

# PEASE PARK

MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



CITY COUNCIL ADOPTED  
OCTOBER 16, 2014

Cover Image: Custer's Oak, Pease Park  
Ted Lee Eubanks

# PEASE PARK

## MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OCTOBER 2014

Prepared for  
PEASE PARK CONSERVANCY  
AUSTIN PARKS & RECREATION

Prepared by  
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September 15, 2014

The Pease Park Master Plan you are about to read is the result of a long journey populated first with far-sighted local heroes like Governor E.M. Pease in 1875 and Janet Fish in 1961 and then, more recently, with concerned ordinary citizens, neighbors and friends. The publication of this Master Plan marks the end of that initial journey and the beginning of a new exciting one, full of promise for one of Austin's iconic green spaces.

Pease Park and the Shoal Creek Greenbelt were in a degraded state in 2007 when the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center published its report on the park's multitude of problems. The park was beyond tired, overused and under-maintained. Parks Department budget cuts had taken a toll and the early efforts to turn things around had not gotten the job done. So, some neighbors and friends came together formed "Trees for Pease" in 2008, intent on reversing this decline.

In time, we became the Pease Park Conservancy, a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. We enjoyed many successes, raising funds, planting new trees, installing an irrigation system, restoring historic elements and establishing a permanent financial endowment for the park's care. But, was it enough? The answer was "no."

With central Austin's boom accelerating ever faster, it was clear that the park would be under incredible increasing pressures. This could ultimately result in undoing all our good work, necessitating that someone else pick up the pieces once again in twenty or thirty years. This was simply unacceptable. We hoped for a "fix" for the park that would last. For our hard won progress to be sustainable, Pease needed a plan - an excellent comprehensive Master Plan prepared by the best professional designers in the country to guide its future. That's what you now have in your hands in our opinion.

The Plan speaks for itself. You will find so many good things in it that I know you will get as excited as we all are. New trails, more trees, picnic shelters, better restrooms, state-of-the-art playscapes and a grand entrance that does justice to the park's historic importance and much, much more.

It spreads some additional recreational amenities throughout the 88 acres of the space to populate them with new life and reflects the public's overwhelmingly expressed desire that the park remain "natural" but better maintained. It seizes opportunities for increased intra-park mobility and use of alternative modes of transportation. The park entrances and periphery along Lamar Blvd. will made more pedestrian friendly and beautified as a true tree lined "parkway" in keeping with the intent of the 1928 City Plan.

The Plan has been prepared with "sustainability" in mind so that the park never again falls into dilapidated state or is totally at the mercy of tight public budgets. It sets the stage for a major public-private collaboration that we hope keeps this special green space in good repair, decade after decade.

There will be a lot of daunting work ahead to make the Master Plan a reality. Funding will be a challenge as always. But, problems did not deter Austin park pioneers like Governor Pease or Janet Fish. It is now our turn to step up to the plate and do something of transcendent importance for our community's future. Our generation has a fiduciary duty to see to it that future residents get to enjoy this green corridor that so important to our collective quality of life.

We can do this for Austin. Let's all get started!

Richard Craig  
President  
Pease Park Conservancy



## City of Austin

Parks and Recreation Department  
200 South Lamar Blvd, Austin, TX 78704

It's an exciting time to live in Austin, Texas! The economy is booming and our city is one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country. The Parks and Recreation Department oversees nearly 17,000 acres of parkland, more than 270 parks, 17 preserves, 39 greenbelts, more than 100 miles of trails, 51 aquatic facilities, five golf courses, and multiple museums and sites of historic, cultural and natural value.



Along with explosive growth comes opportunities and challenges. With one of the highest ratios of parkland per capita for a city of our size, the Parks and Recreation Department must foster partnerships with the nonprofit and private sector to provide the citizens of Austin with the best designed and best maintained parks. The Pease Park Conservancy's efforts serve as a shining example of the type of partnership that is integral to a healthy and prosperous park system. The organization has raised more than \$200,000 for the master plan and an additional \$200,000 for a permanent financial endowment to support the park in the long term. Further, the Pease Park Conservancy has planted nearly 600 trees throughout the park and funded a new roof for the historic Tudor Cottage restrooms.

The Pease Park Master Plan is the culmination of a year-long effort to develop the first master plan for one of Austin's oldest parks and the plan reveals an exciting vision this treasured green space in the heart of our city. With an overall focus on enhancing and preserving the naturalistic feel of the park and adjacent Shoal Creek Greenbelt, opportunities have been identified for improving gateways, sensitively adapting the historic Tudor Cottage restroom building and enhancing the playscape area. Additionally, the plan calls for additional bridge crossings across Shoal Creek and a much improved and enhanced trail system.

The Parks and Recreation Department is proud to support this plan and appreciates the efforts of the Pease Park Conservancy to make it a reality. When the community comes together to support our parks, we all win.

Sincerely,  
Sara L. Hensley, CPRD, Director  
Austin Parks and Recreation Department

The Pease Park Master Plan was completed with contributions from the individuals, organizations, and public sector entities listed below.

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# PREFACE

## HOW TO USE THE MASTER PLAN

The contents of the report reflect the process used to develop it.

The [Executive Summary](#) begins with the big picture, including the vision for the creek and boulevard as an integrated greenway, a summary of recommendations and overview of its implementation.

[Chapter 1- Introduction](#) sets the stage for the recommendations. This chapter outlines the contents of the report and describes the status of the master plan project in relation to its place in the City and its companion watercourse, Waller Creek; the call to action to address the impacts of pressures that bear on the Park, such as population growth, recreation demand, drought, climate change, and balancing the appearance and use of the park; and future areas of study beyond the scope of the master plan.

[Chapter 2 - Foundation for Planning](#) provides an understanding the place. This chapter provides the basis for the master plan recommendations. It includes a description of the master plan process and overview of public engagement, park history, planning context, and inventory of the natural, cultural, recreational and infrastructural resources of the park and its immediate surroundings.

[Chapter 3 – Vision](#) brings together the inventory and public input. This chapter sets the course for the master plan recommendations, and is the outcome of the inventory and public process. The vision distills the input from the Foundation for Planning into a vision statement, four goals for culture, nature, recreation and infrastructure, and their supporting objectives and actions.

[Chapter 4 – Recommendations](#) is the blueprint for action. This chapter is divided into parkwide recommendations that cover the systems and features throughout the Park, design recommendations that cover the design character of specific features found throughout the park, and then detailed recommendations that describe the specific places, or rooms, in the Park.

[Chapter 5 – Implementation](#) shows how the recommendation will be acted upon. This chapter addresses governance; partnerships; cost estimates, phasing and priorities; management of natural areas and uses, security and future horizons after the master plan.



## DEFINITIONS

The Master Plan document uses the following terms to describe Pease Park’s existing conditions and specific recommendations and improvements to be made over time. Though some terms may be obvious, other may be used in a way that is less obvious. Therefore, definitions are provided here for clarity.

**Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC):** See Works Progress Administration.

**District Park:** District parks range from 31 to 200 acres, have a service area of a two mile radius, provide basic recreational opportunities found in neighborhood parks that may also utilize the land’s features in preservation and interpretation and provide major indoor and outdoor facilities.

**Gateway:** a city planning / urban design term describing the architectural treatment that defines the space or feature that marks the entry into a place of a particular character.

In this master plan, the following definitions apply:

**Civic Gateway:** gateways at 15th and 31st Streets that mark the passage into the “Pease Park / Lamar Parkway” space, and thresholds between Downtown Austin and West Austin at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, 24th and 29th Streets.

**Park Gateway:** pedestrian oriented entrances into to the park at Kingsbury Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Harrell / Windsor Streets, 24th, Gaston, 29th and 31st Streets.

**Greenway:** a corridor of undeveloped land preserved for recreational use or environmental protection (first used in 1966) (Merriam Webster) In the context of this master plan, greenway refers to the Shoal Creek Greenway as defined in the Shoal Creek Greenway Action Plan.

**Park:** Generically, a large public green area in a town, used for recreation. In the context of this plan, “Park” refers to all the public open space between Kingsbury Street and 31st Street. Austin PARD has categorized Pease Park as a District Park.

**Parkway:** Generically a parkway is a broad landscaped thoroughfare (first used in 1887) (Merriam Webster) The master plan proposes that Lamar Boulevard be thought of as a parkway so that the Park and Lamar Boulevard can be considered as a unified and interrelated system.

*Parkway* is also the proper name of the street that runs from Lamar Boulevard to 24th Street. It is called Kingsbury Street between the Pease Park Gates and Harrell Street. Parkway / Kingsbury Street presently serve as a frontage street for the neighborhood side of the park. The master plan recommends that Parkway / Kingsbury Street be developed to look and function more like a true parkway.

**Pease Park:** The specific 42.68-acre City property designated as a public park. Governor Pease and his wife dedicated 23 acres of land in 1875 for use as a public park extending from what is now the intersection of Kingsbury Street / Parkway to a point south of Rainbow Lane. The City built Kingsbury Street and Parkway within the 23-acre limits, and later enlarged the park to its present 42.68 acres, extending it to the north to 24th Street.

**Project Area:** The land that is the subject of this master plan. The project area includes the 42.68 acres of Pease Park proper from Kingsbury Street to 24th Street, and a 41.74 acre portion of the larger public open space referred to as the Shoal Creek Greenbelt, from 24th to 31st Streets. This land lies within the Shoal Creek Greenway (see below) and the Shoal Creek Watershed. The project area occupies only 1% of total watershed.

**Shoal Creek:** The 10.1 mile creek that flows through Pease Park. 2.1 miles is within the project area. Shoal Creek is the drainage corridor of the Shoal Creek Watershed.

**Shoal Creek Greenbelt:** The public open space extending northwards along the creek from 24th Street. This is the northern, upstream part of the project area and of the Shoal Creek Greenway plan's Parkland Character Zone.

**Shoal Creek Greenway Action Plan** produced in 1998 for the Shoal Creek Partnership. In the Action Plan, the project area of Pease Park master plan is called the "Parkland Character-15th-29th Streets." (The Cliffs are covered in the "Suburban Character Zone")

**Shoal Creek Watershed:** a drainage area of 12.5 square miles /8,384 acres. The watershed is highly urbanized, with 60% of the watershed covered by impervious surface,

#### **Shoal Creek Watershed Restoration**

**Project:** The \$5.8 million project by the City's Watershed Protection Department will stabilize approximately 3,000 linear feet of the creek bank, relocate wastewater lines from the creek bed, provide stormwater treatment for water quality and improve vegetation and trails along the sides of the creek. Updates to the original design include adding an underpass to the hike and bike lane, which will bypass the busy Windsor Road / 24th Street intersection. Also, thanks to public input, more open space was incorporated into the design with plans to install a rain meadow, instead of rain gardens, to capture and retain stormwater runoff at Custer's Meadow in Pease Park.

**Urban Trail Network** "A citywide network of non-motorized, multi-use pathways that are used by bicyclists, walkers and runners for both transportation and recreation purposes." (Urban Trails Master Plan)

**Watershed:** The area of land that drains into a creek. Shoal Creek is in the Shoal Creek Greenway, which is in the Shoal Creek Watershed.

**Works Progress Administration (WPA):** The federal agency responsible for civic recovery works during the depression via the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Along the Creek, this included work on the bridges, Shoal Creek Trail, and Lamar Boulevard, among other work.

## City and Other Entities

### **Austin Park and Recreation Department**

**(PARD):** 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. PARD owns the land and manages the park property and is a partner with PPC in the development of this master plan.

**Austin Energy:** maintains the power lines and utility poles in the public right of way. Austin Energy is a proposed partner in the burial of the power lines and relocation of poles at Kingsbury Street and Polecat Hollow.

**Austin Parks and Recreation Board:** The Park and Recreation Board’s charter is for acquisition, development, improvement, equipment, and maintenance of City parks and public playgrounds; future development of City parks, playgrounds, and recreational facilities, and purchase of additional land for those purposes; and improvements in the maintenance, operation, and general welfare of the City’s parks, grounds, and recreational facilities and their use by the public.

**Austin Parks Foundation:** The Austin Parks Foundation (APF) is a non-profit organization devoted to building public/private partnerships to develop and maintain parks, trails, and open space in Austin and Travis County. APF’s mission is to connect people to resources and partnerships to develop and improve parks. APF seeks to fill the gap between what needs to be done and what Austin’s parks department can afford to do.

**Austin Streets Department:** Austin’s Street and Bridge Operations handle repair and maintenance of all of Austin’s structures within the City’s public right-of-way. This includes streets, bridges, sidewalks and guardrails. A potential partner in the improvement of Lamar Boulevard, Kingsbury Street and Parkway.

**Austin Water Utility:** the entity responsible for the water and sewer lines that run down the center of the creek and across 29th Street at Lamar Terrace.

**Austin Urban Forestry Board:** May study, investigate, plan, advise, report, and recommend any action, program, plan, or legislation which the board determines necessary or advisable for the care, preservation, pruning, planting, replanting, removal, or disposition of trees and shrubs and other landscaping in public parks, along streets, and in other public areas. A possible partner in advocating for street trees and managing the park’s tree canopy.

**Austin Watershed Protection Department:** Watershed Protection Department (WPD) protects lives, property and the environment of our community by reducing the impact of flood, erosion and water pollution. WPD is leading the Shoal Creek Restoration Project.

**Pease Park Conservancy (PPC):** formerly known as Trees for Pease, founded in 2008 to save the Park from further degradation. PPC is the initiator and primary funder of the master plan. PPC is “dedicated to the rehabilitation beautification and support of Austin’s central city park for the enjoyment of Austin and future generations.”

**Shoal Creek Conservancy (SCC):** formed in 2013 to help improve Shoal Creek for all Austinites - present and future. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose vision is: Shoal Creek will be a vibrant corridor that integrates the flow of water and people, engages the community, and inspires the public. The Shoal Creek Conservancy’s mission is to restore, protect and enhance the ecological, social and cultural vibrance of Shoal Creek for the people of Austin by engaging the public and partnering with the community.

The conservancy addresses the entire watershed. The SCC is a cooperating partner in the development of the master plan.

## PLACE NAMES

The park is made of a series of connected spaces, like rooms. The spaces have their own identity and are the point of reference in this master plan.



### 1 KINGSBURY COMMONS

Kingsbury Commons is the recreational heart and cultural soul of Pease Park. It is home to the playground and splashpad as well as the Historic Tudor Cottage and iconic picnic tables. The historic Pease Park Gates frame the main entry to the Park. The mature tree canopy is dominated by cedar elms and will eventually be joined by the recently planted sycamores, oaks and elms.



### 2 BIG FIELD

As the largest open space in Pease Park, Big Field serves as a multi-purpose event field and home to Eeyore's Birthday Party. Big Field offers sweeping interior views of the Park as well as views of the rising downtown skyline.



### 3 HILLSIDE

Live oak trees frame a spectacular view of the State Capitol Building along this slope forest of ashe juniper, hackberry and cedar elms. Starting from the back of Tudor Cottage, Hillside, along with North Ramble, includes the Park's largest collection of hiking and nature trails.



### 4 NORTH RAMBLE

North Ramble is a Texas ash and ashe juniper dominated slope forest that suffers from hillside erosion. Like its neighbor, Hillside, North Ramble is home to many of the park's hiking and nature trails.



### 5 WINDSOR HILLSIDE

At one of the highest elevations above Shoal Creek, Windsor Hillside typifies the dry-mesic slope forest and woodland of the Edwards Plateau. This upland hillside suffers from an abundance of non-native invasive plants.



### 6 POLECAT HOLLOW

Home to Lamar Knoll, Mesquite Grove and the popular volleyball courts, Polecat Hollow is the largest open space on the east side of Shoal Creek with stunning views of Downtown Austin. Current creek bank soil erosion will be resculpted and replanted by the City of Austin Watershed Protection Department.



### 7 CUSTER'S MEADOW

Named after the site of General George A Custer's encampment in the 1860's, this meadow is anchored by a stately live oak known as Custer's Oak. Custer's Meadow serves as a vehicular and pedestrian gateway to the Park and offers multiple creek access points to explore the waters of Shoal Creek.



### 8 CASWELL SHOALS

Live Oaks and Cedar Elms dominate this woodland and savannah landscape on the east side of Shoal Creek. This is the site of a new commuter bicyclist trail with access to Lamar Boulevard and 24th St.



### 9 WOOTEN WOODS

Cedar elm groves with signature live oaks frame a pedestrian promenade reminiscent of a formal alley. Frequent flooding along with heavy human and dog traffic have eliminated the groundcover and understory necessitating the need for immediate restoration efforts.



### 10 LIVE OAK TERRACE

The presence of mature live oaks and closely mowed herbaceous vegetation characterize the open riparian space of the Live Oak Terrace. At the heart of the terrace is a stone bench triangle nestled amongst the trunks of three live oaks.



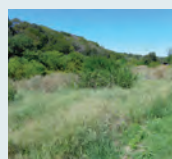
### 11 GASTON GREEN

As the heart of the dog park, Gaston Green is the central open space north of 24th St. With entrances from Shoal Creek Boulevard and Gaston St., it is one of the few locations where you can park in the park.



### 12 EAST BANK

East Bank is home to some of the steepest slopes in Pease Park which serve to funnel and direct views while driving along Lamar Boulevard. The wooden hillside is dominated by a cedar elm canopy but suffers from hillside erosion and abundance of non-native invasive plants.



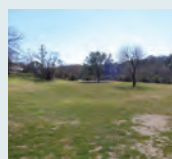
### 13 LAMAR SLOPE

Often confused as a right-of-way for Lamar Boulevard, Lamar Lawn is a narrow open space with access only from the Lamar sidewalk. The Lamar Lawn presents an opportunity for riparian restoration and stormwater infiltration along Lamar Boulevard.



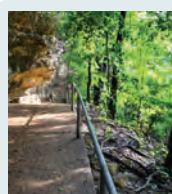
### 14 RAMBLE SCRAMBLE

The steep slope forest canopy of the Ramble Scramble is dominated by the live oak, cedar elm and ashe juniper while the understory is being taken over by young non-native invasive plants. Ramble Scramble is home to Split Rock, a huge boulder that split into two forming a forty-foot canyon.



### 15 LAMAR TERRACE

Characterized by level terrain out of the floodplain, Lamar Terrace is an unprogrammed open space with access to Lamar Boulevard and 29th St. Lamar Terrace is home to a sewer interceptor which runs through the center of the terrace.



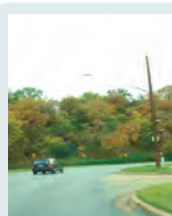
### 16 THE BLUFFS

A piece of Hill Country in the City, the 40' high bluffs are a natural geologic landmark unique to the rest of the Park. Cat Hole and Blue Hole are famous hideouts along The Bluffs that play a prominent role in the cultural lore of Austin. The Bluffs suffer from bank erosion and an infestation of invasive species.



### SHOAL CREEK

As one of the seven creeks in Austin, Shoal Creek is the central spine flowing through Pease Park. Its' tranquil and turbulent waters serve as a destination for park users and as a force of nature requiring bank stabilization and riparian reforestation. Over 80% of the Pease Park Master Plan site is within the Shoal Creek Floodplain.



### LAMAR BOULEVARD

Lamar Boulevard parallels the Shoal Creek for nearly two miles along the eastern frontage of Pease Park. With over 75,000 commuters a day and counting, Lamar Boulevard is a transportation artery that presents several challenges for Pease Park in terms of pedestrian connectivity, stormwater management and utility restrictions.



### KINGSBURY / PARKWAY

Together Kingsbury and Parkway form the western frontage of Pease Park. The two lane roads present an opportunity to connect Pease Park with the neighborhoods while defining what the character of a park road can be.

### A Note about the Room Names

For ease of communication in this report, Pease Park has been divided into sixteen character zones. The place names assigned to these spaces are interim names for the purpose of reference only. The names call attention to, provoke dialogue about, and memorialize the unique character of the place. Where possible, the names reflect the geography or history of the park. Some, such as Custer's Meadow, are longstanding traditions; others, such as "Lamar Terrace" have no current identity, but are important locations worthy of a name. The final names are the work of Austinites to determine, per Austin City code. The code establishes a naming policy for public parks as a public process, which could be initiated by PARD and PPC, if there is a desire to formally name the places in the Park.

### From Spaces to Places

It takes the effort of concerned and devoted people to make generic spaces become enduring, memorable. Place names are generally an indicator of community concern for a landscape, such as Custer's Meadow or Split Rock. PARD and PPC should engage the community in a public process to determine place names for the special locations in the Park, integrated with interpretive planning. For instance, research determined that Polecat Hollow was the name that area had historically been given according to a book called "A History of Central Texas" by Mary Starr Barkley published in 1970.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## THE BIG PICTURE

The master plan is a blueprint for a unified vision defined by supporting goals, objectives and actions, with a prioritized phasing plan and budget. Like the Park itself, the plan bridges past and present, drawing from the memories that give Pease Park its special meaning and the aspirations for its role in the Austin of the future.

The executive summary presents the big picture of the Park, including the vision for the creek and boulevard as an integrated greenway, a summary of recommendations and overview of its implementation.



Lamar Senior  
Activity Center

Lamar Boulevard



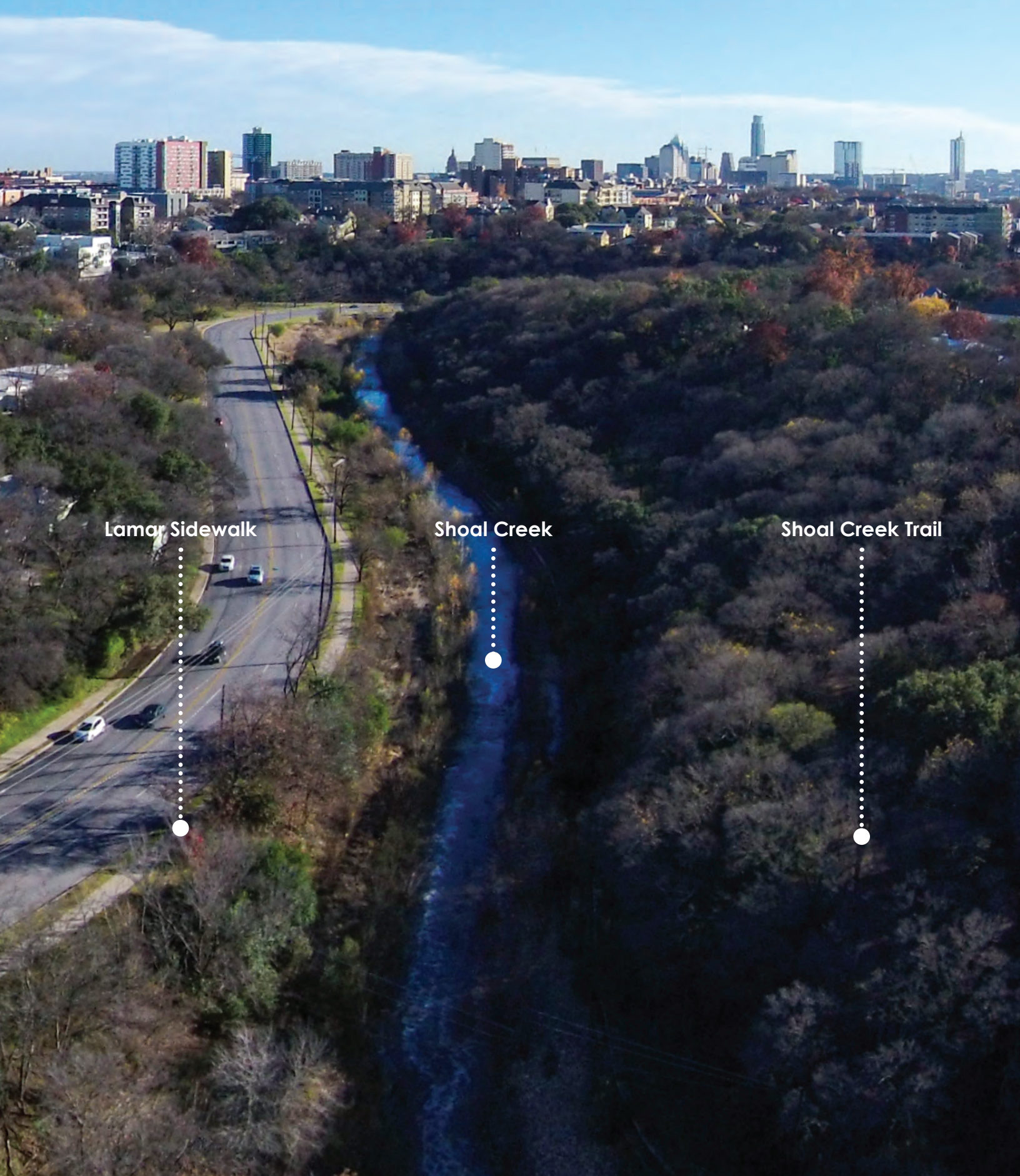
## AUSTIN'S GRAND PARKWAY

Pease Park, Lamar Boulevard and Shoal Creek together form Austin's grand parkway, winding towards downtown Austin, connecting the City to the Colorado River at Lady Bird Lake.

A tangible symbol of the region's famous geology, the Shoal Creek Valley is both visible evidence of the Balcones Fault system separating the Hill Country from the Blackland Prairie and the dividing line between downtown and west Austin. Pease Park connects the City and its neighborhoods, a civic landmark and neighborhood treasure.

The Pease Park Master Plan looks at the Park, creek and road as an integrated system that moves water, cars, bicycles, people, and wildlife through the valley. The Shoal Creek Trail and Lamar Sidewalk connect neighborhoods upstream with the booming lower Shoal Creek district.

What is today a road next to a park will be tomorrow's grand parkway, a memorable green ribbon taking its place among other great parkways of the nation.



Lamar Sidewalk

Shoal Creek

Shoal Creek Trail

*Pease Park and the Shoal Creek Greenbelt stretch over two miles along Shoal Creek and Lamar Boulevard. The plan shows the vision for a fuller canopy of shade trees, with five proposed activity hubs and gateways.*

## POLISHING A HIDDEN GEM

Austinites have yet to know the full value of the hidden gem that lay before them. Pease Park, by virtue of its character and strategic location, is an exceptional and undervalued, albeit much loved, community treasure. We have not seen the full potential of Pease Park. This is a good time to plan for its future, and to aspire to a build on the Park and greenbelt's noble past of ground breaking environmental history.

In many cities, any open space not specifically spoken for and programmed, or explicitly preserved as undeveloped land, is claimed for expedient use such as parking, organized ball fields, or concessions. Pease Park has miraculously escaped this, in part because of its narrowness and location by the volatile Shoal Creek. It remains something of a blank slate upon which Austinites can write their own narrative. Perhaps that is why the Park is as popular as it is - a beloved place that allows people to use it as they wish. Keeping a low profile may have saved the Park from intensive development.

But there is no assurance that this passive approach is guaranteed to continue unchallenged, nor that the absence of a plan will stand the Park in good stead in the competition for resources to sustain it. In the absence of other guidance, the Park is there for people to decide what happens to it on an ad hoc basis. Absent a publicly supported, administratively approved plan for its future, there is nothing but force of communal will to prevent the Park from being changed in a way that alters the very qualities that make it appealing.

Without a plan to prepare it for the inevitability of increasing use, there is currently no way for the Park to protect itself from that impact. While the ongoing Watershed Protection Department Restoration Project will help to address water quality and quantity problems, only an integrated partnership with the City and the Shoal Creek Conservancy will be able to tackle the full magnitude of this critical watershed-wide problem. Climate change in the form of drought, rising temperatures and catastrophic flooding is stressing the great canopy of trees and the creek bed, and shows no sign of abating. Without a plan, current and planned investments are in perpetual jeopardy from drought, flooding and polluted water. Likewise, there is no plan to protect the Park from being smothered by good intentions to place unwanted facilities in inopportune locations. This plan is needed to assist in advocating for Pease Park's future - for the resources required to preserve its natural and cultural heritage, and develop its recreational and infrastructural potential.



Bluffs



Lamar Terrace



Gaston Green



Wooten Woods



Parkway



Custer's Meadow



Windsor



Lamar Boulevard



Polcat Hollow



MLK Gateway



Kingsbury Gateway

*While the ongoing Watershed Protection Department Restoration Project will help to address water quality and quantity problems, only an integrated partnership with the City and the Shoal Creek Conservancy will be able to tackle the full magnitude of this critical watershed-wide problem. Climate change in the form of drought, rising temperatures and catastrophic flooding is stressing the great canopy of trees and the creek bed, and shows no sign of abating. Without a plan, current and planned investments are in perpetual jeopardy from drought, flooding and polluted water.*

## DARING TO DREAM

Beyond these protective, reactive concerns, there is a higher civic value to which the Park ought to aspire. Over years of budget woes, citizens have been, in effect, trained to expect and even demand less due to fiscal and other challenges that confront our cities. As a result, citizens are frequently loath to ask the best of the public realm. The truism that parks are among the first sectors to be cut when budgets are tight has made us accept the status quo. That has started to change in Austin as the City seeks its new identity as a one of the most popular cities in the country, and park advocates have successfully lobbied for higher funding.

In addition to protecting it, a plan for Pease Park gives us the opportunity to think big and long term. The era in which we live is one of the first in decades in which so many cities are aspiring to improve their quality of life by improving their parks. The desire to improve quality of life through park amenities can be considered a "movement." New York and Chicago have made major investments in their parks. These cities, along with others, have made this the first flowering of park improvement since the eras of the City Beautiful Movement and WPA.

In this context, stewards, advocates and community members have taken time to examine the Park we see today and dream of a Pease Park that could be. This has resulted in a plan that focuses on the Park itself, and reaches out to its surroundings to create the best setting for the Park's success.

The opportunity to shape the future of Pease Park and the Shoal Creek Greenbelt can be compared to Governor Elisha M. and Lucadia Pease's donation of the land for the Park and to

another threshold moment in Austin's history.

In recounting the story of one of Austin's public realm heroines, Janet Long Fish, author and educator William Scott Swearingen Jr. observed that Mrs. Fish:

*"...gave her trail the name 'Shoal Creek Hike and Bike Trail' ... The trail became a model linear park at both the local and national levels. As a form of landscape, the Hike and Bike Trail served as the model for all future greenbelts in Austin, showing how area creeks could be used for recreation rather than dumping grounds. It also provided a name for an idea used by other cities across the nation, for the first time placing Austin in the forefront of thinking about environmental landforms and city design."*

The seeds of civic leadership are already inherent in the place. The first big idea was to create the Park, the second to create the trail and greenbelt. The next step is to do the hard work to bring these ideas into the 21st century and form the creek, Park and boulevard into a true integrated parkway. This time the parkway will be a leader pointing the way to watershed restoration and a landmark for the City. This initiative will be led by a partnership among PARD, Pease Park Conservancy, Shoal Creek Conservancy and other City departments and partners.



## MOVING FROM PRESENT TO FUTURE

The master plan takes a position between status quo and radical makeover. Public sentiment was clearly in favor of keeping the Park as it is. The responsibility of managers and advocates is to look to the future to protect the Park and offer reasonable public amenities that accommodate evolving recreational use and the growth that has begun to affect the park. Between these poles is a first step towards a revitalized and robust park, one that is appropriate for the level of current use and public expectation. The plan provides more facilities than are presently

needed to accommodate future growth. Planning now allows for quick implementation response when the time comes to build. The plan changes more than some are comfortable with, and does not change as much as others think is necessary. Public opinion favors familiarity. Vision favors change. The plan divides the major issues and actions to address them into four themes. Nature and culture, which represent preservation and restoration; and recreation and infrastructure, which represent change, growth and design.

The existing prefabricated restroom is an unflattering focal point for Kingsbury Commons. It is proposed to be removed and a new, larger restroom is proposed, located, along with the splash park mechanical room, in the west side of the commons, away from the floodway and tucked into the slope.

## VISION

### PEASE PARK AND SHOAL CREEK GREENBELT IS...

- > a green, urban oasis whose natural waterway, Shoal Creek, its forest, open spaces and cultural history are protected and enhanced,
- > a safe, well-maintained and beautiful destination that is easily accessible for all, and serves the adjoining neighborhoods and all Austinites, and
- > a hub of Austin's trail system, where people gather as a community to enjoy recreation and respite.



Image: Siglo

## GOALS AND ACTIONS

The goals of sustaining and improving Pease Park cover the four parts of the Park's physical development. **ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS** address the Park's natural systems, **CULTURAL ACTIONS** address the historic and contemporary built features in the Park, **RECREATIONAL ACTIONS** address the spaces and features that provide leisure activities for people and **CONNECTIONS ACTIONS** link the Park to the surrounding neighborhoods and system, largely outside of the Park property. Below are listed the major objectives that will shape the park, grouped by these four themes.

### ENVIRONMENT

*Goal: Preserve and Enhance the Natural Environment*

- Preserve the existing legacy trees and other native trees and vegetation where possible.
- Plant more trees – especially on the hillside, along the creek and roadways.
- Eradicate invasive plants, focusing on the hillside and creek edge.
- Restore the creek edge by extending the actions of the Watersheds restoration project from Gaston Green to the Cliffs.
- Improve habitat by reducing fragmentation / improving patch and corridor integrity and planting vegetation conducive to desirable species such as song birds, waterfowl and pollinators.
- Define the edges of the manicured landscape versus naturalized landscape for the purpose of maintenance and aesthetics.
- Provide for special treatment and preservation of the important geologic resources including the Buda limestone Cliffs and Split Rock and the fossil beds.

### CULTURE

*Goal: Preserve and Enhance the Cultural Environment*

- Define the spaces of the Park as rooms and provide names grounded in local heritage.
- Preserve and enhance the 1920s and CCC-era historic features in the park: Tudor Cottage, picnic tables, walls and bridges.
- Reuse the Tudor Cottage as a public meeting place.
- Design new facilities to complement but not mimic existing historic features - to reinforce the civic and rustic aspects of the park on the streets and the park interior respectively.
- Provide picnic / shade shelters in each of the five hubs, with new bathrooms in Kingsbury and Lamar, and provisions for potential future bathrooms and a park folly called the "History Hut" in Gaston Green.
- Develop an interpretive program for the natural and cultural environment.

### RECREATION

*Goal: Provide Appropriate Recreation*

- Increase passive recreation capacity by distributing activity northward in the park.
- Focus recreation facilities and gathering areas in five locations: Kingsbury Commons, Polecat Hollow, Custer's Meadow, Gaston Green and Lamar Terrace.
- Create more places for people to gather, sit and picnic.
- Extend and improve the trail system throughout the park.
- Create a hierarchy of trails including Shoal Creek and Lamar sidewalk trails as the primary spines, along with a secondary and tertiary level of path development.
- Provide attractive trails that evoke the flow of moving water, and are constructed in a sustainable way to resist flood damage and erosion.

### INFRASTRUCTURE CONNECTIONS

*Goal: Provide or Advocate for Connective Infrastructure to Support Use and Access*

- Develop attractive and welcoming park gateways at major intersections and trailheads at the five hubs.
- Improve Lamar Boulevard as a civic "parkway" and improve Parkway with sidewalks and safe crossings as a more neighborhood oriented park frontage street.
- Add street trees where possible, improve stormwater management /rainwater capture, and bury power and communications lines where possible at Kingsbury and along Polecat Hollow.

## MAJOR ACTIONS AT THE FIVE ACTIVITY HUBS AND ADJACENT STREETS

The strategy to accommodate and manage recreational use is to concentrate activity in five hubs to allow the forest to regenerate and thrive: Kingsbury Commons, Polecat Hollow, Custer's Meadow, Gaston Green and Lamar Terrace. To reduce impact in Pease Park where park use is heaviest, additional points of recreational development are proposed at Gaston Green and Lamar Terrace. The descriptions below assume that landscape restoration is a given feature at all locations.

### KINGSBURY COMMONS ACTIVITY HUB



Image: WRT

#### OPEN ARMS: THE FUTURE KINGSBURY COMMONS

*The welcoming front door of the park is a civic landmark with a shady and well-used entry area and a long sweeping view across the Big Field.*

Kingsbury Commons, the current heart of Pease Park, will remain the Park's most prominent space. New access and internal improvements will make it a more attractive and interesting place while reinforcing the good parts that make it popular and one of Austin's iconic open spaces.

##### Approach, Arrival and Entry

The most dramatic change will come at the doorstep to the Park.

- Primary Park gateway and arrival space at Kingsbury Commons
- Proper setting for the historic stone gates integrated with the Park arrival space
- "Traffic table" of special paving at the intersection of Parkway and Kingsbury to slow traffic
- Clear, safe and attractive pedestrian crossings from Parkway to the Park
- Relocate utility poles and bury the wires in the prime viewshed/circulation space
- New signature pedestrian bridge aligned with City's proposed 15th Street crosswalk on Lamar, and salvage the existing bridge for re-use
- Re-designed parking lot to improve appearance, capture/filter stormwater, and add shade
- Remove/redesign vehicle barrier and position dumpster to limit visibility
- Bicycle racks, Austin B-Cycle station and drinking fountain



### Kingsbury Commons

- Welcoming, attractive and iconic Park entry space with stone paving, terraces and low walls to frame the view to the Big Field
- Continued park like appearance of trees in lawn, framed on the east by the riparian forest and on the west by the Ramble slope
- Existing prefab bathroom removed and salvaged for re-use elsewhere in the Austin park system
- New state of the art nature-influenced playscape to replace the existing playscape, and include a multifunction activity pad and basketball court and shade structures
- New splash pad in the new playscape. Demolish the existing splash pad
- Renovated Tudor Cottage as a multipurpose gathering space with adjacent seating terraces.
- Retain historic CCC picnic table and reinforce the shade grove
- New multipurpose pavilion that includes shaded picnic space and interior space for expanded restrooms, storage for park maintenance hand tools, space for the splash pad mechanical equipment and material storage
- Key existing trees protected, relocate select trees and plant additional trees to shade and frame the spaces, trim dangerous trees
- Provide an integral space for the memorial garden and a petanque court
- Provide limited, new compatibly designed pedestrian lighting
- Build paved Shoal Creek Trail to align the CCC stone walls, to expand the Big Field.
- Provide a Shoal Creek Overlook
- Continue to reinforce the riparian restoration efforts by defining the mow line along the Shoal Creek Trail

### BIG FIELD

- Expand to the east when Shoal Creek Trail is shifted and paved
- Retain softball/kickball field
- Expand/densify shade grove at north end
- Design focal trail node/seating area at the north terminus of the Big Field, aligned with proposed MLK gateway and new pedestrian bridge to Polecat Hollow/MLK

### NORTH RAMBLE / HILLSIDE

- Provide four trail gateways at the Shoal Creek Trail (north), Big Field Node (east), Tudor Cottage (south), and Kingsbury Street (west)
- Analyze the “backcountry” hiking trail system to simplify and find the best routes for the long term path placement, to protect vegetation and allow for access
- Continue “rough” mowing to the midslope trail, and allow the remaining sloped area up to Kingsbury Street to grow in with annual mowing only
- Continue reforestation to infill canopy and address attrition, and frame the important Capitol View corridor

### WINDSOR HILLSIDE

- Develop a signature Park gateway at former Harrell Street. Remove street and barriers and provide landing spaces with terraced steps, adjacent ramps, low walls and re-vegetation
- Encourage a fully layered native canopy / understory / groundcover forest to enhance songbird habitat
- Provide soft hiking trails to allow access for birding and alternative routes from Windsor Road to Kingsbury Street

## POLECAT HOLLOW



Image: WRT

### DOWN TO THE CREEK: THE FUTURE POLECAT HOLLOW

*The big view from Lamar will show a busier place framed by shade trees with places to gather at the edge of the expansive lawn and along the creek.*

Polecat Hollow will be transformed from a relatively unused space into a gathering place second to Kingsbury Commons in its array of park features.

- Major Park gateway at Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (MLK) intersection with improved crosswalk, curb ramps and other features.
- Provide new custom bus shelter, arrival terrace, signage seating, B-Cycle station, open bicycle racks, trash receptacle and drinking fountain
- New pedestrian bridge to Kingsbury Commons with connecting path to MLK arrival terrace.
- New walkway connecting MLK to the Polecat features
- Excavate where possible to provide shallow rainwater capture basins south of MLK and north of the volleyball courts
- New picnic pavilion near courts, with free-standing picnic tables near the large oak and a seating area and a path to channel circulation and frame the space
- Reinforce riparian forest, existing Mesquite Grove and define high value lawn area within a meadow context
- New tree-studded terraced bowl leading to the creek with a veil of trees along the creek.
- New signature pedestrian bridge to Custer's Meadow, to complete an ADA accessible route encompassing all of Pease Park proper
- Maintain signature plantings, wildflower meadow, drinking fountain and exercise stations.

## CUSTER'S MEADOW



Image: WRT

### CONNECTED: THE FUTURE CUSTER'S MEADOW

*Now linked to Polecat Hollow by bridge, Custer's Meadow is the low key space of Pease Park with a shade-dappled lawn to sit out on, and overlooks to the creek from Shoal Creek Trail.*

Custer's Meadow will remain a low-key open space, with better connections to the rest of the Park and neighborhoods. Custer's Oak is among the most iconic features in the Park. The Watershed Protection Department's Shoal Creek Restoration project will capture and filter stormwater from Parkway and reduce and eventually remove and relocate parking from around Custer's Oak to be farther from the tree or on the street. The plan proposes modest improvements in the form of an improved pedestrian node at the Oak, gateway at 24th Street sidewalk, a pavilion and connecting trails to a bridge leading to Polecat Hollow.

The area has been stressed by human and pet traffic, stormwater flows, bank erosion and invasive species. The Shoal Creek restoration project will dramatically reshape this area

through bank stabilization, rainwater meadows, invasive species control, impervious pavement reductions and landscape plantings. The master plan will support and complement this work by ensuring the plantings between the trail and the creek are of appropriate size to direct user traffic, expanding the riparian zone to include the entire area between the creek and trail, creating formal creek access points, and monitoring invasive species.

- Gateways at Custer's Oak, 24th Street and Rainbow Lane to reinforce the Park character.
- New overlook and terraced creek connection at Fossil Bend
- New shade pavilion near 24th Street
- Improved edge condition at Parkwa
- Bridge to Polecat Hollow with connecting walk to Custer's Oak

## WOOTEN WOODS



Image: WRT

### GREEN TUNNEL: THE FUTURE WOOTEN WOODS

*The Shoal Creek Trail weaves under the canopy of the cedar elm grove, with side routes to creek crossings, overlooks, and seating areas braided into the design of the space.*

Wooten Woods is the beginning of the wilder, north portion of the greenbelt. Heavily affected by flooding, the area is defined by the grove of cedar elms and the arching canopy over the Shoal Creek Trail. Improvements will support the Shoal Creek Restoration Project to stabilize the soil, revegetate the area and pave the Shoal Creek Trail.

The groundcover and understory in this area are substantially degraded from previous disturbances that include disc golf and flooding. These previous disturbances are exacerbated by current informal, off-trail recreation and off leash dogs. Understory restoration as well as bank stabilization is part of the Shoal Creek Restoration Project and will substantially enhance

the area. The master plan will complement these efforts by increasing canopy, understory and groundcover diversity in the restored area, creating formal creek access points, and creating formal and/or informal barriers to allow for plant establishment in highly used areas.

- Invasive Species Removal
- Tree Care
- Riparian Reforestation
- Signature Plantings
- Stone Culvert Restoration
- Picnic Tables / Seating / Dog Waste Stations
- Integrate the proposed fully-designed Shoal Creek Trail and braided side trails with the trail being built in the Shoal Creek Restoration Project.
- Overlooks and Trail Connectors

## GASTON GREEN



Image: WRT

### NEW DESTINATION: THE FUTURE GASTON GREEN

*A shade pavilion and the History Hut face onto a multiuse lawn surrounded by places to sit, facing out to the Shoal Creek Trail along the Creek.*

Gaston Green provides a mid-Park gathering place, a focal point for the gateway and serves Pemberton Heights. Gaston Green, the fourth activity hub, is located at the base of Gaston Street and the two Shoal Creek Boulevard bridges. It is the gateway to Pemberton Heights and a popular destination for dog owners. Recommendations are to restore the landscape where possible, increase park amenities and improve the area's appearance with select paving and curbing.

- Shade Pavilion
- History Hut for gathering and interpretation
- Central Lawn with perimeter path and seating
- Improved walkways, parking lot and street edges

- Restore Historic Walls and Benches
- Riparian Reforestation
- Invasive Species Removal
- Tree Care
- Waterline / Water fountain
- Gaston Sidewalk / Gateway
- Integrate the proposed fully-designed Shoal Creek Trail and braided side trails with the trail being built in the Shoal Creek Restoration Project.
- Picnic Tables / Seating / Dog Waste Stations
- Historical Interpretation
- Bridge Lighting

## LAMAR TERRACE



### GATEWAY TO THE GREENBELT: THE FUTURE LAMAR TERRACE

*The new civic gateway at 29th Street welcomes park visitors, UT students and seniors from the Lamar Senior Activity Center with a view of a central lawn framed by a shade pavilion, restroom and overlook and seating among the arching trees.*

Lamar Terrace is the northern most hub space in the greenbelt and a major civic gateway and park entry. Recommended improvements will make it a more welcoming and interesting place for recreation. Located opposite the Lamar Senior Activity Center, it provides an opportunity for recreation for seniors in an intergenerational setting. It is a gateway space for UT students, the first connection to the green belt from campus via 29th Street. It is also the location of

the service access for the crosstown sewer line, and requires service access accommodation for Austin Water Utility.

- Shade pavilion
- Restroom built into the east slope
- Central lawn with perimeter walkway and seating.

## THE BLUFFS



Image: WRT

### HILL COUNTRY IN TOWN: THE BLUFFS

*The path snaking along the face of the Buda limestone cliffs will be selectively widened to provide safe clearance with a new railing and a tree canopy overlook from the Lamar Boulevard sidewalk.*

The Bluffs are the defining feature of the north greenbelt and a landmark unto itself. Recommendations focus on preservation and developing safe and alternative ways to experience the Bluffs. The topography visible from the trail as it goes through the Bluffs area is some of the most dramatic found within the study area. A walk through the Bluffs is a lesson in the geologic history of Central Texas that can be accentuated through appropriate interpretation. This area has numerous invasive species infestations within the riparian zone and at the base of the bluffs. Management will focus on replacing these invasive plants with appropriate natives and increasing overall diversity in the area. This area of the park

is similar to the steep canyons found in the Balcones Canyonlands on the eastern edge of the Edwards Plateau. As a result, some of the plant selection recommendations are unique to this type of habitat. Because of the unique nature of the Bluffs within the Park and Austin, the area is considered a high priority area within the master plan.

- Invasive Species Removal
- Upland Reforestation
- Riparian Reforestation/ Bank Stabilization
- Children's Nature Play
- Shoal Creek Retaining Wall / Guardrails
- Overlooks and Trail Connections
- Restore Pylons / Culverts
- Historical Interpretation

## MAJOR ACTIONS ON SURROUNDING STREETS

In an effort to create an attractive and safe context for the Park, some of the most important aspects of the plan are recommended in the street rights of way of Lamar Boulevard and Kingsbury / Parkway outside the park.

### WEST MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BOULEVARD GATEWAY



Image: WRT

#### WELCOME: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. GATEWAY AT LAMAR BOULEVARD

*Across Lamar Boulevard will be a shaded terrace with low stone walls opening to a walkway across the bridge through Polecat Hollow.*

The busy intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) and Lamar Boulevards will become a gateway to the Park. The existing bus stop will be improved and the gateway will serve as a trail node for the Lamar Boulevard sidewalk, MLK sidewalk, connection to Kingsbury via bridge and the Polecat Hollow loop trail. Immediately to the south is an open lawn that could be excavated as a shallow infiltration basin. The bus shelter will be a custom design related to the new park structures, with additional attention to artisan craft.

- Improved Crosswalk
- Bus Shelter
- Entry terrace
- Low stone seat/signage walls
- Bicycle racks / B-Cycle station
- Trail node / Orientation signage
- Drinking fountain
- Trash can/recycling station
- Stormwater management infiltration feature



## LAMAR BOULEVARD



Image: WRT

### THE FUTURE LAMAR “PARKWAY”

*Travellers by car, bicycle and foot will move along a greener tree-shaded corridor framing postcard views of the skyline and of the new features in Polecat Hollow.*

Lamar Boulevard will be enhanced to create a more accessible, healthy and attractive edge for the park. The improvements will shape a new parkway environment with stronger connections to the Park.

- Major Civic North–South Gateways at 15th Street and 31st Streets
- Major Civic East-West Gateways at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, 24th and 29th Street
- Lamar Sidewalk
- Street Trees
- Stormwater Drainage
- Utility Poles

## PARKWAY



Image: WRT

### LIVING UP TO ITS NAME: THE FUTURE PARKWAY

*Converted from a frontage road, the Parkway will include a new sidewalk, edging treatment, crosswalks, speed control, street trees and drainage.*

#### PARKWAY

Kingsbury and Parkway are the neighborhood-scaled companions to Lamar Boulevard. Traffic calming, stormwater runoff and safe pedestrian access are the major concerns. The street functions as a throughway and as such is somewhat hazardous at times for pedestrians, especially neighborhood children and parents with strollers. New sidewalks and ways to channel stormwater are key to its improved function as a neighborhood park frontage street.

- Park Entry Gateway at 24th Street
- Bridge preservation and graffiti abatement

- Sidewalks (both sides of Parkway south, only east sides of Kingsbury and Parkway north)
- Street Trees
- Crosswalks
- Traffic Calming
- Drainage improvements
- Restore CCC Stone walls

## THE BELVEDERE



Image: WRT

### THE BELVEDERE: THE FUTURE WINDSOR GATEWAY

*From sunny barricaded asphalt to leafy passage, new terraced stone steps and a ramp will connect Windsor Road and Parkway.*

The Windsor Gateway will replace the abandoned Harrell Street connector between Windsor and Kingsbury. Existing paving and barriers will be removed, and a new flight of terraced stone steps will be built, flanked by a bicycle/stroller ramp. The upper and lower entries will be stone paved landings, flanked by low stone walls. In years to come, the adjacent space will be revegetated with trees and signature plantings to create a closed canopy of trees overhead.

## DESIGN CHARACTER

The master plan provides general direction for the design character of Pease Park and the Shoal Creek Greenbelt. The design process will refine the broad ideas presented here with more specific images and products. Green design is a typical consideration at the outset of the discussion of built form and management. It is recommended that construction projects actively enroll in or at least follow the precepts of the LEED and Sustainable Sites Initiative, whose national leaders include the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and University of Texas School of Architecture.

The Park is already shaped in various ways by its geology, hydrology, historic and contemporary influences. There is such an eclectic mix of styles it is not possible to derive one overarching style or form that should dictate the design of new improvements. The historic influences are the Tudor Cottage with its pitched roof and brick and timber detailing, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)-era bridges with their neoclassical concrete form, the tradition of stone craft on the gates and the low walls and the precast concrete picnic tables. Paving materials are limited to concrete and decomposed granite.

The overall composition we see today was not driven by a predetermined form. The location and arrangement of features is casual and appears to have responded to simple concepts of convenience and logic, such as the siting of the cottage above the flood plain. Very little documentation exists from which to draw conclusions about the designers' intent beyond what remains on the site.

The facility program that evolved during the master planning process recommends new structures, trails and other features. The cumulative effect of these features will alter the image of the Park, so a clear concept of and rationale for the new look is needed to create a coherent built image. The design team took the challenge of helping to shape the Park in

the context of the design tradition of the City of Austin, PARD and the neighborhood and the intrinsic spirit of the Park.

Seeking inspiration for guiding principles to shape the character, the team examined the site's geology, hydrology, vegetation, and the architectural traditions of the City, including that of craftsmen and artisans and current public open space design. The team concluded that the specific idiosyncrasies of the place dictate the need to evolve a new aesthetic that is drawn from the land and influenced by the people.

The story begins with the site's position on the Balcones fault, spanning two geologic formations and the recognition that stone is a very visible part of the site's skeleton as seen in the bluffs and the creek bed. The hydrology of the site, evidenced by the creek and its flow, provides a counterpoint to the rugged stone. Together the rugged crystalline stone and the fluid dynamic creek drive the overarching design character of the park.

The buildings, site walls and paths, the most visible elements of the Park, define the character. The proposed buildings are straightforward rectangular forms made of steel and stone that relate to the monumental presence of the stone features in the park – the bluffs, split rock and the creek bed. The buildings also relate to the urban conditions along the park's edge at the streets, where the CCC-era monumentality and civic form inspired the concrete bridge designs.

Together, the two systems work together by looking inward to the wilds of the Park and its driving force, the creek, and outward to the civic form of the streets and neighborhoods surrounding the Park. The four components of the built realm of the Park are described below: the paths that provide access through the site, the buildings that house the activities, the site features that support the exterior spaces, and the furnishings.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation addresses the governance of the Park, the capacity of the City to take action, the estimated order of magnitude costs of the Park with prioritized phasing, natural areas management, use management, safety and future horizons for planning beyond the scope and time frame of this document.

## GOVERNANCE

Pease District Park and the adjacent Shoal Creek Greenbelt that comprise the planning area are fully operated and managed by PARD. The Pease Park Conservancy (PPC) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and the “Adopt-a-Park” partner for Pease Park. Since 2008, the PPC has led efforts to improve the area’s landscape, including planting 500 new trees and restoring historic features in the park, such as the Tudor Cottage, Memorial Entry Gates constructed in the 1920s and the picnic tables installed by the Works Progress Administration. PPC has established a permanent financial endowment at the Austin Community Foundation. It is meant to be a “trust fund” for the Park to supplement what the City can spend on its care. The endowment is presently valued at \$200,000.

## MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The master plan provides a conceptual framework for the development of Pease Park and the adjacent Shoal Creek greenbelt for the next 20-30 years. An Implementation Guide that lists suggested priorities and cost estimates is part of the final document. The master plan, developed through a community-based process, provides a blueprint of park development and moreover, is a tool that can be used to leverage contributions from the nonprofit and private sector for improvements. The City will likely play a role in coming years through the Capital Improvements Program, which is the voter-approved bond program that addresses major capital projects. Currently, there are no public sector funds allocated for the implementation of the master plan.

The Conservancy has expressed its intent to actively raise private funds to assist the City in funding approved projects in the park. PPC and the City will continue to work with other partners to fund improvements. Among the various approaches to funding may be the naming of certain features or places in the Park, in accordance with City policy.

## ORDER OF MAGNITUDE COST ESTIMATE / PHASING PRIORITIES

## Inside the Park

Landscape Character Zone	Total	
	Low Range	High Range
Kingsbury Commons	\$4,195,060	\$6,458,202
Big Field	\$865,674	\$1,560,780
North Ramble and Hillside	\$296,148	\$466,716
Windsor Hillside	\$411,240	\$774,180
Polecat Hollow	\$2,220,420	\$4,328,370
Caswell Shoals	\$101,568	\$202,722
Custer's Meadow	\$629,280	\$1,012,920
24th St Bridge	\$563,040	\$935,640
Wooten Woods	\$405,720	\$661,020
Live Oak Terrace	\$196,650	\$383,640
Gaston Green	\$985,941	\$1,637,232
East Bank	\$68,310	\$164,220
Ramble Scramble	\$1,033,620	\$1,672,560
Lamar Slope	\$82,800	\$193,200
Lamar Terrace	\$1,121,250	\$2,028,600
29th St Bridge	\$455,400	\$759,000
The Bluffs	\$359,490	\$757,620
Reclaimed Water	\$871,200	\$1,742,400
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$14,862,811</b>	<b>\$25,739,022</b>

## Outside the Park

Landscape Character Zone	Total	
	Low Range	High Range
Kingsbury Commons	\$489,900	\$897,000
Gaston Green	\$55,200	\$82,800
East Bank	\$34,500	\$55,200
Lamar Parkway	\$4,335,960	\$7,990,200
Parkway / Kingsbury	\$996,360	\$1,835,400
Reclaimed Water	\$1,400,000	\$4,200,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,311,920</b>	<b>\$15,060,600</b>

## NATURAL AREAS MANAGEMENT

The desire to preserve the natural environment was made clear during the public engagement process. Participants placed “Preserve and Protect the Natural Environment” of the Park at the top of the list of priorities. Further evidence of care in stewardship can be seen by the huge volunteer effort already put into the Park by Pease Park Conservancy volunteers and their partners. To continue to protect and enjoy this amazing and dynamic natural resource, active management is necessary. The guidelines and concepts presented in the plan and in the more detailed appendices lay out some of the information needed to work towards the goal of preserving and protecting the Park. The plan includes categories of parcels designated for land management tasks, a land management schedule that prioritizes tasks over the next five years, monitoring recommendations that insure a clear understanding of resources and time invested and allow for a feedback loop of success, metrics to understand how the complex system of management is working towards overall multi-year goals, and finally resources for building greater capacity of the core volunteer group that has carried out so much work at the Park already.

## USE MANAGEMENT: LIMITS OF ACCEPTABLE CHANGE AND CARRYING CAPACITY

### PARK MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP

All parks experience varying degrees of competing interest, budget limitations and expectations of appearance, function and experience. Park agencies are pressed to balance the different positions and priorities in terms of fiscal, social and physical impact. To address this aspect of management, the plan recommends a framework to evaluate, monitor and take action on the physical and human side of the park. It is rarely possible for park agencies to manage each park’s interests to the degree necessary to manage the many issues that arise, especially in popular urban parks. The presence of a conservancy provides a partnership opportunity to resolve, or if not possible to resolve, funnel focused concerns to the City. Such an agreement will help to ensure the future of Pease Park. It will need to be drafted by the City and the Pease Park Conservancy along with other important stakeholders such as the Shoal Creek Conservancy.

#### PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

A partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding/agreement is necessary to establish the ground rules for what the partner entity is required or able to do, and what is not possible. Such an agreement lies in the future at Pease Park. It needs to be worked out by the City, and the Pease Park Conservancy, along with other important stakeholders like the Shoal Creek Conservancy.

#### BALANCING PEOPLE WITHIN NATURE WHILE REACHING THE FULL POTENTIAL

Pease Park has the capacity to serve more people, but only to a certain extent before increased use degrades the park's environmental and experiential quality. This is called carrying capacity, and it is a relative concept. As the first plan for Pease Park, it is recommended that a conclusive procedure be put in place to evaluate carrying capacity on an ongoing basis.

#### THE BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT: RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Park stewardship addresses the quality of the place and what people can do in it. To establish a baseline for park stewards and the public, some form of agreement is needed about the expectations for the physical quality and social experience. In the case of an established park such as Pease, there is a long record of maintenance and use that predisposes expectations. This master plan is an opportunity to set a baseline for future stewards and park users to refer to as the Park environment and pressures for use evolve.



## SECURITY

The increasing popularity of the Park as a key part of Austin's focus on physical health and outdoor lifestyles, coupled with the increase of trail use of all kinds has drawn more people to the Park and helped to provide a passive police presence. In addition, the range of programming from school groups to picnickers, families, kick ballers, volleyball players, birders and petanque players have all contributed to the increased safety of the park. The layout and design of gateways, paths, parking, and gathering places in Pease Park will reinforce user and neighbor safety according to best practices.

## FUTURE HORIZONS

### THE VISION BEYOND THE HORIZON

The to do list for Pease Park and the Shoal Creek Greenbelt is extensive. Even so, it is only the first step in an even larger civic perspective. The master plan responds to the needs of the Park itself, and reaches beyond to the adjacent streets to bring them into the greenway concept. But this plan stops at the right of way. Several big picture influences are beyond the scope of this master plan, but may have a significant influence in the future. These influences include population growth, climate change, success and greenway plan.

- Opportunities Due to Growth: the Lamar of the Future
- Climate Change and Canopy Decline
- Coping with Success
- A Bigger Vision: the Shoal Creek Greenway





