

MASTER PLAN



"Yellow Fins", Will van Overbeek

This chapter describes the plan geographically to allow the reader to understand the proposals for individual parts of the planning area. In general, existing conditions are described, followed by relevant observations and recommendations.

Some matters that are better discussed globally rather than geographically, like interpretive planning, sustainability and art in the park seemed to warrant their own discussion, which can be found in "Special Considerations".

PLAN OVERVIEW

This chapter describes the plan in its constituent parts to offer understandings of specific proposals and their impact on particular places or elements within the park. It is presented in three broad categories: the Pool, the grounds and the buildings. In general, existing conditions are described, followed by relevant planning concepts and observations; then recommendations.

This chapter also discusses one matter that affects the entire park; the planning attitude toward the landscape. Its discussion is found in “Grounds Overview”. It concerns the decades-long trend towards suburbanizing the landscape, and its effects on contemporary issues such as plant diversity, an interest in native species and sustainability.

There are also matters of an equally global nature that seemed to warrant their own detailed discussions: the interpretive plan, sustainability and art in the park. Their discussions are found in “Special Considerations”.

The interpretive plan is a first-order concept that has become a fundamental goal and whose reach is found throughout the planning area. It gives an official voice to the long-standing community advocacy for the Pool that is embodied by such groups as the Save Barton Creek Association, Friends of Barton Springs Pool and the Save Our Springs Alliance.

Sustainability is a fundamental value for the City of Austin. Its details tend to be technical, and its logic is best understood when discussed in wholistic terms.

Art and performance also seemed to warrant their own discussion, since they breathe a special kind of life into the place. Plus, opportunities for them were found in unexpected places.

And there is also a matter that is alone in its own category--enlarging the Pool. In the course of preparing this plan, a proposal was made by the Barton Springs Scientific Advisory Committee to enlarge the Pool, and the planning team was asked to evaluate that proposal from a planning point of view. Enlarging the Pool did not seem to fit into the fabric of the original master plan proposals, therefore, we did not recommend it in this plan. The planning team’s thoughts on enlarging the Pool are also discussed in “Special Considerations”.

PROJECT SCOPE

THE POOL

1. IMPROVE FLOW REGIME

Study concepts for improving flow regime that may include adding more operable gates to the downstream dam, introducing water recirculation features in strategic locations and installing operable gates in the upstream dam.

2. BYPASS INLET UPGRADE

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

3. UPSTREAM DAM

Add openings to improve flow regime. Raise dam to mitigate “pop up” floods. Widen dam to improve clean-up equipment access.

4. NUISANCE ALGAE CONTROL

Study algae control skimmer designs to remove floating algae.

5. GRAVEL BAR REMOVAL

Remove gravel and sediment bar from deep end of Pool.

6. SEDIMENT and ALGAE DISPOSAL

Consult with Pool cleaning and maintenance staff to improve methods for disposing sediment and nuisance algae.

THE GROUNDS

7. ZILKER PONDS

Rehabilitate Zilker Ponds with special attention to the several sets of steps leading from the upper parking lot to the Zilker Hillside Theater and the Bathhouse.

8. SIGNS and GRAPHICS **

Identify opportunities throughout the Barton Springs Pool site for the creation and installation of coordinated thematic material that fosters awareness of the cultural and scientific history of the park and its ecosystem. Propose a series of maps and signs for orientation and wayfinding. Propose signs at major entry points to direct visitors into the park and towards the Pool.

9. ELIZA SPRING

Reconstruct spring run from Eliza Spring and possibly reconnect to the main body of the Pool. Rehabilitate the Elks amphitheater. Remove concrete slab under waters of Eliza. Add an operable gate to allow control over flows. Redesign areas around Eliza to mitigate flooding.

10. FENCE

Recommend new fence design. Consider new fence locations to possibly include new areas within the perimeter.

11. TREES and GRASS

Evaluate trees to determine number, distribution, species and condition. Make recommendations for replacing sick and damaged trees. Make recommendations for adding more trees throughout the campus. Consider more drought-tolerant grass options. Make recommendations for upgrading and extending the irrigation system. Make recommendations for grass care.

12. AREA BELOW DOWNSTREAM DAM

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

13. ENLARGE THE POOL **

Study the possibility of making the Pool larger by relocating the downstream dam to a position below the Sunken Garden outflow. The concept is to bring all three salamander habitats into one uninterrupted body of water.

14. SUNKEN GARDEN

Rehabilitate stone walls, reconstructing and stabilizing as required. Reconsider the fence, including its location and its design. Rehabilitate the basin to improve salamander habitat. Include a new, operable gate for flow control. Create stable walking surfaces to enhance access and enjoyment. Update landscaping to include new trees and groundcover recommendations.

15. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Recommend improvements to site electrical service to include buried lines and increased power. Recommend site lighting improvements

THE BUILDINGS

16. HISTORIC BATHHOUSE

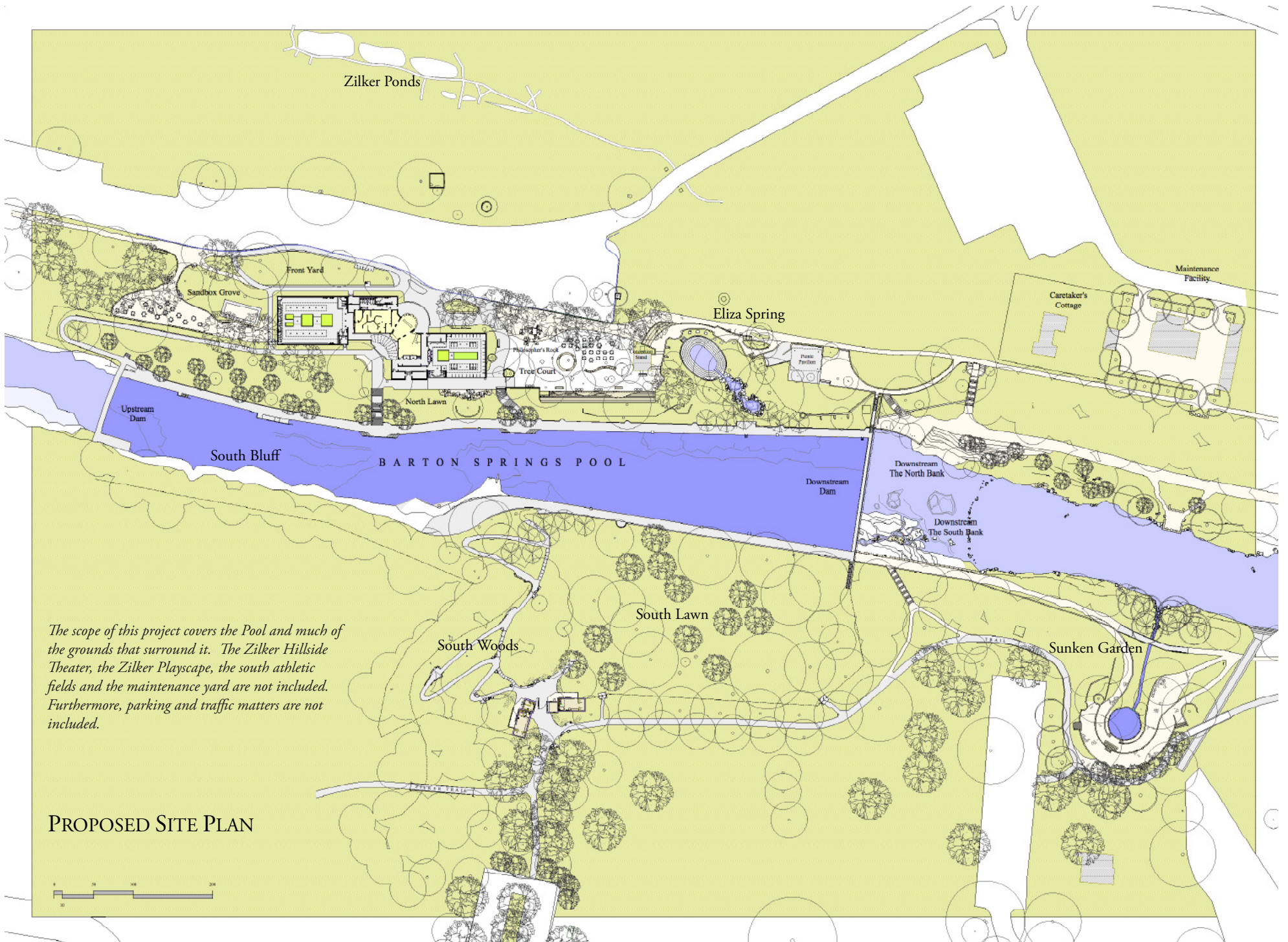
Rehabilitate the historic Bathhouse to repair deteriorated condition and to return ticket-taking to its original location, at the central “glass cylinder”.

17. NEW SOUTH BATHHOUSE

Consider the addition of a new, though modest, south bathhouse to provide shower and changing facilities.

**** Item added by public input**





The scope of this project covers the Pool and much of the grounds that surround it. The Zilker Hillside Theater, the Zilker Playscape, the south athletic fields and the maintenance yard are not included. Furthermore, parking and traffic matters are not included.

PROPOSED SITE PLAN