



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Stephen Oliver, Chair  
Members of the Planning Commission

**FROM:** Jeff Engstrom, Planning and Zoning Department, (512) 974-1621

**DATE:** June 5, 2018

**RE:** North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Plan  
Case #: NP-2016-0031

### **Previous Planning Commission Action**

At the April 24 Planning Commission, staff presented the draft North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Plan. Discussion points included draft plan elements such as connectivity and housing availability. The planning Commission voted to postpone consideration of the plan to June 12. At the May 15 meeting of the Small Area Planning Joint Committee (SAPJC), committee members again discussed the draft plan, focusing on connectivity and housing. On a vote 5-0 with one abstention, the SAPJC directed staff to develop text changes regarding:

- Additional language about accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
- The appropriateness of adding missing middle housing along Steck Avenue
- Improved connectivity.

These changes are attached to this memo as a recommendation from the SAPJC. The original draft plan, as well as background and process information can be found in the backup for the April 10 and April 24 Planning Commission meetings.

### **Description of Backup Information**

Backup information for the North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Plan is attached, including:

- Small Area Planning Joint Committee's proposed changes to North Shoal Creek Neighborhood Plan
- [Staff memo to Planning Commission dated 4/17/18](#): Participation summary, plan summary, summary of major themes, issues, and concerns
- [Draft plan](#), NP-2016-0031
- [Character District Map \(FLUM\)](#)
- Neighborhood Housing and Community Development Department's [Affordability Impact Statement](#)

- Note that additional background information, including an in-depth profile of the planning area and detailed recaps of all workshops, presentations, and exercises can be found on the plan web page: <http://austintexas.gov/northshoalcreek>.

# RESIDENTIAL INTERIOR

***VISION: The Residential Interior should remain a quiet residential district. In the future it should retain its residential character as a community of calm, tree-lined streets with sidewalks that safely and comfortably connect residents to their neighbors and nearby goods, services, and recreation.***

North Shoal Creek's Residential Interior is calm and peaceful. It is characterized by quiet, tree-lined streets of well-maintained one and two-story, ranch-styled houses and duplexes mostly dating from the 1960s and 1970s. At the heart of the planning area sits Pillow Elementary School and Park. Along the edges are a number of apartment and condominium complexes. Surrounding the Residential Interior are commercial areas providing goods, services, and employment opportunities. In places where other character districts abut single-family properties in the Residential Interior, considerations such as screening, fences, landscaping, and architectural designs should be employed to provide a protective buffer.

The Residential Interior of the planning area is well-established and not likely to substantially change from its current residential nature. In the short-term, the most likely changes will be significant remodels of, and additions to, existing houses. However, if the value of land increases at a much greater rate than that of the structures sitting on it, redevelopment pressures will likely increase. As redevelopment occurs along quiet residential streets, the built environment's character and the planning area's demographic profile





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could markedly change. Based on observations in Austin neighborhoods where this has already occurred, the resulting new houses will be larger, likely have more contemporary designs, and be significantly more expensive than the existing ones. In the Crestview and Allandale neighborhoods - immediately to the southeast and south of the planning area - this is already happening.

Along Steck Avenue, significant projected traffic volume increases may hasten redevelopment of these houses. If redevelopment occurs along Steck Avenue, missing middle housing should be developed in appropriate locations. Missing middle housing is a range of denser housing options that are compatible in scale to single-family houses.

**Existing Conditions**

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**Land Use Policies for Residential Interior**

RI P1 Retain single-family houses as the most dominant building type.

RI P2 Encourage subordinate, secondary housing units in locations that provide access and respect privacy.

**Related Policies**

EN P4 Establish a healthy and vibrant tree canopy.

MC P1 Complete the sidewalk network, starting with key connections.

### WHAT IS MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING?

Missing middle housing is a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types compatible in scale with single-family homes that help meet the growing demand for walkable urban living. Types include duplex, bungalow court, carriage house, courtyard apartments, live/work, and small multi-plex, to name a few.



### WHAT ARE ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)?

ADUs, a type of missing middle housing, are buildings containing additional dwelling units that are smaller than the primary residential buildings. They can be an apartment located over a garage or parking area or a small, stand-alone unit. While some of these are two-stories, they should not intrude on the privacy of neighbors. These units are an important tool to promote more affordable housing options and can contribute to a more diverse community while providing private and public benefits.



Accessory Dwelling Units can:

- Provide more affordable housing options for people wishing to live in an established neighborhood
- Provide rental income for homeowners
- Provide additional space for caregivers, grown children, elderly parents, or overcrowded households
- Allow people wishing to downsize the opportunity to stay in their neighborhoods by renting the primary house and living in the accessory unit
- Gently increase the density of a neighborhood without altering its character



Steck Avenue runs through the center of the planning area, serving as an east/west connector street. In addition to vehicle traffic lanes, a striped bicycle lane and a continuous sidewalk (on the south side of the street) provide multiple transportation options.

There are two major commercial roadways in the area, Anderson Lane and Burnet Road. Both are home to small businesses, restaurants, retailers, automobile dealerships, and national chains. In addition to the retail environment along Burnet and Anderson, the planning area has a large employment cluster made up of several office parks concentrated on the western edge of the planning area along the Mopac Service Road and Shoal Creek Boulevard. This employment cluster and the goods and services available along the aforementioned corridors contribute to the area's regional draw.

The suburban style development of the single-family part of the planning area established a local transportation network where few streets directly connect with Burnet Road and Anderson Lane. This limited connectivity funnels local traffic to Steck Avenue, Crosscreek Drive, Rockwood Lane, and to a lesser degree McCann Drive. Although the majority of people who reside in the planning area use their cars for most trips, many residents would like to walk to local destinations, ride their bicycle through the neighborhood, and use public transit for short trips outside of the planning area. Since the current roadway network is firmly established and not likely to change, other opportunities for improved connectivity should be considered. As redevelopment occurs along the major roadways, every effort should be made to improve connectivity between the corridor and the planning area's interior.