

Waller Creek Local Government Corporation

Progress Report



A Shaded Grove at Creek Level

Waller Creek Local Government Corporation

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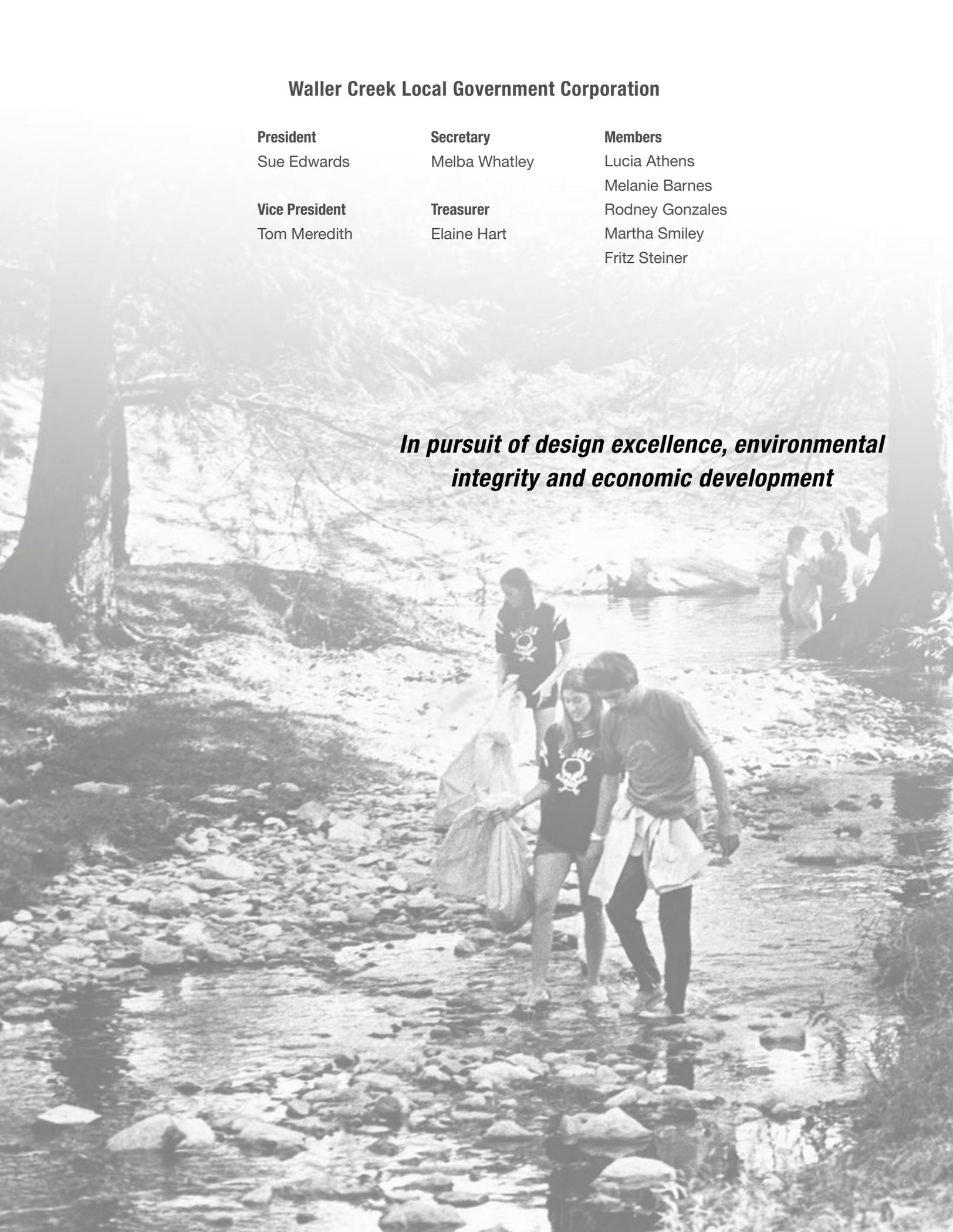
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In pursuit of design excellence, environmental integrity and economic development



Legacy of Waller Creek

1839

The town of Waterloo, situated between two creeks, is chosen to be the capital of the new Republic of Texas. A new city is built quickly in the wilderness, and its name is changed to Austin, in honor of Stephen F. Austin, “the father of Texas.” Texas President Mirabeau Lamar chose Judge Edwin Waller to supervise the surveying and sale of town lots and the construction of public buildings at the new capital. During the process, one of the surveyors names the creek known as Waller Creek after Waller.

1915

Flash floods kill 35 people, including 12 along Waller Creek. Many people drown from swirling water inside their houses. Excerpts from a 1915 article in the Austin American-Statesman read: “Whole sections of the city were submerged for hours. Houses were washed away, cows, horses, chickens and other fowls were careening down swelled Shoal and Waller Creeks...This morning Austin presents a pitiable sight.”

1938

Lyndon B. Johnson, recently elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, walks Waller Creek and decries the “shanties” and “hot beds of crime.”

1969

The University of Texas Board of Regents decides to bulldoze several hundred feet of Waller Creek, along San Jacinto Boulevard—south of 21st Street, and adjacent trees to expand Memorial Stadium. In an unsuccessful attempt to stop the bulldozing, student protesters chained themselves to trees on October 22, 1969, in what becomes known as the Waller Creek Riot.

1975

A concerted effort of numerous urban planners, architects, landscape architects and engineers create the Waller Creek Development Plan for improvements to the Waller Creek corridor as part of the City of Austin’s U.S. Bicentennial project. The plan includes recommendations for immediate, near future and long-range development through land use, circulation, landscape architectural design elements, and flood and erosion control systems.

1981

13 people drown and \$36 million in damages are incurred as part of a storm event on May 24, 1981, remembered as the “Memorial Day Flood.” This short-duration storm with intense rainfall hits many of Austin’s urban creeks: Shoal, Walnut, Little Walnut, Bee and Waller Creek.

2010

The Waller Creek Conservancy was created in November to act as the steward of Waller Creek by playing a vital role in the preservation, redevelopment and maintenance of the creek’s surrounding parks, nearby businesses, adjoining neighborhoods and community at large.

2011

On April 8, 2011 a groundbreaking ceremony marks the start of construction of the Waller Creek Tunnel. On April 28, 2011, the Austin City Council approved a resolution creating the Waller Creek Local Government Corporation to act on behalf of the City in partnering with the Waller Creek Conservancy to develop, operate and maintain Waller Creek District. The Waller Creek Conservancy formed a historic partnership with the City of Austin, with both committing \$400,000 to fund the design and implementation of a new master plan for the Waller Creek area. In November, the Waller Creek Conservancy launches *Design Waller Creek: A Competition*, an international design competition that calls for the most innovative and qualified landscape architects, architects and artist to join forces and present their ideas for remaking a currently fragmented and undervalued section of Austin into a vibrant, livable, workable district.

2012

11 months from the initial call for portfolios, *Design Waller Creek: A Competition* concludes with the announcement of the selected design team: Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc. and Thomas Phifer & Partners. Austin City Council unanimously votes to affirm the selected teams on October 18, 2012. In a November 2012 bond election, Austinites approve \$13 million for the redevelopment of Waller Creek.

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District Highlights

Summary

The Waller Creek District was established to pursue design excellence, environmental integrity, and economic development. Such an effort requires the unique partnership of the City of Austin, Waller Creek Conservancy and Local Government Corporation (LGC) to strategically plan, coordinate and deliver the projects needed to make the District vision a reality. This monumental effort involves public and private partnerships to navigate the challenges of funding, property acquisition, utility coordination and creation of signature destination reaches along Waller Creek. Accomplishments completed since January 2015 include the LGC approval of the Addendum to the Tunnel Side Inlet Modifications and Waterloo Park Interim Design Phase Plan and delivering a major milestone, the Creek Corridor Framework Plan.

Waller Creek Conservancy Highlights

- In February 2015, the WCC welcomed new CEO, Peter Mullan.
- Hosted 4th Annual Palm Park Picnic. See Special Events Page for more details.
- Completed work on the Creek Corridor Framework phase plan.

Waller Creek District Design Guidelines Team (WCDDGT) Highlights

- Reviewed: Fairmont Canopy Walkway, Waterloo Park Tower (aka Brick Oven), Bangers expansion and 84 Rainey Street
- Coordinated with: Central Health District

Waller Creek Tunnel Project Highlights

- Waller Creek Tunnel was filled during May 5, 2015 rain event.
- Crews at the outlet are installing the permanent boat docks and finishing the concrete access ramp.
- The 2 large recirculation pumps at Waterloo facility have been installed.
- Work on the structural elements for the inlet building redesign has begun.

Related Projects

- Capital Metro MetroRail Downtown
- Central Health
- University of Texas Medical School

City Council Action Items

- No action items to report.

Local Government Corporation (LGC) Action Items

- Authorized PARD application for grant funding from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Local Park Urban Outdoor Grant Program for the Waller Creek District on February 11, 2015
- Approved Addendum to the Tunnel Side Inlet Modifications and Waterloo Park Interim Design Phase Plan on May 13, 2015.

Upcoming LGC Board Meetings

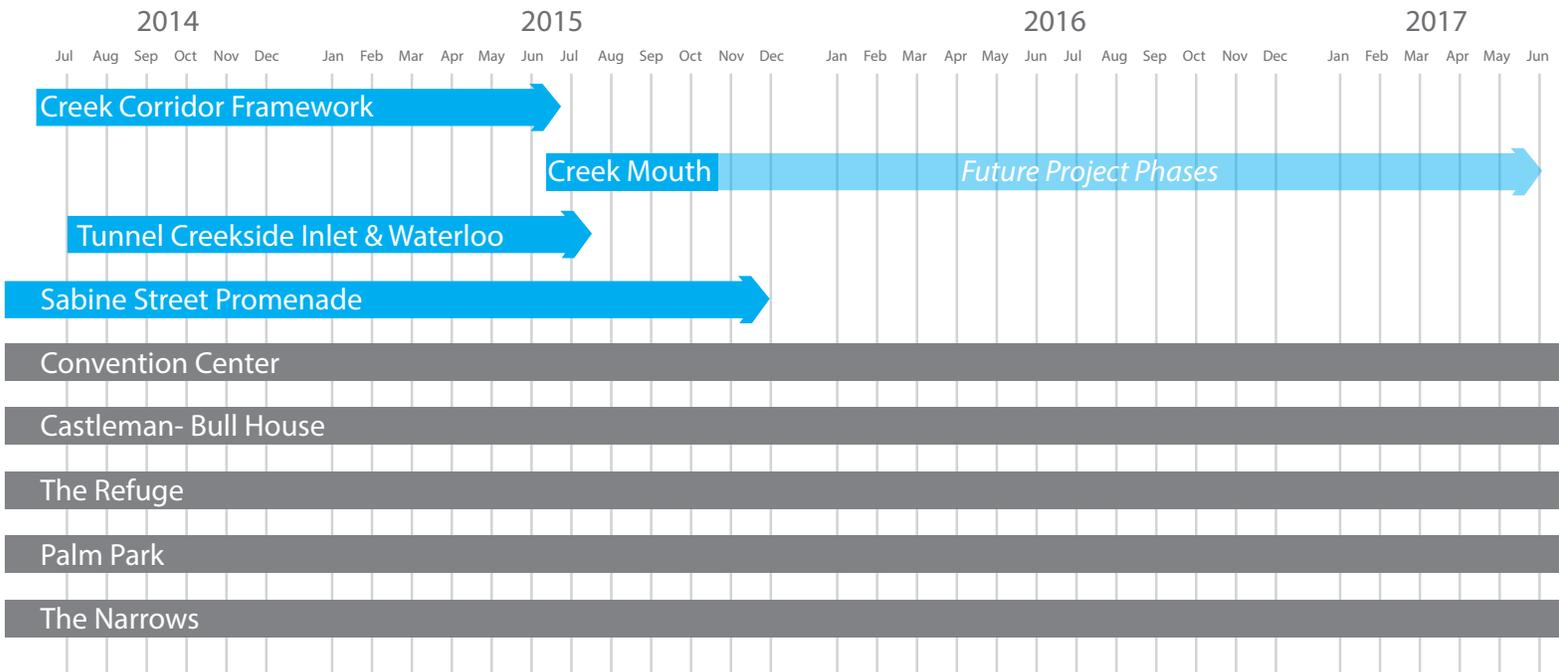
- July 8, 2015
- August 12, 2015
- September 9, 2015

Resources

Local Government Corporation website. www.austintexas.gov/departments/waller-creek-local-government-corporation

Waller Creek Conservancy website. www.wallercreek.org/

City of Austin Waller Creek Tunnel Project website. www.austintexas.gov/departments/waller-creek



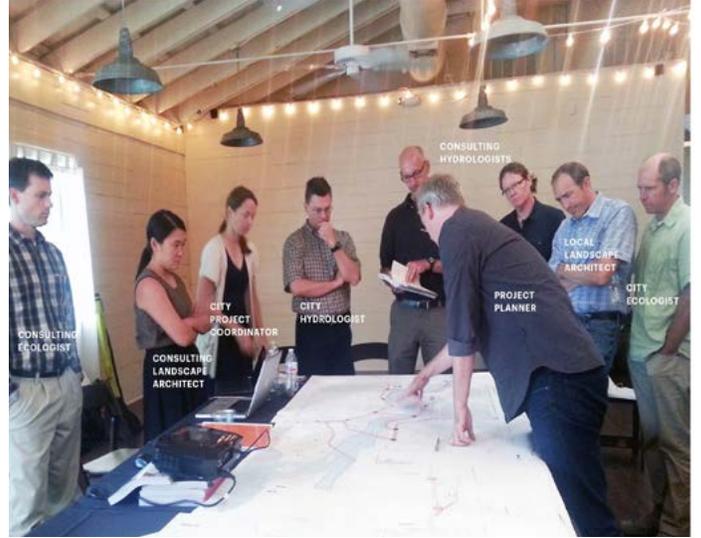
WALLER CREEK CORRIDOR FRAMEWORK PLAN



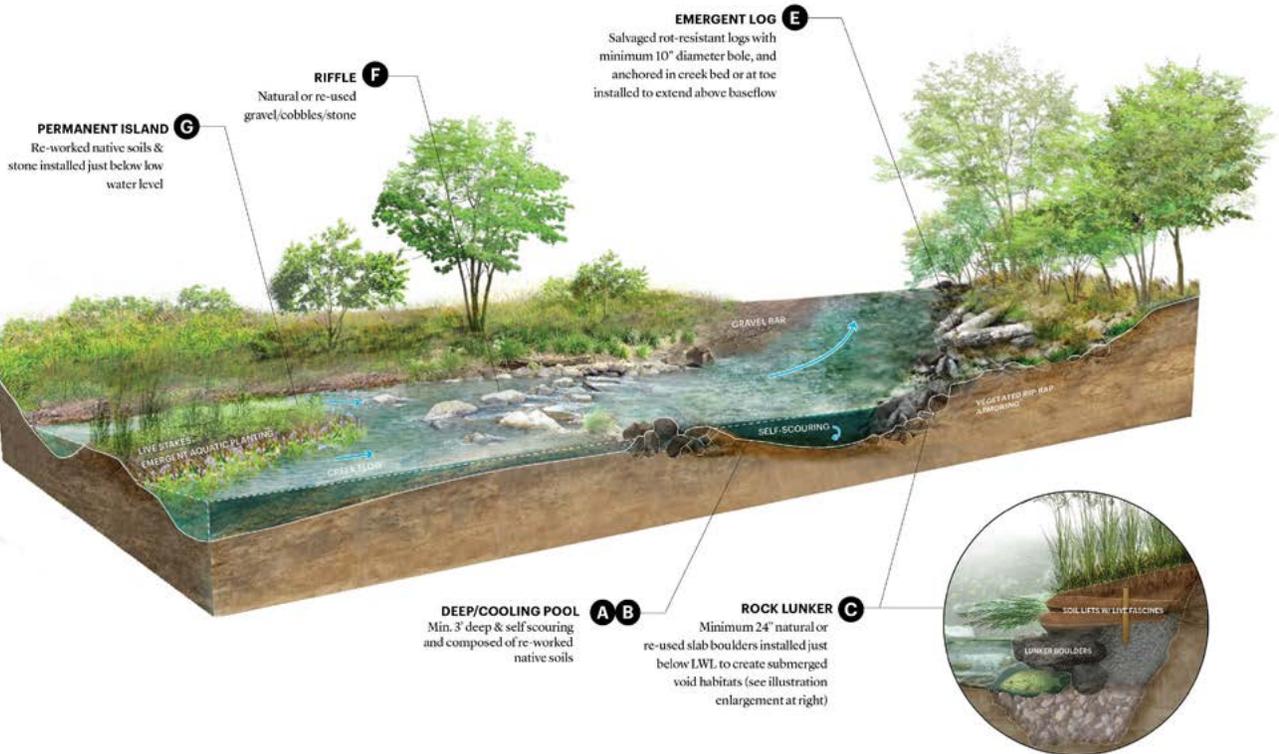
The Waller Creek Corridor Framework Plan is a critical piece for the rapidly emerging puzzle of downtown Austin. The environmental study for Interstate 35, the expansion of the chilled water line and downtown reclaimed water system, the Sabine Street Promenade, the expansion of downtown MetroRail, the Waller Creek Tunnel Project and the large amount of developer activity within the District all add up to a significant transformation of downtown Austin. The creek landscaped will hold a special place in the midst of concurrent planning and development - it will be the physical glue that connects these new city-building activities with the historic assets and existing institutions that will remain alongside the creek. The creek landscape is also the means by which some form of continuity will be preserved in this wave of urban redevelopment. In one of the fastest-growing cities in the country, the valuation of nature in Austin is a powerful factor that links communities across the city, and a precious asset to a population that is experiencing change at an unprecedented speed and scale.

The Framework Plan is a planning tool that prioritizes strategic thinking over the more prescriptive and programmatic approach of a traditional Master Plan. This is an important distinction within complex planning environments like the Waller Creek Corridor as the recommendations of a Master Plan can be more easily rendered obsolete in the face of new urban developments, shifts in policy, and other unforeseen changes. The objective of a Framework Plan is to maintain a level of coherence in the face of the indeterminacy that necessarily exists in complex urban environments such as Waller Creek.

Beginning with an assessment of the creek and adjacent public rights-of-way (trails, parkland, streets, easements, etc.), the result is a plan that describes the strategic approach to restoring the creek landscape, block-by-block conditions along the creek, and catalogs supporting technical information. Recommendations and guidelines of this plan are tailored to analytic and technical criteria in order to find “footholds” for working within the complexity of the creek environment while meeting the goal to connect, to green and to build.



LONGITUDINAL SECTION: IN-CHANNEL RESTORATION & AQUATIC HABITAT





PUBLIC PROJECT 01
FUNDED

Creek Corridor Framework

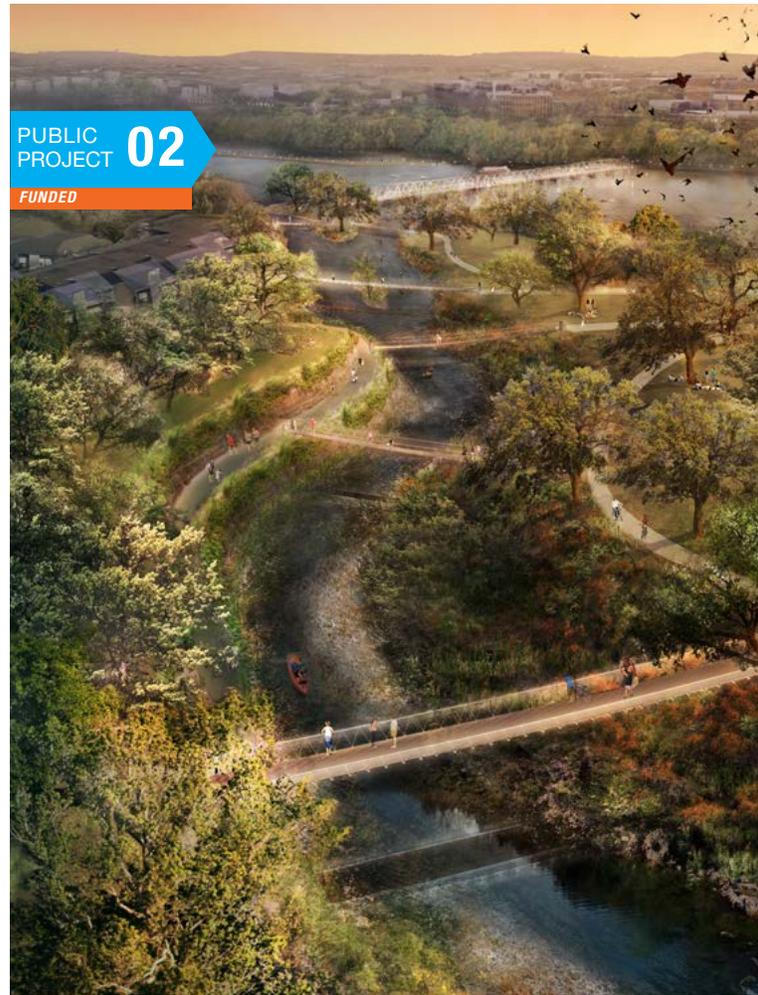
Schedule: June 2014 – June 2015

Description: Planning effort to create a guiding framework for Waller Creek District stream and trail improvements. Improvements will be constructed as public improvement projects or in agreement with private developers.

Status: The Framework Plan, consisting of renderings and creek sections showing the proposed creek and trail improvements, will be delivered to the City and Conservancy in June 2015.

Issues to Horizon: None to report.

Contact: WCC/WPD



PUBLIC PROJECT 02
FUNDED



PUBLIC PROJECT 03
FUNDED

Tunnel Side Inlet Modifications and Waterloo Park Interim Design Plan

Schedule: July 2014 – July 2015

Description: Assess design concepts for the Waller Creek District at 4th Street and 8th Street creekside inlets and maximize opportunities to construct design concepts as part of the Waller Creek Tunnel Project. Further develop design for Waterloo Park and where possible, construct the improvements as part of the Waller Creek Tunnel Project.

Status: Addendum to the phase plan was approved by the Waller Creek Local Government Corporation in May 2015. Addendum provides continued design, documentation and coordination with the Waller Creek Tunnel Project Team.

Issues to Horizon: None to report.

Contact: WCC/PARD/WPD



PUBLIC PROJECT 04
FUNDED

Sabine Street Promenade

Schedule: September 2013 – November 2015 (Design)

Description: Proposed project consists of transforming a one-way roadway and sidewalk into a right-of-way that gives priority to bikes and pedestrians, enhancing connectivity between the Lance Armstrong Bikeway and planned downtown Great Streets along the eastern stretch of 5th and 6th

Streets. The proposal includes providing a “festival street” environment for events.

Status: 90% design to be completed June 15, 2015.

Issues to Horizon: N/A

Contact: PDR

Creek Mouth

Schedule: June 2015 – October 2015 (Schematic Design)

Description: Stream and trail improvements along Waller Creek between Lady Bird Lake and Red River Street.

Status: Phase plan for schematic design presented to the LGC at

the June 2015 meeting. Schematic design will advance design concepts introduced in the Creek Corridor Framework Plan.

Issues to Horizon: None

Contact: WCC/PARD/WPD



PUBLIC PROJECT 05
FUNDED

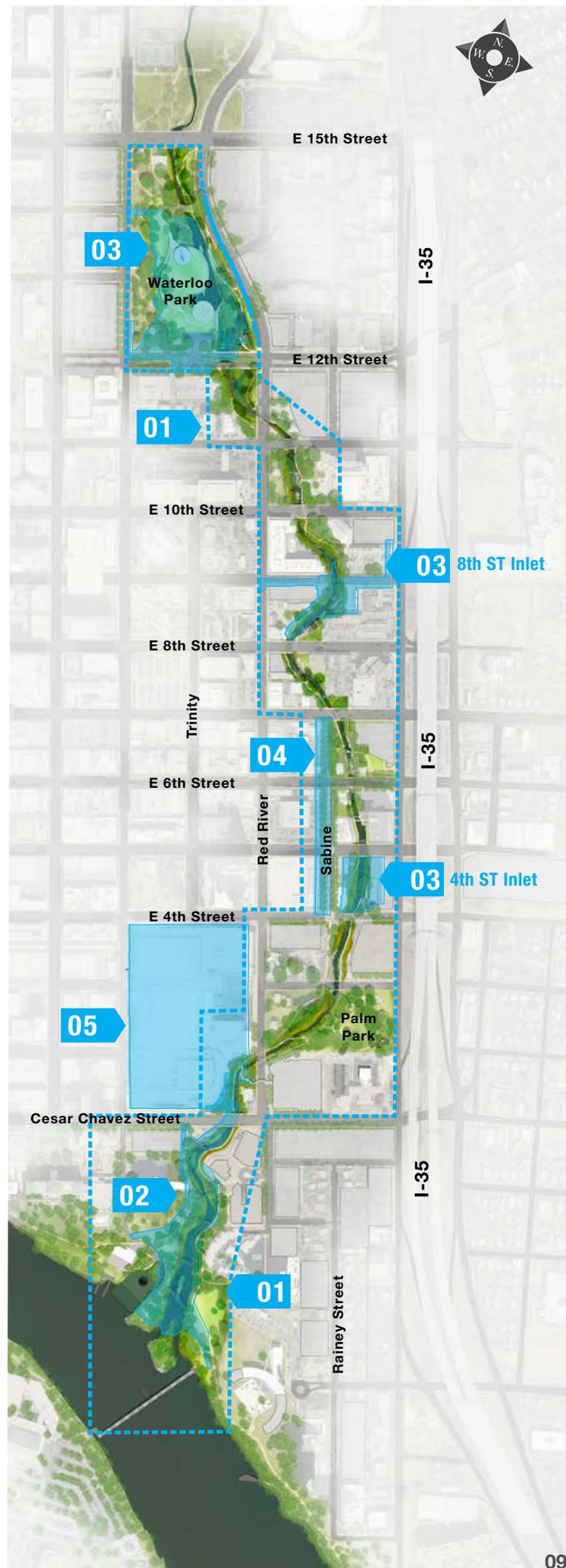
Convention Center

Description: Improvements and major renovations to the Austin Convention Center.

Status: Concept plan coordination underway to develop trail alignment along the west side of Waller Creek.

Issues to Horizon: None

Contact: ACCD



PUBLIC PROJECT 06

FUNDED



Castleman-Bull House

Description: Design improvements to the Castleman-Bull House and development of the Waller Pavilion outdoor event space, considering stream and trail improvements for Waller Creek.

Status: In Design

Issues to Horizon: N/A

Contact: ACCD



PUBLIC PROJECT 08

PLANNED

Palm Park

Description: Design and construction phase services for redeveloping Palm Park and the stream and trail improvements between Red River and 4th Street.

Status: Planned

Issues to Horizon: None

Contact: WCC/PARD/WPD





PUBLIC PROJECT 07
PLANNED

The Refuge

Description: Design and construction phase services for stream and trail improvements between 8th and 12th Street.

Contact: WCC/PARD/WPD

Status: Planned

Issues to Horizon: None



PUBLIC PROJECT 09
PLANNED

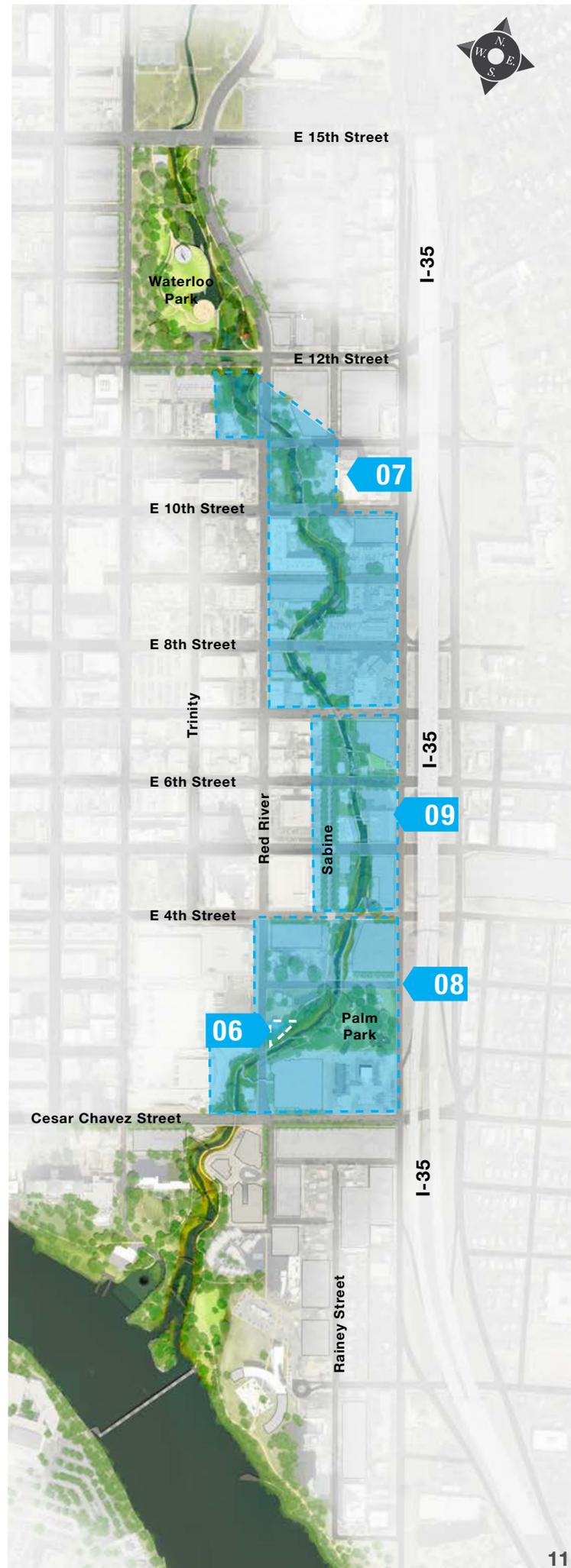
The Narrows

Description: Design and construction phase services to develop the stream and trail improvements between 4th and 7th Street.

Status: Planned

Issues to Horizon: None.

Contact: WCC/PARD/WPD



PRIVATE PROJECT 01



Fairmont Hotel

Description: Hotel adjacent to Waller Creek and Palm Park. Planned Canopy Walk bridge will provide direct access to Austin Convention Center. Public-private partnership to recreate hike & bike trail at Convention Center. Hotel has 37 stories and over 1,000 rooms.

Status: Construction broke ground the week of November 3, 2014.

Location: Northeast corner of Cesar Chavez and Red River

Contact: Manchester Texas Financial Group, LLC

PRIVATE PROJECT 02



Waller Park Place

Description: Mixed-use development adjacent to Waller Creek, south of Cesar Chavez.

Location: Southwest of Cesar Chavez and Red River.

Contact: Sutton Group

Status: Site Development Permit approved. WCC, Sutton Group & COA collaborating on trail & stream restoration design.



PRIVATE PROJECT 04

Hotel Indigo

Description: Hotel located within the Waller Creek District near the intersection of Red River and 9th Street. Hotel has 133 rooms and will be accessed on 9th Street. The projected opening is late summer 2015.

Status: Site Development Permit approved. Project under construction.

Location: Intersection of Red River and 9th Street.

Contact: 9th Red River, LLC



Holiday Inn Express

Description: Hotel located within the Waller Creek District near the intersection of Neches and 9th Street. Hotel has 167 rooms and will be accessed on Neches Street. The projected opening is late summer 2015.

Status: Planned

Location: Intersection of Neches and 9th Street.

Contact: 9th Red River, LLC



70 Rainey Street

Description: Proposed 31-story residential tower with ground floor retail.

Status: Planned

Location: Near intersection of Rainey Street and River Street

Contact: 70 Rainey Street, LP





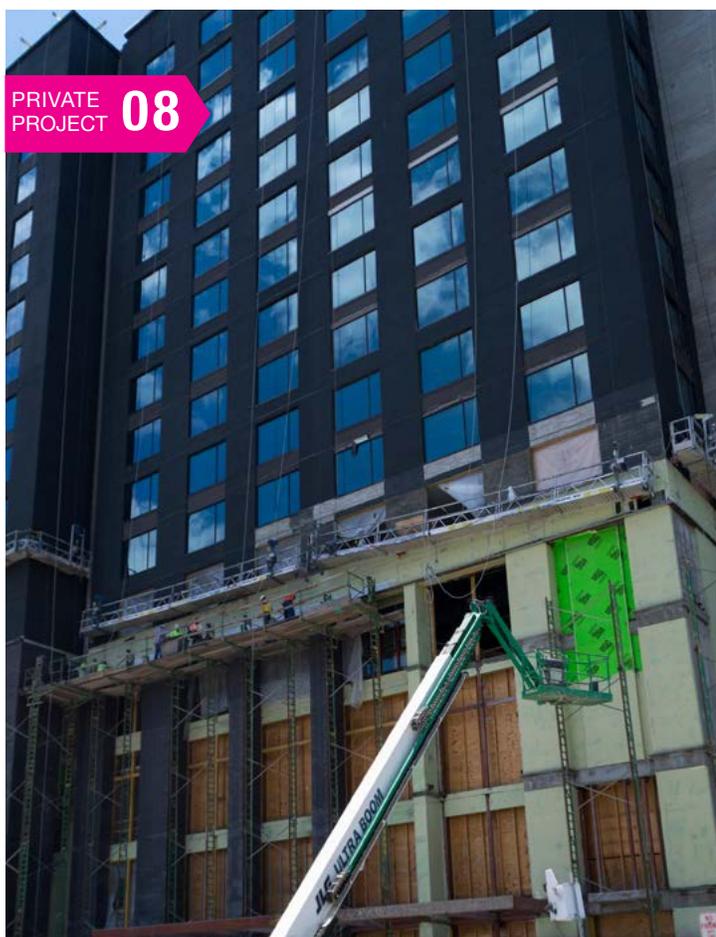
Kimber Modern Hotel

Description: Proposed 35± room hotel in the Waller Creek District.

Status: N/A

Location: Frontage road of IH-35 near the intersection of River Street and East Avenue.

Contact: KMDR Property, LLC



Hotel Van Zandt

Description: Hotel project by JMI Realty. 326 room hotel is expected to be operated by San Francisco-based Kimpton Hotels.

Status: Under Construction

Location: 605 Davis Street, 78701

Contact: JMIR - Austin Hotel LP



Homewood Suites

Description: Proposed 14-story hotel within the Waller Creek District.

Status: N/A

Location: East Avenue between River Street and Driskill Street

Contact: AUS Rainey St., LLC



The Millennium Rainey

Description: Construction has started on this development, spearheaded by the Dinerstein Group of Houston, which features 326 apartments with a ground floor restaurant, totaling about 250,000 square feet. The site is more than two acres bounded by Rainey and Driskill streets and the I-35 frontage road.

Status: Under construction

Location: Intersection of Driskill Street and IH-35

Contact: The Dinerstein Companies



Definition Page of Acronyms

Austin Convention Center Department - ACCD
City of Austin - COA
Economic Development Department - EDD
Local Government Corporation - LGC
Parks and Recreation Department - PARD
Planning Development and Review Department - PDRD
Recommendation for Council Action - RCA
Waller Creek Conservancy - WCC
Waller Creek District - WCD
Waller Creek District Design Guidelines Team - WCDDGT
Watershed Protection Department - WPD

Photo Credits

Austin History Center
Trent Atkins - WPD
John Beachy - WPD
Thomas Guerra - WPD
Aaron Hicks - WPD
Michael Knox - EDD
Waller Creek Conservancy



Photo Credit: WCC

WALLER CREEK PALM PARK POP-UP PICNIC

Despite reports of eminent bad weather, hundreds came out for the 4th annual Palm Park Pop-Up Picnic benefiting the Waller Creek Conservancy. Attendees purchased thoughtfully created picnic baskets from some of Austin's top restaurants and many others took their own picnic spreads.

Picnic-goers learned about the vision for Waller Creek; which includes a chain of parks, walking trails and ecological restoration of the 1.5 mile-long stretch of creek that winds through downtown.

Attendees were encouraged to walk, bike, ride share and use public transit. Even a bike valet was provided on site.

The ground was a little damp, but everyone came prepared for a great time! This community picnic has quickly become a favorite Austin event.

Special Events



Photo Credit: Michael Knox

WALLER CREEK TUNNEL

Construction is nearly complete on the flood conveyance components of the Waller Creek Tunnel. Construction of the pond at the main inlet at Waterloo Park is complete and screens are in place to filter out trash and debris before flows enter the tunnel. Crews are working on the dam in Waterloo Park which will divert floodwaters into the tunnel and limit the amount of water that continues down Waller Creek. On May 5th, a large storm event dropped 2 to 4 inches of rain across Austin in a matter of just a few hours. With just a small portion of the dam in place, floodwaters from Waller Creek filled the inlet pond and entered the tunnel where it flowed to Lady Bird Lake for the first time. Pond levels have since subsided and work will continue on the dam as weather permits.



Photo Credit: Michael Knox



Photo Credit: Thomas Guerra



Photo Credit: John Beachy

Waller Creek District Contacts

Waller Creek Local Government Corporation

www.austintexas.gov/department/waller-creek-local-government-corporation

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Photo Credit: Aaron Hicks



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