

Barton Springs Pool  
Master Plan  
Short Term Recommendations



# THE TEAM

- Parks and Recreation Department
- Watershed Protection and Development  
Review Department
- Stakeholders
- Consultants

# BARTON SPRINGS POOL MASTER PLAN

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

### GOALS STATEMENT

RETURN THE SITE TO ITS RIGHTFUL GLORY WHERE THE WATER WAS CLEANER AND THE EXPERIENCE OF THE POOL WAS MORE ENJOYABLE.

Propose appropriate additions and renovations to the swimming pool, its buildings and its grounds that respect the fragility of this unique natural and historical setting, and also accommodate the significant user demands on Austin's most popular park amenity.

### TREES and GRASS

Evaluate the trees to determine whether. Assess them, assess and condition. Make recommendations for replacing sick and damaged trees. Make recommendations for adding more trees throughout the campus. Consider more drought-tolerant grass species. Make recommendations for upgrading and controlling the irrigation system. Make recommendations for grass care.

### ZILKER PONDS

Rehabilitate the Zilker Ponds with special measures to the current use of ponds leading from the upper parking lot to the Zilker Theater and the bathhouse.

### SIGNS and GRAPHICS

Identify opportunities throughout the campus for a coordinated system of interpretive graphics to tell both the cultural and natural history of the park and its ecosystem. Propose a system of signs and signs for orientation and wayfinding. Propose signs at major entry points to direct visitors into the park and towards the pool.

### ELIZAS SPRING

Reconstruct Eliza to the site body of the pool. Rehabilitate the 1903 Zilker amphitheater construction. Remove concrete slab under the waters of Eliza. Include a new, operable gate for flow control. Reroute runs around Eliza to manage flooding.

### HISTORIC BATHHOUSE

Rehabilitate the historic bathhouse to repair deteriorated conditions and to return visitors to its original location, at the central glass cylinder.

### BYPASS INLET GRATE

Redesign inlet grate so that it is less prone to clogging during floods.

### UPSTREAM DAM

Add openings to improve flow regime. Remove dam to restore "top up" floods. Widen dam to improve clean-up equipment access.

### BYPASS TUNNEL

Reconstruct inlet grate technology.

### BARTON SPRINGS POOL

### DOWNSTREAM DAM

Add more operable gates to improve flow regime.

### RECIRCULATION SYSTEM

A pump connected to a pipe to distribute moving water across the "beach".

### ALGAE CONTROL

Add algae control skimmer designs to remove floating algae, microorganisms.

### INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Reassess improvements to site electrical services to include buried lines and increased power. Reassess site lighting improvements.

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### NEW SOUTH BATHHOUSE

Study a new, though modest, south bathhouse to provide shower and changing facilities.

### SEDIMENT and GRAVEL REMOVAL

Consult with pool cleaning and maintenance staff to improve methods for removing sediment and gravel.

### TREES and GRASS

Evaluate the trees to determine whether. Assess them, assess and condition. Make recommendations for replacing sick and damaged trees. Make recommendations for adding more trees throughout the campus. Consider more drought-tolerant grass species. Make recommendations for upgrading and controlling the irrigation system. Make recommendations for grass care.

### FENCE

Assess new fence design. Consider adjustments to fence locations to include new areas within the perimeter.

### ENLARGE THE POOL

Study the possibility of enlarging the pool larger by relocating the downstream dam to a position below the Barton Garden outflow. The concept is to bring all three downstream facilities into one uninterrupted body of water.

### AREA BELOW DOWNSTREAM DAM

Redesign the area below the downstream dam to make it more comfortable and more attractive.

### SUNKEN GARDEN

Rehabilitate the stone walls, masonrywork and masonry as required. Reconstruct the fence, including its location and its design. Rehabilitate the trees to improve riparian habitat. Include a new, operable gate for flow control. Create suitable walking surfaces to enhance access and experience. Uphold landscaping to include new trees and grass/cover recommendations.

# THE PROCESS

- Public Participation

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- PARD and Watershed staff

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- Regulatory Officials

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- Regulatory Officials
- Team of Specialists

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- Public Participation  
Diversity of Opinion  
(no single consensus)
- PARD and Watershed staff
- Regulatory Officials
- Team of Specialists



# WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

To develop or improve through a long-range plan that balances and harmonizes all elements.

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To develop or improve through a long-range plan that balances and harmonizes all elements.

The short term recommendations are to address immediate needs.

A MASTER PLAN IS NOT THE END

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IT'S THE END OF THE BEGINNING

# A MASTER PLAN IS NOT THE END IT'S THE END OF THE BEGINNING

Each recommendation will have its own development process.

- There will be design development and review
- There will be regulatory oversight
- There will be Boards and Commissions

Regarding Short Term Recommendations

## HOW WERE DECISIONS MADE?

- Stakeholder Input
- Health and Safety
- Pool Operations and City Values
- Logical Order

A number of course corrections were made in response to

## STAKEHOLDER INPUT

- Water Quality was elevated
- Building Improvements were de-emphasized
- Interpretative Planning was given priority

# **BARTON SPRINGS POOL MASTER PLAN**

Meetings held to date 8/30/07

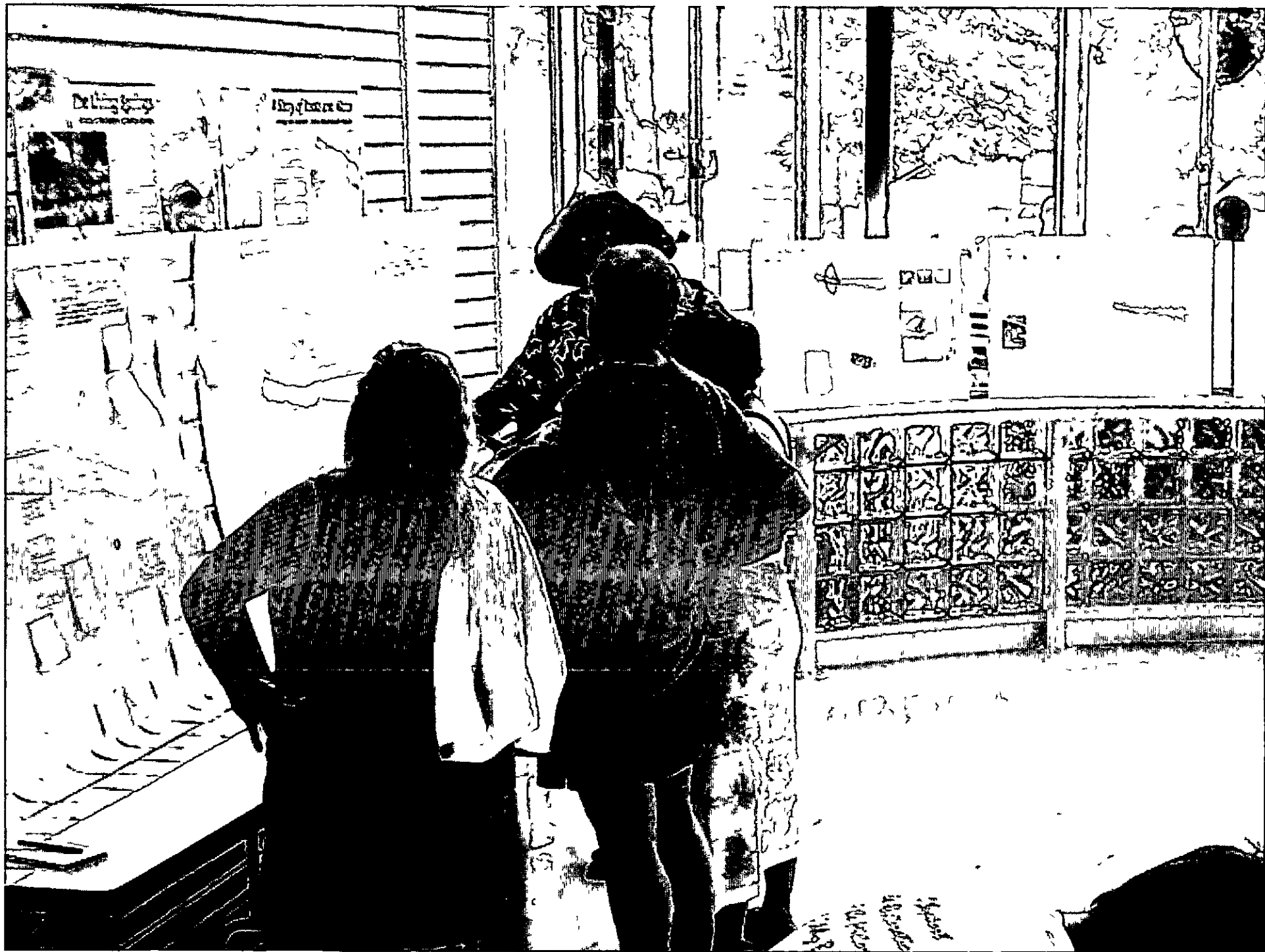
| Date            | Meeting topic                   | Attendees |      |      |                                                  |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|-----------|------|------|--------------------------------------------------|
|                 |                                 | Cons      | PAAD | WPDR | Public                                           |
| <b>February</b> |                                 |           |      |      |                                                  |
| 2/7/07          | Project introduction            | x         | x    |      |                                                  |
| 2/14/07         | Project introduction            | x         | x    | x    |                                                  |
| 2/15/07         | Site visit                      | x         |      | x    |                                                  |
| 2/16/07         | Project introduction            | x         | x    |      | FBSP                                             |
| 2/23/07         | Client/staff review mtg         | x         | x    | x    |                                                  |
| <b>March</b>    |                                 |           |      |      |                                                  |
| 3/6/07          | Multiple Stakeholder Groups     | x         | x    | x    | FBSP, SOS, HCC, SBGA                             |
| 3/14/07         | Client/staff review mtg         | x         | x    | x    |                                                  |
| 3/16/07         | Site visit                      | x         |      | x    |                                                  |
| 3/16/07         | Regulatory review               | x         |      |      | Building officials                               |
| 3/16/07         | Bathhouse programming mtg       | x         | x    |      |                                                  |
| 3/28/07         | Client/staff review mtg         | x         | x    | x    |                                                  |
| <b>April</b>    |                                 |           |      |      |                                                  |
| 4/3/07          | Regulatory review               | x         |      |      | Texas Historical Commission                      |
| 4/4/07          | Client review mtg               | x         | x    |      |                                                  |
| 4/11/07         | Stakeholder review mtg          | x         | x    | x    | Scientific Advisory Committee, USFWS, BS/EACD    |
| 4/11/07         | Client/staff review mtg         | x         | x    | x    |                                                  |
| 4/14/07         | Informational presentation, Q&A | x         |      |      | FBSP Members Meeting                             |
| 4/16/07         | Town Hall Public Meeting #1     | x         | x    | x    | Swimmers, individuals, stakeholder groups, press |
| 4/25/07         | Client/staff review mtg         | x         | x    | x    | USFWS                                            |
| 4/27/07         | Client review mtg               | x         | x    |      |                                                  |
| <b>May</b>      |                                 |           |      |      |                                                  |
| 5/1/07          | Pre CMO mtg                     | x         | x    |      |                                                  |
| 5/2/07          | CMO                             | x         | x    | x    |                                                  |
| 5/8/07          | Informational presentation, Q&A | x         |      |      | Barton Hills RA ExCom                            |
| 5/8/07          | SPLASH programming mtg          | x         | x    | x    |                                                  |
| 5/10/07         | Bathhouse programming mtg       | x         | x    |      | FBSP                                             |
| 5/18/07         | Bathhouse programming mtg       | x         | x    |      | FBSP                                             |
| 5/21/07         | Historic Landmark Commission    | x         |      |      | Public hearing                                   |
| 5/22/07         | Parks Board                     | x         | x    |      | Public hearing                                   |
| 5/23/07         | Informational presentation, Q&A | x         |      |      | Austin Neighborhoods Council                     |
| 5/23/07         | Client review mtg               | x         | x    | x    |                                                  |
| 5/25/07         | Bathhouse programming mtg       | x         | x    | x    | FBSP                                             |
| 5/29/07         | Informational presentation, Q&A | x         | x    | x    | SOS staff                                        |
| 5/30/07         | Trees                           | x         | x    |      |                                                  |
| 5/31/07         | Informational presentation, Q&A | x         | x    |      | Polar Bear Swimmers                              |
| <b>June</b>     |                                 |           |      |      |                                                  |
| 6/1/07          | Bathhouse programming mtg       | x         | x    |      | FBSP                                             |
| 6/8/07          | Client, stakeholder review mtg  | x         | x    |      | FBSP, swimmers                                   |
| 6/12/07         | Informational presentation Q&A  | x         | x    |      | Council aides                                    |
| 6/13/07         | Site visit                      | x         |      |      | Austin Energy                                    |
| 6/14/07         | Regulatory review               | x         |      | x    | COA Environmental Officer                        |
| 6/14/07         | Regulatory review               | x         |      |      | COA Historic Preservation Officer                |
| 6/14/07         | Regulatory review               | x         |      |      | Development Assistance Center                    |
| 6/20/07         | Environmental Board             | x         |      | x    | Public hearing                                   |
| 6/22/07         | Client, stakeholder review mtg  | x         | x    | x    | FBSP                                             |



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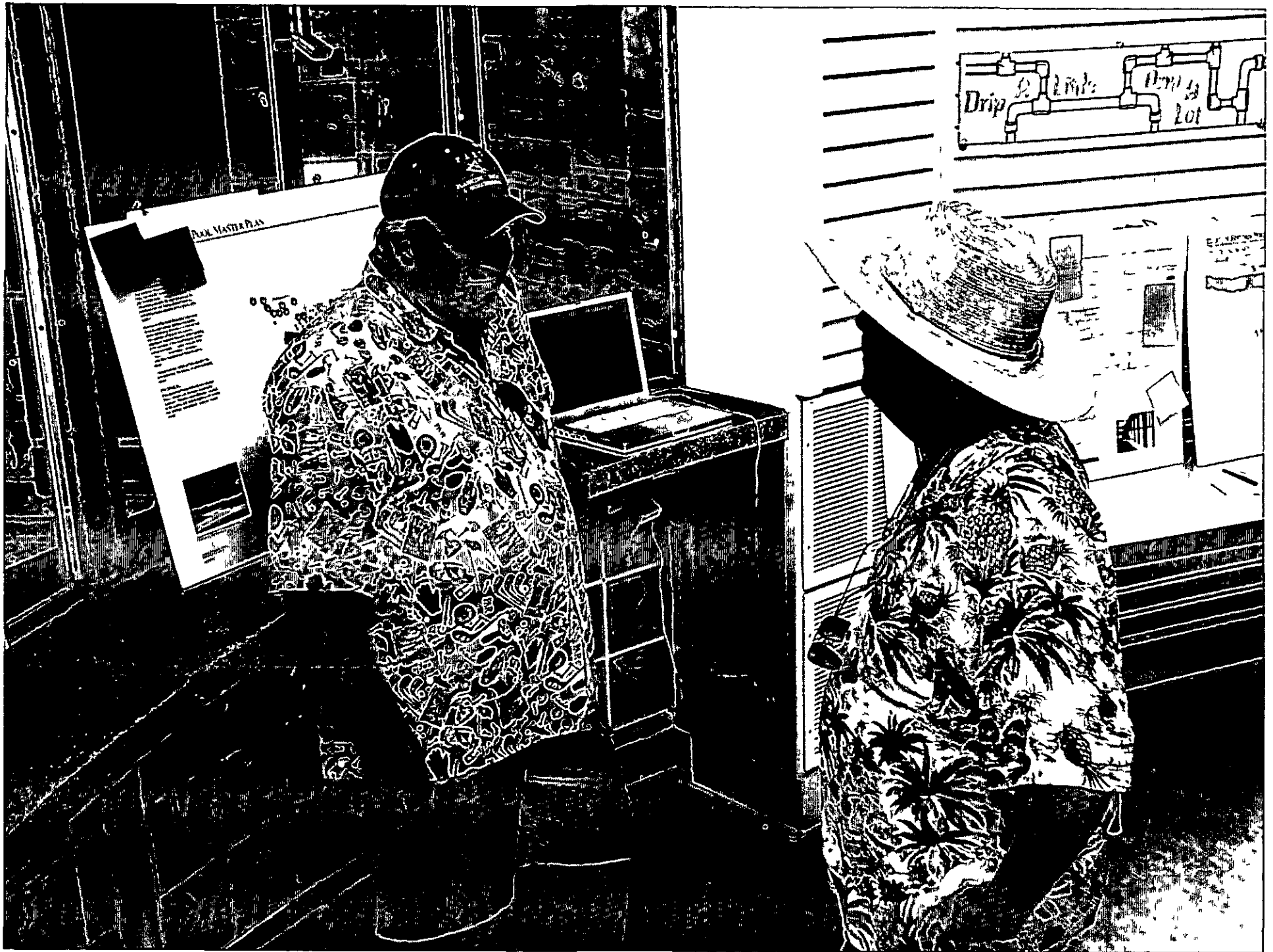
Meetings held to date, 8/30/07

| Date    | Meeting topic                                              | Attendees |      |       |                                                      |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------|-------|------------------------------------------------------|
|         |                                                            | Cons      | PARC | W.PDR | Public                                               |
| June    |                                                            |           |      |       |                                                      |
| 6/26/07 | Informational presentation, Q&A                            | x         |      |       | Barton Hills NA Members Meeting                      |
| 6/27/07 | Client review mtg                                          | x         | x    | x     |                                                      |
| 6/28/07 | Regulatory review                                          | x         |      |       | Texas Historical Commission                          |
| 6/28/07 | Informational presentation, Q&A                            | x         |      |       | Austin Museum of Art event                           |
| 6/29/07 | Client, stakeholder review mtg                             | x         | x    | x     | FBSP                                                 |
| July    |                                                            |           |      |       |                                                      |
| 7/5/07  | Regulatory review                                          | x         | x    | x     | USFWS                                                |
| 7/5/07  | Informational presentation, Q&A                            | x         |      |       | Zilker NA ExCom                                      |
| 7/6/07  | Multiple Stakeholder Groups                                | x         | x    | x     | FBSP, SOS                                            |
| 7/10/07 | Regulatory review                                          | x         | x    | x     | USFWS                                                |
| 7/11/07 | Client review mtg                                          | x         | x    | x     |                                                      |
| 7/14/07 | Town Hall Public Meeting #2-Open House and Community Forum | x         | x    | x     | Swimmers, individuals, stakeholder groups, press     |
| 7/20/07 | Staff review mtg                                           | x         |      | x     |                                                      |
| 7/23/07 | Informational presentation, Q&A                            | x         |      | x     | Save Barton Creek Association Members Meeting, press |
| 7/25/07 | Client review mtg                                          | x         | x    | x     |                                                      |
| 7/25/07 | Client, stakeholder review mtg                             | x         | x    | x     | FBSP                                                 |
| 7/30/07 | Informational presentation, Q&A                            | x         |      |       | Zilker NA Watermelon Social                          |
| August  |                                                            |           |      |       |                                                      |
| 8/1/07  | Client review mtg                                          | x         | x    | x     |                                                      |
| 8/1/07  | Multiple Stakeholder Groups                                | x         | x    | x     | SOS, SBGA, FBSP                                      |
| 8/8/07  | Client review mtg                                          | x         | x    | x     |                                                      |
| 8/8/07  | Multiple Stakeholder Groups                                | x         | x    | x     | Swimmers, SOS, SBGA, FBSP, HCC, FBSP                 |
| 8/10/07 | Client, stakeholder review mtg                             | x         | x    |       |                                                      |
| 8/15/07 | Interpretive planning review mtg                           | x         | x    |       |                                                      |
| 8/15/07 | Client review mtg                                          | x         | x    | x     |                                                      |
| 8/15/07 | Multiple Stakeholder Groups                                | x         | x    | x     | Swimmers, SOS, SBGA, FBSP                            |
| 8/16/07 | Council Cleans the Pool Day                                | x         | x    | x     | FBSP, swimmers, press                                |
| 8/21/07 | Regulatory review                                          | x         |      |       | TDLA                                                 |
| 8/21/07 | Trees                                                      | x         | x    |       | Public                                               |
| 8/27/07 | CPO                                                        | x         | x    | x     |                                                      |
| 8/27/07 | Town Hall Public Meeting #3-Short Term Projects            | x         | x    | x     | Swimmers, individuals, stakeholder groups, press     |
| 8/28/07 | Parks Board                                                | x         | x    | x     | Briefing on Short Term Projects                      |
| 8/29/07 | Client review mtg                                          | x         | x    | x     |                                                      |
| 8/30/07 | City Council                                               | x         | x    | x     | Briefing on Short Term Projects                      |

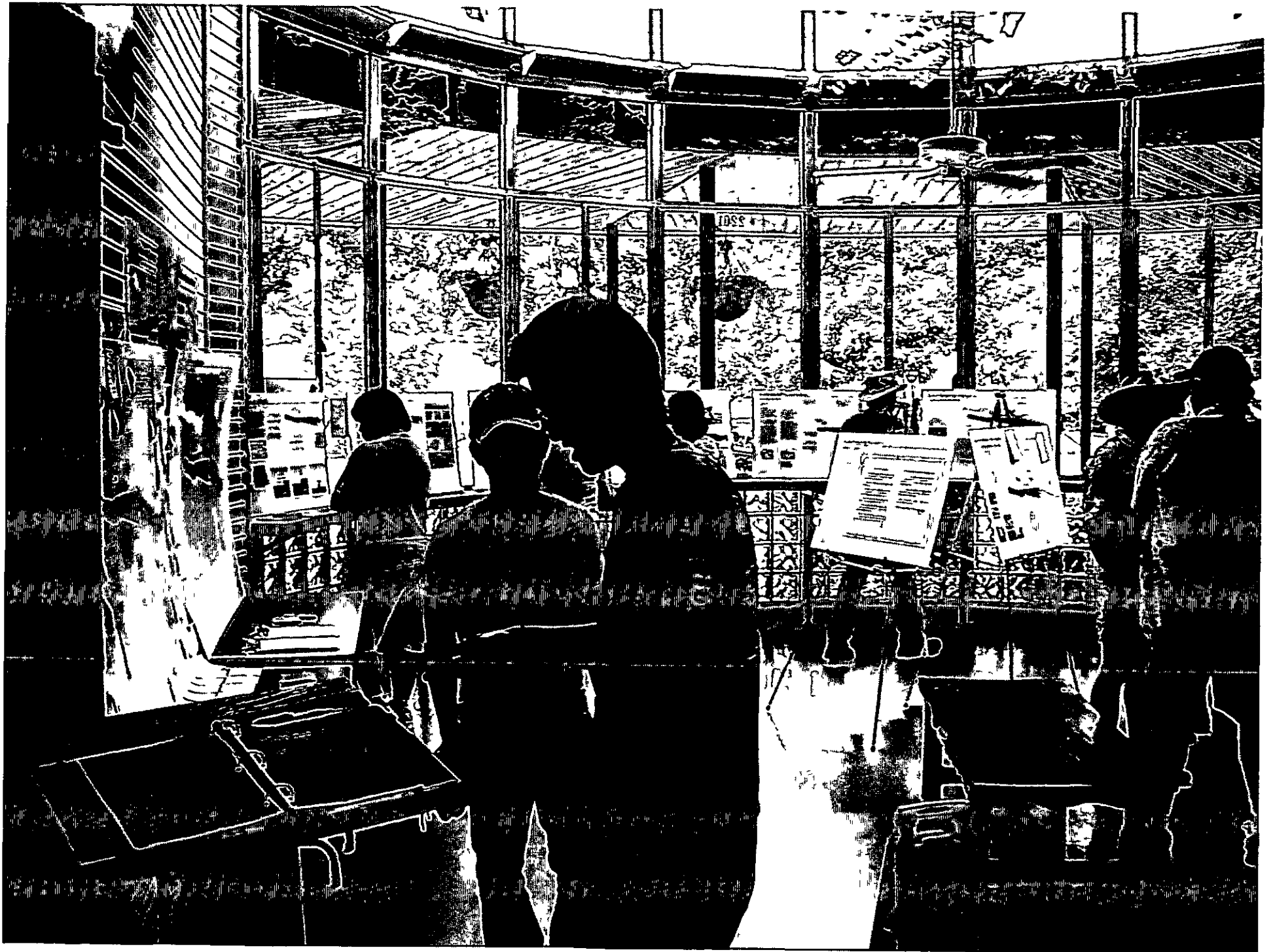


















# BARTON SPRINGS POOL MASTER PLAN

## REHABILITATE SUNKEN GARDEN

Sunken Garden was built in the 1930s as a National Youth Administration project. It was designed by Delmer Groves, one of the architects of the Barton Springs bathhouse.

In the years following its completion, the Sunken Garden was a popular destination. Its flagstone levels were

For the last few decades, the Sunken Garden has fallen into decline, and has lost its place as a destination of choice. Its flagstone paving is obscured with dirt and weeds, and its stone walls have begun to crack and in some cases collapse. Its trees are in poor condition, and in some cases, its trees are causing structural damage to the construction.

And while the Sunken Garden may have potential as a rediscovered park attraction, it is currently home to the endangered salamander. The salamanders could be better nurtured if their vessel were free of sediment, and if the entryway was outfitted with an operable sluice gate.

### PROPOSAL

Rehabilitate Sunken Garden to make it more attractive for visitors, and to make it more conducive to salamander habitat. Rehabilitate stone walls and stone paving. Include interpretive materials to tell the story of this fascinating place.

### A NOTE ABOUT PHASING

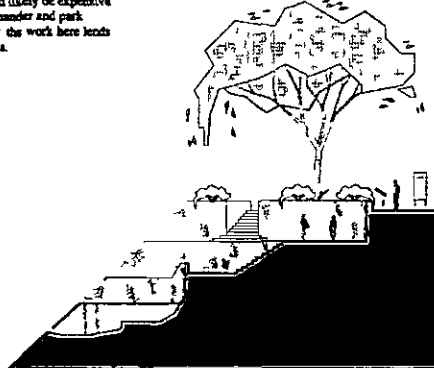
Undertaking the rehabilitation of the Sunken Garden in one phase would likely be expensive and disruptive to the salamander and park visitors alike. Fortunately the work here lends itself to being done in parts.



Cypress trees make excellent plantings at the water's edge. The cypress is native to Texas and is a diverse, resilient and durable.



Rehabilitate the spring pool vessel. Close sediment and debris from bottom. Include an operable sluice gate. Add new stone fence to separate visitor access to site.



Rehabilitate Sunken Garden to make it more attractive for visitors and to make it more conducive to salamander habitat.

**OVERLOOK**  
Create an overlook on the north bank to highlight the waterfall spilling from the Sunken Garden spring pool. Integrate interpretive materials into the experience to tell the story of Sunken Garden.

**NEW CYPRESS TREES**  
Plant new cypress trees to frame the waterfall.

**NEW MORE TRANSPARENT BRIDGE**  
Adopt a long-term goal to replace the existing bridge with a more attractive, more transparent bridge. The existing bridge is so bulky as to obscure views to one of Barton Springs' more unusual features.

**RECONSTRUCT STONE PATHS**  
Reconstruct stone paths to encourage walk-through traffic. Integrate interpretive materials into the experience.

**PLANT NEW GROUND COVER AND UNDERSTORY**  
Working with salamander biologist and Friends groups, propose new groundcover and understory planting scheme.

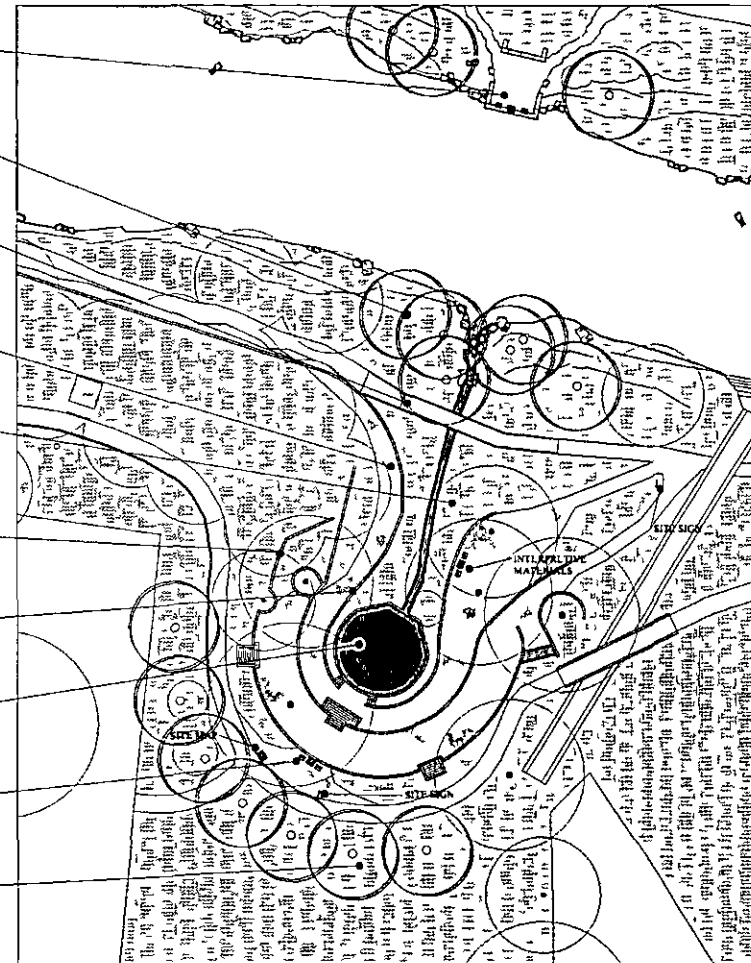
**REPAIR/REBUILD WALLS**  
Repair and or rebuild the historic stone walls. Reconstruction should use modern techniques to promote long service life. Integrate the construction efforts with tree replacement to maximize disruption.

**NEW FENCE**  
Replace the existing fence with one that is shorter and more transparent. Represent the fence so that visitors can walk the site more freely while still being mindful of the importance of protecting the salamander habitat.

**REHABILITATE SPRING POOL VESSEL**  
Repair stone-work to complete the stone cylinder. Add an operable sluice gate. Remove sediment and debris from bottom of pool.

**CREATE A NEW OVERLOOK**  
Take advantage of the elevated position, and create new overlook. Integrate interpretive materials into the experience to tell the story of Sunken Garden.

**PLANT NEW TREES**  
Plant new shade trees to complete the planned space around the pool.



# BARTON SPRINGS POOL MASTER PLAN

## TREES--Existing

This map shows existing trees classified by their general condition, based on a visual evaluation done by the planning team's landscape architect.

Of the more than 125 trees evaluated, the condition of about one third of them suggests that a more thorough evaluation is in order before arriving at final recommendations for either accelerated tree care or tree removal and replacement for reasons of public safety.

This map can also serve to establish a useful baseline for building a plan for ongoing tree care and canopy renewal through periodic site plantings.

### TREE CONDITION

- 1 GREAT CONDITION  
Long life expected.
- 2 GOOD CONDITION  
Of a variety that may not have a long life, or may tend to become hazardous.
- 3 COMPROMISING FACTORS APPARENT  
This can be expected to affect longevity or tendency to become hazardous.
- 4 SHOULD BE ASSESSED  
To minimize the potential for hazard.
- 5 COMPROMISING DAMAGE APPARENT



Three quarters of the trees in the pool area are present.



Arranged by category

# SHORT TERM PROJECTS

- Water Quality Improvements
  - Water Quality Studies
  - Pool Cleaning
  - Grounds
  - Building

# WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

- Remove gravel bar (8)
- Replace bypass tunnel inlet grate (10)
- Repair bypass tunnel joints (11)
- Renovate Sunken Garden (Part 1) (20)

# WATER QUALITY STUDIES

- Pilot Study for recirculation at Beach (1)
- Pilot Study for ultrasonic algae control (2)
- Pilot Study to determine effects of creek flows on pool water quality (3)
- Topographic surveys (7)
- Flow (hydrodynamic) modeling (14 & 15)
- Structural testing of dams (21)

# POOL CLEANING

- Additional electrical power at pool side (6)
  - New pump to increase water pressure and to facilitate cleaning (12)
  - Disposal for silt and algae (16)

# GROUNDS IMPROVEMENTS

- Tree assessment and tree treatment (4)
  - Remove overhead wiring (5)
  - Accessible route on south side and accessibility improvements on north side (13)
  - Interpretative Plan (17)
  - General grounds improvements (19)

# BUILDING

- Rehabilitate existing bathhouse (Phase 1) (9)



Regarding the Master Plan itself

## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

- Write Master Plan report
- Put report on internet for comment (2-4 weeks)
- Public meeting
- Boards, Commissions and Council
- Short term projects, future public processes

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- Write Master Plan report
  - Put report on internet for comment (2-4 weeks)
  - Public meeting
  - Boards, Commissions and Council
- 
- For today's items--funding
  - Short term projects, future public processes