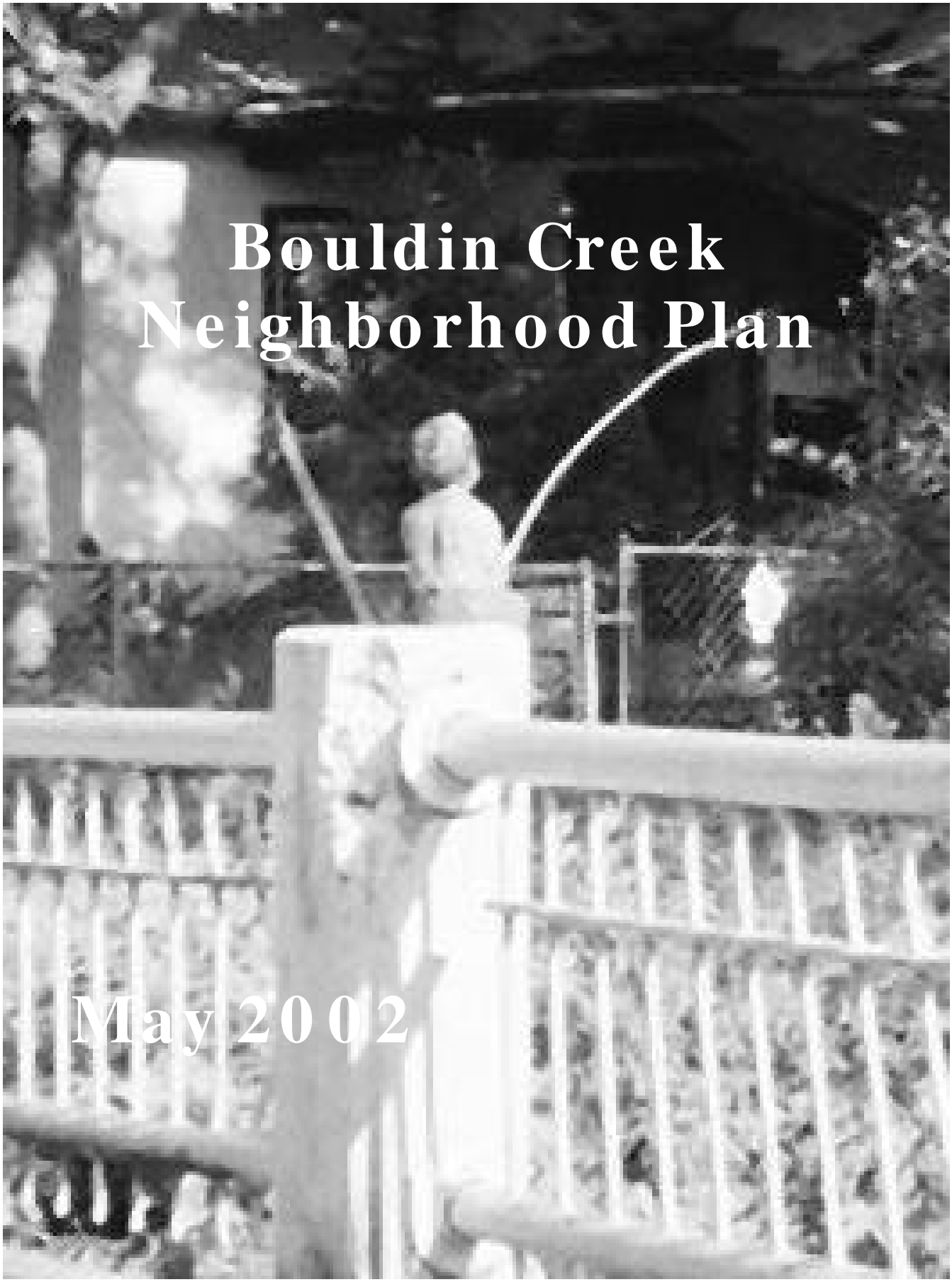
Bouldin Creek

Neighborhood Plan

PLAN ADOPTED: May 23, 2002

This Neighborhood Plan has been amended by City Council. These amendments may include text changes or Future Land Use Map (FLUM) changes. Please refer to the Ordinance Chart on the planning area webpage for more information on amendments. Planning and Development Review staff updates the Ordinance Chart on a regular basis; however, newly adopted amendments may not be reflected on the chart.





Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan

May 2002

Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan

An amendment to the City of Austin's Comprehensive Plan

The Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan:
Chapter 5
Section 5-13
Exhibit A

By adopting the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan the City Council will demonstrate the City's commitment to the implementation of the plan. However, every action item listed in this plan will require separate and specific implementation. Adoption of the plan does not begin the implementation of any item. Approval of the plan does not legally obligate the City to implement any particular action item.



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Mayor Pro Tem

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CITY MANAGER

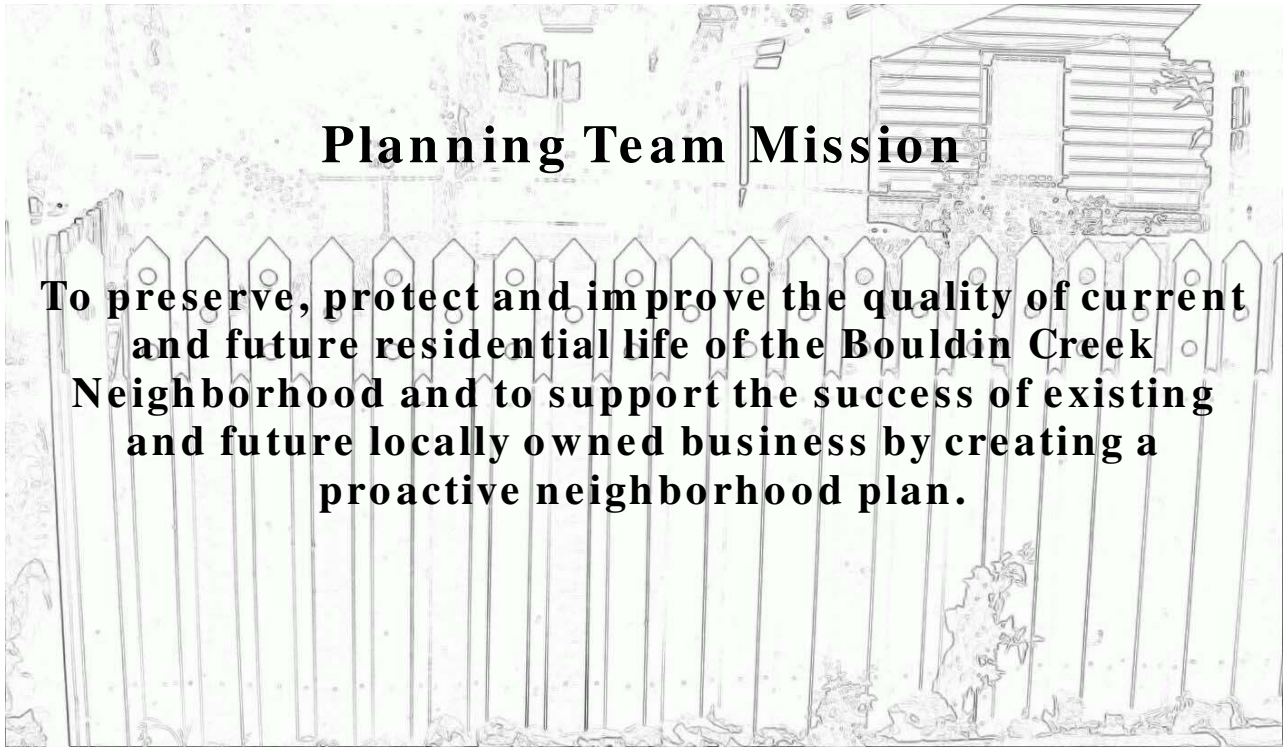
Toby Futrell

ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

Lisa Gordon

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

Alice Glasco, Director



Planning Team Mission

To preserve, protect and improve the quality of current and future residential life of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood and to support the success of existing and future locally owned business by creating a proactive neighborhood plan.

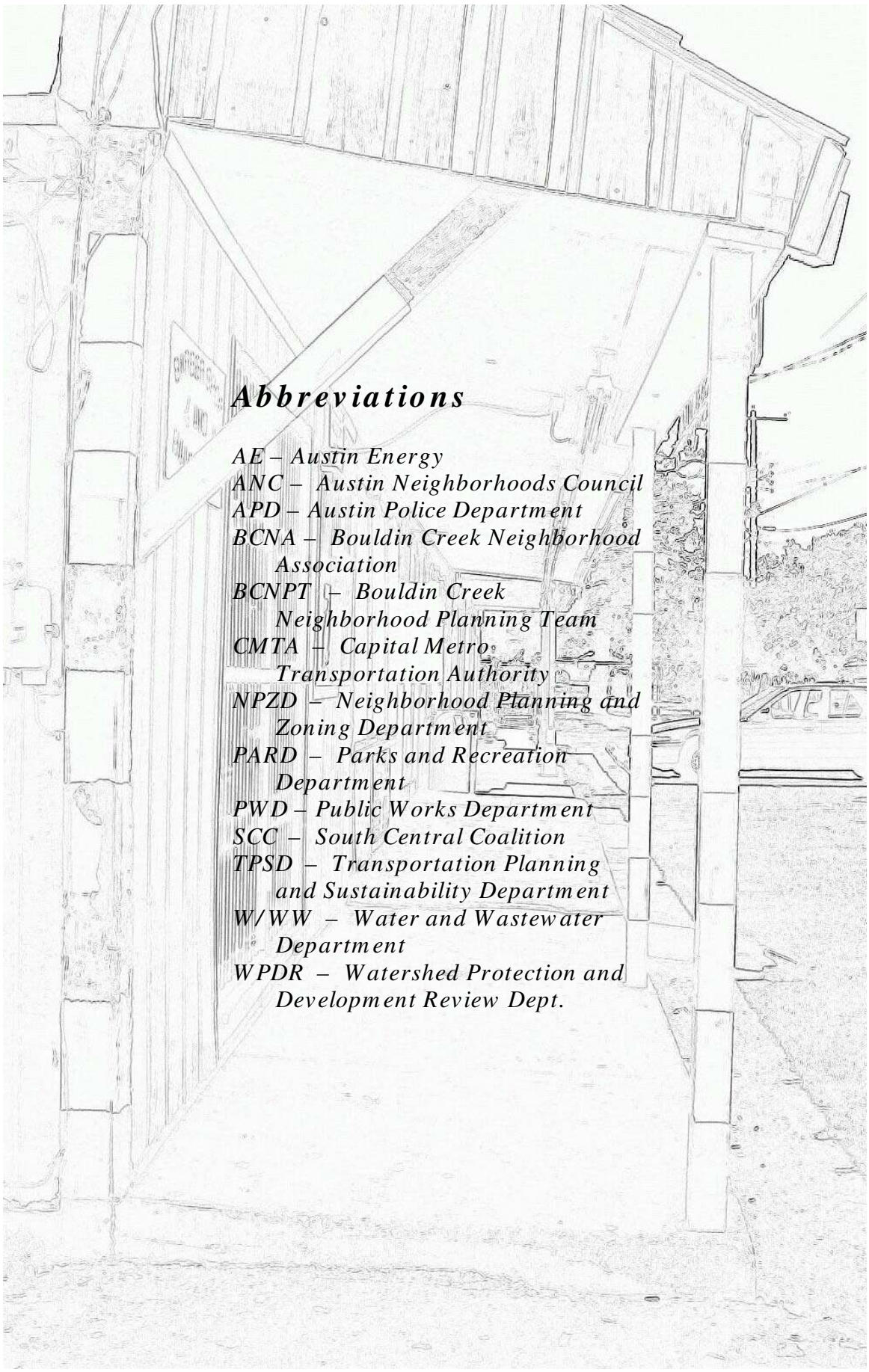
Acknowledgements:

The following individuals attended regular meetings to help develop the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan and guide the planning process:

Gail Armstong
Tom Bruechert
Laura Caffrey-Piston
Mark Coffey
Matt Coldwell
Ronald Dittmar
David Dunlap
Aaric Eisenstein
Ryan Gullahorn
Rick Hall
Stuart Hampton
Susan Helgren
Kris & Gary Hyatt
Sean Kelly
Wayne Ledford
Frank & Martha Maverick
Scott McClain
Paul Miller
Leslie Moore
Thomas Pachalos
Billie Passmore
Laura Pierce
Joyce Pohlman
Mike Poulson
Margaret Quadlander
Mario Ramirez
Ellen Richards
Magdalena Rood
Christine Rothe
Liz Salaiz
Bob Sessa
Helen Snook
Cory Walton
Steffen Waltz

Special thanks to the institutions that provided meeting space:

South Austin Community Health Center (City of Austin Health and Human Services Department)
Bouldin Creek Coffeehouse
Austin Lyric Opera
St. Ignatius Catholic Church



Abbreviations

AE – Austin Energy
ANC – Austin Neighborhoods Council
APD – Austin Police Department
BCNA – Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association
BCNPT – Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Planning Team
CMTA – Capital Metro Transportation Authority
NPZD – Neighborhood Planning and Zoning Department
PARD – Parks and Recreation Department
PWD – Public Works Department
SCC – South Central Coalition
TPSD – Transportation Planning and Sustainability Department
W/WW – Water and Wastewater Department
WPDR – Watershed Protection and Development Review Dept.

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Planning Process

At the direction of the Austin City Council, Neighborhood Planning staff began working in the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood in October 2000. Following a kickoff meeting, staff, residents, property owners, business owners, and representatives of area institutions have been attending meetings and developing the plan for seventeen months. These goals, objectives, and action items were developed at numerous Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Planning Team meetings.



Meetings –

- Biweekly Planning Team meetings held on Monday evenings, 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm, from October 2000 to March 2002. Approximate attendance: 20 persons, including two to three staff persons. Over 450 different stakeholders have attended a Planning Team meeting or returned a survey.

- Community Forum held October 2001 at One Texas Center, 505 Barton Springs Rd., to solicit citizen input on the draft plan in progress.

Stakeholders/ Active Participants –

- Anyone who owns or rents property in the neighborhood (resident, business owner, property owner) is defined as a stakeholder.
- Participation from S. 1st and Congress Avenue business owners.
- Participation from the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association.

Outreach –

- Mass mailings (master list includes all residents, property owners, businesses in Bouldin)
- Advertisement for Planning Process, October 2000.

- Neighborhood survey mailed April 2001.
- Flyer advertising community forum mailed and hand delivered September 2001.
- Summary plan with comment form mailed January 2002.
- Interest List Mailings*:* periodic meeting reminders sent to Planning Team meeting and workshop attendees, in addition to names of persons who contacted staff via phone or email.
- Initial Survey Response Rate: Over 20% of residents and property owners responded to the neighborhood survey.
- Final Draft Comment Form Response Rate: 10.3%
- Approve by the City Planning Commission March 27 2002.
- Adopted by City Council May 23, 2002.

Bouldin Creek Neighborhood History

One of Austin's oldest, Bouldin Creek neighborhood dates to the turn of the century, with most of its growth occurring in the 1920s and 1930s. It was home to one of Austin's most famous voices, the late speaker, writer, and first amendment rights activist John Henry Faulk. His boyhood residence, the landmark 1894 Victorian mansion of Dr. E.W. Herndon, is now occupied by Green Pastures Restaurant on W. Live Oak St.

Before post-war damming and flood control, real estate south of the river was cheap. This was partially due to frequent Colorado River flooding, which often left residents and businesses stranded from downtown. As a result, many black families made their homes in the Bouldin neighborhood. Today, this early ethnic diversity is visible at the 1916 St. Anne African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1711 Newton Street, and the nearby Goodwill Baptist Church, 1700 Newton.





In the 1940s a small Hispanic settlement began to blossom, following the establishment of the San Juan Catholic Church at the corner of West Mary and South Third streets. The stone mission-style church still stands, offering Western Orthodox services, including an annual blessing service for animals.

The neighborhood's largest institutional resident is the Texas School for the Deaf. Established in 1856, the school's 65-acre campus stretches between South Congress and South First Street and from Barton Springs Road to Elizabeth Street. The original school building was demolished in 1956. An ambitious expansion and renovation program began at the school in 1992 and continues today.



Bouldin Family

There is very little information available through local sources regarding James Bouldin (I), although it is known that he was born in Henry County, Virginia in 1796. The Colonel married Malinda Saunders in 1825, also born in Virginia, and they had five children: James E. (II), Mary V., Constance, Ann Elizabeth and David W. The family moved to Missouri in 1832, and then came to Austin about twenty years later. At least, James (II) and Ann Elizabeth stayed behind in Missouri. Upon arriving in Austin in the early 1850s, Colonel Bouldin began to acquire a considerable amount of property, most of which was originally part of the Isaac Decker League in South Austin. Eventually he owned property from the river south to almost William Cannon Drive. The Bouldins had a large plantation; many African-Americans who worked on this and other nearby plantations continued to live in the area after emancipation, establishing churches and their own viable community.

Bouldin Subdivision and Home

After the Colonel died in 1876, David W., the only son remaining in Austin, managed the Bouldin estate. Local records indicate that David W. lived in a large residence on family land (at an unknown date) at a site that is now occupied by Becker Elementary School (corner of W. Milton and Bouldin Avenue). David W. died in the early 1890s (probably 1893), and the Bouldin descendants then began subdividing and selling off family lands. The family subdivided Bouldin Addition, roughly bound by what is now East Bouldin Creek on the east, the UP railroad tracks on the west, West Elizabeth on the north, and West Live Oak Street to the south in 1894. The family homestead was located in the middle of the subdivision on land now occupied by Becker Elementary School. Also subdivided by the Bouldin Family in 1894 was South Heights, comprising largely what is now the Gibson Street area.

House at 1312 W. 10th Street (Moved to 615 W. Mary in 1998)

County deed, tax and occupancy records all indicate that the house at 1312 West 10th Street was built by the Bouldin family as a residence for Arthur Bouldin Terrell, grandson of Col. James Edward Bouldin.

The family apparently built a house for Arthur Bouldin Terrell, grandson of Colonel James Bouldin, at what is now 1312 South First Street, c.1894. Arthur was the youngest of five children born to Ann Elizabeth Bouldin (born 1828; died in Austin in 1860) and Alexander Watkins Terrell (born 1827), a prominent district judge (1857-1863) and state senator (1876-1884), representative of the U.S. house of representative (1891-1892; and 1903-1905) who also served as minister to Turkey under President Grover Cleveland (1893-1897).

Arthur Bouldin Terrell and his wife Mary sold the house and associated .52 acres of property to Winston D. Miller in November of 1895 (perhaps because he married). In the deed conveying the property to Mr. Miller, Arthur states that he

and his wife were occupying this land as a homestead. In 1895, the county valued the .52-acre property at $500 and assessed taxes from Arthur for the property as well as for two horses and a carriage. Arthur and his wife apparently moved to town after the house and associated property was sold. No mechanic's lien was found to document the construction of the house, although the deed, tax and occupancy records all indicate that Arthur Bouldin Terrell was living at this address.

In 1896, the Bouldin family sold the land immediately west and north of the .52-acre tract to Southern Building and Loan Association who then subdivided the property into South Heights Addition. The .52-acre tract changed hands numerous times from 1911 to 1924. The house at 1310 was built c. 1909. The small board-and-batten, modified L-plan cottage has served as a rental house for most of its existence.

The house at 1312 South First Street remains as one of the oldest (and perhaps the oldest) surviving house located on lands owned and sub-divided by the Bouldin family. Numerous L-plan cottages were built in the early 1900s in the Bouldin and South Heights Addition, but most of these have been heavily modified. The house at 1312 South First Street, with its original wood-frame windows and wood siding, remains as one of the most intact, historic L-plan houses surviving in the immediate South First Street area.

The house at 1312 South First Street is also the only known house surviving in Austin directly associated with James Bouldin or his immediate family. The large Bouldin family home, which was located at the present site of Becker Elementary School, has been gone for at least seventy years.

While the site at 1312 South First Street has changed over the years, the house survives as a significant artifact from late 19th century life in the Bouldin Creek area.

South First Street -- Grocery Stores

South First Street has historically served as a major north to south corridor, accommodating traffic to South Heights Addition, Bouldin Addition, the State School for the Deaf and other communities to the south of Austin. During the 1920s through 1950s, numerous retail services – such as grocery stores – operated on South First Street and were interspersed between residential uses. City directories indicate that there were a dozen or more family-operated grocery stores on South First Street in the 1920s and 1930s. After World War II, however, the consolidated grocery store drove most of the smaller family groceries out of business.

By 1928, Edgar L. Blum and his wife Mattie were living at 1312 South First Street and running a grocery store out of an adjacent commercial building (now demolished) located just south of the house at 1314 South First Street (sitting on the corner of West Elizabeth and South First Street facing onto South First

Street). In 1930, the Blum's purchased the .52-acre tract of property. They continued to occupy the house at 1312 S. First Street. Edgar L. Blum worked as a barber downtown for many years while Mattie operated the store. The Blum's raised two children in the house: Dorothy and William.

Neighborhood's Brackenridge area included South Austin's first Black-owned businesses



The portion of today's Bouldin Creek neighborhood between South Congress Avenue and South First Street, from the Texas School for the Deaf to Oltorf Street was known as the Brackenridge neighborhood, named for the elementary school of the same name, which has since been razed.

Census data suggests that this area was primarily a black neighborhood up until about the 1940's. The 1900, 1910 and 1920 Census shows an almost 100 percent black make-up with black seamstresses, laborers, masons, and business people living in Brackenridge. Several black churches still stand in the area and have loyal followings.



The building now housing the Herb Bar, 200 West Mary Street at Eva, was built by Mr. Robert S. Stanley and served as a general store from the turn of the century until the 1930's. Stanley's second wife, Jennie, ran the store. The Stanleys were one of the first African American families to have their own small business in South Austin.

Robert Stanley built the Historic Stone Stanley House at 1811 Newton Street at West Mary in 1895 with help from his brothers. It is one of the few homes in South Austin with a basement. The house was heated with four potbelly stoves and had no electricity until the 1920's. The Stanelys raised many children, stepchildren and grandchildren here.

Top Ten Neighborhood Priorities

1. Complete the West Bouldin Creek Greenbelt and Hike and Bike Trail.

2. Construct a sidewalk on S. 5th/ Dawson Street.

3. Continue working to solve problems with noise and light pollution, dumpsters, zoning code enforcement, parking enforcement, and sight lines at intersections.

4. Preserve City-owned lands along East Bouldin Creek as a natural greenbelt preserve.

5. Continue development of the West Bouldin Creek Greenbelt to provide continuous access between Barton Springs Road and Oltorf Street.

6. Add new standards for development on S. 1st Street.

7. Determine the possibility of constructing trash and particle barriers where storm sewers drain to the creeks.

8. Provide incentives for new affordable housing.

9. Secure manhole covers to prevent unauthorized access.

10. Explore alternative materials to concrete for constructing sidewalks.

Part I: Land Use

GOAL 1: Maintain established neighborhood character and assets

OBJECTIVE 1.1: Maintain the Single Family Residential Character of the Neighborhood Interior.



- *Properties located within the interior of the neighborhood that are zoned single family should remain as single-family land uses.*
- *Multifamily development should be allowed in the interior of the neighborhood where already permitted by existing zoning.*
- *New multifamily development should:*
  - *Have adequate off-street parking;*
  - *Provide adequate green space and buffers between multifamily and other land uses;*
  - *Be designed to mitigate or limit additional traffic impacts along residential streets or intersections; and*
  - *Not exceed 60 feet in height.*

Action Item 1: Work with the South Central Coalition (SCC), the Austin Neighborhoods Council (ANC), and the City of Austin to address ongoing problems with:

a) Noise and light pollution
b) Dumpsters
c) Zoning code enforcement
d) Parking Enforcement
e) Sight lines at intersections

Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 2: Rezone the two CS zoned properties near the intersection of Elizabeth and S. 5th to residential to make these properties

more compatible with surrounding single-family land uses and zoning. Lead Implementer: NPZD

Action Item 3: Rezone MF zoned properties to the East of S. 1st Street that are used as single-family to single-family. The sizes of these lots are not large enough to accommodate multifamily development. Lead Implementer: NPZD

OBJECTIVE 1.2: Preserve South First Street as an eclectic mix of commercial, residential and office uses that serve as "Downtown Bouldin Creek."







South First Street is a commercial corridor that bisects the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood and primarily consists of locally owned businesses and some residences. The BCNPT would like to preserve the existing character of this area by encouraging a mix of residential and commercial uses on South First Street. Whenever possible, efforts should be made to improve the pedestrian experience along this corridor.

The BCNPT is also seeking to prevent the encroachment of commercial uses into the residential parts of the neighborhood. Because commercial properties on S. 1st are so close to single-family residential properties, additional landscaping and height setbacks will help create a better transition between these land uses. East Bouldin Creek should remain as a natural boundary between the commercial and residential land uses.

Action Item 4: Add the Mixed-Use Overlay[1] (MU) to all commercially zoned properties. Lead Implementer: NPZD

[1] The Mixed-Use Overlay (MU) allows both commercial and residential development on a site but does not require that both types of uses occur at that site. The overlay can only be added to

Action Item 5: The following site development standards should be required for new buildings on S. 1st:

a) Provide landscaping on any side of a property that adjoins residential zoning such that landscaping mitigates the impact of the commercial structure.

b) Any portion of a structure over 35 feet should maintain a height setback creating a 60-degree angle to the front and rear of the lot.

c) Retail establishments over 20,000 square feet in gross floor area should be a conditional use[2].

d) When possible, parking should be located to the side or back of the building. This is intended to improve the walkability of the corridor. Lead Implementer: NPZD

Action Item 6: Maintain SF-3 zoning on South Second from East Bouldin Creek to lots 6-10 of the Abe Williams Sub-Division (or 25 contiguous lots out of the existing 30 lots on S. Second remain SF-3) This is intended to protect the creek from expanded impervious cover and honor the neighborhood planning objective of preserving the single-family nature of the neighborhood interior. Lead Implementer: NPZD

Action Item 7: On S. 1st, rezone SF-3 properties between East Bouldin Creek and 902 S. 1st to GR-MU (Community Commercial-Mixed Use). This rezoning will also apply to properties on the South Side of Copeland that have access to lots on South 1st. The

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properties with the following commercial base zoning designation: Neighborhood Office (NO), Limited Office (LO), General Office (GO), Neighborhood Commercial (LR), Community Commercial (GR), Commercial Services (CS) and Commercial- Liquor Sales (CS-1). If a commercially zoned property with the MU Overlay is developed as a residence, the minimum site area requirements and building specifications are determined by the property's commercial zoning category (e.g. NO, LO, GR, etc.) Other restrictions may apply.

[2] Making a use conditional with a Conditional Overlay (CO) means that existing businesses in these categories can continue to operate; however their ability to expand would be affected by the CO. New businesses in these categories would be subject to the restrictions in the CO. Existing businesses can expand, improve, or alter their structures up to 20% of the value of the structure *annually* without having to submit a "conditional use permit" (CUP). This includes both exterior and interior work. If an expansion or improvement exceeds 20% in a given year, then a CUP would be required. A site plan would be required for an expansion (adding more than 1,000 sq ft) even if the use were not conditional; however the difference is that most site plans are administratively approved. A CUP (site development) would require a public hearing and Planning Commission approval. Through the CUP process, specific criteria are used to determine if a new use or expansion is appropriate and ways to ensure that compatibility with the neighborhood is addressed. The review process and cost of CUPs vary by the size of the project and whether construction is required.

following site development standards should be required for new buildings:

a) All new structures should be limited to 35 feet in height;
b) Parking should be located in the rear; and
c) Buildings should be setback 20' from the street, and 30% of the setback should be improved public open space abutting the public right-of-way.

Lead Implementer: NPZD

This recommendation is part of an overall rationalization of zoning along S. 1st. The neighborhood plan recommends protecting the residential character of the neighborhood interior while encouraging commercial and mixed use development to occur on the neighborhood arterials, such as S. 1st. The small slice of S. 1st from E. Bouldin Creek to 902 S. 1st represents a limited upzoning from SF-3, not to CS (Commercial Services), which is found on the remainder of S. 1st, but to the more restrictive GR-MU with a Conditional Overlay (CO) limiting height and other development standards.

Action Item 8:

A) A retreat center will be allowed on Tract 24 (Lots 9 & 10, Abe Williams Subdivision) while the rest of the land will be left as open space to protect the creek. Lead Implementer: NPZD

For lots 9 and 10, the following conditions apply:

1. 40% Maximum building coverage;
2. 45% Maximum impervious coverage;
3. 35 feet Maximum height;
4. 15,200 square foot maximum building area;
5. Applicable only to any "hotel/motel" development: Lot 9 shall have a 150-foot setback from the western property line for detention ponds and a 200-foot setback form the western property line for all other uses including, but not limited to, buildings, parking areas or roads for vehicles. Lot 10 shall have a 200-foot setback from the western property line for all uses, including, but not limited to, buildings, detention ponds, parking areas or roads for vehicles.
6. Parking is to be shielded from residential properties by building or structures or other methods in accordance with compatibility standards in the Land Development Code and that any landscaping used be

"mature" vegetation as defined in the Land Development Code or as set in other City standards.

7. All lampposts and external light fixtures are to be restricted to 15 feet.

"Retreat" shall be defined as a non-profit, "spiritually-oriented" facility that facilitates individual or group withdrawal for directed prayer, meditation, study, and instruction.

B) New structures on Tract 25 (Lots 1-8, Abe Williams Subdivision) should be permitted a height of 45 feet, a minimum setback of 10 feet, and the 30% community open space condition on these properties should be waived. Lead Implementer: NPZD

This recommendation allows for the City to follow though on recommendations made in earlier public planning processes (including the Sector 12 plan of 1987) for a mixed-use designation on the Quadlander properties adjacent to Multifamily zoning on S. 1st. The 45 feet height limit allows a small MF property to be developed as a buffer between the high-density apartment complexes immediately to the north and the 35 ft. GR-MU properties to the south.

OBJECTIVE 1.3: Maintain South Congress as a pedestrian-oriented "destination" boulevard while preserving the adjacent residential area.



South Congress Avenue is a "destination" boulevard; it is a place where people throughout the city come to shop and eat, and is not solely a route to and from downtown. The NPT wants to ensure that South Congress enhances the close community atmosphere of Bouldin Creek and facilitates pedestrian travel as much as possible. Additionally, no existing residentially zoned properties should be used for accessory or on-site parking facilities.

Action Item 9: Permit the "Neighborhood Mixed-Use Building[3]" Special Use on all commercially zoned properties. Lead Implementer: NPZD

Action Item 10: Add the MU Overlay to properties south of Live Oak Street. Lead Implementer: NPZD

Action Item 11: Retail establishments over 20,000 square feet in gross floor area should be a conditional use[4]. Lead Implementer: NPZD

Action Item 12: Parking facilities should be located in the rear or to the side of a building except for on-street parking. Whenever possible, parking should be screened with landscaping to improve walkability and protect adjacent residential properties. Lead Implementer: NPZD

OBJECTIVE 1.4: Pursue historic designation as a means of preserving the character of existing properties



As one of the older neighborhoods in Austin, Bouldin Creek already has several identified and potential historic landmarks. Also, the historic fabric of the original neighborhood remains relatively unchanged, making some or all of the neighborhood a possible candidate for local historic district status.

Some of the neighborhood was included in the Comprehensive Cultural Survey of 1984, but much of Bouldin Creek has never been surveyed to determine its historic potential. The BCNPT supports completing a survey of the entire neighborhood, and recommends further discussion of creating a historic district within Bouldin Creek.

Action Item 13: Conduct a historic survey to determine the neighborhood's eligibility for Local and National historic district

[3] A Neighborhood Mixed Use Building is a structure located in a commercial zoning district that has commercial or retail uses on the ground floor and allows residential uses on one or more upper floors.

[4] See footnote 2 on page 16.

designations. This should be coordinated with other South Austin neighborhood associations. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 14: Educate property owners about historic designation requirements and benefits via BCNA website and newsletter. Lead Implementer: BCNA

Action Item 15: Assist property owners/ neighborhood areas in pursuing historic zoning. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 16: Pursue historic landmark designation for the Boys and Girls Club (211 W. Johanna) and Becker Elementary School (906 W. Milton). Lead Implementer: TPSD

OBJECTIVE 1.5: Encourage developments to incorporate units for low-income persons.



The BCNPT strongly supports the continued economic diversity of residents in the neighborhood. Providing a variety of housing options is important to counteract the effects of gentrification. The City of Austin's SMART Housing Initiative can contribute to more affordable housing options in the neighborhood.

These programs help finance:

- *New affordable owner-occupied and rental housing; and*
- *Rehab of existing housing and affordable housing purchase options.*

The neighborhood should pursue City funds for acquisition/development of property for affordable housing.

Action Item 17: Provide incentives to developers to include affordable units serving households at or below 80% of the Area Median Income by offering neighborhood support for such developments. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 18: Develop incentives for mixed-use developments to include affordable housing serving households at or below 80% of the Area Median Income. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 19: If the church property at Bouldin and W. Elizabeth were to redevelop, support variances for the required lot size for two-family dwellings to allow the construction of six single-family units with secondary apartments that comply with City of Austin SMART Housing requirements. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 20: Partner with nonprofit organizations to guide affordable housing development for households earning at or below 80% Area Median Income. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 21: Partner with ANC and the City of Austin to develop guidelines and incentives for affordable housing development. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 22: Educate Bouldin Creek neighbors about the availability of programs to reduce their housing costs via the BCNA website and newsletter. Such programs include homestead exemptions and City of Austin low interest loans for rehabilitation and energy efficiency improvements. Lead Implementer: BCNA.

GOAL 2: Protect and enhance creeks and open spaces

OBJECTIVE 2.1: Protect East and West Bouldin Creeks to ensure the safety and enjoyment of the neighborhood residents.



East and West Bouldin Creeks run through the core of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood, providing natural beauty along with the possibility of significant recreational opportunities. The quality of the water in these creeks affects not only their ability to continue to provide these comforts to neighbors and other citizens, but directly affects the water quality in Town Lake.

Studies nationwide have shown that damage begins to occur to creeks when impervious cover[5] exceeds 10% to 12%. Damage increases as impervious cover percentages increase. The current impervious cover in the neighborhood surrounding East and West Bouldin Creeks is approximately 45%. Impervious cover has a direct effect on the amount of water runoff entering a watershed.

Impervious cover can increase non-point source pollution resulting from trash, road pollutants such as oil, rubber, and the heavier constituents of fuels that do not quickly evaporate, and household pollutants such as fertilizers, through overland flow. Impervious cover does not increase point-source pollution, which is generated from a factory or sewage treatment facility or from a blocked and overflowing sewer line.

Increasing impervious cover in the watersheds could further degrade water in the creeks and in Town Lake unless some mitigation measures are instituted.

Action Item 24: All sewer access points in creek beds and all other sewer access points off of roadways should be retrofitted with secure, screw-down manhole covers to prevent unauthorized access. Lead Implementer: W/WW

[5] Definition of Impervious Cover: Structures, roads, parking lots or other constructed features which do not permit the penetration of rainfall into the soil and underlying rock material.

Action Item 25: Educate Bouldin Creek neighbors about the value of rainwater collection systems via BCNA website and newsletter. Lead Implementer: BCNA.

Action Item 26: Conduct a study to determine if it is possible to construct some form of small, permanent trash/particulate barriers at the City's stormwater collection system outflow points that drain directly to the creek beds. Lead Implementer: WPDR

Action Item 27: The BCNPT strongly recommends that new construction in the neighborhood include rainwater collection systems based on square footage, with storage capacity for four inches of rain to be built for each new square foot of impervious cover. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 28: Form a citizen's advisory committee with other neighborhoods in the West Bouldin Creek Watershed to direct the City's development of the West Bouldin Creek Watershed Study. Lead Implementer: WPDR

Action Item 29: Through the neighborhood association, increase awareness of best management practices for lawns and landscaping and make available sample landscaping plans for urban lawns. Lead Implementer: BCNA

Action Item 30: Encourage commercial or multifamily developments to use semi-porous material for parking areas. Lead Implementer: BCNPT.

OBJECTIVE 2.2: Preserve, improve and develop parks and green spaces.



Several high-quality parks serve the Bouldin Creek neighborhood from the regionally popular Auditorium Shores, to the nearly complete West Bouldin Creek Greenbelt. The NPT encourages the preservation and enhancement of the open spaces for community gathering and environmental quality.

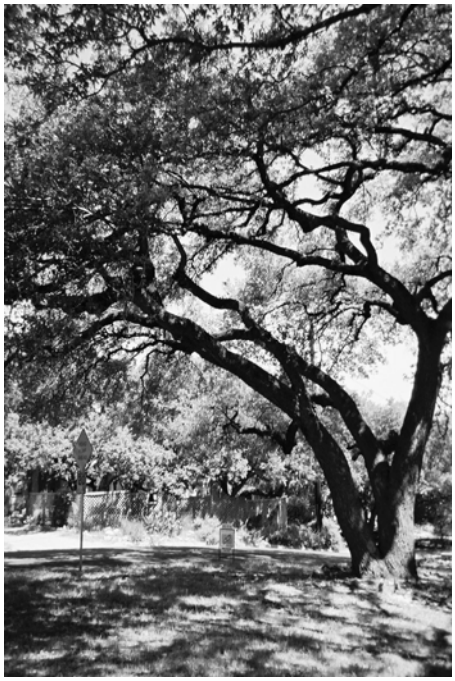
Action Item 31: Develop the West Bouldin Creek Greenbelt and Hike and Bike trail. Coordinate with Austin Metro Trails, City of Austin PARD, and planners for the Town Lake Cultural

Center. Tie the West Bouldin Creek Greenbelt into the Town Lake Hike and Bike Trail. Lead Implementer: PARD

Action Item 32: As the City acquires additional flood-plain property along W. Bouldin Creek, continue the development of the West Bouldin Creek greenbelt to provide continuous access between Oltorf Street and Barton Springs Road. Lead Implementer: PARD

Action Item 33: Reserve city-owned lands along E. Bouldin Creek as a natural greenbelt preserve. Lead Implementer: WPDR

OBJECTIVE 2.3: Be proactive on tree preservation and planting.



The significant canopy created by the mature trees is a highlight of the Bouldin Creek neighborhood. Foliage provides shade during hot Texas summers and helps to mitigate the "heat island" effect caused by sun-baked asphalt. The NPT strongly recommends that mature trees be preserved whenever possible and new trees continue to be planted throughout the neighborhood.

Action Item 34: Identify properties to participate in "Neighborwoods," a City sponsored tree-planting program that distributes trees free of charge to homes without them. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

GOAL 3: Manage growth by encouraging development on major corridors and in existing higher-density nodes.

OBJECTIVE 3.1: Maintain the neighborhood-oriented commercial node at West Mary and South 5th Street.



The BCNPT strongly recommends against allowing additional commercial development in the residential interior of the neighborhood. However, the intersection of W. Mary and S. Fifth is an existing neighborhood-serving commercial node. The plan recommends maintaining this commercial node, while preventing any additional development that would be better suited on a major corridor.

Action Item 35: The existing commercial area at the intersection of S. 5th and W. Mary should be maintained, while encouraging mixed-use and commercial uses that serve the neighborhood and do not generate significant automobile traffic. Existing residential properties should not be rezoned to accommodate additional commercial development on W. Mary or S. 5th. Rezone existing commercial properties to LR-MU (Neighborhood Commercial-Mixed Use) subject to agreement by the owner. Lead Implementer: NPZD

OBJECTIVE 3.2: Encourage a mix of moderate-intensity commercial and residential on Oltorf Street, while increasing pedestrian safety.



Oltorf Street, while one of the major corridors serving the neighborhood, does not have the commercial development found on S. Congress, S. 1st, and Barton Springs. A majority of the uses on Oltorf remain owner-occupied, single-family homes.

A survey of homeowners on Oltorf determined that a majority did not support developing the street as a commercial corridor. However, the planning team recognizes that development pressure will continue to be a reality on Oltorf. The BCNPT recommends giving property owners the option to develop their properties as higher-density single-family uses such as townhouses and condominiums. Commercial development should only be accommodated at the major intersections with S. Congress, S. 1st, and S. 5th, and the Union Pacific Railroad Tracks. Additionally, new development on Oltorf should respect the recommendations in the adopted Dawson Neighborhood Plan.

Action Item 36: Allow the "Neighborhood Mixed-Use Building[6]" special use on commercially zoned properties on Oltorf. Lead Implementer: NPZD

Action Item 37: Consistent with the Dawson Neighborhood Plan, the following uses should be conditional[7] on Oltorf St.:

a) Pawn Shops
b) Service Stations
c) Warehouses
d) Any Industrial Use
e) Adult-oriented businesses
f) Any use with a drive-through service

Lead Implementer: NPZD

[6] See footnote 3 on page 18.
[7] See footnote 2 on page 16.

OBJECTIVE 3.3: Maintain Barton Springs Road as a gateway boulevard that serves as a transition between Downtown Austin and the neighborhood.

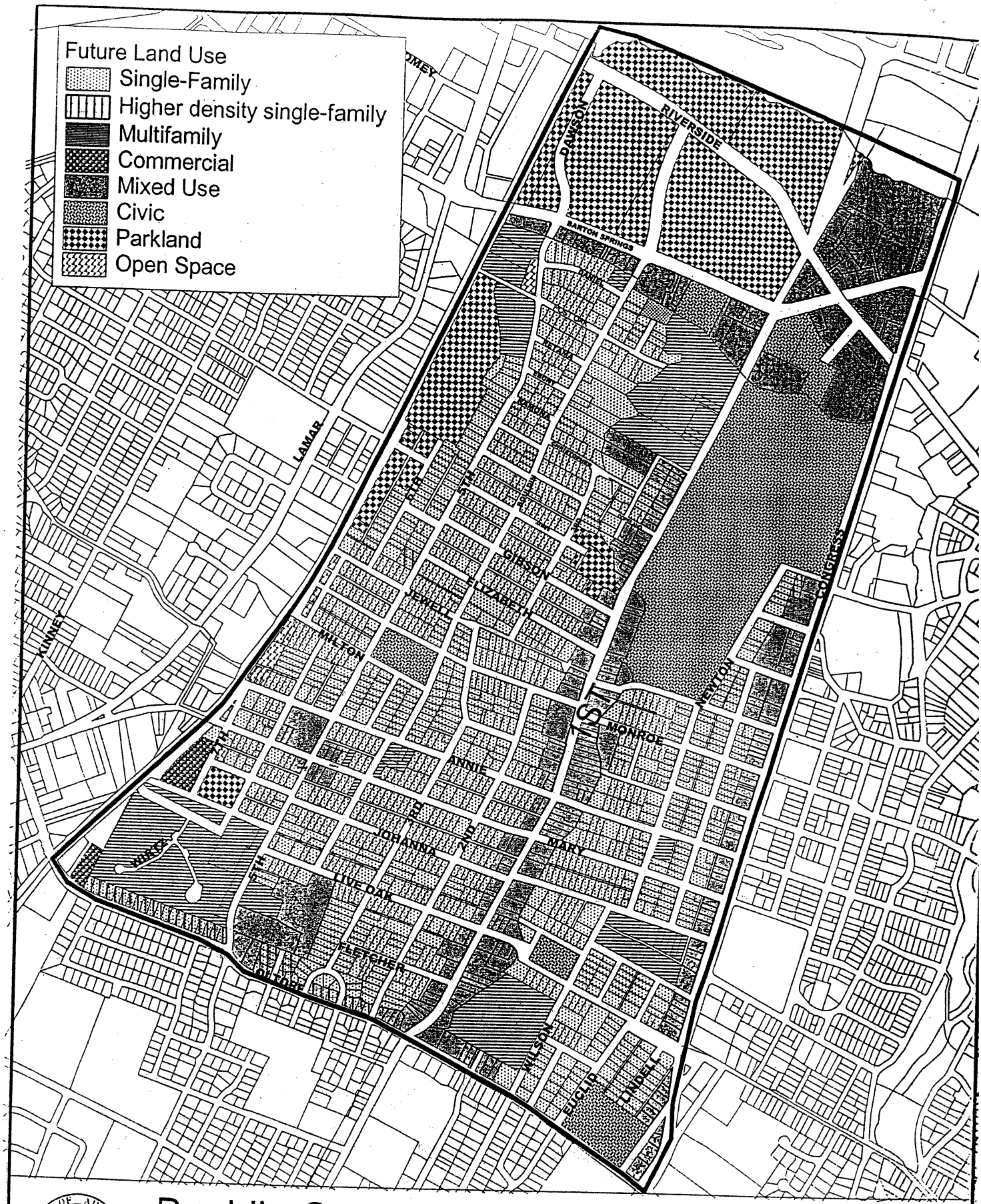


Barton Springs Road is a gateway to both the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood and Downtown Austin. Because of its proximity to downtown, many of the buildings are much larger in scale that those in the rest of the neighborhood. The BCNPT recognizes the importance of this street to the City and the neighborhood, but would like to insure that it does not become an extension of downtown.

Action Item 39: Buildings on the south side of Barton Springs Road should not exceed 60 ft. in height. The maximum height allowed by zoning on Barton Springs Road is currently 60 feet. For those properties on Barton Springs Road between Bouldin Ave. and Dawson St., building height is limited to approximately 40 feet by compatibility standards. The BCNPT does not recommend adding additional height restrictions to these properties, but does recommend that no height variances or height compatibility waivers be granted. Lead Implementer: WPDR

Action Item 40: Consistent with the ROMA plan for the South Central Shore of Town Lake, limit the base height of buildings east of S. 1st to 60 feet. Some height bonuses could be permitted if the redevelopment requirements recommended in the ROMA plan are met. Lead Implementer: NPZD

Action Item 41: When implementing the ROMA plan for the South Central Shore of Town Lake, the City should continue to consult with the BCNPT to ensure that zoning and ordinance changes are consistent with the Neighborhood Plan. Lead Implementer: TPSD



Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan
Future Land Use Map

Part II: Transportation

GOAL 4: Create a transportation network that allows residents to walk, bike, ride, roll, and drive safely.

OBJECETIVE 4.4: Create safer and better-connected pedestrian and bicycle circulation systems in the Bouldin Creek neighborhood.

Sidewalks

The BCNPT did not necessarily adopt the position that all street and roads in the neighborhood required a sidewalk; blanket concrete sidewalk installation is undesirable. The Neighborhood Planning Team recommends that new sidewalks meet the following conditions:

- *Pedestrians had demonstrated a need for a sidewalk by creating a dirt footpath along the way.*
- *If the installation of a new sidewalk makes for a better and smoother interface with other neighborhood pedestrian ways.*
- *If it would help those with mobility impairments to move through the neighborhood.*
- *If the sidewalk and its linkage serve a neighborhood school or church.*
- *If there is already is a sidewalk on one side of the street.*

Bike Lanes

Streets currently designated as bike routes #31 (Bouldin Ave.) and #68 (W. Mary St.) should remain so. The neighborhood needs and supports a comprehensive network of bicycle routes that link adjoining neighborhoods and business corridors together. Any future improvement of these routes should be done in concert with a citywide master plan to provide a comprehensive and uniform system of bicycle lanes throughout the city. The future implementation of lanes or routes that are exclusively for the use of bicycles should be based on a city wide uniform code that measures traffic speed, traffic volume, lane width and the existence or non-existence of shoulders.

The age and density of our neighborhood means that many residential units do not have on-site parking and thus, must park in the street. The existing privilege of street parking must not be usurped by the creation of bike exclusive lanes unless traffic and safety demands require it. All considerations must be given to protect on-street parking when implementing a bike exclusive lane.

privilege of street parking must not be usurped by the creation of bike exclusive lanes unless traffic and safety demands require it. All considerations must be given to protect on-street parking when implementing a bike exclusive lane.

Action Item 42: Build new sidewalks at locations identified as priorities by the NPT and responses to the survey.

a) On the east side of Dawson/S. 5th Street from Daniel to Elizabeth.
b) On the north side of Elizabeth from Eva to the alley west of Eva.
c) On the east side of S. 2nd from Mary to Fletcher.
d) On the north side of Fletcher from S. 1st to S. 3rd.
e) On either side of S. 3rd from Monroe to Annie.
f) On the west side of Wilson from Crockett to just south of Live Oak.
g) On the east side of Eva from Johanna to Milton, and on the west side of Eva from Milton to Gibson.
h) On either side of Fletcher from Euclid to Wilson.

Lead Implementer: TPSD

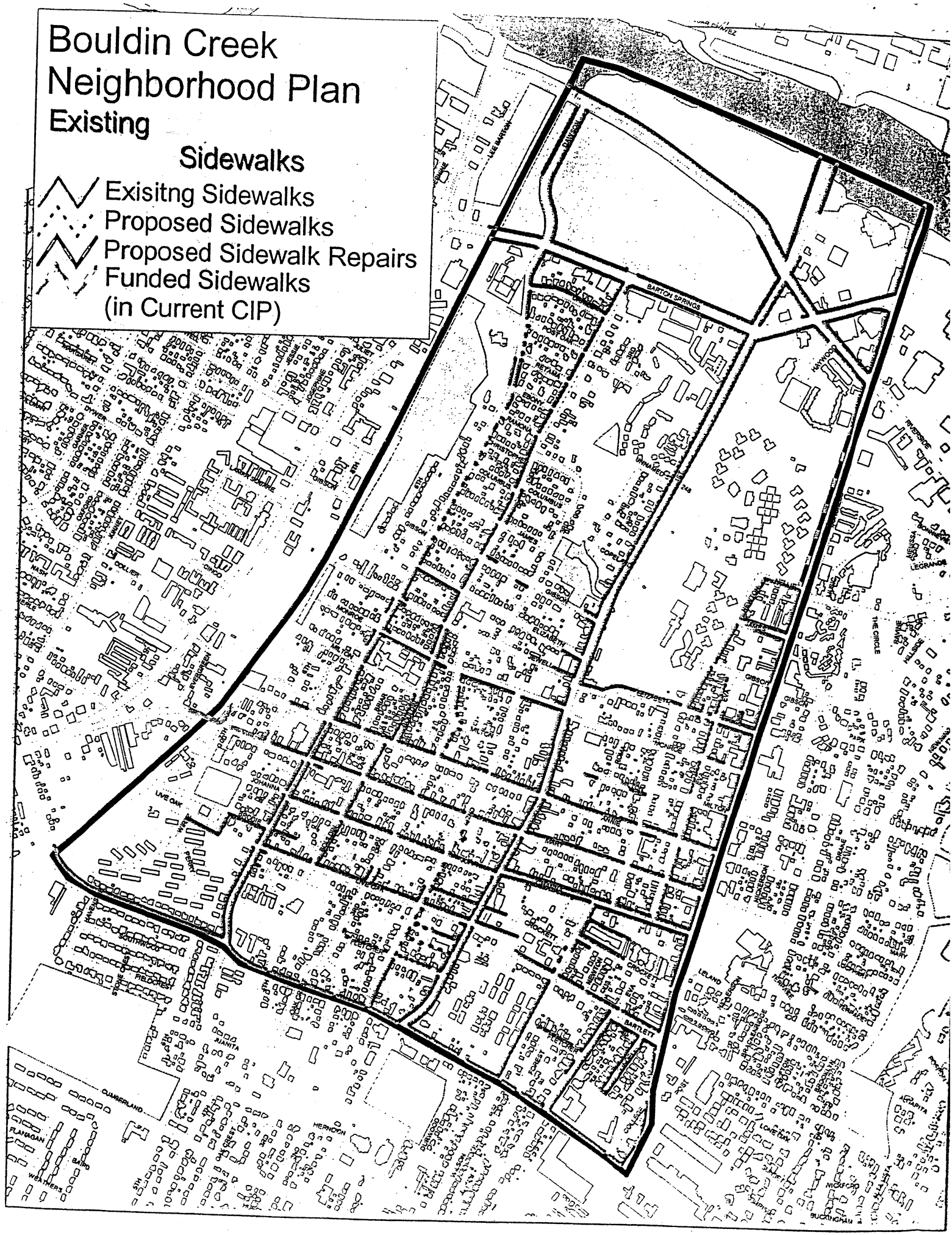
Action Item 43: Complete sidewalk ramps at all intersections on S. 1st, S. Congress, and Bouldin Ave. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 44: Repair the sidewalk on S. Congress between the Texas School for the Deaf entrance and Nellie St. These improvements should include better accessibility for the disabled, repairs to the retaining wall, and making the grade even with S. Congress. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 45: Consistent with the Bicycle Master Plan, include W. Annie as a designated bike route through the Bouldin Creek neighborhood. Also encourage the use of Live Oak Street as a designated bike route. These bike routes could be designated using signage and/or striping. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 46: Encourage the use of Nellie St./Milton St./Live Oak St. as an alternative bike route to S. Congress Ave. Add bike lanes on S. Congress between Riverside and Nellie and between Live Oak and Oltorf. Add signage to Nellie, Milton, and Live Oak directing bicyclists to the alternative route. Lead Implementer: TPSD

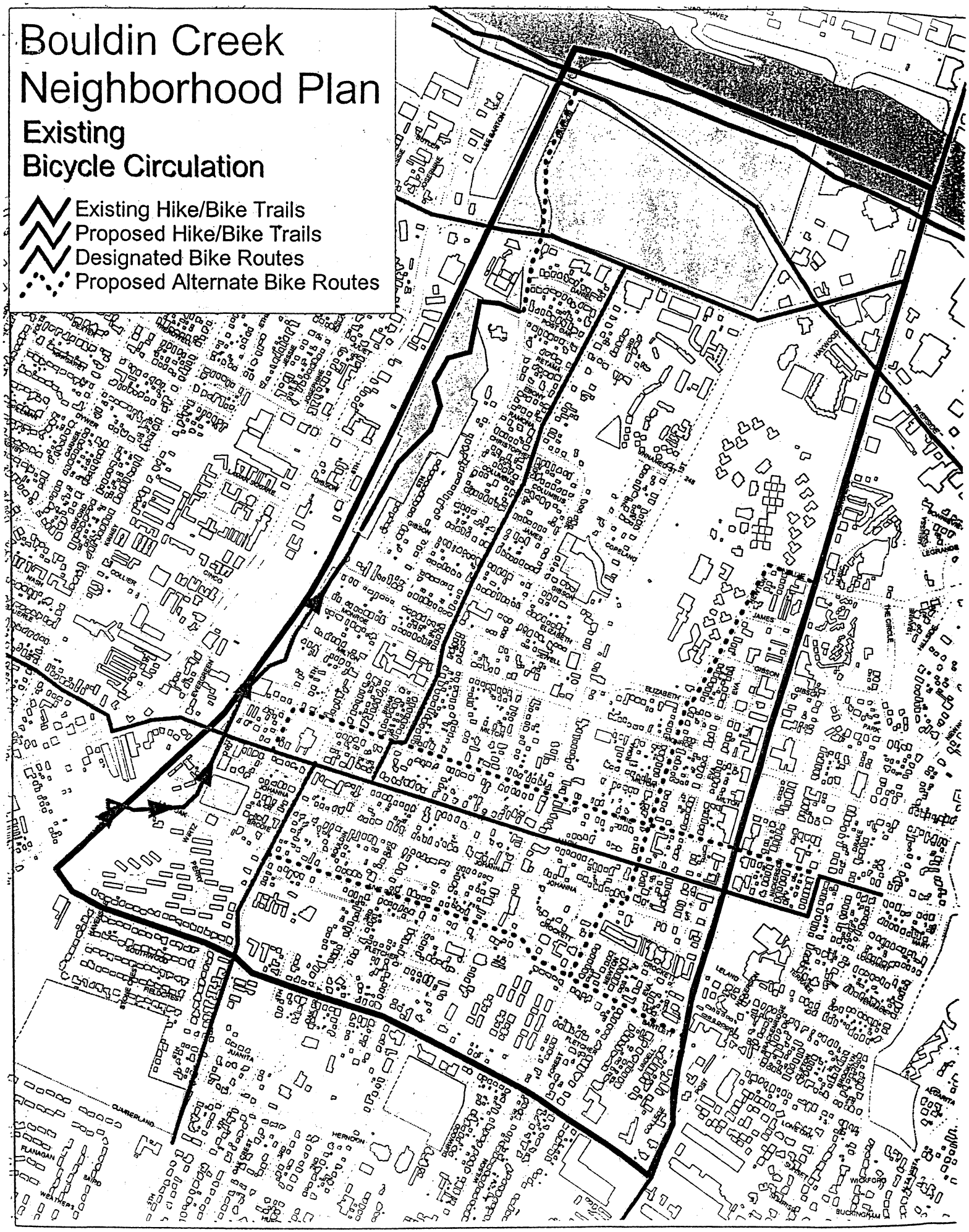
Action Item 47: Add signage on Bouldin and W. Mary identifying the location of designated bike routes. Lead Implementer: TPSD


Bouldin Creek
Neighborhood Plan
Existing
Sidewalks
Exisitng Sidewalks
Proposed Sidewalks
Proposed Sidewalk Repairs
Funded Sidewalks
(in Current CIP)
BARTON SPRINGS
LEE BARTON
DAWSON
POST OAK
NETAMA
EBONY
RAMONA
HRISTOPHER
COLUMBUS
JAMES
GIBSON
MONROE
MILTON
ELIZABETH
JEWELL
JOHANNA
LIVE OAK
CROCKETT
BARTLETT
LELAND
THE CIRCLE
HILLSIDE
LEGRANDE
RIVERSIDE
CUMBERLAND
HERNDON
FLANAGAN
WEATHERS
JUANITA
FIELDCREST
SOUTHWOOD
EVERGREEN
NASH
COLLIER
CINCO
DYWER
GARNER
JANNEY
JESSIE
JOSEPHINE
JULIET
MARGARET
MARY
LOVE OAK
NICKERSON
BUCKINGHAM
NICKFORD
ALHAPITA
MARY

Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan

Existing Bicycle Circulation

- Existing Hike/Bike Trails
- Proposed Hike/Bike Trails
- Designated Bike Routes
- Proposed Alternate Bike Routes



OBJECTIVE 4.2: Improve the flow of traffic while maintaining a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Neighborhood Planning Team encourages vehicular traffic to continue to use the major arterials surrounding the inner city neighborhoods: Ben White, Mopac, IH-35 and 183. For commuters entering the downtown area, the neighborhood planning team recommends commuter-parking facilities for the mass transit routes that bisect the neighborhood. The BCNPT also recommends the following transportation polices for the thoroughfares in the neighborhood:

- *West Mary and S. 5th/Dawson are interior neighborhood streets and should never be designated as corridors or arterials.*
- *Changes to S. 1st should discourage its use a major car thoroughfare, although with cutouts for bus stops or a bus lane during peak traffic hours, its use as a bus route could improve.*
- *S. 1st needs more pedestrian friendly accommodations such as walk buttons at all stoplight intersections and an additional pedestrian stoplight at Elizabeth.*
- *The widening of S. 1st would forever change the character of the neighborhood and should be resisted as a top priority.*
- *Reversible lanes for cars during peak traffic hours would likely promote more car traffic.*
- *S. Congress should continue its emphasis on neighborhood community by promoting pedestrian traffic.*
- *Riverside between S. Lamar and Civic Drive should be closed in conjunction with the completion of the Town Lake Cultural Center project.*
- *The absence of traffic lights on S. 1st north of W. Annie and on Oltorf Street makes crossing these streets difficult for pedestrians. The BCNPT recommends the addition of measures that would increase pedestrian safety in these areas.*

Action Item 48: Maintain angled on-street parking on S. Congress between Nellie and Live Oak. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 49: Conduct a traffic signal study at the intersection of S. 1st and the Timbercreek Apartments. Install a stoplight and pedestrian activated crosswalk if warranted. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 50: Conduct a traffic signal study at the intersection of S. 1st and W. Elizabeth (eastbound). Install a stoplight and pedestrian activated crosswalk if warranted. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 51: Add textured crosswalks across Barton Springs Road at its intersections with Dawson and Bouldin. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 52: Add striping on W. Live Oak, W. Annie, and W. Mary at their intersections with S. 1st clearly delineating right and left turn lanes. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 53: Install at least one 4-way stop on W. Mary and W. Annie between S. Congress and S. 1st. This would require a traffic study. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 54: Place temporary banners near intersections with traffic circles directing drivers to slow and yield. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 55: The traffic circles currently installed in the neighborhood should be xeriscaped with 3 goals in mind: 1) aesthetically pleasing, 2) low maintenance, 3) clear sight lines. Planting within the traffic circles, while softening the concrete structure, will also serve to flag its existence to oncoming traffic. While the choice of plants will lend itself to low maintenance, some maintenance will be required and will be the responsibility of the city. The choice of plantings should be low growing in order to maintain clear sight lines across the traffic circle in all directions. Lead Implementer: TPSD

OBJECTIVE 4.3: Encourage transit services and facilities that meet the needs of neighborhood residents.



The BCNPT is firmly in favor of encouraging mass transit for any number of environmental, aesthetic, and social reasons. It is critical, however, that mass transit facilitate these goals without introducing major new problems. The Avenue Shops in our neighborhood on S. Congress are an integral part of the economic and cultural character of our neighborhood, and we are vehemently opposed to any mass transit proposal that would seriously jeopardize not just these shops, but also the character of S. Congress and the adjacent residential areas.

The Union Pacific railroad track that defines the western border of the Neighborhood Planning area is an ideal route for a light rail program, and we commend it in the strongest possible terms to the City, Capital Metro, Travis County, and other agencies presently studying mass transit alternatives. This is a routing that would reduce construction times and costs, have minimal impacts on existing homes and businesses, and would demonstrate a major recognition of the concerns of neighborhood groups. The plurality of respondents to the Bouldin Creek neighborhood survey preferred the Union Pacific route alternative. In the event that technical or contractual problems present insurmountable barriers to its adoption, we would suggest that any in-road mass transit system be located within Lamar Boulevard.

The neighborhood wishes to encourage and will actively support different incentives (such as, but not limited to, permit fees, right of way issues, and licensing requirements) to help insure the economic viability of locally owned companies whose expressed purpose is to provide low-cost alternative forms of small vehicular transportation in order to facilitate travel from mass transit stops and the commercial corridors to the interior of the neighborhood. Existing examples include the "pedi-cabs" now in use around Town-lake Park.

Action Item 56: Any fixed-transit route should follow the existing Union Pacific railroad tracks instead of S. Congress Avenue. Lead Implementer: CMTA

OBJECTIVE 4.4: Encourage the construction of infrastructure that reflects the unique character of the Bouldin Creek neighborhood.



The neighborhood planning team advocates the use of alternatives to concrete materials (wherever topographically possible) such as decomposed granite, brick pavers, inset flagstone, and limestone borders. Retaining walls that may need to be installed to prevent erosion on pedestrian paths should be constructed to blend in with natural elements. Avoid generic designs in sidewalks, street lamps, bus stop benches & shelters. Additionally, all new infrastructure should incorporate an element of art in them and the "Art in Public Places Program" of the city as an integral part of construction.

Action Item 57: Determine the possibility of using alternate materials for paving sidewalks including decomposed granite, brick pavers, inset flagstone, and limestone borders. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 58: Determine the possibility of using alternate materials for constructing retaining walls including stone, brick, and stepped planters. Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 59: Encourage incentives from the City for property owners who use alternative materials for driveways, walkways, and other improved surfaces. Lead Implementer: WPDR

OBJECTIVE 4.5: Promote parking designs that maximize safety and are compatible with neighborhood character.

Action Item 60: The neighborhood wishes to facilitate enforcement of existing parking and sight-line regulations in order to insure: 1) maximum vehicular safety at all intersections, and 2) pedestrian safety throughout the neighborhood. Problem examples include parking too close to an intersection thereby obstructing the sight-line to oncoming traffic, foliage too close to an intersection such that it obstructs the sight-line to oncoming traffic, and parking on sidewalks. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 61: The BCNPT recognizes its proximity to one of Austin's finest cultural gathering places: Town Lake Park. The NPT supports the Park as a central outdoor event spot for the entire community of Austin. The NPT supports music in the Park and the various track marathons that use the Park. To reduce the parking impacts related to additions to the Town Lake Park, a residential parking permit program should be created for streets in the vicinity of the park. To insure that parking is available for annual community-wide events, the BCNA will work to find appropriate "amnesty" days when parking in the neighborhood would not require a permit. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 62: The neighborhood recognizes that there exists within the neighborhood a few areas where parking for commercial enterprises creates a burden for their immediate residential neighbors. For these areas we would like to restrict parking to the maximum extent allowed by law with maximum enforcement of current regulations. Parking variance requests within these areas should be given maximum scrutiny. Two such areas are the intersection of Bouldin and Barton Springs and the intersection of S. 1st and Johanna. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Action Item 63: Paint curbs to designate where parking is prohibited at the following intersections:

a) S. 1st and Johanna
b) Bouldin and Barton Springs
c) Bouldin and Daniel

Lead Implementer: TPSD

Action Item 64: Explore more shared parking opportunities for S. 1st businesses. Lead Implementer: BCNPT

Implementation

By adopting the plan, the City Council will demonstrate the City's commitment to the implementation of the plan. However, every action item listed in this plan will require separate and specific implementation. Adoption of the plan does not begin the implementation of any item. Approval of the plan does not legally obligate the City to implement any particular action item. The implementation will require specific actions by the neighborhood, the City and by other agencies. The Neighborhood Plan will be supported and implemented by:

- City Boards, Commissions and Staff
- City Departmental Budgets
- Capital Improvement Projects
- Other Agencies and Organizations
- Direct Neighborhood Action

City Boards, Commissions and Staff

The numerous boards and commissions of the City will look to the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan when they need guidance about the neighborhood. The Parks and Recreation Board will have a guide available stating the neighborhood's priorities for parks and open space. The Planning Commission will already know if a proposed zoning change in Bouldin Creek would be appropriate and supported by the residents and businesses of the neighborhood. Additionally, City staff will use the plan as a guidance document for review of projects and programs.

Department Budgets

Each year every City department puts together a budget that states the department's priorities for the coming year. By bringing the strengths and desires of the neighborhood to the attention of City departments, the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan will help them prioritize those projects that help safeguard the neighborhood's assets while addressing its needs.

Capital Improvement Projects

There may be issues in the neighborhood that require a major capital expenditure. In these instances the guidance provided by the plan will be critical to guarantee the project will proceed in a fashion that keeps in mind the overall long-term interests of the neighborhood.

Other Agencies and Organizations

Other agencies and organizations outside City government will play a key role in the implementation of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan. As these agencies

look for public input, the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan will be available as a clearly articulated vision of the direction the neighborhood desires to go.

Direct Neighborhood Action

Some of the elements of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan will be implemented by direct neighborhood action, possibly with some City support. Neighborhood clean-ups and creek clean-ups a few examples of projects that might best be coordinated by the neighborhood.

Implementation Schedule and Tracking

The implementation of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan will be monitored. Some items are expected to be completed quickly. For others, especially those items that need additional funding, it may be harder to schedule a firm completion date. Nevertheless, the status of every item proposed in the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan, the status will be tracked. The Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan Implementation Tracking Chart provides an easy way to check the status of the implementation of the plan. For each action proposed in the plan, the chart lists the contact, the estimated cost, the current status and comments that include the next needed action. A check date, if not a completion date, will be set for each item. This tracking chart will be updated regularly as more information becomes available and as the status of projects change. An update report is scheduled for Fall 2002 to summarize the overall implementation status of the plan's recommendations. The Tracking Chart will be available upon request from the City of Austin, Neighborhood Planning and Zoning staff.

Updating the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan

Neighborhoods are dynamic. To be effective, a neighborhood plan must be periodically updated to reflect changes in the neighborhood. The Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Plan will undergo regular review every 6 months. The Neighborhood Planning Leadership Team will conduct this review, updating the status of the action items and considering additions or amendments. The Neighborhood Planning Leadership Team may also designate subcommittees to assist in this review however, just as the full Leadership Team represents the diverse interests of the neighborhood, the updating subcommittee should include representatives of homeowner, renters, businesses and non-resident property owners.

Over time, a neighborhood plan may need more changes to stay current than would be appropriate for a small subcommittee to make. How often this will be necessary depends on how much the conditions have changed in the neighborhood. Overall, it seems that a neighborhood plan, with any needed changes, should be re-approved and re-adopted every 5-7 years.

Appendix 1: Additional Action Items

The following action items were included in the original draft of the plan, but were not included in the final adopted plan because they were not supported by City departments responsible for implementing them, or because consensus within the neighborhood could not be achieved. The planning team recommends revisiting them at a later date if conditions or City polices change.

1. Due to a blind intersection, extend the cautionary 20 mph speed limit on Live Oak Street to the east of the intersection with Wilson St.

2. Realign bus Route # 16 that comes south on Bouldin, and then east on W. Annie, and then continues south on S. 5th St. It would be preferable for the bus to stay on Bouldin until W. Mary and then head east. This change would run the bus in front of several commercial enterprises whose patrons could use mass transit. It also reduces noise at night in an area that is principally residential as opposed to principally commercial.

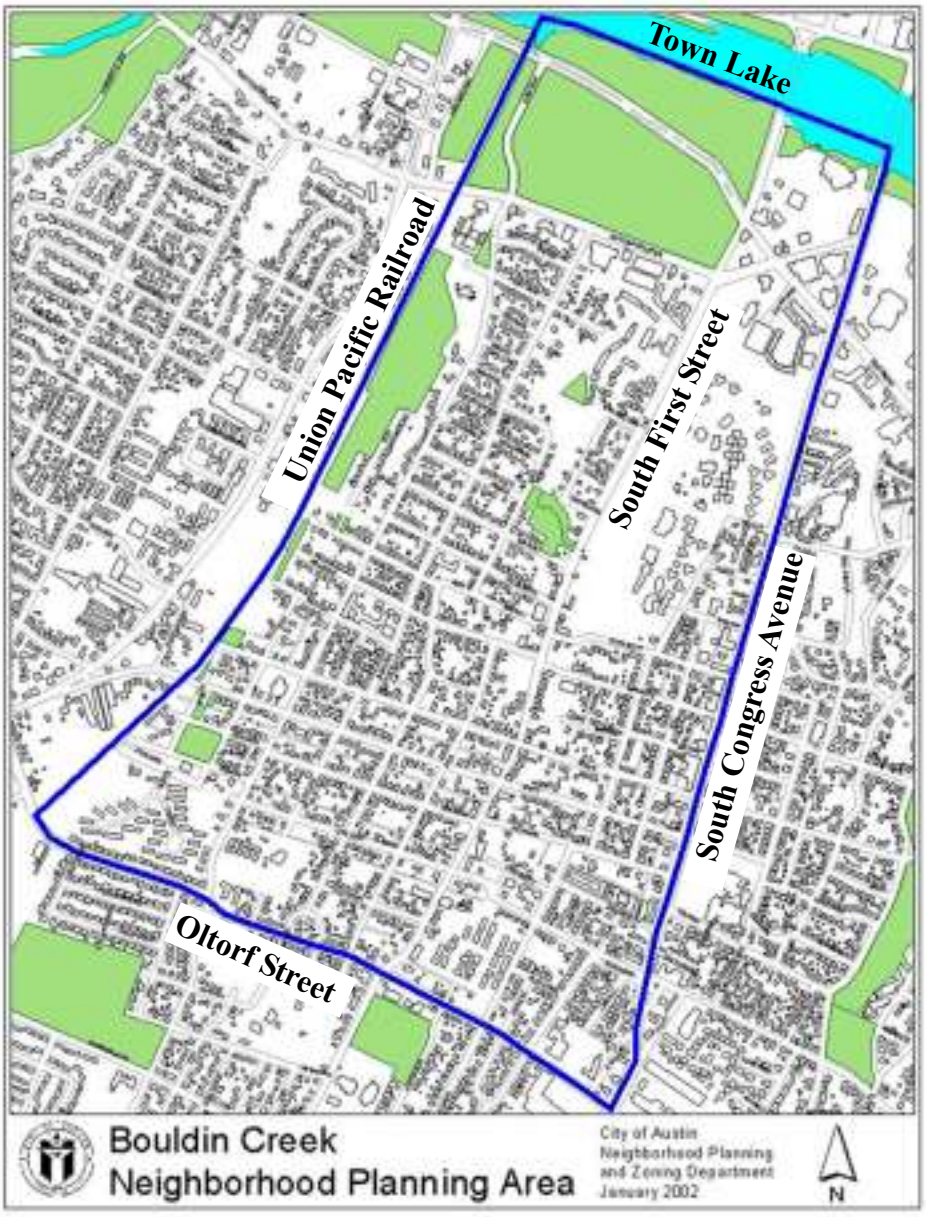
3. Develop parallel parking on the south side of Barton Springs Road where right-of-way is wide enough to permit it.

Appendix 2: Final Surveys Received

Final Surveys Received					
Total					
I support	Overall, I support	I do not support			
42.9%	46.9%	10.9%			
Residents:					
I support	Overall, I support	I do not support			
43.2%	50.0%	8.1%			
Non-resident property owners or businesses					
I support	Overall, I support	I do not support			
41.2%	26.5%	32.4%			
Total mailed:	**3,055**		**Total received:**		
Response rate:	**10.3%**		**315**		

PRESERVING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER THROUGH VOLUNTARY DESIGN GUIDELINES

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT, ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS



BOULDIN CREEK

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREA

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, contact Pollyanne Melton, Urban Designer (512) 974-6459;

City of Austin, Transportation, Planning & Sustainability Department,

Urban Design & Historic Preservation Division

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Commercial Guideline 3.4 Parking Location
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CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Survey results indicated that most people are happy with the character of the neighborhood as it currently exists and would like to retain it.

The top three reasons people choose to live in this neighborhood according to the survey are:

1) access to highways and city,
2) diversity (economic, social, cultural) and
3) established trees.

The major characteristic defining Bouldin Creek, although not necessarily of landmark historic stature, is that it is a mature, urban neighborhood. The age of the houses, churches, and many of the retail shops, as well as natural features such as the creeks and the very mature trees, and the fact that these assets have been built up over time, is irreplaceable.

Residential Character: With few exceptions, the houses were not built by one developer, but were built individually in many styles by different owners in materials as varied as stucco, brick, stone and wood. The eclecticism that this represents is very valued by our community. In general, houses are tucked among towering trees and abundant landscaping, tied to the earth with porches and decks and do not shout their presence to the street or to their neighbors. The variation in color, style and texture is mitigated also by human scale and similar massing. Houses are mostly one-story with simple shapes and typically gabled or hipped roofs. Garages and carports are rare, and driveways are narrow and unobtrusive. Street furniture, sidewalks and lighting are minimal.

Commercial Character: Commercial centers in Bouldin Creek are typically linear and based along the perimeter of the residential core. South Congress is the busiest retail strip with many flat-roofed, two-story structures that typically provide a continuous, often shaded, walking path. Parking is provided directly in front of the stores or behind the buildings. The parked cars in front actually provide a type of buffer between pedestrians and the cars traveling at often highway speeds up South Congress. South First has more discontinuous structures that are mostly one-story and broken up repeatedly by driveways and parking lots.

Public Space Character: The streets of the neighborhood are comfortable for walking and biking. Sidewalks are often shaded by trees in the residential areas and by awnings or canopies over store fronts. Innovative front yard landscaping and store fronts make the streetscape interesting and inviting. The passive, green qualities of the parks and creeks are loved and ardently protected by appreciative neighbors.

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

Neighborhood objectives reflected in these Guidelines include:

- ⇨ Encourage the renovation, rather than the demolition, of existing structures.
- ⇨ Retain current setback limits.Prohibit the removal of healthy trees over 3” in caliper.
- ⇨ Encourage the planting of more trees and other native landscaping, while taking care to prevent hazardous overgrowth that reduces sight lines at street corners.
- ⇨ Encourage the existing building pattern of front porches, one to two story massing, use of natural or simple materials, narrow street fronts, few garages, narrow drives, etc.
- ⇨ Promote the eclecticism of the design fabric in the neighborhood by encouraging sympathetic responses to the current styles, but not clones. Discourage development of more than one or two adjacent lots at one time by one developer.
- ⇨ Encourage the use of a variety of natural materials in public structures such as sidewalks and retaining walls. Encourage the integration of such programs as Art in Public Places to design street furnishings such as transit shelters.
- ⇨ Bury utilities underground whenever possible, particularly when streets are already undergoing other work.
- ⇨ Retain the current pattern of development along South Congress Avenue.
- ⇨ Encourage the connection of South Austin to Town Lake Park and Town Lake by easing pedestrian access from Barton Springs Road, keeping the scale of mixed use development along the street to a 35’-40’ building height, burying utility lines and encouraging tree planting and sidewalk alternatives (inlaid tiles, etc.).
- ⇨ Encourage properties along South First to limit number of curb cuts, combine parking areas, provide continuous pedestrian access, keep buildings to the street edge, or back from the street to allow sidewalk cafes or other pedestrian-friendly amenities.

GOALS OF THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following three major goals provide the foundation for Neighborhood Design Guidelines within City of Austin neighborhoods.

Goal 1: Respect the Historic, Ethnic and Cultural Character of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood.

The Guidelines aim to reinforce those positive elements, patterns, and characteristics that exist within the neighborhood, that help create a unique sense of place within the city. The Guidelines serve as a framework for new development providing suggestions as to how it may fit into the existing neighborhood character in terms of scale, mass, building patterns, and details. Following the Guidelines helps ensure the existing neighborhood character is preserved, maintained or even enhanced.

Goal 2: Ensure Compatibility and Encourage a Complementary Relationship between Adjacent Land Uses.

In the Future Land Use Map, the neighborhood has expressed a preference for increasing or decreasing the occurrence of certain types of land uses in the neighborhood. The Guidelines show how these uses can be grouped together to create a complementary mixture of uses while being designed so as to be compatible with each other.

Goal 3: Enhance and Enliven the Streetscape.

The Guidelines promote the design of safe and interesting streetscapes that are comfortable for walking, biking, and transit use. Key to achieving this goal is creating a sense of human scale in the buildings defining the streetscape, enhancing visibility from the building to the sidewalk, and providing accessible, adequately-sized and protected pathways.

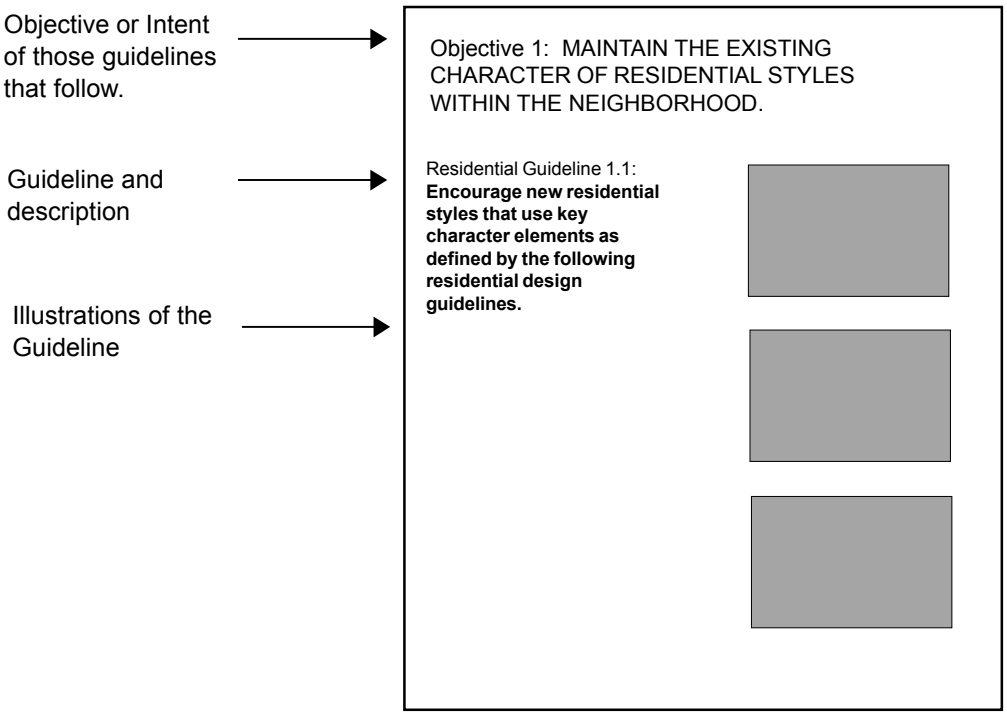
GUIDELINES ORGANIZATION

GUIDELINES are made up of separate Objectives to serve each major type of development that might occur in the neighborhood:

Residential Development: Single Family, Multi-Family, Secondary Unit
Public Space Development
Commercial Development

FORMAT for the Guidelines is illustrated below.

All Guidelines address one or more of the three goals descibed above. The main objective is stated at the top of each page. The numbering system cites the number of the Objective and the number of the guideline itself. For example, Residential Guideline 1.1 is the first Guideline under the first Objective.



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, contact Pollyanne Melton, Urban Designer (512) 974-6459;

City of Austin, Transportation, Planning & Sustainability Department,

Urban Design & Historic Preservation Division

Residential Objective 1: MAINTAIN THE SINGLE-FAMILY CHARACTER OF THE INTERIOR OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD. MAINTAIN THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF HOUSE STYLES WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. ENCOURAGE NEW CONSTRUCTION, ADDITIONS OR RECONSTRUCTION THAT USE KEY ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER ELEMENTS FOUND IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Guideline 1.1: Houses are predominantly 1 story high, with the first floor level 12-24 inches above the ground. The height of each floor of new construction should be similar to floor-to-floor heights on existing houses. If a second story addition is desired, locate the addition to the center of building footprint, and design it to resemble the existing house in overall shape, materials and colors.



Guideline 1.2: Use a house footprint similar to the typical simple rectangle or L-shape plan, with the narrow end of the rectangle facing the street.



Guideline 1.3: Roofs should be simple in form, either gabled or hipped, with low to moderate pitch (5 or 7:12 is common). Typical roofing materials include metal and tabbed composition shingles.

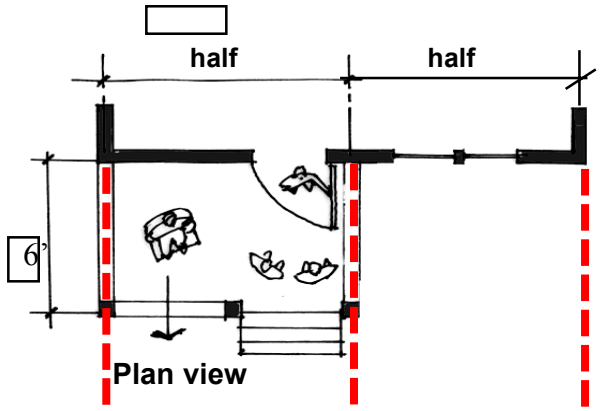


MAINTAINING THE SINGLE-FAMILY CHARACTER OF THE INTERIOR OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Guideline 1.4: Garages or carports are not common in the neighborhood but where they exist, they are detached and located at the rear of the lot. If an attached garage is desired, setting it back at least 10 feet from the front facade of the house will help to preserve the people-oriented character of the streetscape. Garages are typically designed to resemble the house in shape, material and color.



ally modest
houses have
half the front
east 6 feet
space to sit



Plan view





MAINTAINING THE SINGLE-FAMILY CHARACTER OF THE INTERIOR OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Guideline 1.6: The relative amount of wall space occupied by windows, their proportion and the pattern of window placement in new construction should be similar to that of existing houses.



Guideline 1.7: Natural materials such as wood, stucco, brick or stone are typical exterior wall materials. Common wood siding styles include vertical board and batten and narrow horizontal clapboard siding. There are many new materials available that are environmentally-friendly but still provide the sense of scale and texture common to the existing materials found in the neighborhood.



Residential Objective 2: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE PATTERN OF LANDSCAPED FRONT YARDS THAT GIVES THE NEIGHBORHOOD A PLEASANT, FRIENDLY APPEARANCE.

Guideline 2.1: Mature, existing trees in front yards and along the street are one of the most dominant visual charcteristics of the residential interior of the neighborhood. Trees should be preserved and protected and additional trees planted to create a continuous canopy of cooling shade over the street and sidewalks. Developers are encouraged to be pro-active on tree preservation and planting.



Guideline 2.2: Setting houses back from the street at a distance similar to the setback of most of the houses on the street helps form a coherent transition zone between the public space of the street and the private space of the home.



MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THE PATTERN OF FRONT YARDS

Guideline 2.3: Fences in the neighborhood are often works of art, utilizing found materials in whimsical ways. Friendly fences or hedges along the front property line, and the side yards in front of the house should be low enough to see over the top (less than 4 feet) or allow views through to avoid creating a walled-off appearance.



Guideline 2.4: Front yards should be green xeriscape landscaped areas with minimal impervious paving. Using native plant materials creates a heathly environment that is sustainable for the long-term. Parking in the front yard is discouraged except in a driveway to the side of the house. If larger areas of parking are needed, they should be located behind the house.



Guideline 2.5: Mechanical equipment (air conditioners, electric meters, gas meters etc.) and garbage carts or garbage storage areas are best located to the side or rear of the house, where they cannot be seen from the street. If the location is visible from the street, it should be screened from view.

Guideline 2.6: Exterior building and site lighting should be unobtrusive, shielded and directed downward so as not to intrude upon neighboring properties.

Residential Objective 3: MAINTAIN THE STREET-ORIENTED CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHEN CONSTRUCTING NEW HOUSES.

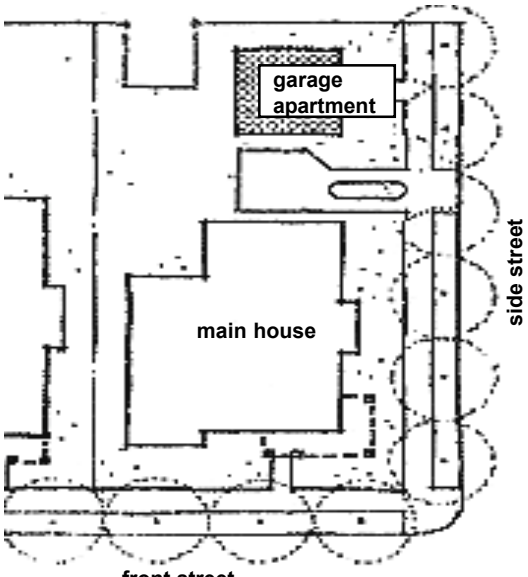
Guideline 3.1: New houses should be designed to have a good view of the street. The front of the house should have a door, at least two windows, and a porch facing the street. Having “eyes on the street” is one way to enhance the sense of security on the street , especially for bicyclists and pedestrians.





REINFORCE THE EXISTING RESIDENTIAL IGHBORHOOD WHEN BUILDING GARAGE NDARY DWELLING UNITS. IN addition to D ABOVE FOR SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES, REFER CONDARY DWELLING UNIT REQUIREMENTS.

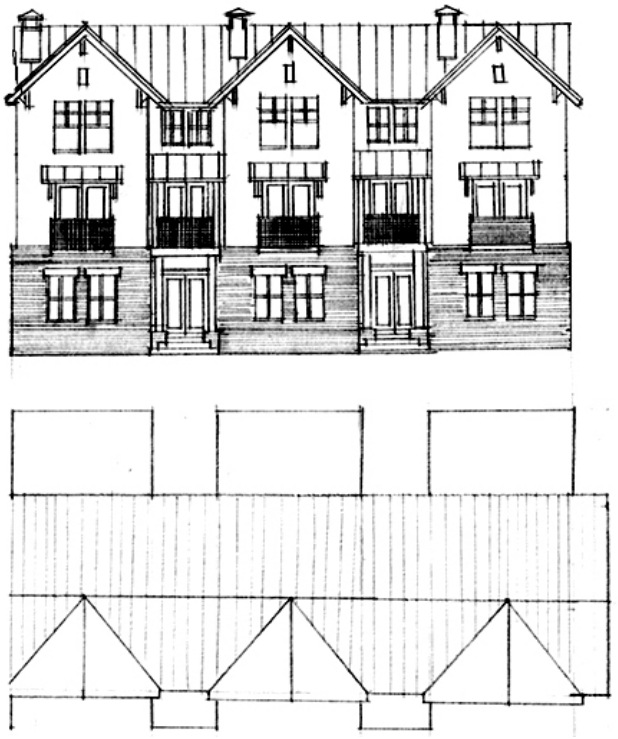
Guideline 4.1: Secondary units fit into the neighborhood best when they are set at the back of the lot. Facing the unit to the side street enlivens that street while providing more privacy for the main house.



garage apartment faces side street

Residential Objective 5: PROVIDE A DIVERSITY OF HOUSING OPTIONS THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING THAT IS IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Guideline 5.1: Multi-family buildings less than 100 feet in width on any street-facing side are more in keeping with the scale of the neighborhood. Building facades should be divided into approximately 30-foot wide bays and be treated as separate units to avoid a blocky appearance.



Facade is divided into 30 foot increments. Rooflines are simple.

Guideline 5.2: Use exterior building materials typical to the neighborhood: stone, brick, wood or stucco.

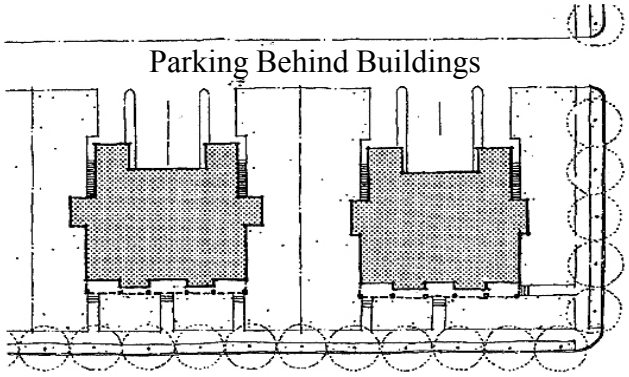
Guideline 5.3: Multi-family buildings should have the same relationship to the street as single family houses. Landscaped front yards with porches or balconies and a walkway connecting the building to the street sidewalk are neighborhood characteristics. Front doors and windows facing the street encourage neighborliness and enhance security by putting “eyes on the street”.



PROVIDING A DIVERSITY OF HOUSING OPTIONS IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Guidelines 5.4: Parking lots along the street detract from the pedestrian-oriented character of the neighborhood. Locating parking lots to the side or behind the building or buffering the lot from street view by a fence or hedge, low enough to screen the cars but allowing visibility for security, helps to preserve the quality of the streetscape.





Guideline 5.5: Service areas for trash disposal, air conditioners, and utility meters are best located behind the building or screened from public view.



PUBLIC SPACE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Public Space Objective 1: ENHANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION BY IMPROVING THE DESIGN OF THE PUBLIC WAY: SIDEWALKS, STREETS AND TRANSIT FACILITIES.

Guideline 1.1: Sidewalks are needed along at least one side of a residential street to provide pedestrian linkage between the neighborhood and commercial areas, transit stops and civic areas such as parks, churches and schools. The greater amount of pedestrian activity in commercial areas requires sidewalks at least 8 feet wide. The use of special paving details or materials such as unit pavers, imprinted or colored concrete, or scoring patterns, is a useful way to highlight commercial areas as distinct from residential areas.



Guideline 1.2: Separating sidewalks from the street by a minimum 4 foot wide planting strip wherever the street right-of way is sufficiently wide enhances pedestrian safety and comfort. Native grasses such as buffalo grass, and native, non-littering shade trees that do not require a lot of water or maintenance are appropriate to the Austin climate.



Guideline 1.4: The sidewalk should provide a continuous safe zone for pedestrians with as few curb cuts as possible. Building residential and commercial driveways to the minimum dimensions allowed by City of Austin Transportation Criteria Manual improves pedestrian comfort and safety.



IMPROVING THE DESIGN OF THE PUBLIC WAY

Guideline 1.3: Tree-lined streets beautify the neighborhood, encourage pedestrian activity and create a more liveable environment. Planting trees in a strip between the street and sidewalk is preferred as it shades the pavement and reduces heat build-up but planting trees immediately to the rear of the sidewalk is a good alternative. Planting trees in pits with grates and decorative sidewalk planters works well where pedestrian traffic is heavy. All tree plantings in the public right-of-way are subject to a City license agreement (Parks and Recreation Department).



Guideline 1.5: Allowing parking on the street wherever the right-of-way is wide enough to accommodate it helps to calm traffic. At intersections of commercial and residential streets, a “bulb-out” or “neck-down” is an effective way to narrow the street crossing for pedestrians and calm traffic as it enters the residential areas of the neighborhood.



Guideline 1.6: Consolidating and carefully locating street furnishings and utility equipment necessary for the function of the street makes walking easier and safer. Mounting street and traffic control signs on light poles, rather than on individual posts, reduces the number of impediments in the pedestrian way. Grouping and locating utility boxes and vending machines along the curb side of the sidewalk further clears the way for pedestrians.



Public Space Objective 2. PROVIDE WORKABLE ALTERNATIVES TO DRIVING PRIVATE VEHICLES IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THE PEDESTRIAN-ORIENTED CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Guideline 2.1: Neighborhood stakeholders should work closely with Capital Metro to locate and design bus stops and transit plazas in a way that serves neighborhood needs and is compatible with neighborhood character.

Public Space Objective 3: ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF PARKS, GREENWAYS, PUBLIC FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE TO SERVE AS COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACES.

Guideline 3.1: Increasing accessibility to school grounds facilitates their use by the community after school hours and expands recreational opportunities in the neighborhood.

Conveniently located entrances and handicapped-accessible walkways connecting facilities on the school grounds to the street, as well as to the school, invite community use.

Guideline 3.2: Defining edges and entrances and improving access to and through the park helps these spaces to live up to their potential as civic gathering places and landmarks of the community.

Providing gateways - of simple or elaborate design depending on the use - are effective means of identifying where to enter the park.

Low walls,fencing allowing views trhough them, such as steel picket, hedges and vines are useful for defining the park's edge while permitting surveillance.

Commercial Objective 1: CREATE A HUMAN-SCALE ENVIRONMENT ALONG THE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Recognize that the linear commercial districts forming the boundaries of the Bouldin Creek Neighborhood have three distinct characters that should be retained and enhanced: South Congress, South 1st and Barton Springs Road. The urban design elements of each street should be modified as appropriate to the scale and the flavor of each commercial area.

Guideline 1.1: Encourage mixed-use structures and corner stores to bring around-the-clock vitality to the neighborhood. Live-work spaces and apartments over stores with balconies overlooking the street increases security for both residents and businesses and provides residents easy access to goods and services needed on a daily basis.


South Congress Avenue

Guideline 1.2: Buildings located along the commercial corridors should be built up to the minimum front yard and side yard setback lines to create a human-scale streetscape. An exception to this guideline would be to allow buildings set back farther to create outdoor seating areas, sidewalk cafes, outdoor markets, transit plazas or other facilities attractive to pedestrians.


South Congress Avenue

Guideline 1.3: Dividing building facades into 30 foot (more or less) wide bays helps to reduce the overwhelming scale of large buildings. Using different materials and colors or recessing alternating bays of the building are effective ways to break up a blocky appearance. Commercial buildings should be designed to reflect residential scale and character where possible. The use of traditional building materials such as brick, stone and stucco is encouraged.


Barton Springs Road

Commercial Objective 2: ENHANCE INTEREST, SAFETY AND WEATHER PROTECTION FOR PEOPLE WALKING IN SHOPPING DISTRICTS

Guideline 2.1: Awnings or canopies along the street facing building facade encourages walking and shopping by providing shade and rain protection. The cover should extend the full length of the facade and be at least 5 feet wide.



Guideline 2.2: Pedestrian level lighting, mounted on the building or on poles in addition to public street lighting enhances security and encourages walking and shopping.



Guideline 2.3: Store windows with interesting displays of merchandise and frequent entrances make a commercial street inviting to shoppers and pleasant to walk along. The front facade of the building should be “active” with at least 50% of the facade in windows, with doors spaced no more than 50 feet apart and with balconies on the upper stories.



ENHANCING INTEREST, SAFETY AND WEATHER PROTECTION

Guideline 2.4: In addition to signs directed at motorists, signage should be oriented to the pedestrian and be readable from 20 feet away on the sidewalk. Pedestrian-friendly signage, mounted on the building, on awnings, or inside storefronts rather than on separate poles or detached structures makes for a lively and attractive commercial street. Creative signage that is in keeping with the architectural style of the building or suggests the nature of the business inside is encouraged.



Guideline 2.5: Incorporating locally produced art into commercial architecture brings the unique character of the neighborhood to its business districts.



Commercial Objective 3: MAINTAIN THE CHARACTER OF SOUTH CONGRESS AVENUE AND SOUTH FIRST STREET.

Guideline 3.1: Maintain South Congress as a pedestrian-oriented “destination” boulevard while preserving the adjacent residential area.



Guideline 3.2: Preserve South First Street as an eclectic mix of commercial, residential and office uses that serve as “Downtown Bouldin Creek”.



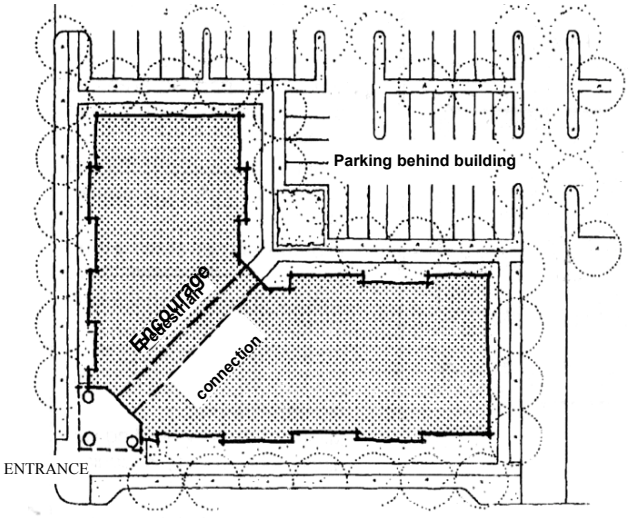


MAINTAINING THE CHARACTER OF SOUTH CONGRESS AVENUE AND SOUTH FIRST STREET

Guideline 3.3: The impact of parking can be mitigated by locating it beside or behind buildings and by screening the parking from public view by means of a low (less than 4 foot high) hedge, wall or fence that buffers the view of parking while maintaining security viewing into the lot.



Parking Buffered or Behind Building



MAINTAINING THE CHARACTER OF SOUTH CONGRESS AVENUE AND SOUTH FIRST STREET

Guideline 3.4: Parking structures fit into a commercial streetscape best when the facade is treated as if it were a building façade: vertical divisions every 30 to 50 feet, traditional materials and human scale detailing. The parking structure must incorporate pedestrian-oriented commercial uses along the street-fronting, ground-floor level of the parking structure, according to City code.

Parking garage under building, screened with hedge and vines



Parking garage above street level pedestrian-oriented, retail use with facade divided into 30' increments