Todd

## PLANNING CONTACT TEAMS

The City of Austin Comprehensive Plan divides the city into neighborhood areas. SRCC areas 1-5 are covered in The Greater South River City (GSRC) Neighborhood Plan (NP). SRCC Areas 6 and 7, located east of I-35, are included in the E. Riverside/Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Plan (EROC).

The GSRC NP was adopted by the City of Austin on September 29, 2005. Volunteers from the GSRC and SRCC Neighborhood Associations were part of an advisory committee, and assisted in the preparation of the plan. The GSRC plan covers the area bounded by the centerlines of South Congress Avenue, Lady Bird Lake,

IH-35, and Ben White Boulevard. The GSRC Neighborhood Planning Contact Team (NPCT) is made up of up to 30 stakeholders including property owners, residential renters, business owners, and neighborhood organization members who own property within the NP area. Members are Jean Mather Chair, Sarah Campbell Co-Chair, Terry Franz Secretary, Joe Arriaga, Carl Betancourt, Cristina Bordin, Elizabeth Day, Joe Day, Don Dial, Sharon Doerre, Ruth Ford, Russell Frasier, Teresa Griffin, David Karoly, Claudette Lowe, Sam Martin, Elloa Matthews, Gretchen Otto, Sara Jane Parsons, Steve Prather, David Swann,

Connie Todd, Sage White and Jerry Windisch.

The EROC NP was adopted in November 2006, and covers the area bounded by the centerlines of IH-35, Lady Bird Lake, Grove Blvd, and Ben White Blvd. SRCC members Dawn Cizmar, Gayle Goff, Toni House, Pastor Fred Krebs, Linda Land and Jean Mather have been members of the EROC NPCT since the adoption of the NP. Prior to the adoption of the plan, all were actively involved in the planning process as members of the Advisory Committee.

There are no dues or fees, and the NPCT has no budget. The teams are

responsible for being stewards of the NP and upholding its vision, goals, and recommendations. The NPCT provides recommendations to city staff, the Planning Commission, and city council regarding any proposed amendment to the NP.

NPCT meetings are open to the public, and all interested neighbors are encouraged to attend. However, only team members may vote. Notice of meetings is posted to the SRCC list serve. More information about the list serve can be found at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SouthRiverAustin/>.

—Terry Franz, GSRC NPCT, and Toni House, EROC NPCT



# HERITAGE OAKS PARK PROJECT

The Heritage Oaks Park project is beginning! Take a look at the newest public space addition to our neighborhood at 2100 Parker Lane, showcasing several magnificent heritage oak trees.

After years of effort by neighbors, the city purchased the property and Austin Parks Foundation (APF) awarded a matching grant to South River City Citizens (SRCC) that will enable us to create a pocket park that can be enjoyed by all. The planning for this project has been in progress since 2014. SRCC residents approved the landscape design, City of Austin PARD approved the technical requirements, and guided the plans through the permit review process. The contractor is TF Harper. As resident stewards of the park, here are basic facts you should know:

## **What is being installed?**

A loop trail, picnic tables, trash receptacles, and benches.

## **Why is the loop material concrete rather than crushed granite?**

PARD does not install granite trails on areas with a slope over 3%, which is the majority of this trail.

## **How will the heritage trees be protected?**

The tree trunks have been surrounded with protection. The canopy areas are fenced off and the construction will avoid the critical root zones.



## **Can the grass/ground cover survive the exposure to heavy equipment?**

Although re-vegetation is not part of the TF Harper contract, we hope PARD and APF might work with us to come up with a plan to restore any ground cover that is disturbed.

## **Where can I see the landscape design plans?**

The SRCC website has information about the project and a site plan.

## **Will the park be closed?**

Yes, for safety reasons, the park will be fenced off and marked with signs. If you see anyone attempting to get inside the fenced area, please help by explaining that the park will re-open when construction is completed. Please use the City 3-1-1 app or call to report vandalism.

## **How long will construction take?**

Estimated 6 - 8 weeks (depending on weather).

Part of SRCC's match to the total grant from APF includes volunteer hours to maintain the park.

Please show your appreciation by showing up for workdays. Thanks to all who worked to make this happen!

—Carol Martin, [membership@srccatx.org](mailto:membership@srccatx.org)



**AUSTIN PARKS  
FOUNDATION**  
PEOPLE PLUS PARKS



# FLOOD TASK FORCE

Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo has appointed SRCC Area 5 Coordinator Elloa Mathews, and fellow Sherwood Oaks resident, John Gleason, to the City of Austin's Flood Mitigation Task Force (FMTF). The FMTF has been created to gather information, develop recommendations related to

citywide and area flooding and its impacts to property, public safety, and city finances, with an emphasis on flood mitigation solutions and funding options.

The Central Texas Hill Country is the most flash flood prone area in North America. The Hill Country drains into lakes and rivers

around Austin. Flooding is Austin's most common weather-related emergency and can occur even during a drought.

John Gleason's experience as a landscape architect, and Elloa Mathews' successful advocacy for the \$5 million Long Bow Storm Drain

project in 2006 will both benefit the city as they work to fulfill the FMTF mission. To learn more about FMTF, see:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/fmtf>

—Elloa Mathews,  
[ellomail@austin.tx.com](mailto:ellomail@austin.tx.com)



## LIFE IN THE CITY UMC

Life in the City UMC is a vital new United Methodist faith community committed to offering the radically inclusive love of God to urban south Austin. The new congregation has recently moved its Ministry activities to 205 E Monroe, the campus of what was formerly Grace United Methodist Church. Life in the City launched in July 2014 with worship once a month at El Mercado Restaurant. In November the church began weekly worship at the Long Center for the Performing Arts. While that location was exciting, beautiful and recognizable, challenges with parking, festivals and races was the impetus to move to the new location in Travis Heights.

Life in the City is committed to the radically inclusive love of God revealed in Jesus' kindness, love, acceptance, justice and respect. Inclusivity of every sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status is a key value of the new congregation. Pets are welcome in worship, as well.

Artistic Director Mela Sarajane

Dailey, a critically acclaimed professional vocalist, leads our exceptionally gifted creative arts team of instrumentalists, vocalists, dancers, and fine arts experts. Ms. Dailey's creative vision and vast musical experience is at the heart of the engaging worship offered each Sunday at 11:00 am. The

creative arts team presents an original scripted musical each quarter and is currently rehearsing "Downtown

Christmas" at Life in the City on Saturday, Dec. 19 and Sunday, Dec. 20.

In July, Life in the City hosted over 50 campers and camp staff from the community for the Over the Rainbow Creative Arts

Camp. Children sang, danced, drummed, acted, painted, drew, created original music compositions, and innovated at every opportunity. The week

culminated in the presentation of the original musical, "Over the Rainbow" musical on Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Life in the City has launched several ministries focused on feeding the hungry, has volunteers at the UMC FreeStore on East 12<sup>th</sup> Street, and is serving

Several nearby schools. Every third Sunday at 12:30, Life in the City hosts a Sunday Funday

for the community at the church campus park. Neighbors are encouraged to come for free delicious food, games, a bouncy house for kids, and fun!

For more information, visit [www.lifeinthecityaustin.org](http://www.lifeinthecityaustin.org).

—Pastor Valerie Sansing



## WOODLAND TRAFFIC

A recent meeting of some SRCC residents East of I-35 with the agent of a new, 122-unit apartment complex planned at 1900 Burton/1901 Mariposa has brought to light the ever-increasing traffic on Woodland Avenue. Although the City of Austin estimated traffic from the new development to be below the threshold required for a traffic impact analysis (TIA), some residents are concerned about the cumulative effects of additional developments that fall short of the threshold for a TIA.

We've recently learned from City staff that there is the possibility of requesting a Neighborhood Traffic

Analysis (NTA) and are currently investigating this option. While overflow traffic from Oltorf and Riverside are putting increased pressure on Woodland Avenue, it's also spilling into some of the ancillary, residential streets. If you feel your street is receiving increased traffic or are experiencing problems from that traffic like speeding, please e-mail [president@srccatx.org](mailto:president@srccatx.org) with your concerns so we can be aware of specific problem areas.

—Sounthaly "Tune" Outhavong, SRCC President



## SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION

The construction of new sidewalks along the north side of Annie/Woodland between Congress Avenue and IH-35 is nearing completion. Once finished, the city will begin a second phase of filling in gaps as necessary to form a complete sidewalk along the west side of Travis Heights Boulevard from Riverside Drive to Live Oak.

Sidewalks for these

streets have been designated as top priority requests in the GSRC Neighborhood plan for many years. These are very welcome improvements that will make it safer and more pleasant to walk around our neighborhood.

—Mike Sledge, [transportation@srccatx.org](mailto:transportation@srccatx.org)





# CodeNEXT UPDATE

## ***What will the SRCC neighborhood be like in 20 years?***

The answer to that question is at the heart of the current debate about the development of Austin's new land development code, a process called CodeNEXT. Austin, as a home rule city in Texas, is given authority over land use within our city limits by the state legislature. Our City Charter requires that code must be consistent with the adopted City Comprehensive Plan. Austin adopted a new comprehensive plan in April 2012 called the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan, or IACP.

Within that plan was a provision to write a new land development code, more commonly known as our "zoning" code.

Zoning codes regulate many different aspects of property development ranging from the uses allowed on a site, sizes of buildable lots, parking requirements, and other site development standards such as building setbacks from property lines, building coverage and impervious cover limits, height and number of floors and in some areas the bulk of residential construction known as the McMansion ordinance. However, zoning is not limited to only residential development but includes also multifamily and commercial development. Zoning also controls "compatibility" between all of these uses to ensure harmonious development throughout the city.

The CodeNEXT process was begun over two years ago and has been focused on gathering information about

our community, creating a neighborhood character manual, looking at various zoning code formats, determining just how much of the existing code needed to be re-written and on identifying the problems and strengths of the existing code. But the CodeNEXT process is now entering the next phase of actually looking at how a new code can address the many issues facing our rapidly growing city.

## ***Testing a draft of the New Code: November 16 - 21.***

The city staff and consultants have begun to draft the new code and have scheduled an intensive week of meetings to test the draft code. These meetings are being called a "sound check" and will include education presentations, open design studio, "pin-up" sessions of ideas generated by the team and various informal "brown bag" discussions.

The topics to be covered in this "sound check" include: Compatibility and Transitions, Economics, Green infrastructure, Household affordability, the IACP growth concept map, and infrastructure capacity and needs. To organize this effort the "sound check" is laid out to look at 7 areas of Austin as representative of many different areas of town. Those 7 areas were selected by staff to examine the impact of the "corridors and center's" concept that is a part of IACP so the areas chosen reflect the intersections of major and minor roadway corridors with various sizes of "center" (neighborhood, city and regional).

## ***Why you need to take part in the "Sound Check".***

This "sound check" is a crucial step in developing the new code. Along with the issue areas noted above is an underlying question of how and where to provide more housing for our growing population. One scenario being advocated by some groups is to encourage what is called the "missing middle housing" throughout Austin's urban core neighborhoods such as SRCC. This "missing middle housing" could replace single family homes with more duplexes, row houses, small apartment blocks and cottage courts as a "transition" between residential and commercial uses. Others that support even more density are calling for the total elimination of single family zoning in the urban core to be replaced with even larger apartment blocks and condo towers, while others want to change site development standards to allow larger residential development and there are those who are promoting more accessory dwelling units and short term rentals in existing neighborhoods.

Unfortunately, there appears little consideration for the existing residents of our older close in neighborhoods by those advocating for such changes. There has not been enough discussion of the impact of increasing zoning entitlements and the subsequent increase in density to the quality of life for our neighborhoods, the impact on property valuations and property taxes, nor the long term implications on the cost of living in an increasingly expensive city.

The fact that SRCC, like most urban core neighborhoods, has spent

years developing a neighborhood plan that was supposed to guide the development in the area for years to come. However, even the added density allowed in the neighborhood plan seems to be irrelevant to many advocating for more density and a more urban lifestyle. So, it is very important that those who value their neighborhood plans, want to keep the residential character of their neighborhoods, want a new land development code that respects what is great about our neighborhoods, and want the surety that the new zoning code will indeed reflect the neighborhoods desire for its future, need to participate in this "sound check" to ensure that what comes out of this event is not the deafening noise of approaching bull dozers head your way.

—Jeff Jack

## **MAKE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SAFER**

The SRCC neighborhoods are easy targets for criminals, and our residents have had problems with home and auto burglaries and thefts within our boundaries. To combat property crime, we formed the SRCC Neighborhood Watch and Patrol Program a few years ago. In addition to general volunteers, we are still looking for a new leader to take over the program. Our program includes block captains organized to improve communication within the neighborhood, and trained volunteers who actively patrol to deter crime. Materials and information will be provided. To get involved, email

[neighborhood-watch@srccatx.org](mailto:neighborhood-watch@srccatx.org)

—Gretchen Otto, SRCC Vice President



## Area Coordinators

Area 1 Claudette Lowe 512-447-1514  
 Area 1 Diane Presti 512-217-6651  
 Area 2 Elizabeth Day 512-441-1759  
 Area 2 —**Volunteer Needed!**  
 Area 3a Jo Webber 512-441-3117  
 Area 3 Sara Newsom 512-444-8292  
 Area 3b Brooks Kasson 512-444-8100  
 Area 3b Tim Boswell 512-589-5593  
 Area 4a Sam Martin 512-441-5222  
 Area 4a Mary Friedman 512-619-5773  
 Area 4b Kris Asthalter 512-443-4963  
 Area 5 Neal Nuwash 512-462-9093  
 Area 5 Elloa Mathews 512-442-6986  
 Area 6 Rachel McClure 512-326-5572  
 Area 6 Laura Gass Weaver  
 gassweaver@sbcglobal.net  
 Area 7 Kelvin Glover 512-415-2027  
 Area 7 Jackie Hatfield  
 jackie.hatfield@gmail.com  
 Area 8 Maria Martinez 512-443-9784  
 Area 8 Kim Lanzillotti 512-658-8565

## Standing Committees

### Planning & Zoning

Jean Mather 512-444-4153  
 Kent Anschutz kent@kentanschutz.com  
 Marc Davis marc.davis@gmail.com  
 Russell Fraser russell\_fraser@msn.com  
 David Swann swanito@att.net

### Parks, Schools & Environment

David Todd (Parks) 512-416-0400  
 Sherri Ancipink (Schools) 512-707-2627  
 Marty Christman (Environment) 512-912-0724

**1st Monday every month at 7:15pm at  
 Grace United Methodist Church, 205 E. Monroe**

SRCC Meetings

*We thank all our officers, area coordinators, committees, and representatives for their dedication to our community!*

Call your coordinator for SRCC questions, volunteer opportunities, or to help deliver newsletters.

### Transportation & Public Safety

Mike Sledge transportation@srccatx.org  
 Jeff Kessel jeff@impactpro.com

### Neighborhood Patrol Chair

—**Volunteer Needed!**

### Communications

Justin Chang communications@srccatx.org

### Membership

Carol Martin membership@srccatx.org

### Financial

Sam Martin 512-441-5222

### Newsletter

Maia Reeves newsletter@srccatx.org

## Ad Hoc Committees

### Norwood House

Wolf Sittler 512-447-2150

### TH-FP Historic District

Michele Webre 512-422-1262

## Representatives

### Austin Neighborhood Council

James Bilodeau ancrep@srccatx.org

### City District 9

James Bilodeau ancrep@srccatx.org

### CodeNEXT

Russell Fraser russell\_fraser@msn.com

### East Riverside (EROC)

Toni House 512-447-8090

### St. Edward's

Elloa Mathews 512-442-6986

### South Central Coalition

Danette Chimenti 512-912-8290

### Travis Heights Art Trail

Charlotte Bell 512-447-2150

### Travis Park Apt/Austin Interfaith

Terry Franz 512-447-8786

## SRCC Officers

### President

Sounthaly "Tune" Outhavong  
 president@srccatx.org

### Vice President

Gretchen Otto vicepresident@srccatx.org

### Treasurer

Nancy Byrd treasurer@srccatx.org

### Secretary

Garret Nick secretary@srccatx.org

## Join Your Neighbors in SRCC

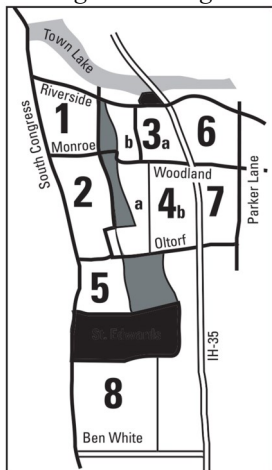
### Become a member and be eligible to vote!

Join or renew online ([www.srccatx.org](http://www.srccatx.org)) or at membership table at meetings.

Membership Levels		
No. Of Years	Individual	Family
1	\$20	\$35
2	\$35	\$65
3	\$50	\$95

To pay via PayPal, go to [www.srccatx.org/membership-dues/](http://www.srccatx.org/membership-dues/). You can also send a check made payable to SRCC, along with this completed form to: **SRCC, Attention: Treasurer, P.O. Box 40632, Austin, TX. 78704.**

*Notes—Dues and contributions are **not** tax-deductible. If dues lapse, renew at a SRCC meeting and be eligible to vote. New members can vote after 28 days.*



Number of Years (circle one):

1      2      3

Membership (circle one):

Individual      Family

Date:

Name (s):

Address:

SRCC Area (See Map):

Phone (s):

Email (s):

Membership Fee Due: \$

Add'l Donation to

SRCC General Fund: \$

**TOTAL: \$**