

# Waller Creek Local Government Corporation

## Progress Report







## Waller Creek Local Government Corporation

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This report is dedicated to Assistant City Manager Sue Edwards and her perseverance to transform Austin's Waller Creek from an undervalued public space to a world class destination. With her natural sense of style and appreciation for public art and culture, Sue championed this effort by creating the framework for design and development that is consistent with the City's values of supporting public art and celebrating the City's natural spaces. Through her unwavering leadership, Sue was responsible for:

- Leading negotiations in 2010 that resulted a public-private partnership between the City and Waller Creek Conservancy;
- Negotiating the Joint Development Agreement, a historic agreement that established the long-term partnership between the City of Austin, Waller Creek Local Government Corporation and Waller Creek Conservancy to promote and expand the public use of the Waller Creek District;
- Securing funding to advance the design and construction of the Waller Creek District; and
- Cofounding the Waller Creek Local Government Corporation, the governing board that oversees the financing, design, construction, maintenance and operation of the Waller Creek District.

For generations to come, Austinites will benefit from the dedication and hard work put forth by ACM Edwards to make this city a safer and more livable one. On behalf of the City of Austin, the Waller Creek Conservancy and the Waller Creek Local Government Corporation, we would like to extend our utmost gratitude and appreciation to ACM Edwards and wish her the very best in her retirement.

## Waller Creek Timeline

### 1975

A concerted effort by numerous urban planners, architects, landscape architects and engineers creates the Waller Creek Development Plan to work on 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 during 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 is 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 approves 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 forms 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 artists 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 after 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.

### 2013

On April 13, 2013, the Waller Creek Conservancy holds a community picnic in Palm Park. The inaugural Palm Park is a huge success in bringing Austinites back to the chain of parks on Waller Creek.

### 2014

On April 16, 2014, the Local Government Corporation, or LGC, met to approve the Joint Development Agreement & Operating Maintenance Agreement, a landmark agreement that governs the work in the Waller Creek District.

### 2015

On May 5, 2015, the Waller Creek Tunnel filled with floodwaters for the first time - a historical moment marking a new era for Waller Creek.

### 2016

On March 5, 2016, the Waller Creek Conservancy and The Contemporary Austin presented Orly Genger: Hurlyburly, the inaugural installation of the new public art collaboration project. The installation is adjacent to the Waller Delta and will be on view through February 2017.

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## Photo Credits

- Austin History Center
- Trent Atkins - Watershed Protection Department
- Aaron Hicks - Watershed Protection Department
- Michael Knox - Economic Development Department
- Waller Creek Conservancy
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## Acronym Definitions

- ACCD - Austin Convention Center Department
- COA - City of Austin
- EDD - Economic Development Department
- DSD - Development Services Department
- LGC - Local Government Corporation
- PARD - Parks and Recreation Department
- PZD -Planning and Zoning Department
- RCA - Recommendation for Council Action
- WCC - Waller Creek Conservancy
- WCD - Waller Creek District
- WPD - Watershed Protection Department

## PUBLIC PROJECTS

- 01** Waller Delta
- 02** Palm Park
- 03** Waterloo Park
- 04** 4th Street Creekside Inlet Facility
- 05** 8th Street Creekside Inlet Facility
- 06** Waterloo Park Inlet Facility
- 07** Sabine Street Promenade
- 08** Waller Pavilion

## PRIVATE PROJECTS

- 01** Fairmont Hotel
- 02** Waller Park Place
- 03** 70 Rainey Street
- 04** East 9th Street MicroUnits
- 05** Homewood Suites
- 06** Canopy Walk
- 07** Waterloo Park Tower
- 08** Villas on Town Lake
- 09** IHOP Site
- 10** East Avenue Apartments

## RELATED PROJECTS

- 01** University of Texas Medical School
- 02** Central Health
- 03** Capital Metro MetroRail Downtown
- 04** Travis County Palm School





## 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 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.

### Waller Creek Conservancy Highlights

- In February 2017, the Moody Foundation awarded a \$15 million grant for Waterloo Park improvements, which include an amphitheater and great lawn that will accommodate up to 5,000 people. This grant marks the largest philanthropic contribution to parks and open space in the history of Austin.
- Design continues to progress on Waterloo Park – the largest park within the Waller Creek parks district. Construction is expected to begin in 2017.
- Creek Show 2016, now in its third year, welcomed more than 10,000 attendees. They viewed light-based art installations along Waller Creek and interacted through kids' activities, live music, and special events including an Opening Night Party, Artist Talk and Family Night in the Red River Cultural District.

### Waller Creek Tunnel Operation and Maintenance Highlights

- Construction continues on the Waller Creek Tunnel projects. The Waller Creek Outlet was completed in 2016.
- More than 475 million gallons of water were diverted into the tunnel during 50 storms.
- City staff removed more than 2,100 tons of debris at the Waterloo Park inlet facility.
- More than one billion gallons of water have been recirculated from Lady Bird Lake through the inlet facility and back into Waller Creek.
- City staff is dewatering the tunnel for inspection in February 2017.

### City Council Action Items

- On January 26, 2017, the Austin City Council voted to authorize a lease agreement between The Austin Symphony Orchestra Society and the Waller Creek Conservancy relating to an existing long-term lease on Symphony Square.
- On February 9, 2017, the Austin City Council voted to authorize a construction contract with National Power Rodding Corp. for the dewatering of the Waller Creek Tunnel Project.

### Local Government Corporation (LGC) Action Items

- On July 13, 2016, the Waller Creek Local Government Corporation board approved the following:
  - the reappointment of directors to the Waller Creek Local Government Corporation Board;
  - the Creek Mouth Design Development Phase Plan; and
  - the Waterloo Park Venue Addendum.
- On September 21, 2016, the Waller Creek Annual Project Plan was approved.
- On November 9, 2016, the Waterloo Park Design Development Phase Plan was approved.

### Upcoming LGC Board Meetings

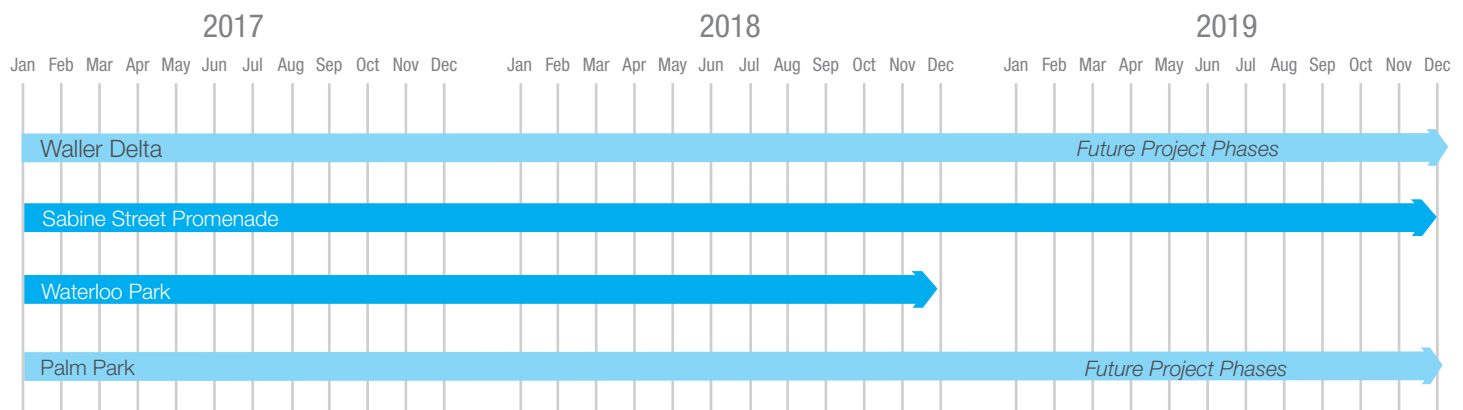
- February 22, 2017

### Resources

Local Government Corporation website. [www.austintexas.gov/departments/waller-creek-local-government-corporation](http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/waller-creek-local-government-corporation)

Waller Creek Conservancy website. [www.wallercreek.org](http://www.wallercreek.org)

City of Austin Waller Creek Tunnel Project website. [www.austintexas.gov/departments/waller-creek](http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/waller-creek)





## PUBLIC PROJECT 01



### Waller Creek Delta - formerly known as Creek Mouth

**Status:** Design Development kicked off at the end of January 2017. The team met in Austin on January 12 to discuss the overall project schedule, review the limits of work relative to Palm Park, and discuss roles and responsibilities for the owner/consulting team through this phase of work. In addition, the team met with

CapMetro to discuss key coordination elements and major architectural components for the Downtown Station Project. Topics included design alternatives for the platform canopy, a briefing on the plaza design and coordination of the signal facility design, pedestrian railings, and landscape design.

## PUBLIC PROJECT 02



### Palm Park

**Status:** Schematic Design for Palm Park is now complete. Palm Park Conversations, a series of public meetings held in May and September, provided community feedback and ideas for the design of Palm Park,

which has been and will continue to be incorporated into the next phase of design. Additionally, the Conservancy and City of Austin are actively involved in stakeholder discussions regarding the future of Palm Park.

## PUBLIC PROJECT 03

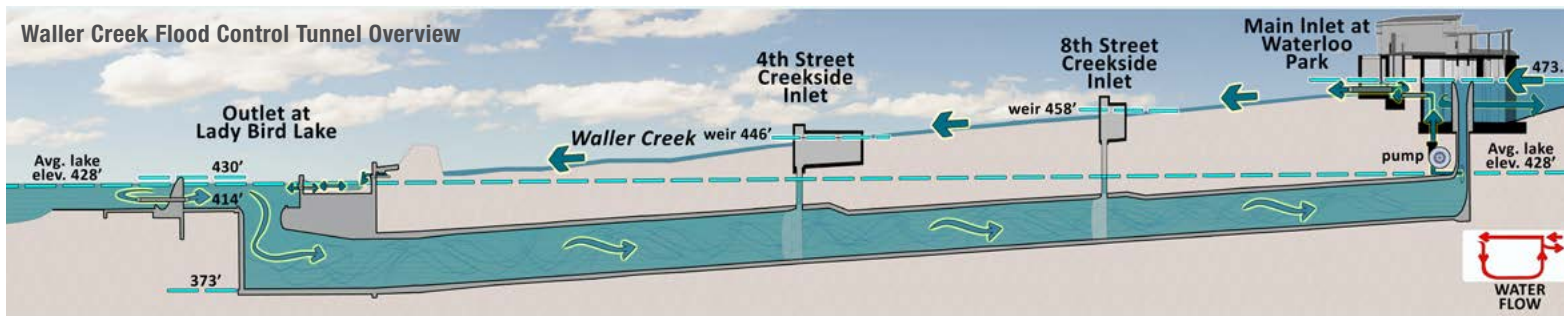


### Waterloo Park

**Status:** Schematic Design for Waterloo Park – the largest park within the Waller Creek parks district – is complete, as is the Schematic Design for the

Waterloo Amphitheater. The next phase of design will get underway in early 2017, with construction expected to begin in 2017.





### 4th Street Creekside Inlet Facility

**Status:** The 4th Street Inlet Facility is nearing completion. Major structural components have been completed, including the debris screen facility, the 'eco-weir,' and other in-channel features. Coordination with the Waller Creek Conservancy is ongoing and has resulted in an approved permit correction for the site that incorporates changes to the east bank that are consistent with the design plan for the district. Estimated completion is April 2017.



### 8th Street Creekside Inlet Facility

**Status:** Early site work is underway, including installation of the 72-inch storm drain line in 9th Street and utility relocations. Coordination with the Waller Creek Conservancy is ongoing, and informs decisions that will impact the future pedestrian trail between 8th and 9th Streets. Estimated completion date is December 2017.



### Waterloo Park Inlet Facility

**Status:** Milestones include completion of all major structures including the in-channel dam, inlet pond, and inlet building. Current activities include building interior systems, beginning construction of the eco-weir and stone embankments south of the dam and park grading. Coordination with the Waller Creek Conservancy continues, focusing on work included in the site plan permit revision. Estimated completion is spring 2017.





PUBLIC PROJECT **07**



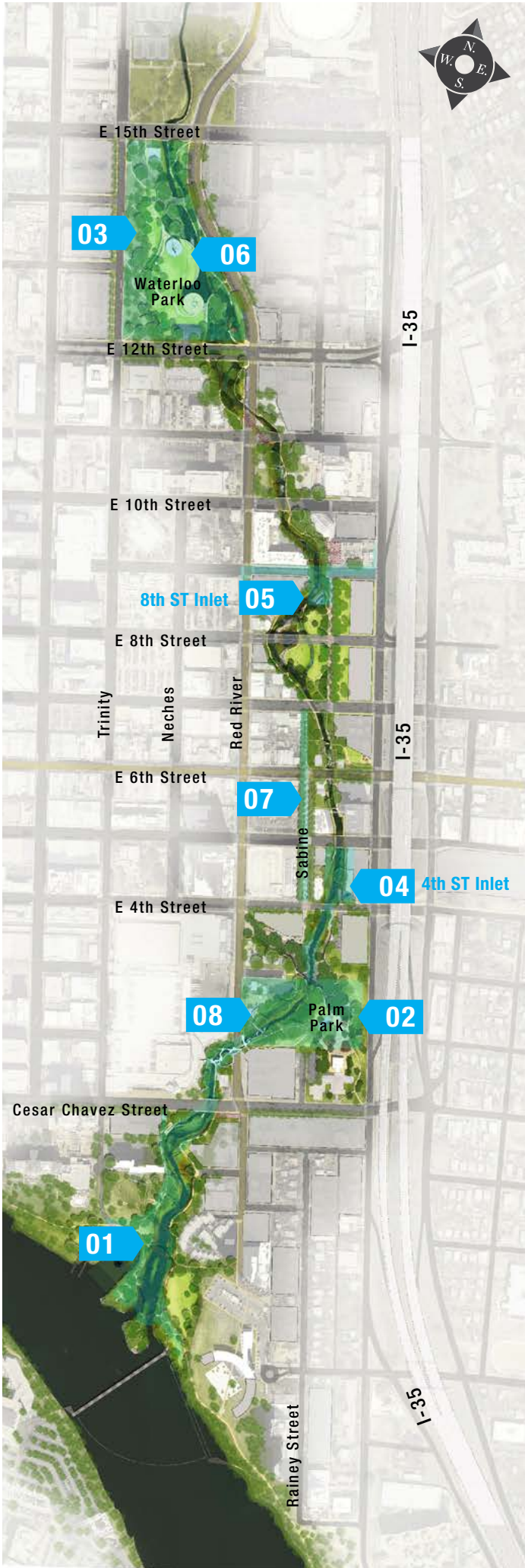
### Sabine Street Promenade

**Status:** Plans have been completed and the City is coordinating with TxDOT to advertise the project in spring 2017. In January 2017, Murry Legge with Legge Lewis Legge presented the final design for Amphibious to the Arts in Public Places (AIPP) panel. Installation will begin after construction of the Sabine Street Promenade is completed.



### Waller Pavilion

**Status:** The project has been reinstated between the City and the consultants and there is currently no plan to relocate the historic houses on the north side of 3rd Street.







PRIVATE PROJECT **01**

### Fairmont Hotel

**Status:** Under construction. The hotel is expected to open in August 2017.



PRIVATE PROJECT **02**

### Waller Park Place

**Status:** Demolition was completed in February 2016, and construction is pending.



PRIVATE PROJECT **03**

### 64/70 Rainey Street

**Status:** Completion is expected in late 2018.



PRIVATE PROJECT **04**

### 703 E 9th Street MicroUnits

**Status:** The site plan for a 4- to 5-floor multi-family building with 147 micro units plus ground floor restaurant and retail is currently under review. It will be located at the former site of Ecology Austin. Coordination has begun with the City of Austin and the Waller Creek Conservancy for including a creek-facing café to further activate the space.



PRIVATE PROJECT 05

## Homewood Suites

**Status:** Providing hotel accommodations in the Rainey Street District, Homewood Suites is a 17-story hotel located close to the Convention Center and Lady Bird Lake. Construction began in February 2016 and completion is expected in late 2017.



PRIVATE PROJECT 06



## Canopy Walk

**Status:** This project is a result of ongoing coordination between the City of Austin, the Waller Creek Conservancy, and Manchester Financial Group. It will provide a connection to the Convention Center's Waller Creek trail system and will implement the vision for Waller Creek from Cesar Chavez to Red River. Completion is expected in August 2017.

PRIVATE PROJECT 07



## Waterloo Park Tower

**Status:** Undetermined

PRIVATE PROJECT 08



## Villas on Town Lake

**Status:** On October 20, 2016, City Council approved a motion to terminate a restrictive covenant that limited the number of residential units to 30 per acre. To address neighborhood concerns, the Sutton Company is currently working with the Rainey Street Neighborhood Association to complete a transportation study that highlights concerns and offers potential solutions to traffic congestion. The first meeting was held on January 12, 2017. The Sutton Company is also planning a major mixed-use development on the tract.

PRIVATE PROJECT 09



## IHOP Site

**Status:** Located at the gateway to downtown Austin and the Waller Creek District, the property at IH-35 and East Cesar Chavez Street, also referred to as the IHOP site, has been purchased by World Class Capital Group.

PRIVATE PROJECT 10



## East Avenue Apartments

**Status:** A 32-story residential development on a .36-acre site between the Town Lake Holiday Inn and IH-35 plans to contain 226 dwellings.

RELATED PROJECT 01



## University of Texas Medical School

**Status:** The initial phase of construction will be completed in summer 2017.

RELATED PROJECT 02



## Central Health

**Status:** The bid for the Central Health Brackenridge Campus closed in October. Ongoing community engagement is scheduled through May, with the selection of a master developer planned in the fall.

## Capital Metro Rail Downtown

**Status:** Coordination continues between the City and Capital Metro on the architectural elements and prominent features, such as the Waller Creek Bridge, Sabine Street Pedestrian crossing, transit plaza and platform canopy. The goal is to ensure a seamless transition between the Waller Creek trail and the Downtown Station Project. Major project milestones include a community engagement meeting held on January 18, 2017, to unveil the current design plan and the upcoming 60 percent design deliverable in February 2017. After the City receives the 60 percent design plan, the Waller Creek District Design Guidelines Team will review and provide recommendations on the plan.

RELATED PROJECT 03



## Travis County Palm School

RELATED PROJECT 04



**Status:** A Request for Proposal to contract a consultant to study architectural and design issues is pending in the County's Purchasing Office. The request will eventually go before the County Commissioners for approval.



# Special Events



## Waller Creek Live!

The first Waller Creek Live!, hosted by Generation Waller, welcomed a number of young professionals to Palm Park. The night included comedy, music, and prizes.



## Sunday Funday

A new event, Sunday Funday, offered families a free and fun experience in Palm Park on the last Sundays of September and October. Kids’ games, hands-on arts and crafts, and performances entertained and delighted audiences. In addition, the October event featured a hay bale maze, magic show, and costume contest.



## Creek Walk with TreeFolks

In an interactive, small-group creek walk presented by TreeFolks, attendees learned how to identify trees and riparian plants in Palm Park and along Waller Creek.

## Imagine Austin Speaker Series

In coordination with the City of Austin’s Planning and Zoning Department, the Conservancy hosted the Imagine Austin Speaker Series in September. Michael Van Valkenburg Associates’ Principal Gullivar Shepard gave a free talk on how landscape architecture can serve as a medium for strategic thinking at Waller Creek and beyond. More than 130 gathered to hear about Waller Creek and Shepard’s expertise.

## Fifth Annual Benefit Concert

The Fifth Annual Benefit Concert at Stubb’s Waller Creek Amphitheater in October featured headliner HAIM with Walker Lukens. The event brought more than 2,000 attendees together to support Waller Creek.







### Creek Show 2016

Creek Show 2016 returned for a third year with 10 nights of light-based art installations designed by local artists, architects, and landscape architects. The free event, which attracted more than 10,000 people to downtown Austin, included a number of special activities: kids' programming; an Artist Talk with the 2016 designers, moderated by arts critic Jeanne Claire van Ryzin; Monster Bash, a young leaders' social hour; and live music and drink specials throughout Red River Cultural District.



### Waller Creek Clean-ups

In conjunction with Austin Parks Foundation's local National Public Lands Day in September and It's My Park Day in November, volunteers participated in various clean-up efforts along Waller Creek's northern end.



### Movies in the Park

Waller Creek Conservancy joined with Austin Parks Foundation to present a free movie in the park. More than 250 Austinites enjoyed Steven Spielberg's "Jurassic Park" under the night sky!

### Rediscover Waller: Waller Creek Plants

In partnership with the Waller Creek Conservancy, scientists from the City of Austin's Watershed Protection Department explored the mouth of Waller Creek and investigated its biodiversity by looking for native and invasive plants. This research provided insight into how the Waller Creek Project enhances the area's habitat over time.



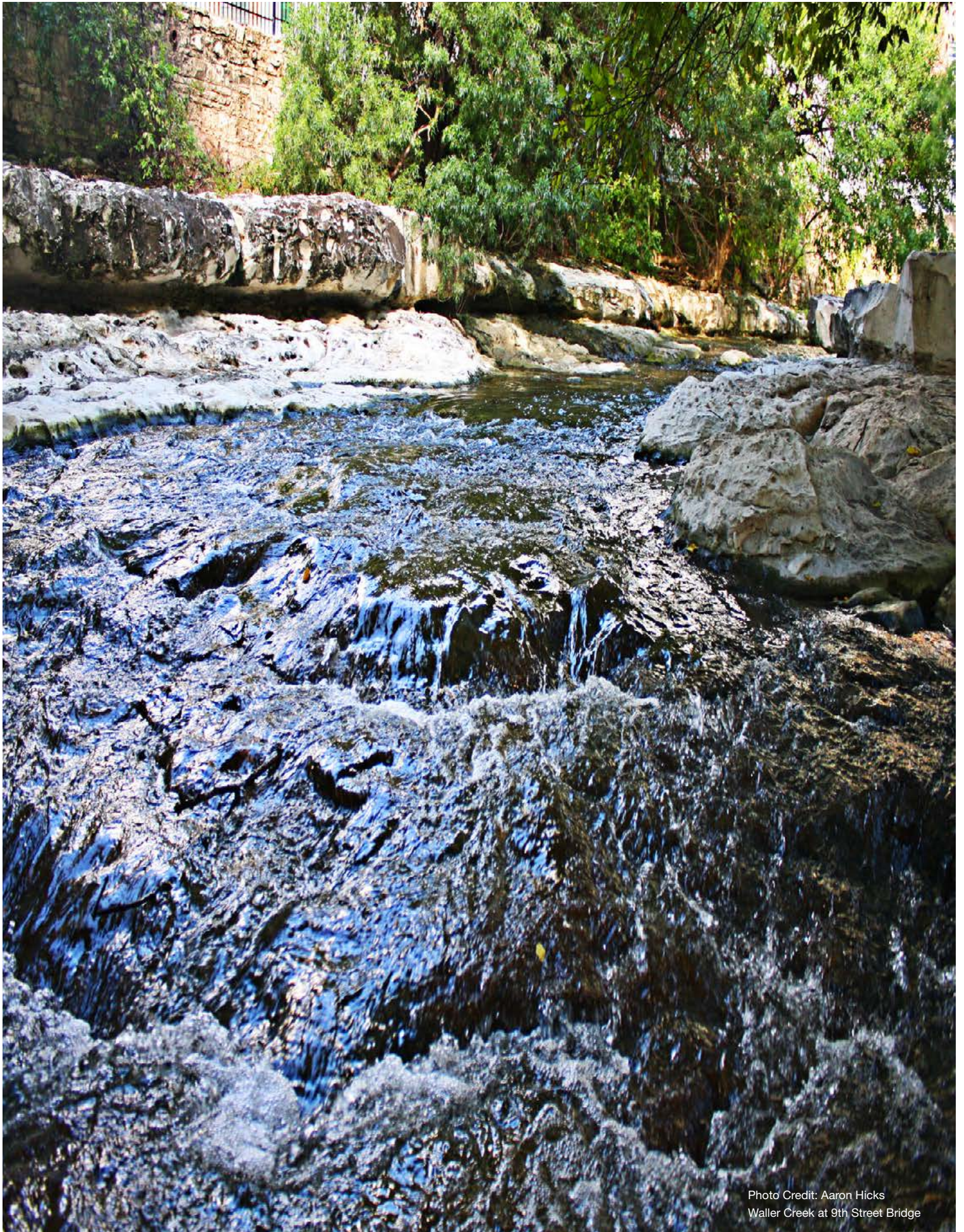


Photo Credit: Aaron Hicks  
Waller Creek at 9th Street Bridge



## **Waller Creek District Contacts**

### **Waller Creek Local Government Corporation**

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### **Waller Creek Conservancy - [www.wallercreek.org](http://www.wallercreek.org)**

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