CITY OF AUSTIN HISTORIC CEMETERIES MASTER PLAN

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AUGUST 2015

Prepared for the
CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS
Parks and Recreation Department

Prepared by
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Austin, Texas
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Special thanks to the many members of the community who shared their knowledge of their heritage and provided valuable insights and opinions, which were essential to the planning process.

Letter From the Director

The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) manages five historic municipal cemeteries that comprise more than 60,000 burials. We are entrusted by the families and descendants to care for these sacred places, and the cemeteries are indelible and essential parts of the neighborhoods in which they reside.

All across the country, cities are evaluating how best to care for their historic municipal cemeteries. Here in Austin, Texas, we're proud to be on the forefront of tackling the challenges inherently found in historic cemeteries and crafting new initiatives to help us better connect the Austin community to these beloved and important sites.

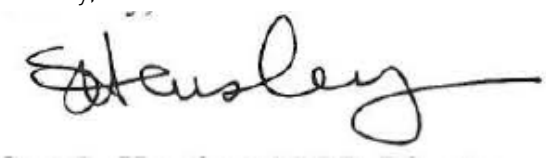
The Historic Cemeteries Master Plan represents an enormous undertaking by our City. There are few precedents across the country, and therefore, we worked diligently to craft a thoughtful approach to public engagement in order to reach a diverse array of community members.

Outreach for the master plan included five public meetings, a dedicated website, and a print newsletter placed in libraries and senior centers, and posted online. The team also used the city's survey tool, "Speak Up Austin!" to gauge the community's opinion on programming and burial options. The team individually interviewed dozens of stakeholders to ensure that a cross-section of community voices were represented. Signage in the cemeteries notified visitors of every meeting.

The result of these efforts is a Historic Cemeteries Master Plan that will provide our city with an innovative approach to restoration and programming for these historic and sacred landscapes. The City of Austin has never been more invested in our cemeteries. In addition to the development of a master plan, PARD took over direct management of our city cemeteries and now receives support through the city's general fund to provide the level of care expected by our community. Further, the citizens of Austin supported $2 million in capital funding for our cemeteries in 2012 and our department is working hard to stretch these dollars to ensure we cover needed projects in all of our cemeteries.

The Parks and Recreation Department is proud to support this plan and appreciates the efforts of our community to make it a reality.

Sincerely,



Sara L. Hensley, CPRP, Director
Austin Parks and Recreation Department

March 5, 2015

Mayor Adler and City Council Members
City of Austin
Post Office Box 1088
Austin, TX 78767-8865
Sent via e-mail

Dear Mayor Adler and City Council:

Preservation Austin commends the City of Austin for the recently completed *Historic Cemetery Master Plan* and for the foresight to recognize and protect these very important and often fragile historic resources. Members of Preservation Austin's Historic Preservation Committee have reviewed the *Master Plan* compiled for the Austin Parks and Recreation Department by AmaTerra and others. The public input process was considerable, the cemetery surveys very thorough and overall it was one of the best city planning procedures and master plans in memory.

The Master Plan is a first-rate document addressing the wide variety of issues facing historic cemeteries. It confirms some bad news - the loss of 46% of trees at Oakwood Cemetery in the current drought (p. 40), for instance - but offers many solutions for recurring problems and years of deferred maintenance. These solutions are in compliance with *The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation*, the pragmatic standard for the preservation of historic properties and assets compiled by the National Park Service.

The Cemetery Master Plan sets the standard for methods of preservation of City-owned historic assets. We encourage the City of Austin to continue developing similar plans that ensure the care and preservation of historic parks, bridges, libraries and fire stations. Additionally, such plans greatly help in identifying maintenance issues and setting preservation priorities. The City has many extraordinary historic assets like the historic cemeteries, which should continue to be protected while our city grows and changes, allowing for continued public enjoyment.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Shelly Hemingson
President, Preservation Austin

SAVE AUSTIN'S CEMETERIES

March 30, 2015

Dear Ms. Hensley,

Save Austin's Cemeteries (SAC) would like to offer our enthusiastic support for the draft *City of Austin Historic Cemeteries Master Plan*. We've long advocated the development of a Cemetery Master Plan for the City of Austin and are pleased that one now exists.

That a Master Plan for Austin's city cemeteries has been developed to any extent is significant in itself. At the very least, the process of developing the draft initiated a huge collection of valuable data about our cemeteries that didn't exist before in a single location. When the Cemetery Master Plan is implemented, we're confident it will ensure that the city cemeteries are responsibly preserved and maintained not only as burial grounds, but also will flourish as cultural landscapes in our community.

We appreciate the Cemetery Master Plan team's generosity in providing information so that everyone understands the issues, many of which are scientific, logistical, and emotional all at the same time. With patience and sensitivity, the team capably managed a lengthy process of soliciting input from cemetery stakeholders and communities, despite harsh and unwarranted criticism and negativity at times. The result will be a Master Plan that balances community concerns and needs, funding and resources, and the demands of the cemeteries themselves as physical environments.

We're honored to have contributed to this process with SAC's own trove of photographs and information, as well as participation of our members and friends in the public involvement process. We eagerly await the final *City of Austin Historic Cemeteries Master Plan*, its recommendations, and ensuing improvements. We look forward to continuing our partnership with the city in helping to preserve and raise awareness of Austin's cemeteries.

Yours respectfully,

Beth Pickett

Beth Pickett, President
on behalf of
Board of Directors
Save Austin's Cemeteries

cc: Kim McKnight

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M Project Newsletters (monthly)
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O Stakeholder Interviews
P SpeakUp Austin! Surveys
Q Addendum to Draft Master Plan
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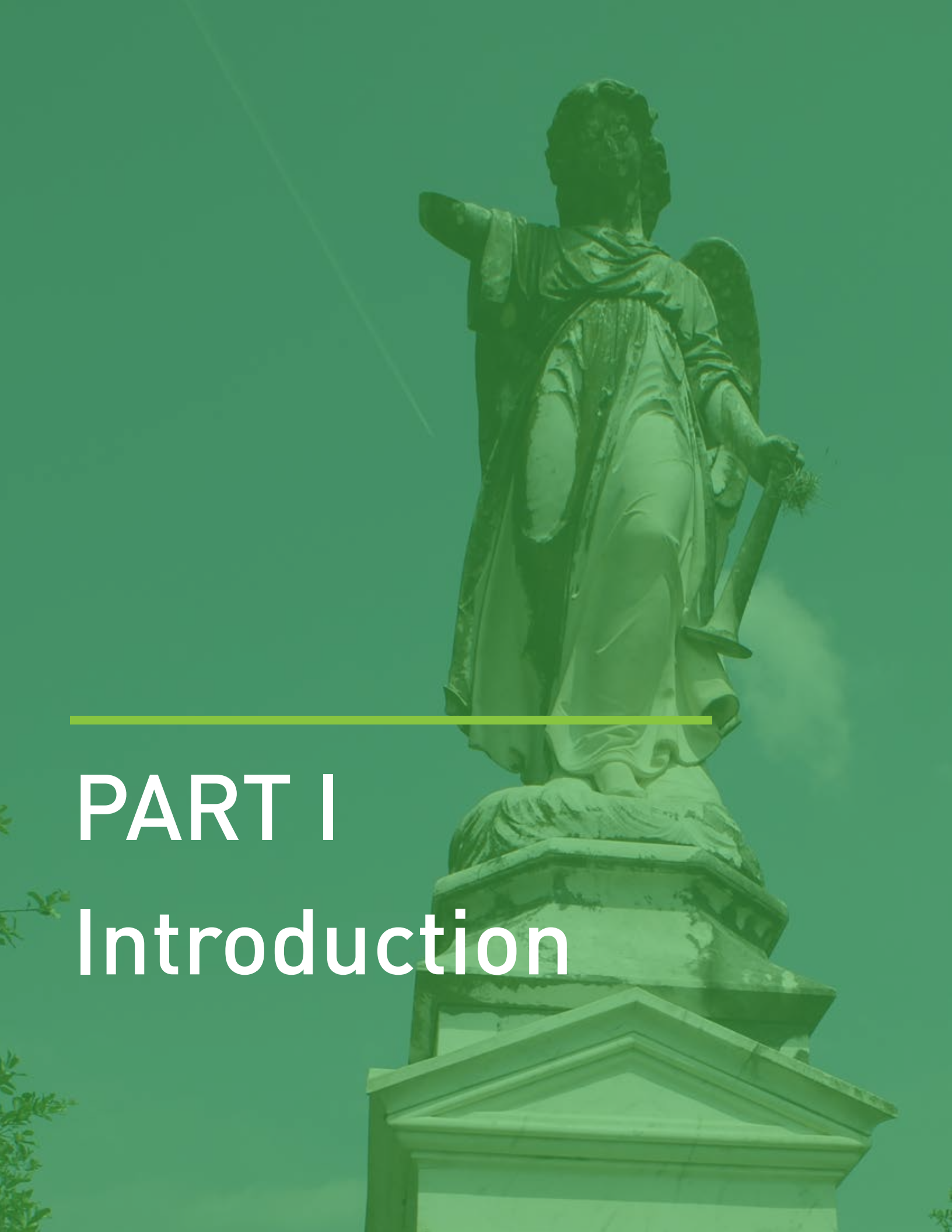
S Summary of Committee, Board, Commission Actions



PART I
Introduction

Chapter 1
Introduction

The City of Austin Historic Cemeteries Master Plan provides a long-term framework for the management and rehabilitation of the five municipally owned cemeteries within the City of Austin, Texas: Oakwood Cemetery, Oakwood Cemetery Annex, Plummers Cemetery, Evergreen Cemetery, and Austin Memorial Park Cemetery. This plan documents how these cemeteries developed over time; examines the current condition of historical, cultural, natural, and built resources within each cemetery; identifies and prioritizes challenges and needs; recommends treatment options; and presents a guide for implementing those recommendations. This plan is designed to evolve over time, as conditions change. Rather than simply prescribing a solution or direction, these guidelines also are intended to help the City address new opportunities or challenges that arise in the future.

The City of Austin Historic Cemeteries Master Plan project represents the culmination of several years of advocacy, community engagement, and professional evaluation and planning. Although other cities have undertaken similar projects for individual cemeteries, this project may be one of the most sweeping cemetery master plans developed to date in the United States, as it encompasses five separate and distinctly different historic cemeteries that were established over the course of nearly a century.

IN THIS CHAPTER

BACKGROUND

Cities throughout the United States are struggling with issues surrounding historic cemeteries, particularly historic urban cemeteries. The American population is increasingly mobile and less likely to remain rooted in the same community for generations; fewer family members may remain near the cemeteries where their parents, grandparents, and ancestors are buried. At the same time, cremation is quickly becoming a preferred method for the disposition of human remains, and ashes are often kept privately or scattered without a permanent memorial. As a result, many of this nation's oldest cemeteries—both public and privately owned—have been largely abandoned by the communities that they once served. Local governments, faced with limited budgets, understandably find it difficult to prioritize cemetery upkeep when the needs of living residents are pressing and immediate. Faced with such challenges, those who manage and advocate for these historic spaces are re-imagining cemeteries' roles in the community and finding ways to creatively engage citizens.

This project began to take shape in Spring 2013, after the City of Austin resumed active management of its five historic cemeteries. The maintenance of these City-owned cemeteries historically was conducted by a combination of city cemetery staff, community groups, and private individuals. In the 1800s, family members were primarily responsible for the upkeep of graves within the City Cemetery (now known as Oakwood Cemetery), with a sexton on staff to sell lots and handle burials. Changes in American society and the professionalization of cemetery management in the early 1900s resulted in some of those duties being shifted to city staff, as well as community organizations like the Austin Cemetery Association, a women's group that supported beautification activities at Oakwood Cemetery and the adjacent Oakwood Cemetery Annex. It was not until the 1970s that the City became completely responsible for the perpetual care of the five cemeteries then under its control, which by then included Evergreen Cemetery, established by the City in 1926 for citizens in East Austin's African American community, and Austin Memorial Park Cemetery and Plummers Cemetery, both existing cemeteries that the City had acquired in 1941 and 1957, respectively.

In 1990, the City of Austin entered into a contract that outsourced cemetery maintenance and management to InterCare Corporation, Inc., a central Texas firm that began groundskeeping in San Marcos, Texas, cemeteries in 1980 and branched out into cemetery

"Our death rituals are changing — and with them, the ways we choose to bury and remember our loved ones."

—George Dvorsky
"The Future of Graveyards"

management. That contract continued, with periodic extensions, through 2012. InterCare provided grounds maintenance, tree maintenance, and burial operations on behalf of the City, including the sales of lots within the cemeteries, recording of deeds of sale with Travis County, and interment activities (gravesite opening and closing, funeral set-up, and the installation of grave liners).

In 2012, the Austin Parks and Recreation Board convened a special working group of board members, including Chair Jane Rivera and members Lynn Osgood and Carol Lee and facilitated by Community Engagement Consultant Larry Schooler, to listen to stakeholders and to help the City better understand the challenges and opportunities that the cemeteries faced.

In Spring 2013, after InterCare and the City of Austin mutually agreed not to renew InterCare's contract, the City of Austin resumed active management of the five cemeteries by the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD). Cora Wright, PARD assistant director, played a key role in the transition of the cemeteries' management from the contractor to PARD, and continued to lead efforts to bring a high degree of professionalism to Cemetery Management Operations. PARD project coordinator and cultural resources specialist Kim McKnight subsequently led an extensive stakeholder outreach and engagement process to outline the scope of work and goals for the development of this master plan. After soliciting bids in Fall 2013, the City selected a team consisting of AmaTerra Environmental, Inc.; John Milner Associates, Inc.; and McDoux Preservation LLC. The City also decided to include a survey of cemetery trees, conducted by AmaTerra and Davey Tree Company, in the project.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The Historic Cemeteries Master Plan includes:

- The history of all five city-owned cemeteries
- Inventory and condition assessment of above-ground features
- Preservation and conservation analysis and recommendations
- Site analysis and a conceptual landscape plan for each cemetery
- Going-forward recommendations for addressing policy and funding concerns
- GIS database and maps
- Survey, condition assessment, and recommendations for the treatment of cemetery trees

The project began in early March 2014 and proceeded in phases.

Phase I

The first phase, Research and Fieldwork, was completed during the spring and summer months and consisted of site evaluations, grave marker conditions assessments, tree survey, GIS digitization of existing and historic maps, mapping of existing above-ground resources within each cemetery, and archival research.

GIS Digitization and Mapping

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is a digital geographic data system that ties non-geographic information to locations on the ground and presents that information on a map. GIS is indispensable for modern municipalities who need ready access to everything from the material, size, and condition of every street lamp in a certain zip code to the text listed on park signs or the effectiveness of modified police patrol activities.

The AmaTerra Environmental team used Global Positioning System (GPS) units to collect the precise position (generally to an accuracy of less than 18 inches), material, condition, and other attributes of all above-ground infrastructure elements within each of the cemeteries. This included roads, buildings, sidewalks and foot paths, mausoleums, signs, irrigation heads, trash cans, and other resources. The data was then standardized to fit accepted data conventions and integrated into the GIS digital mapping system. It is already being used by the City to prioritize maintenance activities.

The geographic data collection effort also included the digitization of 49 historic-age maps and aerial photographs that were previously available only in hard copy or in digital formats that had never been georeferenced (linked to actual on-the-ground coordinates). Scanned at high resolution (400 dots per inch) and digitally stretched to fit real world locations, these georeferenced maps now are readily available to PARD staff and provide quick, accurate access to both modern and historic locational information.

AmaTerra used the data gathered through these efforts to develop several new GIS databases, which have been added to the City's existing GIS system. The new databases are expected to dramatically increase and improve the amount of digital geographic information available to the City for infrastructure location and planning purposes.

See Appendix D for more information about geospatial analysis.

Tree Survey

AmaTerra and Davey Tree Company, working closely with the City's Urban Forestry Department, inventoried all trees within all of the open areas and roughly half of the densely-wooded areas surrounding each of the five historic cemeteries—in total, a collective area of approximately 166 acres of cemetery land. Tree surveyors individually numbered and collected numerous City-prioritized attributes (precise location, size, condition, maintenance priority, etc.) for more than 4,000 trees and 900 dead trees/snags and stumps. This data was then tied to real-world coordinates using GIS and integrated into the City's geodatabase system. This extensive inventory has already been utilized by the Urban Forestry Department as they identify and prioritize tree maintenance within each of the five cemeteries. The data was used to develop the condition assessments and treatment plans included in this document and can be further utilized to better understand factors such as species diversity, evidence of stress, and size as the City undertakes future planning and decision-making regarding cemetery trees.

See Appendix E for more information about the tree survey.

Site Evaluation and Condition Assessment

The landscape architects with John Milner Associates (JMA) undertook a site analysis for the five cemeteries, evaluating each site's spatial organization, such as the placement of pedestrian-related amenities like benches and trash receptacles, and the locations of maintenance and spoils areas; potential access and circulation systems for both vehicles and pedestrians, including compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; signage and interpretation; security concerns; site furnishings; and sustainable planting and maintenance practices.

Meanwhile, McDoux Preservation completed a review and assessment of the conditions of grave markers and associated historic and cultural resources in the five cemeteries, documenting the general materials, marker types, designs, general ages, and conditions of markers within each section of each cemetery.

See Appendix C for the full Grave Marker Condition Assessment report.

Historical, Archival, and Other Research

The master plan team collected archival and historical information from the Austin History Center and cemetery offices. The team was fortunate to have the support of and resources provided by Save Austin's Cemeteries, Inc. (SAC), a non-profit "friends of the cemeteries" organization that has advocated for the preservation of these cemeteries since its establishment in 2004. SAC has previously undertaken grave marker conservation, public awareness events and activities, fundraising for the cemeteries, and a significant project to support the restoration of the chapel at Oakwood Cemetery. SAC founder Dale Flatt was particular helpful to the master plan team in providing volumes of research data that he had collected over the past 10 years.

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) provided information about all five cemeteries, including the Historic Texas Cemetery nominations prepared for Oakwood Cemetery by Dale Flatt and for Austin Memorial Park Cemetery by Sharon Blythe.

McDoux Preservation used that and other information to develop historical narratives of each cemetery's development. McDoux also investigated best practices in cemetery policy and management for Section III: Policy and Funding Recommendations.

Phase II

The data collection effort was followed by data analysis, during late summer/early fall 2014. During this period, the master plan team shared initial findings and preliminary recommendations with PARD staff and members of the public, collecting feedback which was then integrated into the plan.

Toward the end of the master plan project, the team was asked to take over data analysis for a separate but related project, the evaluation and revision of gravesite ornamentation rules and regulations. While a high-level analysis of those rules was included in the original master plan scope of work, PARD had begun a more detailed, expanded exploration of the rules during summer 2014. In December, McDoux Preservation was provided with the data collected by San Antonio firm Smith/Associates Inc. during several public meetings in May and June. McDoux's summary of findings will be included in conjunction with the final master plan.

Phase III

The team then developed its recommendations in the fourth quarter of the year and published a draft master plan in January 2015. Following a public comment period, the draft master plan was revised and brought forward for consideration by City committees, boards, and commissions before final revisions and presentation to City Council.

Throughout the master plan development process, the project team, including PARD project coordinator Kim McKnight, maintained an active dialogue with members of the community through a multi-pronged public engagement campaign that continued the extensive outreach since the City resumed active management of the cemeteries in 2013. Project outreach activities included stakeholder interviews, two community surveys through SpeakUpAustin, a monthly newsletter, weekly updates to a project-specific website, regular updates to the City's Cemeteries website, regular email blasts to a mailing list of several hundred citizens, media releases to local news outlets (including public service announcements on Univision), and five community meetings—roughly one every two months—during the year-long project.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN

The City of Austin Historic Cemeteries Master Plan document is divided into four sections:

A. Introduction and historical, cultural, and natural contexts

B. General management guidelines applicable to all five cemeteries

C. Conditions report and treatment recommendations for each cemetery

D. Policy and funding recommendations

The extensive appendices to this plan are provided in a separate document.

Chapter 2
Natural, Historical, and Cultural Contexts

The development of each of Austin's historic cemeteries and, subsequently, their current conditions and recommended treatment approaches, are presented in the following chapters. In order to provide a basis of reference for those discussions, this section presents a description of the natural, historical, and cultural contexts of the cemeteries. This includes the location and natural setting of the cemeteries within the city and region; the historical development of the City of Austin, including its physical and population growth and the geographic distribution of ethnic populations over time; and evolving cultural traditions related to death and burial, which have influenced the different designs, development, and management of Austin's historic cemeteries.

In order to understand the cemeteries as they exist today, it is critical to understand how they came to be. Austin's location along the Colorado River and the cemeteries' place within the city were influenced by natural factors, including topography and vegetation. The historical events that shaped the city also shaped the cemeteries, and the cultural heritages of people who lived and still live in Austin are reflected in the design of the cemeteries and the historic resources within them. All of these factors contribute to *context*—that is, the interrelated conditions within which the cemeteries were established and developed over time.

IN THIS CHAPTER

LOCATION AND NATURAL SETTING

Austin is located in central Texas, on the east bank of the Colorado River in central Travis County. The city was established at the eastern edge of the Texas Hill Country, a region of approximately 25 counties defined by its location along the Balcones Fault Zone. In this part of the state, uplift movement caused by the slow collision of tectonic plates within the Earth's crust[1] created landforms that include the Edwards Plateau, west of Austin, and to the south and east, the Balcones Escarpment, a plateau that has eroded into sharp peaks and deep valleys. In the mid-1800s, these peaks were described as "mountains" by many who wrote about the area.

Ecoregions

Environmental scientists have classified four levels of different ecological regions across the United States. At the highest level, North America contains 15 Level I ecoregions; most of the State of Texas is within the Great Plains ecoregion, while the far western part of the state is in the North American Deserts, and parts of East and Central Texas are in the Eastern Temperate Forests. Each of these major ecoregions is divided into smaller, more well-defined pieces. While Texas contains a few additional Level II ecoregions, environmental scientists mostly use Level III and Level IV classifications to describe the state's ecology. Texas contains 12 Level III ecoregions, and each of those contain a number of smaller Level IV ecoregions.[2] These ecoregions influence the type of soils—and by extension, vegetation and habitat—found in the different cemeteries.

The City of Austin straddles the boundary between the Level IV Northern Blackland Prairies and Balcones Canyonlands ecoregions. Austin also contains isolated instances of the Southern Post Oak Savannah ecoregion, characterized by sands and sandy loams on upland sites, with clay or clay loams in the bottomlands. Plummers Cemetery, Evergreen Cemetery, and most of Oakwood Cemetery are characteristically Post Oak Savannah (Figure 1).

The Blackland Prairies ecoregion generally follows a belt of rock that includes Upper Cretaceous chalks, marls, limestones, and shales, which contributed to the development of the heavy black, fertile clay soil found in this area. The Northern Blackland Prairies ecoregion extends more than 300 miles in a southwesterly direction, from close to the state border north of Dallas to encompass the greater San Antonio area. The Northern Blackland Prairies surround a separate Level IV ecoregion, called Floodplains and Low Terraces, which is located along the major rivers, including the Trinity River near Dallas, the Brazos River near Waco, and the Colorado River in Austin.[3]

Before it was fragmented by human activity, the Northern Blackland Prairies covered a vast expanse of tallgrass prairie that was subject

1. Environmental Protection Agency, "Ecoregions of Texas," ftp://ftp.epa.gov/wed/ecoregions/tx/tx_front.pdf; accessed January 4, 2015.
2. Glenn Griffith, et al., *Ecoregions of Texas* color poster with map, descriptive text, and photographs, (Reston, Virginia: U.S. Geological Survey, 2004).

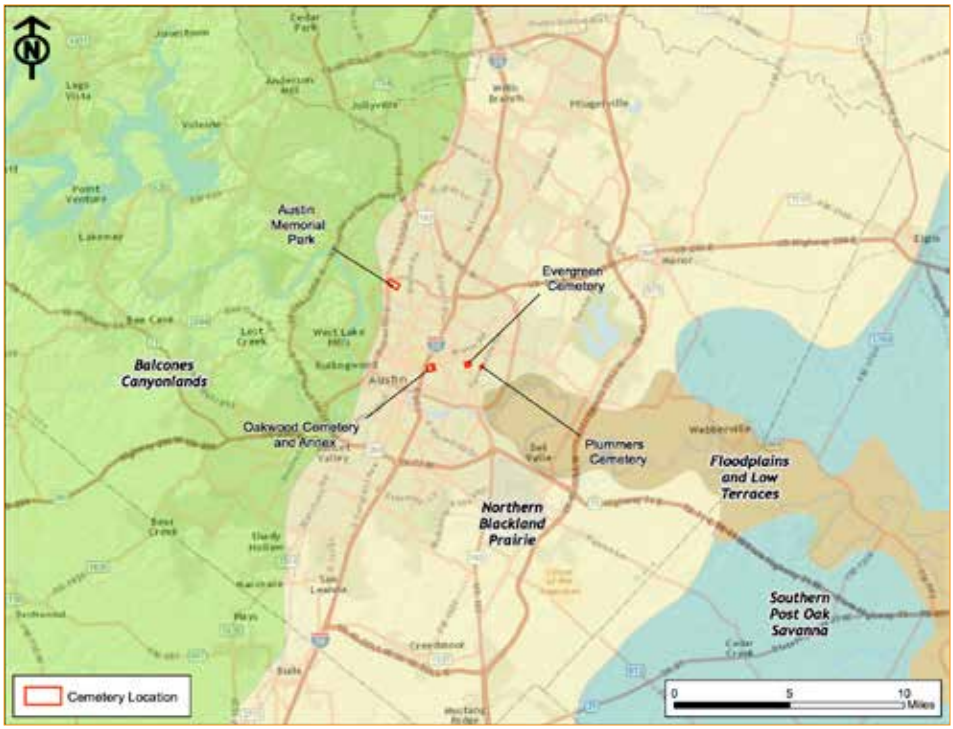


Figure 1. Ecoregions in the Austin area (AmaTerra Environmental)

to frequent, intense fires, often stopped only by a river or creek break, a change in soils, or a lack of dry fuel to burn. These fires made it difficult for trees to become established and also stimulated the growth of the grasses and flowering plants. As a result, the Northern Blackland Prairies became a favorable environment for large game, such as bison, which added to and helped to break down organic material and also helped spread seed as they walked across the soil. The gently rolling terrain of this ecoregion, with its low hills and shallow depressions in the ground, contained small microhabitats that encouraged a diversity of plants.[4]

Ranching and farming activities in the late 1800s and early 1900s reduced the presence of the tallgrass prairies and water-trapping surface pools, both of which historically helped to prevent soil erosion. As a result, the Blackland Prairies has experienced one of the highest rates of soil loss on cropland in Texas. Farmers in the late 1800s also cleared wooded areas to make way for cotton production. While a few small remnants of prairie vegetation and hay meadows remain intact, modern urban and suburban expansion has diminished the habitats that once supported bison, pronghorn, wolves, greater prairie chickens, and other wildlife.[5]

The Post Oak Savannah ecoregion historically was covered with forests of mostly hardwoods.[6] Although the Post Oak Savannah was also cleared and farmed, its deep, sandy soils were more appropriate for pasture; today, much of this area is kept in non-native Bermudagrass or Bahaiagrass.

3. Glenn Griffith, et al., *Ecoregions of Texas*, Project Report to Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (December 27, 2007),4.
4. *Ecoregions of Texas* (2007), 61–63.
5. *Ecoregions of Texas* (2007), 62.
6. *Ecoregions of Texas* (2007), 66.

Austin Memorial Park Cemetery is close to the boundary between the Blackland Prairies and the Balcones Canyonlands. The Balcones Canyonlands ecoregion was formed by tectonic uplift, followed by gradual subsidence during the Miocene epoch, which began approximately 23 million years ago and lasted for about 18 million years. The elevation of this part of central Texas is more than 1,000 feet above the coastal plain. The bedrock in this area is limestone, formed through the repeated flooding and ebbing of an ancient sea, which deposited shells and sediment on this land; as a result, this stone is characterized by an abundance of fossils. It also is easily weathered and eroded, and over time this has created sinkholes, caves, and canyons, which allow surface water to permeate the ground. Over time, that activity created and now recharges the Edwards aquifer.[7]

Critical Environmental Features (CEFs), as defined in the City of Austin Land Development Code (Sec. 25-8-281) are bluffs, canyon rimrocks, caves, faults and fractures, seeps, sinkholes, springs, and wetlands that help to collect water and recharge the Edwards aquifer. Drainage from developed areas must be designed to protect these features from erosion or sedimentation. Through brief observation during the course of the intensive tree survey, no CEFs were observed in any of the five historic cemeteries.

Climate

Austin is located in a humid subtropical climate characterized by hot summers and mild winters, with fewer than 25 days per year when temperatures dip below freezing. Warm, moist air from the Gulf of Mexico encounters higher-altitude air from the Mexican High Plain, creating heavy thunderstorms that are common in late spring and early fall. Rain makes up most of the precipitation in Central Texas and falls throughout the year; if any snow falls, it does not accumulate. Tropical storms from the Gulf of Mexico sometimes reach this area, bringing with them heavy rain and high winds.[8] Heavy rains can drop as much as 20–38 inches of rain within a 24-hour period—sometimes, but not always, caused by tropical storms or hurricanes moving inland—and can cause serious flooding, property damage, and injury or death. The 1980s and early 1990s were the wettest period in the state's history.

Drought historically has been a serious problem for central Texas, with severe droughts occurring in 1886–1887, 1893, 1908–1911, 1915–1918, 1924–1925, 1933–1935, 1950–1957, 1961–1967, and 1970–1971. More recently, drought conditions have been present, on and off, since 1995. The worst single-year drought in Texas' history occurred in 2011. A lack of precipitation, starting in fall 2010, contributed to the following summer's excessive temperatures; without adequate moisture in the soil to absorb the sun's energy, the land and low-lying air became unusually hot. This quickly became a vicious cycle,

7. *Ecoregions of Texas* (2007), 49.
8. *Soil Survey of Travis County,* U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974), 107.

as the high temperatures caused more surface water to evaporate. Many parts of Texas, in 2011, experienced more than 100 days when the temperatures exceeded 100 degrees. The effect on trees was devastating; while their root systems allow them to tolerate short-term drought, by July, the prolonged dry, hot weather had been ongoing for a year. The dried-out forests were easily consumed by fires that raged throughout the state. According to state climatologist John Nielson-Gammon, the current drought is one of the worst in Texas' history.[9]

Soils and Vegetation

In 1974, a U.S. Department of Agriculture survey of the types of soil in Travis County identified 10 general *soil associations*, or areas where one or more major types of soil are large and distinct enough to be shown on a map. Nine of the 10 associations are comprised mostly of soils that are calcareous and mildly to moderately alkaline, formed by the fossil remnants of ancient sea life, and are characteristic of the Northern Blackland Prairie. Collectively, these nine associations cover 97 percent of Travis County, naturally supporting a mosaic of live oak/Ashe juniper woodlands and midgrass grasslands, tallgrass prairie, and various riparian woodlands. These soils dominate in the north and eastern portions of Oakwood Cemetery, and the entirety of Oakwood Annex Cemetery and Austin Memorial Park Cemetery.

The other three percent of the county is covered by the Travis-Chaney soil association, which consists of deep, acidic, loamy soils, characteristic of the Southern Post Oak Savannah. Although laid down by the ancestral Colorado River, these terrace deposits are found high on the contemporary landscape and often quite a distance from the current river location. Because of their acidity, the soils of this association support different vegetation than the other soil associations, typically a mixture of post oak trees (*Quercus stellata*), blackjack oak (*Quercus marilandica*), and eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), with patches of grasslands. The Travis-Chaney Association is home to many plant species that are more commonly found on the sandy acid soils of eastern Texas, rather than the clayey alkaline soils that make up the other 97 percent of Travis County.[10]

The Travis-Chaney soil dominates in the southwestern corner of Oakwood Cemetery and the entirety of Evergreen and Plummers Cemeteries. The keystone woody species of the natural vegetation of this soil are all present in these cemeteries: post oak is common throughout; Eastern red cedar is represented by many large trees; and blackjack oak, while relatively rare, is represented at Evergreen Cemetery by what could be the largest individual of the species in the county.[11]

9. John W. Nielsen-Gammon, *The 2011 Drought: A Briefing Packet for the Texas Legislature*, Office of the State Climatologist, October 2011.
10. *Soil Survey of Travis County*.
11. Memo from botanist William Carr to AmaTerra, June 26, 2014.

These cemeteries offer opportunities to add to our knowledge of the native and adapted flora of the Travis-Chaney Association, and, through careful maintenance, to conserve these relatively rare examples of native vegetation.

Protected Trees

The five historic cemeteries of Austin contain both *heritage trees* and *protected trees*. The City of Austin defines a *heritage tree* as having a diameter of 24 inches or more, measured 4½ feet above natural grade, and one of the following species: Texas ash, bald cypress, American elm, cedar elm, Texas madrone, bigtooth maple, all oaks, pecan, Arizona walnut, and Eastern black walnut.[12] A *protected tree* has a diameter of 19 inches or more. For consistency, tree diameter is measured at chest height, or 4½ feet above natural grade.

There are several heritage trees and many protected trees within the five historic cemeteries. Even dead trees and invasive species are considered protected if they are of these sizes or larger.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The Texas Parks and Wildlife list of threatened, endangered and rare species for Travis County includes 49 species.[13] Occurrences of several of these listed species have been recorded within a mile of all five of the cemeteries. Habitat for some listed species may occur in the undeveloped areas of Evergreen Cemetery, Plummers Cemetery, or Austin Memorial Park Cemetery.

Further discussion of vegetation and wildlife found in each of the cemeteries is provided in the Existing Conditions section for that cemetery.

12. City of Austin Ordinance 20100204-038.
13. Texas Parks and Wildlife, "Non-Game and Rare Species Program: Federal and State Listed Species," https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/nongame/listed-species/.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY

The land now known as the State of Texas was originally occupied by various tribes and loosely affiliated groups and families of Native Americans. Some of these groups were primarily agricultural; others were nomadic hunters and fishers. Over several centuries, these populations had both amicable and adversarial relationships with each other and with the European and Mexican people who gradually settled in the territory. Native peoples ultimately were decimated by disease, chased from the area by military forces, or simply exterminated. By 1890, virtually no Native presence remained in Texas.[14]

The Texas Gulf Coast was explored by both the Spanish and French beginning in 1528, when the survivors of a Spanish expedition, including Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, were stranded by a storm on an island off Galveston. Cabeza de Vaca became separated from the rest of his party and lived among the coastal tribes for the next six years, before eventually encountering three other survivors and, with them, making his way to Mexico.

Nearly 150 years later, in 1682, the French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle, missed his intended destination at the mouth of the Mississippi River by several hundred miles and landed at Matagorda Bay. La Salle and his expedition established a small outpost called Fort St. Louis on Garcitas Creek, near present-day Victoria, and from there explored the nearby Gulf Coast. The settlement did not last, and La Salle was killed by one of his own men.[15]

Despite these setbacks, both the Spanish and French governments made repeated efforts to establish colonies and prevent each other from claiming the territory. After Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, its government began to encourage the settlement of Texas by Europeans and Anglo Americans, providing land agents (known as *empresarios*) with financial incentives to recruit immigrants and help establish new towns. The most well-known of these empresarios was Stephen F. Austin, whose father, Moses Austin, in 1820 had received the first permit to bring colonists from the United States; the elder Austin died early the following year.[16]

Stephen F. Austin selected land in the coastal plains between the Brazos and Colorado Rivers for his colony. In December 1821, Austin's 300 original colonists began to arrive on the Texas coast, but their settlement into the interior was held up for several years by negotiations between Austin and the Mexican government. Eventually, in 1823, Austin received permission to move forward with his colonization efforts, which continued (due to more successful negotiations by Austin) even after further immigration from the United States was prohibited by a Mexican law in 1830.[17]

14. George Klos, "Indians," *Handbook of Texas Online*.
15. T. R. Fehrenbach, *Lone Star: A History of Texas and the Texans* (New York: American Legacy Press), 1983, 2; also "Cabeza de Vaca, Álvar Núñez," *Handbook of Texas Online*.
16. Eugene C. Barker, "Mexican Colonization Laws," *Handbook of Texas Online*.
17. Eugene C. Barker, "Austin, Stephen Fuller," *Handbook of Texas Online*.

Austin's colony stretched from present-day Brenham, Navasota, and La Grange to the Texas coast, along the Brazos, Colorado, and San Bernard Rivers. Each family's land included frontage along a river, with the center of the colony located at San Felipe de Austin, near present-day Sealy.[18]

After Texas gained its independence from Mexico in 1836, the capitol of the Republic initially was located in Houston. In 1837–1838, President Mirabeau Lamar visited a particularly attractive area along the Colorado River. The area already was home to a number of families, the earliest (Reuben Hornsby and his family) having settled about two-thirds of the way from Bastrop to present-day Austin around 1832. By 1836, five more families had located their homes near the Hornsbys, and settlement continued up the Colorado River over the next few years. Edward Burleson surveyed and sold lots for a townsite called Waterloo on the northern bank of the Colorado River in 1838, and the Montopolis area was settled shortly thereafter.

In 1839, as part of his effort to expand the Republic westward and establish a trade route between Houston and Santa Fe, New Mexico, President Lamar instructed the Texas Congress to select a site for the Republic's new capitol at "some point between the rivers Trinidad and Colorado, and above the Old San Antonio Road." The site selected was to be between one and four leagues (between 4,428–17,714 acres) in area and was to be named in honor of Stephen F. Austin, who had died in 1836. The congressional commission appointed to make the selection first chose the Colorado River over the Brazos River and then picked the Waterloo area over Bastrop.[19]

Edwin Waller was selected as the state's agent in the new capital, and charged with surveying it into lots. The new townsite encompassed 640 acres between the Colorado River to the south, Waller Creek to the east, and Shoal Creek to the west. Surveyors laid out the townsite in a grid (Figure 2) with a central square where the capitol building would be located. By the end of 1839, the first lots had been sold, Republic and city government offices were open, Congress had convened for its first session in the new capitol, and a church and newspaper had been established. The City of Austin was incorporated on December 27, 1839.[20]

18. Christopher Long, "Old Three Hundred," *Handbook of Texas Online.*
19. Texas State Historical Association. *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 69, July 1965–April, 1966.
20. David C. Humphrey, "Austin, TX, Travis County," *Handbook of Texas Online.*

Figure 2. Plan of the City of Austin, surveyed by Charles Schoolfield and L.J. Pilie, map by Pilie, 1839 (Texas State Library and Archives)

As described in a 1839 letter by William F. Sandusky, one of the surveyors hired to lay out the original town site:

> Austin is situated … on a beautiful rich prairie about 40 feet above the level of the River extending back one half mile to the "Bluff" and gradually rising to 60 or 70, feet, where is placed the Public Square (15 acres), with an avenue rising up from the river of 120 feet wide, through a narrow valley which appears as if made by nature expressly for this noble purpose. … Two beautiful limestone streams flow through the upper and lower parts of the town, taking their source in the hills from Springs which can by little expense be conducted to any part of the city.

> Stone for building purposes … can be had in and near the city. Timber for building is rather scarce in the immediate vicinity (except on the opposite side of the river) but within six or eight miles there is an abundance. The river … can be made navigable for Steam Boats of medium size, to the falls five miles above the town.[21]

Initially, the new city seemed poised for growth; more than 850 residents called Austin home in 1840. That early promise was stifled between 1842 and 1845, when the Republic's next president, Sam Houston, ordered its government operations moved, first to the city of Houston and then to nearby Washington-on-the-Brazos. Austin's population declined to fewer than 200 people by 1845. When Texas was annexed to the United States in 1846, Austin regained its role as state capitol and its recovery began. The city's population had recovered to 1840 levels by 1850; an 1853 map showed no growth beyond the original plan.

The Civil War depressed local economies throughout Texas during the 1860s and early 1870s, as the state worked through the political, economic, and social upheaval of the war and its aftermath. In those years, however, many people from the American South began to move to Texas in great numbers, and immigration from Europe, which began in the 1830s, surged following the war. Newly freed black people, seeking an alternative to employment by their previous owners or other landowners, increasingly moved from into cities. Austin's population, which had quadrupled between 1850 and 1860,[22] grew from 4,400 to 10,400 between 1870 and 1875.[23]

As shown in a birds-eye view of Austin, illustrated by Augustus Koch in 1873 (Figure 3), the city grew first to the north, adding four additional blocks to its original 14-block by 14-block grid. Neighborhoods also were beginning to develop off East Avenue, the major north-south road shown on the right side of the map.

21. Mary Starr Barkley, *History of Travis County 1839–1899,* third ed., (Austin, Texas: Austin Printing Company, 1963, 1981) 41–43.
22. Carl H. Moneyhon, "Reconstruction," *Handbook of Texas Online.*
23. David C. Humphrey and William W. Crawford, Jr., *Austin: An Illustrated History,* American Historical Press, Sun Valley, CA. 2001, 67.

Figure 3. Bird's Eye View of the City of Austin, Travis County, Texas, 1873. Hand-colored lithograph published by J. J. Stoner, Madison, Wisconsin, with addition of arrow showing location of city cemetery (Library of Congress)

Austin's growth continued relatively steadily in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps from 1889 and 1900 (Figure 4 and Figure 5, page 21) show the city's expansion following a new city charter in 1891 that quadrupled its size from 4½ to 16½ square miles.

The city's expansion was fueled in part by the establishment of Tillotson Collegiate and Normal Institute (1881), which would become Huston-Tillotson College; the University of Texas (1883); and St. Edward's College (1885). These institutions of higher education brought in new residents and jobs. Austin's public school system was organized during these years as well.

During the 1890s, city officials embarked upon several major infrastructure projects, including the construction of the Congress Avenue Bridge and a dam across the Colorado River, which provided power for a municipal water system; an electrical system that included 31 150-foot-tall "moonlight towers"; and the city's streetcars.[24]

24. Humphrey, "Austin, TX, Travis County".

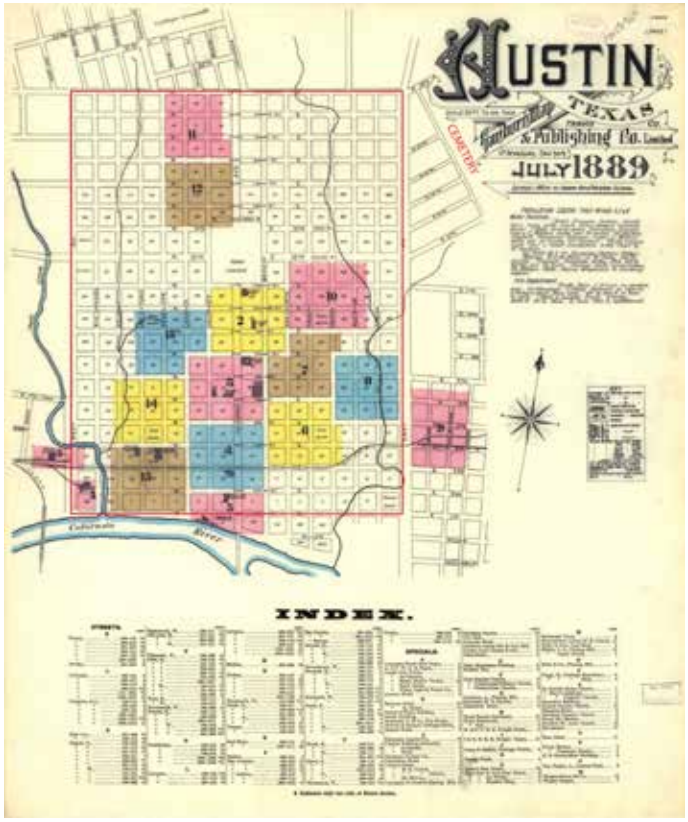


Figure 4. 1889 Sanborn Fire Insurance map of Austin, with red border indicating the original city grid and label indicating location of cemetery (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

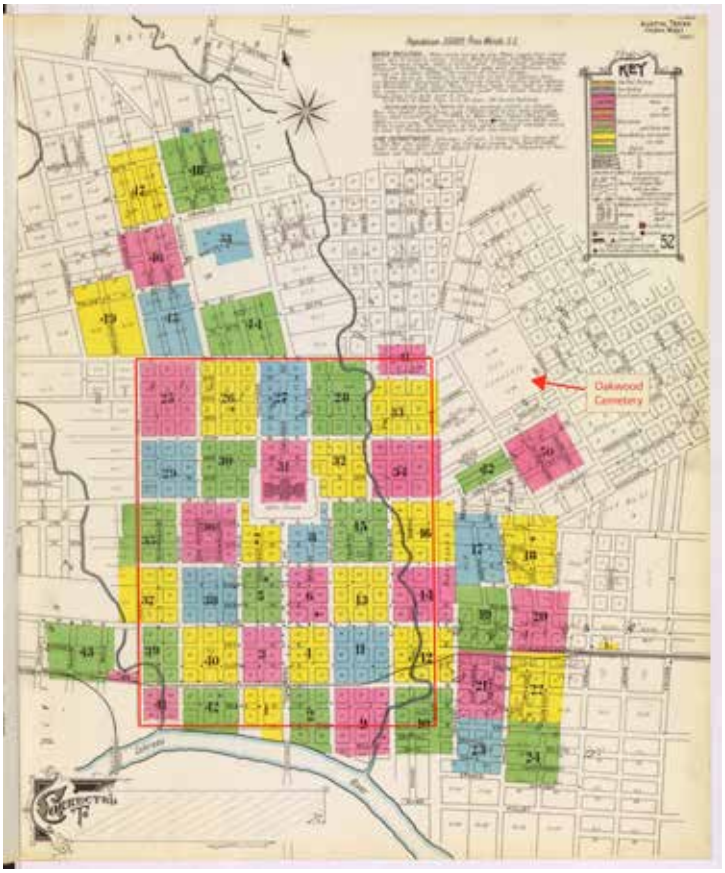


Figure 5. 1900 Sanborn Fire Insurance map of Austin, with addition of red border indicating the original city grid and arrow showing Oakwood Cemetery (Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division)

While its population tripled between 1880 and 1920, Austin's economy, largely based on the state government and higher education, languished. The city reorganized its governing structure several times in the first three decades of the 20th century, eventually selecting a council-city manager format in 1924. Subsequently, the city developed a city plan in 1928—the first such plan since the city was founded in 1839. The 1928 City Plan positioned Austin as a residential, educational, and cultural center with the municipal services and amenities that had become commonplace in major cities by that time: a city water and sanitary sewer system, a public library, a city hospital, and parks and recreational opportunities.[25]

Austin grew from 87,930 residents and an incorporated area of 30.85 square miles in 1940, to 472,020 people and 225.4 square miles in 1990. These increases were driven primarily by the growth of the state government and University of Texas, where research programs that began in the 1950s and were promoted by the Chamber of Commerce led to Austin's development as a technology center in the 1960s and 1970s.[26] Today, Austin has become one of the nation's most sought-after locations for technology businesses, and it continues to grow; in fact, the city has led *Forbes Magazine's* annual list of America's Fastest-Growing Cities for the past four years.

It also is a popular destination for travelers. Austin, The Live Music Capital of the World®, hosts a growing number of major events each year, including ethnic and cultural festivals; the South By South West (SXSW) music, film, and interactive technology festival; and the Austin City Limits music festival. According to the 2013 Texas Tourism Region and MSA Visitor Profile, most visitors come to Austin on vacation and/or to visit friends. Visitors are primarily from Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio within Texas, as well as from Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Atlanta, Seattle, St. Louis, and Washington D.C.[27]

25. Koch & Fowler, Consulting Engineers, *A City Plan for Austin, Texas,* 1928.
26. Humphrey, "Austin, TX, Travis County".
27. "2013 Texas Tourism Region and MSA Visitor Profile: Hill Country Region (Austin-Round Rock)", in *Texas Destinations 2013*, prepared for The Office of the Governor, Economic Development and Tourism Division (McLean, VA: D. K. Shifflet & Associates Ltd., 2014), 9.

ETHNIC GROUPS IN AUSTIN

Following the nearly complete elimination or dispersal of Native Americans by the end of the 1800s, Texas became a state entirely occupied by immigrants. People came here from the United States, Mexico, and many other countries. Although many immigrants settled in generally homogeneous ethnic enclaves outside major cities, Austin and other urban centers developed with more diverse populations.

The major ethnic groups in Central Texas and Austin historically have been Anglo Americans, European immigrants, African Americans, and Mexican Americans. This section also discusses Austin's now-growing Asian population.

Grave markers in the city cemeteries often reference ethnic identity or traditions. Ethnic and cultural burial practices can also be observed in many of Austin's municipal cemeteries, and the changing demographics of the city—in particular, the growth of the Latino and Asian communities—can be seen at Evergreen Cemetery and Austin Memorial Park Cemetery.

Anglo Americans

Most of the nearly 9,000 American colonists who settled in Texas before 1834 were from the American South. They came in almost equal proportions from the Upper South (Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, and Arkansas) and from the Lower South (the Gulf and Atlantic coastal plains). Once in Texas, these groups settled in areas that were somewhat similar to home: the Lower Southerners closer to the coast, and the Upper Southerners farther inland.

Those from the Lower South tended to be slave-owning, while the Upper Southerners were more typically small-scale farmers who worked their own land without slave labor. Many of those from the Upper South were of German, English, and Scotch-Irish descent. As the map (right) shows, these two groups divided themselves organically along an imaginary line that stretched from Texarkana to San Antonio; Austin very nearly straddles that line (Figure 6).[28]

Figure 6. Approximate settlement areas of upper and lower Southerners in Texas (Base map © OpenStreet Map contributors under the Open Database License/CC BY-SA.)

28. Joy Adams, "Persistence and Change in the Ethnic Regionalization of Texas," *The Southwestern Geographer* 11 (2007), 3-21.

German Texans

Although people from many different European countries emigrated to Texas in the 1800s, the largest group by far came from Germany. Germans and Swedes were considered by both Stephen F. Austin and the Mexican government to be excellent colonists, as they were known to be industrious and opposed to owning slaves.[29] The first German settlers arrived in the early 1830s and wrote letters home, extolling the virtues of life in Texas; some of these were published in newspapers, spurring a steady flow of Germans to Texas that was interrupted only by the Civil War. As these immigrants tended to settle in enclaves near former friends and neighbors from the old country, a "German Belt" developed by 1850 that stretched from Houston west to Fredericksburg.[30]

While fewer German people settled in Austin, compared to towns like New Braunfels, they maintained a strong culture through the organization of German schools, businesses, and clubs. Evidence of the German presence in Austin remains in places like the Scholz Garten, a tavern opened by August Scholz in 1866, where the Austin Sangerrunde (a singing society established in 1879) has been meeting since 1901.[31]

Grave markers with German language inscriptions are especially prevalent in Oakwood Cemetery.

Swedes

Between 1848 and 1910, Texas was home to more Swedish people than any other state in the American South. These included immigrants directly from Sweden, as well as people of Swedish descent who moved to Texas from northern states, particularly Illinois. As with the German Texans, a few Swedish people moved to Texas and subsequently encouraged their countrymen to relocate; as a result, many immigrants were friends or relatives of those early settlers. Swedes organized colleges, churches, and Swedish-language newspapers. In Austin, a community known as Swede Hill developed between Waller Street, Red River Street, 15th Street, and 19th Street. After the construction of I-35, only a portion of the original neighborhood remains.[32] Several grave markers in Oakwood Cemetery are inscribed in Swedish.

29. Rudoph Leopold Biesele, *The History of the German Settlements in Texas, 1831–1861*, (Austin, TX: German Texan Heritage Society, 1987), 25–28.
30. Terry G. Jordan, "Germans," *Handbook of Texas Online.*
31. Georgia Ruiz Davis, "German Singing Societies," *Handbook of Texas Online.*
32. Swedish Hill National Register Nomination, National Park Service.

African Americans

From the city's founding, its residents included both enslaved and free black people. Nearly 50% of Austin households owned slaves in 1850, which may reflect Austin's position along the boundary between the non-slave-owning immigrants from the Upper South and those from the Lower South, who were more likely to own enslaved people. (Within a decade, the number of slave-owning households in Austin had declined to 35%.)

For the first 30 years of the city's history, black people consistently made up about 30 percent of Austin's population. Free African Americans established the communities of Pleasant Hill and Masontown on the east side of the city, and Wheatville and Clarksville on the west side.[33]

The Civil War depressed local economies throughout the state well into the early 1870s, as the state worked through the political, economic, and social upheaval of the war and its aftermath. In those years, however, many people began to move to Texas in great numbers. Newly freed black people, seeking an alternative to employment by their previous owners or other landowners, increasingly moved from rural areas into cities.[34]

Although the population of Austin increased dramatically between 1875 and 1910, the number of black people as a percentage of the overall citizenry began a decline that has continued to the present day. According to U.S. Census data, by 1930 the city population was 18.6 percent black, down from a high point of 36 percent in the 1830s.

In 1928, the City of Austin adopted a City Plan that explicitly pursued racial segregation—specifically, the creation of a "Negro district" to be located "east of East Avenue (present-day I-35) and south of the City Cemetery." Before that, African American households were scattered throughout the city, although the area recommended to become the "Negro district" encompassed several neighborhoods (Masontown, Gregorytown, Robertson Hill) that either were historically occupied by black people or which had transitioned from mostly white to mostly black by that time. The City "encouraged" African Americans to relocate by making resources—including schools, libraries, and other services—only available to them in East Austin.

In the event that such "incentives" were not sufficient to motivate the population to relocate, African American people who lived outside East Austin were refused city utilities; segregated public housing was only available to them in East Austin; and "red-lining" practices, including deed restrictions and city ordinances, prevented both African Americans and Mexican Americans from buying or renting property anywhere else in the city. The relocation of Austin's black population to the East Side was, for all practical purposes, complete by 1940.[35]

33. Humphrey, "Austin, TX, Travis County".
34. Jeremiah Spence, Joseph Straubhaar, Zeynep Tufekci, Alexander Cho, and Dean Graber, "Structuring Race in the Cultural Geography of Austin," in *Inequity in the Technopolis: Race, Class, Gender and the Digital Divide in Austin,* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012), 42–46.
35. Ibid, 37.

Since 1990, African Americans increasingly have moved out of East Austin and into suburban areas. As a result, the black population within the city dropped from 12 percent, where it had stabilized between 1960 and 1990, to 10 percent in 2000 and eight percent in 2010. City of Austin demographer Ryan Robinson, in "Top Ten Demographic Trends in Austin, Texas," estimates that black Austinites could make up as little as five percent of the city population within the next 20 years and might be surpassed in number by Asian Americans within the next decade.

Early records of burials in the Austin city cemeteries did not always record the given names of African Americans; the terms "Colored" or "Negro" were sometimes the only information provided. Nor were markers consistently placed to identify the locations of African American graves. This practice has left contemporary historians and genealogists with a scarcity of information about the African American people buried in Oakwood Cemetery, in particular.

Mexican Americans

Few people of Mexican descent lived in Austin during the city's early years. In part, this was due to a generally lower Mexican population in Central Texas than in the southern part of the state, where Tejano communities were established by immigrants seeking opportunities to work in agriculture.[36] In addition, no Mexican American communities had been established in the Austin area before the city was incorporated.[37]

Early Austin was not especially welcoming to Mexican people. In 1854, amid white citizens' fears that the presence of "free brown people" in the city would motivate enslaved black people to rise up against their owners and try to escape, a Vigilance Committee—literally, a committee of vigilantes—was appointed to disperse the Mexican Americans. The committee, which included Austin mayor Rip Ford, marched to a camp where many Mexican American people were living and ordered them to leave. Within two weeks, most had complied. It would be 20 years before Mexican Americans began to move into Austin in meaningful numbers.[38]

By 1875, around 300 people lived in a neighborhood known as "Mexico," on the western side of the city between Second and Third Streets along Shoal Creek. Ongoing immigration from Mexico was heightened during the Mexican Revolution (1910–1920), and by 1930, Austin was home to 902 Mexican American families, 388 of which were born in the United States. (Prior to 1930, the U.S. Census generally classified people of Mexican descent as white.)[39]

Property in the Mexican American neighborhood on the southwestern side of the city was not especially desirable, due to frequent flooding of both the creek and the nearby Colorado River, until the Austin Dam and, later, the Highland Lakes dams, were constructed. Between

36. Arnoldo De León, "Mexican Americans," *Handbook of Texas Online.*
37. "Structuring Race in the Cultural Geography of Austin," 37.
38. *Austin: An Illustrated History*, 52, 82.
39. Leon Edgar Truesdell, *Fifteenth census of the United States: 1930. Population. Special report on foreign-born white families by country of birth of head: With an appendix giving statistics for Mexican, Indian, Chinese, and Japanese families,* United States Bureau of the Census (Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1933), 213.

1900 and 1940, as property values rose in the former floodplain and city policies promoted segregation, Mexican American families—like their African American counterparts—moved to East Austin and South Austin. While no "Mexican district" was formally established, deed restrictions and discriminatory real estate practices served to effect a similar result.[40]

Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the Latino population in Austin has grown steadily and is now on pace to equal the white population within the next 10 years. Nearly 85 percent of Latino Austin residents are of Mexican descent; other Latin-American and Spanish-speaking countries of origin are only minorly represented. Three predominantly Latino areas have developed in Austin: the lower East Side, which was historically occupied by Mexican American people; St. Johns, a historically African American neighborhood on the northeast side of town, between State Highway 290 and State Highway 183, on either side of I-35; and Dove Springs, located in southeast Austin south of the Colorado River, between I-35 and SH 183.[41]

As was the case for African Americans, many of the deaths and burials of Mexican Americans in early Austin were not documented. The burial records for this community, during the 1800s, often only included the word "Mexican," rather than a given name. Graves similarly may or may not have been marked. The Mexican community in those years suffered discrimination in life, as well as in death.

Today, Latino people are being buried in increasing numbers in Evergreen Cemetery and Austin Memorial Park Cemetery.

Asian Americans

The first Asian people to arrive in Texas were Chinese railroad laborers, in 1870. After the railroad projects were completed, a few Chinese people remained in the state, but a U.S. law banning immigration from China between 1882 and 1943 prevented their numbers from increasing substantially until the 1940s.[42] Japanese people began emigrating to Texas in small numbers during the early 1900s, primarily as rice farmers. The collapse of the rice market and hostilities toward Japanese people during the 1920s–1940s led many to leave the state.[43] Vietnamese people began emigrating to the United States in the 1970s, after the Vietnam War, and settled predominantly in Austin and along the Texas Gulf Coast. Chinese, Korean, and Indian people are the most recent additions to Austin's Asian population, arriving in great numbers starting in the 1990s.[44] Of foreign-born Asian people, Filipino and Taiwanese immigrants are present in slightly lower numbers.[45]

Due to the relatively recent increase in this community, most Asian graves in city cemeteries are found in Austin Memorial Park Cemetery.

40. "Structuring Race in the Cultural Geography of Austin," 39–46.
41. Ryan Robinson, "Top Ten Demographic Trends in Austin, Texas," City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department (http://www.austintexas.gov/page/top-ten-demographic-trends-austin-texas), accessed October 22, 2014.
42. Edward J. M. Rhoads, "Chinese," *Handbook of Texas Online.*
43. Edward J. M. Rhoads, "Japanese," *Handbook of Texas Online.*
44. Emily Skop, "Fueling Austin's Boom: The New 21st Century Immigrant Metropolis," America's Twenty-First Century Immigrant Gateways: Immigrant Incorporation in Suburbia, chapter draft submitted to Brookings Institution Press (www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/austinchapterdraft.pdf), accessed October 23, 2014.
45. Place of Birth of Austin's Asian Foreign-Born," City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department (http://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Planning/asians_by_origin.pdf), accessed October 23, 2014.

The Jewish Community

Prior to 1821, Texas was a Spanish colony open only to Catholic people. It was only after Mexico gained its independence from Spain that Jewish people could openly practice their religion here. After that and continuing throughout the 1800s, Jewish people from Germany, Eastern Europe, and the United States spread throughout Texas. Many Jewish immigrants from Germany were Reform-oriented, while Russian, Polish, and other Eastern European Jews tended to be Orthodox. Congregations typically established a cemetery and/or benevolent association and then a synagogue.[46] The first Jewish person to arrive in Austin was Phineas de Cordova, in 1849.

Two of Austin's city cemeteries contain Jewish cemeteries: Oakwood Cemetery, which contains Beth Israel No. 1 and No. 2, and Austin Memorial Park Cemetery, which contains Congregation Agudas Achim Cemetery and Temple Beth Shalom Memorial Cemetery.

Congregation Beth Israel was founded in 1876 and took over a Jewish cemetery that had been established at Oakwood Cemetery in 1866. The congregation purchased a second tract in Oakwood Cemetery, known as Cemetery No. 2, in 1900.[47] Both Reform and Orthodox Jews were buried in the Temple Beth Israel cemeteries. The first officers of Congregation Beth Israel included Henry Hirshfeld as president and de Cordova as vice president. Henry Hirshfeld was a native of Germany who immigrated first to Alabama, at the age of 15, and then to Georgetown, Texas. After serving in the Civil War, Hirshfeld moved to Austin and became a prominent merchant; he later founded the Austin National Bank. A synagogue was built in 1884, at 11th and San Jacinto Streets. Joe Koen served as the congregation's president from 1899–1944; his son William, granddaughter Carolyn Koen Turner, and great-grandson Brian Turner later held the same position. The congregation built a new synagogue in northwest Austin in the 1950s. It established Cemetery No. 3 in Pflugerville in 1985.

Orthodox Jews in Austin, including many local merchants, began meeting to worship separately in 1914. They held services in private homes and were joined by Jewish people from as far away as New Braunfels and Temple. Isaac Laibovitz helped to organize Congregation Agudas Achim, which was officially chartered in 1924 and purchased a building at Seventh and San Jacinto Streets for its worship services. Israel Cohn, a shopkeeper from Russia, and Jim Novy (born Shimeon Novodvorsky), a Polish scrap metal merchant, were the congregation's first president and vice president, respectively. Novy went on to serve as the president of the congregation three times between 1937–1955. He also led the building committees that purchased the congregation's second synagogue and constructed its current building.

Novy worked closely on many issues with Congressman and then Vice-President Lyndon Baines Johnson, who was scheduled to dedicate the new synagogue on November 24, 1963. The event was postponed,

46. Rabbi James L. Kessler, "Jews," *Handbook of Texas Online*.
47. "127 Years of Congregation Beth Israel," (http://www.bethisrael.org/images/About_Us/Our_History/CBI_History_at_125.pdf), accessed october 23, 2014.

following the assassination of John F. Kennedy on November 22, 1963; then-President Johnson attended the rescheduled dedication the following month. Congregation Agudas Achim purchased a section within the Austin Memorial Park Cemetery in 1933, and Isaac Laibovitz, Israel Cohn, and Jim Novy are buried there. Congregation Agudas Achim was an Orthodox congregation until 1948, when it joined the Conservative movement.[48]

In 1992, Michael Dell, founder of Dell Computers, and his wife Susan established the 40-acre Dell Jewish Community Campus in Northwest Austin to provide a centralized location for Jewish organizations in the community. Both Congregation Beth Israel and Congregation Agudas Achim were invited to move to the campus, and CAA did just that, dedicating a new synagogue there in 2001. Congregation Beth Israel considered relocating but ultimately decided to expand their existing building on Shoal Creek Road.

Meanwhile, in 1999, 12 active members of the Austin Jewish community began meeting in their homes; they eventually founded a new Reform congregation, Temple Beth Shalom. The group grew quickly and, led by co-presidents Dee and Don Coplin, began conducting regular religious services on the Dell Campus. The founding and maintenance of Jewish burial space historically has been one of the first responsibilities of every Jewish community, and in 2004, the Temple Beth Shalom Memorial Cemetery was established on one acre of Section 14 in Austin Memorial Park Cemetery. Temple Beth Shalom has since grown to become the third largest Jewish congregation in Austin; it hired an architect in 2007 and purchased land on the Dell Campus in 2009 for a permanent synagogue building, which was dedicated in 2013.[49]

48. "The Life and Leadership of Jim Novy," Congregation Agudas Achim website, accessed online at http://www.caa-austin.org/?q=historyofJimNovy. Also, "Austin, Texas," Encyclopedia of Southern Jewish Communities, Goldring/Woldenburg Institute of Southern Jewish Life, accessed online at http://www.isjl.org/texas-austin-encyclopedia.html.
49. "History," Temple Beth Shalom (http://www.bethshalomaustin.org/lifecycles/death/), accessed October 23, 2014; also, email correspondence with Sam Scheer, October 10, 2014, and December 18, 2014.