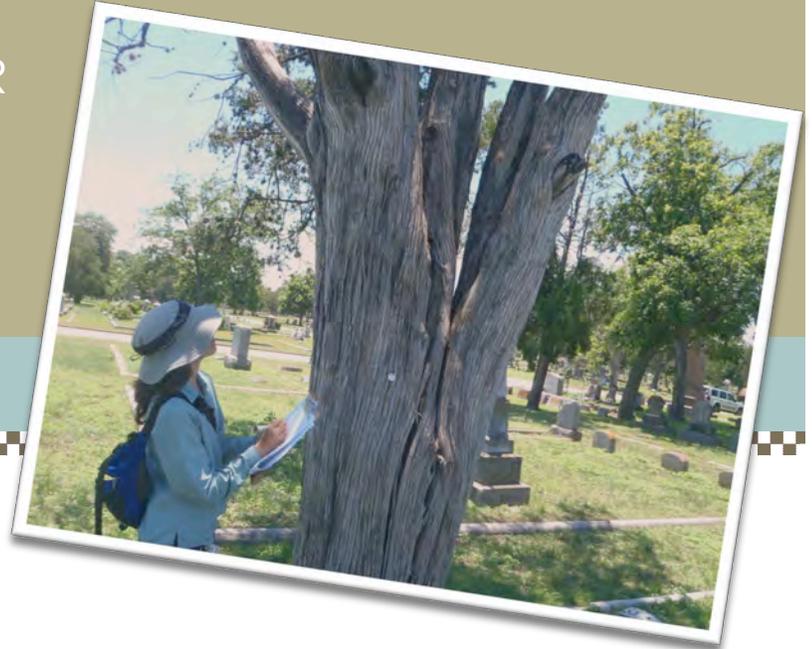


# FIVE

FIVE HISTORIC CEMETERIES.  
FIVE TEAM PARTNERS.  
FIVE COMMUNITY MEETINGS.  
HUNDREDS OF STAKEHOLDERS.  
ONE MASTER PLAN.

## THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN CEMETERY MASTER PLAN

Issue 3, July 2014



### Next Meeting

Saturday, August 23, 2014  
10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.  
Ruiz Branch, Austin Public Library  
1600 Grove Blvd., Austin, TX 78741

## Conditions Report

Join historical landscape architect Laura Knott on Saturday morning, August 23, when she will present the current conditions of Austin’s five municipal cemeteries. Ms. Knott and landscape designer Christina Osborn, from John Milner Associates, Inc., have spent the summer evaluating each cemetery’s vegetation, infrastructure, site plan, and other above-ground elements. According to Ms. Knott, “Although some issues are common to all five cemeteries, each cemetery is unique.” Although the team will not be discussing specific recommendations at the August meeting, they will be available to answer questions. Have a question, concern, or comment that you’d like to see included? Send your questions or comments in advance of the meeting to Kim McKnight at ([kim.mcknight@austintexas.gov](mailto:kim.mcknight@austintexas.gov)).





# Technology in the Cemetery

## Cities around the United States are using cemetery cell phone tours and other technology tools to share their history.

Imagine visiting one of Austin’s historic cemeteries and pausing at a kiosk to dial a number on your cell phone. After entering a code, you hear an introduction to the cemetery’s history and the surrounding neighborhoods. You are then prompted to walk to a nearby grave and dial the code found on a small marker nearby. As you walk, you can listen to music; once you enter the code, you hear the story of the person

buried there, their accomplishments and contributions to the community. The tour is self-paced and includes a dozen such stops.

Tours like these are being used in historic cemeteries all over the United States to share the history of the community and its influential people. The tours and other heritage tourism programs are often created by non-profit organizations formed to help preserve the cemetery, in cooperation with the municipal government.

Similar programs use QR codes. These special barcodes (shown here) can be placed on signs near selected graves, When scanned with smartphones, QR codes connect the user to an informative web page associated with the person buried there.



Accessible signs featuring QR codes and historic photos are already being used in Oakwood Cemetery, as part of an program sponsored by Save Austin’s Cemeteries.

## We Need Your Help!

The Cemetery Master Plan team is currently working to identify historically significant people buried in each of the municipal cemeteries. **You can be a part of this effort by letting us know who is or was important to your community!** What do we mean by “historically significant”? That definition is, in many ways, up to you.

We want to include all people who made important contributions to the Austin community in general, as well as to individual neighborhoods, organizations, etc. Artists, writers, musicians; educators, religious leaders, community organizers; and women and men of influence – whether or not they held official positions – are all worthy of recognition in the master plan.



Please share any information about people in your community by writing to Steph McDougal at [steph.mcdougal@mcdoux.com](mailto:steph.mcdougal@mcdoux.com) or P. O. Box 1556, Kemah TX 77565.



# You Talk; The Project Team Listens

For the past several months, the Cemetery Master Plan team has been talking with people throughout the community about this project and their goals for it. A group of 25 stakeholders shared their opinions on a variety of topics through one-on-one telephone interviews with project consultant Steph McDougal.

Interviewees were Austinites from all over the city, who represent many different demographics and interest groups. They included family members and descendants of the deceased, community and religious leaders, members of Save Austin’s Cemeteries and other community groups, neighbors who live near the cemeteries, and cemetery-related professionals.

Questions focused on long-term needs and goals for the cemeteries, community engagement, and programming/activity concepts.

When asked about goals for the master plan and the cemeteries in general, interviewees’ responses fell into three categories: the master plan must be implemented; it must incorporate input received from citizens; and it must result in the improved appearance of the cemeteries.

Additionally, people had specific concerns about maintenance, the condition of features within the cemeteries, and the need for signage. Most people agreed that all five cemeteries must be treated equitably, but opinions were split on the use of cemeteries for cultural activities or programming. Several people suggested that Oakwood, Oakwood Annex, and Plummers would be more appropriate for such activities than Evergreen or Austin Memorial Park, which are still quite active in terms of ongoing interments.

Ms. McDougal collected a total of 40 pages of comments from interviewees, which have been shared with the project team and the City. Thank you to everyone who participated!

Going forward, information provided by stakeholders will be used to develop one or more surveys of the entire Austin community, to be delivered through SpeakUpAustin. Look for more information on the City and project websites (<http://austintexas.gov/department/cemetery-master-plan> ) and (<http://www.austincemeteryplan.com>) and in the August Cemetery Master Plan newsletter.

## Contact Information for City Officials

### Mayor and City Council

Austin City Hall  
301 W. Second St. Second Floor  
Austin, TX 78701

Mayor Lee Leffingwell

City Council Members:

Sheryl Cole, mayor pro tem

Mike Martinez

Laura Morrison

Chris Riley

Bill Spelman

Kathie Tovo

### Office of the City Manager

P. O. Box 1088, Austin, TX 78767  
512-974-2200

City Manager Marc Ott

Deputy City Manager  
Michael McDonald

Assistant City Managers:

Rey Arellano

Robert Goode

Sue Edwards

Bert Lumberras

Anthony Snipes

### Parks and Recreation Department

P. O. Box 1088, Austin, TX 78767  
512-974-9467

Director Sara Hensley

Assistant Directors:  
Kimberly McNeeley  
Cora Wright

Project Coordinator  
Kim McKnight

Cemetery Manager  
Gilbert Hernandez



### Our Mission

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Department is to provide, protect, and preserve a park system that promotes quality recreational, cultural, and outdoor experiences for the Austin community.



The City of Austin is proud to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

If you require assistance for participation in our programs or use of our facilities, please call (512) 974-9478.



# We Want You! to Participate in the Master Plan Process

In order for this project to be successful, it needs to be inclusive and representative of the Austin community. You can help and make your voice heard. Here's how:

- ✿ Attend one or more community meetings. The meetings are being held in various locations around the city and on different days and times, so that as many people as possible can attend. The next one will take place on **Saturday, August 23, 2014** from **10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** at the **Ruiz Branch, Austin Public Library, at 1600 Grove Blvd.**
- ✿ Sign up to receive this newsletter via email, or look for it at your local library, community center, or senior center. Share it with your friends and neighbors.
- ✿ Sign up for the Austin Cemetery Master Plan email list to get up-to-the-minute information right in your inbox. To subscribe, send an email to [Kim.McKnight@AustinTexas.gov](mailto:Kim.McKnight@AustinTexas.gov).
- ✿ Participate in Speak Up Austin! Surveys: COMING SOON!
- ✿ Visit the Austin Cemetery Master Plan website at <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/cemetery-master-plan>
- ✿ Share your input and feedback with Kim McKnight (PARD Project Coordinator):
  - Email [kim.mcknight@austintexas.gov](mailto:kim.mcknight@austintexas.gov)
  - Call 512-974-9478
  - Send a letter to PARD, Attn: Kim McKnight, P.O. Box 1088, Austin, Texas 78767-1088
- ✿ Call the Austin 3-1-1 line and share your opinions.





# The City of Austin Cemetery Master Plan

Next community meeting:

August 23, 2014

10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Ruiz Branch, Austin Public Library

1600 Grove Blvd.

*Learn more at [www.cityofaustin.org/parks](http://www.cityofaustin.org/parks)*

City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department

P.O. Box 1088, Austin, Texas 78767-1088