

ITEM FOR ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD AGENDA

**BOARD MEETING  
DATE REQUESTED:** Feb 06, 2013

**NAME & NUMBER  
OF PROJECT:** Barton Springs Pool General Grounds Improvements  
SPC-2012-0104D

**NAME OF APPLICANT  
OR ORGANIZATION:** City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department.  
(Gary Gregson, 974-9475)

**LOCATION:** 2201 Barton Springs Road

**PROJECT FILING DATE:** March 09, 2012

**WPDR/ENVIRONMENTAL  
STAFF:** Liz Johnston, 974-1218  
liz.johnston@austintexas.gov

**WPDR/  
CASE MANAGER:** Nikki Hoelter, 974-2863  
nikki.hoelter@austintexas.gov

**WATERSHED:** Barton Creek (Barton Springs Zone),  
Drinking Water Protection Zone, Edwards Aquifer  
Recharge Zone

**ORDINANCE:** Comprehensive Watershed Ordinance (current Code) and  
Save Our Springs Ordinance

**REQUEST:** Consider and recommend approval of an ordinance  
granting variances as follows:

1. To allow construction within the Critical Water  
Quality Zone of Barton Creek; [LDC Section 25-8-  
482]
2. To allow construction within a Water Quality  
Transition Zone of Barton Springs; [LDC Section 25-  
8-483 (A)]

And providing amendments to the Save Our Springs Ordinance as follows:

1. To allow construction within the Critical Water Quality Zone of Barton Springs; [LDC Section 25-8-514(B)]
2. To allow impervious in excess of 15% net site area [LDC Section 25-8-514(A)]

**STAFF VARIANCE RECOMMENDATION:** Grant

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION:** Greater environmental benefit will be achieved with the ordinance than currently exists today.



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mary Gay Maxwell, Chairperson and Members of the Environmental Board

**FROM:** Liz Johnston, Environmental Review Specialist Senior  
Land Use Review, Planning and Development Review

**DATE:** January 30, 2013

**SUBJECT:** Barton Springs Pool, SPC-2012-0104D

On your February 6, 2013 agenda is a request for consideration and recommendation for approval of an ordinance allowing construction at Barton Springs Pool proposed by the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department. As you know, Barton Springs Pool is a unique facility and its particular location and characteristics often require variances or amendments to the City's Land Development Code to allow improvements at the facility.

Outlined below is a description of the unique site characteristics and environmental concerns that have been addressed during review of the proposed site plan, including the existing development and continued public use of the grounds, proposed environmental enhancements and proposed exceptions to the environmental code requirements requested by the applicant, including amendments to the Save Our Springs ordinance. Staff recommends approval of the project based on our finding that the proposed project provides significant benefits to the environment, public safety, and pool users beyond current site conditions. The project, and the associated environmental, safety, and use enhancements, cannot go forward without Council approval of the proposed ordinance.

### **Description of Property**

Barton Springs Pool is located upstream of the confluence of Barton Creek and Lady Bird Lake in Austin's popular Zilker Park. A portion of the site is located over the Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone. The site plan limits of construction consists of a small portion of Zilker Park, which is itself comprised of numerous unsubdivided tracts. The project is mostly located in the Barton Springs Zone, but a portion of the site is located in the Lady Bird Lake Watershed, which is classified as Urban. Areas within the site that are not part of the limits of construction are located within Eanes Watershed, which is classified as Water Supply Suburban.

The existing improvements on the north side of the pool include an existing paved parking lot, a bathhouse, associated patio area, retaining walls and stairs leading down to the pool. On the south portion of the lot currently exists perimeter fencing, a ticket booth, existing pathways that are both paved and unimproved, a mowed ballfield, and a gravel parking area that existed prior to the current Comprehensive Watershed and Save Our Springs Ordinances.

The existing pool, bathhouse, northern parking lot, ticket booth, some of the sidewalks, a portion of the ball fields, and both dams are all located within the Critical Water Quality Zone of Barton Creek. The existing gravel parking lot and ball fields are located within the Water Quality Transition Zone of Barton Creek. There are numerous protected and heritage-size trees scattered throughout the site.

According to the Environmental Assessment, the soils at the site are varied and consist of Austin-Houston Black-Stephen and Bergstrom-Smithville-Ships soil association, along with several other soils that range anywhere from fine sandy loam to clay. The topography is undulating to hilly with some areas that are quite eroded due to pedestrian traffic. The underlying material of the Edwards Plateau soils is erosion-resistant limestone and limestone interbedded with clay and marl.

Vegetation consists of landscaped parkland ranging from turf lawn areas interspersed with large native trees including pecan and plateau live oak to mowed ball fields. Natural wooded areas exist on the south western portion of the site (referred to as the South Woods in the plan set) and consists of Ashe juniper, plateau live oak, cedar elm, and hackberry. Understory species include agarita and yaupon.

#### **Critical Environmental Features/Endangered Species**

There are four Critical Environmental Features (CEFs), one rimrock CEF and three spring CEFs. One of the spring CEFs, Barton Springs (Parthenia Spring), is located in the main pool and consists of multiple springs outlets discharging spring water for the Barton Spring pool. The other spring CEFs, Eliza Springs and The Old Mill Spring (Sunken Gardens), are located on the pool grounds, but are not part of the pool itself.

Barton Springs Pool is home to one endangered species, the Barton Springs Salamander (*Eurycea sosorum*), and one candidate species, the Austin Blind Salamander (*Eurycea waterlooensis*). City of Austin biologists have been involved in the review process for this project to ensure that the project will meet the requirements of the federally-approved Habitat Conservation Plan.

#### **Description of Project**

The Barton Springs General Grounds Improvements site plan includes:

- Changes to the existing hardscape adjacent to the bathhouse, including the removal of compacted granite around the critical root zones of existing heritage trees and the addition of landscaped planters,
- The replacement of existing sidewalk on the northwest portion of the site,
- The installation of new perimeter fencing,
- The replacement of overhead electrical wiring with underground wiring,
- Changes to the lighting,
- The addition of an ADA accessible pathway leading from the existing parking lot on the south to the pool,
- A gravel pathway leading to the South Lawn area,
- A proposed Phase II that would allow the gravel parking lot to be expanded and paved, meeting current transportation and environmental requirements.
- The existing ball field is proposed to be maintained so that it will act as a vegetative filter strip, thus providing water quality treatment for the existing gravel parking as well as the entire proposed parking on the south side of the project.

The maintenance agreement that was reviewed and approved by Watershed Protection Department staff, Land Use Review water quality review staff and Parks and Recreation Department staff is attached to the draft ordinance (Exhibit F).

Four CEF variances were granted by Environmental Resource Management staff to reduce the CEF setbacks to about 50' in order to allow the existing development to remain and to be compliant with Austin's Land Development Code, and to allow for the construction of new Americans with Disability Act (ADA) compliant pathways and sidewalks. Additional riparian habitat restoration with native seeding and plantings are proposed as a condition for CEF buffer reductions and at the request of Watershed Protection staff biologists familiar with issues related to the salamanders.

The portion of Zilker Park that comprises the site contains three different watershed regulation areas, including Barton Springs Zone (Barton Creek Watershed), Water Supply Suburban (Eanes Watershed) and Urban (Lady Bird Lake Watershed) and therefore the impervious cover tables are more complicated than most typical site development projects. Also, the existing improvements for this portion of the site are located in the Critical Water Quality Zone and Water Quality Transition Zone setbacks that would need to be deducted from Net Site Area calculations. For the purpose of this summary, gross site area calculations and Net Site Area calculations for the Barton Springs Zone portion of the site are provided.

- Gross Site Area: 152.50 Acres
- Existing Impervious Cover: 26.12 Acres (17.13%)
- Proposed Impervious Cover: 26.73 Acres (17.53%)
- Square footage of proposed new impervious cover: 26,676 S.F.
- Allowable Impervious Cover by Net Site Area of Barton Springs Zone Portion: 3.57 Acres
- Existing Impervious Cover of Barton Springs Zone Portion: 13.22 Acres
- Proposed Total Impervious Cover Barton Springs Zone Portion: 13.59 Acres

#### **Variances and Code Amendments Requested**

The proposed improvements require variances as well as site specific amendments to the Save Our Spring ordinance as follows:

- 1) Section 25-8-482 (*Critical Water Quality Zone*) and Section 25-8-514 (*Pollution Prevention Required*) are proposed to be amended to allow:
  - Sidewalks located along the western edge of the south lawn of the pool to provide or improve accessible routes.
  - Underground irrigation and utilities as necessary to serve the irrigated landscape areas and provide lighting.
  - A ticket booth located at the south entry gate.
  - An overlook deck, new sidewalk and hardscape within the "tree court" area adjacent to the existing bathhouse to improve the soil conditions for the health of the heritage pecan trees.
  - A portion of a vegetated filter strip located east of the existing gravel parking lot on the south side of the pool providing water quality for the parking lot.
- 2) Section 25-8-514 (*Pollution Prevention Required*) is proposed to be amended to allow impervious cover in excess of 15% of the Net Site Area.
- 3) Section 25-8-483 (*Water Quality Transition Zone*) is proposed to be amended to allow construction in the Water Quality Transition Zone of:
  - Concrete parking facility to improve and expand the existing gravel parking lot located on the south side of Barton Springs pool.

- Sidewalk providing an accessible route from the Robert E. Lee Right of Way and the parking lot on the south side of Barton Springs pool to the south entry to the pool.

#### **Proposed Mitigation for Variances and Amendments**

The applicant has agreed to the following conditions to mitigate any impacts of the requested variances and amendments. These conditions are not required by applicable City code.

- After the Grounds Improvement Project is complete, restore the soil and the site with vegetation or other materials consistent with previous uses.
- Provide not less than 15,000 square feet of additional landscape in addition to landscaping required under City Code. Native plants shall be planted outside of turf areas.
- Maintain the vegetated filter strip as described in the attached Maintenance Agreement
- Provide water quality treatment for both the new and the existing parking lot on the south side of the pool.

#### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends approval of this PUD because:

- The proposed water quality treatment will provide greater environmental benefits than what exists at the site today.
- The proposed development will help reduce the amount of erosion and sedimentation that currently flows into Barton Springs by providing a stable pathway from the parking lot to the pool deck and by diverting a portion of the stormwater causing the erosion to the South Woods.
- The proposed development will help restore a portion of the riparian habitat that has been lost at Barton Springs, which is a requirement of the salamander Habitat Conservation Plan.
- Will provide additional tree planting at the site and will help preserve existing protected and heritage-size trees.
- The proposed erosion and sedimentation controls include minimizing the amount of areas that are disturbed by construction daily and re-sodding or revegetating the area as quickly as possible after construction is complete, thereby minimizing construction related sediment flowing into Barton Springs.

ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 25-8-514 AND GRANTING  
VARIANCES TO SECTIONS 25-8-482 AND 25-8-483 OF THE CITY CODE TO  
ALLOW CONSTRUCTION OF THE BARTON SPRINGS POOL GENERAL  
GROUNDS IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CRITICAL WATER QUALITY ZONE  
AND WATER QUALITY TRANSITION ZONE AND TO EXCEED  
IMPERVIOUS COVER LIMITATION.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

**PART 1.** This ordinance grants a code amendment and specific variances necessary to allow construction of sidewalks, underground utilities, ticket booth, decking, hardscape, and a vegetative filter strip in the critical water quality zone, and expanded parking in the water quality transition zone of Barton Creek, subject to Site Plan Number SPC-2012-0104D to facilitate general ground improvements at Barton Springs Pool (hereinafter the "Grounds Improvement Project").

**PART 2. CRITICAL WATER QUALITY ZONE**

A variance is granted from Section 25-8-482(*Critical Water Quality Zone*) and Section 25-8-514 (*Pollution Prevention Required*) of the City Code is amended to allow construction in the critical water quality zone of:

- (A) Sidewalks located along the western edge of the south lawn of the pool to provide or improve accessible routes, more particularly described in the attached and incorporated **EXHIBIT A**.
- (B) Underground irrigation and utilities as necessary to serve the irrigated landscape areas and provide lighting, more particularly described in the attached and incorporated **EXHIBIT B**.
- (C) A ticket booth located at the south entry gate, more particularly described in the attached and incorporated **EXHIBIT C**.
- (D) An overlook deck, new sidewalk and hardscape within the "tree court" area adjacent to the existing bathhouse to improve the soil conditions for the health of the heritage pecan trees, more particularly described in the attached and incorporated **EXHIBIT D**.
- (E) A portion of a vegetated filter strip located east of the existing gravel parking lot on the south side of the pool providing water quality for the parking lot, more particularly described in the attached and incorporated **EXHIBIT E**.

**PART 3. IMPERVIOUS COVER.**

Section 25-8-514 (*Pollution Prevention Required*) is amended to allow impervious cover in excess of 15%.

**PART 4. TRANSITION ZONE.**

A variance is granted from Section 25-8-483 (*Water Quality Transition Zone*) to allow construction in the water quality transition zone of:

- (A) Concrete parking facility to improve and expand the existing gravel parking lot located on the south side of Barton Springs pool, more particularly described in **EXHIBIT E**.
- (B) Sidewalk providing an accessible route from the Robert E. Lee Right of Way and the parking lot on the south side of Barton Springs pool to the south entry to the pool, more particularly described in **EXHIBIT E**.

**PART 5. CONDITIONS.**

Construction in the critical water quality zone and water quality transition zone authorized by this ordinance must adhere to the following conditions:

- (A) After the Grounds Improvement Project is complete, restore the soil and the site with vegetation or other materials consistent with previous uses.
- (B) Provide not less than 15,000 square feet of additional landscape in addition to landscaping required under City Code. Native plants shall be planted outside of turf areas.
- (C) Provide a Vegetated Filter Strip as described in **EXHIBIT E** and maintain the Vegetated Filter Strip in accordance with the attached and incorporated **EXHIBIT F**.
- (D) Provide water quality treatment for both the existing parking lot and the improvements to the parking lot described in **EXHIBIT E**.

**PART 6.** The requirements imposed by Section 25-8-41 (*Land Use Commission Variances*) regarding the processing and granting of variances is hereby waived for the variances granted in this Ordinance.

**PART 7.** This ordinance takes effect on \_\_\_\_\_, 2013.



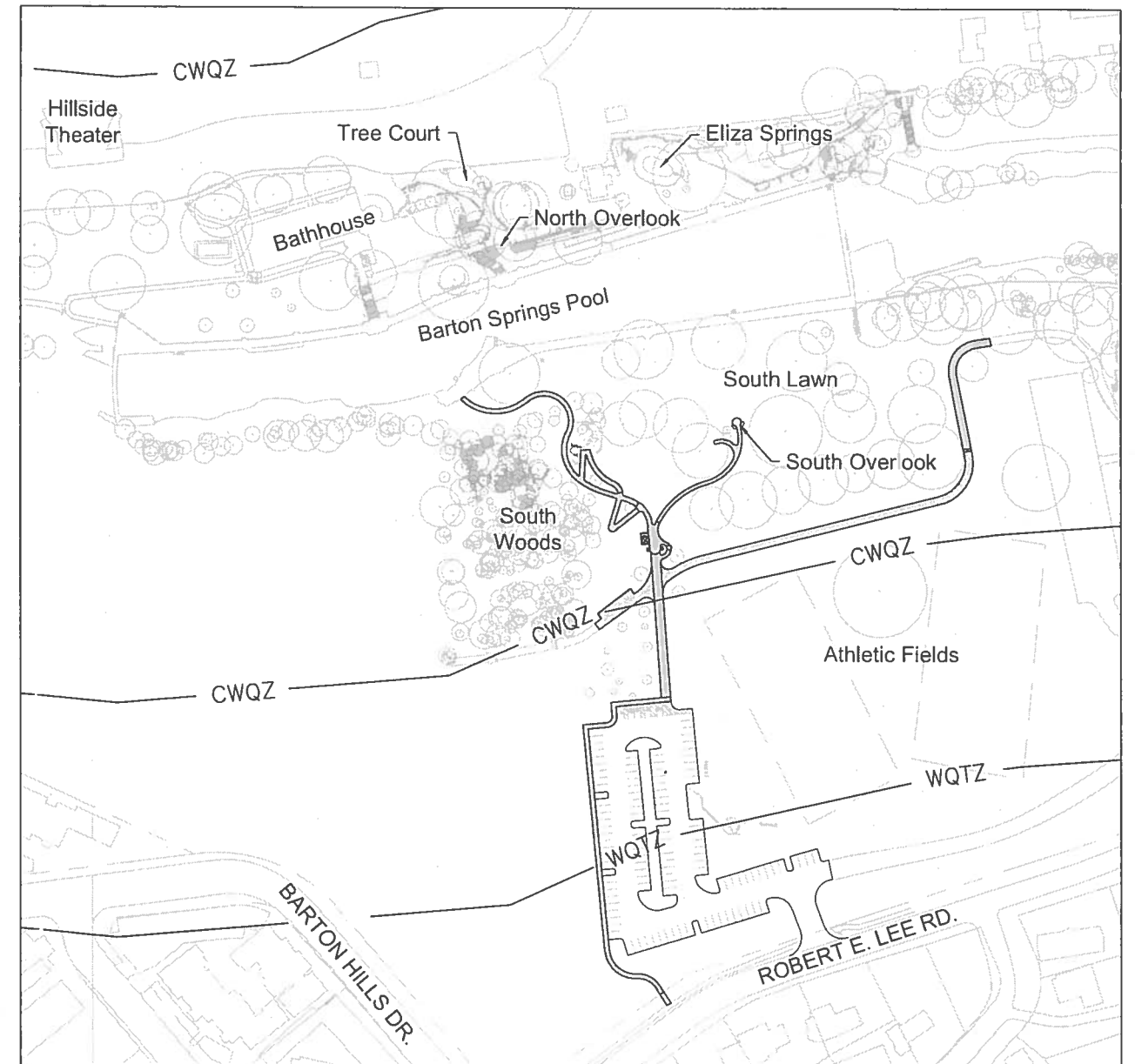
PASSED AND APPROVED

\_\_\_\_\_, 2013      §  
   §  
   §  
   \_\_\_\_\_  
   Lee Leffingwell  
   Mayor

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_ ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
                         Karen Kennard                           Jannette S. Goodall  
                         City Attorney                           City Clerk



# EXHIBIT A

## South Sidewalk Improvements



NORTH  
Not to Scale

### Legend

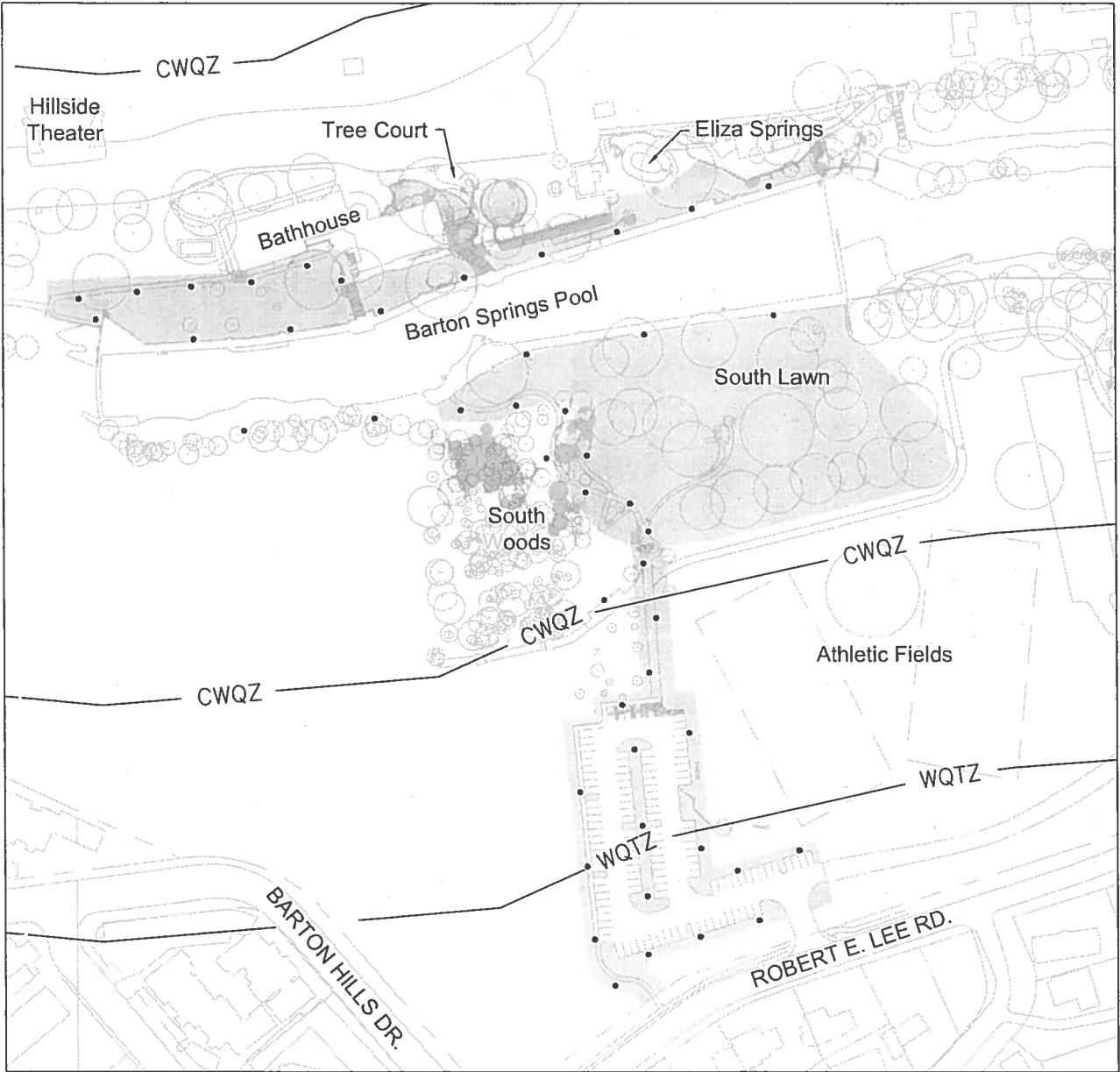
-  Concrete Sidewalk
-  Decomposed Granite Trail

Barton Springs Pool - General Grounds Improvements  
SPC-2012-0104D

Stansberry Engineering Co., Inc. *Civil Engineers*  
Larson Burns & Smith, Inc. *Landscape Architects / Planners*

EXHIBIT B

Irrigation and Electrical Improvements



NORTH  
Not to Scale

Legend



Irrigated Area



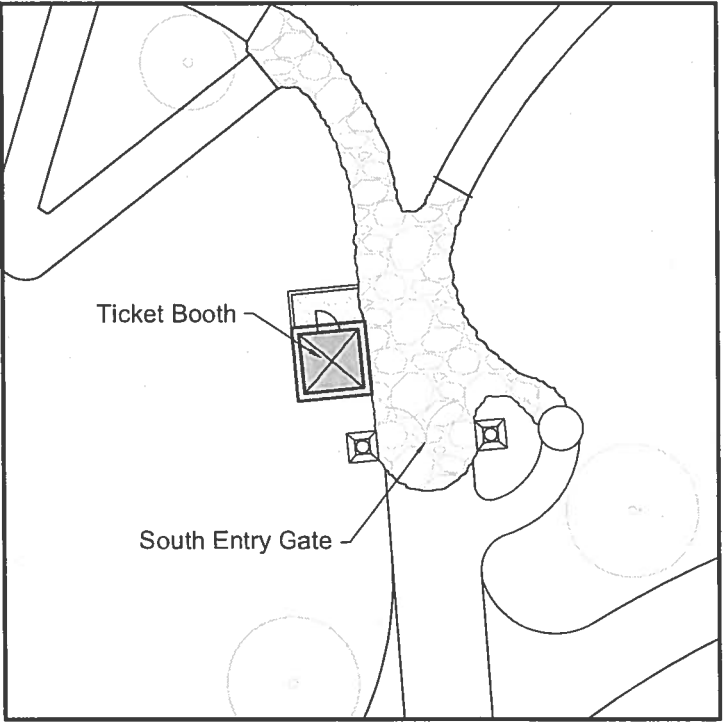
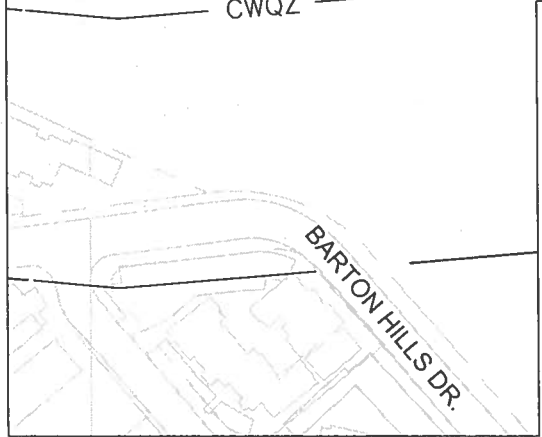
Light Locations

Barton Springs Pool - General Grounds Improvements  
SPC-2012-0104D

Stansberry Engineering Co., Inc. *Civil Engineers*  
Larson Burns & Smith, Inc. *Landscape Architects / Planners*

EXHIBIT C

South Gate Ticket Booth



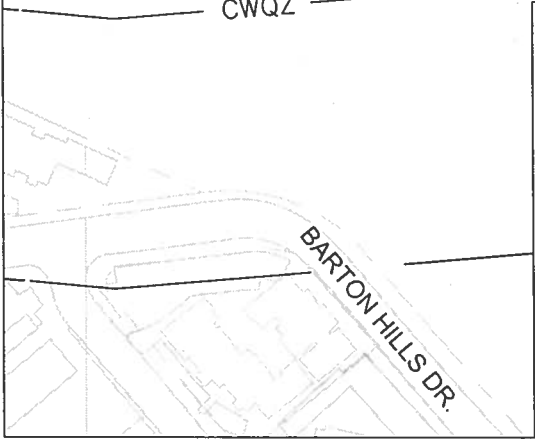
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Barton Springs Pool - General Grounds Improvements  
SPC-2012-0104D

Stansberry Engineering Co., Inc. *Civil Engineers*  
Larson Burns & Smith, Inc. *Landscape Architects / Planners*

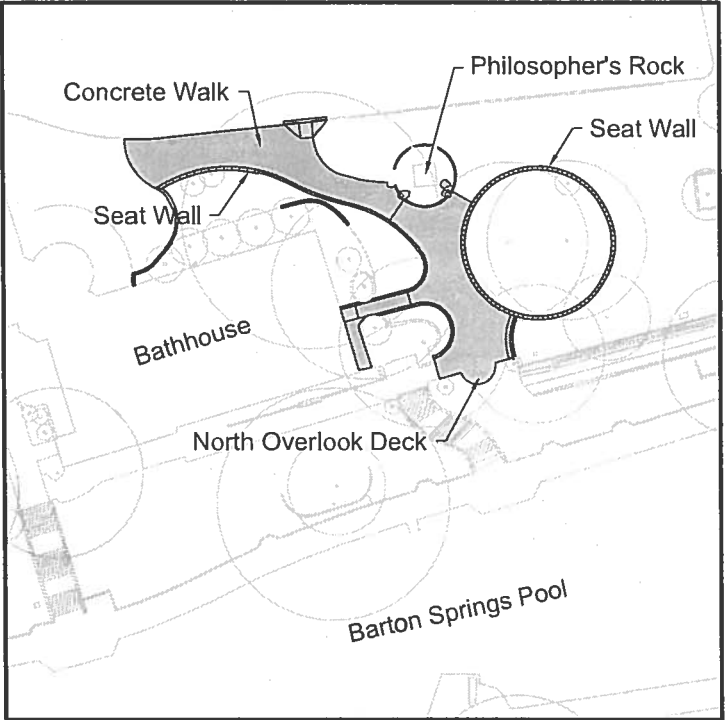
EXHIBIT D

Tree Court Improvements



Barton Springs Pool - General Grounds Improvements  
SPC-2012-0104D

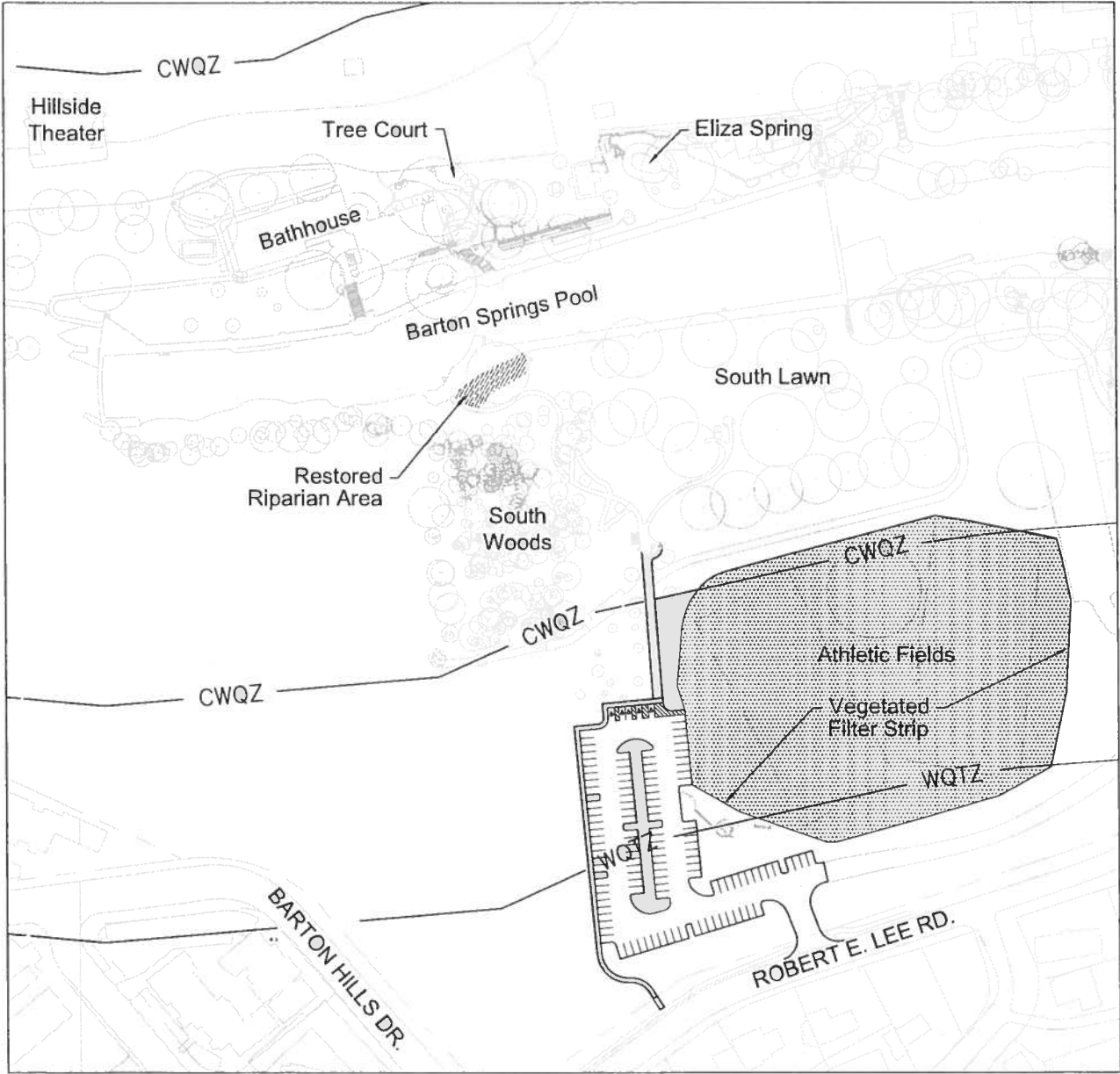
Stansberry Engineering Co., Inc. *Civil Engineers*  
Larson Burns & Smith, Inc. *Landscape Architects / Planners*



Tree Court Plan

EXHIBIT E

South Entry Parking Lot and Water Quality Improvements



NORTH  
Not to Scale

Barton Springs Pool - General Grounds Improvements  
SPC-2012-0104D

Stansberry Engineering Co., Inc. *Civil Engineers*  
Larson Burns & Smith, Inc. *Landscape Architects / Planners*

- Legend
- Concrete Sidewalk
  - Vegetated Filter
  - Restored Riparian Area

## EXHIBIT F MAINTENANCE OF VEGETATED FILTER STRIP

Barton Springs Pool - General Grounds Improvements  
SPC-2012-0104D

### Part A – General

#### 1. Scope

This specification outlines the necessary requirements to maintain the proper function of the vegetated filter strip that fulfills the water quality regulatory requirements (LDC §25-8-211) for the parking lot serving the south side pool entry.

#### 2. Reference Documents

- 2.1 City of Austin Specification Item 601S, Salvaging and Placing Topsoil.
- 2.2 City of Austin Specification Item 604S, Seeding for Erosion Control.
- 2.3 City of Austin Special Specification 612, Topsoil Mix.
- 2.4 Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Specification Item 161, Compost.

### Part B – Products

#### 3. Materials

- 3.1 *Compost* – Compost shall conform to TxDOT Specification Item 161 (including Dillo Dirt).
- 3.2 *Organic Fertilizers* – Organic Fertilizers, shall be a naturally occurring product such as manure, slurry, worm castings, peat, seaweed, humic acid, and guano or processed organic fertilizers such as compost, bloodmeal, bone meal, seaweed extracts, fish meal, and feather meal. Product shall be from sources that are not tainted with pesticides, herbicides, steroids, antibiotics or hormones.
- 3.3 *Sand* – masonry/concrete sand.
- 3.4 *Vegetation* – Vegetation shall consist of a dense stand of turf grass.
- 3.5 *Soil* – Native soil shall be improved using the guidelines of this maintenance document. If imported topsoil is needed, soil shall conform to City of Austin Special Specification 612 or as approved by the Watershed Protection Department.
- 3.6 **The use of synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides is prohibited.**

#### 4. Equipment

- 4.1 *Slicer Aerator* - aerates by cutting grooves within soil.
- 4.2 *Plug Aerator or Core Aerator* – aerates by removing a finger size plug of soil, 3 to 4 inch depth, to allow penetration of air, water, and nutrients. Core hole is top dressed with sand and/or compost.
- 4.3 *Tiller or Disc Harrow* -- shall be used to aerate and break up compacted soil to a depth of 6 inches for long term soil rehabilitation.

### Part C – Procedure

#### 5. Inspection

- 5.1 Soil shall be inspected and tested by Austin Parks and Recreation.
  - 5.1.1 Immediately after a rainfall of 1 inch or greater, athletic field shall be visually inspected for areas of standing water outside tree root zones that remain 24 hours after the end of the rain event. Perform inspection four times per year.

Maintenance of Vegetated Filter Strip  
Barton Springs Pool General Grounds Improvements  
SPC-2012-0104D

- 5.1.2 Soil shall be visually inspected for continuous vegetation growth and areas of erosion. Bare areas shall not exceed 16 square feet and the height of vegetation shall stand at a minimum of 1 1/2 inch. Bare and eroded areas shall be prepared and reseeded as required per City of Austin Specification 604S. Perform inspection four times per year.
- 5.1.3 Soil samples shall be collected and tested annually by a laboratory such as the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service. Three soil samples, evenly spread across the two fields, shall be collected and prepared for testing per laboratory requirements. Sample locations shall vary from year to year. Test results shall be returned to the Program Manager for Austin Parks and Recreation Centralized Program Division/Athletics. A soil specialist shall analyze the results and make recommendations for soil amendments.

6. Construction Methods

6.1 Annual Maintenance

- 6.1.1 Irrigation heads shall be marked with non toxic, water based, biodegradable marking paint prior to aeration. Existing irrigation lines damaged during the aeration shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- 6.1.2 Aerate athletic fields with slicer aerator four times per year.
- 6.1.3 Amend soil twice a year or as needed with compost and/or organic fertilizers to replenish minerals and nutrients identified as deficient through soil testing.
- 6.1.4 Aerate athletic fields with plug aerator and top dress soil with sand annually.
- 6.1.5 Athletic field shall have a "rest period" for a minimum of 6 weeks throughout a one year period. The area shall be fenced off from access.
- 6.1.6 The turf of the vegetated filter strip, when used as an athletic field, shall not be mowed shorter than 1 1/2 inches.
- 6.1.7 Treatments for vegetation management shall follow the guidelines of the Austin Parks and Recreation Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan using organic, natural, biological methods specified for Waterways.
- 6.1.8 **The use of synthetic fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides is prohibited.**

6.2 Long Term Soil Rehabilitation.

If regular annual maintenance is insufficient to loosen soils compacted from use of the athletic fields, the following rehabilitation methods shall be performed.

- 6.2.1 Irrigation heads shall be marked with non toxic, water based, biodegradable marking paint prior to rehabilitation. Existing irrigation lines damaged during the soil rehabilitation shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- 6.2.2 Soil shall be amended with 1 part compost to 4 parts soil. When scarifying soil to a depth of 6 inches, 1 1/2 inches of compost shall be added.
- 6.2.3 Soil amendments shall be worked into the existing onsite topsoil with a disc or tiller to create a well-blended material. Amended soil shall be raked smooth.
- 6.2.4 After completion of item 6.2.3, the athletic fields shall be sodded with appropriate turf for athletic use. Fields shall be fenced to prevent access for a minimum of four weeks to allow the new turf to become established. More time may be necessary during the winter months as determined by Austin Parks and Recreation.

- 6.3 Tree protection. Precautions will be maintained at all times to protect all trees in the area of construction.



Maintenance of Vegetated Filter Strip  
Barton Springs Pool General Grounds Improvements  
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- 6.3.1 Equipment shall not be operated nor materials stockpiled under the canopies of trees.
- 6.3.2 Topsoil or soil amendments shall not be placed within the drip line of trees greater than 4 inches.

7. Administration

- 7.1 Austin Parks and Recreation is responsible for the annual and long term maintenance of the vegetated filter strip area used as athletic fields. Contact the Program Manager for Austin Parks & Recreation Centralized Program Division/Athletics at 512-978-2670.

Accepted by:

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Austin Parks and Recreation

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Victoria Li, Director  
City of Austin  
Watershed Protection Department



## ENVIRONMENTAL BOARD VARIANCE APPLICATION GUIDE

The Land Use Commission (Zoning and Platting Commission or Planning Commission) are authorized under Section 25-8-41 Land Use Commission Variances to grant environmental variances after receiving a recommendation from the Environmental Board.

Boards and Commissions meet twice monthly, schedules can be found at

<http://austintexas.gov/zpc> , <http://austintexas.gov/planningcommission> , <http://austintexas.gov/envboard>

When requesting an environmental variance the following checklist is suggested to fully describe your case.

Applicant must provide variance request to PDRD Environmental Review Staff

### **24 Days Prior to the EV Board meeting,**

**Applicant should pay the variance fee to Intake.**

Current fee schedule can be found at <http://austintexas.gov/departments/fees>

**The following information is recommended to be included for Board and Commission backup. Please provide to the Environmental Reviewer via email:**

1 –Findings of Fact for each requested variance- ( see page 5)

*Use City of Austin Land Development Code -Land Use Commission Variance Determinations from Chapter 25-8, Subchapter A – Water Quality*

2 – A project description (see page 3)

3- Exhibits (see page 8)

4 – An Environmental Assessment pursuant to ECM 1.3.0 (if required by 25-8-121)

5 – Applicant's variance request letter

### **Ten Days Before Scheduled Board or Commission Meeting**

- Provide 10 hard copies of the information described above.
- Provide legible exhibits.

### **Bring to the Meeting**

USB Drive with an MS PowerPoint presentation providing a description of the project and the basis for the variance request and any other presentation exhibits (to be presented by the applicant)

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Applicant Contact Information**

Name of Applicant	Blayne Stansberry, P.E. Stansberry Engineering Co., Inc.
Street Address	P.O. Box 309
City State ZIP Code	Manhaca, TX 78652
Work Phone	512/292-8000
E-Mail Address	Blayne@stansberryengineering.com

**Variance Case Information**

Case Name	Barton Springs Pool General Grounds Improvements
Case Number	SPC-2012-0104D
Address or Location	2201 Barton Springs Rd.
Environmental Reviewer Name	Liz Johnston
Applicable Ordinance	Section 25-8-482 ( <i>Critical Water Quality Zone</i> ) Section 25-8-483 ( <i>Water Quality Transition Zone</i> ) Section 25-8-514 (Pollution Prevention Required)
Watershed Name	Barton Creek
Watershed Classification	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Water Supply Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Water Supply Rural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barton Springs Zone
Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barton Springs Segment <input type="checkbox"/> Northern Edwards Segment <input type="checkbox"/> Not in Edwards Aquifer Zones
Edwards Aquifer Contributing Zone	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Distance to Nearest Classified Waterway	Adjacent to Barton Creek
Water and Waste Water service to be provided by	Existing service provided by Austin Water Utility

Request

The variance request is as follows (Cite code references):

Variance to Section 25-8-482 (Critical Water Quality Zone) and amendment to Section 25-8-514 (*Pollution Prevention Required*) to allow construction in the critical water quality zone of:

- A. Sidewalks located along the western edge of the south lawn of the pool to provide or improve accessible routes, more particularly described in attached EXHIBIT A.
- B. Construction of underground irrigation and electrical utilities, more particularly described in attached EXHIBIT B.
- C. A ticket booth at the south entry gate, more particularly described in EXHIBIT C.
- D. An overlook deck, new sidewalk and hardscape within the “tree court” area adjacent to the existing bathhouse to improve the soil conditions for the health of the heritage pecan trees, more particularly described in attached EXHIBIT D.
- E. A portion of a vegetated filter strip located east of the existing gravel parking lot on the south side of the pool providing water quality for the expanded parking lot, more particularly described in attached EXHIBIT E.

Amendment to Section 25-8-514 (*Pollution Prevention Required*) to allow impervious cover in excess of 15 percent.

Variance to Section 25-8-483 (*Water Quality Transition Zone*) to allow construction in the water quality transition zone

- A. Concrete parking facility to improve and expand the existing gravel parking lot located on the south side of Barton Springs pool, more particularly described in attached EXHIBIT E.
- B. Sidewalk providing an accessible route from the Robert E. Lee Right of Way and the parking lot on the south side of Barton Springs pool to the south entry to the pool, more particularly described in attached EXHIBIT E.

Impervious cover	Existing	Proposed
square footage:	576,055	16,024
acreage:	13.22	0.37
percentage:	44.4%	0.9%

Provide general description of the property (slope range, elevation range, summary of vegetation / trees, summary of the geology, CWQZ, WQTZ, CEFs, floodplain, heritage trees, any other notable or outstanding characteristics of the property)	<p>The pool and surrounding area used by pool patrons is within the floodplain and Critical Water Quality Zone (CWQZ) of Barton Creek. The CWQZ is currently developed as a park which includes the bathhouse, hardscape areas, the dam and concrete structure around the creek forming the pool, parking and site lighting.</p> <p>The natural character of areas designated for park use inside the pool fence have been modified over time to a manicured lawn area which include non native plant species such as Nandina, Ligustrum, and St. Augustine grass. The proposed project includes new landscaping to remove invasive species and plant native plants in landscape areas.</p> <p>There are a significant number of trees on the site including many heritage pecans which are being protected. Of all the trees, this project will remove two trees - a 5 inch and 6 inch hackberry. The project includes removal of the existing decomposed granite in the tree court adjacent to the bathhouse. The compacted gravel is damaging the existing heritage pecans. The project will remove the gravel and add soil and compost to the critical root zone areas.</p> <p>There are significant slopes in excess of 15 percent within the CWQZ about 100 feet from the edge of the pool. Beyond this point, the ground slopes more gently up to approximately 30 feet above the pool deck before it flattens out.</p>
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Clearly indicate in what way the proposed project does not comply with current Code (include maps and exhibits)	<p>The <b>existing</b> park improvements do not comply with current code. The bathhouse, concrete walkways, and associated parking are located in the floodplain and the CWQZ of Barton Creek and exceed the allowable impervious cover.</p> <p>The proposed general grounds improvements are consistent with existing use and require a variance to allow construction within the critical water quality zone and water quality transition zone.</p>
---	---

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

As required in LDC Section 25-8-41, in order to grant a variance the Land Use Commission must make the following findings of fact:

Include an explanation with each applicable finding of fact.

Project: Barton Springs Pool

Ordinance: Section 25-8-482 (Critical Water Quality Zone), Section 25-8-483 (*Water Quality Transition Zone*) and Section 25-8-514 (Pollution Prevention Required)

A. Land Use Commission variance determinations from Chapter 25-8-41 of the City Code:

1. The requirement will deprive the applicant of a privilege or the safety of property given to owners of other similarly situated property with approximately contemporaneous development.

*Yes. The project will create an accessible route on the south side of the existing pool which is currently inaccessible by the physically impaired, injured, or park users with strollers. The code requirement to prohibit construction in the CWQZ and WQTZ would prevent construction of the accessible parking and walkway to the existing pool.*

2. The variance:

- a) Is not based on a condition caused by the method chosen by the applicant to develop the property, unless the development method provides greater overall environmental protection than is achievable without the variance;

*Yes. The pool is existing and the project will provide a hard surface for access to the south pool deck in lieu of the current dirt trail worn by foot traffic. The existing dirt trail is a source of sediment pollutants into the pool during rain events.*

*The project will also remove the decomposed granite in the tree court compacted by the large amount of foot traffic and replace it with amended soil, compost, and an elevated hardscape to protect the tree roots and improve tree health.*

- b) Is the minimum change necessary to avoid the deprivation of a privilege given to other property owners and to allow a reasonable use of the property;

*Yes. The construction of the accessible walkway, improving the health of heritage trees, and paving the existing gravel parking lot are minimum improvements with large benefits for the citizens and environment at the park.*

- c) Does not create a significant probability of harmful environmental consequences; and

*Yes. The negative environmental impact of the existing use is lessened.*

3. Development with the variance will result in water quality that is at least equal to the water quality achievable without the variance.

*Yes. The water quality will be improved by the variance. The construction of the walkway to the south pool deck in the CWQZ will allow for repair of the dirt trail reducing sediment laden stormwater runoff to the pool. Paving of the existing gravel parking lot in the WQTZ will provide a hard surface reducing dust and runoff of gravel sediments.*

- B. Additional Land Use Commission variance determinations for a requirement of Section 25-8-393 (Water Quality Transition Zone), Section 25-8-423 (Water Quality Transition Zone), Section 25-8-453 (Water Quality Transition Zone), or Article 7, Division 1 (Critical Water Quality Zone Restrictions):

1. The criteria for granting a variance in Section A are met;

*Yes. See above.*

2. The requirement for which a variance is requested prevents a reasonable, economic use of the entire property; and

*Yes. Reasonable use is prevented, but economics is not the issue. The park is currently being used by many citizens with environmental consequences resulting from runoff from dirt trail, tree health consequences from the root compaction of heritage trees from the large volume of foot traffic and equality consequences with the exclusion of the physically impaired from access on the south side of the pool.*

3. The variance is the minimum change necessary to allow a reasonable, economic use of the entire property.



*Yes. The code amendment and granting of the variances will result in a minimum amount of construction to the pool with an overall increase in impervious cover of less than 1 percent.*

**\*\*Variance approval requires all above affirmative findings.**

## Exhibits for Board Backup and/or Presentation

- Aerial photos of the site (backup and presentation)
- Site photos (backup and presentation)
- Aerial photos of the vicinity (backup and presentation)
- Context Map—A map illustrating the subject property in relation to developments in the vicinity to include nearby major streets and waterways (backup and presentation)
- Topographic Map - A topographic map is recommended if a significant grade change on the subject site exists or if there is a significant difference in grade in relation to adjacent properties. (backup and presentation)
- For cut/fill variances, a plan sheet showing areas and depth of cut/fill with topographic elevations. (backup and presentation)
- Site plan showing existing conditions if development exists currently on the property (presentation only)
- Proposed Site Plan- full size electronic or at least legible 11x17 showing proposed development, include tree survey if required as part of site or subdivision plan (backup and presentation)
- Environmental Map – A map that shows pertinent features including Floodplain, CWQZ, WQTZ, CEFs, Setbacks, Recharge Zone, etc. (backup and presentation)
- An Environmental Assessment pursuant to ECM 1.3.0 (if required by 25-8-121) (backup only)
- Applicant's variance request letter (backup only)

## **Accumulation of Committees, Boards and Commissions**

### **Barton Springs Pool – General Grounds Improvements**

#### **Design Commission Meeting - February 27, 2012**

The motion to support both items of Alternative Equivalent Compliance as requested and send a message to the public of the importance of preserving our natural springs was approved.

#### **Joint Committee Meeting - June 28, 2012**

All aspects of the design were approved by the Joint Committee of the Environmental Board and Parks and Recreation Board over a two-year public engagement process.

#### **Land, Facilities and Program Committee Meeting - August 13, 2012**

The motion to Recommend the plan to the Parks and Recreation Board was approved.

#### **Historic Landmark Commission Meeting - August 27, 2012**

The motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness in accordance with Staff recommendation was approved.

#### **Parks and Recreation Board Meeting - August 28, 2012**

The motion to approve the plan was approved with the following exceptions:

1. *ADA Trail through the grass of the South Lawn and request planner and Parks Department Staff look closer at a place for that overlook away from the South Lawn.*

#### **Urban Forestry Board Meeting - December 19, 2012**

The motion to approve the plan was approve with the following recommendations:

1. *Tree Court Area:*
  - a. *The entire tree court area is treated as a Critical Root Zone;*
  - b. *Decomposed granite is removed from root zone areas and under walks to native grade;*
  - c. *Piers for the suspended walk are excavated with an air excavation tool for the first 2';*
  - d. *Soil beneath the suspended walk is de-compacted after piers are poured;*
  - e. *An approved Certified Arborist or appropriate city staff be present during construction.*
2. *Remove the south overlook and pathway to the overlook from the plan.*
3. *Increase size of planting median in south parking lot area to 4000 SF and reduce the large maturing trees in the planting to two trees.*

#### **Planning Commission Meeting – January 8, 2013**

Initiation of SOS Ordinance Amendment.

#### **Codes and Ordinances Subcommittee – January 15, 2013**

Introduction of variance language. Discussion postponed to February 19, 2013

**Photo 1. Eroded trail from ticket booth to pool deck**



**Photo 2. Eroded trail from ticket booth to pool deck**





**Photo 3. North Lawn**



**Photo 4. South Lawn**





**Photo 5. South Lawn**



**Photo 6. South Lawn**





Photo 7. Ticket Booth



Photo 8. Ticket Booth





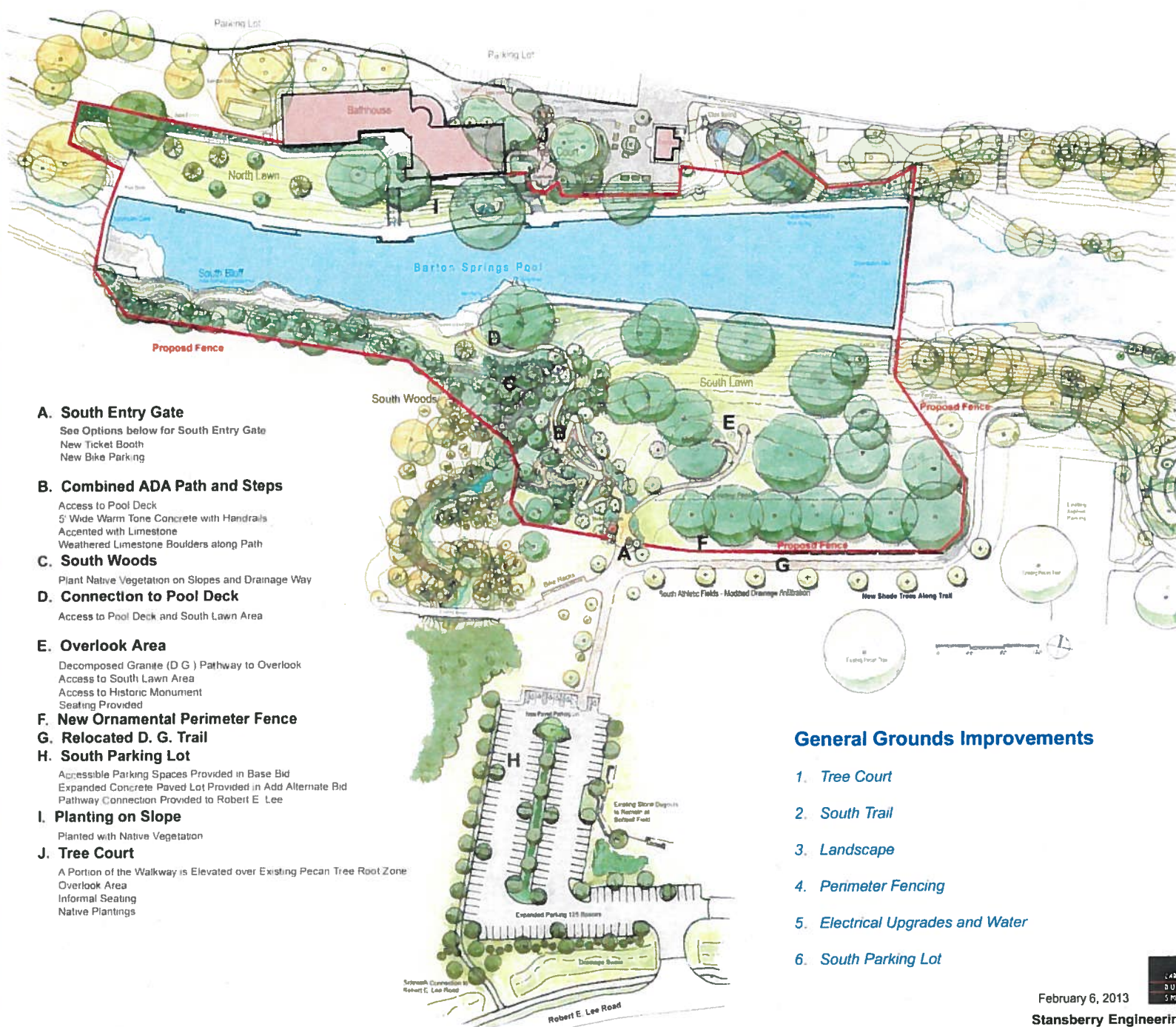
Photo 9. Tree Court



Photo 10. Tree Court







February 6, 2013

Stansberry Engineering



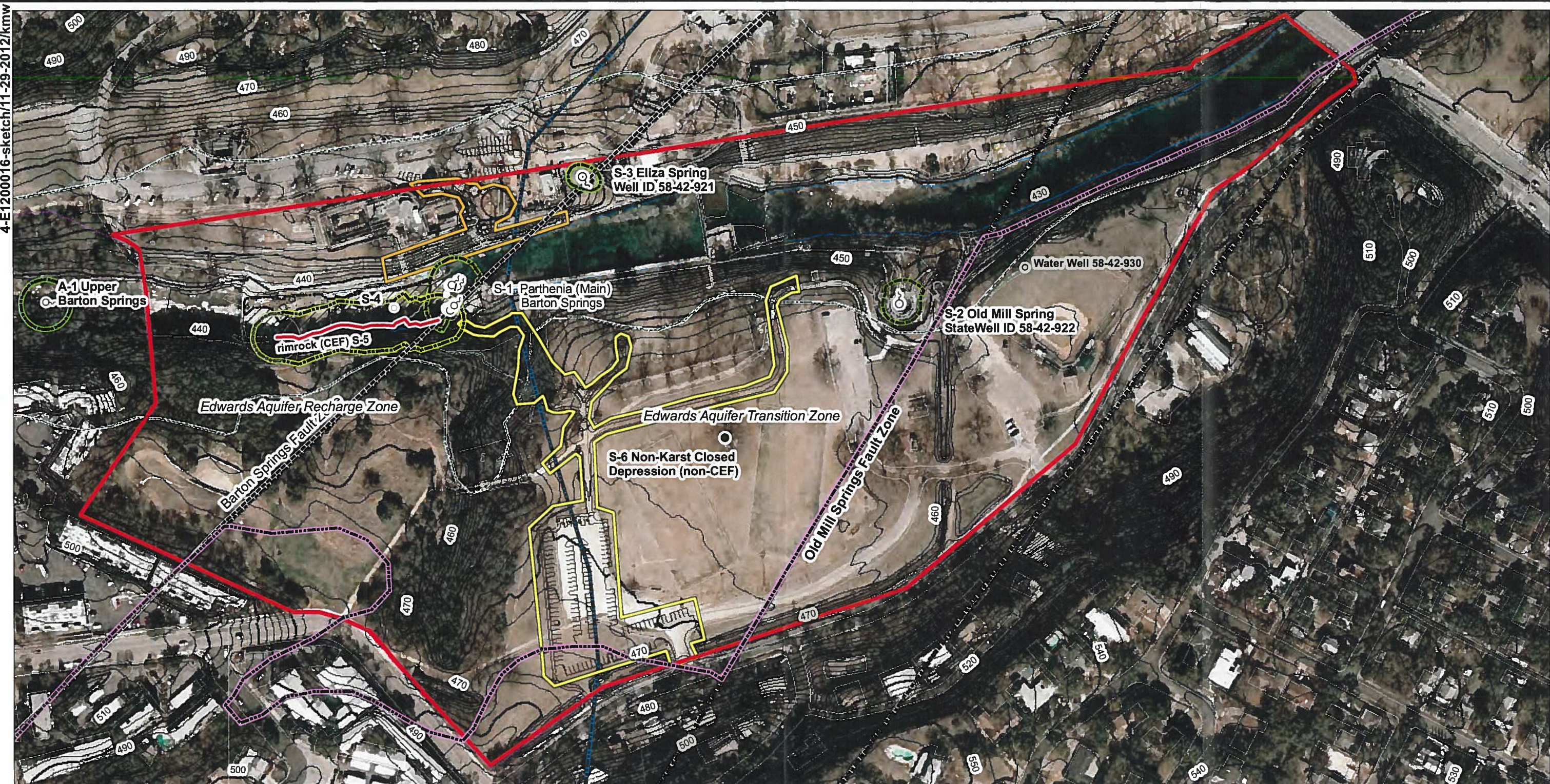




**Barton Springs Pool – General Grounds Improvements – Existing Aerial View**



4-E1200016-sketch/11-29-2012/kmw



Aerial Photo: CAPCOG, Austin West Quadrangle, 2008  
Topography: CAPCOG, 2005  
Recharge Zone: TCEQ, 2006 and City of Austin, 2006  
Client Site Plan, August 2012

**ESCARPMENT ENVIRONMENTAL**  
Geologic & Environmental Consulting for Land Development

**Legend**

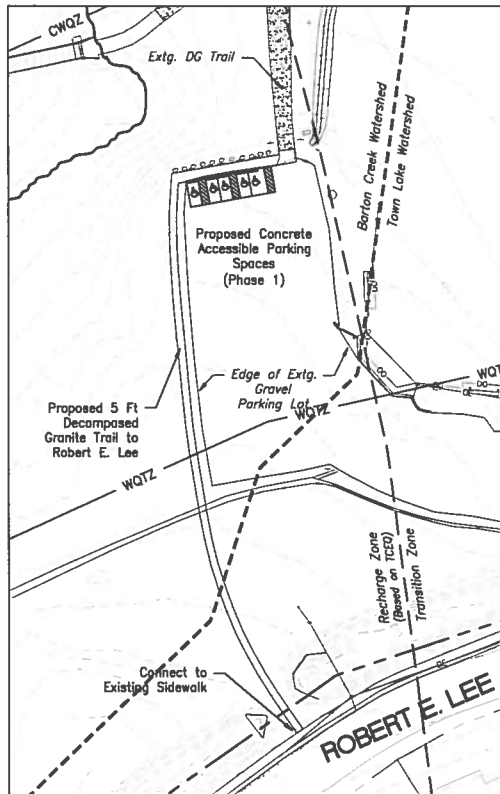
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Property Boundary   | Unconfined Recharge Zone (for City of Austin purposes, 2012) |
| Footprint of Upgrades - North of Pool                     | Rimrock (City of Austin CEF)                                 |
| Footprint of Upgrades - South of Pool                     | Spring (karst aquifer system)                                |
| Edwards Aquifer Recharge/Transition Boundary (TCEQ, 2005) | Concrete Cap in Pool   |
| Floodplain (FEMA, 2006)                                   | Fractured Rock Zone (S-4)                                    |
| Faults (Blome et al, USGS, 2005)                          | Critical Environmental Feature (CEF) setbacks                |

1 inch = 200 feet  
0 100 200  
Feet



**Figure 5**  
**Site Sketch Map**  
**46-acre property**  
**Barton Springs Pool**  
**General Grounds Improvement**  
**2101 Barton Springs Road**  
**Austin, Texas 78704**



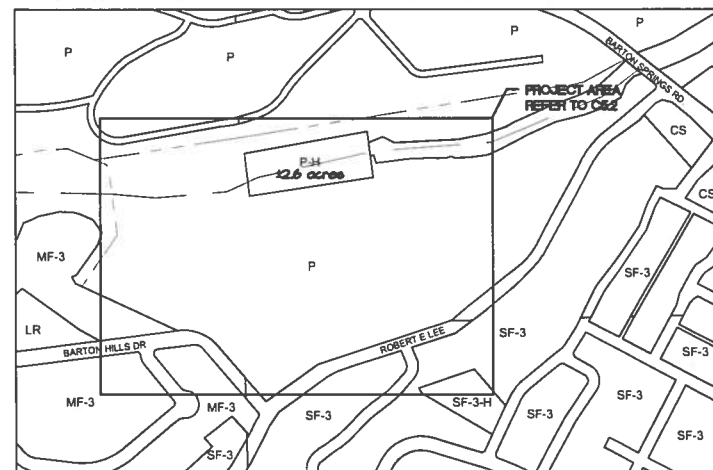
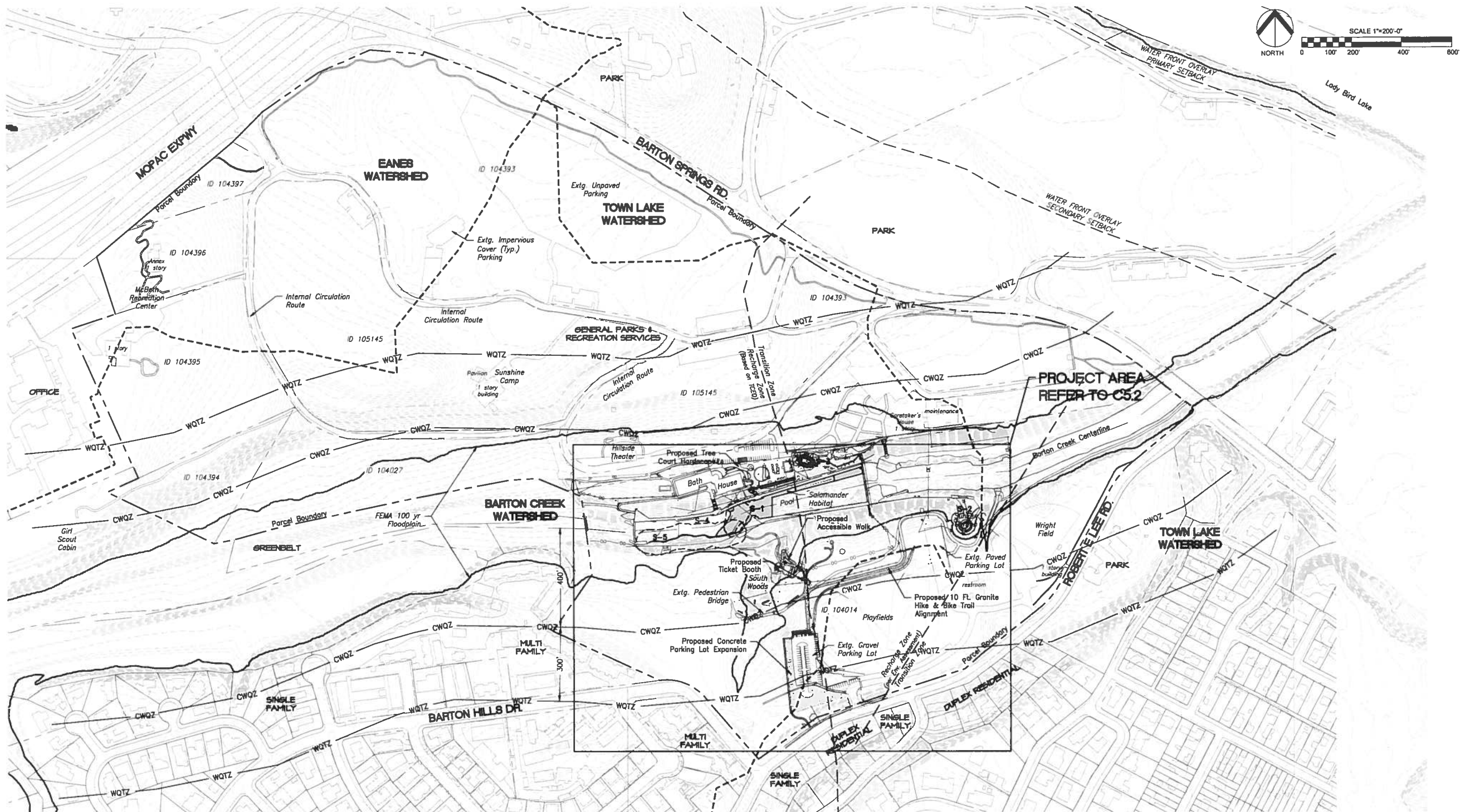


**SITE PLAN RELEASE**

FILE NUMBER: SPC-2012-01040 EXPIRATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CASE MANAGER Nikki Hoeller APPLICATION DATE: 3/9/2012  
APPROVED ADMINISTRATIVELY ON: n/g  
APPROVED BY PLANNING COMMISSION ON: \_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON: \_\_\_\_\_  
under Section 142 of Chapter 25-5 of the Austin City  
Code.

for Director, Planning and Development Review Department

DATE OF RELEASE: \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rev.1 \_\_\_\_\_ Correction 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Rev.2 \_\_\_\_\_ Correction 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Rev.3 \_\_\_\_\_ Correction 3 \_\_\_\_\_



# NOTES

1. THE AREA WITHIN THE NEW PERIMETER FENCING IS 13 ACRES. THE LIMIT OF CONSTRUCTION OF AREA DISTURBED BY NEW SOUTH SIDE PARKING, HARDSCAPE, PLANTING AND IRRIGATION IS 5.3 ACRES.
2. THE LAND USE FOR THIS SITE IS PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES (GENERAL).
3. REFER TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DATED NOVEMBER 2012 BY ESCARPMENT ENVIRONMENTAL FOR INFORMATION ON THE CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES.
  - S-1 PARTHENA (MAIN) BARTON SPRING SETBACK
  - S-2 OLD MILL SPRING SETBACK
  - S-3 ELIZA SPRING SETBACK
  - S-4 RIMROCK SETBACK
  - S-5 RIMROCK (CEF)

SITE PLAN RELEASE	
FILE NUMBER: SPC-2012-0104D	EXPIRATION DATE: 3/9/2012
CASE MANAGER: Niki Heller	APPLICATION DATE: 3/9/2012
APPROVED ADMINISTRATIVELY ON: n/g	
APPROVED BY PLANNING COMMISSION ON: _____	
APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON: _____	
under Section: 147 of Chapter 25-5 of the Austin City Code.	
for Director, Planning and Development Review Department	
DATE OF RELEASE: _____	Zoning: _____
Rev.1 _____	Correction 1 _____
Rev.2 _____	Correction 2 _____
Rev.3 _____	Correction 3 _____

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  
PLANNING  
URBAN DESIGN  
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Fax: 512-476-8128

**STANSBERRY ENGINEERING CO.**  
www.stansberryengineering.com phone 512 / 292-8000  
Texas Registered Engineering Firm F-8276

PROFESSIONAL SEAL:  
THE SEAL APPEARING ON THIS DOCUMENT WAS AUTHORIZED BY BLAYNE E. STANSBERRY, P.E. 88646 ON JANUARY 14, 2013

SHEET KEY MAP:

PROJECT NAME & LOCATION:  
**BARTON SPRINGS POOL  
GENERAL GROUNDS IMPROVEMENTS**  
2201 BARTON SPRINGS ROAD  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78746

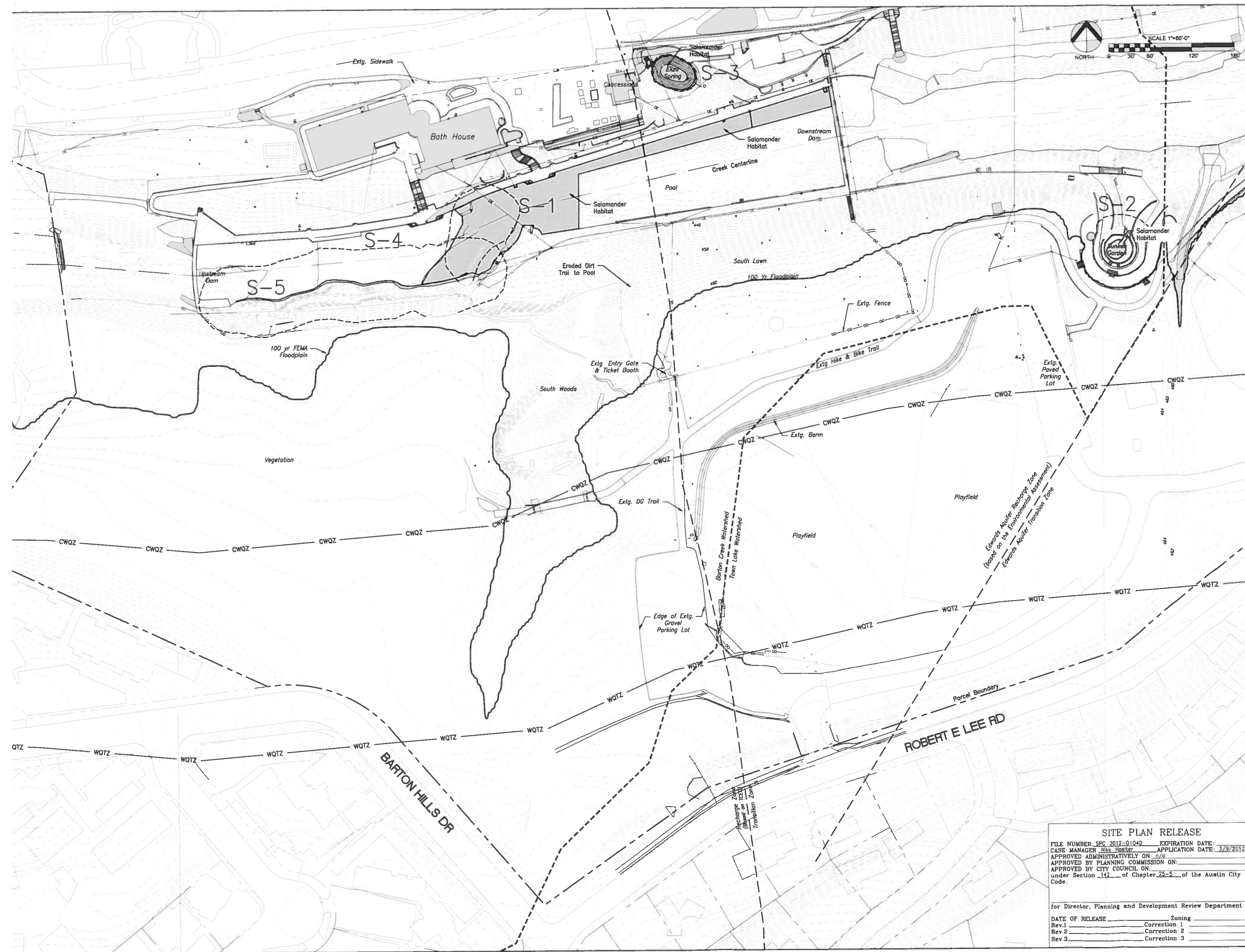
CLIENT  
**AUSTIN  
PARKS  
RECREATION**  
Cultural Places, Natural Spaces  
**CITY OF AUSTIN  
PARKS & RECREATION  
DEPARTMENT**  
: ( 67  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78705

PROJECT NO.: 2008-078  
DRAWN BY: BES  
REVIEWED BY: BES  
DATE: January 14, 2013

SHEET TITLE  
**OVERALL SITE PLAN**

**C5.1**  
15  
OF  
67  
**SPC-2012-0104D**



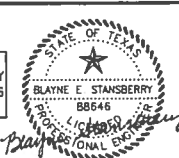


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ON JANUARY 14, 2013



SHEET KEY MAP

PROJECT NAME & LOCATION

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GENERAL GROUNDS IMPROVEMENTS

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AUSTIN, TEXAS 78746

CLIENT



CITY OF AUSTIN  
PARKS & RECREATION  
DEPARTMENT

AUSTIN, TEXAS 78705

PROJECT NO. 2008-078

DRAWN BY: BES

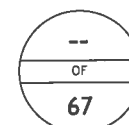
REVIEWED BY: BES

DATE: January 14, 2013

SHEET TITLE:

EXISTING CONDITION

C5.0



SPC-2012-0104D

SITE PLAN RELEASE

FILE NUMBER: SPC-2012-0104D EXPIRATION DATE: 3/9/2012  
CASE MANAGER: Niall Heister APPLICATION DATE: 3/9/2012  
APPROVED ADMINISTRATIVELY ON: 0/0  
APPROVED BY PLANNING COMMISSION ON:  
APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON:  
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