

**Feasibility Report 2011**

**DESCRIPTION**



In December 2010, the Parks and Recreation Department (PAR) retained the services of a qualified team of consultants to assess the condition of an existing building (bungalow style wood frame house dating to 1922) and grounds (approximately 9.5 acres) at the Norwood Tract at Town Lake Metropolitan Park, 1013 Edgecliff Terrace, Austin Texas. This parkland lies along the south shore of Lady Bird Lake and is contiguous with Town Lake Metropolitan Park and currently includes a fenced dog off-leash area.



**Norwood Tract at Town Lake: 2009 Aerials**



**Legend**

-  Creeks and Drainage
-  City of Austin Parks

This map has been produced by the Parks and Recreation Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



The findings of the Norwood Tract Condition Assessment and Feasibility Report provide restoration and/or redevelopment options generated by the consultants through a collaborative public process. The project relied heavily upon the technical and objective condition assessment of the house and

grounds. A broad range of parkland redevelopment options for the site was explored, including but not limited to the restoration, modification and/or re-purposing of the existing house and grounds. Public opinion, site history, life cycle and operational costs, and future programming opportunities were all factored in the selection of the final preferred alternative.

### **Project Dates:**

- Dec 22, 2010 Casa Bella Architects retained by the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department
- April 20, 2011 Community Meeting #1 (Project introduction and public input) -
  - [Presentation from meeting](#)
  - [Public Comments from April 20th meeting](#)
  - [Norwood House Memo from department Director](#)
- May 17, 2011 Community Meeting #2 (Project introduction and public input) -
  - [Public Comments from May 17th meeting](#)
- June 27, 2011 Historic Landmark Commission Meeting (briefing)
  - [Norwood Park Condition Assessment and Feasibility Report](#)
  - [Letter Recommendation June 23, 2011](#)
- July 20, 2011 Community Meeting #3
  - [Presentation of 6 schematic design options with projected costs](#)
  - [Public Comments from the July 20th meeting](#)
- July 26, 2011 Provide Briefing to Parks and Recreation Board
- December 2, 2011 Present Preferred Concepts to Parks and Recreation Board
  - [Parks and Recreation Board Presentation](#)
  - [Preferred Option Site Plan](#)
  - [Preferred Option Perspective 1](#)
  - [Preferred Option Perspective 2](#)

## **OBJECTIVES**

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A Feasibility Report for the Norwood House and Grounds enabled the Parks and Recreation Department to seek future resources for the project. The outcome of this assessment and planning process provided the foundation for decisions to be made regarding the future of the parkland and its facilities. In addition to the physical assessment, the process gauged public sentiment regarding the house and park and documented the historic significance of the house and grounds and brought into focus the opportunities and constraints that the house and grounds have as a public facility for the City of Austin and park users. Estimates for short-term and long-term costs (construction, maintenance and operations) associated with this project factored greatly into decisions regarding its future.

# HISTORY

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In 1922, local developer Ollie O. Norwood and his wife, Calie Norwood, built a small bungalow on the bluffs above the south bank of the Colorado River, just west of the area where Interstate 35 now crosses Lady Bird Lake. The Norwood House occupied a 3-acre estate that included a rose garden, a greenhouse, a fountain, a gazebo/teahouse, and the first geothermal-fed swimming pool in Austin.



*photo credit: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, C01463a*

The City of Austin bought the Norwood Estate, including the house, in 1985. Although the house has not received dedicated funds for restoration, its historic significance has been recognized through a City of Austin historic landmark designation. Due to its current condition and lack of integrity, the house and grounds are not considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. A formal eligibility for Recorded State Historic Landmark (RTHL) listing has not been obtained yet it is doubtful the property would qualify for the same reasons.

The house has not been occupied for many years, it has been moved twice, and is in poor condition. The grounds bear little resemblance to their former elegant terraced gardens with pool and garden structures. The site currently includes a fenced dog [off-leash area](#) with on-street parking. The surrounding landscape is generally overgrown with views to Lady Bird Lake and the city skyline partially obscured.



H.F. KUEHNE - ARCHITECT  
GARDEN OF O.O. NORWOOD

AUSTIN, TEXAS

photo credit: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, PICH 06755a



*photo credit: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, PICH 06753a*



*photo credit: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, PICH 06763a*



*photo credit: Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, PICH 06754a*

The Norwood Park Foundation (formerly the Norwood Posse), a non-profit group of citizen volunteers from the South River City Citizens, was formed in 2008 to promote the restoration for the house and grounds and to raise money towards this goal. This group will play a key role in the planning process.

For questions please call [512-974-9467](tel:512-974-9467)

**Send us an e-mail** if you would like to give input - [Norwoodfeasibility@ci.austin.tx.us](mailto:Norwoodfeasibility@ci.austin.tx.us)