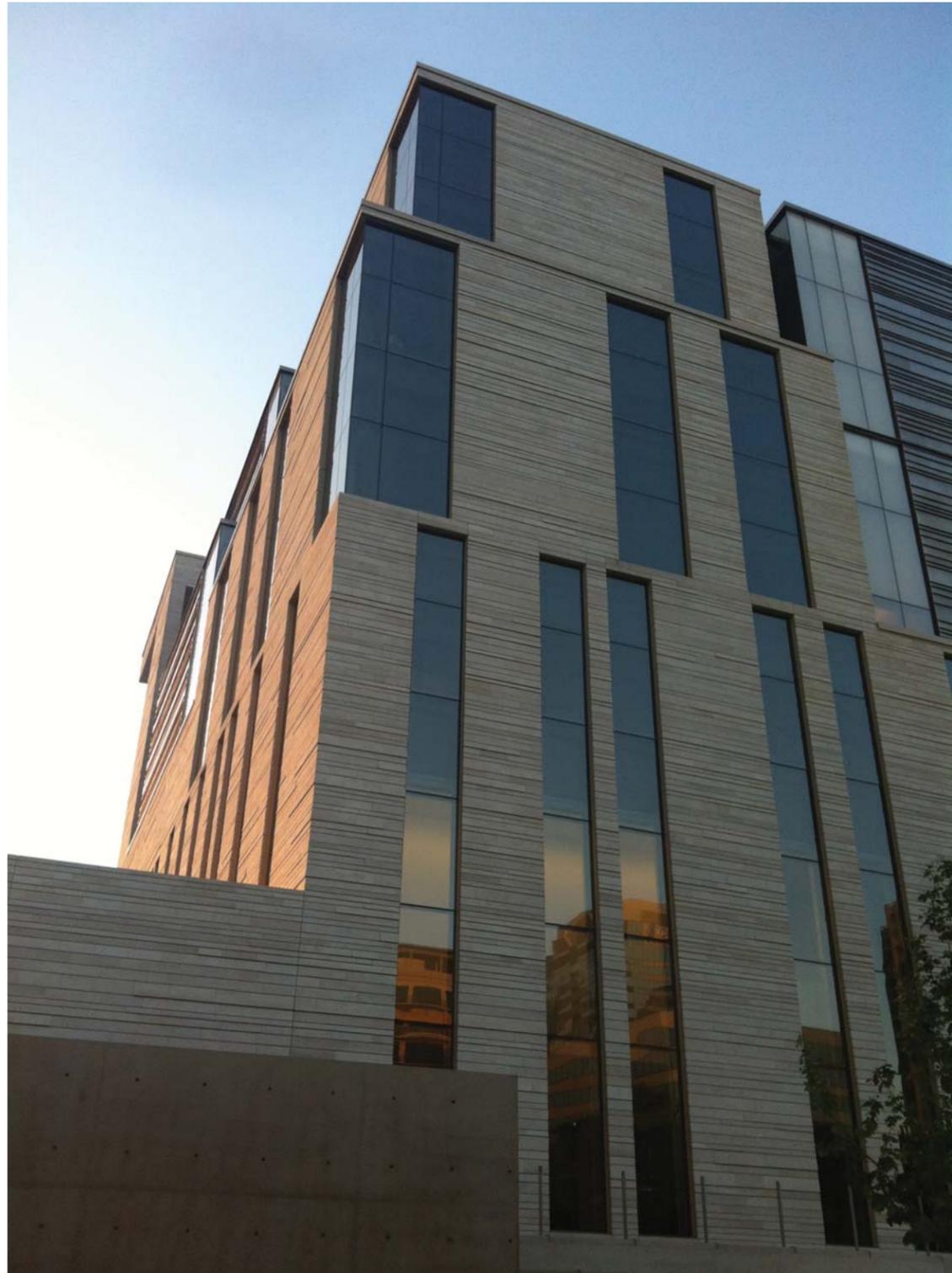


## ANALYSIS AND BASELINES



*The new Federal Courthouse and plaza were completed along the west side of the park in 2012. This facility required the closure of San Antonio St adjacent to the park, creating the possibility of a seamless connection between Park and plaza.*

This section provides detailed analysis of the Park as it exists today. Each analytical piece begins with an introduction to the subject of analysis and is followed by a summary of the associated issues, opportunities and stakeholder feedback. The section is concluded with a summary of Community Workshop 1 and the first online poll, where the above analysis was presented to members of the public.

## Project Context

Republic Square was established as one of four public squares and embedded into the fabric of downtown Austin as part of its original grid. Three of these squares, including Brush Square and Wooldridge Square, still exist, but the fourth public square, Hamilton Square, has since been developed.

Brush Square is located near the Austin Convention Center and current terminus of the METRO Red Line (commuter rail). It currently hosts a relocated historic home, fire station and open green space that is used for limited downtown events. The primary link to the site would be along 5th St due to improved pedestrian facilities and the planned 5th St Mexican-American Heritage Corridor. Wooldridge Square is a short distance to the north of the site, and currently consists of a performance platform surrounded by grassy slopes and mature shade trees.

The Shoal Creek and Lady Bird Lake systems are near the park, and provide a range of recreational opportunities. Extensive trails, cultural features and native vegetation areas line the edges of these systems, making them crown jewels of Austin. Likely linkages to these systems would be 4th St, and Guadalupe St respectively.

Other key features around the park include City Hall, ACL Moody Theater, Congress Avenue (which includes many cultural and arts attractions), and the Lance Armstrong Bikeway.

Land uses around the park are diverse. In addition to State, County and City office uses, the area is at the heart of a rapidly emerging mixed use district. There are an estimated 1,500 residences within a quarter mile of the Park, not to mention projects in planning or design will easily double that figure in the next decade. The Park is near several very popular entertainment and retail districts: Ballet Austin, 2nd St Retail District, 4th St (Warehouse district), and West 5th and 6th St.

### Issues

- Conditions around the park are likely to change very quickly and may affect the Park in many ways.

### Opportunities

- The ongoing Downtown Wayfinding Project can help park users find other resources, and potential Park users to find the Park;
- Through a diverse land use context, the Park has the potential to be utilized by many different people over different times of day;
- The Park could be a platform for the expansion of cultural attractions already in Downtown;
- The existing parks in the area are diverse, and serve a range of needs;
- The Park can provide a meaningful beginning or ending for people interested in the planned 5th St Mexican-American Heritage Corridor.

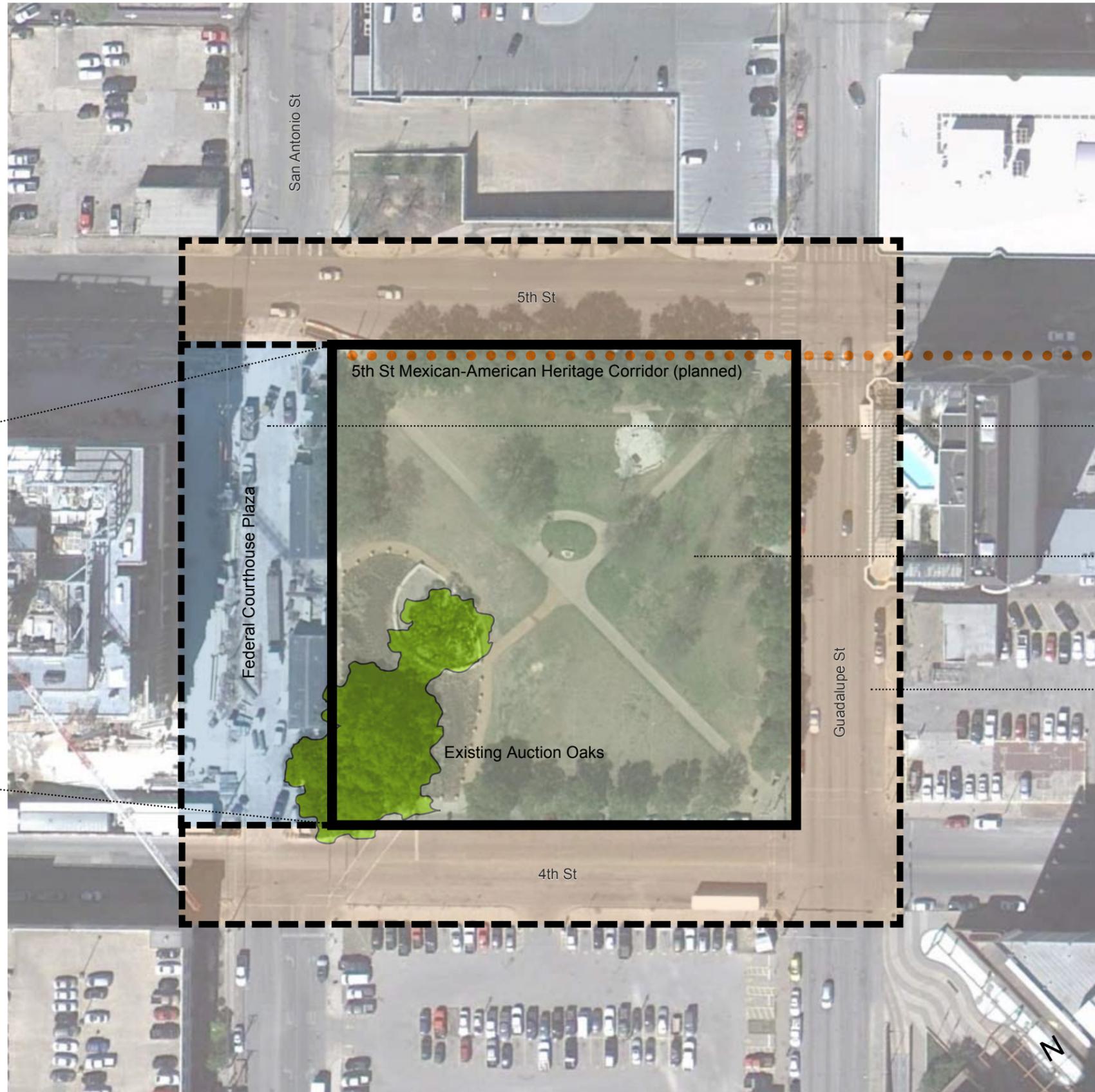
### Stakeholder or Public Feedback

- Republic Square should work in concert with the other historic squares for both local and event needs;
- The Park should feel connected to cultural features around Downtown
- It is believed that Republic Square has a higher concentration of residents within a five block radius than any other park in the city;
- An Austin group is proposing a 5th St Mexican-American Heritage Corridor connecting Republic Square and Saltillo Plaza in East Austin;
- The City's ongoing Downtown Wayfinding Project to create a common theme of signage in downtown should pay attention to "branding" of different areas and points of interest in Downtown Austin.

**1,508**

Number of dwelling units within 1/4 mile of the site in 2010. There were 372 dwelling units in 2000.





## Park Context

The Park is situated between 4th St and 5th St to the north and south, as well as Guadalupe St and a closed portion of San Antonio St to the east and west respectively. The west edge of the Park will be adjoined to a plaza space that is being implemented as part of the overall federal courthouse project. The most significant existing features in the Park are the “Auction Oaks” that played a part in the history of the city. The park is also planned to serve as one of the terminus points for a planned 5th St Mexican-American Heritage Corridor that runs between downtown and East Austin.

### Issues

- The dedicated park area is somewhat small compared to other urban parks with similar context;
- The adjacent right of way along 5th St and Guadalupe St are high volume and unlikely to be closed for events;
- Operational constraints for the new Federal Courthouse Plaza are somewhat unknown, and beyond City control in the future.

### Opportunities

- 4th St is occasionally closed for events;
- Several surrounding properties are likely to redevelop and may be able to host programmable space.

### Stakeholder or Public Feedback

- The block south of the Park is planned to become the Travis County Courthouse;
- Details on future uses on the blocks to the Southwest and Southeast are unknown, but are likely to be redeveloped to their highest use;
- The Federal Courthouse Plaza is seen as an extension of the Park.

**0.46 acres**

*Federal Courthouse Plaza*

**2 acres**

*Republic Square (to curbs)*

**1.86 acres**

*Adjacent Remaining Right of Way*

### Benchmarks:

*Market Square (Houston, TX); 1.78 acres  
 Madison Square Park (NYC); 6.65 acres  
 Schenley Plaza (Pittsburgh, PA); 2.8 acres  
 Bryant Park (NYC); 5.1 acres  
 Jamison Square, Portland; 1.5 acres*

## Republic Square Today

The current conditions and uses of the Park are changing as the city around it is changing. It currently hosts a range of popular programs, and serves as a local park for the recent influx of downtown residents.

The daily use of the Park is focused on a modest number of visitors walking dogs or eating lunch. The weekends often fill the Park with visitors enjoying the Farmers' Market and other scheduled events.

### Issues

- The current park elements do not create enough recreational diversity for the area;
- The Park often feels empty and does not have a strong sense of community ownership;
- Much of the content of the Park feels out of date;
- The Park is likely to be heavily used, meaning that it will need significant funds for adequate maintenance.

### Opportunities

- The Park is very flexible and can accommodate a wide range of activities;
- There are many people living near the Park;
- Tree canopy in the Park makes it a relatively comfortable place to visit in the summer.

### Stakeholder and Public Feedback

- The Park design should balance local use and event use;
- The Park should be more usable after dark;
- Sustainability is a significant issue with the downtown squares.

**12%**

Percent of usable park hours currently dominated by programmed events. This assumes the park is open 24-7.

**16%**

Percent of users who think the Park "captures the essence of Austin" (Public Meeting May 12, 2012).



Views to the west are dominated by the new Austin Federal Courthouse, "Auction Oaks," and wood deck area recently added to the Park. (Photo by Design Workshop)



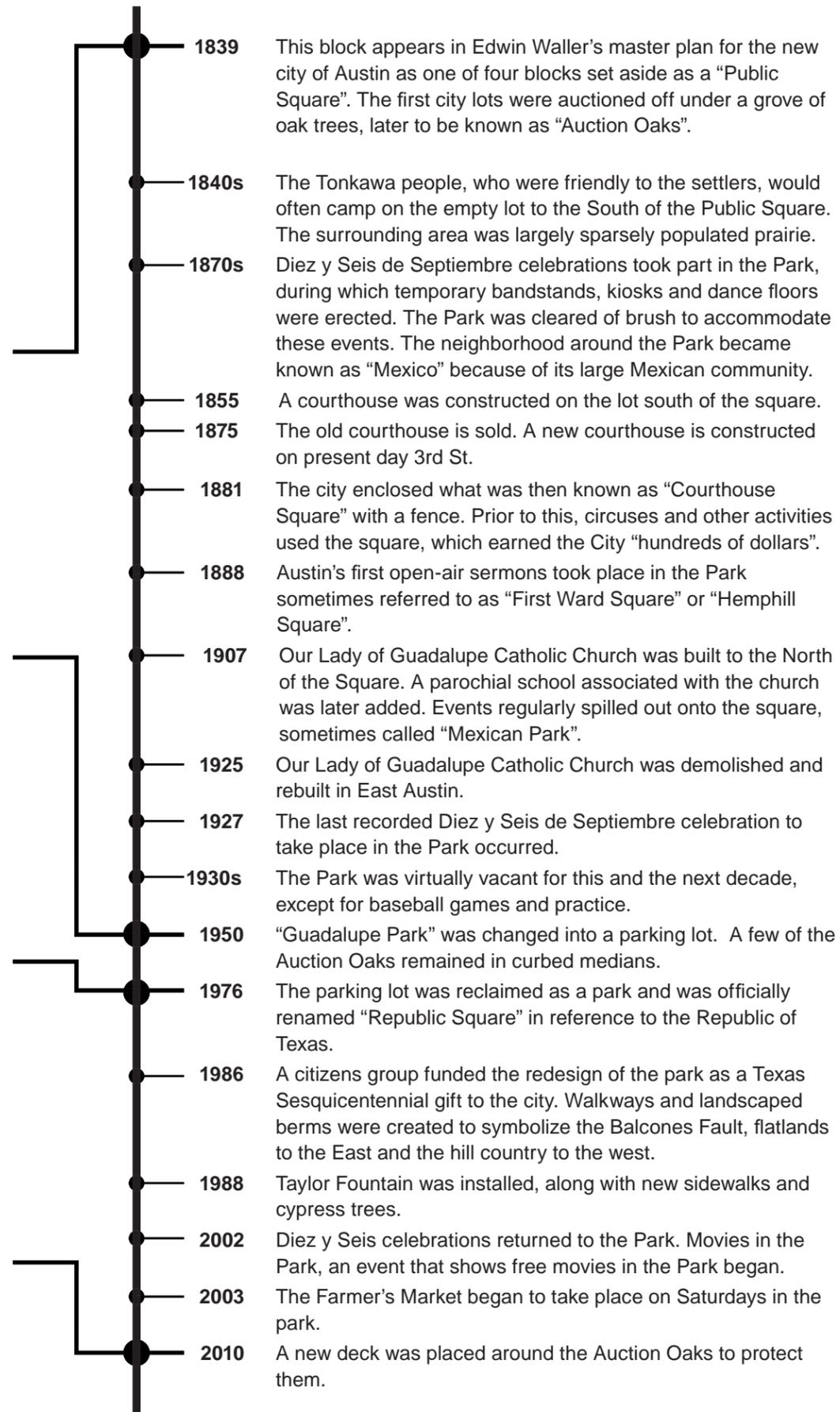
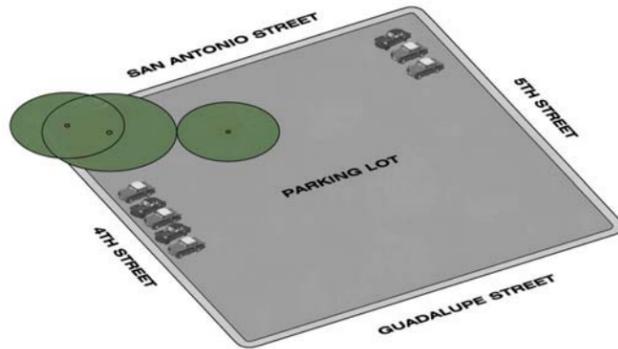
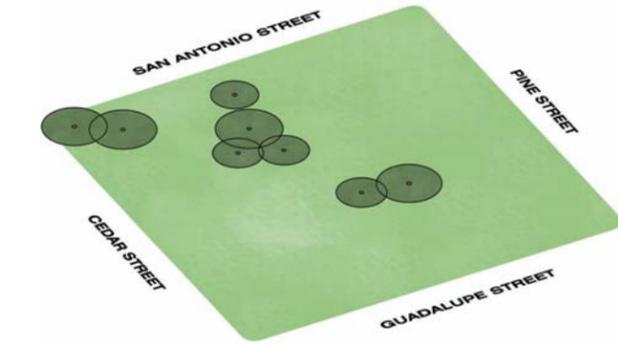
The street edges are currently defined by parking, furnishings, Live Oak trees, and paving areas implemented during the 1976 Park construction. (Photo by Design Workshop)



Deciduous trees, rolling berms, and open lawn areas dominate the core of the Park. Some portions of the circulation routes that were part of the 1976 Park construction remain. (Photo by Design Workshop)



The downtown Farmers' Market is the dominant temporary use of the Park. (Photo by Michael Knox)



## General History

As one of the four original "Public Squares" designated in Austin's original master plan, the Park has hosted many uses over the years. At its inception, the Park was a flexible space that served many community needs. One particularly important event in the Square's early history was its role as the site where the first city lots were auctioned off under a grove of oak trees, later to be known as "Auction Oaks." In addition to serving the city's need for open space, the Square had a close association with Austin's Mexican-American and Catholic populations, largely due to its adjacency to the Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church just one block north.

The Park has been known by a number of different names during its history, including "Public Square," "Courthouse Square," "First Ward Square," "Hemphill Square," "Mexican Park," and "Guadalupe Park." Over time, the Square was used less and less frequently and slowly transitioned into a parking facility for automobiles with only a collection of oaks preserved in a curbed area.

As part of the City's celebration of the US Bicentennial, the Square was reclaimed as a park and given its current name, "Republic Square." In the years that followed the Park was given the general layout that is there today, including the landscape berms, cruciform paths and the Taylor Fountain.

In the early 2000s the park began to host new community programs such as the Diez y Seis celebration, Movies in the Park, and the Farmers' Market. Around 2010, some of the landforms and walkways were removed to improve the health of the existing "Auction Oaks," and a new deck/stage feature was implemented.

### Issues

- The existing "Auction Oaks" are currently thriving, but will inevitably decline in health as they continue to age;
- It is unclear what portions of the park should be considered "historic";
- As the park edges change, the historic footprint of the park may lose definition;
- Much of the context that historically drove the function of the park is gone.

### Opportunities

- The historic story of the park should be expressed in the design;
- Trees propagated from those of the existing "Auction Oaks" could be used in the future.

### Stakeholder and Public Feedback

- The park design should be consistent with the character of Austin;
- Preservation and continued emphasis on the health of the existing "Auction Oaks" is a priority;
- Too much emphasis on the Square's history could limit the Park's value and function for future users.

**50%**

Percent of users who have an accurate understanding of the park's role in the heritage of Austin (Public Meeting May 12, 2012).

## Republic Square and Austin's Mexico

Beginning in the 1870s, the neighborhood around what is now Republic Square was known as "Mexico" because of the number of Mexican and Mexican-American residents living in the area. At this time Republic Square was often referred to as "Mexico Park" and was a significant part of daily life for residents of the surrounding neighborhood. One block north of the Park Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, which was in part a response to racial segregation in other city churches, was built in 1907. In 1917 a parochial school associated with the church was built on the same block.

The map to the right "shows the locations of the homes, businesses, and social organizations that arose to support and define the neighborhood. Most of the locations are noted in the remembrances of Jose Trevino (pictured at bottom left of map), who grew up in this neighborhood, as recorded in an oral history interview conducted by his daughter-in-law, Modesta Trevino. The sites identified in the Trevino interview are transposed here without correction except where a minor clarification such as a more complete name was needed" (quoted from Austin's Mexico Map, courtesy of the Austin History Center, Austin Public Library).

In the 1920s and 1930s, the area's residents gradually left the neighborhood, with many of them relocating to Austin's East Side. This move was partly driven by racial discrimination and Austin's 1928 City Plan, which advanced the idea of racial segregation in the city. Our Lady of Guadalupe Church was demolished in 1925.



(Austin's Mexico Map, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library) The proposed 5th St Mexican-American Heritage Corridor seeks to provide a comprehensive network of information related to early Mexican settlement in Austin. The vision is for visitors to access related information while moving around the focus area, which includes sites between the "Treaty Oak" just west of Lamar Boulevard over to Plaza Saltillo in East Austin. There is currently no funding to implement or develop this plan.

### Jose Trevino Recollections:

1. West Ave School
2. Seaholm Power Plant
3. Y.W.C.A.
4. Mexican Neighborhood
5. Luis' Cantina
6. Quality Mills Flour Mill
7. Water Plant
8. Mexican Neighborhood
9. (New) Chili Factory
10. Kerosene Station and Refinery
11. Jose Trevino's Home
12. Marlo Residence
13. Macia Residence
14. Faro Store
15. Faro Residence
16. Lopez Residence
17. Other Mexican Homes
18. Alamo Hotel
19. Ice Cream Factory
20. Catholic Nun's Residence
21. Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church
22. Our Lady of Guadalupe School
23. (Old) Chili Factory
24. Mexican Neighborhood
25. Ramirez Residence
26. Segovia Tortilla Factory
27. Segovia Residence
28. J.P. Schneider Store
29. Buick Auto Co.
30. Caruso's Restaurant
31. Wooten Building
32. Mexican Neighborhood
33. Tom Miller's Poultry Warehouse and Tannery
34. Eusebio Rodriguez Grocery Store
35. Bakery
36. Ice Station
37. Luis Sabas' Barbershop
38. Cantina
39. Post Office
40. Hancock Theater
41. Shoe Shop
42. Hotel and Shops
43. Paris Cafe
44. Ice Station
45. Casitas ("little houses" facing alley)
46. Jefferson Hotel
47. MKT Railroad Depot
48. Marathon Dances (OK Garage)
49. Lonestar Ice Company
50. Gato Negro Restaurant
51. Carmona's Barbershop
52. Meat Market
53. Southern Pacific Railroad Depot
54. Sam Wah Cafe
55. Meat Market
56. Meat Market

### Other Sites:

- A. Mexican Methodist Episcopal Church
- B. First Mexican Baptist Church
- C. Travis County Courthouse
- D. Phillip's Building - Mexican Music Hall
- E. Mexic-Arte Museum

### Photographs:

1. [Young people at First Mexican Baptist Church], 1908, Image # PICA 16161
2. Jose Trevino, Undated, Image # PICB 211637
3. J.P. Schneider & Bros., Undated, Image # C00130



Our Lady of Guadalupe Church was built one block north of the Park in 1907, in part as a response to racial segregation. Pastor P.J. O'Reilly, whose image is inset above, led the congregation in Spanish. (AR.2009.047(12), Austin History Center, Austin Public Library).



Our Lady of Guadalupe School was built in 1919 on the same block as the church. It was a valuable alternative for non-English speaking students who would otherwise be forced to attend special public school a significant distance from the neighborhood (PICA 36925, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library).



Walker's Austex Chili Factory was found in 1900 located one block south of the Park and employed approximately 15% of the city's Mexican and Mexican-American population. After a fire in 1916, the factory was rebuilt one block west (PICA 15019, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library).

## Streets

The Park is surrounded by 4th St and 5th St to the north and south, along with Guadalupe St and San Antonio St to the east and west. Despite a common right of way width, these are very different in character. Guadalupe St and 5th St regularly see traffic counts in excess of 10-20,000 trips per day, while San Antonio St and 4th St are well under 10,000 trips per day. The portion of San Antonio St adjacent to the park has been closed for security purposes of the new Federal Courthouse.

### Issues

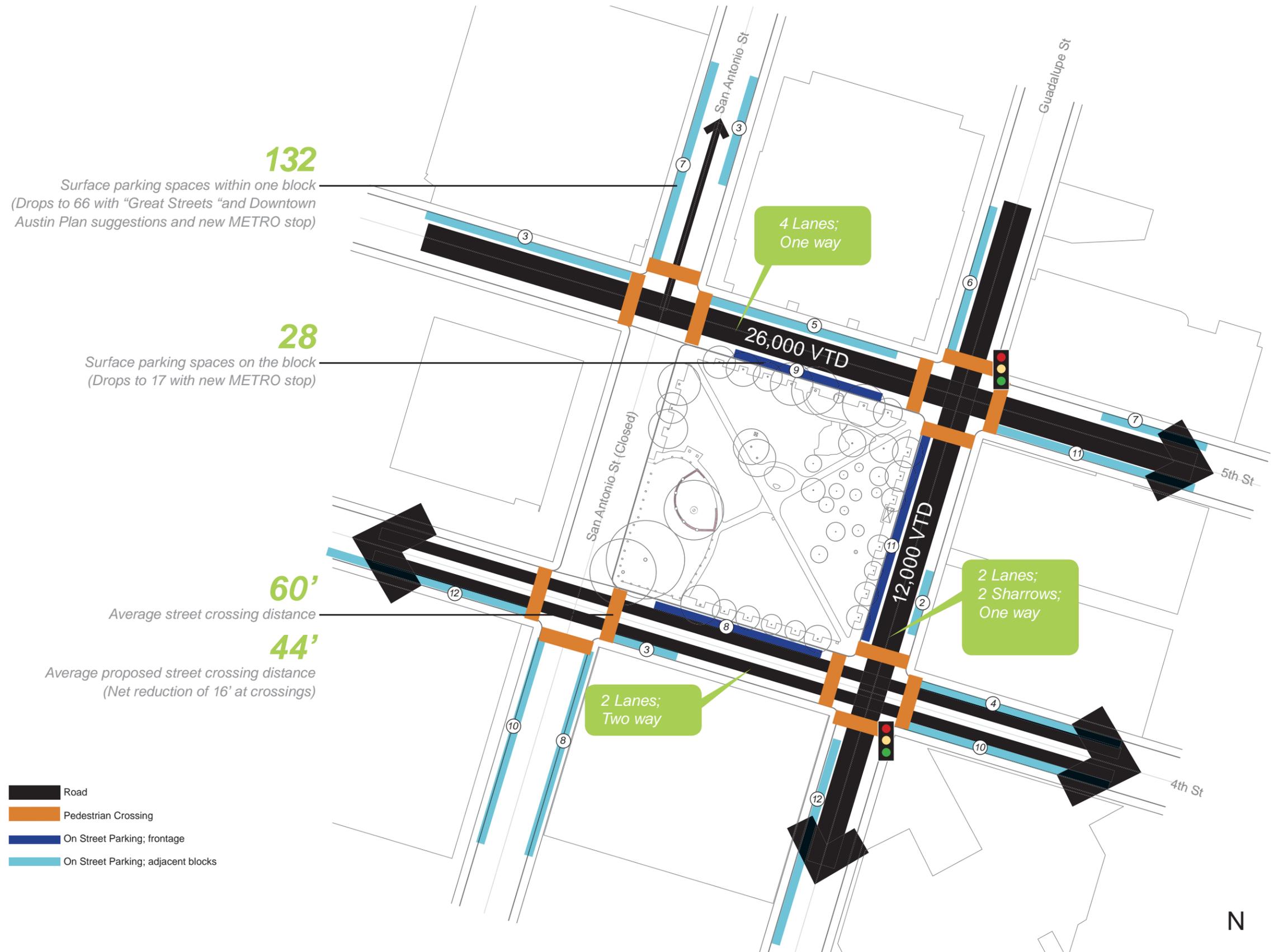
- Traffic along 5th St and Guadalupe St can be fast-moving and intense, especially during evening hours when nearby residents are most likely to use the Park;
- Roadways are wide;
- San Antonio St has been closed, which reduces access to the Park and available parking;
- 4th St is the only direct connection to the Park east-bound;
- There is no true north-bound vehicular circulation around the park.

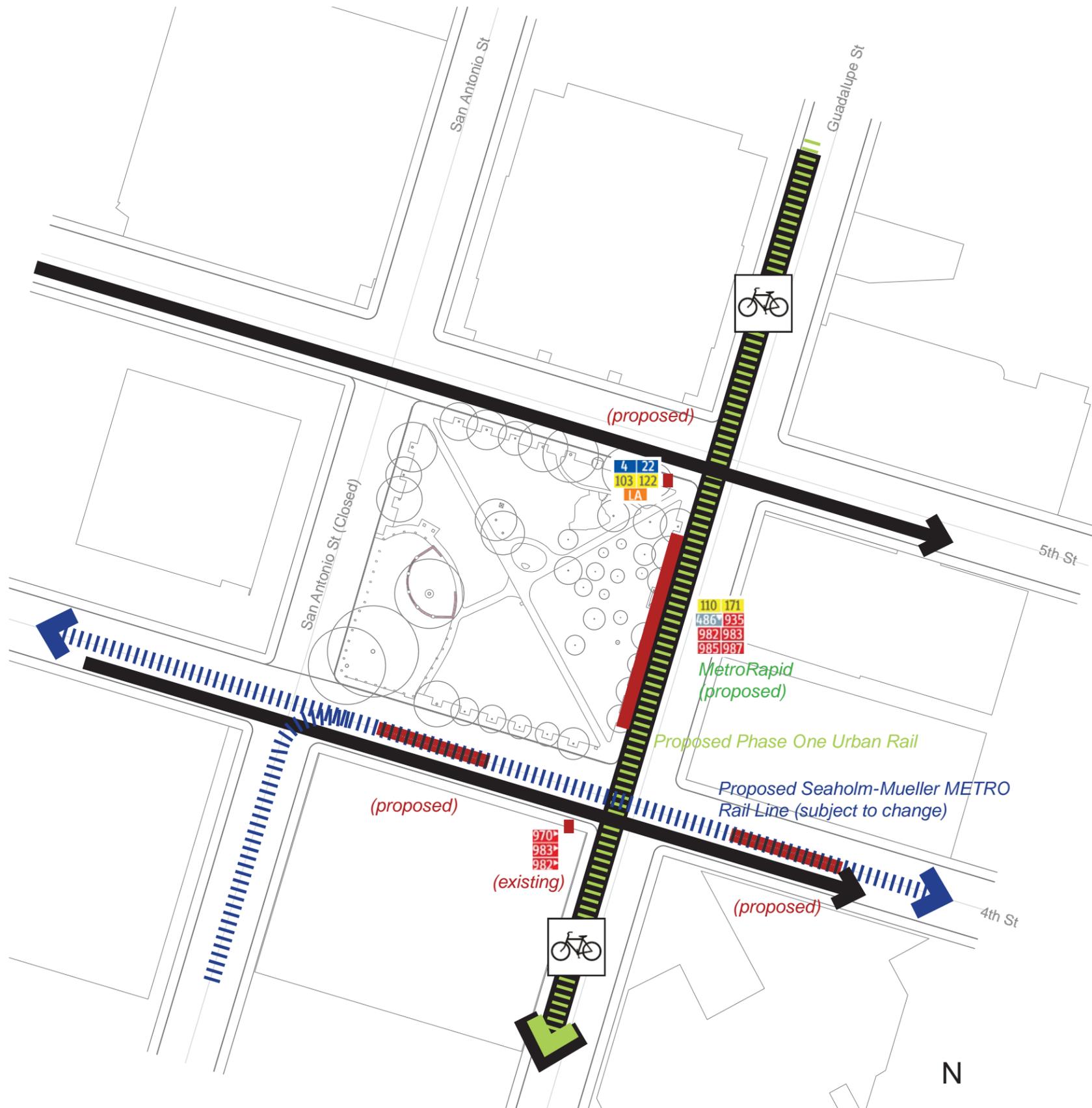
### Opportunities

- The high number of trips per day make the Park extremely visible and part of many people's commutes;
- The planned Travis County Courthouse will have approximately 538 parking spaces for courthouse use during the day, and the spaces will be available to the public after courthouse hours;
- The closure of San Antonio St allows for the Park to have some quiet spaces.

### Stakeholder or Public Feedback

- Parking in nearby parking garages meets parking needs of visitors to the Park;
- The connection between Republic Square and its surroundings via the City's "Great Streets" program is highly recommended;
- Cars parked around the Square currently act as a safety buffer for Park visitors, and the proposed removal of street parking will be an issue that will have to be addressed.





**6** Number dedicated bike racks currently in Republic Square; a total of 12 dedicated bike parking spaces.

**8** Number of dedicated bike racks currently in the adjacent remaining right of way; a total of 16 dedicated bike parking spaces. This number will increase to 32 racks with 64 parking spaces upon completion of "Great Streets" work.

*Benchmarks: Other parks with significant transit hubs*

Dolores Park, San Francisco  
 Pioneer Square, Seattle  
 Jamison Square, Portland

- Bus Route(s)
- Transit Station/Stop (existing or planned)
- Future Rail Line Extension
- Future Phase One Urban Rail
- Sharrow (on-street bike lane)

## Transit

The Park currently includes limited bus stops, but planned projects will dramatically change the relationship between the Park and transit. In addition to the Park's east-west route, the Park will host a major bus stop that is part of the new Rapid Bus system in Austin. This facility is projected to provide rapid service at least every 15 minutes, with additional routes stopping as well. CapMetro projects that there will be up to 50 riders waiting at a time.

In addition to this, CapMetro plans to locate a future urban rail stop along 4th St. This will not occur in the Park, but it will directly affect the Park's use and role as a transfer station between bus and rail.

The Park currently includes 8 dedicated bike racks, and is adjacent to the Guadalupe St sharrow. Many events held in the Park see high numbers of bicycle commuters.

### Issues

- There is not enough bike storage for future daily use and current special events;
- Rail would eliminate any ability to close 4th St for events;
- 4th at Guadalupe will become a very transit heavy crossing for pedestrians;
- Transfers between bus and rail will affect the use of the Park;
- Such a large transit presence can be detrimental to the feel of the Park.

### Opportunities

- Transit riders can be a great source of Park users throughout the day;
- Transit facilities and maintenance can also serve Park users;
- Create engaged and committed partnership with CapMetro.

### Stakeholder or Public Feedback

- The Park could be a good location for a future bike share station;
- There is not enough bike parking to attract the bicycle community on a regular basis;
- There is concern about what affect the bus service will have within the Park.

## Cover and Soils

Impervious surfaces on the site include basic streetscape features, sidewalks, stone fountain, and the deck area recently built. The current amount and variety of hard surfaces does not meet demands of event program, nor provide basic accessibility up to federal standards.

Soils on the site are diverse in condition and composition. Much of the soil around the perimeter of the site is heavily compacted. Soils in the center of the site vary from native profiles that were uncovered after artificial berms were removed to introduced topsoils used to create berms as part of the 1976 Park construction.

### Issues

- Native soils exposed after berm removal do not support healthy turf growth;
- Soils have a low percolation rate, which increases runoff from the site;
- Streetscape features do not meet ADA standards;
- Streetscape features will not meet demands of new CapMetro bus service;
- Fountain is non operational.

### Opportunities

- The new Federal Courthouse Plaza will reduce demand for impervious areas as part of the proposed plan;
- The future CapMetro facility has the potential to serve many uses.

### Stakeholder and Public Feedback

- Paved areas do not accommodate foot traffic and operational needs of the Farmers' Market, even with the addition of the new Federal Courthouse Plaza;
- The Park improvements should work to meet the goals of Austin's "Great Streets" program;
- A streetscape or hard surface would work best for the Farmers' Market.
- An objective of PARD is to keep pedestrians off the grass during the Austin Farmers' Market events.

99%; Total impervious cover in both existing and proposed "Great Streets" conditions

76%; Total proposed plaza impervious cover

**25%**

Total existing park impervious cover

#### Benchmarks:

Market Square (Houston, TX); 64%  
Bryant Park (NYC); 57%  
Tanner Plaza (Portland, OR); 53%

003, 007; low organics, nitrates, phosphorus, sulfur and potassium

001, 005; low nitrates and phosphorus

002, 004; low nitrates, sulfur and phosphorus

Average pH is 8.1; Moderate alkaline

**63%**

Total lawn or mowed cover

#### Benchmarks:

Market Square (Houston, TX); 10%  
Bryant Park (NYC); 21%

6%; Percent of Park with seasonal plantings

4%; Area of understory plantings providing wildlife food sources

## Existing Trees

The site is dominated by mixed turf/vegetation and Live Oak trees. There are some minimal ornamental plantings, and groups of deciduous trees toward the center of the Park.

### Issues

- The Park lacks seasonal interest;
- There is a relatively low amount of material that provides food for urban animals;
- Grackles roost in some of the trees;
- There are few resources to maintain turf or ornamental plantings;
- The existing irrigation system is not effective in keeping plant life alive;
- Many of the trees are in poor condition due to compaction or poor installation.

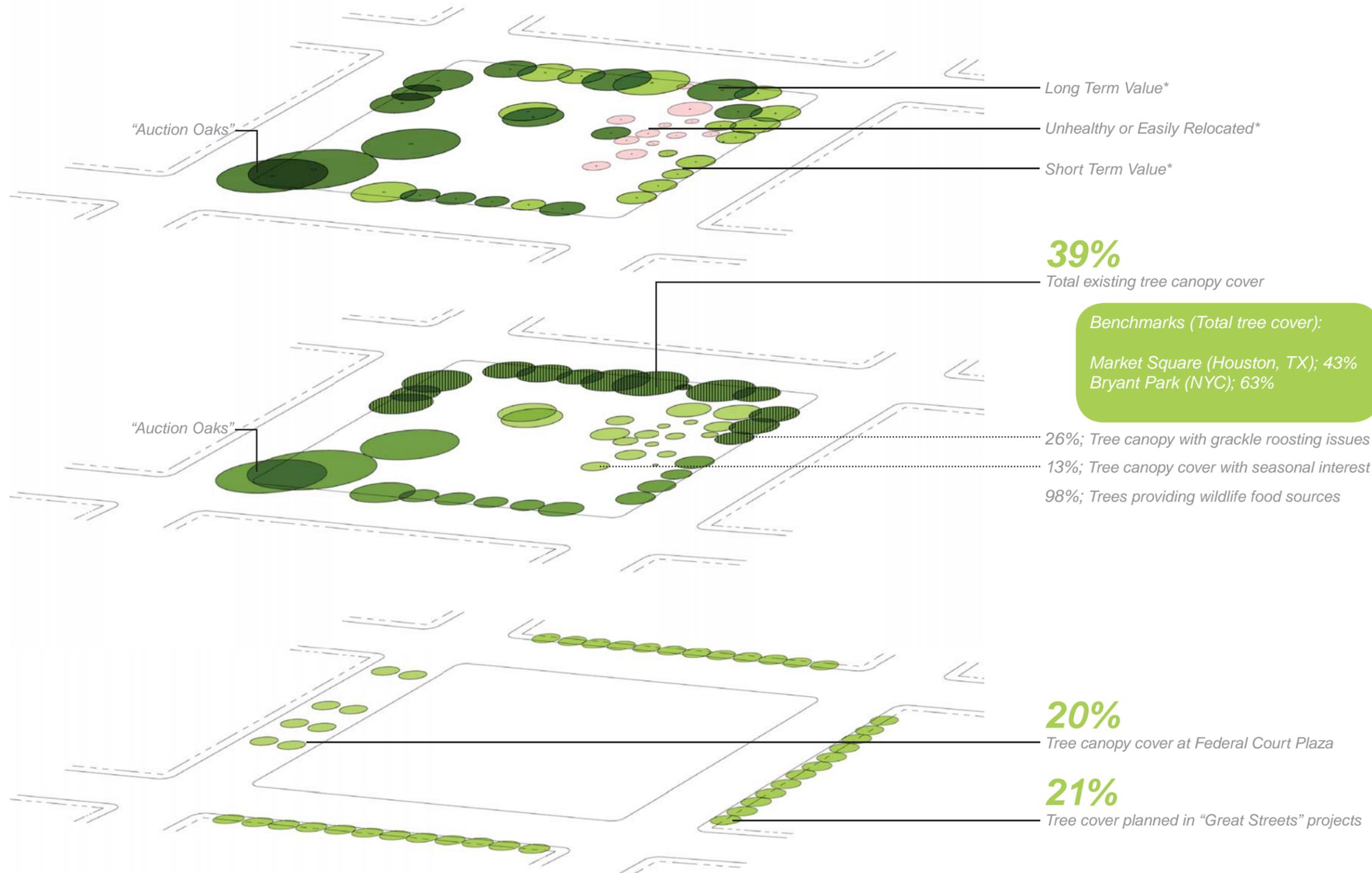
### Opportunities

- Trees implemented as part of the “Great Streets” program may contribute to the overall seasonality and habitat value.

### Stakeholder or Public Feedback

- The nature of “Great Streets” along the Park edge may have some flexibility to work around existing conditions or to feel like a true extension of the Park;
- The City’s “Great Streets” program prescribes urban design concepts for streets in downtown Austin including those surrounding Republic Square. The “Great Streets” design concepts may need to be altered for the streets surrounding the Park as there are currently some large trees in areas not prescribed by the “Great Streets” guidelines
- Trees and greenery in the Park for sound attenuation are highly recommended by the planned Travis County Courthouse.

\*Tree assessment provided by PARD staff.



## Sun and Shade; Today

In general, the Park stays fairly sunny during most of the year. Development along the southern edge of the Park is low, and has little impact on the shade of the Park. The existing trees on the site provide much of the shade, which is concentrated on the north side of the Park and into 5th St and Guadalupe St.

### Issues

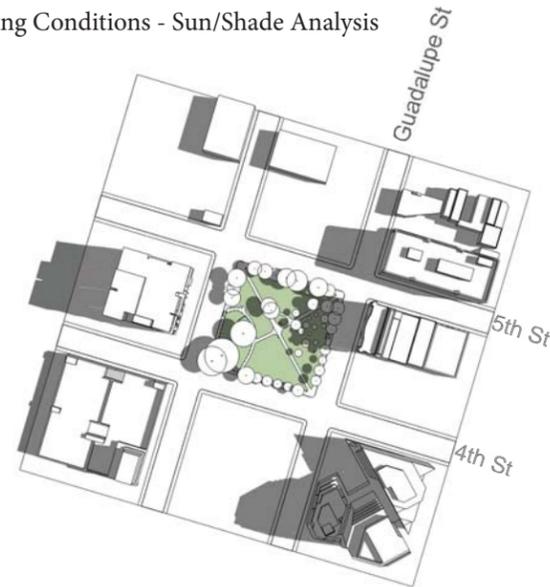
- Existing shade in the Park is enough to support existing levels of use, but not much more;
- Much of the afternoon shade falls in the adjacent streets;
- There is relatively little seating in the shade during summer mornings;

### Opportunities

- There is a lot of sunlight available during the winter at all times of day.

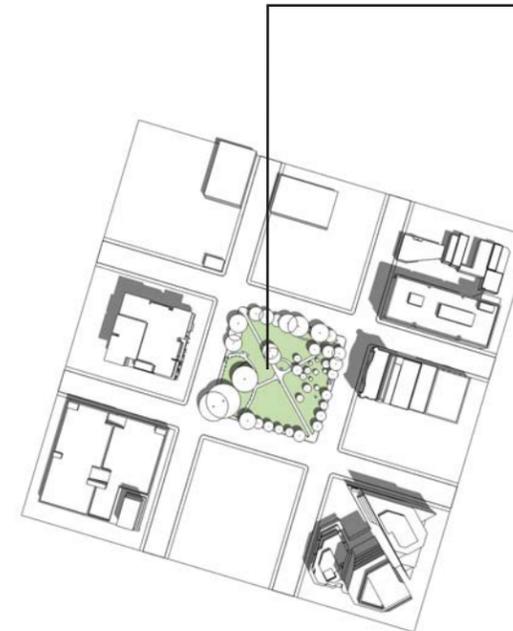
summer

Existing Conditions - Sun/Shade Analysis



August 15 - 9:00 a.m.  
Average Temperature - 74-96°F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 35,550 sf - 41%  
Area in Shade: 51,570 sf - 59%



August 15 - 12:00 p.m.  
Average Temperature - 74-96°F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 46,700 sf - 54%  
Area in Shade: 40,420 sf - 46%



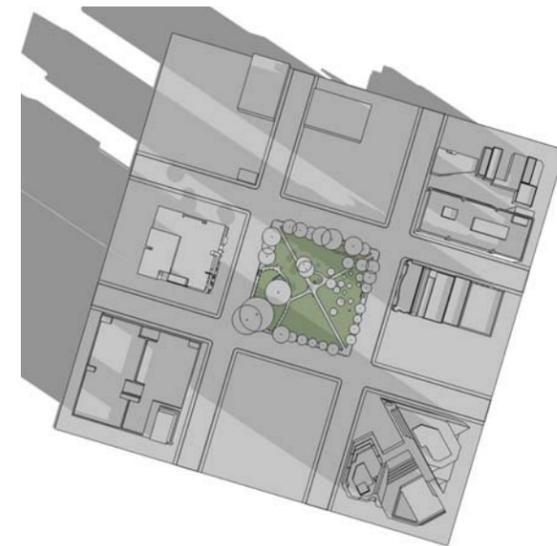
August 15 - 5:00 p.m.  
Average Temperature - 74-96°F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 35,400 sf - 41%  
Area in Shade: 51,720 sf - 59%

46%

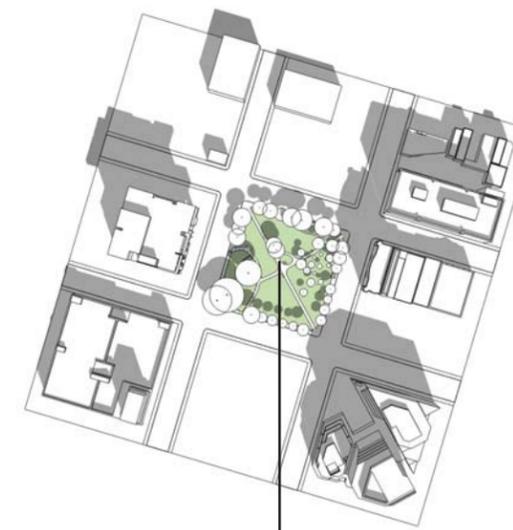
Area of Republic Square in full shade at 12 pm

winter



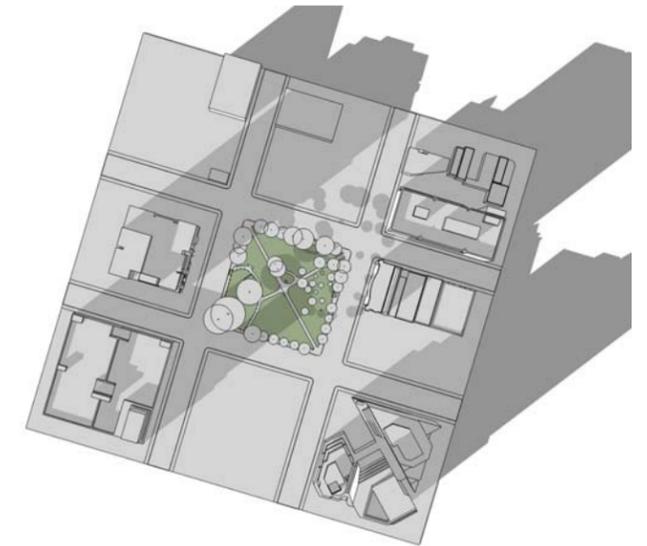
January 15 - 9:00 a.m.  
Average Temperature - 42-60°F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 31,000 sf - 36%  
Area in Shade: 56,120 sf - 64%



January 15 - 12:00 p.m.  
Average Temperature - 42-60°F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 38,120 sf - 44%  
Area in Shade: 49,000 sf - 56%



January 15 - 5:00 p.m.  
Average Temperature - 42-60°F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 30,180 sf - 35%  
Area in Shade: 56,940 sf - 65%

56%

Area of Republic Square in full shade at 12 pm

### Benchmarks:

Market Square (Houston, TX);

#### Area in shade:

- Jan 15, 9:00 a.m. - 84%
- Jan 15, 12:00 p.m. - 61%
- Jan 15, 5:00 p.m. - 90%

- Aug 15, 9:00 a.m. - 68%
- Aug 15, 12:00 p.m. - 55%
- Aug 15, 5:00 p.m. - 63%

## Sun and Shade; Tomorrow

The blocks around Republic Square are likely to change dramatically. Dense developments along the southern and northern edges of the Park will undoubtedly modify the micro environment of the Park.

### Issues

- The Park will potentially be almost entirely shaded during the winter months;
- Existing "Auction Oaks" will potentially get a great deal of shade year-round;
- Wind tunneling may also create comfort problems, and make tents difficult to set up
- Glare from buildings north and west of the site could make parts of the Park uncomfortable.

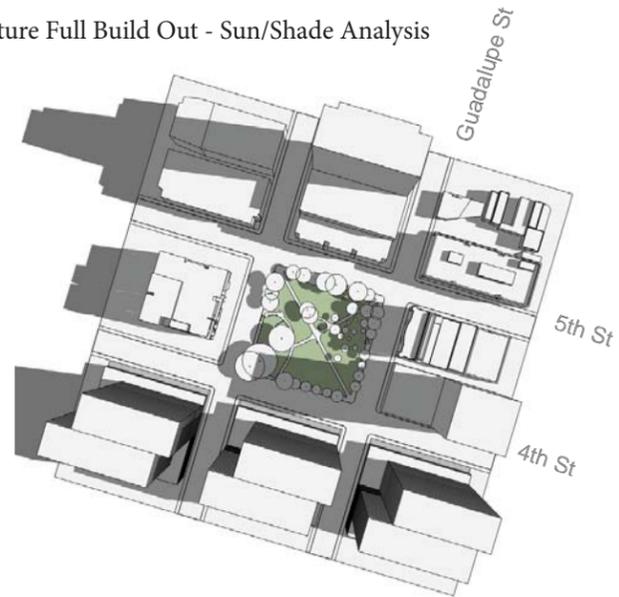
### Opportunities

- There will potentially be a nice balance of sun and shade during summer months;
- The City may be able to work with developers to adjust building forms and finishes for sunlight issues.

summer

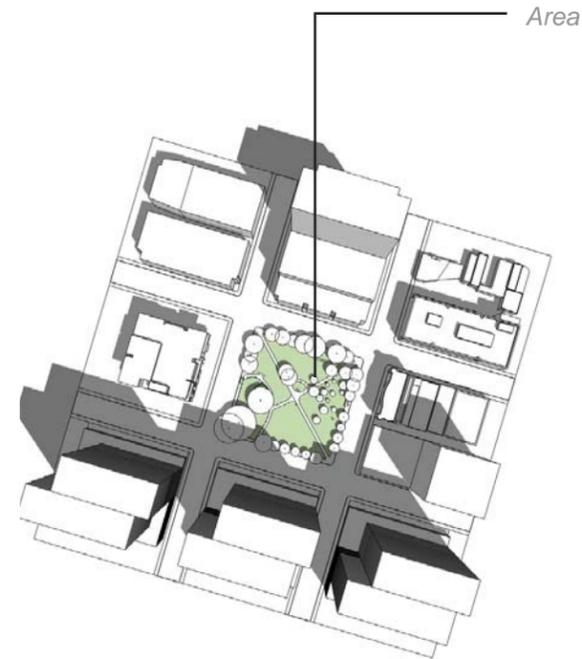
winter

### Future Full Build Out - Sun/Shade Analysis



August 15 - 9:00 a.m.  
Average Temperature - 74-96 °F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 21,230 sf - 24%  
Area in Shade: 65,890 sf - 76%

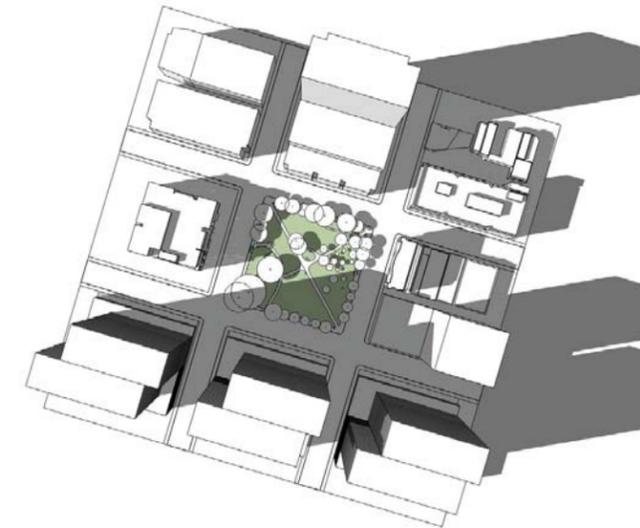


August 15 - 12:00 p.m.  
Average Temperature - 74-96 °F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 42,930 sf - 49%  
Area in Shade: 44,190 sf - 51%

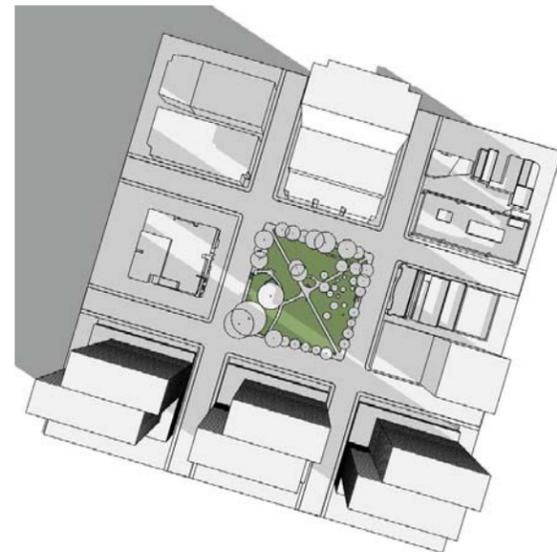
51%

Area of Republic Square in full shade from 12 pm to sunset



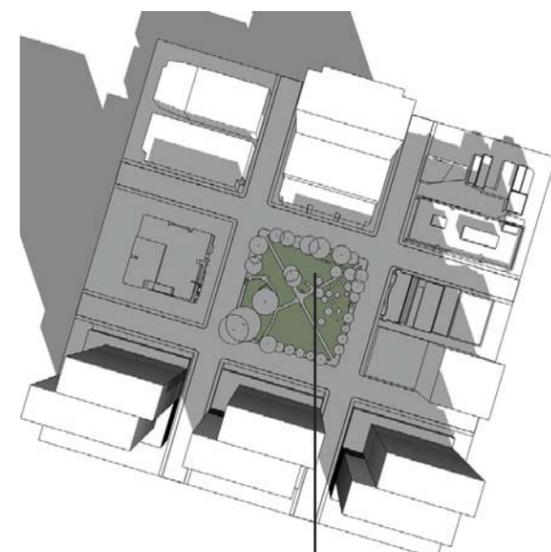
August 15 - 5:00 p.m.  
Average Temperature - 74-96 °F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 17,970 sf - 21%  
Area in Shade: 69,150 sf - 79%



January 15 - 9:00 a.m.  
Average Temperature - 42-60 °F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 9,450 sf - 11%  
Area in Shade: 77,670 sf - 89%

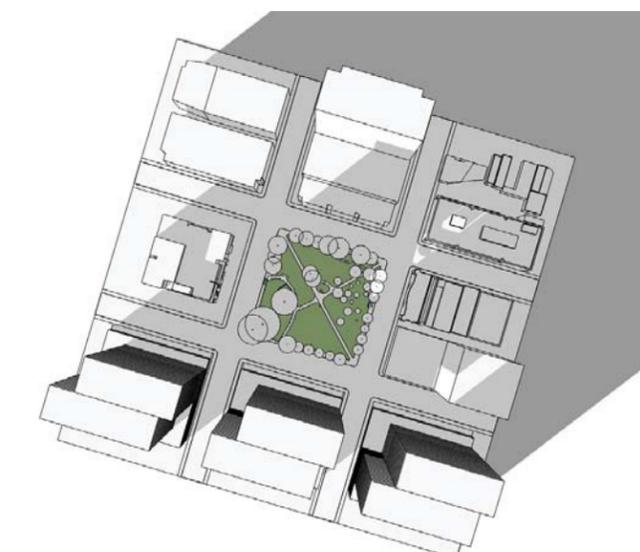


January 15 - 12:00 p.m.  
Average Temperature - 42-60 °F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 0 sf - 0%  
Area in Shade: 87,120 sf - 100%

100%

Area of Republic Square in full shade from 12 pm to sunset



January 15 - 5:00 p.m.  
Average Temperature - 42-60 °F

Total Area: 87,120 sf  
Area not in Shade: 0 sf - 0%  
Area in Shade: 87,120 sf - 100%

\*\* Total Area = Park Area from back of curb

## Park Use

General use of the Park varies by time of day, but is typically dominated by dog walkers and lunchtime visitors.

### Issues

- Use is inconsistent overall, and visitors do not tend to linger;
- The site does not have much built-in programming.

### Opportunities

- There is potential to expand built program and make the overall visitor experiences more comfortable.

### Stakeholder and Public Feedback

- The County hopes that the enhancements for the Park will be fitness-friendly;
- A café will be included within the planned Travis County Courthouse to serve staff and visitors;
- Part-time child care services for court users (not employees) will be provided within the planned Travis County Courthouse on the ground floor;
- The Park's design should consider uses by people at different times of day;
- The Park should be a beautiful space that draws people in;
- It should be a space that creates a balance between passive and active recreation;
- Mothers and young children would likely use the passive recreation areas, and teens and young adults would use the more active areas of the park;
- Water features and shade are of paramount importance. Use of recycled water in water features is highly recommended;
- The existing berms are used as benches to view within the Park because of their slightly higher elevations.
- The installation of public art needs to be a cautious process as once art is installed it is difficult to remove as people get attached to the art.
- Create a space for the rotation of art works. A protocol for the rotation of such art should be considered.

**0.01%**

Area of Park currently dedicated to arts or creative programming

**85%**

Area of park that is "flexible"; can accommodate more than one use

**40%**

Area of Park used by children on a regular basis

**37%**

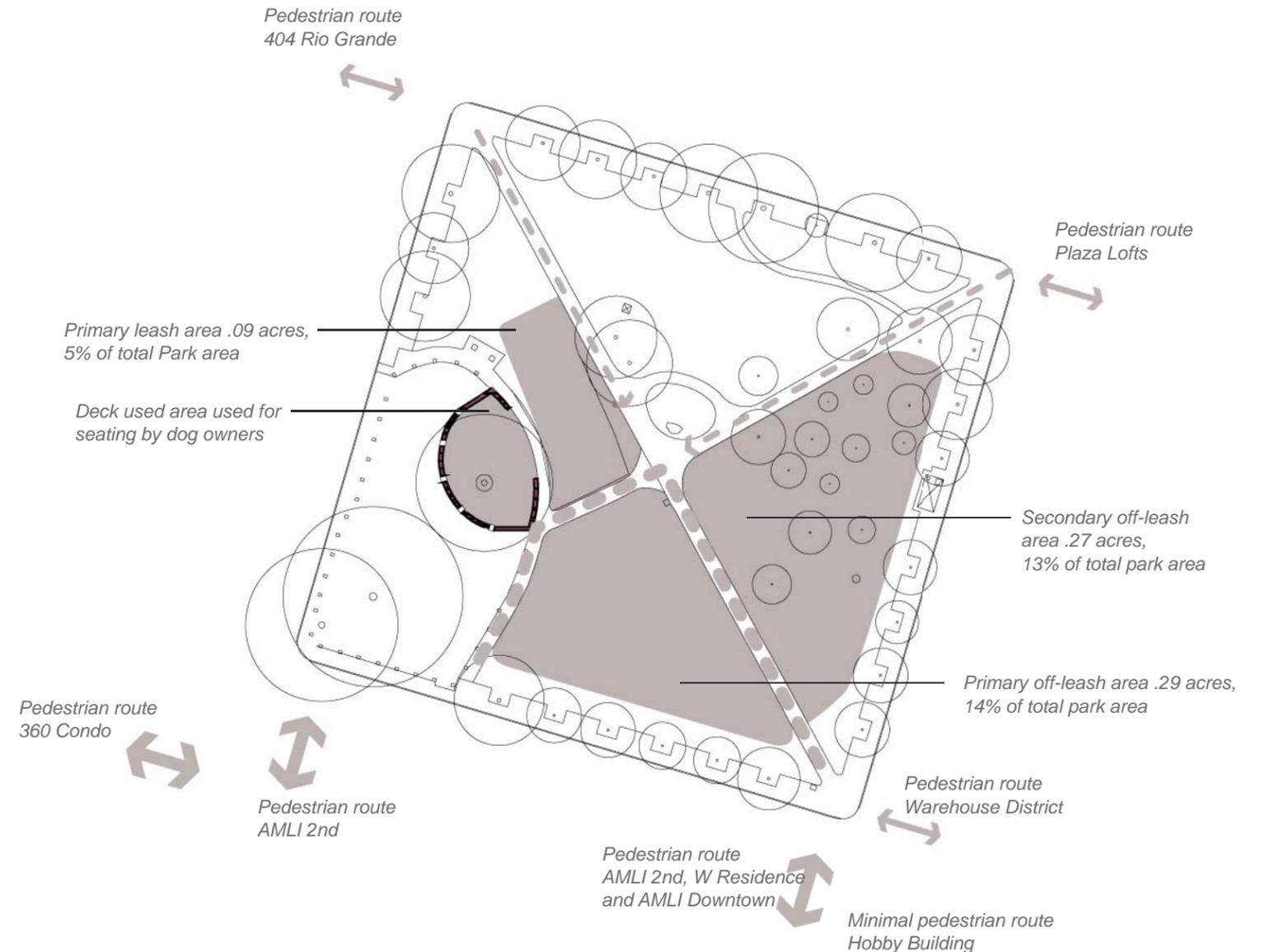
Area of Park used by teenagers on a regular basis

**57%**

Area of Park used by adults on a regular basis

**40%**

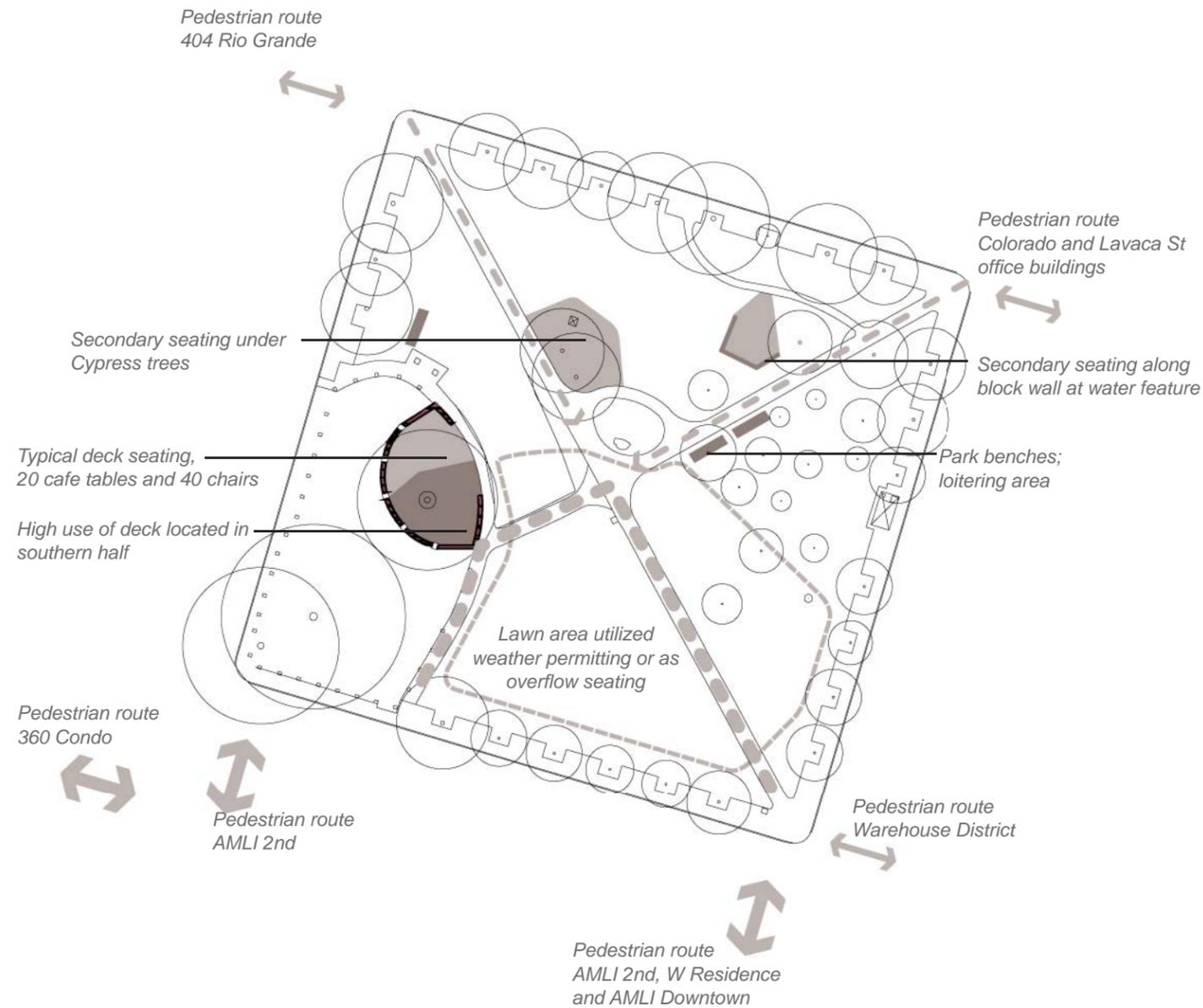
Area of Park used by seniors on a regular basis



morning

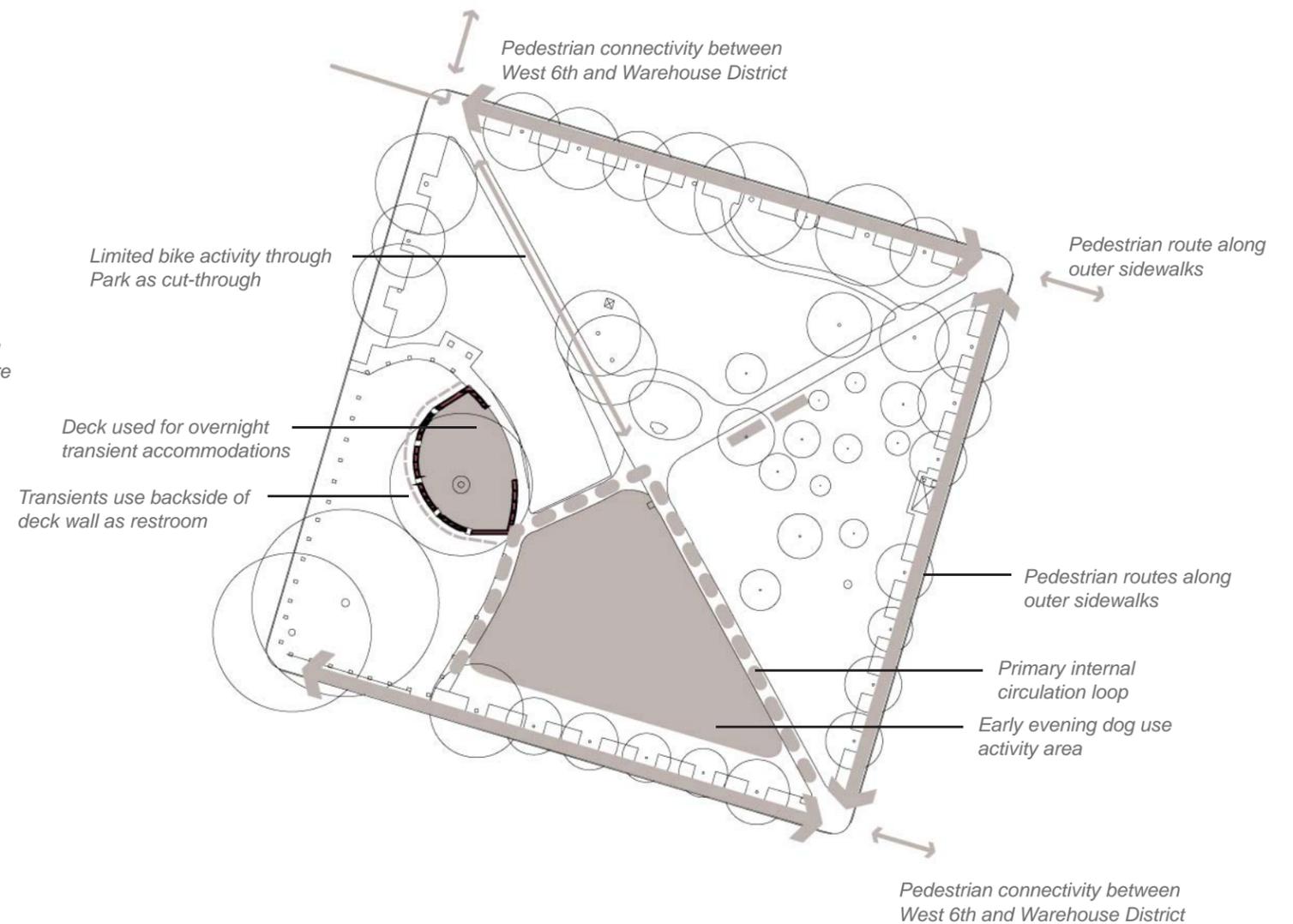
Mornings at Republic Square include heavy dog activities, spontaneous cafe uses and flexible physical workout classes. Morning usage of the Park is one of the most diversely populated and active.

Total area for dog use activity .65 acres, 32% of total Park area



## noon

In the afternoon leashes give way for to-go boxes as Republic Square becomes a lunchtime destination. Moveable cafe tables and chairs are the first choice as multiple group arrangements can be accommodated. Additional seating is accommodated with 4 benches along the walk. Occasionally the rock edge of the fountain will be utilized.



## evening

The Park sees a decline in use and visitors during the evening hours. The outer sidewalks still serve pedestrian circulation but internal circulation dwindles. Combining the lack of Park activity with the draw of refined furnishings on the deck creates an attractive destination for transients. The overnight influx of transients also increases the use of the Park as a bathroom. An additional concern that is highlighted in the evening hours is the grackle population along 5th St and Guadalupe St.

## Special Programming

The Park hosts a range of regular program activities, as well as approximately four single-occurrence events per year.

### Issues

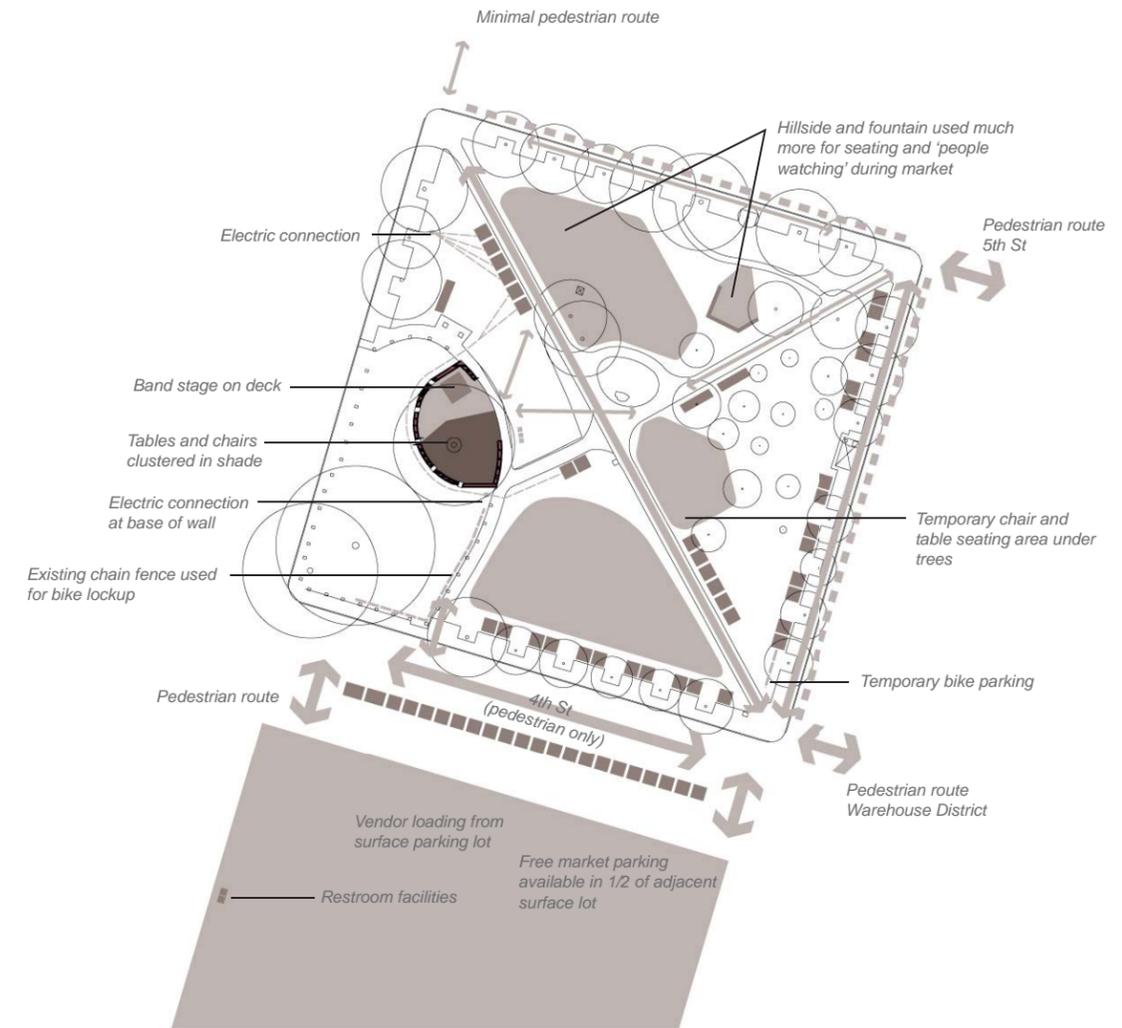
- The Farmers' Market program makes it difficult for the Park to be used for other weekend events during the year;
- Permits for Park use may get more complicated if users wish to set up on the new Federal Courthouse Plaza;
- PARD does not capture any revenue for many of the events held on the Park.

### Opportunities

- Programming could be expanded to provide a more diverse event calendar.

### Stakeholder or Public Feedback

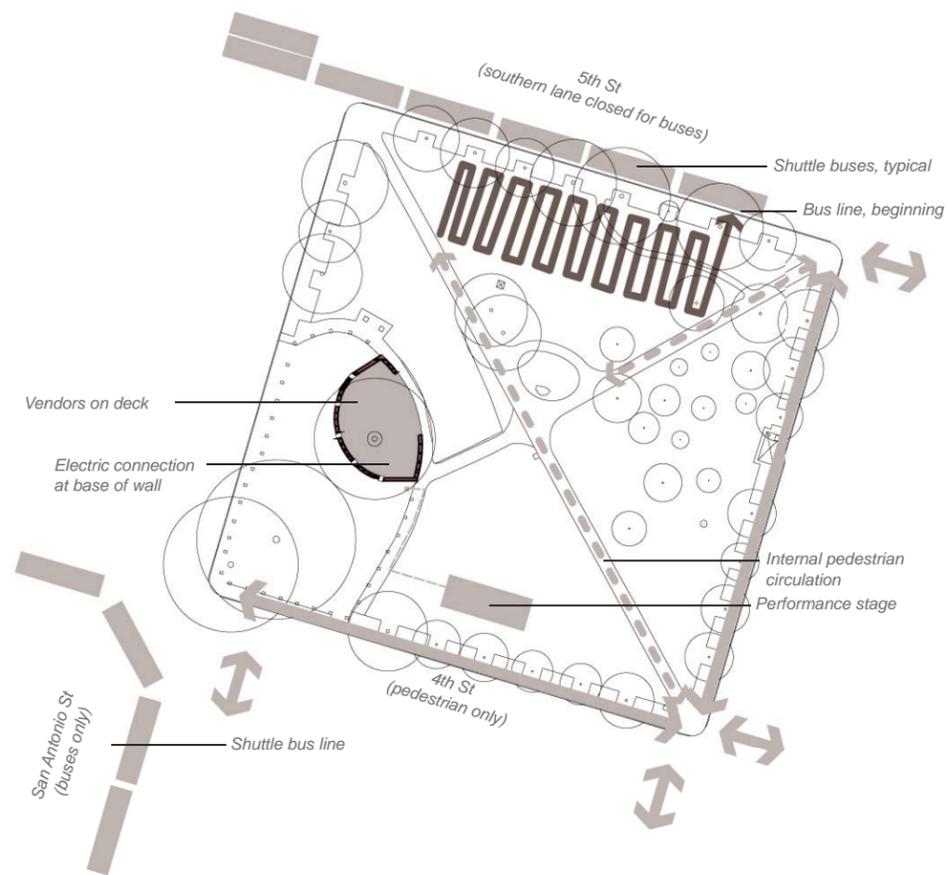
- AMLI's residents support the Farmers' Market as well as a separation of uses to accommodate a wide variety of users and uses;
- The City's Public Works Department is purchasing bicycle infrastructure to provide valet parking for bikers in downtown Austin;
- The City is proposing a bike share program of up to 500 bicycles and 30 to 40 bicycle kiosks throughout downtown on the City's right-of-way by 2013;
- Off-loading on the plaza will be a permitted activity.
- Events on the plaza will be acceptable, but no fund raising activities will be permitted;
- The Park should be a quiet zone; amplified sound would be a problem for the courthouses during work hours, a very sensitive issue with Travis County;
- Travis County will not permit the blocking of its courthouse's entrances;
- White Cane Day draws 200 to 300 participants once a year;
- Diez y Seis de Septiembre draws 300 to 500 participants once a year;
- A balance needs to be achieved between static art and participatory / active art;
- A variety of uses can be hosted in the Park provided they do not interfere with each other.



## 2.8 acres

Total area used by Farmers' Market program;  
408 hours of operation per year.

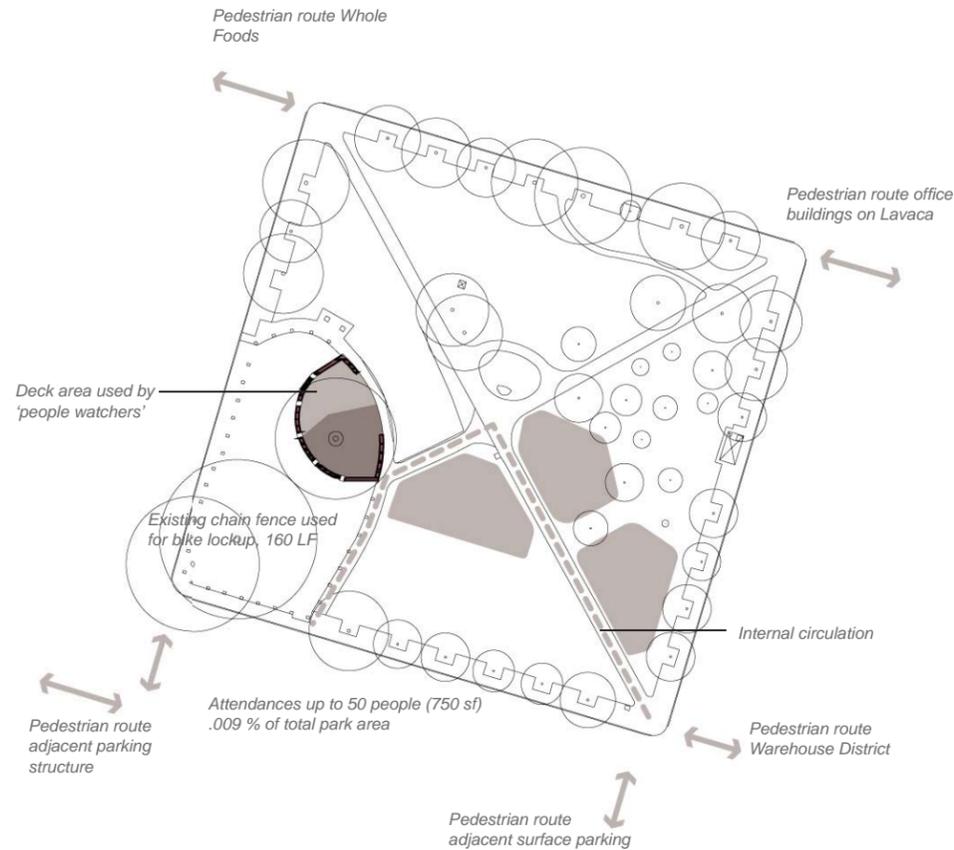
The Saturday SFC Farmers' Market is the most popular event in the park. Throughout the day thousands of users visit the Park to browse the diverse offerings from vendors. The success is evident in that every inch of the Park is explored and uncovered. Up to 63 seasonal vendors provide a variety of foods and crafts, along with live music and other event features.



## 1.5 acres

Area used by ACL bus loading;  
36 hours of operation per year;  
500 minimum attendance.

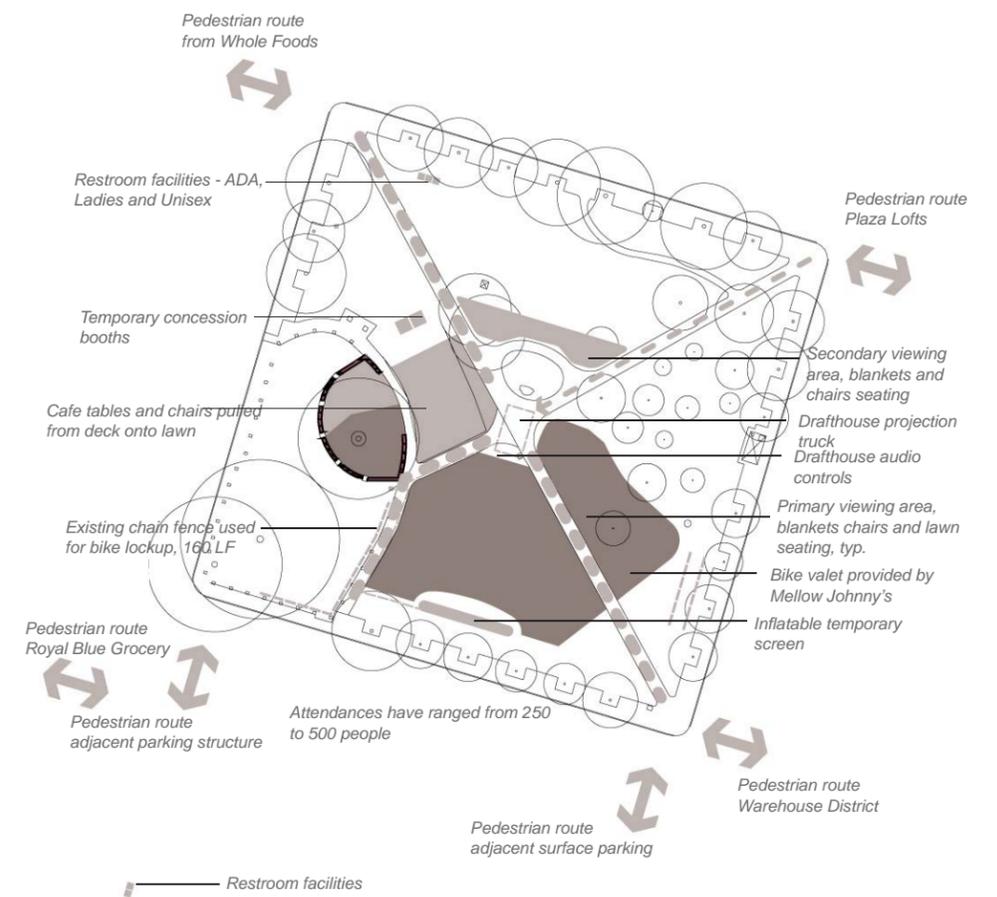
Republic Square Park acts as the downtown staging area for shuttle bus lines to Austin City Limits. Access is limited to the eastern edge of the Park as a majority of roads are closed to accommodate bus staging. Road closures include 4th St, San Antonio St, Nueces St, and the southern lane of 5th St.



## .05 acres

Maximum area used by yoga in the park program;  
25 hours of operation per year (once per week, May-September);  
50 average attendance.

Led by a certified instructor, Yoga in the Park occurs every Wednesday at noon in May, June and September. Attendance is typically from downtown employees on lunch break. Most attendees walk to the Park.



## .78 acres

Total area used by Movies in the Park program;  
40 hours of operation per year (8 movies);  
300-500 average attendance.

Held nearly once a month from April through November - these free events have proven to be highly successful in attendance. Bike valet provided by Mellow Johnny's. Portable rest rooms are available in northwest corner and adjacent surface parking lot to the south. Total viewing area is .78 acres - 39% of total Park area. Attendances have ranged from 250 - 500.

## Lighting and Visibility

The site currently includes minimal lighting around the existing "Auction Oaks" and perimeter street lighting. In general, the Park is very dark after sunset.

### Issues

- The lack of lighting makes the Park undesirable for use after dark;
- The stage feature built in phase One creates some dark and non-visible spaces in the Park;
- Some berms block views into the Park;
- Many local residents do not leave work until dark, which reduces the value of the Park;
- The Park feels unsafe after dark.

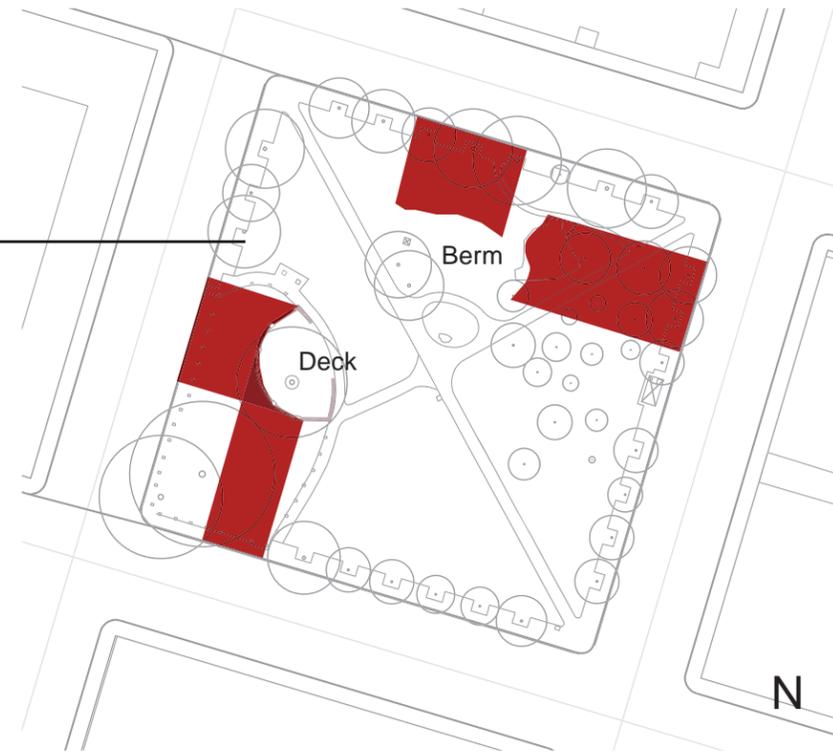
### Opportunities

- Increasing lighting will increase the hours of active use in the Park.

### Stakeholder and Public Feedback

- Too much lighting might make some events difficult to enjoy (movies, etc);
- Park visitors' safety should be enhanced by ensuring open views and adequate night lighting.

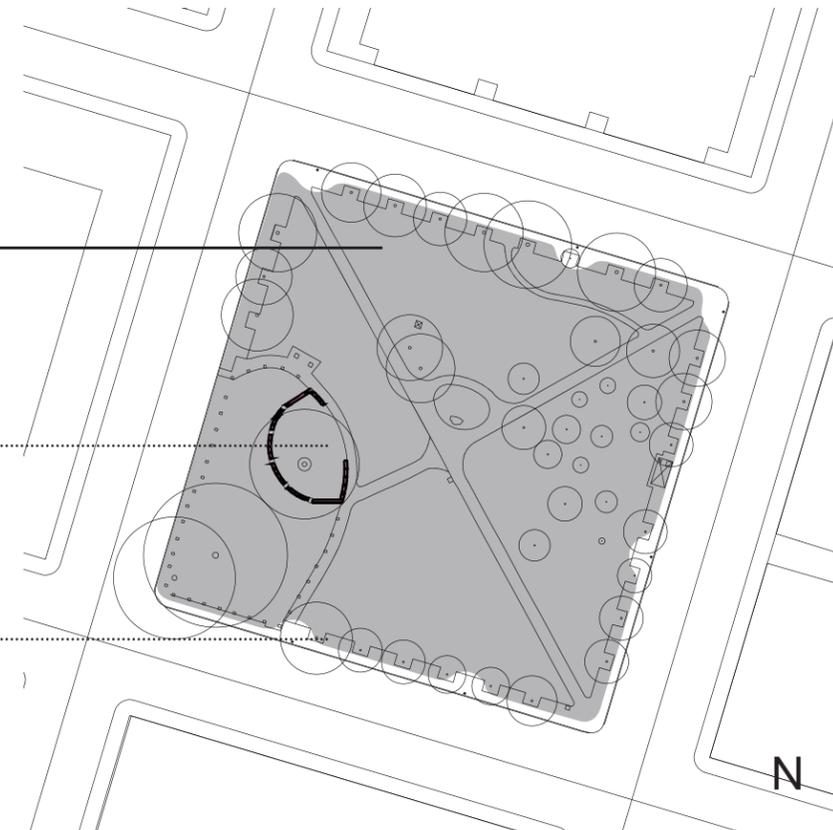
**95%**  
Total frontage that has open views from the street between 2.5' and 7'



**98%**  
Total area that reads below .5 foot candles; which is the minimum amount recommended

Low level uplights were installed with Phase One; these do little to light the ground plane or pedestrian surfaces

The Park has seven roadway lights on its perimeter; most of this light is cast onto the street surfaces or is blocked by street trees



## Utilities

Water pressure in the vicinity exceeds 100 psi, meaning that ample service should be available to meet any needs the project might have. However, due to the extreme pressure, a pressure-reducing valve will be required at the service meter. Currently, 6" cast iron lines are located across the street from the property on the south and west sides. An 8" cast iron line is located about 12' off the curb on the east side (Guadalupe) of the property and a 4" cast iron line parallels the northern property boundary (5th St) about 14' off the curb line. Fire hydrants are located at all four intersections bordering the site.

It is anticipated that the wastewater generation rate for the site will be low and the existing system should therefore have ample capacity to meet the project's needs. Gravity wastewater lines exist on all four sides of the site with a 10" line under 4th St (on the Park side of the street) being the most likely candidate for service since it is in the downhill side of the property. Additionally, San Antonio St to the west contains 8" and 15" gravity lines. Guadalupe St to the east contains an 8" gravity line and 5th St to the north contains a 12" gravity line.

Gas is available from a 4" wrapped steel high-pressure main located on the east side of Guadalupe St east of the site. Other service options for gas may be available in the area but will require the approval of Texas Gas Service. Similarly, electric, telephone and data service (if required) are all also available in the right-of-way immediately adjacent to the site, but the actual utility provider will define the point of service. In the future, reclaimed water may be available (for irrigation) to the site through a main planned along 4th St.

Runoff from the site generally drains to the south and west. The existing City of Austin storm sewer system extends to the site at the southwest and southeast corners to collect flow from three existing curb inlets. A trunk line under Guadalupe St conveys flow four blocks south to Lady Bird Lake. A line under 4th St conveys flow two blocks west to Shoal Creek. Assuming that

significant increases in impervious cover are not proposed, it should be possible to discharge flow from the site to the existing drainage system. If impervious cover is increased to the extent that significant increases in street flow occur, it may be necessary to upgrade some of the inlets and storm sewer in the adjacent streets.

In the central business district, on-site detention for the purposes of flood control is generally not required due to the proximity of the ultimate receiving stream (Lady Bird Lake). The system rather relies on conveyance to move storm water runoff to the lake directly. Similarly, flows from less intense storms (such as the two-year event) are conveyed to the lake through street gutters, storm sewers and box culverts. Since runoff from the site is unlikely to increase the erosion hazard downstream (since the conveyance system is "hardened"), two-year detention should not be required on the site.

Depending on the final configuration of the site, permanent water quality controls may be required in association with the redevelopment. If impervious cover is increased to more than 20%, water quality requirements will be triggered. Participation in the City's fee-in-lieu program for water quality may be an option for this site. This approach would involve payment of a fee to the water quality fund which would then be used for water quality improvements elsewhere. However, current City policy typically requires that applicants try to provide a least some measure of permanent water quality control on site. Options for Republic Square include vegetative buffer strips, biofiltration, sedimentation/filtration and re-irrigation/rainwater harvesting. All of these approaches have benefits and drawbacks, which vary with the exact location selected for the water quality controls.

Vegetative filter strips require the largest amount of land area but the strips could be multi-tasked for lawn use as well. The establishment of effective filter strips would likely require significant re-grading and this may not be consistent with other goals for the site Sedimentation/Filtration systems require

a moderate sized footprint and are limited in depth by the ability to gravity drain water to the adjacent storm sewer system (unless a pump is used). Biofiltration ponds are similar in size and volume but provide a more aesthetically pleasing look and typically require slightly less maintenance. A re-irrigation/harvesting system utilizing a buried cistern equipped with an irrigation pump would likely require the least amount of land, but these systems have mechanical parts, require electric service and need routine maintenance. The City is in the process of updating its rules for re-irrigation and rainwater systems to allow them to function more akin to true rainwater harvesting approaches. Assuming the new rules are adopted, a re-irrigation or rainwater system would provide for the beneficial reuse of site runoff.

### Issues

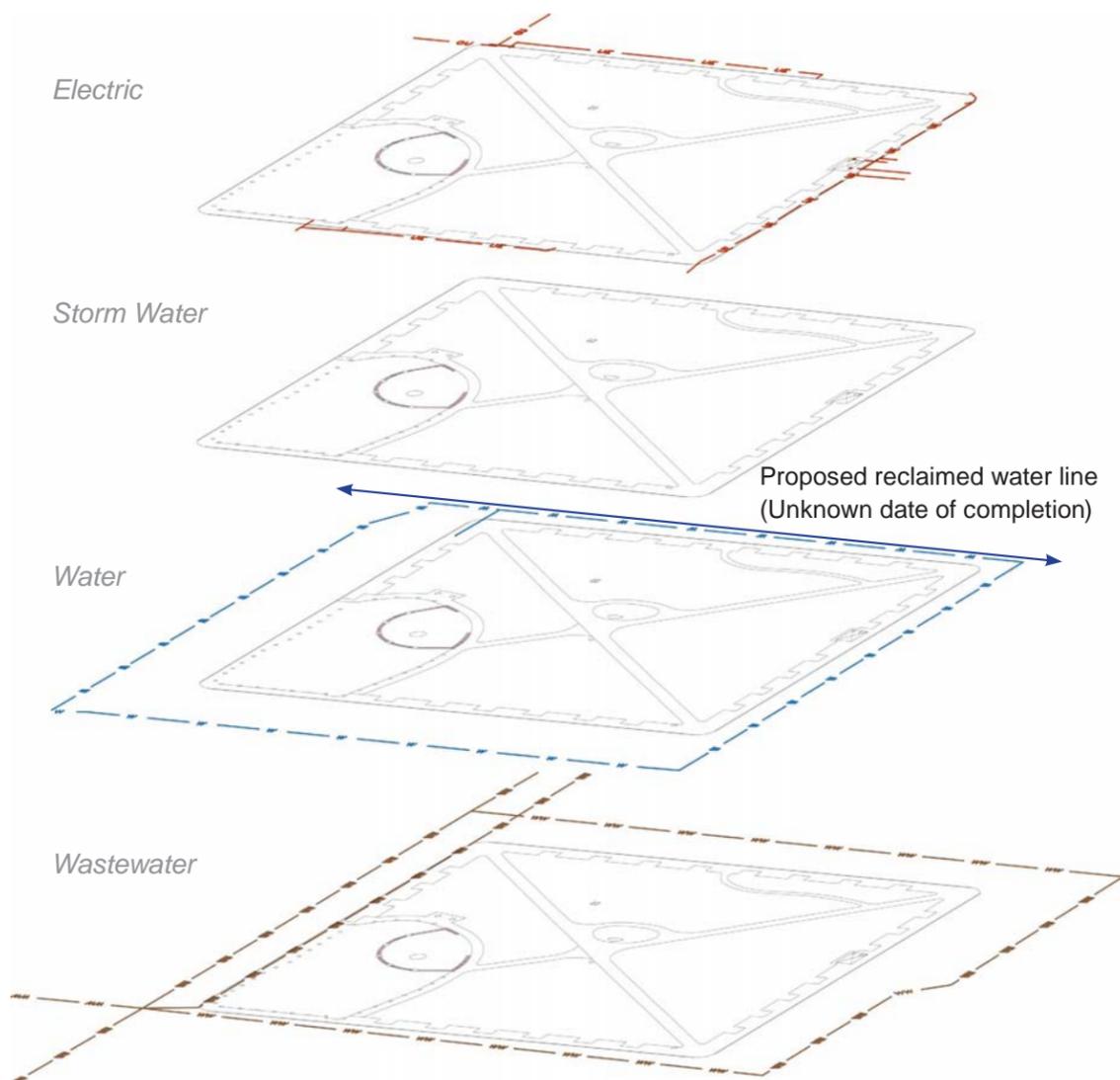
- New utility connections may have to be done in the street;
- Capturing rain water for park use can result in a high maintenance system.

### Opportunities

- The proposed reclaimed water line down 4th St would be a much lower maintenance option than reclaimed storm water;
- The site is generally well served by most utilities;
- The site already has WiFi service.

### Stakeholder and Public Feedback

- There is not enough electrical service for events that use most of the Park;
- The potable water service is not adequate;
- If recycled water were to be used for irrigation, there would be less opposition to regular and greater irrigation at the Park;
- A public relations campaign was suggested to explain to the public the sources of resources, including recycled water, to be delivered to the Park to increase the public's support for the Square's operations and maintenance initiatives.
- It is not too late to expect it from the planned Travis County Courthouse.



## Existing Operations and Maintenance

The process of designing and constructing a park is usually the most engaging part of a project, but the ongoing operations and management of a park is what truly makes it sustainable. There are few things that have a greater role in the ongoing success of a park than management planning.

### Issues

- There is a lack of funding to maintain parks above existing conditions;
- There are many partners in current maintenance, but no comprehensive approach.

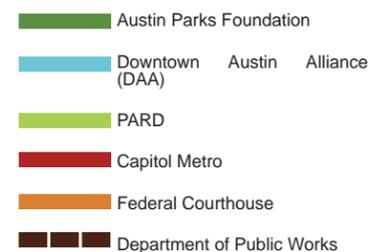
### Opportunities

- A conservancy group or other organization could provide consistent leadership and vision for park operation;
- A partnership between existing organizations (e.g. Federal, County, and City governments, CapMetro, the Austin Parks Foundation, the Downtown Austin Alliance, etc.) could also help guide Park operation.

### Stakeholder and Public Feedback

- The plaza currently under construction between Republic Square and the courthouse (San Antonio St) will be under the security control of GSA;
- A more robust management organization is needed that would leverage small amounts of funds into larger amounts of funds;
- There should be a management entity for Republic Square responsible for both programming and operations and maintenance. This entity should ensure that the Park has adequate greenery;
- A Park-dedicated organization could solicit funding support for operations and maintenance from properties within a given radius of the Park;
- There are no objections to revenue-generating programming at the park;
- The DAA and the Austin Parks Foundation are interested in a third-party agreement with the City of Austin to generate and capture revenues generated at the Park and

- invest these funds in the Park's operations and maintenance and not be deposited in the City's General Fund;
- PARD has a high level of interest in generating revenues at the Park.





**70%**

Population within 1/4 mile of the site under 45 years of age. The median age of an Austinite is 31 years and the median age within 1/4 mile is 35.1 years.

**68%**

Households within 1/4 mile of the site earning more than \$50,132, which is the average for Austin.

**1.1**

Average number of residents per household within 1/4 mile of the site.

**30%**

Households within 1/4 mile that are owner occupied.

**\$14.21 million**

Baseline appraised value\* per acre

**\$21.75 million**

Baseline appraised value\* per acre

Blocks likely to redevelop (\$)

## Return on investment

Parks have a proven ability to increase the value of adjacent land if they are cared for and considered to be a community asset. According to Trust for Public Land, most people are willing to pay more for a home close to a nice park. This is often referred to as “hedonic value”. In reference to parks, this value is generated by two factors; distance to the park and quality of the park. In the case of Republic Square, the value differences are likely expressed in first tier (views to the Park and within 500’) and second tier blocks (within 1000’). With so much land around the Park likely to develop, this project represents an opportunity for public investment to create real value in the form of tax revenues and property values.

### Opportunities

- Early investment in this master plan has the ability to affect property values before they redevelop;
- The City may be able to capture this difference in revenue to accelerate improvements and maintenance of the Park.

### Stakeholder and Public Feedback

- The State owns the Hobby Building bounded by W. 4th St, Guadalupe St, W. 3rd St, and Lavaca St as well as 4–story parking garage bounded by Nueces St, W. 4th St, San Antonio St, and W. 3rd St;
- Both of these two properties are grossly under developed, and the State is interested in maximizing the buildings on these sites;
- The Federal Courthouse will be occupied by 80 to 100 employees early in November 2012;
- The proposed redevelopment of the Post Office block north of the Square was discussed in reference to its ground level needing to be “people-friendly” unlike the existing Plaza Lofts development to the east of the Park;
- Gables indicated that the company owns and proposes to develop the southern half of the block east of the Square in the near future as an apartment complex with mixed uses.

# Community Workshop 1 and Online Poll 1

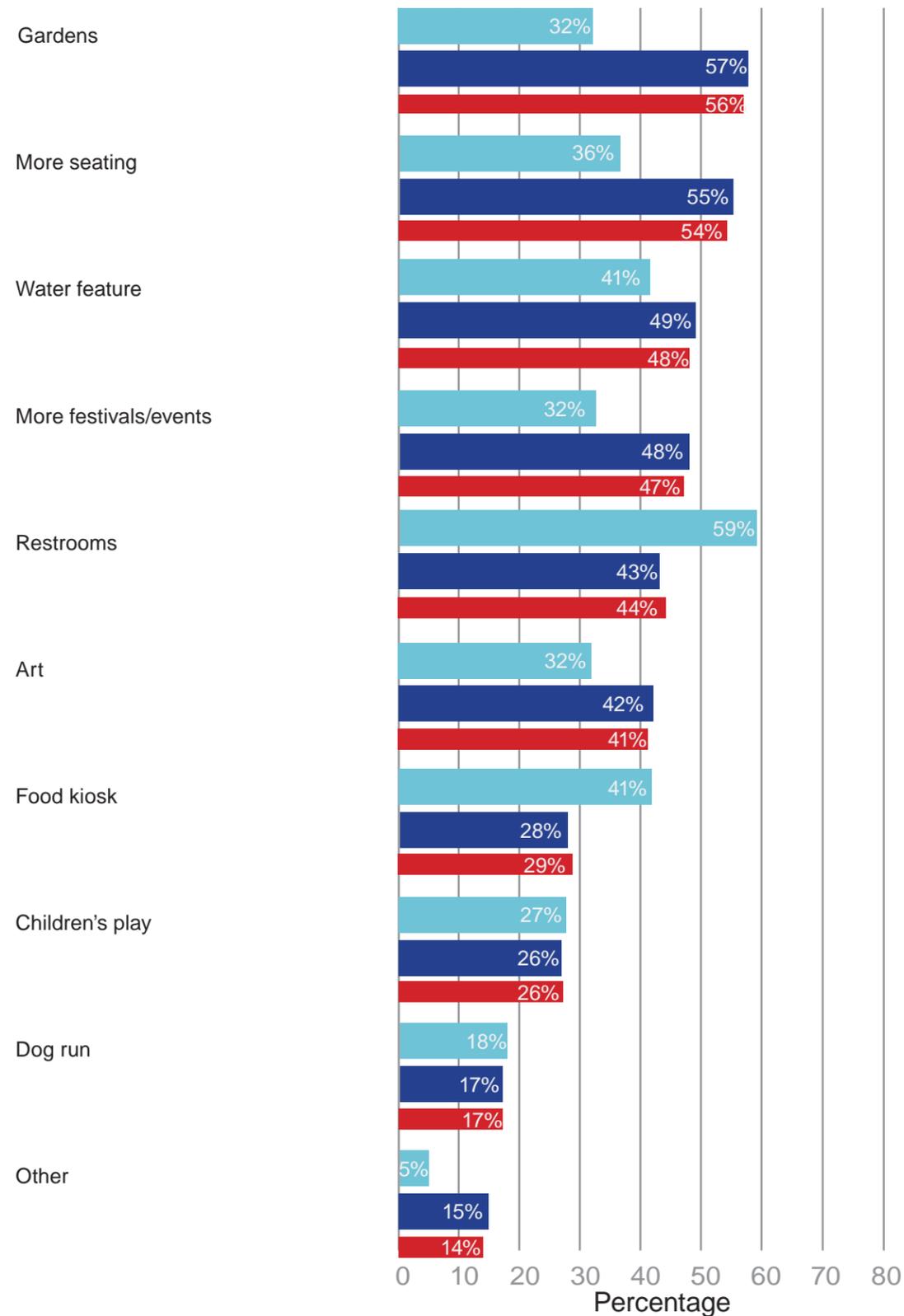
Community Workshop 1 was held at City Hall on May 12, 2012. The meeting was held to present existing conditions and analysis and to gain a sense of the community's goals and what program elements they would like to see at Republic Square. There were approximately 22 people in attendance.

The results of Community Workshop 1 were further supplemented by an open online poll that asked that same questions as the keypad poll from the workshop and allowed participants to write additional comments. Approximately 400 individuals participated in the first online poll.



Community Workshop 1 was held at City Hall on May 12th, 2012.

## What new park amenities do you feel should be factored into the design?



The above summarizes results concerning public support for potential Park amenities.

## Community Workshop 1 and Online Poll 1

### Program Elements

Participants were asked to select which park amenities should be factored into the design.

#### Top Amenities:

1. Gardens
2. More seating
3. Water feature

#### Amenities with lowest number of votes:

1. Dog run
2. Children's play

#### Strategies:

1. Focus resources on the highest ranked program elements: gardens, more seating, water feature, more festivals/events.
2. Eliminate or create alternative strategies for a fenced dog run.



# Community Workshop 1 and Online Poll 1

## Goals

Participants were asked what top goals they had in the categories of environment, community, art/aesthetics, and economics. The results show the percentage of votes compiled at Community Workshop 1, in the Online Survey 1, and an average of the two. The results display the percentage of people who voted in favor of the goal.

The answers are shown with the highest ranked goal to the lowest ranked goal based upon the average of all respondents from Community Workshop 1 and the Online Survey 1.

### Top Community Goals:

1. Increase the perception of safety.
2. Keep views into park open and clear. (Tie)
3. Create seamless connections to the park. (Tie)

### Top Environmental Goals:

1. Use diverse and drought tolerant plants.
2. Increase the health of plant material.
3. Reduce heat island.

### Top Aesthetic Goals:

1. Use local materials.
2. Expand the seasonal interest to add dynamics.
3. Allow local character to enhance the design.

### Top Economic Goals:

1. Balance revenue and costs for operations of the park.
2. Create a vision that is able to be phased over time.



## Environmental Goals

Use diverse and drought tolerant plants

Increase the health of plant material

Reduce heat island

Use reclaimed water for irrigation

Increase habitat for songbirds, squirrels, and butterflies

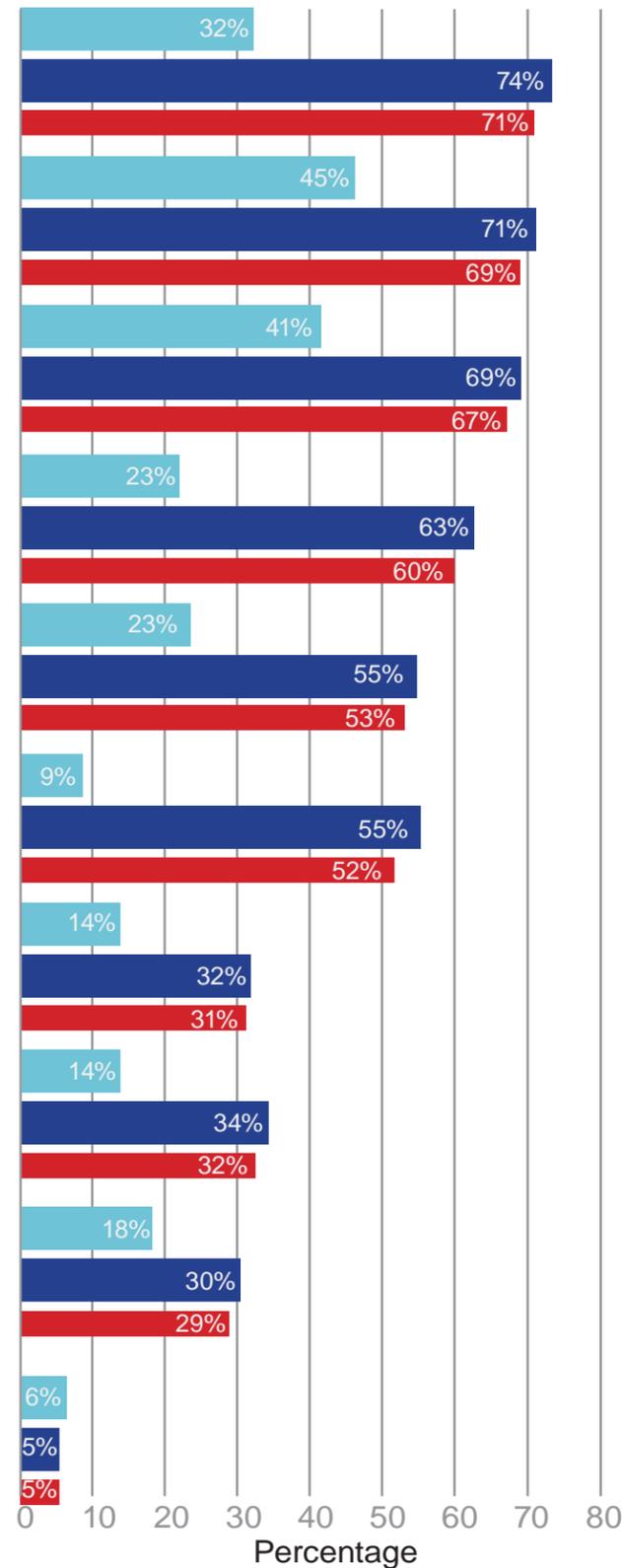
Manage grackle population

Create a carbon-neutral park

Manage the park stormwater on-site

Minimize the amount of potable water used at the park

Other



The above summarizes results concerning public opinion regarding environmental goals for Republic Square

## Community Goals

Increase the perception of safety

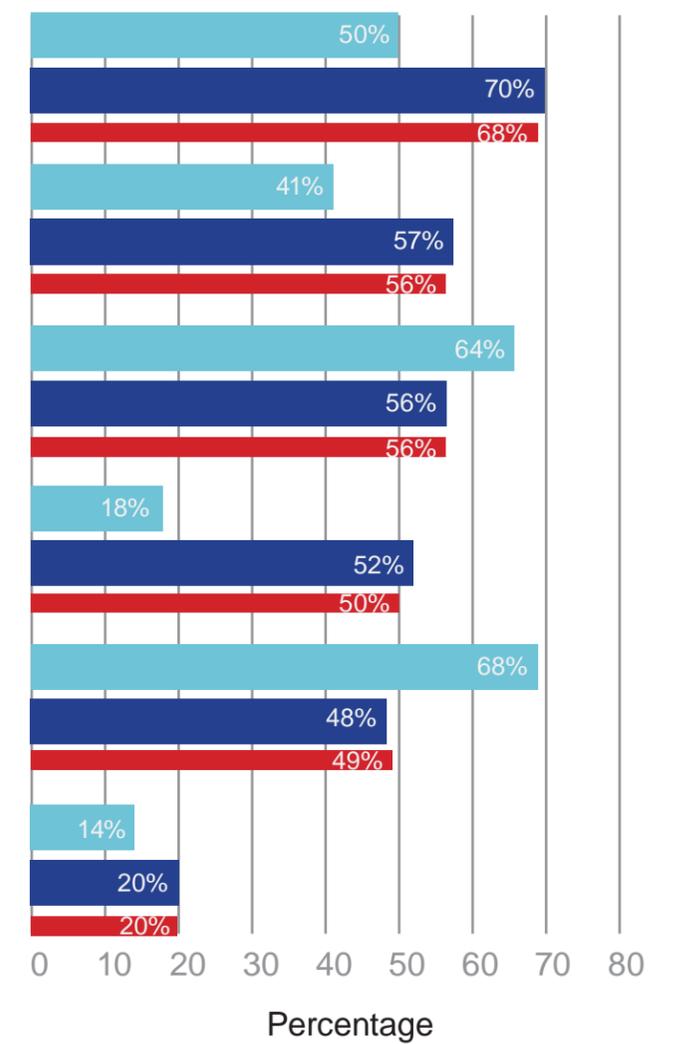
Keep views into park open and clear

Create seamless connections to the park

Increase diversity of park amenities

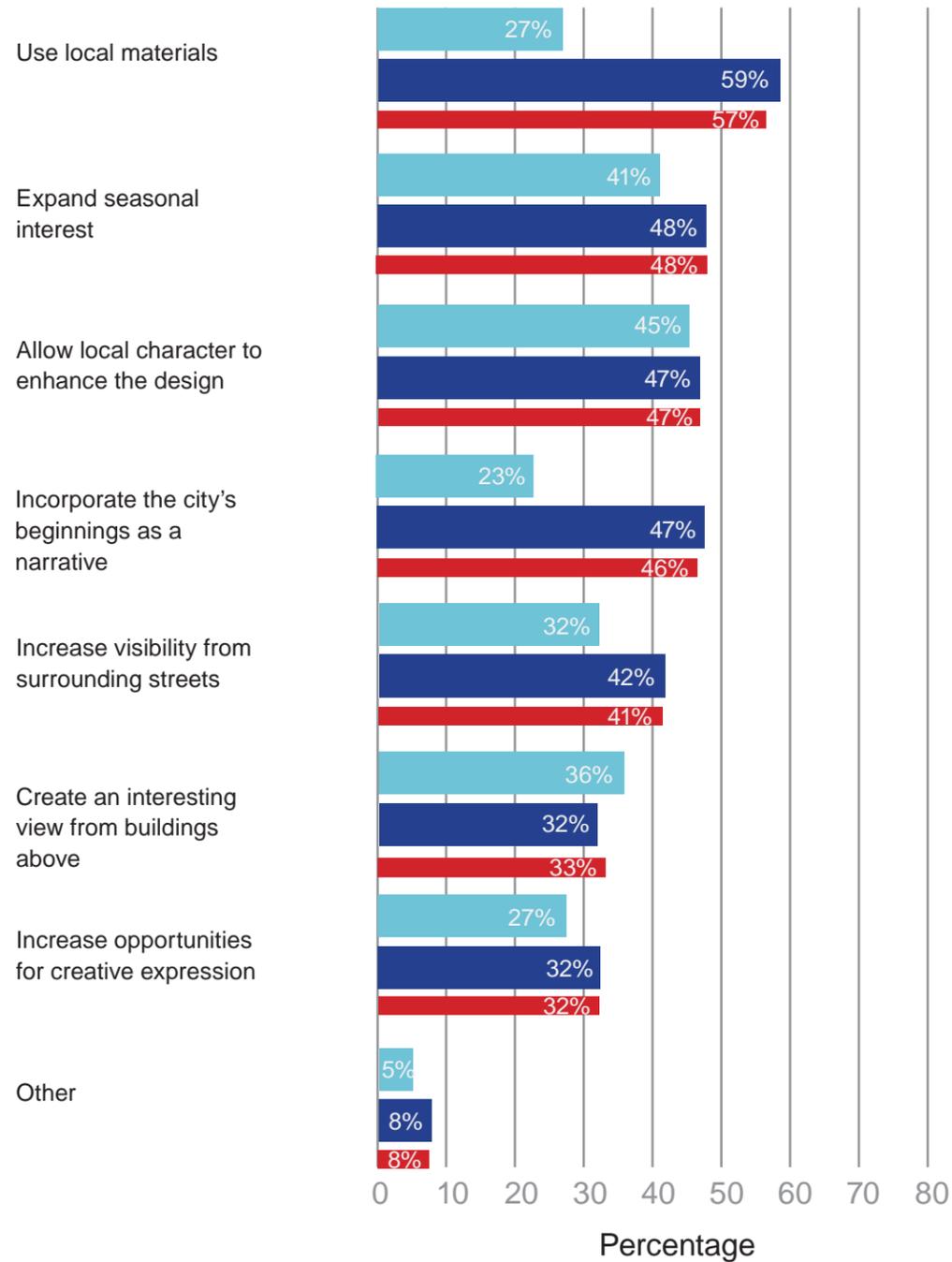
Increase awareness of the park's history

Other



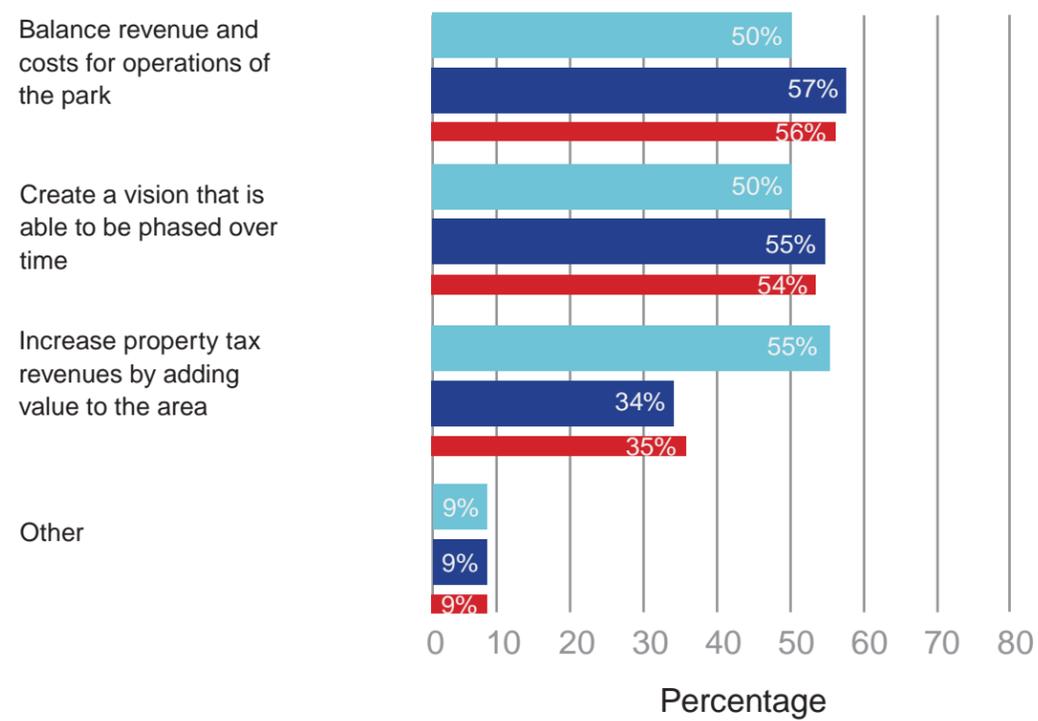
The above summarizes results concerning public opinion regarding community goals for Republic Square

## Aesthetic Goals



The above summarizes results concerning public opinion regarding aesthetic goals for Republic Square

## Economic Goals



The above summarizes results concerning public opinion regarding economic goals for Republic Square

## Strategies:

1. Provide a variety of park amenities.
2. Use plant materials that are lower than 24 inches around the perimeter of the park.
3. Keep visual barriers to a minimum and not around the perimeter of the park.
4. Ensure lighting contributes to the safety of the neighborhood.
5. Schedule evening visits by the Austin Rangers in order to create a safe nighttime experience.
6. Utilize local materials.
7. Utilize larger trees and shade producing structures in the final design.
8. Incorporate diverse plantings.



