

# Chapter 4

## Oakwood Cemetery

Oakwood Cemetery is Austin’s first city cemetery and its oldest municipal burial ground. This chapter contains a historical narrative of Oakwood Cemetery’s development, an examination of its historic integrity and significance, a discussion of existing conditions observed in the cemetery during the master plan team’s site evaluations, specific treatment recommendations, and a prioritized list of potential projects.

This chapter should be used in conjunction with the General Management Guidelines presented in Chapter Three. The General Management Guidelines include treatment recommendations that apply to all five historic city cemeteries; this chapter provides additional detail specific to Oakwood Cemetery.

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## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Austin's first public cemetery was established in 1839 at the northeast corner of the original town plat laid out by surveyors Charles Schoolfield and L. J. Pilie. The City Cemetery, as it was originally known, was located on the slope of a hill, as is traditional for an "Upland South folk cemetery," identified by cultural geographers for its distinctive characteristics of site, orientation, plantings, grave markers and decorations, and grave-tending rituals and practices.<sup>61</sup> In 1856, the Texas legislature relinquished the State's interest in the cemetery property, granting it to the City of Austin.<sup>62</sup>

Oakwood Cemetery is located at 1601 Navasota Street, near downtown Austin and east-side neighborhoods, including Upper Boggy Creek, Chestnut, and Swede Hill. Nearby neighborhood associations include the Blackland Neighborhood Association, East Austin Conservancy, Swede Hill Neighborhood Association, Oakwood Neighborhood Association, United East Austin Coalition, and the Davis-Thompson Neighborhood Association.

The earliest reported burials in or around the City Cemetery are not marked; according to previous research, the earliest recorded burial was that of George W. Logan in 1841.<sup>63</sup> His marker (Figure 28) is part of the Cook family lot (Section 1, Lot 158); Logan's widow, Eliza T. Pickering, went on to marry Abner H. Cook, a builder. It is unclear if Logan is buried in that plot or just commemorated there, as Abner and Eliza lived until 1884 and 1888, respectively. An earlier burial may have been that of an enslaved person, owned by Hamilton White, who was killed in 1839 while traveling between Bastrop and Austin and reportedly interred to the south of the cemetery's entrance.<sup>64</sup>

The oldest memorial that marks a known grave is that of John R. Black and George M. Dolson, who died in 1842.<sup>65</sup> Located in the southwest corner of the cemetery, the marker was made of limestone and has deteriorated significantly due to weathering and continued exposure to irrigation. (Early grave markers were often made of wood or locally available stone.)

The City Cemetery originally consisted of 10 acres of land, now known as Section 1. The first part of the cemetery to be developed, on the western side of the cemetery along what is now Navasota Street, is known as The Old Grounds and is divided into four parts: A, B, C, and D. This part of the cemetery is easily identified by its irregular layout, as opposed to the orderly grid that characterizes later development (Figure 29). The graves in such early Southern folk cemeteries "are often strewn bout in a rather disorderly manner, in staggered rows, separate clusters, and freestanding sites. In places, the choice of location for burial appears to have been almost purely random."<sup>66</sup> Dr. D. Gregory Jeane characterizes this as the "pioneer" phase of the Upland South folk cemetery, which lasted into the early 1800s.<sup>67</sup>

61. D. Gregory Jeane, "Cemeteries," *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, Volume 14: Folklife, ed. by Glenn Hinson, William Ferris, and Charles Reagan Wilson (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

62. H. P. N. Gammel's *Laws of the State of Texas 1822–1897*, Volume IV, Chapter CLXXVII, Section 2 and 3, 521.

63. Texas Historical Commission, *Oakwood Cemetery Archives*.

64. Mary Starr Barkley, *History of Travis County and Austin, 1839–1899*, 3rd ed. (Austin: Austin Printing Company, 1981), page 35.

65. *Oakwood Cultural Landscape Report*, 6.

66. Terry G. Jordan, *Texas Graveyards: A Cultural Legacy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982), 30.

67. D. Gregory Jeane, "The Upland South Folk Cemetery Complex: Some Suggestions of Origin," in *Cemeteries and Grave Markers: Voices of American Culture*, ed. Richard E. Meyer (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), 111–119; as quoted in *Oakwood Cultural Landscape Report*, page 71.

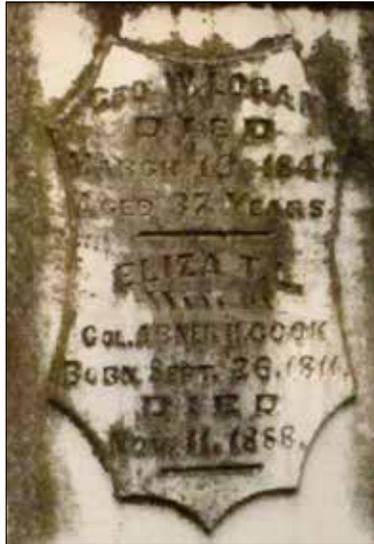


Figure 28. Photograph of George W. Logan marker (Courtesy of Jacquie Demsky Wilson)

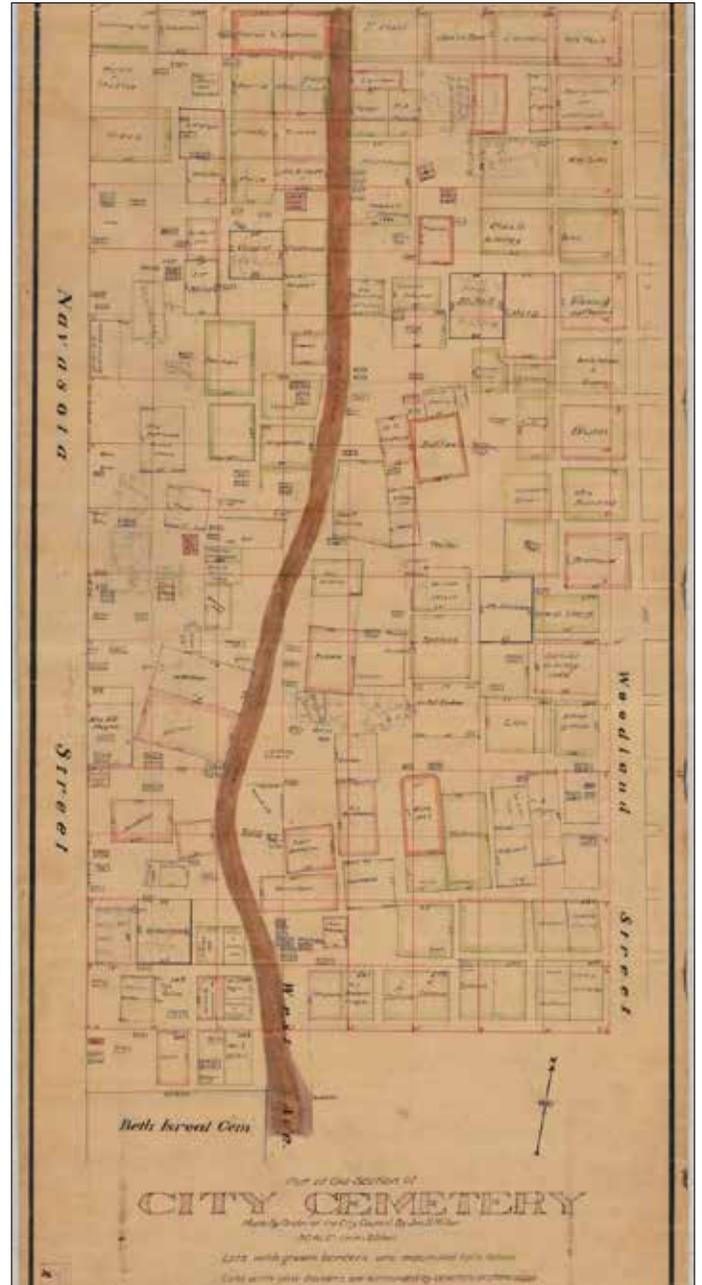


Figure 29. Plat of Old Section of City Cemetery, by Jno. D. Miller, completed July 31, 1911 (Austin History Center)

In those days, in the American South, most people were buried in family burial grounds or community cemeteries. It was not uncommon for a town like Austin to establish a public cemetery, not associated with a church or necessarily considered “sanctified” religious space. Like the City Cemetery, most were sited on hilltops or high on hillsides, away from the very real possibility of flooding; such an elevated location also would have been considered closer to heaven.

Graves were oriented with feet to the east, based on a belief that the dead would rise in both body and soul on Judgment Day and, so oriented, would face the morning sun and/or Jerusalem.<sup>68</sup> The orientation of graves on an east-west axis was not limited to Christians; historically, Jewish graves have been oriented with feet toward Jerusalem (to the east, when one is in Texas), with heads toward Jerusalem, or with feet toward the cemetery entrance. Burial along an east-west axis also was part of funereal practices in pagan Europe and some parts of Africa.<sup>69</sup>

It is likely that the graves in The Old Grounds were covered with mounds of earth, to be renewed as the earth settled, as if the deceased were freshly buried. The graves likely would have been scraped to bare earth, since allowing grass to grow on a grave was considered disrespectful (Figure 30). Scraping of individual graves or entire burial grounds was common throughout east and central Texas, in both white Anglo and African American communities. These practices were part of a “cult of piety,” in which the care of burial grounds enabled the living to continue to memorialize the dead, and both mounding and scraping are still seen today.<sup>70</sup>



PICA 03146, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

Figure 30. Men rake mounded dirt over graves at Oakwood Cemetery Annex. (Undated photo, Austin History Center, PICA03146)

68. Jeane, “Cemeteries.”

69. Jordan, 30; also Mike Parker Pearson, *The Archaeology of Death and Burial* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), 8.

70. Jordan, 14–16.

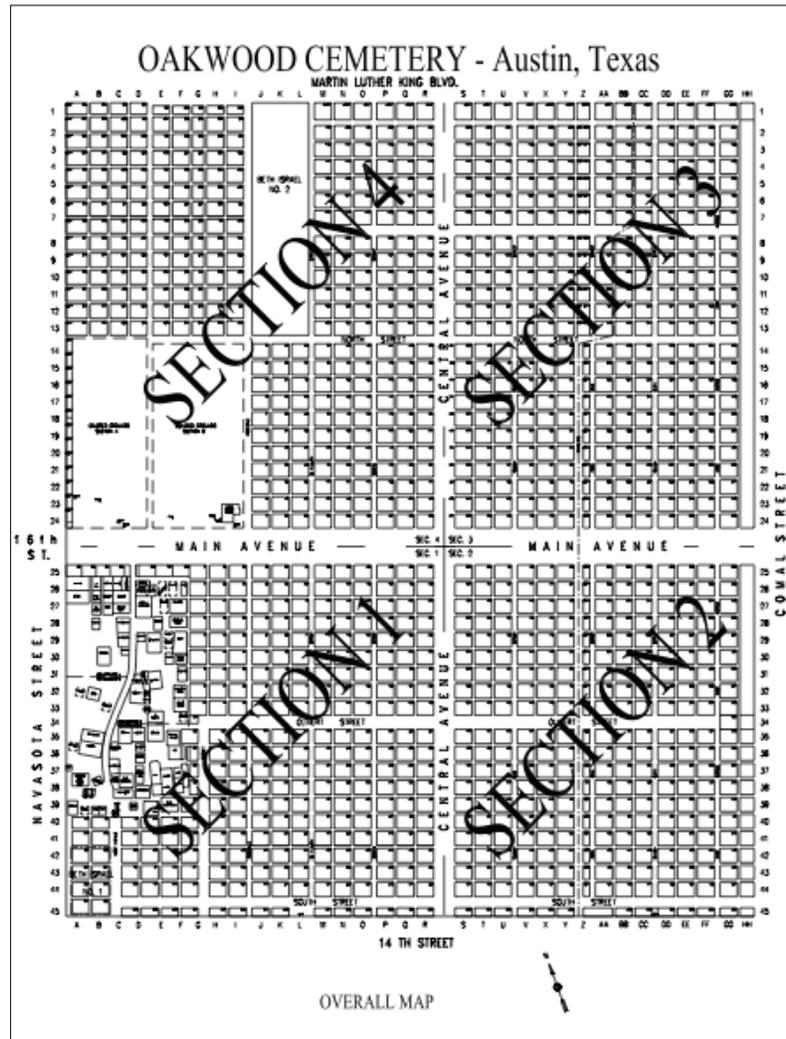


Figure 31. Map of Oakwood Cemetery, formerly the City Cemetery (Created by Robert E. Tieman and used with permission)

The division of graveyards into family plots is another characteristic of the Upland South folk cemetery. A 1911 map of the Old Grounds (as seen on the left side of Section 1, Figure 31) identifies a number of family plots as “mounded lots,” while other plots were surrounded by wood, iron railings, or concrete or stone borders. Individual graves, some marked only with the notation “grave” and no name, are shown mostly along the western border of the cemetery.

Evergreens, particularly the Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), represented eternal life and were popular plantings in burial grounds. In the South, the Eastern red cedar is known as “the cemetery tree,” and many examples are found in the oldest part of this cemetery, marking individual graves or the corners of family plots.<sup>71</sup>

71. *Oakwood Cultural Landscape Report*, 72.

The cemetery, which now occupies approximately 40 acres, is divided into sections (Figure 31, previous page). The numbering of plots reflects the incremental expansion of the property over time. Some lot numbers may be duplicated from section to section.

Because the plots are numbered sequentially, one may infer that they were laid out as needed. The map of the cemetery below (Figure 32) shows that small sections of 18–22 plots, alternating on either side of Main Street, were numbered in sequence. The red numbers indicate the order in which they may have been laid out and sold.

A portion of Section 4, shown in light blue north of the Old Grounds (also in light blue), was set aside as a “potter’s field” (notated below as “Colored Grounds”) for the burial of “strangers and paupers.” African Americans also were buried in this area. It was common in European cemeteries for the poor to be placed on the northern or “dark” side of the graveyard.<sup>72</sup>

Over time, the cemetery grew incrementally, with acreage added as needed. As shown in Figure 33, the cemetery was essentially complete by 1892.

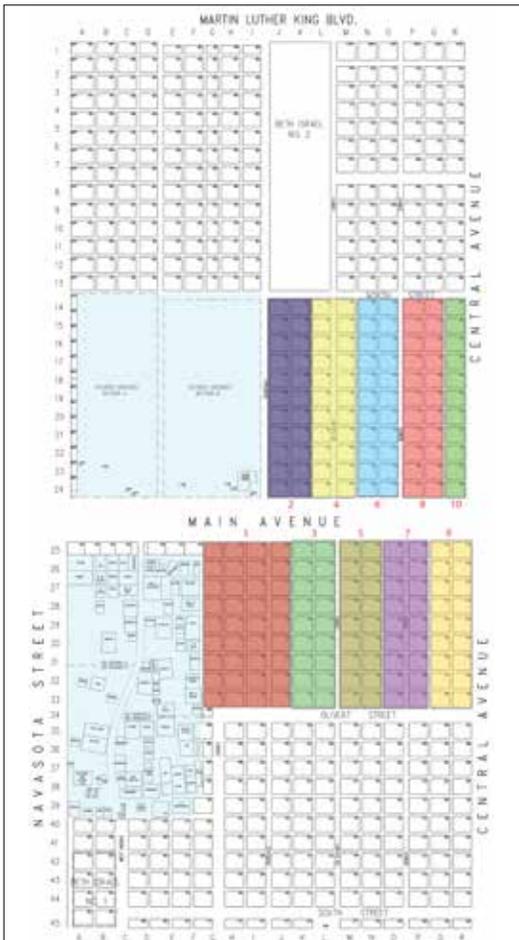


Figure 32. Map of Oakwood Cemetery showing sequence of plot numbering (McDoux Preservation, based on original maps created by Robert E. Tieman and used with permission)

72. Pearson, 14.

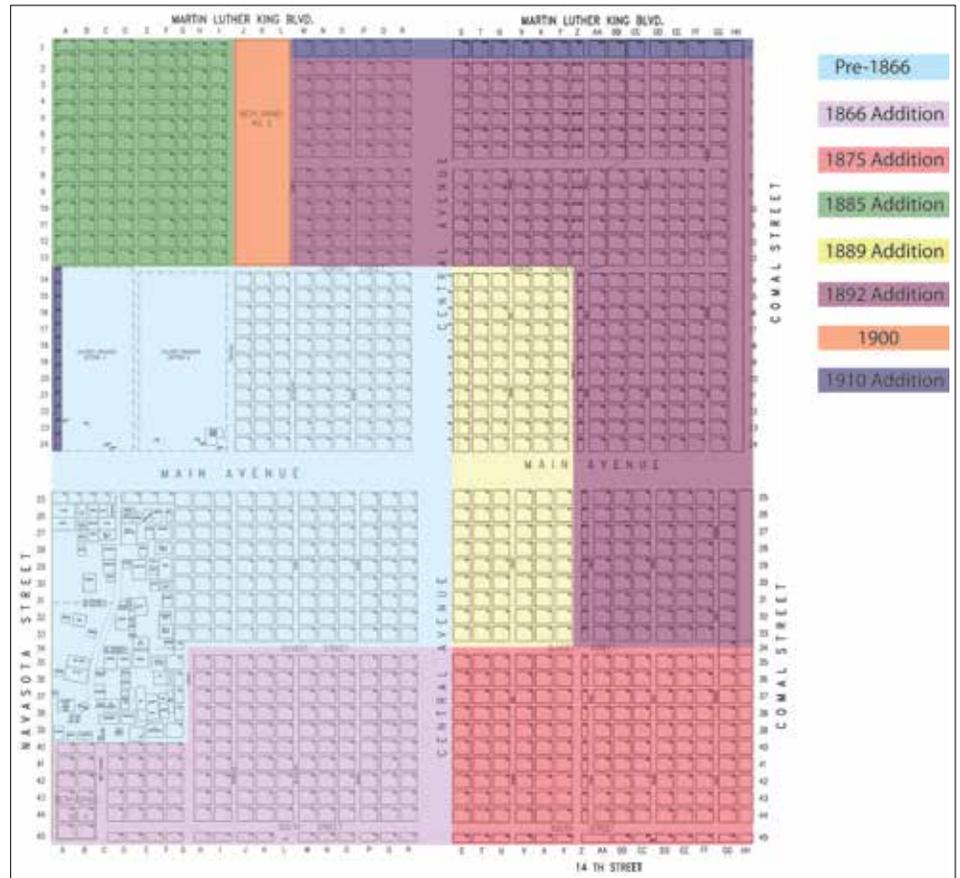


Figure 33. Map showing the additions to Oakwood Cemetery over time (McDoux Preservation, based on data provided by Dale Flatt and original maps created by Robert E. Tieman and used with permission)

As development progressed through the City Cemetery, the land was divided into plots measuring 25 feet by 30 feet, with a series of “streets” or driveways. Main Avenue is the primary street through the cemetery, running east to west; it is bisected by the north-south Central Avenue, which divides Section 1 from Section 2 south of Main Avenue, and Section 3 from Section 4 north of Main Avenue. The most southerly east-west street is South Street, while North Street runs east-west through the middle of Sections 3 and 4 and serves as the northern boundary of the “colored grounds” in Section 4. Olivert Street serves a similar function, proceeding east-west through the middle of Sections 1 and 2. The smaller driveways, which are oriented north-south, were given names evocative of gardens and parks: Fern Dale Street, Shady Glen Street, Sunny Side Street, Rosedale Street, De Fleury Street, and Bonita Street.

This next phase of cemetery development was in keeping with the “transition” phase of the Upland South folk cemetery, which took place during the second half of the nineteenth century. During these decades, a new vision for cemetery design swept the United States, beginning in the Northeast with the development of the New Haven Burying Ground, established in Connecticut around 1800. Earlier

burial grounds were urban, crowded, and chaotic, with older remains routinely disinterred to make way for new burials in the limited space available. Accelerated death rates due to the yellow fever epidemics of the late eighteenth century put more pressure on these cemeteries. In response, a new type of cemetery emerged, organized by private corporations. By forming a corporation to establish and maintain a burial ground, individuals could ensure that burials would be orderly, permanent, and secure. Such a cemetery typically was arranged in an orderly grid of family plots, bounded by avenues extending from a central roadway that led into the cemetery from its entrance. Family plots often featured a central monument with the family name prominently displayed. Sections also were set aside for distinct groups, based on religion, race, and affiliation. The corporation typically planted allées of trees along main avenues, but individual plot owners were allowed to add plantings in family plots. Other cities viewed New Haven as a model cemetery, gradually adopting this type of organizational and physical arrangement well into the nineteenth century.<sup>73</sup>

The formalization and expansion of Oakwood Cemetery took place during the Victorian era—generally associated with the reign of Queen Victoria of England, from 1837 to her death in 1901. Victorian culture, in both England and the United States, turned away from the classical architecture and rationalism that had governed the late 18th and early 19th centuries. In its place, the Victorians embraced romanticism, exuberance, and morality. Texas fully entered the Victorian era following the Civil War, as the state’s economy recovered, railroad building resumed, and the population swelled, resulting in a building boom.<sup>74</sup>

Monuments, which had been more restrained in their design, now became more elaborate and highly ornamented. The grave markers placed during these years were often carved with fanciful designs and statuary, and set within plots surrounded by ornate iron fences or stone borders.

The celebration of death and its rituals became an important component of Victorian society. Elaborate funerals and memorials allowed the well-to-do to display their wealth and position, and the railroads enabled the import of Italian marble, which became the stone of choice for grave markers. Marble headstones became available by mail order, and it is likely that at least some of the marble markers from the latter half of the nineteenth century would have been manufactured elsewhere and shipped to Austin for inscription and placement.<sup>75</sup>

Older traditions were updated as well; instead of scraping grass clean, graves might be covered with stone slabs, with or without inscription, and entire family plots might be paved with concrete, brick, or gravel (often limestone or marble, or sometimes granite). Mounding of earth over graves was replaced, to a limited extent, by the construction of

73. David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), pp. 29-34

74. Willard B. Robinson, "Architecture," *Handbook of Texas Online*.

75. *Oakwood Cultural Landscape Report*, 72–73.

false crypts or, more often, by bodystones, a slab carved or coped to suggest the form of the deceased sleeping with their head resting on a pillow. Grave markers also were carved in the rough shape of pillows, in some instances.



*Figure 34. Slabs with horizontal markers at the "head" resemble beds with pillows (McDoux Preservation)*

Starting in 1875, the Monumental Bronze Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut, produced zinc (also known as "white bronze" or "zinker") grave monuments as an alternative to stone. A few of these are extant in Oakwood Cemetery. The company's 1882 catalog boasts that its products were "pure cast zinc" sandblasted to create a finish "closely resembling granite."<sup>76</sup> The monuments and markers could be customized with any of the bas relief symbols or emblems offered by the company. The Zachary Taylor Torbett monument in Section 1, Lot 303 (Figure 35), is an example of Monumental Bronze Design No. 216 and includes the Knights of Honor star, harp, and crown emblems. The William D. Pauley grave (Section 2, Lot 511) is Design No. 181, a "double front" marker with inscriptions on both sides (Figure 36).

In 1855, Mayor J. T. Cleveland wrote a proposal for the improvement of the City Cemetery, noting that "although the extreme limits of this city of the dead have been defined, and are exhibited on the city map, the place yet remains in a wild and unimproved condition." Cleveland proposed "to plan, layout and enclose the city cemetery" then sell the lots, with the proceeds to be used for "trimming trees, cleaning off brush, and fencing in the site." The cemetery design would be "guided by the plans of the most tasteful cemeteries of the Union," and referenced Mount Auburn Cemetery in Boston, Green-Wood Cemetery in New York, Laurel Hill Cemetery in Philadelphia, and Belle Fontaine Cemetery in St. Louis. The appointment of a cemetery sexton was also proposed.<sup>77</sup>

76. 1882 Monumental Bronze Catalog.

77. "The Austin Cemetery," *The Texas State Times* (Austin, Texas), Vol. 2, No. 29, Ed. 1, Saturday, June 23, 1855, 1.



Figure 35. Zachary Taylor Torbett marker (above left) and (above right) the same design as shown in the 1882 Monumental Bronze catalog (Photo by McDoux Preservation)

Figure 36. William Pawly marker (lower left) and Monumental Bronze design (lower right) (Photo by McDoux Preservation)

In September 1859, City Council passed an ordinance designating the burial grounds as the "Austin City Cemetery" and the grounds to be divided into three parts: one "for the use of the inhabitants of the city of Austin," another for the interment of "strangers," and a third for the burial of "people of color." The Mayor and Aldermen were authorized to appoint a sexton to bury the deceased and keep records; to share information with members of the public wishing to purchase lots; to maintain one of two copies of the cemetery plat book, the other to be kept by the Mayor; and to maintain the cemetery "free from weeds and in good condition."<sup>78</sup> This also includes the earliest known reference to a Cemetery Committee.

According to former Austin Public Library librarian/neighborhood liaison Karen Riles, who studied the Oakwood burial journals at the Austin History Center, 1,211 people were buried in the "colored" section of the cemetery between 1859–1880.<sup>79</sup>

Alexander Eanes, a landowner whose ranch became the nexus of the Eanes Community west of Austin, was appointed as the City Sexton on March 5, 1866.<sup>80</sup> The following year, he was sworn in as the sexton for the Texas State Cemetery, as well.<sup>81</sup>

It appears that Eanes took pride in his work and executed it successfully, according to news accounts of the day.

For years past, the City Cemetery has been in a very neglected condition: the grounds have been encumbered with briars (sic), weeds, thickets and undergrowth to such an extent, that it was with the greatest inconvenience that visitors could get over the place, and the spot has, consequently, presented a very unsightly appearance. ... Under the management of Maj. Eanes, City Sexton, the Cemetery grounds have been entirely cleared of rubbish of every description; the streets and alleys have been kept in a neat condition, and altogether the place is beginning to be a credit to the city, rather than a disgrace as it really was for years. The interest manifested by Major Eanes in keeping everything pertaining to the Cemetery in good condition, has induced a corresponding degree of interest on the part of the relatives and friends of many who are buried there. We notice that many of the lots containing the remains of the dead are enclosed, and suitable shrubbery has been planted, and enclosures are kept in a neat condition. Many others are preparing to enclose lots and making arrangements to beautify and adorn them. There was once a degree of indifference on this subject really disgraceful; but improvement has begun, and, we doubt not, the spirit to do so will be kept up. (1865)<sup>82</sup>

78. "Cemetery," *State Gazette* (Austin, Texas), Vol. 11, No. 5, Ed. 1, Saturday, September 10, 1859, 2.

79. Karen Riles, letter to Austin City Council in support of Oakwood Cemetery landmark designation, August 29, 2001.

80. "City Council," *The Southern Intelligencer* (Austin, Texas), Vol. 1, No. 37, Ed. 1, Thursday, March 15, 1866, 3.

81. Alexander Eanes Oath of Office, January 22, 1867, *Secretary of State Bonds and Oaths of Office* (Austin, Texas: Texas State Library and Archives Commission).

82. "The Cemetery," *The Weekly Southern Intelligencer* (Austin City, Texas), Vol. 1, No. 15, Ed. 1 Thursday, October 12, 1865, 3.

Five years later, in 1870, another newspaper noted that

(w)e understand from our old friend Major Eanes, that the city authorities have concluded at last, to have the Cemetery somewhat improved. The Major has always done his duty, as Sexton of the city Cemetery, faithfully and for the great pride and interest displayed he certainly deserves much credit.<sup>83</sup>

An 1871 note in the *Democratic Statesman* commended Eanes and Austin's citizens for "beautifying with evergreens and flowers the last resting place of the dead" and encouraged them to continue "until every grave is circled with flowers and shrubs."<sup>84</sup> Eanes resigned his city position in 1874.<sup>85</sup> Following his death in 1888, he was buried in the City Cemetery along with his wife, Mary.

In 1876, work at the cemetery continued with the construction of a "plank fence" (Figure 37) around the perimeter and a new set of gates, as well as repairs to the old fence.<sup>86</sup> That year, Congregation Beth Israel also established a perpetual care system for the maintenance of the fenced Jewish section of Oakwood, known as Congregation Beth Israel Cemetery #1.<sup>87</sup> In 1895, the congregation purchased a second acre of land, located just east of the 2.5-acre tract owned by the city on the north side of the cemetery (in today's Section 4) and received permission to construct a fence around its perimeter.<sup>88</sup>

At some point, a "dead house" was built to house the remains of the deceased until they could be buried. It probably was located close to the west entrance, although the exact location is unknown.

The City Sexton, in 1882, presented a request to City Council stating that "the Cemetery was too small" and asking Council to purchase an additional 20 acres adjacent to the existing cemetery to the south, from a Mr. O. Riley. The sexton's communiqué also "pointed out much needed improvements in the Cemetery."<sup>89</sup>

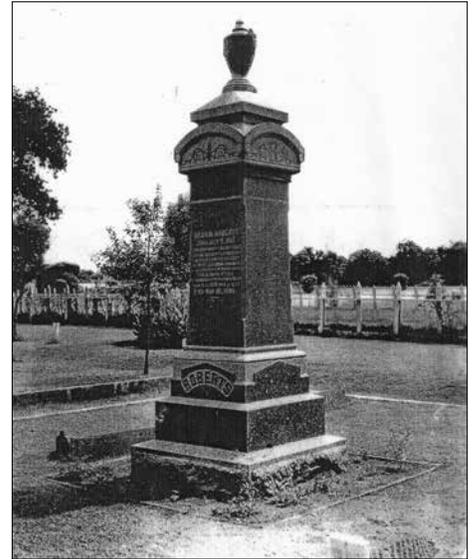


Figure 37. A wooden fence surrounding Oakwood Cemetery is visible in the background of this undated photograph. (Austin History Center, C00403)

83. *Tri-Weekly State Gazette* (Austin, Texas), Vol. 3, No. 120, Ed. 1, Friday, November 4, 1870, 3.

84. *The Democratic Statesman* (Austin, Texas), October 31, 1871, p. 3, col. 1.

85. *Austin Genealogical Society Quarterly*, Volume XVIII, No. 1.

86. *The Democratic Statesman* (Austin, Texas), July 6, 1876, p. 2, col. 4; and August 12, 1876, p. 2, col. 7.

87. Leslie Wolfenden, "Oakwood Cemetery: Cultural and Historical Landscape" (unpublished manuscript, Spring 2001), PDF file.

88. "The City Council, Reports of Committees," *The Austin Weekly Statesman* (Austin, Texas), Vol. 25, Ed. 1 Thursday, August 22, 1895, 4.

89. Minutes, regular meeting of Austin City Council, March 6, 1882, 93.

90. "Council Proceedings: In Regard to the Cemetery Matter," *The Austin Weekly Statesman* (Austin, Texas), Vol. 13, No. 42, Ed. 1, Thursday, June 19, 1884, 8.
91. "Cemetery Extension," *Austin Weekly Statesman* (Austin, Texas), Vol. 13, No. 33, Ed. 1, Thursday, April 30, 1885, 3.
92. Notice of real estate transfer of lots 707 and 730, *The Austin Statesman*, [Austin, Texas], Vol. 18, No. 45, Ed. 1 Thursday, October 17, 1889, 8; notice of transfer of lots 704 and 706, *The Austin Statesman*, [Austin, Tex.], Vol. 18, No. 46, Ed. 1 Thursday, October 24, 1889, 8.
93. "Real estate transfers," *The Austin Statesman* (Austin, Texas), Vol. 20, No. 19, Ed. 1 Thursday, October 16, 1890, 8.
94. Charter, Austin Cemetery Association.
95. *1889 Austin City Directory*, 70, 180.
96. *1893 Austin City Directory*, 90.
97. *1900–1901 Austin City Directory*, 35. Adele was a relative of Swante Palm (born Swen Jaensson), an early Swedish immigrant and businessman who served in a number of local and state government positions, including as the Swedish and Norwegian consul. Before and after her marriage, Adele lived in Swante Palm's home at 107 West 9th Street; the couple lived there well past Palm's death in 1899. [1887 *Austin City Directory*, 187; 1903 *Austin City Directory*, 78; Alfred E. Rogers, "Jaennsen, Swen (Swante Palm)," *Handbook of Texas Online*.]

In June 1884, the City Council considered, but declined to pursue, the purchase of additional land for the City Cemetery. The question at the time seemed to be whether the public should bear the expense or if a private enterprise would be more appropriate. The Mayor had appointed a special committee of council members and citizens to select a site for a new cemetery, which identified five potential tracts of land away from the city, as well as the possibility of purchasing additional land adjacent to the existing cemetery. The committee was divided in its conclusions, two members recommending the purchase of an entirely separate new tract of land while the third member recommended purchasing land for expansion of the existing cemetery.<sup>90</sup>

By April 1885, when the special committee's report was presented to Council, a private cemetery association had been organized, but it had not been officially chartered or incorporated as the members "were ready to take hold of the matter, but did not want to come into any competition with the city." *The Austin Weekly Statesman* reported:

If the city declines to take any action in the matter, the proposed private corporation will, but they have been withheld from filing a charter and going to work so long as the cause of the city was undecided. It would not be advisable nor would it pay as an investment to attempt to establish two cemeteries."<sup>91</sup>

It seems that, at some point, the citizens interested in pursuing such a private enterprise became tired of waiting for the city to move ahead. Two separate entities were established with similar names, and it is unclear whether they represent the same or different organizations.

The Austin Cemetery Association was chartered on August 28, 1889, "for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a cemetery or cemeteries within or outside of the limits of the city of Austin, in Travis County, Texas. And to accomplish that purpose, the corporation shall have power to buy, own, and hold real estate, to subdivide same and sell the subdivisions of suitable size for burial lots." The Association purchased a plot of land on December 10, 1889 (see Figure 33 on page 83), and began selling lots as early as October 1889 in the "cemetery addition."<sup>92</sup> The expansion area also was sometimes described as the "Palms Addition to Austin City Cemetery."<sup>93</sup> The shareholders and directors of that Association were John G. Palm, Clarence H. Miller, and Franz Fiset, all of Austin.<sup>94</sup> Fiset and Miller were attorneys in practice as Fiset & Miller, with offices at Congress and Fifth Street. Palm was the cashier of the State National Bank.<sup>95</sup> (In those days, the cashier was the executive in charge of monetary transactions.)

The Austin City Cemetery Association was officially incorporated on August 25, 1892. The Association president was Otto Bergstrom, a clerk in the state comptroller's office;<sup>96</sup> his wife, Adele Palm Bergstrom, was the association's vice-president.<sup>97</sup>

Whether these two organizations were or were not related or associated remains unclear. The State of Texas considered them to be separate entities. The Austin Cemetery Association (then owned by Franz Fiset and John G. Palm) was dissolved on April 30, 1910,<sup>98</sup> while the Austin City Cemetery Association simply was allowed to expire, per its charter, 50 years after its incorporation, on August 26, 1942.<sup>99</sup>

The Bergstrom organization appears to have been the most active. In February 1893, Austin's City Council established an ordinance to prohibit the burial of remains "within certain territory embraced in the corporate limits of the City of Austin," a territory which specifically included the land adjoining the cemetery in which the Association was selling plots. The following month, the Austin Cemetery Association responded by bringing a lawsuit in the Third District Court to prevent the City from enforcing the ordinance. After the court found in favor of the City, the Association applied to the City for permission to have the property added to the City Cemetery and managed by the city sexton. Eventually the City and the Association came to an agreement, with Bergstrom signing on behalf of the Association.<sup>100</sup>

An ordinance, passed by the City on March 18, 1895, codified the agreement between the City and the Cemetery Association, which included the Association paying all court costs in the case they had lost, as well as those related to a previous case brought by C. F. Hill and other citizens to prevent the city from expanding the cemetery. The agreement also required the Association to indemnify the City for any additional costs of litigation that might result from the cemetery's expansion. The Association further agreed to deed a 25-foot by 1050-foot strip of land in the addition (likely along the south side of Section 2) to the City for pauper burials; construct streets within the addition to be continuous with those in the older cemetery; bear all costs for maintaining the cemetery addition, including fencing, grading, culverts, and drains; and not charge more than \$25 for a 25-foot x 30-foot lot. Conveniently for the City, this took place just as the old cemetery was nearly sold out, relieving the immediate need to purchase additional land for burials.<sup>101</sup>

It appears that the Association, at least according to the City, did not abide by its agreement for very long. A case brought before the Texas Supreme Court in 1903 alleges that the Association, by July 1901, had "willfully and wantonly broke said contract by extorting from all persons purchasing lots in said cemetery addition a price for each lot purchased exceeding the maximum price of \$25, which it is permitted to charge." After being threatened with prosecution if this continued, Otto Bergstrom apparently continued to sell lots for between \$100–\$150. The City alleged that Bergstrom also would "willfully and without cause take all of said lots off the market, and leave the people of said city without adequate or proper place for the burial of their dead." A trial court had found for the Association, but the state Supreme Court reversed that decision, finding the contract valid and binding.<sup>102</sup> It is

98. "New Corporations Chartered," *The Houston Post*. (Houston, Tex.), Vol. 26, Ed. 1 Sunday, May 1, 1910, 7.

99. Texas Secretary of State records, filing number 570100, Secretary of State OnLine Access website, <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/Corp/sosda/index.shtml>.

100. *Southwestern Reporter*, Vol. 73, 525–529.

101. *Ibid.*

102. *Ibid.*

unclear when Bergstrom and his group stopped selling plots or if their pricing changed after the case.

To make matters more confusing, a group of Austin women formed the Oakwood Cemetery Association in April 1906, ostensibly for the purpose of maintaining the cemetery. Unlike the other two cemetery associations, this group was not registered with the state. In 1907, an article in the *Austin Statesman* thanked the “ladies of the cemetery association” for their work at the cemetery and lot owners for placing their family plots in the care of the Austin Cemetery Association.<sup>103</sup> By 1918, the group had 425 members, and it is likely that mentions of “the cemetery association” after 1906 likely reference this group, rather than either of the previous associations.<sup>104</sup>

The maintenance of the cemetery continued to vex the City throughout its history. An 1890 report of the City Sexton noted the need for repairs to the fence and the “dead house” and that “the roadway be repaired, ditched, and drained.” The cemetery had run out of space for “colored people and paupers” by that time as well, and the sexton requested the addition of more land for this purpose.<sup>105</sup> In 1909, Mayor A. P. Wooldridge introduced an ordinance to set aside 2 percent of ad valorem taxes for cemetery beautification.<sup>106</sup>

The City officially changed the name of the cemetery to “Oakwood” in 1908.<sup>107</sup> Around that time, a number of improvements were made to the cemetery, including clearing, trimming, and planting of vegetation; road building; and the construction of the still-extant granite entrance assembly at the west entrance.<sup>108</sup> Having run out of plots to sell at Oakwood, the City began to plan the development of the Oakwood Cemetery Annex, on the opposite side of Comal Street to the east.

Some of the cemetery regulations as outlined in the ordinance of 1908<sup>109</sup> are of interest:

- No one was to use cemetery streets to travel through the cemetery on other business;
- No one was allowed to sell lots in other cemeteries within the city for prices higher than those charged for lots in the city cemetery;
- The sexton was considered an ex-officio police officer with the authority to enforce city ordinances within the cemetery;
- When interring the deceased, the sexton and his assistants were to be dressed in white coats, white collar, and dark pants;
- The sexton was responsible for overseeing any work done by private individuals on their plots;
- The cemetery gate was to be open on Sundays from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m.;
- No lots or individual graves could be surrounded by a rail fence;
- No one was allowed to ride or drive at a speed faster than a walk;

103. “Improvements At The Cemetery Under Way.” *Austin Statesman* (Austin, Texas), February 10, 1907.

104. *1918 Austin City Directory*, 62.

105. Minutes, regular meeting of Austin City Council, February 3, 1890, 580.

106. Minutes, regular meeting of Austin City Council, April 24, 1919.

107. City of Austin, Texas, *Revised Ordinances of the City of Austin*, Book, 1908, <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph38103/>.

108. *Oakwood Cultural Landscapes Report*, 10.

109. City of Austin, Texas, *Revised Ordinances of the City of Austin*, Book, 1908, 30–37, <http://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph38103/>.

- Horses, cows, and mules were not allowed to be staked within the cemetery or allowed to run loose in the cemetery; and
- Dogs were not allowed in the cemetery at all.

Even as the new cemetery was under development, improvements continued at the original cemetery. A stone building, to serve as a mortuary chapel, was constructed at Oakwood Cemetery in 1914 (Figure 38). Designed by Austin architect Charles Page, it included space for funeral services as well as several vaults for temporary interments while the deceased awaited burial.<sup>110</sup> The exterior was constructed of rusticated limestone, with the steep gables, pointed arched windows, and crenellated tower typical of the Late Gothic Revival, made popular by the Boston architect Ralph Adams Cram, whose small churches in this style were widely copied throughout the United States between 1900–1920.<sup>111</sup> A renovation of the chapel in 1944, from plans by architect J. Roy White, included the construction of a ladies' restroom and storeroom within the existing building, the removal of the platform/stage from the waiting room, and the removal of interment vaults in the tower room, which was turned into an office through the installation of cabinets and a safe.

Additional curbing along Main Avenue was installed in the late 1910s and early 1920s; concrete stamps are dated 1917, 1923, and 1924.<sup>112</sup>

Although all plots had been sold, burials continued at Oakwood Cemetery throughout the twentieth century, particularly in the most recently platted areas in the north and east sides. These twentieth century graves, particularly those after World War II, represent the final "modern" phase of the Upland South folk cemetery. Grave markers were more likely to be granite, a more durable stone than marble but one that was difficult to work until technology developed that made possible machine carving and inscription.<sup>113</sup>

It appears that, for much of the twentieth century, the maintenance of the cemetery was left to individual citizens and the Cemetery Association. That changed in 1970, when Oakwood became a perpetual care cemetery, with ongoing maintenance provided by the City. In August of that year, then-City Manager, Lynn Andrews, reporting on the five municipal cemeteries, recommended an increase in maintenance of the sites, including irrigation and the fertilization and replacement of turf and shrubs.<sup>114</sup>



Figure 38. Chapel at Oakwood Cemetery (Oakwood Chapel Feasibility Study, Heimsath Architects)

110. "Mortuary Chapel Is Opened At Oakwood," *Austin American* (Austin, Texas), Monday, November 9, 1914, 8.

111. Kim Lovejoy, "American Religious Buildings," *Common Bond*, New York Landmarks Conservancy, Vol. 12, No. 1, 1998.

112. *Oakwood Cultural Landscapes Report*, 10.

113. *Ibid*, 72.

114. "City Crews Hard at Work on Cemetery Beautification," *Austin American Statesman* (Austin, Texas), August 27, 1970, as reported in *Oakwood Cultural Landscape Report*, 10.



In 2004, a group of citizens formed a non-profit organization, Save Austin's Cemeteries (SAC), to advocate for and support the preservation of Oakwood Cemetery and the other municipal burial grounds. In partnership with the City, SAC contributed to the rehabilitation of the Oakwood Chapel building, which began in 2006, with architectural drawings completed by SAC volunteers. The chapel's roof was replaced by PARD in 2007, and a structural assessment of the building, as well as testing for lead paint and asbestos, was completed in 2008, funded through a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Fondren Endowed Fund with matching funds raised by SAC. Focusing next on the stabilization of the chapel's foundation, SAC paid for a geotechnical survey of the soil around the chapel in 2009 and secured a grant for engineering drawings for the foundation stabilization. A feasibility study for the chapel's complete restoration was completed by Heimsath Architects in 2011. Construction plans for the restoration are currently underway and are being designed by Hatch + Ulland Owen Architects (Figure 41).



Figure 41. Illustrated drawings for the Oakwood Cemetery chapel restoration project (H+UO Architects, 2014)

## HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT PERSONS

As the oldest burial ground in Austin, Oakwood Cemetery contains the graves of many of the city's early leaders, as well as a large number of other people who made important contributions to local, state, and national history. All information provided below is from the Handbook of Texas Online, published by the Texas State Historical Association at <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook>, unless otherwise noted.

This list of historically significant persons is intended to be as inclusive as possible, given the availability of existing information. This project's scope and budget did not include extensive primary research. As a result, it is limited to those people for whom biographical information had been developed in the past. The master plan team recognizes that the historical record is not equitable and often has excluded non-white/Anglo people and women. In particular, early burial records for Oakwood Cemetery may not even include the given names of Mexican or African American people who were interred there. This makes it impossible, within the constraints of this project, to adequately recognize people who may have been important community leaders or noteworthy for any number of reasons. This list of historically significant persons, therefore, is likely incomplete. Should additional information be developed in the future, consider making it available in the same location where this plan is published.

### Early Pioneers

**John Gordon Chalmers** (1803–1847), newspaperman and editor of the *Austin New Era* and *Austin Texas Democrat*; secretary of the treasury of the Republic of Texas; chair of the committee charged with drafting the resolution approving the annexation of Texas to the United States; helped establish the Democratic party in Texas

**William H. Cushney** (1819–1852), newspaperman, published the *Austin Texas Democrat* and the *Austin State Gazette* in the 1840s

**Francis Dieterich** (1815–1860), merchant and meat dealer; city alderman

**Morgan C. Hamilton** (1809–1893), secretary of war, Republic of Texas (1844–1845); state comptroller; U.S. senator, 1870–1877

**Susanna Dickenson Hannig** (1814–1883), the sole white/Anglo survivor, along with her infant daughter, of the Battle of the Alamo

**John “Dutch John” Wahrenberger** (1812–1864), business owner, land owner

**Thomas Pratt Washington** (1806–1873), developed a large cotton plantation in the area now known as Del Valle

**Elizabeth Ellen Johnson Williams** (1840–1924); teacher, cattle dealer, investor; early Texas “cattle queen” who is thought to be the first woman to ride the Chisholm Trail with a herd of cattle under her own brand (“Elizabeth Johnson”)

## Political Figures and City Leaders

**Eugene Carlos Bartholomew** (1839–1923), established schools for the Freedmen’s Bureau during Reconstruction; state government official; Austin water and light commissioner, 1909–1919; banker

**Albert Sidney Burlison** (1863–1937), attorney; assistant city attorney, 1885–1890; U.S. congressman, 1899–1913; U.S. postmaster general, 1913–1921

**Oscar Branch Colquitt** (1861–1940), governor of the State of Texas; state senator; state railroad commissioner; president, New Southern Oil Company (Dallas)

**Thomas Watt Gregory** (1861–1933), attorney; member, University of Texas Board of Regents; assistant city attorney, Austin; U.S. Attorney General

**Andrew Jackson Hamilton** (1815–1875), lawyer; state legislator; state senator; member, U.S. House of Representatives; governor of the State of Texas during Reconstruction

**John Hancock** (1824–1893), attorney, judge, state legislator; U.S. Congressman

**James Stephen Hogg** (1851–1906), first native-born governor of the State of Texas; newspaperman, attorney, land dealer; served as state attorney general; as governor, established the Railroad Commission

**Thomas Freeman McKinney** (1801–1873), state senator; “Father of the Texas Navy”

**Elisha Marshall Pease** (1812–1883), wrote part of the Constitution of the Republic of Texas; served in several governmental positions after Texas won its independence from Mexico; attorney; state legislator; governor of the State of Texas; established the Permanent School Fund; helped organize the Republican party in Texas after the Civil War

**John W. Robbins** (1852–1910), state legislator; state treasurer, 1898–1907

**James Hervey Raymond** (1817–1897), banker; treasurer, Republic of Texas and State of Texas

**John James Terrell** (1857–1920), commissioner, General Land Office; developed rules and regulations that contributed to the success of land sales for the Permanent School Fund

**Robert J. Townes** (1806–1855), judge; state legislator; president, Austin Library Association; Texas secretary of state, 1862–1865

**William “Buck” Walton** (1832–1915), attorney, politician; officer in the Confederate Army

**Alexander Penn Wooldridge** (1847–1930), attorney; helped to organize Austin public school system; secretary, University of Texas Board of Regents, 1882–1894; president, City National Bank, 1885–1905; mayor of Austin, 1909–1919

**William Barto Wortham** (1853–1925), state treasurer, 1890–1899; first chairman, Texas Railroad Commission oil and gas division, 1917

## Attorneys

**Robert Lynn Batts** (1864–1935), attorney, Gregory and Batts; assistant state attorney general; professor of law, University of Texas, 1893–1901; special assistant attorney general of the United States; judge, Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals; general counsel, Gulf Petroleum Company; chairman, UT Board of Regents

**Clarence Heath Miller** (1860–1908), attorney in private practice with Franz Fiset, 1887–1904; admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court; Austin city attorney; professor of law and dean of the School of Law, University of Texas, 1904–1907

**Jules Henri Tallichet** (1877–1937), known as “the dean of Texas railroad lawyers”; trial lawyer, general attorney, and general counsel for Southern Pacific Railroad; partner, law firm of Baker, Botts, Andrews, and Wharton (Houston); founder and president, General Attorneys Association of Texas; director of various railroad companies

## Military Leaders

**Jacob Carl Maria DeGress** (1842–1894), first Texas state superintendent of public education; cavalry commander, lieutenant colonel, Union army; inspector general, Freedman’s Bureau, during Reconstruction; Austin postmaster

**Thomas Green** (1814–1864), veteran of the battle of San Jacinto; state legislator; secretary of the state Senate; clerk of the Texas Supreme Court, 1841–1861; colonel, Fifth Texas Volunteer Cavalry; brigadier general, First Cavalry Brigade; died while leading an attack on federal gunboats on the Red River; Tom Green County is named for him

**James Gibson Swisher** (1794–1862), soldier, farmer, businessman; participated in the Texas Revolution; signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the Republic of Texas

## Business

**Washington Anderson** (1817–1894), hero of the battle of San Jacinto; businessman; helped to organize Williamson County and sold land for the City of Round Rock

**John Bremond, Sr.** (1813–1866), a leading social and financial figure in Austin in the nineteenth century, whose family constructed the collection of mansions in downtown Austin known as the Bremond Block

**John T. Brackenridge** (1828–1906), attorney; merchant; president, First National Bank of Austin

**George Duncan Hancock** (1809–1879), businessman and state legislator; established one of the first retail stores on Congress Avenue in 1845; part of groups chartering the Colorado (River) Navigation Company and the Brazos & Colorado Railroad Company between Austin and Houston; appointed to the board of trustees of the State Lunatic Asylum (Austin State Hospital)

**William C. Hogg** (1875–1930), attorney, businessman, civic leader, philanthropist (mostly in Houston); son of governor James Hogg; president, secretary, University of Texas Ex-Students Association; member, UT Board of Regents

**George Washington Littlefield** (1842–1920), cattleman, land dealer, philanthropist; founder and president, American National Bank, 1890–1918; member, University of Texas Board of Regents

**Frank Taylor Ramsey** (1861–1932), horticulturist and owner of Austin Nursery, who discovered or originated and introduced several types of fruit and pecans in the early 1900s

**Goodall Harrison Wooten** (1869–1902), civic leader and founder of the Texas Memorial Museum at the University of Texas

## Architects and Engineers

**John Andrewartha** (1839–1916), architect and civil engineer; designed many buildings in Louisville, Kentucky, before moving to Austin, where he designed many residences, institutional buildings, and other structures

**Abner H. Cook** (1814–1884), carpenter, architect, and contractor who owned his own brick kiln and lumber mill and designed many prominent Greek Revival buildings in Austin, including the Governor's Mansion

**Karl Wilhelm Pressler** (1823–1907), surveyor and cartographer; chief draftsman, General Land Office, 1865–1899; created state map in 1858, revised and published as the *Traveler's Map of the State of Texas* in 1867

**Christoph Conrad Stremme** (1807–1877), German engineer and architect, one of the first professionally-trained architects in Texas; designed and supervised construction of the first General Land Office building, where he was a draftsman and produced many maps, drawings, and surveys; designed the original Gothic Revival main building of the State Lunatic Asylum (Austin State Hospital); developed an inexpensive method of photographic reproduction of maps for the Land Office

## Scientists and Inventors

**Dr. Charles Hemphill Fay** (1910–1987), physicist; professor and head of the physics department, University of Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1938–1941; Geophysical Laboratory, Exploration and Production Research Laboratory, Shell Oil Company, Houston, 1941–1969; named on 10 U.S. Patents; sole inventor on another 11 U.S. Patents

**Elizabeth Sthreshley Townsend** (1857–1919), teacher, Texas School for the Blind, who invented and patented the punctograph, a braille typewriter

## Writers and Artists

**George Waverley Briggs** (1883–1957), journalist, author, and managing editor of major newspapers throughout Texas; state commissioner of insurance and banking, 1918–1920; vice president, City National Bank/First National Bank, Dallas; wrote *Digest of Texas Insurance and Banking Laws*; responsible for the Texas trust act, the common trust fund act, and the Texas probate code

**Frank Brown** (1833–1913), publisher of the *Austin Southern Intelligencer*; author of *Annals of Travis County and Austin*

**Phineas de Cordova** (1819–1903), land agent; writer for the *Texas Herald*; editor of the *Southwestern American*, an Austin weekly

**John Henry Faulk** (1913–1990), author, humorist, radio personality, playwright; campaigned against blacklisting in the 1950s; Austin Public Library downtown branch is named for him

**Fania Feldman Kruger** (1893–1977), poet; Russian immigrant who expressed her commitment to human rights through powerful poetry printed in many publications, including the *Southwest Review*

**Karl Friedrich Hermann Lungkwitz** (1813–1891), early Texas landscape painter and photographer

**Peter Heinrich Mansbendel** (1883–1940), Swiss artist and woodcarver, who created ornamental details for projects such as the reconstructions of the Spanish Governor's Palace and the Mission San Jose in San Antonio

**Harvey R. Marks** (1821–1902), renowned portrait photographer who maintained a studio in Austin from 1870 until shortly before his death

**George Washington Raborn, Jr.** (1923–1974), sportswriter and movie critic; University of Texas athlete; Southwest Conference shot-put champion, 1946; AAU shot-put record holder (six years); editor, *UT Daily Texan* student newspaper; president, Southern California Track Writers Association; covered Olympic Games in 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s

## Sports

**Wilmer Lawson Allison, Jr.** (1904–1977), tennis player; runner-up, Wimbledon singles, 1930; U.S. National Mixed Doubles champion, 1930; ranked number one in United States 1934, 1935; won U.S. National Open Tournament, 1935; competed on behalf of United States in Davis Cup, 1928–1933, 1935–1936; with partner John Van Ryn, won Wimbledon doubles titles, 1929 and 1930, and U.S. National Doubles titles, 1931 and 1935; won 14 of 16 Davis Cup matches with Ryn, the pair considered by many tennis historians to be the best doubles partners of their time; served as University of Texas assistant tennis coach under Daniel Penick, 1937–1941 and 1947–1957; head tennis coach, 1957–1972; Texas Sports Hall of Fame, 1957; International Tennis Hall of Fame, 1963; “the finest tennis player to come from the state of Texas during the first half of the twentieth century”

## Religious

**Thomas White Currie, Sr.** (1879–1943), professor and president of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, 1922–1943; Presbyterian minister and national leader; member of the board of Tillotson College (now Huston-Tillotson College)

**Jacob Fontaine** (1808–1898), born into slavery; founder, after emancipation, of the First Baptist Church for African Americans in Austin and five other churches; founded the Travis County Association (later known as the St. John Regular Missionary Baptist Association); business owner; established the *Austin Gold Dollar*, one of the first black-owned newspapers in the South and the first in Austin; and served as the leading black figure vying for the establishment of the University of Texas at Austin; with his son, co-founded the Colored Brothers of the Eastern Star fraternal organization; advocated for the location of the University of Texas in Austin, gaining support from the black community around central Texas

**Richmond Kelley Smoot** (1835–1905), pastor, Southern Presbyterian Church, Austin; co-founder, Austin School of Theology; elected moderator of the national Presbyterian General Assembly; elected chaplain of the Texas Senate, without seeking the office in 1882, and was re-elected several more times

## Community Leaders

**Mary Frances Freeman Baylor** (1929–1997), African American community organizer; director, Clarksville Neighborhood Center (1968–1992); founder, Clarksville Community Development Corporation

**Rebecca Jane Gilleland Fisher** (1831–1926), only woman elected to the Texas Veterans Association for military service associated with the Army of the Republic of Texas, and its last surviving member; charter member and state president for 18 years, Daughter of the Republic of Texas

**Dr. Everett H. Givens** (1888–1962), dentist and civic leader; worked to obtain equal rights and opportunities for African Americans in Austin

**Johann Jacob Groos** (1822–1878), surveyor; commissioner, General Land Office; served as mayor of New Braunfels and in other government positions

**Ima Hogg** (1882–1975), daughter of Governor James Hogg, noted philanthropist; founder, Houston Symphony Orchestra; president, Houston Symphony Society; founder, Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, University of Texas; first female president, Philosophical Society of Texas; appointed to the planning committee for the National Cultural Center (now Kennedy Center); appointed to the Texas State Historical Survey Committee (now the Texas Historical Commission); member of a panel that assisted first lady Jacqueline Kennedy in selecting historic furniture for the White House in 1962; with Lady Bird Johnson and Oveta Culp Hobby, one of the first female members of the Academy of Texas; established the Bayou Bend Collection (Museum of Fine Arts-Houston) and Varner-Hogg Plantation State Historical Site (West Columbia)

**Swen Jaenssen, aka Swante Palm** (1815–1899), merchant; served as postmaster in La Grange and Austin; Swedish immigrant who played a leading role in promoting and facilitating Swedish migration to Central Texas; U.S. vice consul to Norway and Sweden; book collector who donated thousands of books to the University of Texas library

**Julia Maria Pease** (1853–1918), daughter of Governor Elisha Pease; art patron of sculptor Elisabet Ney and organizer of the Texas Fine Arts Association, after Ney's death; philanthropist; charter member of the Texas State Historical Association; active in many other cultural and charitable organizations

**Octavia Fry Rogan** (1886–1973), head librarian, Texas State Library; district library supervisor, Works Progress Administration; president, Texas Library Association; vice president for Texas, Southwestern Library Association

**Andrew Jackson Zilker** (1858–1934), businessman; bank director; sold the land containing Barton Springs to the City of Austin on the condition that the City of Austin make its payments to the school district and convert the land into a park, now known as Zilker Park

## Educators

**Laurine Cecil “L.C.” Anderson** (1853–1938), teacher; principal, Prairie View Normal Institute (now Prairie View A&M University); first president, Colored Teachers State Association; principal, Robertson Hill High School (later E. H. Anderson High School, after L.C. Anderson’s brother), at the time the only high school for black people in Austin, 1896–1928; L. C. Anderson High School was posthumously named in his honor

**Dr. Eugene C. Barker** (1874–1956), historian and author; professor; chair, University of Texas Department of History; managing editor, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, and director, Texas State Historical Association, 1910–1937

**Dr. Annie Webb Blanton** (1870–1945), teacher, North Texas State Normal College (now University of North Texas); first female president, Texas State Teachers Association; first woman elected to state office in Texas, as state superintendent for public instruction, 1918; reelected 1920; professor of education, University of Texas; founder, Delta Kappa Gamma Society for women teachers; vice president, National Education Association, 1917–1922

**Dr. Evelyn Maurine Carrington** (1898–1985), who served on the faculty of Sam Houston State Teachers College, Texas State College for Women, and other educational facilities, as well as maintaining a private practice in child psychology in Dallas

**Dr. George Pierce Garrison** (1853–1910), historian, author, professor; on the University of Texas faculty from 1884–1910; chair, history department, 1888–1910; began offering graduate work in history in 1897 and encouraged women to become historians; co-founder, Texas State Historical Association; editor, *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, 1897–1910; Garrison Hall at UT is named for him

**Dr. Reginald Harvey Griffith** (1873–1957), professor of English, University of Texas; known as “the godfather of the rare books collection”; founded the UT Shakespeare Tercentenary Festival; founder and president, Texas Conference of College Teachers of English; instrumental in the establishment of the University of Texas Press

**Dr. Louis Hermann Hubbard** (1882–1973), teacher and school administrator; teacher, principal, superintendent of schools, Belton; first dean of students, University of Texas; president, College of Industrial Arts (later Texas State College for Women, now Texas Women’s University), Denton, 1926–1950

**John Garland James** (1844–1930), founder, Texas Military Institute, 1867–1879; president, Texas A&M University, 1879–1883

**Dr. Mildred Mary Pickle Mayhall** (1902–1987), historian and author; professor of anthropology at the University of Texas (20 years); history teacher, Stephen F. Austin High School; amateur horticulturalist, helped organize the Austin Rose Society and developed several new strains of roses

**Arthur Newell McCallum, Sr.** (1865–1943), superintendent, Austin Public Schools, 1903–1942

**Dr. Daniel Allen Penick** (1869–1964), professor of classical languages, University of Texas, 1917–1955; assistant dean, College of Arts and Sciences, 1928–1940; called “the father of Texas tennis”; first UT tennis coach, 1908–1957; president, Southwest Conference, 12 years; president, Texas Lawn Tennis Association, 40 years; named to Texas Sports Hall of Fame, 1962

**Dr. Henri Rene Lucien Tallichet** (1844–1894), professor of modern languages; one of the original eight faculty members, University of Texas, 1883; previously taught at University of the South (Sewanee, Tennessee)

## Professional and Trade Organizations

In addition to families, many organizations purchased and maintained plots for their members over the years, such as the Texas Confederate Women’s Home, the Austin Typographical Union, the Texas School for the Deaf, and the Austin Fire Department.

Fraternal organizations such as the Masonic Lodge, Capital Lodge #28, and Carpenters and Joiners of America also bought plots for their members. Woodmen of the World are heavily represented throughout the cemetery.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### Ecological Setting

Oakwood Cemetery is situated in a highly developed urban setting. Site elevation ranges from approximately 550 feet above mean sea level (AMSL) in the west to approximately 580 feet AMSL in the east. The nearest body of water is Waller Creek, located just west of IH-35 and draining into the Colorado River to the south. Additionally, an artificial drainage channel bisects Oakwood Cemetery from north to south.

The cemetery's park-like landscape is maintained through regular mowing and pruning of woody species. Woody vegetation, from shrubs to large trees, provides shade, cover, foraging opportunities, and nesting habitat for numerous common bird species. Intermittent water availability in the form of precipitation runoff in the canals and a sprinkler system also makes the cemetery attractive to common urban wildlife species, including many birds and a few mammals, such as squirrels, opossums, raccoons, and foxes. The cemetery also offers a quiet respite from the surrounding densely developed urban landscape. However, due to its developed and maintained state, it is of marginal quality as wildlife habitat and unsuitable as habitat for the rare, threatened, or endangered animal species tracked in Travis County by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Frequent mowing, foot traffic, and other disturbances also make the site unsuitable as habitat for protected plants.

The cemetery is in Karst Zone 4, which includes areas that do not contain endangered cave fauna. No City-defined Critical Environmental Features (CEFs) were observed in Oakwood Cemetery during recent surveys.

### Topography

Oakwood Cemetery is relatively flat and, with the exception of a portion of the northern edge, no slopes greater than eight percent are found on the site. The site is bisected by a ridge; falling from the ridge to the west is the Waller Creek watershed and to the east, the Boggy Creek watershed.

The western half of the site forms a bowl, with the site sloping from the north and south down toward Main Avenue, and the lowest point being at the east gate. The highest point on the site is located at the midpoint of the northern property line. Opposite, on the southwest corner of the site, is the hill on which the original graves that formed the nucleus of the cemetery are located. The eastern half of the site slopes relatively evenly from north to south and is bisected by a tributary to Boggy Creek.

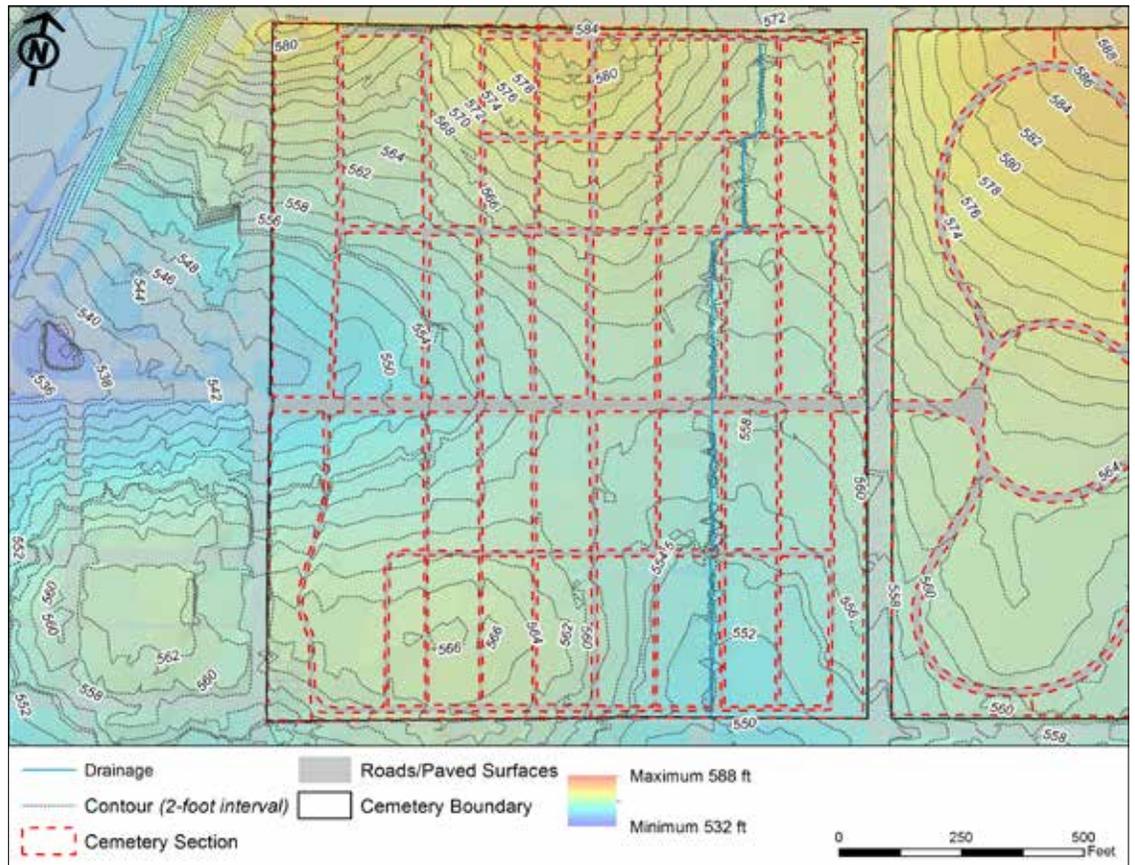


Figure 42. Topography of Oakwood Cemetery (Oakwood West Topo, Project Team)

## Geology and Soils

The northern portion of Oakwood Cemetery falls within Fluvial terrace deposits, specifically high-gravel geological deposits (Qhg). These deposits date to the Pleistocene epoch and are described as upper silty clay (with some gravel exposure) and a lower coarse unit that yields some water and possibly correlates with the Onion Creek Marl. The southern portion of the cemetery consists of Austin Chalk (Kau), described as Upper Cretaceous geological deposits that are chalky, mostly microgranular calcite with large amounts of calcium carbonate.

The soils in Oakwood Cemetery consist primarily of urban land, Austin, and Whitewright soils, 1–8 percent slopes (UtD), with the southwestern quarter of the cemetery primarily Travis soils (TuD). A small section of the northwest corner of the cemetery contains Urban land, 0–6 percent slopes (Ur). Ur represents soils disturbed by urban development.

Two soil types arise from these deposits, as well as imported soils: a combination of urban land and Austin and Brackett (UtD) soils makes up about 75 percent of the entire area of the cemetery and a combination of urban land and Travis soils (TuD) makes up the other 25 percent (Figure 43).

Of the first type, urban soils comprises about 40 percent, Austin soils about 30 percent, Brackett soils about 25 percent, and other soils about 5 percent. Urban soils are made up of a mixture of native and imported soils and other material and cannot be described unless specifically tested. Austin soils have a surface layer of very dark grayish-brown silty clay about 15 inches thick, a second layer of brown silty clay, extending to about 36 inches, underlain with partly weathered chalk. Brackett soils have a surface layer of light brownish-gray clay loam about five inches thick, a second layer of light yellowish-brown clay loam about eight inches thick, underlain by soft limestone.

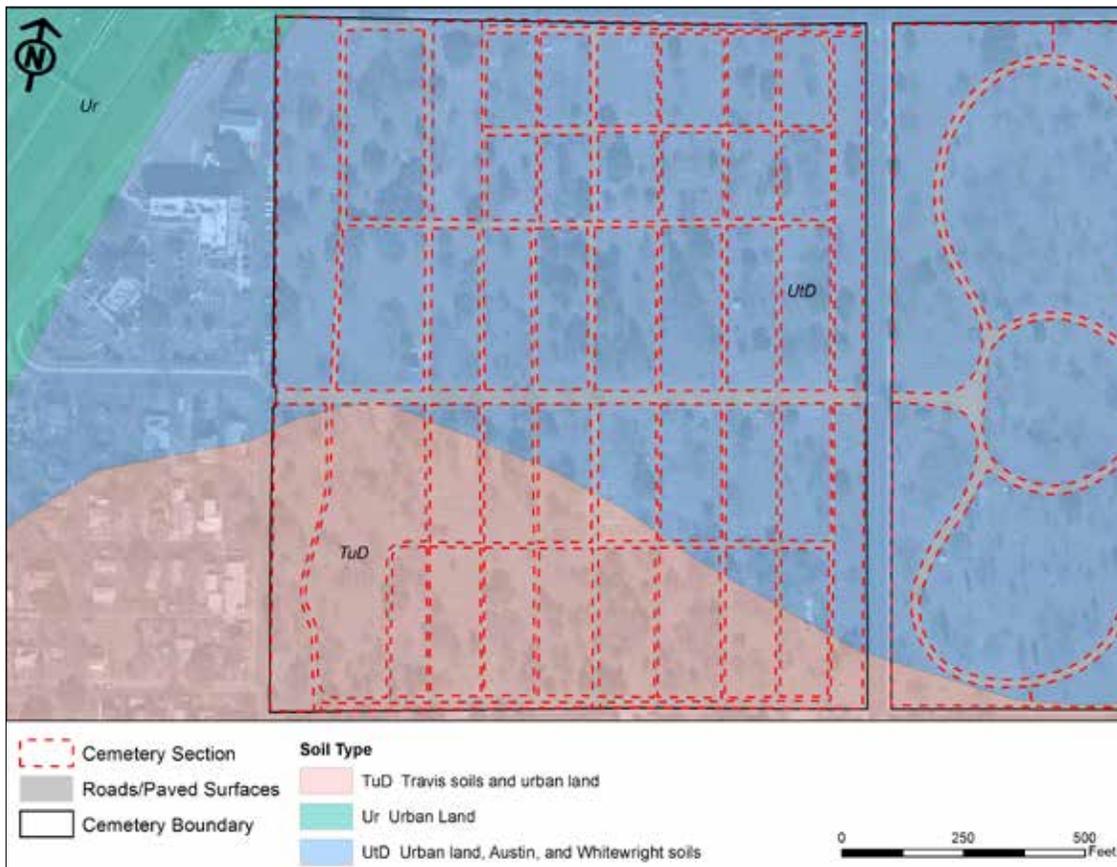


Figure 43. Oakwood Cemetery soils (Oakwood West Soils; Project Team)

The second type of soil present at Oakwood consists of 45 percent Travis soils, about 35 percent urban land, and about 20 percent other soils. Travis soils have a surface layer of gravelly fine sandy loam about 18 inches thick, with a second layer to a depth of 50 inches of red gravelly sandy clay. Travis soils, being composed of sand and loam, are much more erodible than the Austin and Brackett soils, which are mostly clay. Therefore, it is most likely that the Travis soils, which are more orange in color, are specifically those being so severely eroded during heavy rains.

## Cultural Setting: Previously Conducted Archeological and Historical Investigations

The Texas Historical Commission's Archeological Sites Atlas indicates that Oakwood Cemetery, along with Oakwood Cemetery Annex, has been designated as site number 41TV1706. (Number conventions for Texas archaeological sites are as follows: "41" is Texas' place in an alphabetical list of the 50 United States; "TV" is an abbreviation for Travis County; and "1706" indicates that the site was the 1,706th recorded within Travis County at the time of its recording.) Oakwood Cemetery was recorded in the Archeological Sites Atlas in 2004 and described as a "maintained urban setting cemetery."

Oakwood Cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1985. It was designated as a Historic Texas Cemetery in 2010.

The cemetery contains several Texas historical markers that recognize the gravesites of persons of historical significance, such as Susanna Dickinson, survivor of the Alamo.

No additional archeological sites, surveys, NRHP properties or districts, State Antiquities Landmarks (SAL), or historical markers are located within 30 meters of the cemetery boundaries. One of the boundaries of the Swedish Hill National Register Historic District is located approximately 50 meters to the west.

## Spatial Organization

The earliest section of Oakwood Cemetery was established in the 1830s on a promontory overlooking the town of Austin. The cemetery was formalized in 1856 as a 10-acre plot set within the city grid. Over the years, more property around this 10-acre section was purchased, and eventually, the cemetery grew to 40 acres, located east of what was then East Avenue, now U.S. Interstate Highway 35 (IH-35). City streets bound the cemetery along all four sides: Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (formerly 19th Street) to the north, Comal Street to the east, East 14th Street to the south, and Navasota Street to the west. The cemetery is oriented on a slight rotation off the cardinal grid toward the northwest. Its perimeter is bounded with a chain-link fence set along the property line.



Figure 44. Oakwood Cemetery (Project Team)

The setting of Oakwood Cemetery varies in character and scale on each of its four sides. To the north is the large mass of the University of Texas' Disch-Falk Fields stadium (Figure 45). The ramps and other structures of IH-35 are also visible to the northwest. To the east, across Comal Street, is the Oakwood Cemetery Annex. To the south, an alley runs between the cemetery and adjacent small-scale residences on small lots. Beyond Navasota, to the west and south of 16th Street, continues the small-scale residential neighborhood with what was a small monument carving business on the corner of 16th and Navasota. A commercial complex, including a multi-story hotel, its parking lot, and a chain restaurant, dominates the northwest corner of the cemetery (Figure 46).



*Figure 45. University of Texas' Disch-Falk Field stadium north of the cemetery (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 46. A commercial complex, including a multi-story hotel, its parking lot, and a chain restaurant, dominates the northwest corner of the cemetery. (John Milner Associates)*

Internally, the site is divided into quadrants by its principal circulation routes, which also are the only two paved drives: Main Avenue, which runs east to west, and Central Avenue, which runs north to south. A secondary grid of unimproved roads further subdivides each quadrant. Family plots are arranged in a grid within each of the subdivided spaces. Each family plot measures 25 feet by 30 feet and is bounded by footpaths about five feet wide. This grid system, set up by the original Austin Cemetery Association, occurs almost continuously over the whole site except for portions of the southwest and northwest quadrants (the old section). These two quadrants, Sections 1 and 4 respectively, are the oldest parts of the cemetery and their internal arrangement was opportunistic, rather than planned.

The older areas of the cemetery differ greatly in layout from the rest of the cemetery. Section 1, the southwest quadrant, contains the only curving road in the cemetery: West Avenue. Plots in the northwestern half of this section are irregular in both size and placement. Many individual graves do not have defined burial plots at all. The southwestern portion of Section 4 also lacks defined plots and has fewer individual marked graves.

Two traditional Jewish burial grounds, both called Beth Israel, are divided from the surrounding plots by fencing, following Jewish custom. Both follow the grid pattern prevalent throughout the cemetery. Beth Israel #1, located in the southwestern corner of Section 1, is the older of the two. It is two plots wide by four plots long and is defined by a fence to the north, by West Avenue to the east, and the outer boundary of the cemetery to the south and west. Beth Israel #2 is located in the mid-north portion of Section 4 and is three plots wide by 14 plots long. It is bounded by Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to the north and unimproved cemetery roads on the other three sides.

A drainage channel in the eastern half of the cemetery creates further spatial distinction. The channel, running north-south, breaks the regularity of the grid in Sections 2 and 3.

Topography, vegetation, the chapel, tall monuments, and boundary fencing define the vertical space in Oakwood Cemetery. Despite the overall gentle slope of the site, the bowl-like character of the topography in the western half of the cemetery provides a slight sense of enclosure. Vegetation, which also defines space in the cemetery, varies with tree canopy heights, tree density, and time of year. Portions of the cemetery with a higher concentration of Eastern red cedar (an evergreen tree with a lower branching habit) have a stronger sense of vertical enclosure. Other parts of the cemetery, with larger deciduous trees, feel less enclosed, especially in the winter when branches are bare. The five mausoleums on site, the chapel, and other tall monuments, while not creating enclosures, nevertheless punctuate the site and tend to define the space that surrounds them.

## Circulation and Access

Comal Street gives access to the cemetery from the east, while Navasota and 16th Streets provide access from the west. Within the cemetery, circulation forms a grid and is hierarchical in nature. Primary circulation routes consist of the two paved drives, unpaved gravel and dirt roads make up the secondary circulation, and tertiary circulation consists of the narrow grass pedestrian paths between burial plots.

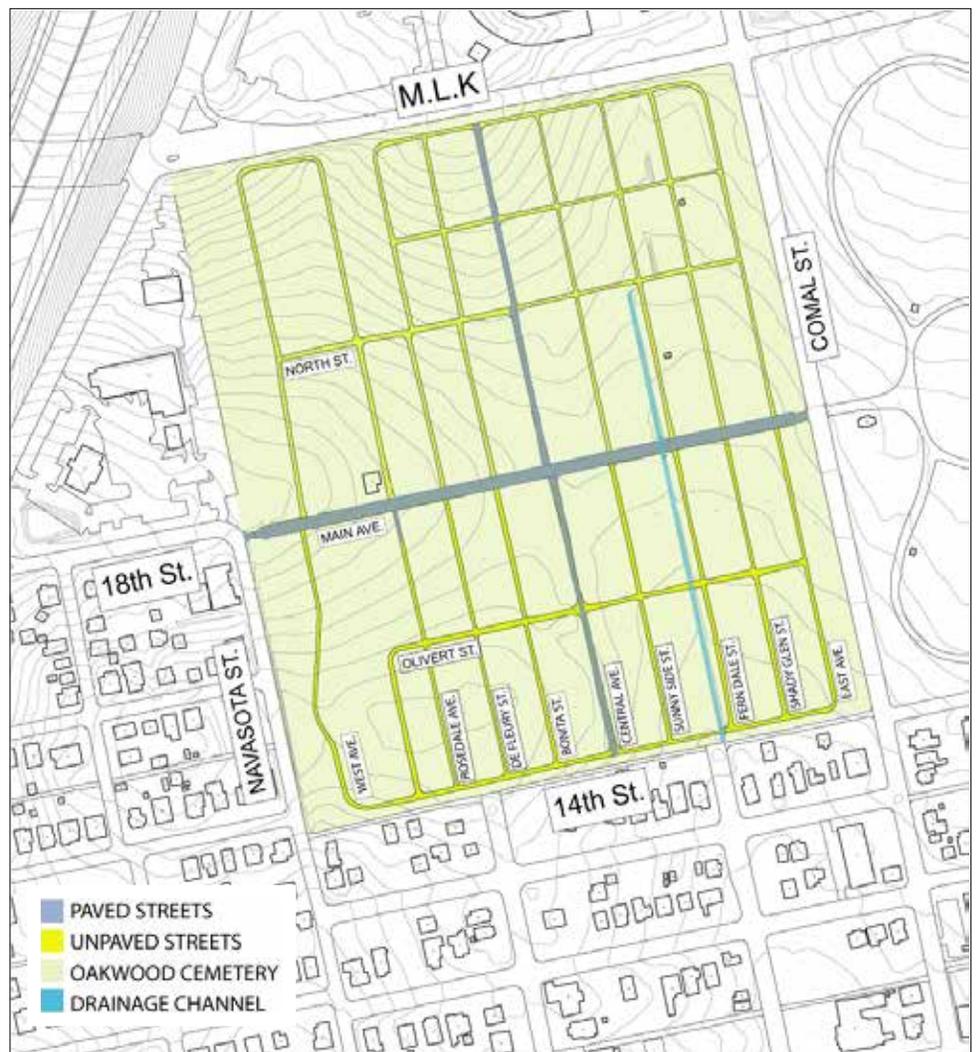


Figure 47. Oakwood Cemetery circulation; the street labeled "18th St." on this map is actually 16th Street (Knott, Oakwood Cemetery Cultural Landscape Report, p.25)

Main Avenue and Central Avenue, the two paved drives, make up the primary circulation routes. Main Avenue runs east-west and provides access to the cemetery from each end (Figure 48). A double gate set in the surrounding fence controls vehicular access at the entry points. Central Avenue runs north-south perpendicular to Main Avenue (Figure 49). Together, the two asphalt-paved roads divide the cemetery into roughly equal quadrants.

Secondary circulation consists of the unimproved roads that further subdivide each quadrant; five roads are oriented east-west and nine roads are oriented north-south (Figure 50–Figure 53 on page 113). Most of the north-south streets occur every three burial plots and most span the entire cemetery, although they are slightly misaligned where they cross Main Avenue (Figure 54). The roads are composed of packed dirt and some have a covering of loose gravel.

Tertiary circulation is composed of the grid of pedestrian walkways that separate the burial plots (Figure 55). These paths consist of grass in most places, with occasional concrete or stone paving associated with a family plot (Figure 56 on page 114). Formal access points into family burial plots from these paths are often defined by low thresholds set into the curb.



*Figure 48. Main Avenue, the primary east-west drive through the cemetery, lined with concrete curbs and sidewalks (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 49. Central Avenue, the only other paved road in the cemetery (John Milner Associates)*



Figure 50. The secondary circulation routes are composed of packed earth, with some gravel. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 51. The straight, unimproved roads subdivide the burial sections. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 52. West Avenue in the southwest portion of the cemetery is the only curved road. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 53. An intersection of two unimproved roads (John Milner Associates)



Figure 54. Several of the north-south streets are misaligned where they cross Main Avenue. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 55. Grass pathways between burial plots comprise the pedestrian circulation. (John Milner Associates)

Main Avenue is defined by a curb and gutter and lined by concrete sidewalks running parallel to the street on each side (Figure 57). At least some of the curbing was installed in the early 1920s, evidenced by a concrete curb stamp that reads “Wallace R. Miller, 1923, We Pave the Way,” (Figure 59) and a similar stamp dated 1924. Portions of the sidewalk were installed a few years earlier; stamps with the dates 1917 and 1918 were noted in at least two places. Both the curb and gutter and the sidewalks appear to be formed using two-course construction, a concrete-pouring technique common in the early twentieth century which involved pouring a thin, smooth concrete mixture over a more coarse concrete base.



Figure 56. Concrete sidewalks are sometimes associated with individual family plots. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 57. Concrete sidewalk and curb along Main Avenue (John Milner Associates)



Figure 58. Concrete sidewalk along the north side of Main Avenue (John Milner Associates)



Figure 59. Curb stamp along Main Avenue, 2005 (Knott, Oakwood Cemetery Cultural Landscape Report, p.25)

The drainage channel that runs through Oakwood is crossed in several places by a variety of bridges. Along the sidewalks lining Main Avenue, small metal bridges span the channel (Figure 60). The bridges are thought to have been relocated from Congress Avenue, possibly after the City of Austin acquired the cemetery. Where secondary roads cross the channel, concrete bridges designed to support vehicles are utilized (Figure 61).



*Figure 60. A pedestrian bridge crossing the drainage channel (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 61. A concrete vehicular bridge crossing the drainage channel (John Milner Associates)*

Both Main Avenue and Central Avenue are in fair condition. Both have been repaved occasionally, and have cracks, potholes, and an accumulation of silt and gravel along the sides (Figure 62, Figure 63). The curb and gutter along Main Avenue is in fair to poor condition; many portions are cracked, displaced, or have significant material loss (Figure 64; see also Figure 57 on page 114). This occurs most often at the intersections of secondary roads with Main Avenue, where vehicles attempting turns have destroyed curb corners (Figure 65). The most severe instance is at the intersection adjacent to the Chapel building, where large trucks regularly turn into the drive to access the temporary storage unit (Figure 66) and, previously, a dumpster. The sidewalks along Main Avenue are also in fair to poor condition. While some portions of the sidewalks exhibit only minimal deterioration, other sections have significant cracking, displacement, and material loss (Figure 67–Figure 69).



*Figure 62. Silt and gravel accumulated at the edge of Main Avenue (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 63. The cracked surface of Central Avenue (John Milner Associates)*



Figure 64. A severely cracked curb where the drainage channel passes beneath Main Avenue (John Milner Associates)



Figure 65. Turning vehicles have caused severe damage to this curb. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 66. The curb at the intersection adjacent to the chapel is extremely degraded. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 67. Many portions of the sidewalk lining Main Avenue are in poor condition. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 68. Severe displacement where the sidewalk crosses a cemetery road (John Milner Associates)



Figure 69. A concrete sidewalk leading to the chapel restroom is similarly in poor condition. (John Milner Associates)

The secondary circulation drives are in poor condition. They are not regularly graded or maintained, resulting in erosion, loss of gravel, and ruts caused by vehicles during wet and muddy conditions (Figure 70–Figure 72). The gravel and silt washes downhill to Main Avenue, where it collects at the road margin and blocks storm drains. The eroded road beds along more heavily used routes have caused adjacent plot enclosure features to lean (Figure 73).

The grassy paths between family plots are in good to fair condition. The grass, or occasionally herbaceous ground cover, is mowed on a regular basis. In a few instances, a paved surface has been installed as access to a particular family plot. These paved paths are in fair to poor condition, for the most part. Bermuda grass intrusions onto the walks cause cracking and uneven surfaces (Figure 74).



Figure 70. Gravel washes off the road surface, collecting at the road margin. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 71. This drive has lost much of its gravel surfacing. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 72. The north-south gravel roads are often in especially poor condition near their intersections with Main Avenue. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 73. Eroded road beds are causing adjacent features to lean and break, as is visible in the curbing here. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 74. Grass intruding on a paved path has obscured the paving stones. (John Milner Associates)

## Vegetation

The acid soils of Oakwood Cemetery support vegetation and flora that are distinct from those found on the other soil associations in the area. The typical vegetation on Oakwood soils is a mix of post oak/blackjack oak/Eastern red cedar woodlands and patches of mid- to shortgrass grasslands. At the flora level, this soil association is home to many species commonly found on the sandy acid soils of eastern Texas, but seldom (if ever) found on the clayey alkaline soils that make up the other 97 percent of Travis County. While Oakwood Cemetery and Oakwood Cemetery Annex contain numerous specimens of post oak and Eastern red cedar, the herbaceous layer is mostly composed of planted turf grasses and opportunistic weeds, such as *Hedypnois cretica* (cretanweed). Many trees in Oakwood Cemetery are eligible for protected status, and one crape myrtle may be one of the largest specimens in Travis County.

## Trees

A canopy of both deciduous and evergreen trees covers a large portion of the cemetery (Figure 75 on page 120 and Figure 76–Figure 77). The most common species are post oak (*Quercus stellata*), crape myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*), Ashe juniper (*Juniperus ashei*), pecan (*Carya illinoensis*), and live oak (*Q. virginiana*). Of these, only the crape myrtle is not a native Texas species (Figure 78).

Other species of tree present in the cemetery include cedar elm (*Ulmus crassifolia*), arborvitae (*Thuja sp.*), Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), Italian cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*), yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*), chinaberry (*Melia azedarach*), ligustrum (*Ligustrum occidentalis*), Texas persimmon (*Diospyros texana*), American elm (*Ulmus americana*), Texas mountain laurel (*Sophora secundiflora*), and Texas red oak (*Q. texana*). Some of these are native Texas species. Of all the tree species present in the cemetery, only the post oak and live oak are likely to be naturally occurring—the others were almost certainly planted at one time or another.

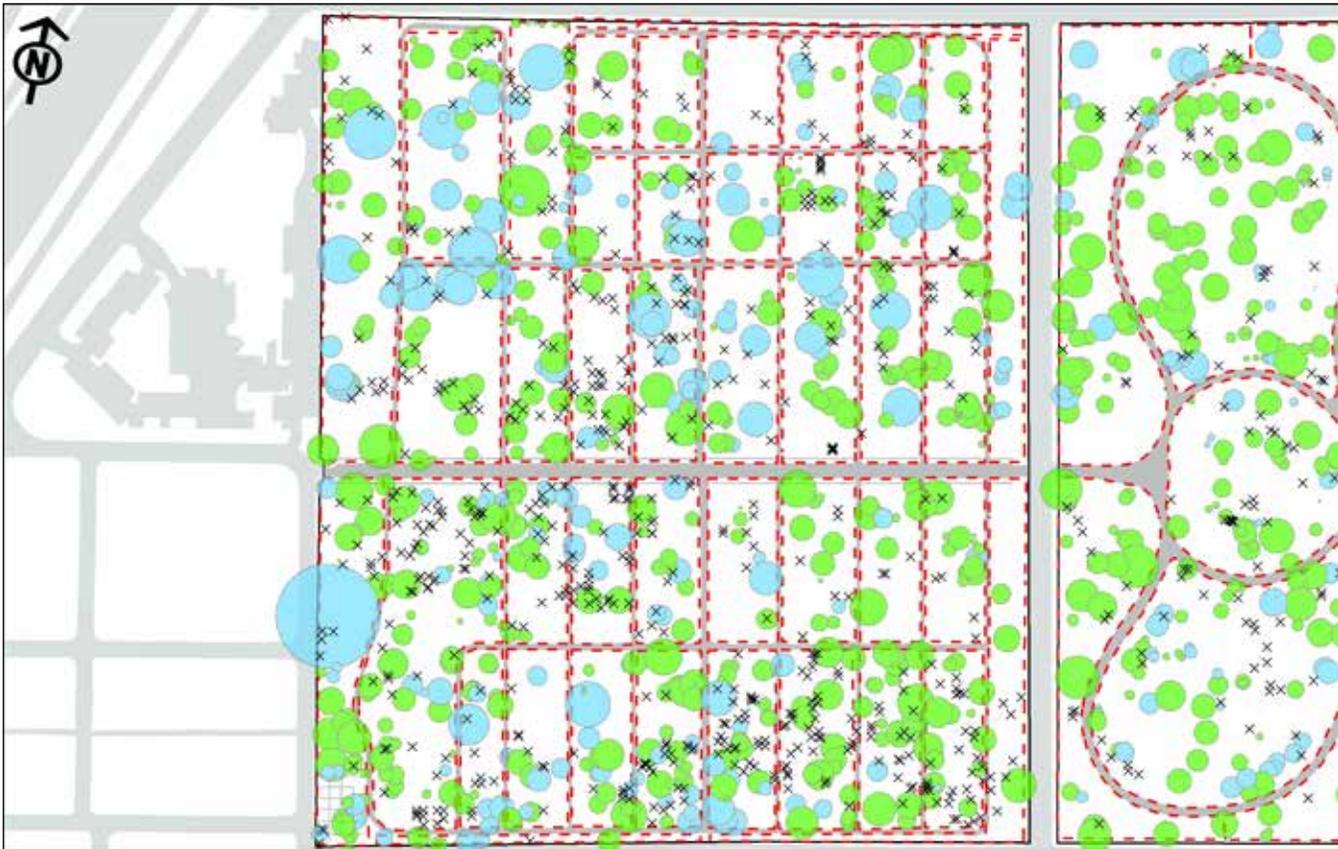


Figure 75. Trees in Oakwood Cemetery (Oakwood and Annex Trees; Project Team)



Figure 76. A variety of trees are present in the cemetery. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 77. Trees form a canopy over many parts of the cemetery. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 78. Crape myrtles are among the most common trees in the cemetery. (John Milner Associates)

Section 1 contains the only specimens of Eastern red cedar, which was a favorite species for cemetery plantings until the 1920s. Sometimes called the “cemetery tree,” this evergreen was considered a symbol of eternal life in the Upland South folk cemetery and was often planted in family plots or adjacent to individual graves. The concentration of Eastern red cedar in this particular area suggests that the rest of the cemetery was not heavily used until a later date and that, by then, the species had fallen out of favor as an ornamental tree.

Post oaks are found throughout Section 1 and in the southern portions of Sections 2 and 4. This species is native to the Austin area in only a few locations and is restricted to growing in sands and sandy loams on upland sites. To the east of Austin is the Post Oak Savannah ecoregion; pockets of this region are found within the city, usually on the Travis soil series, which is present on this site. Post oaks at Oakwood range in condition from good to poor, with most in only fair to poor condition. Most have some dieback at the tips of branches and indicate other signs of stress, due to root damage, over-watering, or nutritional deficiencies (Figure 79). Several have larger dead limbs, which pose both a safety hazard to visitors and a threat to grave markers. Others exhibit damage consistent with impact from large equipment. Numerous large specimens of post oak have been lost due to the recent years of drought in the area.

A line of crape myrtles is planted in the grass area between the boundary fence and the edge of Comal Street, on the east side of the cemetery. These trees were planted in 2007 and are maintained by either Parks and Recreation or Public Works.



*Figure 79. Many post oaks have some dieback or exhibit other signs of stress. (John Milner Associates)*

## Shrubs, Vines, Groundcovers, Perennials, and Annuals

Oakwood is only sparsely planted with ornamental species. Throughout the cemetery, a lawn composed of a mixture of St. Augustine grass, Bermuda grass, native grasses, and low herbaceous plants is kept mowed. Other plants, including shrubs, grasses, and other species have been planted as ornamentals within family plots. Shrub species present in the cemetery include nandina (*Nandina domestica*), oleander (*Nerium oleander*), boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*), primrose jasmine (*Jasminum mesnyi*), yucca (*Yucca sp.*), red yucca (*Hesperaloe parviflora*), century plant (*Agave americana*), sotol (*Dasyilirion sp.*), Tam juniper (*Juniper sabina 'Tamariscifolia'*), winter honeysuckle (*Lonicera fragrantissima*), lantana (*Lantana camara*), spirea (*Spiraea japonica*), photinia (*Photinia fraseri*), Texas sage (*Leucophyllum frutescens*), purple nandina (*Nandina purpurea*), and dwarf yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria 'nana'*).



Figure 80. Boxwood shrubs planted along the edges of a family plot (John Milner Associates)



Figure 81. Nandina and irises planted within a family plot (John Milner Associates)



Figure 82. Red yucca in bloom (John Milner Associates)



Figure 83. A few instances of century plant (agave) are located in the cemetery. (John Milner Associates)

Groundcovers present at Oakwood include English ivy (*Hedera helix*), monkey grass (*Ophiopogon japonicus*), and liriopse (*Liriope muscari*). Vine species include Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) and fall clematis (*Clematis virginiana*). The groundcovers are not native species and were likely deliberately planted, while the vines are native and may have seeded naturally.

Perennials in the cemetery include Dutch iris (*Iris germanica*), crinum lily (*Crinum asiaticum*), and oxblood lily (*Rhodophiala bifida*). Annuals include blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*), Texas bluebonnet (*Lupinus texensis*), and winecups (*Callirhoe involucrate*); all three of these species are Texas wildflowers.



Figure 84. *Crinum lily* planted at the foot of graves in a family plot (John Milner Associates)



Figure 85. A variety of perennial species planted at the base of a family monument (John Milner Associates)

## Grave Markers and Monuments

Grave markers and other monuments of commemoration within Oakwood range in age from as early as the 1840s to the present. Due to the age of Oakwood Cemetery, it contains some of the largest and most ornate grave markers in any of the city cemeteries, particularly (but not exclusively) in Section 1.

### Marker Types

Grave markers exist in a wide range of forms and styles, representing more than 150 years of trends and traditions in memorial design. Especially large monuments are located in the north-central parts of Sections 3 and 4, east of Temple Beth Israel #2. More modest, handmade markers are located around the periphery of the cemetery, particularly in the eastern portion of Section 3 along Comal Street, north of the main avenue that bisects the cemetery.

Graves and grave markers in Oakwood are oriented approximately to the east, with headstones typically placed on the west end of the grave and the inscription facing east. This orientation is traditional in Protestant Christian cemeteries. Some graves do not follow the east-west alignment, and are instead oriented to a central monument or to fit more efficiently into a family plot.

Upright markers found in Oakwood include headstones set on a base (Figure 86); tablet stones; columns set on a base; pedestals, alone or topped with columns, urns, or obelisks (Figure 87–Figure 88); steles; crosses; scroll markers (Figure 86); curved-top markers (Figure 90 on page 128); and slant-faced markers (Figure 91).

Markers are composed of a variety of materials, the most common being marble or granite. A small number of limestone markers are present. A few zinc monuments are located in Sections 1, 2, and 3 (see Figure 35 and Figure 36 on page 86).

The most common marker type found at Oakwood is a gray granite block headstone (see Figure 86 on page 127). These are rectangular, vertically oriented, inscribed on the eastern face, and usually resting on a granite base. Variations on the block headstone are also common, where the top of the marker has a decorative carving such as a slant-top, scroll, or pillow.

More common in older sections of the cemetery is the vertical tablet, appearing in four basic forms: flat-topped, domed, shouldered, and Gothic (Figure 92–Figure 93). These headstones are usually limestone and carved with an inscription, occasionally accompanied by a bas relief on the east face.

A variety of crosses are also found in the cemetery, including Latin crosses, rustic crosses made to look like tree branches (Figure 94), elaborately carved Celtic crosses (Figure 96), reclining crosses (Figure 95), and one wrought iron cross (Figure 97).

Also found throughout Oakwood Cemetery are markers indicating the deceased's association with military service or another organization. Military markers commemorate casualties from wars from the Civil War to World War II (Figure 98). Fraternal organizations recognized include the Masonic Lodge, Woodmen of the World, and the Austin Typographical Union. Woodmen of the World monuments are present throughout Oakwood (Figure 99–Figure 100).

Low markers include block markers, surface markers made of both stone and bronze (Figure 98 on page 130), bedsteads and cradles (Figure 102–Figure 103), flower boxes (Figure 105 on page 131, and Figure 81 on page 123), and bolsters (Figure 104 on page 131). Bedsteads consist of a tall carved curb outlining the grave and a vertical tablet, resembling a bed. The origin of this tradition is unknown, but surveyors in 2004 noted that most graves with this type of marker had German names. Cradles are identical, except that they mark the grave of infants and small children. Flower boxes are similar to bedsteads and cradles, but tend to have lower curbing, with the space filled with flowers or other plants.

A number of one-of-a-kind markers and monuments, from hand-carved marble sculptures (Figure 106 on page 132) to unique folk art pieces are present. An Austin Fire Department plot is marked with a pair of granite fire hydrants (Figure 107). Another monument of note is a small marker carved with a sleeping child, placed to memorialize "Little Alice." The marble sculpture has deteriorated severely, possibly the result of irrigation over-spraying (Figure 108 and Figure 109). Other unique markers include several wooden tablets (Figure 110), one of which is protected with a metal cover, and a headstone created from a discarded carved limestone Ionic capital.

Footstones are found throughout the cemetery. Marble footstones are present in Section 1; these may be set flush with the ground or may project above the surface. These typically consist of a small rectangular block carved with initials, and are usually paired with a headstone (Figure 111). A fair number of footstones have been moved from their original location and placed closer to the primary marker element or simply displaced.

The plots in the two Temple Beth Israel sections are marked with headstones on bases, tablet stones, pedestals, obelisks, and scrolls. Most are family plots, with a primary surname headstone, and are covered with stone or concrete slabs and surrounded by curbing (Figure 112). Bedsteads are also found in Temple Beth Israel #1, and limestone markers, bronze markers on stone bases, slant-faced markers, and ledger stones are found in Temple Beth Israel #2.

That section also includes a number of cenotaphs—markers for deceased persons who are buried elsewhere (Figure 113). Markers in both sections are made of granite or marble, and many include integral planters.

Many graves and family plots are marked with vertical monuments, which range from a simple obelisk to elaborate and eclectic ensembles (Figure 114–Figure 115). The most common monument is a pedestal surmounted by a draped urn, statue, or other object. Limestone or granite columns are also prevalent, with a wide variation in appearance: flat, smooth, pedimented, plain, ornamented, and carved to resemble tree trunks. Gateway markers, composed of two columns flanking an opening, often appear to mark the graves of a married couple.



Figure 86. Headstone on base (center) and slant-faced markers (John Milner Associates)



Figure 87. Pedestal marker, topped with a bolster (McDoux Preservation)

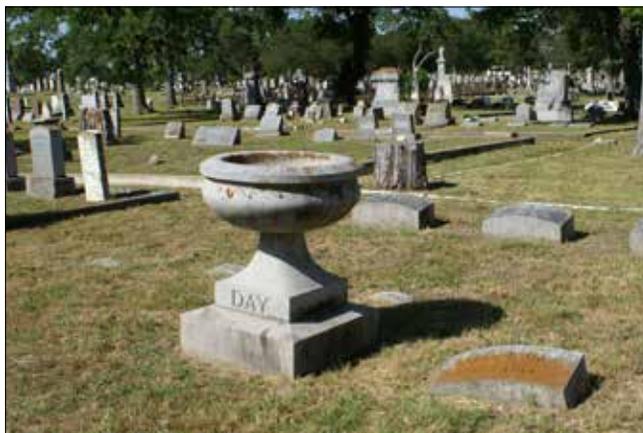


Figure 88. Pedestal marker, topped with an urn (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 89. Scroll markers (John Milner Associates)



Figure 90. Curved-top markers in a family plot (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 91. Slant-faced markers (John Milner Associates)



Figure 92. Gothic tablet marker (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 93. Domed tablet marker (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 94. Rustic cross (McDoux Preservation)

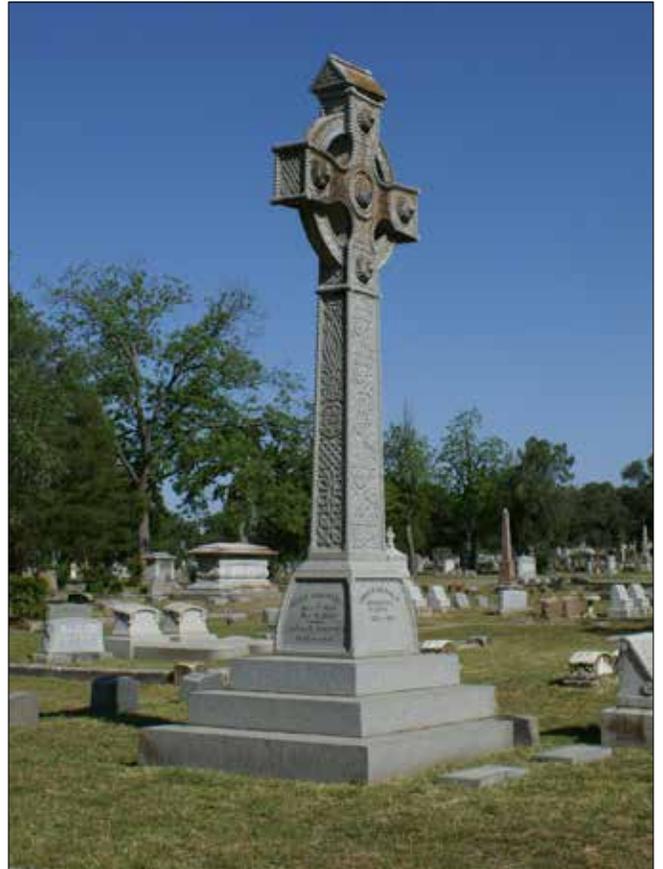


Figure 96. Celtic cross monument (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 95. Reclining cross grave markers (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 97. Wrought iron cross (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 98. Bronze surface marker and cross noting a veteran of the Civil War who also served as a Texas Ranger (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 99. Woodmen of the World monument (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 100. Woodmen of the World monument (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 101. Bedsteads in a family plot (John Milner Associates)



Figure 102. Bedstead marker (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 103. Cradle marker; the head of the statue has been broken off. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 104. Bolster marker (McDoux Preservation)

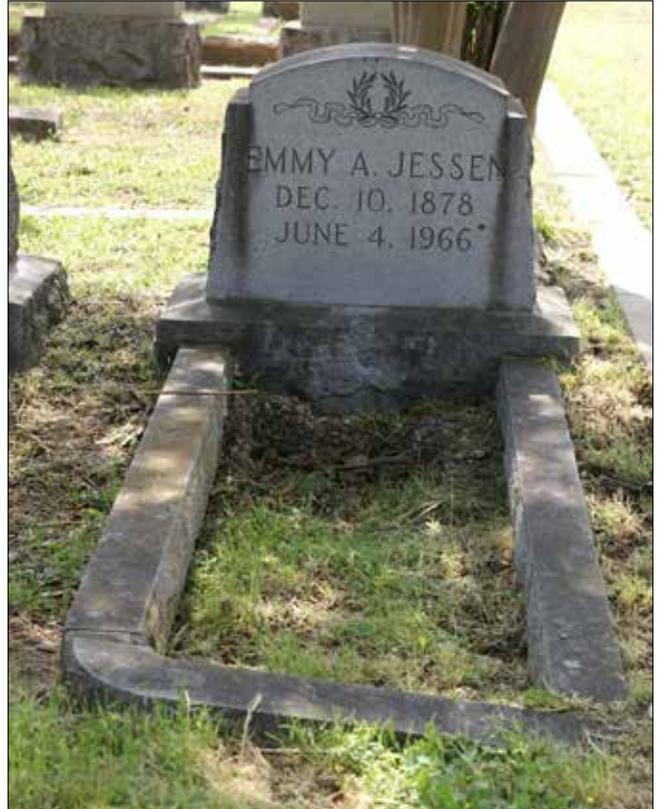


Figure 105. Flower box marker (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 106. Statuary integrated into a family plot marker (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 109. Granite fire hydrants mark the Fire Department plot. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 107. "Little Alice" marker, prior to damage (Austin History Center, PICA 16338)



Figure 108. "Little Alice" in 2004 (Dale Flatt, 2004)



Figure 110. Wooden headboard (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 111. Paired headstone and footstone (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 112. Family plots in Beth Israel #1 (John Milner Associates)



Figure 113. Cenotaphs in Beth Israel #2 (McDoux Preservation)

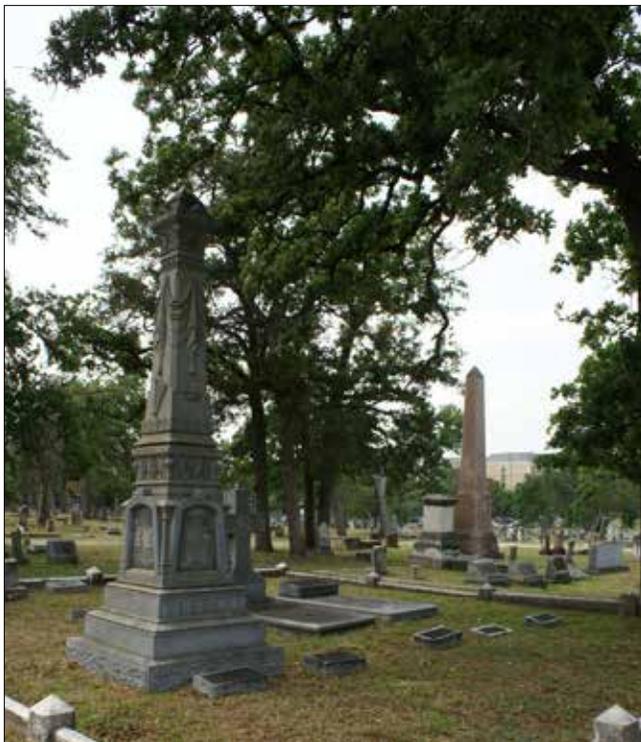


Figure 114. Obelisks in Section 1 (McDoux Preservation)

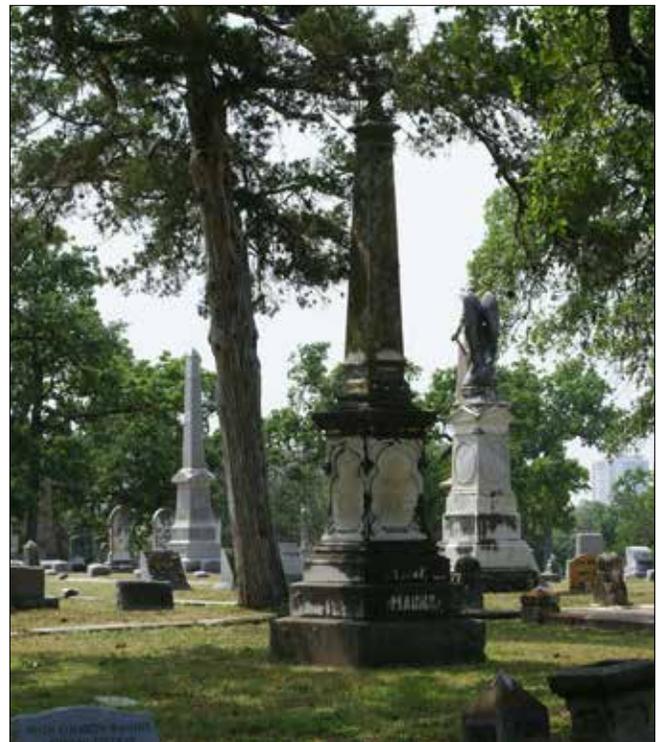


Figure 115. Obelisks and pedestal topped by statue (McDoux Preservation)

## Adverse Conditions

The overall condition of the monuments and markers at Oakwood is fair. As in all of the city cemeteries, the primary conditions observed in Oakwood Cemetery are tilted (Figure 117), sunken (Figure 118), displaced, or fallen grave markers and exposed marker foundations; biological growth, especially under trees; encroaching vegetation, including shrubs and tree trunks and roots; and subsidence of the soil over graves.

Grass clippings are found all over the markers, and these contribute, along with the proximity of overhanging trees and other vegetation, to the biological growth found on markers throughout the cemetery (see Figure 115 on page 133). Specific species have not been identified but are likely to include lichen, bacteria, mold, moss, and algae. Staining and general soiling are found on markers and monuments throughout the cemetery.

In addition, Oakwood contains quite a few broken markers and marker fragments, many of which have been displaced or moved, sometimes leaning against still-upright markers or placed in a pile (Figure 118–Figure 122 on page 136).

Cracking, open joints, and the separation and disassembly of marker elements are particularly a problem in the case of statuary or markers with multiple decorative pieces, although those conditions are found to some extent throughout the cemetery (Figure 123–Figure 124). Some markers are missing altogether, with only the base or concrete foundation remaining. Vandalism is another problem at Oakwood: markers have been pushed over, statuary broken, and box tombs dismantled and plundered (see Figure 103 on page 131).

Due to the age of the markers, worn inscriptions, sugaring or delamination of the stone (Figure 125), and visible previous repairs (both well-done repairs and those that have failed, as seen in Figure 126) were observed. Limestone markers have been very nearly destroyed (Figure 127–Figure 128).

The survey team saw actively running, unattended water faucets spraying water directly onto markers, plots, and curbing, as well as a water line repair project where workers had scraped mud from their tools and boots onto nearby markers. Dripping faucets were observed.

Proximity to the gravel paths that are accessible by car could threaten markers throughout the cemetery, and existing vehicle damage was noted in Section 4, along the path that passes near the Chapel building.

In addition, markers and plots are threatened by the deteriorated condition of the drainage channel that runs through the cemetery from north-to-south. This channel is reinforced with concrete walls which, in some places, are unstable. The markers close to the edge of the channel could be displaced if the walls were to move further or collapse (Figure 129).



*Figure 117. Tilted marker (McDoux Preservation)*



*Figure 116. Sunken marker (McDoux Preservation)*



*Figure 118. Tablet marker partially engulfed by adjacent tree (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 119. Broken markers (McDoux Preservation)*



Figure 120. Marker fragments (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 121. Displaced marker (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 122. Displaced marker (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 123. Disassembled stele alongside intact steles (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 124. Cracked monument. (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 125. Sugared marble (McDoux Preservation, OW-DSC09686)



Figure 126. Previously repaired tablet marker (JMA\_050114\_0366)



Figure 128. Damaged limestone tablet (McDoux Preservation, OW-DSC00051)



Figure 127. Severely damaged limestone monument (McDoux Preservation, OW-DSC00049)



Figure 129. Markers and burials near the edge of the drainage ditch could be damaged or displaced if the walls fail. (John Milner Associates)

## Plot Coverings

Traditionally, family plots and graves in southern cemeteries were regularly scraped of all vegetation. The practice has been generally replaced by the complete paving of a family plot or grave in concrete or gravel; tile may be applied over the concrete. There are several examples of these practices in Oakwood, in both historic and modern plots (Figure 130–Figure 132).

In Section 2, many plots are surrounded by curbing and filled with black stone or limestone gravel (Figure 134). Bedstead markers also often contain coverings of gravel or ornamental plants (Figure 133, Figure 135).

Box tombs (Figure 136), above-ground tombs made of stone or concrete (Figure 137–Figure 138), ledger stones, stone slabs over crypts, and body stones (Figure 139) are found in several sections. False crypt box tombs and table tombs (Figure 140–Figure 141 on page 140) are found in older sections of the cemetery, usually made from stone, limestone, and marble. In some cases, the slab on top of box tombs has been displaced slightly, probably by vandals attempting to access the interior. Section 1 also contains several above-ground tombs made of brick. These are generally in poor condition (Figure 142–Figure 143 on page 141). Ledgers, which are grave-sized markers installed on or very low to the ground, are common grave coverings in the cemetery. Ledgers appear in a variety of forms and materials: they may be concrete, marble, or other stone; may be flat or rounded; and may be accompanied by a grave marker or include a carved inscription on the surface of the ledger itself (Figure 144–Figure 145 on page 141).

Several examples of the traditional southern form of the mounded grave are found in the cemetery. Although a 1911 cemetery map indicates many mounded graves, only a few are still present. Two concrete mounds located in Section 1 are encrusted with seashells, a decorative style popularized by cement worker H.T. Mordhorst in the late nineteenth century and found in many historic Texas cemeteries (Figure 146). The shell mounds are in poor condition. The concrete is cracked and collapsed, and most of the shells are broken or missing entirely. Another mounded grave is made of cast-iron, an example of a mass-produced modular mounding system patented by Joseph R. Abrams in 1874, which could be customized by the addition of elliptical pieces to increase its size. The cast iron mound is in fair condition (Figure 147).



Figure 130. Concrete slab poured over crypts and plot (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 131. Concrete paved family plot (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 133. Bedstead markers with plantings (John Milner Associates)



Figure 132. Concrete paved family plot (John Milner Associates)



Figure 134. Gravel-covered family plots (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 135. Bedstead marker with gravel (John Milner Associates)



Figure 136. Box tombs (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 137. A mortared brick above-ground tomb (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 138. Above-ground tomb (John Milner Associates)



Figure 139. Box tombs with curved bodystones (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 140. Table tomb (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 141. Table tomb with stele and decorative metal supports (John Milner Associates)



Figure 142. Deteriorated above-ground brick tomb (John Milner Associates)



Figure 143. Deteriorated brick tomb (John Milner Associates)



Figure 144. Ledger with carved inscription (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 145. Ledgers with additional grave marker (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 146. Shell mounds in Section 1 (John Milner Associates)



Figure 147. Cast-iron mound (Laura Knott)

## Plot Enclosures

Many of the family plots, and some individual graves, in Oakwood Cemetery are bounded by low curbs that mark their extents. Curbing may be made of granite, marble, limestone, or cast stone and often includes taller corner stones and side stones cut in various designs (Figure 148, below). The entrance to these large family plots is often indicated by a low threshold or step cut into the curb, into which the family's name may be carved (Figure 149–Figure 150). Thresholds are often flanked by piers, which sometimes include the plot's lot number (Figure 151). Entrances are usually centered on one side of the plot, often facing the closest circulation corridor.

The most common curb type is a simple, poured concrete curb ranging from flush to the ground to about six to twelve inches in height (Figure 152–Figure 153). These are sometimes punctuated by rusticated concrete masonry unit piers, topped with concrete domes or other ornamentation (Figure 154).

Also common are hand-worked limestone curbs, usually with a curved or quarter-round top. These are frequently punctuated by square limestone piers at each corner and at plot entrances (Figure 155). Piers typically feature some variation on a carved Gothic-style groin-vaulted design, ranging from barrel vaults to pointed arched vaults or more complex designs (Figure 156).

Granite curbs are also common in the cemetery, especially in the northern half of Section 2. Gray granite is used most frequently, although local pink granites are used in several instances (Figure 157–Figure 159). Granite curbs are often of a quarter-round or rectangular shape and punctuated by granite piers, sometimes in quite ornate forms and often Gothic in design (Figure 160, facing page). In the northern portion of Section 2, granite curbed plots are often associated with families of high economic or social standing. These plots tend to be well cared for, are in good or excellent condition, and often feature large monuments and elaborate carvings in the granite curbing (Figure 161).

Most curbs, usually those formed of poured concrete or granite, are in good condition. However, many of the curbs made with either concrete or limestone masonry units have been overturned or displaced by vegetation, soil subsidence, or by erosion, which undermines support at the base (see Figure 73 on page 118). Others have been damaged or dislodged by vehicles or maintenance equipment (Figure 162). Still others have missing or damaged piers or ornamentation features (Figure 163 on page 147).

One family plot in Section 4, close to the chapel, is bounded by a four-foot-tall limestone masonry wall. This wall is in poor condition, with many cracks and several displaced or missing stones (Figure 164, Figure 165)



Figure 148. A wide variety of corner and side stones ornament plot curbs (a, b, d, g, h, McDoux Preservation; c, e, f, John Milner Associates)



Figure 149. Carved marble threshold set in a concrete curb (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 150. Carved threshold (McDoux Preservation)

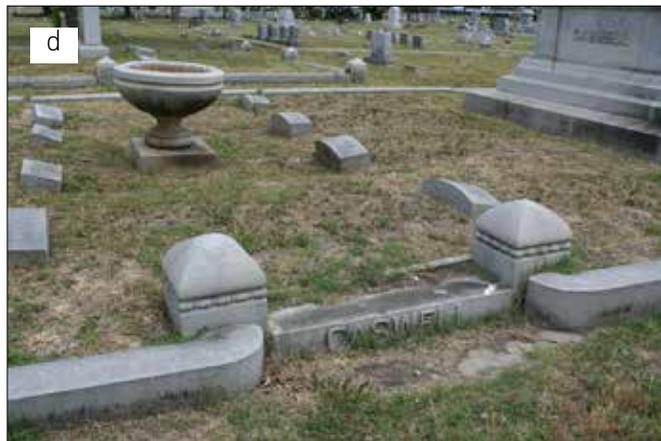


Figure 151. Plot entrance thresholds with a variety of decorative piers (John Milner Associates)



Figure 152. Simple poured concrete curb (John Milner Associates)



Figure 153. Family plot outlined with concrete curb (John Milner Associates)



Figure 154. Poured concrete curb with decorative corner piers (John Milner Associates)



Figure 155. Deteriorating limestone curb (John Milner Associates)



Figure 156. Limestone pointed gothic arch piers (John Milner Associates)



Figure 157. Granite curbing (John Milner Associates)



Figure 158. Rough granite curbing (John Milner Associates)



Figure 159. Pink granite curbing (John Milner Associates)



Figure 160. Quarter-round granite curbing with corner piers (McDoux Preservation)



Figure 161. Elaborately carved granite plot enclosure (John Milner Associates)



Figure 162. (left) Severely damaged limestone curb, probably due to mowers; (right) displaced curbing (John Milner Associates)



*Figure 163. Detached granite pier (McDoux Preservation)*



*Figure 164. Limestone masonry wall surrounding a family plot in Section 4 (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 165. The wall is severely cracked, and has missing and displaced stones. (John Milner Associates)*

## Plot Fencing

Oakwood Cemetery contains a variety of Victorian and more recently-installed wrought or cast iron fencing, “gas pipe” fencing, and wire fencing. In several instances, fencing systems feature specialized finials, fasteners, and built-in plaque holders. Beginning in the 1880s, cast iron fencing for a family plot could be assembled by choosing from among a variety of gates, posts, and picket tops sold via catalog. Changing cemetery trends in the twentieth century led to the removal of many family plot fences.

Several family plots and some individual burials at Oakwood have cast iron fencing. In many instances, the cast iron fencing has been stolen or otherwise removed, leaving only metal support posts (see below). Some lengths of fencing have been secured with bicycle locks.

Of those for which the fencing still remains, a variety of designs are found in both the panels and attachment systems (Figure 166–Figure 171). One unique grave surround, which cemetery specialist Anne Shelton Vance has seen only in Oakwood Cemetery and in Navasota, is this cast iron decorative surround with attached oval headstone (Figure 172).

Several family plots are fenced with decorative woven wire. One example was made locally by the Austin Anchor Fence Company and features a complex, tensioned system of springs and fasteners, which holds it in place and prevents theft (Figure 173–Figure 174).

A few plots in Oakwood feature “gas pipe” fencing—horizontal pipes held in place with metal posts or set into stone piers (see Figure 175–Figure 176).

One unusual family plot is bounded by a carved marble balustrade, the only one of this kind found in the cemetery (Figure 177).

Although much of this plot fencing was originally painted, the paint generally has failed, and some fences exhibit pitting and material loss as a result. Iron fences are corroded and, in several cases, ball moss has attached to their surfaces (Figure 178). Of most concern is the ongoing loss of historic fencing by theft, vandalism, breakage, or other mechanical damage.



Figure 166. The cast iron fencing has been removed, leaving only the support posts. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 167. Missing fencing (John Milner Associates)



Figure 168. Cast iron fencing (John Milner Associates)



Figure 169. Bent metal fencing (John Milner Associates)



Figure 170. Cast iron fencing, with many missing sections (John Milner Associates)



Figure 171. Modern steel fencing (John Milner Associates)



Figure 172. Unique cast iron grave fencing with attached headstone (JMA\_050114\_0340)



Figure 173. Woven wire fencing surrounding a family plot (John Milner Associates)



Figure 174. Woven wire fencing surrounding an individual burial (John Milner Associates)



Figure 175. Gas pipe fencing set in stone piers (John Milner Associates)



Figure 176. Gas pipe fencing with missing and damaged sections (John Milner Associates)



Figure 177. Carved marble balustrade (John Milner Associates)



*Figure 178. Ball moss attached to rusted cast iron fence (McDoux Preservation)*

## Water Features

The eastern half of Oakwood Cemetery once drained naturally to a swale that crossed the site from north to south. To improve flow rates during periods of high water, the swale was channelized in the 1930s (as dated based on the channel's design and in reference to historic maps). The concrete-lined, open-top box channel varies in width from less than five feet to more than six feet, and from three feet to four feet in depth (Figure 179). An early map and grade profile of the channel shows the north end of the drainage channel passing under a bridge at 19th Street (now Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard) and exiting the site to an open ditch, labeled "low ground," to 13th Street, where it empties into what was labeled "deep ditch" at 12th Street to the south. A Public Works stormwater map shows the current configuration, with a 48-inch-diameter underground storm sewer entering the open channel from the north and emptying into a 66-inch underground sewer at the southern boundary of the cemetery.

Stormwater drainage from the north enters the channel through a grated culvert outlet on the south side of the first east-west cemetery service road. The channel flows southward, jogging twice diagonally to the west and passing through two concrete culverts under service drives. Continuing southward, the channel passes through additional concrete culverts under Main Avenue and two more service drives, terminating at the 66-inch-diameter underground storm sewer entrance. Steel pipe spacers are placed across the channel at its terminus for safety reasons (Figure 180).



*Figure 179. The concrete drainage channel that bisects the cemetery (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 180. Steel pipe spacers placed across the channel's southern terminus (John Milner Associates)*

A plan to repair the upper portion of the channel was initiated in 1961, specifying the replacement of nearly 400 linear feet of the channel between 19th Street and Main Avenue. Cast concrete struts were specified as spacers in the northern-most section, in lieu of the iron pipe spacers used in the rest of the channel (Figure 183). Several of these spacers have been dislodged over time, and a number of new spacers added to keep portions of the channel from collapsing. Other repairs to the channel have been made periodically, and a detailed report on the existing condition of the drainage channel in 2004 led to several repairs, including the replacement of collapsed wall sections (Figure 184) and the addition of concrete lined swales in some areas to prevent soil washout (Figure 185–Figure 186, facing page). Numerous instances remain of missing and damaged spacers, damaged or collapsing walls, and severe cracks in the channel bottoms (Figure 181–Figure 182).

An underground iron pipe irrigation system was installed at Oakwood around 1971, as part of a city-wide initiative to improve city cemetery maintenance. Iron pipe risers, most terminating with a hose bib or a quick coupler for attaching an impulse sprinkler head, are located in a grid pattern throughout the cemetery. Most risers, which average 30 inches in height, are encased in eight-inch-diameter corrugated concrete drain pipes, hub end buried in the ground, and grouted solid. Numerous risers and their protective casings have been bent or damaged (Figure 187–Figure 188). During the development of this master plan, the City replaced 60 hose bibs, 86 vacuum breakers, and 124 quick couplers in the irrigation system at Oakwood Cemetery. It also purchased a total of 110 removable, transportable impact heads to be shared between the city cemeteries.



Figure 181. Partially collapsed wall section (John Milner Associates)



Figure 182. Cracked channel bottom (John Milner Associates)



Figure 183. Cast concrete and iron pipe spacers stabilize the channel in the northern portion of the cemetery. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 184. Recent repair of a collapsed wall segment (John Milner Associates)



Figure 185. Soil washout along the side of the channel (John Milner Associates)



Figure 186. Concrete swales added to mitigate erosion (John Milner Associates)



Figure 187. Iron pipe riser with hose bib (John Milner Associates)



Figure 188. Iron pipe riser with mineral deposits (John Milner Associates)

## Structures

### Buildings

Oakwood's Gothic Revival mortuary chapel is the only habitable building located within the cemetery. It stands on the north side of Main Avenue near the cemetery's west entrance (Figure 189–Figure 190). The chapel was designed by Austin architect Charles H. Page and constructed in 1914 by contractor James Waterson to replace a smaller building (the "dead house") located at the west entrance gate. Built of rusticated ashlar limestone masonry, the chapel is asymmetrical in plan, with a rectangular sanctuary and a tower centered on its east side. The load-bearing masonry walls are buttressed and support heavy wood brackets and deep overhanging eaves. The doors and window openings are lancet arches created with smooth limestone units containing wood frames. The front-gabled roof is constructed of wood, with composition asphalt shingles, and is supported by decorative brackets at the front and back gables. A wooden-gabled hood, with a cross-timber design and decorative wooden brackets, shelters the front double door. A



Figure 189. Oakwood Chapel (John Milner Associates)

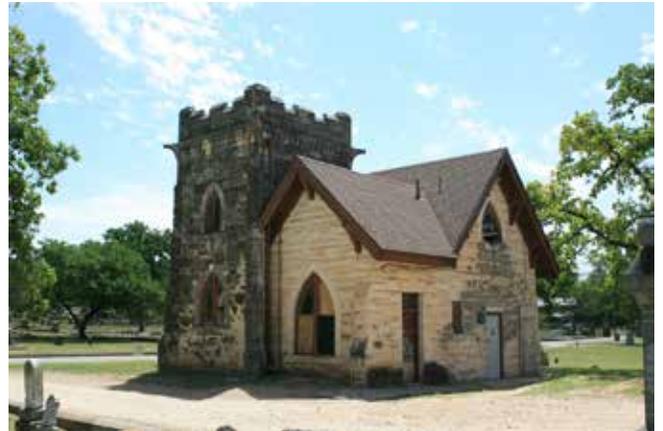


Figure 190. The rear of the chapel (John Milner Associates)

Original plans have not been located, but it is thought that a nave and chancel originally comprised the main room. The tower room contained receiving vaults, which provided temporary storage for remains before a permanent location was excavated. In the mid-1940s, the interior of the Chapel was remodeled from plans designed by J. Roy White, City Engineer and dated April 12, 1944. These plans required removal of a platform that may have supported an altar, closed off what was probably the chancel to create a women's restroom, and enlarged a storage room in the back of the building. An area that likely was once the nave of the chapel became a waiting room. The tower was remodeled to become an office; cabinetry with a built-in safe was installed, and a window on the south wall was

enlarged, with the window specified to match those existing in the nave. The front doors were replaced to match the original. A low wooden railing to separate the waiting room from the office was also added at this time, as was additional trim at the ceiling. Asphalt tile was installed in the waiting room over what may have been the original concrete floor. At a later date, another frame and plaster partition was constructed to divide the main sanctuary into two rooms, creating front and back offices. A drop ceiling was installed in the front office.

The building was evaluated in 2008 by a structural engineer, who reported that the main problems affecting its structural condition are a result of differential settlement of as much as five inches, associated with seasonal weather variations, poor stormwater drainage, and possibly leaking plumbing. This settlement has led to significant cracking and lateral displacement of the limestone units of the masonry walls. The engineer recommended a program to reduce soil moisture variations, including controlling stormwater drainage, and to underpin the exterior walls of the building to provide more stability.

Other condition issues include badly degraded stone windowsills and coping stones, and open or badly eroded mortar joints. Inappropriate repairs, using Portland cement, have been made to some of the mortar joints. The limestone forming the tower and the north wall is badly stained with mildew, indicating that the walls are collecting and holding moisture that likely infiltrates from the tower parapet, window sills, and surrounding wet soils. This water is leading to deterioration of the limestone units and delamination of the interior plaster.

The original chapel roof was shingled in wood; when that was replaced by asphalt shingles, the flashing was not replaced between the tower and the main roof, and this area still leaks. The tower roof is also leaking. All of the exterior wood on the chapel is in poor condition, including some of the decorative wood brackets, which are rotted, as well as sills, frames, and sashes. Open joints are present on all of the windows and the trim, and the paint is checked, crazed, and peeling. The two exterior doors on the building's north side are in very poor condition. The main entrance door is in fair condition.

On the inside of the chapel, the floors are cracked and uneven and are covered in asbestos tile. Much of the interior lime plaster is intact, but water infiltration has caused the plaster keys to fail, and plaster has completely dislodged from the walls in many areas. In addition, groundwater has caused the wood frame of the northernmost partition to rot at the base, leaving large holes. The wooden ceiling and decorative beams are in good condition, but moisture and insects have caused damage to much of the interior woodwork below. Baseboards and windowsills show evidence of rot and termite activity, and in areas where the plaster has completely failed, baseboards and other woodwork have separated from the walls. Some of the wood trim is missing altogether. The existing electrical system in the chapel does not meet current code, and there are no heating or air conditioning systems in the building. The two restrooms are non-functional.



Figure 191. Lane mausoleum in Section 3 (John Milner Associates)

## Mausoleums

Oakwood Cemetery contains five mausoleums in various styles, including Art Deco and Art Moderne. Four of the five are in very good condition. Exterior staining and exposed foundations are an issue on some of these, but they appear to be structurally sound (Figure 191–Figure 194). The Kreisle mausoleum, however, located in the southwest quadrant, is in need of exterior stabilization (Figure 195). This brick masonry load-bearing structure has been overlaid with concrete stucco, which is deteriorating rapidly. Because the mausoleum was situated in a wooded area, moisture accumulation, penetration, and biological growth have caused the concrete to spall and fail in many areas.



Figure 192. Hamilton mausoleum in Section 3, with some staining and an exposed foundation (John Milner Associates)



Figure 193. Davis mausoleum in Beth Israel #2 (John Milner Associates)



Figure 194. Mausoleum with flanking bronze statues (John Milner Associates)



Figure 195. The concrete-stucco-clad, brick masonry Kreisle mausoleum in Section 1 (John Milner Associates)

## Fence System

Oakwood is entirely fenced along its perimeter with a six-foot chain link fence, topped in many places with a double row of barbed wire. The fence is in fair condition, due to rusting, missing or loose posts, and other damage (Figure 196). The barbed wire is missing in areas along the south and west sides. The gate is punctuated by the two formal entrances to the cemetery at either end of Main Avenue. A pedestrian gate along Martin Luther King Boulevard near the northwest corner of the cemetery is kept locked (Figure 197).

Along the southern half of the west boundary, the chain link fence sits atop a concrete retaining wall that runs from the west entrance to the cemetery to the southwest corner. At its highest point, the wall is seven to eight feet tall. The retaining wall likely was constructed between 1952–1964, possibly to reduce the steepness of Navasota Street. The wall shows many signs of repair and has been painted over many times to cover up graffiti (Figure 198).



Figure 197. A pedestrian gate in the northwest corner of the fence (John Milner Associates)



Figure 196. The chain link fence surrounding the cemetery (John Milner Associates)



Figure 198. A concrete retaining wall along the southwest corner (John Milner Associates)

The two formal entry points to Oakwood are centered on the east and west sides of the cemetery. The west entrance was constructed around 1913 and is composed of four rusticated granite columns, a double wrought iron gate for vehicles, two flanking wrought iron pedestrian gates, and flanking curved wing walls of rusticated granite masonry (Figure 199). Each of the four granite columns is topped by a decorative finial. The wrought iron gates are in good condition, but the masonry columns and wing walls are only in fair condition. Several of the masonry blocks on the north wing wall have been displaced, as have several blocks on one of the larger columns (Figure 200). The chain link and barbed wire boundary fence extends behind the stone entrance to discourage trespassing.



*Figure 199. The west entrance to Oakwood Cemetery (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 200. Several blocks on the north wing wall of the west entrance are displaced. (John Milner Associates)*

The east entrance to Oakwood Cemetery matches the entrance to the Oakwood Cemetery Annex across Comal Street. It is composed of two matching yellow brick columns supporting a double vehicular gate of bent steel (Figure 201–Figure 202). Both the columns and the gates (painted black) are in good condition.

In addition to the boundary fencing, each of the Beth Israel cemeteries within Oakwood is fenced. Beth Israel #1, in the southwestern corner of the cemetery, is bounded by a metal picket fence and set with an ornate cast iron lichgate along its eastern side (Figure 203). Beth Israel #2, in the northwestern portion of Oakwood, is bounded by a low chain link fence. The fence has several double gates along each side, presumably to allow access for maintenance equipment (Figure 204). A cast iron lichgate, featuring a decorative arch, is located at the southwestern corner of the section (Figure 205).

A three-sided vertical board fence in the southeast corner of the cemetery partially screens soil and gravel piles from view (Figure 206).



Figure 201. The east entrance matches the entrance to Oakwood Annex. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 202. The yellow brick columns support steel gates. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 203. A metal picket fence and cast iron archway surround Beth Israel #1. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 204. A chain link fence surrounding Beth Israel #2 is set with several access gates. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 205. A cast iron archway is set in the southwest corner of Beth Israel #2. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 206. A vertical board fence screens soil and gravel piles in the southeast corner of the cemetery. (John Milner Associates)

## Small-scale Features

### Site Furnishings

Few site furnishings are present in Oakwood Cemetery. A few aluminum-slat litter receptacles are surface-mounted on concrete pads along both sides of Main Avenue (Figure 207). These were installed in ca. 2010 and are in good condition.

A number of directive and informational signs are located along Main Avenue, especially clustered near the two entrances (Figure 209, opposite page). Several Texas historic marker signs are located within the cemetery, one recognizing the cemetery itself and others identifying the graves of important persons in Texas history (Figure 210–Figure 211). A number of small informal signs are placed throughout the cemetery to give more information about prominent local citizens; some of these signs include text and others feature quick response (QR) codes that link to websites with information about the person (Figure 212). A covered kiosk just outside the chapel holds a cemetery map and other information about the cemetery and upcoming events (Figure 208).



Figure 207. Aluminum slat litter receptacles along Main Avenue (John Milner Associates)



Figure 208. A covered kiosk adjacent to the chapel provides information about the cemetery and events. (John Milner Associates)



Figure 209. Signs clustered along the east entrance (John Milner Associates)



Figure 211. An Official Texas Historical Marker next to a gravestone (John Milner Associates)



Figure 210. An Official Texas Historical Marker recognizing the cemetery (John Milner Associates)



Figure 212. Informal sign with a QR code providing a link to more information about the decedent (John Milner Associates)

## Grave Furnishings

Oakwood Cemetery features a relatively small number of grave decorations, compared to the other historic city cemeteries. In a few family plots, benches are placed alongside graves or at the foot of graves (Figure 213), and a few instances of metal arbors and trellises are also present (Figure 214). Other decorative grave furnishings include chairs, sometimes with pedestals placed nearby to function as side tables.

A collection of grave furnishings that decorates the Robison family plot, at the western edge of Section 1, includes an arbor over a concrete bench, two plant stands, a small table, and a chair, all made of metal with embellishments (Figure 215).

In a few instances, silk flowers are placed at headstones, and small stones are placed on many of the grave markers in the two Beth Israel areas, in the Jewish tradition.

## Utilities

Utility features in Oakwood Cemetery are limited to underground water and sewer lines, and one overhead electric line servicing the Chapel.



*Figure 213. Benches are placed in some family plots. (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 214. A metal arbor with climbing roses (John Milner Associates)*



*Figure 215. Grave furnishings in the Section 1 (McDoux Preservation)*

## SIGNIFICANCE

In order to develop treatment recommendations that are well-grounded in national standards, this master plan proposes areas and periods of significance, evaluates the cemetery under National Register Criteria, and determines its integrity. The applicable Criteria for Evaluation for Oakwood Cemetery are presented below, along with one Criterion Consideration. Per National Register requirements, except for archeological sites and cemeteries nominated under Criterion D, burial places must also meet the special requirements of Criteria Considerations C or D, which refer to graves and cemeteries, and possibly to A (religious properties) or other Criteria Considerations.

**Criterion A:** *Properties can be eligible for the National Register if they are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.*

Oakwood Cemetery meets Criterion A because it was the first municipal cemetery in Austin and that the year of its first burial, 1839, was also the year that Austin was officially established. In addition, within its boundaries are buried persons from a wide range of ethnic, religious, social, and cultural backgrounds, overall representing the general composition of the citizenry of Austin into the early twentieth century.

**Criterion B:** *Properties may be eligible for the National Register if they are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.*

Within Oakwood Cemetery are buried many influential citizens of the past from the areas of government, the military, architecture and art, education, land development, religion, political reform, and science, including prominent governmental and military figures, artists, local business and philanthropic leaders, educators and writers, and even a couple of notorious characters. These persons were important not only to the history of Austin, but many were also influential statewide and nationwide; therefore, Oakwood Cemetery meets Criterion B.

**Criterion C:** *Properties may be eligible for the National Register if they embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.*

Oakwood Cemetery meets Criterion C. It is significant for the location, forms, and the design of its markers and monuments, representing three periods of development of the typical Upland South cemetery: pioneer, transitional, and modern. Many of the markers and monuments, especially those installed before the arrival of the

railroad and mass-manufactured goods in 1871, may be found to be valuable works of important local craftspersons and artists. Others may also be found to be important examples of local folk art forms and traditions. A large number of the monuments and markers in Oakwood Cemetery represent the social and artistic values of the Victorian era, and in particular, the Victorian “cult of death,” and its romantic and sentimental view of mortality. Many Victorian and later monuments also represent mechanized manufacturing processes that made items such as “white bronze” markers and cast iron fencing inexpensive for people to purchase, especially by catalog, and have shipped to Austin.

**Criterion D:** *Properties may be eligible for the National Register if they have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.*

Because there is little written history of Oakwood Cemetery, archeological investigation may reveal even more information about the history of Austin and its people. Of particular interest is the area identified on older cemetery maps as the “Negro section,” adjacent to the Chapel, where most African Americans were buried in the early days of Oakwood Cemetery. Few graves in this section are identified with markers, so it is possible that ground penetrating radar and other investigative techniques may reveal a good deal more information about their locations. These techniques similarly can also be applied to the areas along the east cemetery border, identified as “pauper grounds,” also an area in which few graves are identified with markers.

Oakwood Cemetery may meet Criterion D.

**Criteria Consideration D:** *A cemetery is eligible if it derives its primary significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, from age, from distinctive design features, or from association with historic events.*

Refer to justifications for the Criteria above.

## Period of Significance

The period of time during which a property acquired the characteristics that make it eligible for listing in the National Register or for designation as a local landmark is called the *period of significance*. This period often begins when the property was established or constructed, or when events or activities that contribute to the property’s historic significance began to take place. The period of significance usually ends at least 50 years before the present date.

Based on Criterion A, the period of significance would begin when the City of Austin and the cemetery were established, in 1839. The end of the period of significance would be based on either the time when the property ceased to be associated with significant persons (Criterion B) or the end of the period during which significant architectural resources were constructed (Criterion C).

Oakwood Cemetery's period of significance was listed as "1839–1899, 1900 – " in the East Austin Multiple Resource Area listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The master plan team would define the period of significance as 1839–1950, in order to encompass the many city and state leaders who were buried during those years. Burials of significant persons continue through 1950, followed by a gap until the 1970s, when burials include a number of people significant in the development of the University of Texas. An end date of 1950 also encompasses the changes in marker styles through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

## Integrity and Threats

To be eligible for National Register listing, a property must retain integrity to the period of significance. In general, Oakwood Cemetery possesses integrity from its period of significance (1839–1950). One of the reasons for this level of preservation is that Oakwood was sold out by 1917, when the Annex was opened, so there was little impetus to make changes that would have affected its integrity. Although the occasional monument may have been replaced by a family with a more modern version, and vegetation has died and been replaced, the cemetery generally retains its historic character. Threats to its integrity include ongoing issues with monument damage and theft, the loss of historic trees due to drought and disease, and changes to the setting of the cemetery on its north and west boundaries, which have degraded its viewsheds and increased noise levels, both of which detract from the cemetery's otherwise peaceful setting.

Assessment of integrity is based on an evaluation of the existence and condition of physical features dating from a property's period of significance, taking into consideration the degree to which the individual qualities of integrity are present. The seven aspects of integrity included in National Register criteria are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, as described below.

**Location** refers to the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where a historic event occurred. Overall, Oakwood Cemetery retains integrity in its historic form. The cemetery has not changed in its size or layout since 1917. No property has been deleted or added to the original 40 acres and, since that time, it appears that the circulation has also retained its original layout. In addition, Protestant traditions prevalent in the south typically dictated that burials not be located on sanctified church grounds. Like many other southern cemeteries of the pioneer phase, when it was established, Oakwood was situated on a high hill outside of the main community. The situation of burial sites on high grounds had a clear symbolic association with heaven.

**Setting** refers to the physical environment of a historic property. The integrity of the location of Oakwood Cemetery has been compromised by growth and sprawl of the city and the University of Texas (UT) surrounding it. Originally, the cemetery stood alone on a promontory overlooking the city and the area around it was slow to develop. One would have been able to see downtown Austin and the State Capital dome from the top of the hill, but that view is now obscured by houses and vegetation.

The construction of IH-35 had a negative effect on the original view from the cemetery and attracted related businesses, such as restaurants and hotels along the northwestern edge of the cemetery. An adjacent hotel looms over Oakwood, and the hotel parking lot abuts the cemetery fence; both are incompatible with the cemetery.

The growing campus of UT has had a negative effect on the setting on the northern side of the cemetery. Beyond Martin Luther King Boulevard (MLK) is Disch-Falk Field and its immense parking lot. Not only does the scale and design of the building clash with the character of the cemetery, but also, when the stadium is in use, the noise of the crowds and the number of cars disrupt Oakwood Cemetery's peaceful atmosphere.

**Design** is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. **Materials** are the physical elements that were combined during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.

**Workmanship** is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. Oakwood Cemetery retains its overall design from the period of significance, including its gridded arrangement of internal drives. However, while enough of the original materials and expressions of workmanship in the construction, decoration, and planting of the cemetery survive to communicate the cemetery's historic character and maintain integrity, many are vulnerable to a number of threats. Many early markers, particularly those crafted from marble or limestone, have been damaged and many others are threatened by damage resulting from local soil conditions that lead to tilting and falling. Many lengths of the Victorian metal fencing that once surrounded family plots have been stolen or lost to weathering or other damage. In addition, traditional plantings have been lost to lack of maintenance, drought, disease, or removal, particularly trees that have been perceived as hazardous and have been removed and not replaced. The evidence of workmanship as found in the markers, plot enclosures, planting design, and fencing within the cemetery is threatened due to weathering, vandalism or deferred maintenance. Oakwood Cemetery is also directly reflective of trends in vernacular cemetery design, particularly of the Upland South region, as well as national trends in monument and marker design and fabrication.

**Association** is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. The very nature of the cemetery as a burial place directly associates it with those historically prominent persons interred there. Oakwood Cemetery is still significantly intact enough to convey its association with hundreds of people who contributed to the history of Austin, many of them also important to the history of the State of Texas.

**Feeling** is a property's expression of the aesthetic of historic sense of a particular period of time. Although it stands in close proximity of several major urban roads, and commercial, institutional, and residential developments, by virtue of its physical separation from its environs and its abundance of green space, Oakwood Cemetery has a park-like ambiance. The retention and condition of the vast majority of historic monuments, with the exception of most original wooden markers, obviously portray the cemetery's historic function and continued use. Oakwood is a fairly tranquil space given its location, and, for the most part, visitors respect it as a place for contemplation and remembrance.

## TREATMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall treatment objectives for Oakwood Cemetery focus on:

- protecting and restoring historic markers, curbs, and fences;
- rehabilitating the drainage channel;
- caring for and replacing historic trees;
- restoring the historic entrance;
- improving the exterior appearance of the cemetery;
- rehabilitating and adaptively reusing the chapel;
- preserving unique works of art and craft;
- providing historical and wayfinding information; and
- repairing cemetery drives.

Treatment plans illustrating these objectives are presented at the end of this chapter.

### Protecting and Restoring Historic Markers, Curbs, and Fences

Of primary concern to Oakwood Cemetery stakeholders are the poor conditions of grave markers, plot curbs, and plot fencing throughout the cemetery. Condition issues affecting all of these features include displacement, vandalism, theft, damage from falling tree limbs, deterioration from irrigation overspray, soiling from pollution and organic materials, and botanical growth. Refer to Chapter 3, General Management Guidelines, for protection and care of these types of features.

## Drainage Channel Rehabilitation

In its current condition, the concrete drainage channel that runs through Oakwood Cemetery presents the greatest threat to public safety of any feature within the cemetery. In addition, should the walls collapse, the graves that line the channel stand a chance of losing their contents to a stormwater event. The following actions are recommended:

- Divert a portion of the stormwater that is flowing into the channel from the north to reduce the likelihood of flooding in the cemetery and further deterioration of the channel wall. PARD is in communication with Watershed Management about developing water diversion as a priority for a future bond program.
- Remove the concrete spacers installed in the 1960s and replace with steel bar spacers to match older spacers as needed for bracing (Figure 216). Attempt to set spacers in an evenly distributed pattern where required. Consider painting all metal bar spacers a dark, weathered bronze color to minimize glare, reflection, and visibility.
- Remove and replace, in-kind, any sections of the channel walls that are identified as hazardous by the city engineer. New sections must be of the same design and concrete mix and the original sections, including matching aggregates and exterior finishes.
- Restore the footbridges (originally located along Congress Avenue) in consultation with a materials conservator who specializes in the treatment of historic metals. Add interpretive signage to explain their origins.
- Retain and reset, as needed, the pipe guardrails on bridge and culvert crossings over the channel, in consultation with a materials conservator who specializes in the treatment of historic metals.
- Consider, as a long-term solution to risks associated with the drainage channel, partially filling the channel and planting to interpret the historic waterway or creek (Figure 217).



Figure 216. The dark, weathered surface of these steel spacers is ideal for minimizing glare, reflection, and visibility in the landscape. (John Milner Associates, 2014)



Figure 217. Adaptive re-use of the drainage channel as a bioswale planter is an option, as shown in this example. (EPA.gov)

## Vegetation Management

### Historic Trees

The primary goal of vegetation treatment at Oakwood Cemetery is to preserve and enhance the historic character of the cemetery through the protection of existing historic trees and the replacement of lost trees. In its early history, the cemetery was characterized by its groves of large, deciduous trees, as well as evergreen trees planted to ornament family plots. In the past ten years, drought conditions have stressed the historic trees of Oakwood Cemetery, leading to dramatic losses.

The cemetery team conducted a tree survey/inventory at Oakwood Cemetery in 2014 and identified 643 live trees and 550 stumps; these stumps represent the loss of 46 percent of the total number of trees known to have grown within the cemetery. This does not take into account wind-thrown trees or other trees for which no stump remains. Of highest concern is the ongoing loss of the large post oaks that pre-date the establishment of the cemetery. Most of these oaks are concentrated in the southwest corner of the cemetery, where they grow in the deep sandy loams of the Travis soil series that covers that area.

Preservation, care and maintenance of remaining historic trees, and replacement of lost trees is paramount to maintaining the integrity of the entire cemetery. The following actions are recommended for the vegetation within Oakwood Cemetery:

- Develop a construction-phase planting plan to replace trees that have been lost from the cemetery, based on the attached conceptual plan and further research based on early aerial photographs and any ground-level evidence, such as stumps. It is possible that volunteer shrubs or perennials may mark the previous location of a tree or may obscure a stump.
- Develop a maintenance regimen for the care of historic trees at Oakwood.
- Add compost, mulch, and water trees (as necessary and appropriate for each species) during periods of insufficient rainfall.
- Ensure that, over time, specimen trees remain as historic features within the landscape through a program of in-kind replacement.
- Remove volunteer trees (usually mulberry, hackberry, tree ligustrum, or gum bumelia) that threaten markers and plot enclosures. Retain other volunteer trees as needed for tree cover or to represent a lost historic tree.

## Shrubs, Perennials, and Groundcovers

Oakwood Cemetery is only sparsely planted in ornamental shrubs, perennials, and groundcovers. Those plants that survive in the cemetery are proven to be tough, drought-resistant species and varieties. If private plantings in family or individual plots are desired, the species listed in the existing conditions section or other drought tolerant plants would be reliable. Otherwise, the following actions are recommended:

- Encourage garden clubs to investigate the antique shrubs, perennials, and groundcovers growing in Oakwood Cemetery. Consider supporting a propagation program for these antique plants and holding plant sale events to benefit cemetery care.

## Turf

Ground level turf at Oakwood is actually a mix of lawn grasses and a wide variety of native and exotic herbaceous annuals and perennials, all of which are kept mowed to form an even surface.

- Discourage the growth of troublesome weeds, such as sandspurs in Sections 1 and 2, by improving soils, primarily by adding compost topdressing annually.
- Upgrade the irrigation system, replacing risers with ground level hose bibs or quick couplers that can be accessed by the public to water newly installed plants in individual or family plots, and by city staff to irrigate plant material and turf during times of drought.
- See “Cemetery Lawn Care” in Chapter 3 for more information.

## Entrance and Appearance

Stakeholder concerns regarding the entrances and general exterior appearance of Oakwood Cemetery are focused on three issues: the condition of the west entrance gateway, the appearance of the west retaining wall, and the appearance of the rusting chain link fence that surrounds the cemetery.

### West Entrance

This entrance was built around 1913. It has been damaged by vehicles and needs to be repaired. The following actions are recommended:

- Reconstruct the north wing wall: disassemble, documenting and numbering each stone as it is removed, noting how and with what fixtures and materials the wall was originally constructed. Reconstruct the wall, replacing each stone in its original location. If metal fasteners or dowels are required, use stainless steel or other non-oxidizing material. If mortar was originally used, match that mortar when re-setting and pointing the wall.
- Remove both vehicular gates and restore in consultation with a materials conservator.
- Reconstruct the north gate pier: Carefully remove and securely store the finial. Disassemble the pier, documenting and numbering each unit as it is removed, noting how and with what fixtures and materials it was originally constructed. Reconstruct the pier, replacing each stone and the finial in their original locations. If metal fasteners or dowels are required, use stainless steel or other non-oxidizing material. If mortar was originally used, match that mortar when re-setting and pointing the wall.
- Replace the gates, adding a compatible locking system that replaces the current lock-and-chain system.
- Develop a compatible intersection between the new boundary fence (see age 176) and the north and south walls, one which secures the cemetery while complementing the original design of the west entrance.

### West Retaining Wall

A comparison of historic aerial photographs suggests that the poured concrete retaining wall, along the western edge of the cemetery where it shares a boundary with Navasota Street, was constructed between 1952 and 1964. The wall was poured in lifts in which the aggregate can be seen; the sandy, rounded, orange-brown aggregate appears to be locally derived, likely from the site. Unfortunately, the flat texture of the wall has invited graffiti, which is then quickly painted over by street maintenance staff. However, the painted surface provides an even more inviting surface for graffiti.

The following actions are recommended:

- Remove graffiti, instead of painting over it, using a product that is equivalent to “World’s Best Graffiti Removal System.” After removal, seal the wall surface so that it is easier to keep clear.
- Consider an Art in Public Places (AIPP) project to develop a mural to be painted on the west wall (Figure 218 and Figure 219). Invite local artists and other community members to propose subject matter and to, potentially, participate in the creation of the mural. Ensure that the mural is painted in a way that the original wall materials are visible between figures. Options other than a mural could be considered to improve the appearance of this wall.

The AIPP selection process is administered by a panel of volunteer visual arts professionals appointed by the Arts Commission. Any AIPP projects in City of Austin cemeteries would follow the standard process as outlined on the AIPP website: <https://austintexas.gov/department/aipp-policies>.



Figure 218. Example of a wall mural painted on a brick wall, but not obscuring the color and pattern beneath (Messenger-news.com)



Figure 219. Example of a wall mural painted on a concrete retaining wall, but not obscuring the color and pattern beneath (Charlottesvilledtm.com)

## East Entrance

The east entrance gateway into Oakwood Cemetery was originally constructed with funds allocated by the Austin City Council in 1922.<sup>116</sup> In 1980, it was demolished and replaced with the current gateway, likely to accommodate larger vehicles. The original entrance, which matched one at Oakwood Cemetery Annex, across the street (also altered in 1980), was comprised of a double set of brick gate piers framing a 12-foot-wide vehicular entrance set eight feet back from the street edge.<sup>117</sup> The inside piers supported the entrance gate leaves and, together with the outside set, supported the pedestrian gate leaves. The outside piers also supported the boundary fence. The demolition drawings indicate that the original gateway piers were constructed of brick. When the entrance gateway was replaced, these four piers were removed and replaced with two new brick piers set 20 feet apart and 22 feet back from the street edge. The original vehicular and pedestrian gate leaves were combined to create the existing gate. The following actions are recommended:

- Clean and inspect the brick piers at the east entrance for condition issues.
- Remove, restore, and reset the gates.
- Add a locking system that replaces the current lock-and-chain system and is compatible with the historic gate.
- Consider, when feasible, reconstructing the original gateway configuration since Oakwood is no longer a fully active cemetery. This will contribute to restoring and maintaining the historic character of the cemetery.

## Boundary Fence

Replace the existing chain link fence with a black metal picket fence to match the character of the east cemetery gates (see General Management Guidelines). Alternatively, the south boundary fence, since it is along an alley, could be replaced with a black, vinyl- or powder-coated chain link fence as a cost-saving measure. Consider adding a pedestrian gate midway along the south boundary fence, to provide easy access by nearby residents.

116. Minutes, regular meeting of Austin City Council, February 23, 1922.

117. "Oakwood Cemetery Gate Widening," City of Austin Department of Public Works, AFPC No. 607204, dated March 7, 1980, revised to add mowing strip, March 14, 1980.

## Visitor Facilities

Visitor access and comfort are a high priority for Oakwood Cemetery stakeholders. The existing chapel building is being restored to be adaptively reused as a multi-purpose interpretive space, and will also provide on-site public restrooms. Other visitor accommodations needed at Oakwood include seating nodes located throughout the cemetery. These seating nodes could be located anywhere there is adequate public space, preferably in shaded areas.

## Historical Information and Wayfinding

Stakeholders have asked that information be made available to the cemetery visitor to tell the story of the cemetery and the community it serves, with maps that can help visitors locate particular graves within the cemetery. A temporary kiosk was installed several years ago in front of the chapel, but it blocks views to the chapel and should be redesigned and relocated. In addition, the cemetery drives and sections are not identified, making it difficult to find particular graves. [See Chapter 3, General Management Guidelines, for more details.] To address these issues, the following actions are recommended.

- Design a new visitor kiosk, which should be located in the vicinity of the chapel. Archeological investigation is needed to determine the absence or presence of graves in the vicinity of the chapel, in order to site the kiosk. The design of the new kiosk should complement that of the chapel building.
- Install historical and wayfinding maps at the visitor kiosk. Consider incorporating QR codes that can be scanned using smart phones.
- Identify cemetery sections and drives with markers located at intersections. The markers should be durable and preferably of stone, concrete, or other material compatible with the historic character of the cemetery. Galvanized steel and unpainted aluminum are not recommended. The markers should be placed low to the ground or be thin and vertical in orientation.
- Consider installing informational signs at the graves of important community leaders. These signs should be simple, contemporary, and not distract from the historic character of the cemetery.
- Consider installing interpretive waysides to describe distinct historic sections of the cemetery .

## Cemetery Drives and Sidewalks

Two condition issues affecting circulation features need to be addressed at Oakwood Cemetery: the restoration and maintenance of the central cemetery drive and sidewalks, and the treatment of the unpaved internal cemetery roads.

Some of the concrete curbs and sections of sidewalk along Main Avenue are stamped with their construction dates, indicating that the road was formalized with curb-and-gutter and lined with sidewalks between 1918 and 1924. This is likely when Main Avenue was paved in asphalt, which was a relatively new product. One of the brand names for asphalt that was heavily advertised in park and cemetery journals was “Tarvia,” a viscous coal tar preparation used to make roads “dustless, mudless, waterproof, frostproof, and traffic-proof.”<sup>118</sup>

All 18 intersections of the cemetery side roads with Main Avenue were also provided with concrete curb returns and a concrete road apron. It appears also that the concrete sidewalks may have extended across the end of each apron, but most of those have been damaged and removed, or are buried beneath layers of asphalt or gravel. Damaged portions of the curbs and sidewalks reveal that they were constructed using a layered technique in which the core of the curb is poured with a large stone aggregate mixed with cement, then finished with a one-inch layer of mortar made of fine sand and cement. Sometimes the bond between the two layers was not successful, resulting in the spalling of the fine exterior layer when subject to compression stress from vehicles. These curbs and sidewalks in Oakwood exhibit most of their damage at intersections of cemetery interior roads with Main Avenue. The following actions are recommended:

- Grind down the asphalt on Main Avenue to the original level, replace damaged concrete features as recommended, below, then re-pave with asphalt comprised of similar aggregate as the original paving.
- Replace all damaged lengths of curb and gutter, concrete aprons, and concrete sidewalks along Main Avenue, matching the original materials and workmanship in-kind. Consider changes to design that would support accessibility in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If damaged sections contain historic manufacturer’s stamps, carefully saw-cut to remove these sections out and incorporate into the new curb and gutter in their original locations. If this is not feasible, carefully document the stamps and their context in photograph and map, then carefully remove and place in the cemetery archives.
- Avoid driving maintenance vehicles over sidewalks and curbs, when possible.



Figure 220. Removable steel bollards  
(RelianceFoundry.com)



Figure 221. Steel bollards with chain  
(RelianceFoundry.com)

One of the main causes of damage to these historic features is the continued vehicular access along all of the cemetery's internal avenues. The cemetery's original design did not provide enough space along its aisles to accommodate a modern vehicle's turning radius; large vehicles, trucks, and excavation equipment have to cut corners to make a turn, driving over curb returns and family plot enclosures, and compacting tree roots. The following actions are recommended:

- It is particularly important to close the southern half of West Avenue, the winding drive that leads through the oldest section of the cemetery, in order to protect markers and graves, many of which are especially vulnerable to damage as they are not protected by plot enclosures.
- At a point in the future when PARD personnel are on-site daily, limit vehicle access within the cemetery to Main Avenue, East Avenue, Bonita Street, South Street, Olivert Street, North Street, and Woodland Street north of Main Avenue, and the small length of road between Olivert and South streets and just east of West Avenue. Accomplish this by installing, on all other cemetery drives, either removable bollards at the centers of those drives or chain-and-post assemblies across the drives. These could be removed, if necessary, for maintenance access or for accessibility during special occasions, such as the religious services conducted by Temple Beth Israel every three years (Figure 220–Figure 221). Ensure that the bollards or chain and post assemblies are designed as part of the overall cemetery site furnishings plan.
- In all cases, limit event parking to the main cemetery drive and public streets outside the cemetery.

## Note: New Interment Options

Several comments received from the community during the development of this plan requested that the City of Austin consider adding a scatter garden or columbarium (for the interment of cremated remains) to Oakwood Cemetery and/or Oakwood Cemetery Annex. Any future consideration of this suggestion would require, at minimum, archeological investigation to determine if any area within Oakwood Cemetery is available for that use. While historic city cemeteries in other municipalities have been “reactivated” in this way, such options may or may not be possible at Oakwood Cemetery or Oakwood Cemetery Annex and would require significant analysis and review.

# PRIORITIZED PROJECT LIST AND ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS

## Priority One

**(to be completed within 1-2 years)**

*These probable costs are estimates based on comparable projects and previous estimates. All costs are subject to fluctuation and/or increase.*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>
Limit vehicular access by adding bollards (assume 100 removable bollards at \$1,000 each).	\$100,000
Divert a portion of stormwater from the concrete channel.	\$500,000
Conduct GPR or utilize a similar technique to locate unmarked graves and extent of burials.	allow \$10,000
Replace shade trees (assume 54-4" caliper).	\$43,200
Survey grave marker conditions and prioritize for repair/ conservation/ resetting.	\$0 (to be completed by volunteers)
Upgrade irrigation system, replacing hose bib risers with ground-level quick couplers and hose bibs .	\$31,200 to finish converting 60 risers already equipped with new fixtures \$149,600 for full conversion of remaining 187 risers

## Priority Two

**(to be completed within 3-5 years)**

*These probable costs are estimates based on comparable projects and previous estimates. All costs are subject to fluctuation and/or increase.*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>
Repair west cemetery entrance, including remove and restore steel gates.	\$50,000
Replace boundary fence with metal picket fence (4488 lf x \$40/lf), potentially at same time as Oakwood Cemetery Annex fence.	\$179,520
Rehabilitate Oakwood Chapel.	\$1,200,000
Document, stabilize, and preserve unique works of art and craft.	allow \$10,000
Repair and stabilize concrete channel (replace 50 concrete braces, paint 50 steel braces, replace 480 lf concrete ditch wall).	\$500,000

## Priority Three

**(to be completed within 5-7 years)**

*These probable costs are estimates based on comparable projects and previous estimates. All costs are subject to fluctuation and/or increase.*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>
Grind down asphalt on Main Avenue, replace/repair curb and gutter, sidewalks, and road aprons, repave asphalt to match original.  Grind down and replace asphalt (36450 sf x \$10/s = \$364,500)  Replace ½ curb and gutter (1,260 lf x \$25 = \$31,500)  Replace ½ sidewalks (5040 sf x \$5 = \$50,400)  Replace 6 road aprons (225 sf x 6 x \$10 = \$13,500)	\$459,900
Add interpretive kiosk at chapel.	\$7,500
Place cemetery drive markers at intersections (assume 20 post-type hewn stone).	\$3,000
Install informational signs at graves of community leaders (assume 25 small metal, short post).	\$6,250
Install interpretive waysides for notable cemetery areas (assume 10 medium interpretive signs).	\$15,000
Remove east entrance gate piers and rebuild original in original location.	allow \$30,000
Redevelop concrete channel as a bioswale planter.	allow \$75,000
Remove and rehabilitate historic pedestrian bridges	allow \$50,000

## PLANTING PLAN

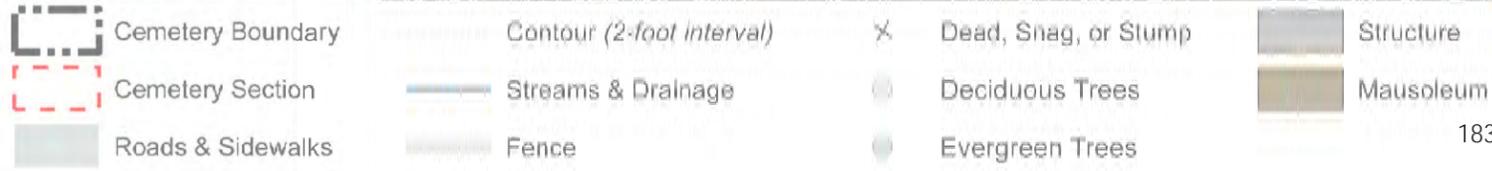
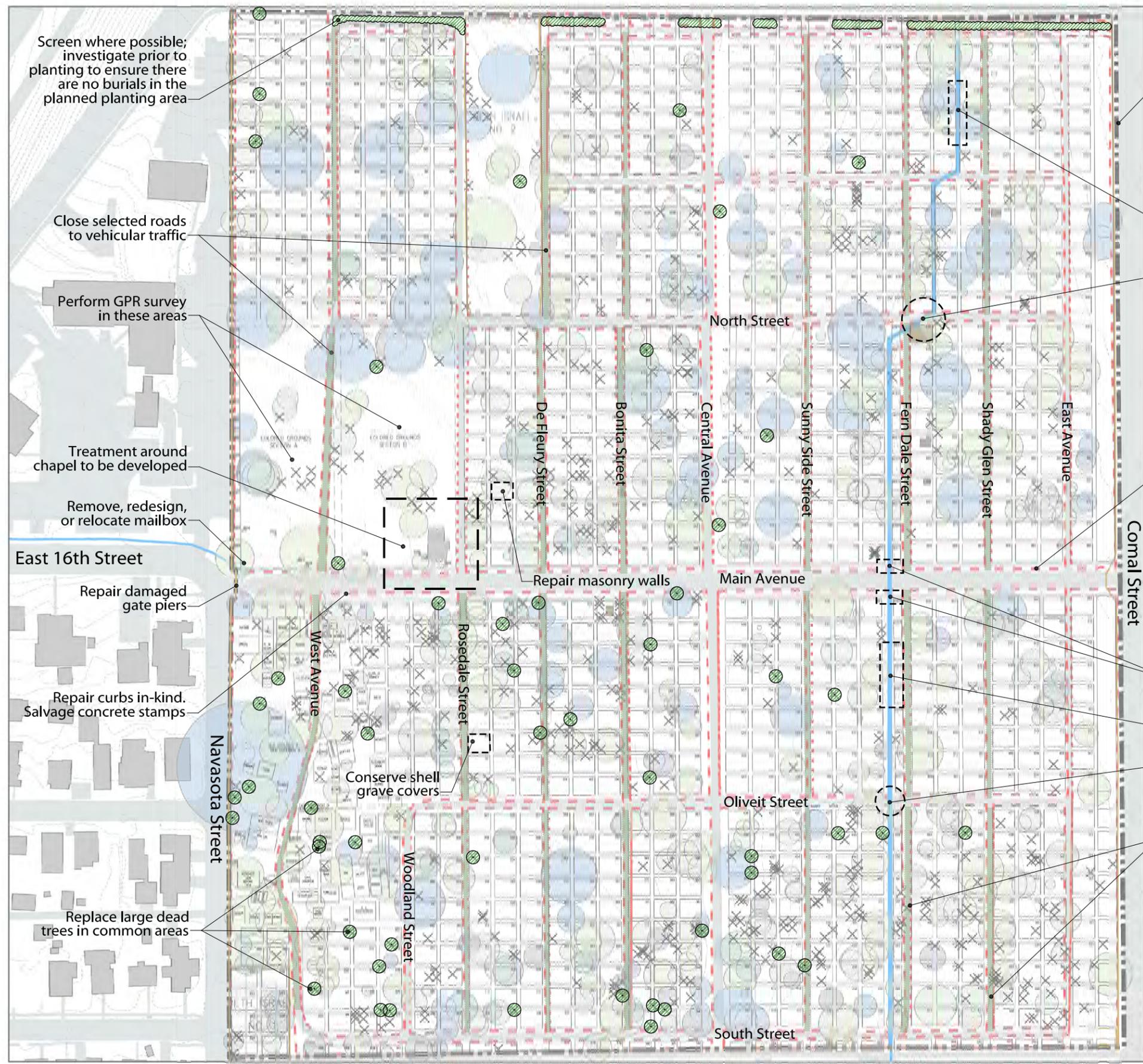
Please refer to the Site Plan and Detail Plan on the following pages for locations of the plantings described below.

### Supplemental Tree Plantings (in deep clay)

Preferred Plant Characteristics and Considerations:	Evergreen and deciduous trees in a variety of sizes and mature heights
Soils:	Silty clay from 8 to 36" deep
Sunlight:	Full sun
Planting Cycle:	Install all plants in fall and winter
Installation and Maintenance:	Refer to the City of Austin's <i>Native and Adapted Landscape Plants</i> guide (Appendix A) for information on installing and maintaining specific individual species
Recommended Species by Common Name:	Pecan, crape myrtle, Italian cypress, live oak, Eastern red cedar, arborvitae, cedar elm, yaupon, possumhaw, wax myrtle

### Supplemental Tree Plantings (in sandy areas)

Preferred Plant Characteristics and Considerations:	Evergreen and deciduous trees in a variety of sizes and mature heights
Soils:	Fine sandy loam to 18" then red gravelly sandy clay to 50"
Sunlight:	Full sun
Planting Cycle:	Install all plants in fall and winter
Installation and Maintenance:	Refer to the City of Austin's <i>Native and Adapted Landscape Plants</i> guide (Appendix A) for information on installing and maintaining specific individual species
Recommended Species by Common Name:	Post oak, blackjack oak, Eastern red cedar, Ashe juiper, crape myrtle, cedar elm, arborvitae



# Oakwood Cemetery Site Plan





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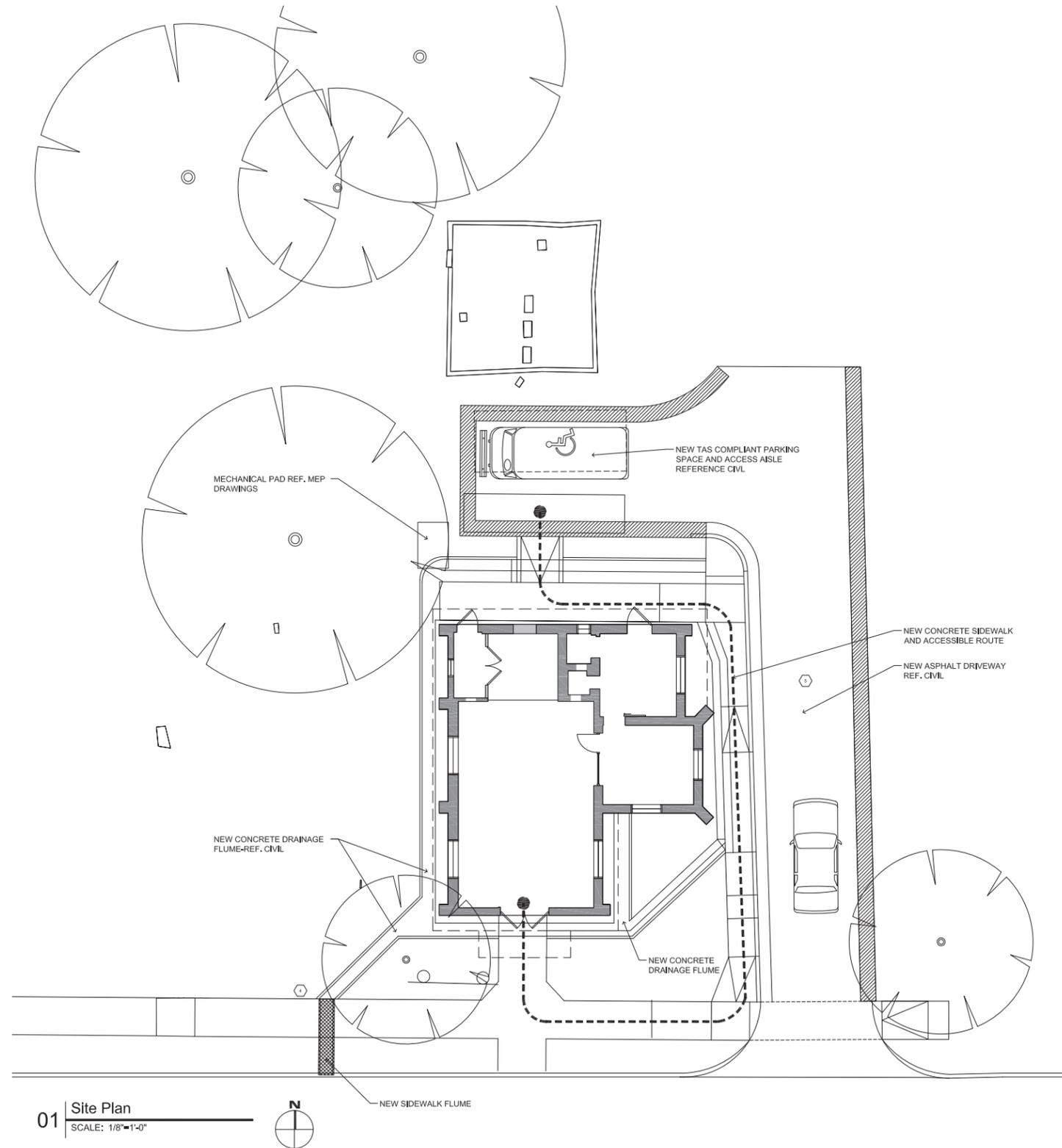
OAKWOOD CEMETERY CHAPEL  
RESTORATION

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ISSUE DATES:	
07.21.14	60% Review Set
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Siteplan

A0.0



01 Site Plan  
SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"