

## **ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET**

**CASE NUMBER:** C14H-2025-0077

**HLC DATE:** August 8, 2025    **PC DATE:** September 9, 2025    **CC Date:** October 23, 2025

**APPLICANT:** Historic Landmark Commission with owner agreement from Parks and Recreation Department

**HISTORIC NAME:** Palm Park Shelter House

**WATERSHED:** Waller Creek

**ADDRESS:** Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park, 200 N. IH-35 Svr. SB

**ZONING CHANGE:** P to P-H. See department comments below.

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** 9

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Grant the proposed zoning change from public use (P) to public use-historic landmark (P-H) combining district zoning for the footprint of the shelter house. (See Department Comments for explanation of zoning timeline).

**LANDMARK DESIGNATION QUALIFICATIONS:** architecture, community value, historical associations

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION ACTION:** July 2, 2025: Initiate historic zoning (10-0). August 6, 2025: Recommend historic zoning (9-0) and approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of the shelter house (9-0).

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** September 9, 2025: Recommend historic zoning (12-0).

**CITY COUNCIL ACTION:** May 8, 2025: Adopt Resolution No. 20250508-042, initiating zoning for Palm Park to a base zoning that is appropriate based on its current use and directing staff to pursue historic landmark zoning for the shelter house to comply with Heritage Preservation Grant funding regulations.

**CASE MANAGERS:**

Kalan Contreras, Planning Department, 512-974-2727/[kalan.contreras@austintexas.gov](mailto:kalan.contreras@austintexas.gov)

Paul Books, Austin Parks and Recreation Department, 512-978-1315/[paul.books@austintexas.gov](mailto:paul.books@austintexas.gov)

**NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:** Austin Independent School District, Austin Neighborhoods Council, City of Austin Downtown Commission, Downtown Austin Alliance, Downtown Austin Neighborhood Assn. (DANA), East Austin Conservancy, El Concilio Mexican American Neighborhoods, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Lower Waller Creek, Preservation Austin, Tejano Town, Waterloo Greenway

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**

The shelter house's zoning to public use (P) is currently pending, as it is located on an unzoned (UNZ) portion of land. City Council will hear the zoning application applying public (P) zoning (C14-2025-0072), as directed by Resolution No. 20250508-042, on October 23, 2025. The subsequent rezoning from P to P-H will be heard in tandem at the same Council meeting.

The property owner, the Parks and Recreation Department, received a Heritage Preservation Planning Grant from the Office of Arts, Culture, Music, and Entertainment in 2024.

A 2022 survey report conducted for the Texas Department of Transportation identified the park and its assets as eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mitchell, R., and E. Pettis. "Historical Resources Survey Report: Capital Express Central – Intensive-level Survey: Palm Park, 200 North Interstate Highway I-35" (No. 0015-13-388, Texas Department of Transportation), 2022.

**BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

**§ 25-2-352(3)(c)(i) Architecture.** *The property embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a recognized architectural style, type, or method of construction; exemplifies technological innovation in design or construction; displays high artistic value in representing ethnic or folk art, architecture, or construction; represents a rare example of an architectural style in the city; serves as an outstanding example of the work of an architect, builder, or artisan who significantly contributed to the development of the city, state, or nation; possesses cultural, historical, or architectural value as a particularly fine or unique example of a utilitarian or vernacular structure; or represents an architectural curiosity or one-of-a-kind building.*

The Palm Park Shelterhouse embodies the distinguishing characteristics of the National Parks Rustic style, often called “Parkitecture.” Austin examples were heavily influenced by Hugo Kuehne’s interpretation of this style in the 1930s. A collection of seven other Rustic structures in Austin’s parks, though Palm Park’s castle design is unique. Preservation of each is imperative to maintain the aesthetic and historical connections among Austin’s historic-age public parks. The historical narrative provided by the Parks and Recreation Department describes its characteristics and significance in detail:

[The National Parks Rustic] style is characterized by...simple local materials that blend with the surrounding park setting. Building forms are simple, pulling from vernacular architecture of the region, and focus on hand building methods, organic lines, and unaltered natural materials. In the case of the Palm Park shelter house, this is articulated through the striking use of uncut field stone masonry walls...The shelter house features a dog-trot layout, with two enclosed areas connected by a central covered breezeway...The structure is topped by a flat parapeted roof above arched wooden doors to the storage space on one side, and two restrooms on the other. Along the west elevation...the walls of the tower extend into low, decorative wing walls, terminated in stone square pillars. Today, the shelter house appears largely as it did upon its completion in 1933.

While the Palm Park shelter house is an excellent example of the National Parks Rustic aesthetic... [the structure is] part of a larger network of historic park shelter structures in Austin from the same period...the eight shelter houses designed or heavily influenced by Hugo Kuehne in the 1930s present...a distinct moment in architectural history when considered as a complete collection... It is therefore imperative that the Palm Park shelter house be preserved not just for its own sake, but to maintain the connections between these historical assets within the city.<sup>2</sup>

**§ 25-2-352(3)(c)(ii) Historical Associations.** *The property has long-standing significant associations with persons, groups, institutions, businesses, or events of historical importance that contributed significantly to the history of the city, state, or nation or represents a significant portrayal of the cultural practices or the way of life of a definable group of people in a historic time.*

Palm Park’s shelter house holds historical importance for its strong association with Austin’s Mexican American community, and as a physical manifestation of a national movement pertaining to parks and park programming in the early twentieth century. Austin’s Parks and Recreation Department describes the Palm Park Shelter House’s multifaceted historical importance as follows:

Palm Park has served as a community hub for the families of the lower Waller Creek district since its construction in 1933. At the time of Palm Park’s construction, the surrounding area was an ethnically mixed neighborhood, with a growing Mexican American population. Many Mexican American children attended Palm School...and various businesses and churches catering to the Latino population were in the park’s vicinity. Though the city’s segregationist policies barred Mexican Americans from using the pool, Palm Park...became strongly associated with Austin’s Mexican American community, and that association continues today.

...The shelter house at Palm Park [exemplifies] a national movement championing the civic and public health role of...parks programming in the first half of the twentieth century. Following the Great Depression, an interest in structured recreational programs emerged as a solution for the perceived problem of the increasingly urban population’s unfilled leisure hours ...

<sup>2</sup> Austin Parks and Recreation Department, “Historical Narrative.” Palm Park Shelterhouse historic zoning application, 2025.

When it opened in 1933, Palm Park was complete with a pool, playground, and the shelter house, which was described as a “combination shelter house, open air theater, and dressing rooms”. In many ways, the Palm Park shelter house was the physical manifestation of this new recreation philosophy, serving as a flexible hub for community programming and recreation, that enabled decades of successful, structured park programming...the shelter house provided a natural center and staging ground for this programming...productions were staged in the open-air portion of the shelter house, with backdrops hung to frame the stage, and the storage and restroom areas serving as backstage areas.

...The shelter house at Palm Park is emblematic of a critical moment of park and programming expansion in the city, echoing larger national trends in recreation. As a brick-and-mortar manifestation of the City’s and nation’s efforts to further public health, [it] demonstrates the influence of changing national conceptions of recreation on [Austin parks] ...The Palm Park shelter house is a primary visible symbol of this era of park development in the city of Austin.<sup>3</sup>

**§ 25-2-352(3)(c)(iv) Community Value.** *The property has a unique location, physical characteristic, or significant feature that contributes to the character, image, or cultural identity of the city, a neighborhood, or a particular group.*

In the 2025 application for historic zoning, Austin’s Parks and Recreation Department describes the Palm Park Shelter House’s importance to the Mexican American community in Austin:

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and into the twenty first, several developments strained the connections between Palm Park and the Latino community. Midcentury urban renewal efforts encouraged redevelopment and removal of prominent Latino American businesses, residences and churches from the area, pushing the Latino community south and east; a trend that has only continued in recent years. The construction of I-35 in the 1960s, followed by the closure of Palm School in 1976, and rapid development of the Waller Creek district...further strained the direct physical connection between Palm Park and the Latino community.

Despite all of this, Palm Park remained central to the local Latino community and had even taken on the important role of representing the resilience of the Mexican American community in the face of discrimination. El Concilio, a coalition of Latino advocacy and neighborhood organizations, organized to keep the park’s amenities open, despite interest from Council in shuttering them in the mid-1990s. Paul Hernandez, the founder of El Concilio, noted in 1996: “Many of us remember the racism we grew up with in Austin. We couldn’t even come to this pool...Now the pool is our symbol for the struggle to keep East Austin a viable minority community.” This sentiment is still deeply felt today. During 2016 community engagement sessions that specifically sought out Palm School alumni and residents of east Austin, 46.5% of respondents indicated that Palm Park’s history was among its greatest assets. Similarly, the park’s deep ties to the Mexican American community emerged as a recurring theme during the Palm Park Conversations series, which included several open-ended community engagement discussions held in 2024...

...The Palm Park pool...was demolished in 2023...As one participant in the Palm Park community engagement session noted, “It would be amazing to see the historic shelter house celebrated and lifted up as both a park centerpiece and backdrop for communal gatherings.” As the shelter house is currently the only major original built structure that remains from this period of great importance to the Mexican American community, its preservation as an embodiment of that community history becomes even more critical.<sup>4</sup>

**PARCEL NO.:** 0204041701

**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** BLOCK 012 ORIGINAL CITY PLUS VAC ALLEY & 1/2 ADJ VAC STREET

**ESTIMATED ANNUAL TAX EXEMPTION:** None

**APPRAISED VALUE:** N/A

**PRESENT USE:** Recreational, vacant

<sup>3</sup> Austin Parks and Recreation Department, “Historical Narrative.” Palm Park Shelter House historic zoning application, 2025.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

DATE BUILT/PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1933/1933-1975

INTEGRITY/ALTERATIONS: A Certificate of Appropriateness is currently in review for its rehabilitation per 2025 ACME Heritage Preservation Grant specifications. The roof has deteriorated and windows at the east and west elevations have been filled in. The added ramp and handrails do not alter the structure itself. Its defining characteristics—rustic fieldstone masonry, parapeted roof, and dog-trot layout—remain intact.<sup>5</sup>

PRESENT/ORIGINAL OWNER: Parks and Recreation Department

OTHER DESIGNATIONS: None



<sup>5</sup> Austin Parks and Recreation Department, “Historical Narrative.” Palm Park Shelter House historic zoning application, 2025.



1" = 200'

- SUBJECT TRACT
- PENDING CASE
- ZONING BOUNDARY

## HISTORIC ZONING

ZONING CASE#: C14H-2025-0077

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

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



**RESOLUTION NO. 20250508-042**

**WHEREAS**, Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park (“Palm Park”) dates back to the 1930s, making it one of the oldest and most historic parks in the city; and

**WHEREAS**, Palm Park is best known as the playground, community gathering place, and sports field for the adjacent Palm School; and

**WHEREAS**, since 2016, Austin Parks and Recreation and Waterloo Greenway Conservancy have engaged the community on the future of Palm Park, highlighting the importance of building upon its Mexican-American history and reinvigorating the park as a family-friendly space that celebrates nature, culture, and play; and

**WHEREAS**, the Shelter House located within Palm Park is one of eight early City park structures still standing built between 1930-1951; and

**WHEREAS**, the Shelter House is historically important to the community as a critical multi-purpose public space that operated as a community landmark, stage, lending library, restroom facility, and gathering place for families; and

**WHEREAS**, the Shelter House will be restored, protected, and made fully functional again through Waterloo Greenway’s improvements to Palm Park; and

**WHEREAS**, the development of the Palm Park design is underway, and groundbreaking is anticipated in 2026, with a park opening estimated in 2028; and

**WHEREAS**, steps to include historic landmark combining district for the Shelter House structure will eventually be pursued to comply with Austin Historic Preservation Grant funding; and

**WHEREAS**, prior to zoning the Shelter House structure the entire Palm Park property should first be zoned to reflect the current uses on this property; and

**WHEREAS**, the Palm Park property is among existing City-owned park property that is not currently zoned for parks and recreation services use; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

City Council initiates zoning for Palm Park to a base zoning that is appropriate based on its current use.

**ADOPTED:** May 8, 2025 **ATTEST:**   
Erika Brady  
City Clerk

Historic Preservation Office  
City of Austin  
July 2, 2025

**Subject: Request to consider initiation of historic zoning for Palm Park Shelter House**

We would like to include the 1933 Palm Park Shelter House, centrally located in the park that lies on the eastern side of downtown Austin between I-35, Red River St., 3rd St., and Cesar Chavez St., on the Historic Landmark Commission's July agenda for consideration of initiation of historic zoning. The owner, the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department (PARC), has been notified of this request and has agreed to historic zoning of the Shelter House's footprint. The historic shelter house is a key feature of the park and is being preserved during the Palm Park redesign process.

Palm Park played an important role in the lower Waller Creek community in the 1930s and 1940s. Critical to the park's history is the Shelter House structure. The Shelter House is centrally located in the park and is strikingly similar to those constructed by Hugo Kuehne in other important city parks of the same era. Kuehne designed a series of shelter houses to provide restrooms and spaces for recreational programming, utilizing the dogtrot design in a reference to Texas folk architecture. Many were constructed in the Rustic style employed in parks nationwide and showcased local building materials in their construction. The shelters provided a focal point for programming, from dances to performances to athletics, and became central to the recreational missions of the neighborhood parks and playgrounds. The fieldstone shelter building in Palm Park, completed in 1933, is one of just examples still extant in Austin. Its Rustic design meets the City's Architecture criteria for local landmark designation.

In the era of segregated recreation, Palm Park and its amenities—excluding the swimming pool—became known for serving Austin's Mexican American community. Despite this, people of color were barred from using the pool due to discriminatory segregationist policies. Hispanic advocacy groups later described the park and pool as a symbol of their community within Austin. As a crucial structure in a pivotal Central Austin park during the era of extensive recreational greenspace development, the Shelter House meets the City's landmark designation criteria for Historical Associations with the development of Austin's parks program. As a gathering place for the Mexican American community and a symbol of their resilience in the face of discriminatory policies, Palm Park and its Shelter House meet the City's landmark designation criteria for Community Value.

Thank you for your consideration and feel free to reach out regarding any questions or concerns.



Ben Heimsoeth

HLC Chair

Royanne Evans



Bat Taniguchi

## A. APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC ZONING

### PROJECT INFORMATION:

| DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY            |                          |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| APPLICATION DATE: _____          | FILE NUMBER(S) _____     |
| <b>TENTATIVE HLC DATE:</b> _____ |                          |
| TENTATIVE PC or ZAP DATE: _____  |                          |
| TENTATIVE CC DATE: _____         | CITY INITIATED: YES / NO |
| CASE MANAGER _____               | ROLLBACK: YES/NO         |
| APPLICATION ACCEPTED BY: _____   |                          |

### BASIC PROJECT DATA:

|                                                                               |                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. OWNER'S NAME: _____                                                        |                   |
| 2. PROJECT NAME: _____                                                        |                   |
| 3. PROJECT STREET ADDRESS (or Range): _____                                   |                   |
| ZIP _____                                                                     | COUNTY: _____     |
| IF PROJECT ADDRESS CANNOT BE DEFINED ABOVE:                                   |                   |
| LOCATED _____ FRONTAGE FEET ALONG THE <u>N. S. E. W. (CIRCLE ONE)</u> SIDE OF |                   |
| _____ (ROAD NAME PROPERTY FRONTS ONTO), WHICH IS                              |                   |
| APPROXIMATELY _____                                                           | DISTANCE FROM ITS |
| INTERSECTION WITH _____                                                       | CROSS STREET.     |

### AREA TO BE REZONED:

|                                     |                 |                               |                 |                 |                    |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 4. ACRES _____                      | (OR)            | SQ.FT. _____                  |                 |                 |                    |
| 5. ZONING AND LAND USE INFORMATION: |                 |                               |                 |                 |                    |
| EXISTING<br>ZONING                  | EXISTING<br>USE | TRACT#<br>(IF MORE<br>THAN 1) | ACRES / SQ. FT. | PROPOSED<br>USE | PROPOSED<br>ZONING |
| _____                               | _____           | _____                         | _____           | _____           | _____              |
| _____                               | _____           | _____                         | _____           | _____           | _____              |
| _____                               | _____           | _____                         | _____           | _____           | _____              |

### RELATED CURRENT CASES:

|                                     |                    |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 6. ACTIVE ZONING CASE? (YES / NO)   | FILE NUMBER: _____ |
| 7. RESTRICTIVE COVENANT? (YES / NO) | FILE NUMBER: _____ |
| 8. SUBDIVISION? (YES / NO)          | FILE NUMBER: _____ |
| 9. SITE PLAN? (YES / NO)            | FILE NUMBER: _____ |

City of Austin - Historic Preservation Office  
**Historic Zoning Application Packet**

**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION (SUBDIVISION REFERENCE OR METES AND BOUNDS):**

**10a. SUBDIVISION REFERENCE:** Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Block(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Lot(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Outlot(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Plat Book: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_  
Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
**10b. METES AND BOUNDS** (Attach two copies of certified field notes if subdivision reference is not available or zoning includes partial lots)

**DEED REFERENCE CONVEYING PROPERTY TO PRESENT OWNER AND TAX PARCEL I.D.:**

**11. VOLUME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PAGE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TAX PARCEL I.D. NO.** \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER PROVISIONS:**

**12. IS PROPERTY IN A ZONING COMBINING DISTRICT / OVERLAY ZONE?** YES / NO  
TYPE OF COMBINING DIST/OVERLAY ZONE (NCCD, NP, etc) \_\_\_\_\_  
**13. LOCATED IN A LOCAL OR NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT?** YES / NO  
**14. IS A TIA REQUIRED?** YES / NO (NOT REQUIRED IF BASE ZONING IS NOT CHANGING)  
TRIPS PER DAY: \_\_\_\_\_  
TRAFFIC SERIAL ZONE(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ADU Approximate Area Reduced Parking  
Capitol View Corridors: NORTH-BOUND LANES OF IH-35  
BETWEEN THIRD STREET AND THE WALLER CREEK PLAZA  
Convention Center  
Downtown Austin Plan Districts: Waller Creek  
Downtown Density Bonus: FAR - 15 | No Max Height  
Downtown Creeks: WALLER  
Green Building Mandatory: Central Business District/Downtown  
Mixed Use  
Residential Design Standards: LDC/25.2 Subchapter F  
Transit Oriented Development: CONVENTION CENTER  
Selected Sign Ordinances  
Selected Sound Ordinances

**OWNERSHIP TYPE:** ☒ PUBLIC

**15. \_\_\_SOLE \_\_\_COMMUNITY PROPERTY \_\_\_PARTNERSHIP \_\_\_CORPORATION \_\_\_TRUST**

If ownership is other than sole or community property, list individuals/partners/principals below or attach separate sheet.

**OWNER INFORMATION:**

**16. OWNER CONTACT INFORMATION**  
SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

**AGENT INFORMATION (IF APPLICABLE):**

**17. AGENT CONTACT INFORMATION**  
SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CONTACT PERSON: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_



**Travis Central Appraisal District**  
P.O. Box 149012  
Austin, Texas 78714  
www.traviscentral.org  
Main Telephone: 512-334-8817

This map was prepared by the City of Austin, Texas, and is not a legal document. It is a representation of the information provided to the City of Austin, Texas, and is not a guarantee of accuracy. The City of Austin, Texas, is not responsible for any errors or omissions on this map. The map is for informational purposes only and should not be used for legal purposes. The map is a representation of the information provided to the City of Austin, Texas, and is not a guarantee of accuracy. The City of Austin, Texas, is not responsible for any errors or omissions on this map. The map is for informational purposes only and should not be used for legal purposes.

NAD 1983 StatePlane  
Texas Central FIPS 4203 Feet  
Projection: Lambert Conformal  
N

0 120 Feet  
Revision Date: 4/7/2025

**20404**

## **F.1 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION: DEED CHRONOLOGY**

**Transaction:**

**Vol./Page**

E.J. Hofheinz to City of Austin  
Part of Lot 5, Block 12  
February 11, 1929  
\$1,500

Vol. 434, pp. 256-257

Robert J. Hammond to City of Austin  
Part of Lots 6, and 5, Block 12  
Part of Lots 6 and 5, Block 12  
Part of Lots 1 and 2, Block 12  
March 22, 1929  
\$3,750

Vol. 434, pp. 255-256

R.C. Lambie to City of Austin  
Lot 3 and Part of Lot 4, Block 13  
April 29, 1929  
\$1,500

Vol. 434, pp. 565

John Quist and Lena Quist to City of Austin  
Part of Lot 4, Block 13  
April 29, 1929  
\$2,500

Vol. 434, pp. 565-566

A.J. Raif and Margaret Mary Raif to City of Austin  
Part of Lot 4, Block 13  
April 29, 1929  
\$2,000

Vol. 436, pp. 196-197

Joe Macken, et ux to City of Austin  
Lot 8 and Part of Lot 7, Block 12  
June 7, 1929  
\$2,500

Vol. 436, pp. 501

Paul O. Simms and Earl E. Simms to City of Austin  
Part of Lots 1 and Two, Block 12  
June 18, 1929  
\$1,400

Vol. 440, pp. 139-140

Dora Silberstein to City of Austin  
Lots 3 and 4, and Part of Lot 2, Block 12  
June 26, 1929  
\$3,000

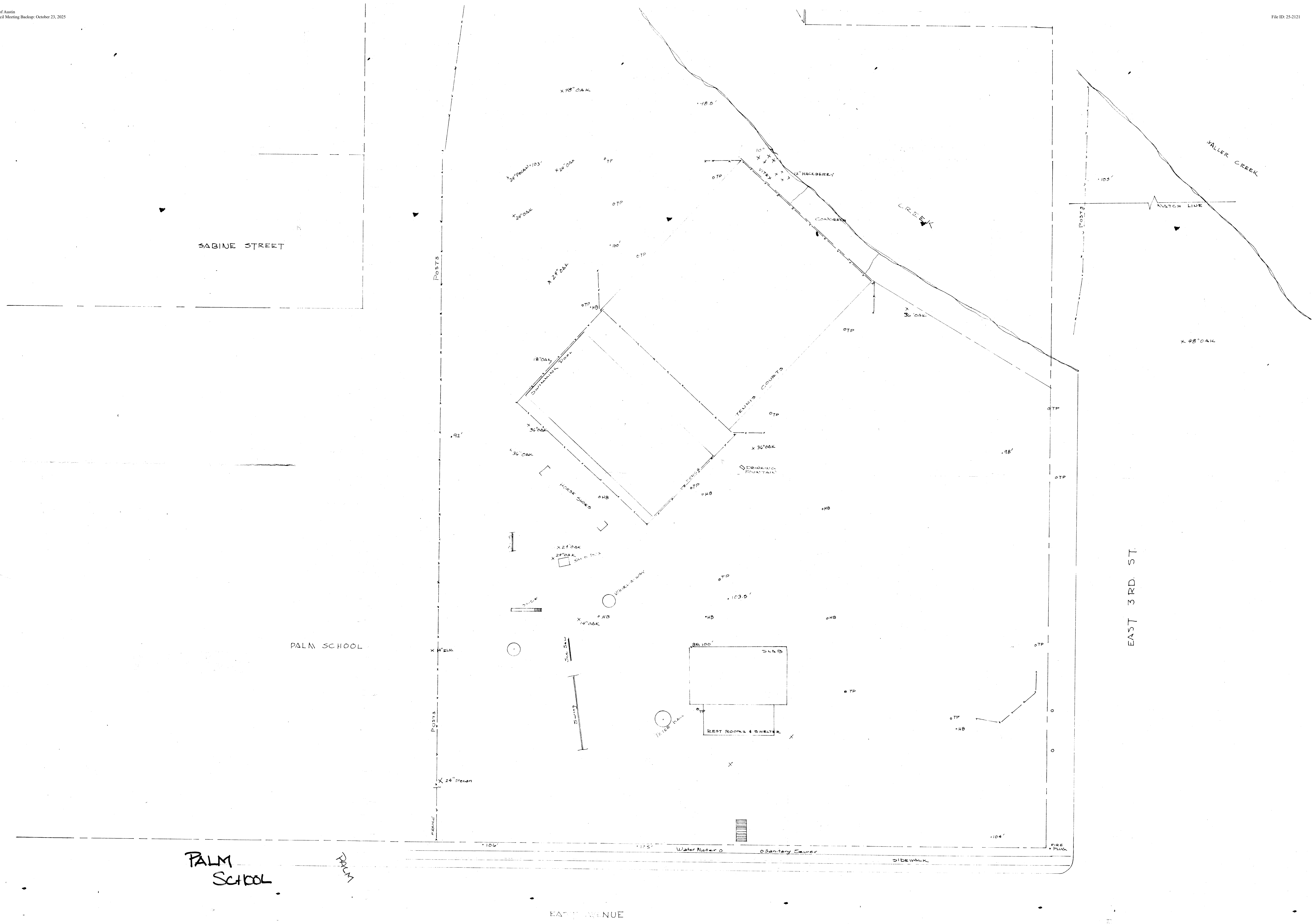
Vol. 436, pp. 579-580

Augusta L. Wende to City of Austin  
Part of Lots 1 and 2, Block 13  
March 13, 1930  
\$3,000

Vol 450, pp. 55-56

## F.2 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION: OCCUPANCY HISTORY

| Year:        | Occupant Name and Reference:                                                                          | Source:                                                         |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1933-2023    | Palm Park Shelter House open to Public,<br>Owner, City of Austin Parks and Recreation<br>Department   | <a href="#">Austin American<br/>Statesman;<br/>Feb 23, 1933</a> |
| 2023-Present | Temporary Closed to Public while Palm Park<br>serves as staging ground for Confluence<br>construction | <a href="#">City of Austin Parks</a>                            |





**F.5 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - PHOTOGRAPHS  
WEST ELEVATION, AT A DISTANCE, WITH PECAN TREES. UNDATED.**



**F.5 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - PHOTOGRAPHS  
WEST ELEVATION. 09/01/2023**



**F.5 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - PHOTOGRAPHS  
SOUTH ELEVATION. 09/01/2023**



**F.5 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - PHOTOGRAPHS  
EAST ELEVATION. 09/01/2023**



**F.5 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - PHOTOGRAPHS  
STONEMASONRY AND KEYSTONE DETAILS. 09/01/2023**



**F.5 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - PHOTOGRAPHS  
NORTH ELEVATION. 09/01/2023**



**F.5 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - PHOTOGRAPHS  
ARCHED DOORWAYS. 09/01/2023**

## F.6 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION: ARCHITECT AND BUILDER INFO

### *Architect*

The original plans for the shelter house do not indicate an architect, and instead note “G. S. Moore, B.I.”. G. S. Moore was the City’s building inspector during the design of the shelter house, and later served as the structural engineer for all Public Works Administration projects for the City of Austin.<sup>1,2</sup> While the plans for the shelter house do not list an architect of record, there is strong evidence that prominent Austin architect Hugo Kuehne was involved in the design for all of the shelter houses designed and built the 1930’s, including Palm Park Shelter house.

Kuehne was appointed Vice Chairman of the Parks and Playground Committee, which established as a result of the 1928 Koch & Fowler City Plan’s recommendations. Kuehne was a native Austinite who was recognized nationally as an architect and city planner. Many prominent Austin buildings were designed by Kuehne, including the Austin Public Library (now the Austin History Center), the Ritz Theater, buildings for the Austin State Hospital, and the Commodore Perry Hotel.<sup>3</sup> He played a prominent role at the University of Texas School of Architecture, where he served as a professor and developed the school’s curriculum. Kuehne served as the president of the Central Texas chapter of the American Institute of Architect twice, and once as the director of the Texas Society of Architect. In 1944 he was elected a fellow of the American Institute of Architects. His achievements were also celebrated locally; in 1954 was named “Austin’s Most Worthy Citizen” for his dedication and service to city planning efforts, including his work on the Parks and Playgrounds Committee.

Kuehne was recorded as the designer for other local park structures with a similar National Park “Rustic” aesthetic, including the caretaker’s cottage at Zilker Park, the bathhouse at Barton Springs. He was also the architect of record for the shelter houses built at Eastwoods Park, Little Stacey Park, and West Austin Park, but because of his deep involvement with the Parks and Playgrounds Committee, he is presumed to have been involved with the overall design scheme for all of the eight shelter houses built during that time period.<sup>4</sup>

### *Builder*

The original plans indicate that “Brydson Bros” were the contractors for the Palm Park shelter house. The Brydson Lumber company was founded in 1914, after the brothers spent many successful years as general contractors. By the 1930s they operated a full lumber yard and planing mill on Guadalupe, and advertised their services in estimating, cabinetry, brickwork and wallpaper.<sup>5</sup> The

---

<sup>1</sup> RESIDENCE BUILDING FOR 6 MONTHS GREATER THAN IN 1930: 272 PERMITS GIVE \$588,745.60 TOTAL. (1931, Jul 17). *The Austin Statesman* (1921-1973) Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/residence-building-6-months-greater-than-1930/docview/1615597432/se-2>

<sup>2</sup> Eckert is named inspector here: G. S. Moore appointed PWA design engineer. (1934, Dec 02). *The Austin American* (1914-1973) Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/eckert-is-named-inspector-here/docview/1612587103/se-2>

<sup>3</sup> “Architect Kuehne Funeral Is Today,” *The Austin American*, November 27, 1963; Roxanne Williamson, “Kuehne, Hugo Franz,” *Texas State Historical Association Handbook of Texas*, February 1, 1995, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/kuehne-hugo-franz>.

<sup>4</sup> Blackman, “Historic PARD Shelter Houses Historic Context [Unpublished Draft],” 3; Eliza Blackman, “Historic PARD Shelter Houses Multiple Property Form [Unpublished Draft],” November 27, 2019.

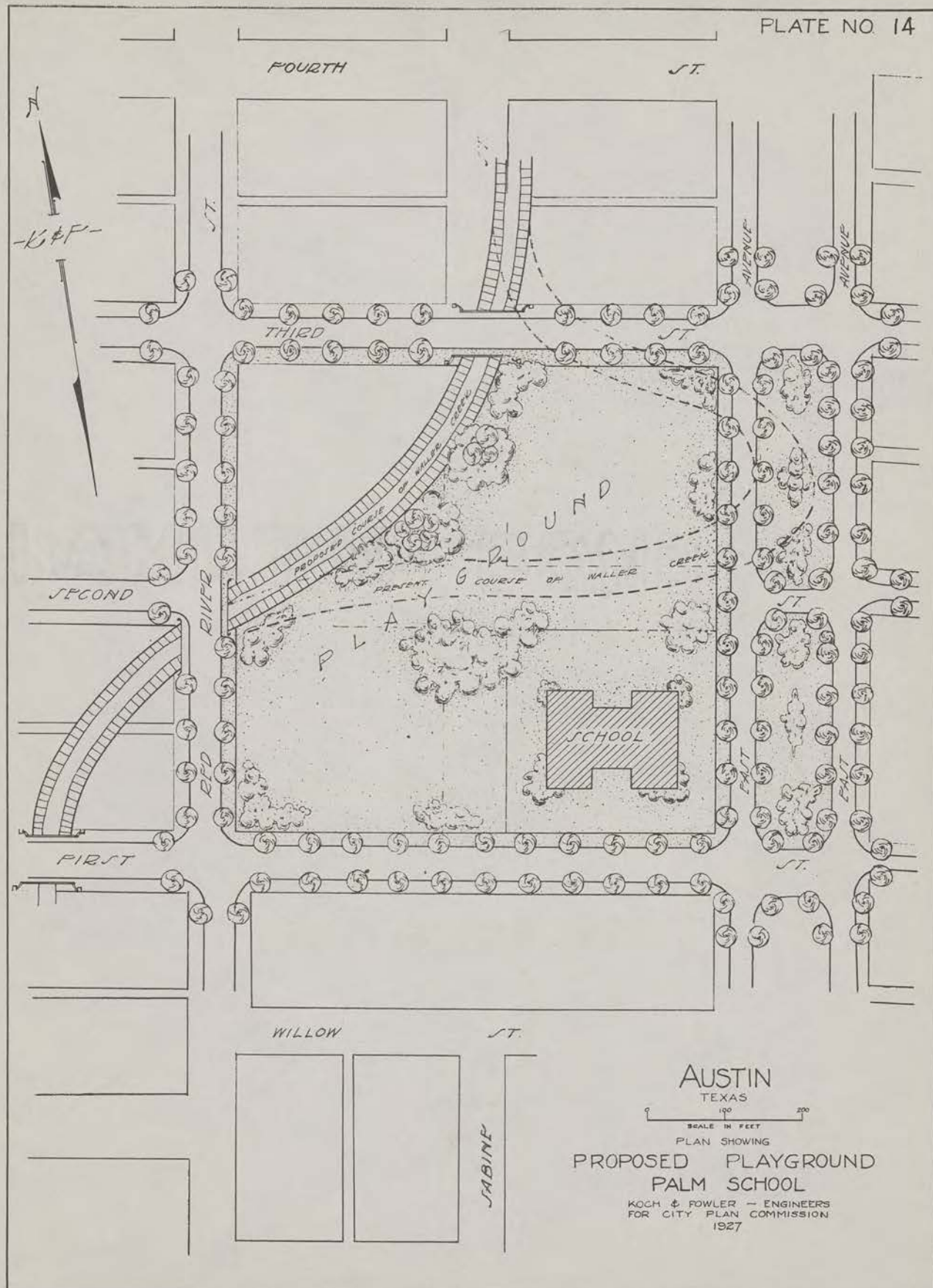
<sup>5</sup> Pioneer builders of Austin. (1937, Mar 28). *The Austin American* (1914-1973) Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/pioneer-builders-austin/docview/1611461857/se-2>

company was particularly active in building the Hyde Park Neighborhood and was known for often handling the construction of purchased plans or catalogue homes.



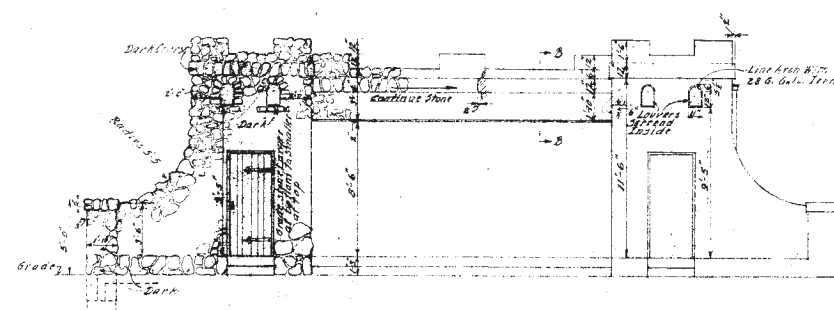
#### **F.7 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS**

Historic aerial prior to 1933 Waller Creek realignment and park construction(future Palm Park location highlighted in orange), Austin History Center, undated



## F.7 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS

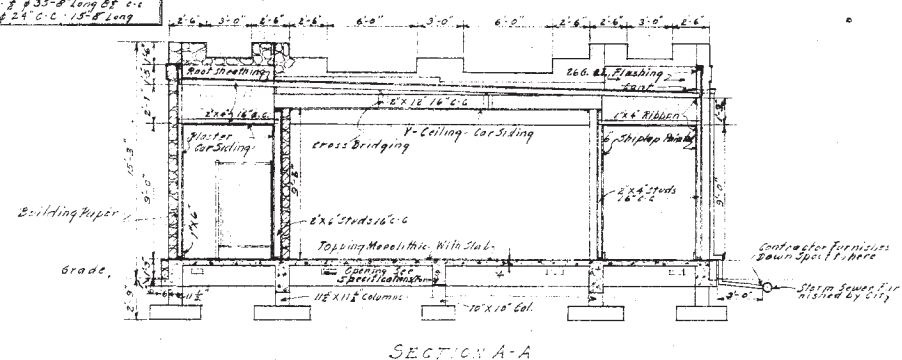
Exhibit from Koch & Fowler City Plan for Austin, Texas; 1928

[illegible]

| DOOR SCHEDULE |                                                             |       |        |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| MARK          | DESCRIPTION                                                 | GLASS | NUMBER |
| (1)           | 2'-10" x 6'-10" 3 Ply (1 1/4" Thick) Built Up, Rough Finish |       | 4      |
| (2)           | 2'-10" x 6'-10" Standard 5 CrossPanc 1 1/2" Exterior Door   |       | 1      |

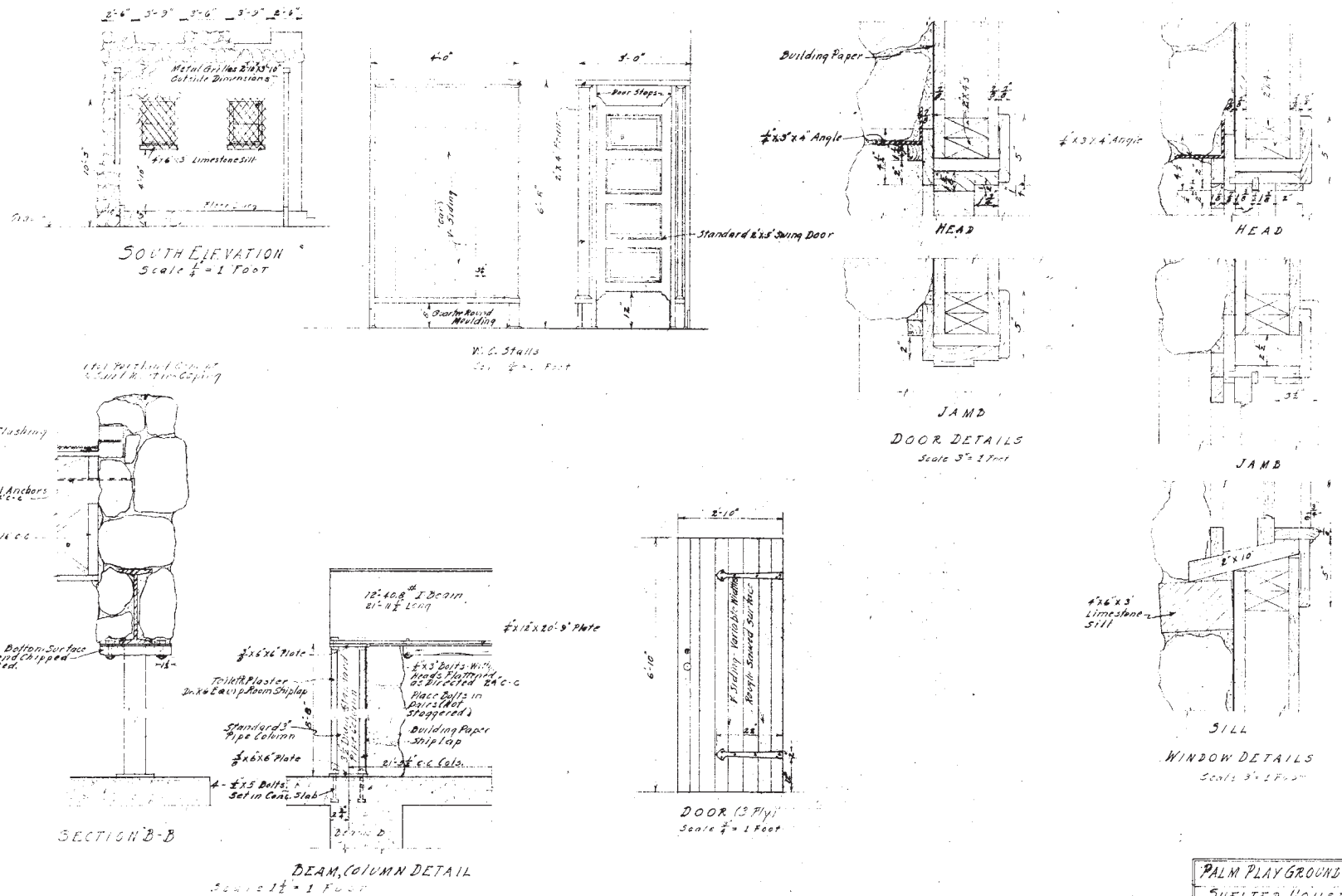
| WINDOW SCHEDULE |                                               |             |        |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| MARK            | DESCRIPTION                                   | GLASS       | NUMBER |
| (A)             | Double Hung 22 x 16 Glass (2' x 3' 2 Opening) | D. 5.       | 2      |
| (B)             | Double Hung 22 x 16 Glass (2' x 3' 2 Opening) | Translucent | 2      |



SCALE  $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1 \text{ FOOT}$

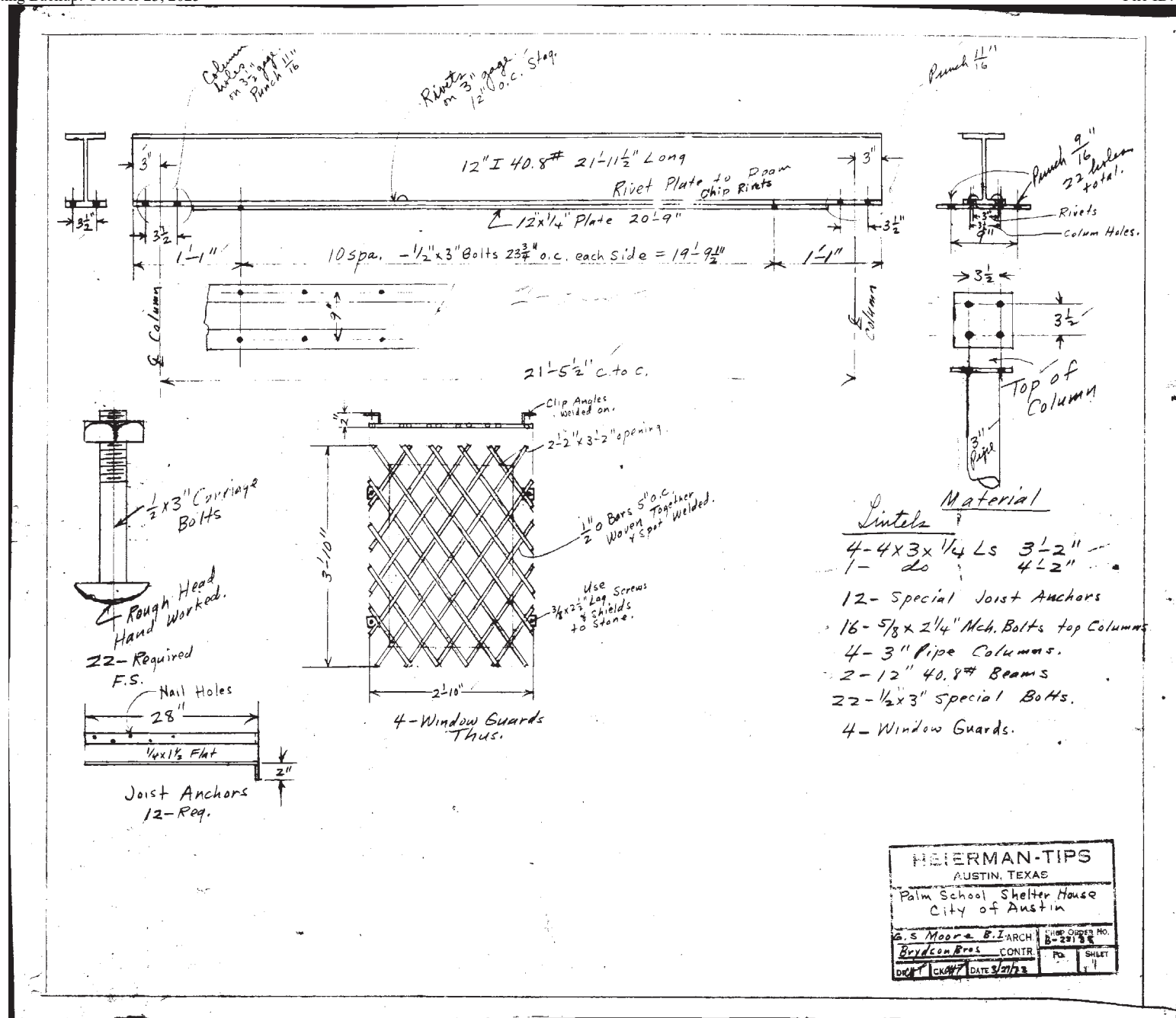
|                                   |           |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| PALM PLAY GROUND                  |           |
| SHELTER HOUSE                     |           |
| CITY OF AUSTIN                    |           |
| Plans by<br>G.S. Moore Elder Bros | 100 P. 30 |

Palm Playground Shelter House Plans - Plan, Foundation Framing, Schedules, Section A-A and West Elevation



PALM PLAYGROUND  
SHELTER HOUSE  
CITY OF AUSTIN  
Plans by  
G. S. Moore, July 1900 B 30

F.7 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS  
Palm Playground Shelter House Plans - South Elevation, Section B-B and details



## F.7 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS

### Palm Playground Shelter House Plans - Details



**F.7 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS**

Young girls jumping rope on a concrete slab at Palm Park with shelter house behind, PICA-24192, Austin History Center, 1945-02-09



#### **F.7 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION - HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHS**

Dramatic production staged at Palm Park shelter house, Austin History Center, undated

## F.9 - HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION: BREIF HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

### Background and Context:

Prior to the creation of Palm Park in 1933, the alignment of Waller Creek differed from present day. The creek took a sharp bend between 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, with the center channel running through what is now the interior of Palm Park. This resulted in frequent and problematic flooding of roads and structures along the lower Waller Creek. At the time, the district was home to a diverse and growing population, with a large Mexican American population interspersed with white and African American households.<sup>1</sup> This area, which was then considered East Austin, was also understood as having problems with crime, particularly along Waller Creek itself. Given this context, the 1928 “City Plan for Austin, Texas” prepared by Koch & Fowler, proposed a solution intended to address both issues simultaneously – the creation of Palm Park, then referred to as Palm Playground.

The plan recommended acquiring the land north of Palm School to allow for a channel realignment to straighten the bend in Waller Creek, creating a large open space directly to adjacent to the school to be used as a playground for the city’s youth.<sup>2</sup> The new recreational opportunities provided by the playground were thought to be an antidote to criminal tendencies brought about by idle leisure time for the neighborhood’s youth, thereby addressing the issue of crime. This proposal for a new park along Waller Creek was one of just two case studies proposed in the 1928 plan and was intended as a model for neighborhood parks throughout the city. When it opened in 1933, Palm Park was complete with a pool, playground, and shelter house, which was described at the time as a “combination shelter house, open air theater, and dressing rooms”<sup>3</sup>.

As a part of the current redevelopment of Palm Park, Waterloo Greenway Conservancy applied for and was awarded a \$30,000 2024 Heritage Preservation Grant from the City of Austin for the purposes of creating a plan for the shelter’s preservation and rehabilitation. A historic zoning designation for the shelter house is a prerequisite for receiving this grant funding.

### Justification of Historical Importance: Architecture

The Palm Park shelter house’s design is emblematic of the National Parks ‘Rustic’ aesthetic, which was typical of Austin’s early twentieth century parks structures, including the seven other shelter houses built in Austin parks during this time. This style is characterized by the utilization of simple local materials that blend with the surrounding park setting, rather than stand apart from it. The building forms are typically simple, pulling from vernacular architecture of the region, and focus on hand building methods, organic lines, and unaltered natural materials.<sup>4</sup> In the case of the Palm Park shelter house, this is articulated through the striking use of uncut field stone masonry walls, which put local, natural stone on full display. The shelter house features a dog-trot layout, with two enclosed areas connected by a central covered breezeway. This building form was favored by early European settlers of Texas for its simplicity and ability to provide natural passive ventilation. The structure is topped by a flat

---

<sup>1</sup> HHM & Associates, Inc. (2018). *Historic Context Study of Waller Creek*. Waller Creek Conservancy.

<sup>2</sup> Koch & Fowler, Consulting Engineers. (1928). *City Plan for Austin, Texas*. City of Austin Department of Planning. <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/items/f15262ac-77d6-4ef2-85bb-fa22c46085c7>

<sup>3</sup> Tom Gullette Written for, *The Statesman*. (1933, Feb 23). SHARP CONTRAST OF PLAYGROUND DESCRIBED. *The Austin Statesman (1921-1973)* Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/sharp-contrast-playground-described/docview/1610365668/se-2>

<sup>4</sup> Tweed, W. C., Soulliere, L. E., & Law, H. G. (1977b). *Rustic Architecture: 1916 - 1942* [Online book]. National Park Service Western Regional Office Division of Cultural Resource Management. [https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online\\_books/rusticarch/introduction.htm](https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/rusticarch/introduction.htm)

parapeted roof, which sits above arched, wooden doors to the storage space on one side, and two restrooms on the other. Along the west elevation of the building, facing the center of the park, the walls of the tower extend into low, decorative wing walls, terminated in stone square pillars.

Today, the shelter house appears largely as it did upon its completion in 1933. Recent evaluation has determined that the structure's stone walls are in good structural condition. However, the roof over the breezeway has been removed, and the roof sections over the flanking enclosed areas are on the verge of collapse. Pairs of small windows above the arched doors at the east and west elevations have been filled in with matching fieldstone. Nevertheless, the essential defining characteristics of the structure, namely its rustic fieldstone masonry, parapeted roof, and dog-trot layout remain intact, despite the current state of the roof assembly. The later addition of an access ramp and handrailing at the north restroom doors does not alter the structure itself and does not detract from the appreciation of its historic character.

While the Palm Park shelter house is an excellent example of the National Parks 'Rustic' aesthetic, the historical architectural significance of the shelter house is best understood when considering the structure as a part of a larger network of historic park shelter structures in Austin from the same period. As noted in section F6 of this application, the eight shelter houses designed or heavily influenced by Hugué Kuehne in the 1930's present an even more compelling story of a distinct moment in architectural history when considered as a complete collection than when considered individually. It is therefore imperative that the Palm Park shelter house be preserved not just for its own sake, but to maintain the connections between these of historical assets within the city.

#### *Justification of Historical Importance: Historical Associations*

Palm Park's shelter house holds historical importance in two separate, but related, dimensions: for its strong association with Austin's Mexican American community, and as a physical manifestation of a national movement pertaining to parks and park programming in the early twentieth century.

#### *Historical associations with Austin's Mexican American community*

Palm Park has served as a community hub for the families of the lower Waller Creek district since its construction in 1933. At the time of Palm Park's construction, the surrounding area was an ethnically mixed neighborhood, with a growing Mexican American population. Many Mexican American children attended Palm School to the park's immediate south, and various businesses and churches catering to the Latino population were in the park's vicinity.<sup>5</sup> Though the city's segregationist policies barred Mexican Americans from using the pool, Palm Park, along with Parque Zaragoza in East Austin, became strongly associated with Austin's Mexican American community, and that association continues today.

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and into the twenty first, several developments strained the connections between Palm Park and the Latino community. Mid-century urban renewal efforts encouraged redevelopment and removal of prominent Latino American businesses, residences and churches from the area, pushing the Latino community south and east; a trend that has only continued in recent years. The construction of I-35 in the 1960's, followed by the closure of Palm School in 1976, and rapid development of the Waller Creek district in the past two decades further strained the direct physical connection between Palm Park and the Latino community.

---

<sup>5</sup> Mitchell, R., & Pettis, E. (2022). *Historical Resources Survey Report: Capital Express Central – Intensive-level Survey: Palm Park, 200 North Interstate Highway (I-) 35* (No. 0015-13-388). Texas Department of Transportation.

Despite all of this, Palm Park remained central to the local Latino community and had even taken on the important role of representing the resilience of the Mexican American community in the face of discrimination. El Concilio, a coalition of Latino advocacy and neighborhood organizations, organized to keep the park's amenities open, despite interest from Council in shuttering them in the mid-1990's.<sup>6</sup> Paul Hernandez, the founder of El Concilio, noted in 1996: "Many of us remember the racism we grew up with in Austin. We couldn't even come to this pool ... Now the pool is our symbol for the struggle to keep East Austin a viable minority community."<sup>7</sup> This sentiment is still deeply felt today. During 2016 community engagement sessions that specifically sought out Palm School alumni and residents of east Austin, 46.5% of respondents indicated that Palm Park's history was among its greatest assets.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, the park's deep ties to the Mexican American community emerged as a recurring theme during the Palm Park Conversations series, which included several open-ended community engagement discussions held in 2024.<sup>9</sup>

It is also important to note that previous evaluations of Palm Park and its assets have reached similar conclusions of clear historical importance to the Mexican American community. A 2022 Texas Department of Transportation Report on Palm Park's historic significance concluded that Palm Park met the National Register for Historic Places, Criterion A - "Significance in the areas of Ethnic Heritage and Entertainment/Recreation" for the important role it played for the Mexican American community throughout the twentieth century.<sup>10</sup>

While the Palm Park pool closed indefinitely as a result of the 2014 Aquatics Facilities Needs Assessment and was demolished in 2023, there is still the opportunity to preserve the shelter house. As one participant in the Palm Park community engagement session noted "it would be amazing to see the historic shelter house celebrated and lifted-up as both a park centerpiece and backdrop for communal gatherings."<sup>11</sup> As the shelter house is currently the only major original built structure that remains from this period of great importance to the Mexican American community, its preservation as an embodiment of that community history becomes even more critical.

#### *Historical associations with national progressive movement in recreation*

In addition to its significance to the citizens of Austin, the shelter house at Palm Park is emblematic of a larger national movement championing the civic and public health role of recreation and parks programming in the first half of the twentieth century. Following the widespread unemployment of the Great Depression, an interest in structured recreational programs emerged as a solution for the perceived problem of the increasingly urban population's unfilled leisure hours. Providing recreational programming for the public, and youth in particular, was intended to keep the population physically healthy, prevent crime, and strengthen community cohesion.<sup>12</sup> Organizations such as the National Recreation Association (originally known as the Playgrounds and Recreation

---

<sup>6</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>7</sup> (Ibid)

<sup>8</sup> Cortez Consulting. (2024). Public Engagement Report 2023-2024. Waterloo Greenway Conservancy. Retrieved November 4, 2024, from [https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Parks/Partnerships/FINAL-REPORT\\_PALM-PARK-Community-Engagement-Summary-Report.pdf](https://www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Parks/Partnerships/FINAL-REPORT_PALM-PARK-Community-Engagement-Summary-Report.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> (Ibid)

<sup>10</sup> (Ibid)

<sup>11</sup> (Ibid)

<sup>12</sup> Mitchell, R., & Pettis, E. (2022). *Historical Resources Survey Report: Capital Express Central – Intensive-level Survey: Palm Park, 200 North Interstate Highway (I-) 35* (No. 0015-13–388). Texas Department of Transportation.

Association of America) were established to promote, study, and implement the construction of parks and playgrounds to address these issues.<sup>13</sup>

This national movement was visible in Austin's 1928 Koch & Fowler plan, which dedicated an entire section to parks and their design; the design of Palm Park was used as one of two case study examples. Following the city plan, Austin established the Parks and Playgrounds Committee in 1928, which would later become the Parks and Recreation Department, to champion the building of municipal parks throughout the city. The local architect Hugo Kuehne was named as vice chairman, and James Garrison, who had recently completed the National Recreation Association's graduate program, was appointed as Director of Recreation. Under Kuehne and Garrison's leadership, the city's new parks exemplified the national trends in park planning, with a strong emphasis on structured community recreation in the form of designated areas for athletics, play, and organized community activities, as an antidote to the negative effect of urban life.

This ethos is readily apparent in the original design and programming efforts of Palm Park. When it opened in 1933, Palm Park was complete with a pool, playground, and the shelter house, which was described as a "combination shelter house, open air theater, and dressing rooms"<sup>14</sup>. In many ways, the Palm Park shelter house was the physical manifestation of this new recreation philosophy, serving as a flexible hub for community programming and recreation, that enabled decades of successful, structured park programming.

During the early years of Palm Playground (as it was then called), the park was actively programmed and often supervised; the shelter house provided a natural center and staging ground for this programming. Newspaper features from the 1930's through the 1950's indicate that dramatic community productions were a frequent occurrence at Palm Park. These included marionette shows<sup>15</sup>, youth bands<sup>16</sup>, pageants<sup>17</sup>, dance exhibitions<sup>18</sup>, and plays put on by children and adults alike<sup>19</sup>. Photos from the time indicate that productions were staged in the open-air portion of the shelter house, with backdrops hung to frame the stage, and the storage and restroom areas serving as backstage areas.

In many ways, the shelter house at Palm Park is emblematic of a critical moment of park and programming expansion in the city, echoing larger national trends in recreation. As a brick-and-mortar manifestation of the City and nation's efforts to further public health, the shelter house demonstrates the influence of changing national conceptions of recreation on local park spaces in Austin. In this way, the Palm Park shelter house is a primary visible symbol of this era of park development in the city of Austin.

---

<sup>13</sup> McKnight, Kim. "Zilker Park Caretaker's Cottage." National Register of Historic Places nomination, 2017. Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas. Pg. 19 "National Recreation Association Records." National Recreation Association Records. University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, Social Welfare History Archives. Minneapolis, MN: <https://archives.lib.umn.edu/repositories/11/resources/6084>

<sup>14</sup> Tom Gullette Written for, The Statesman. (1933, Feb 23). SHARP CONTRAST OF PLAYGROUND DESCRIBED. *The Austin Statesman (1921-1973)* Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/sharp-contrast-playground-described/docview/1610365668/se-2>

<sup>15</sup> Palm prepares marionette play. (1942, Aug 13). *The Austin Statesman (1921-1973)* Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/palm-prepares-marionette-play/docview/1610068003/se-2>

<sup>16</sup> BOY BAND GETS GOOD RECEPTION. (1933, Jul 21). *The Austin Statesman (1921-1973)* Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/boy-band-gets-good-reception/docview/1610383840/se-2>

<sup>17</sup> Pageant tonight closes city playground season. (1952, Aug 27). *The Austin Statesman (1921-1973)* Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/pageant-tonight-closes-city-playground-season/docview/1559464876/se-2>

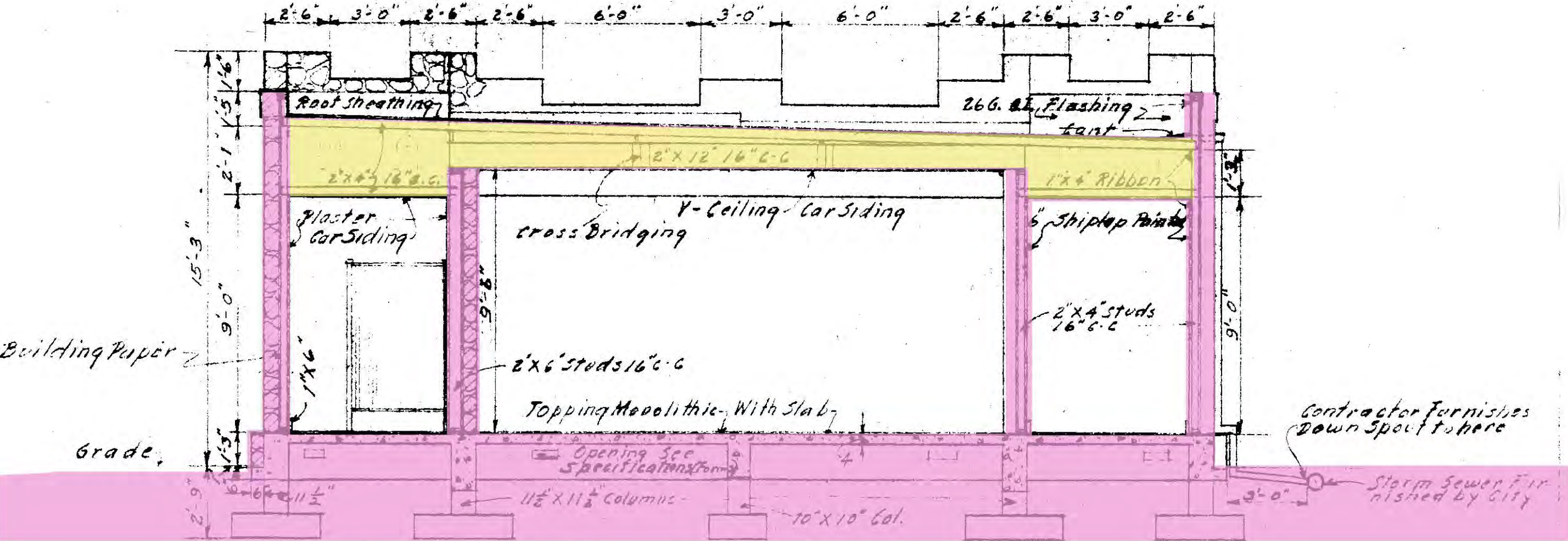
<sup>18</sup> Dance and novelties on Palm Park Slate. (1943, Jun 17). *The Austin Statesman (1921-1973)* Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/group-singing-popular-at-athletic-club/docview/1609935831/se-2>

<sup>19</sup> ALL-DRAMATIC PROGRAM SLATED AT PALM PARK THURSDAY NIGHT. (1937, Jul 29). *The Austin Statesman (1921-1973)* Retrieved from <https://atxlibrary.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/all-dramatic-program-slated-at-palm-park-thursday/docview/1610346640/se-2>

*Palm Park  
Shelter House*



Historic Photograph from the 1940's



Shelter House Original Construction Drawings - Section

SECTION A-A

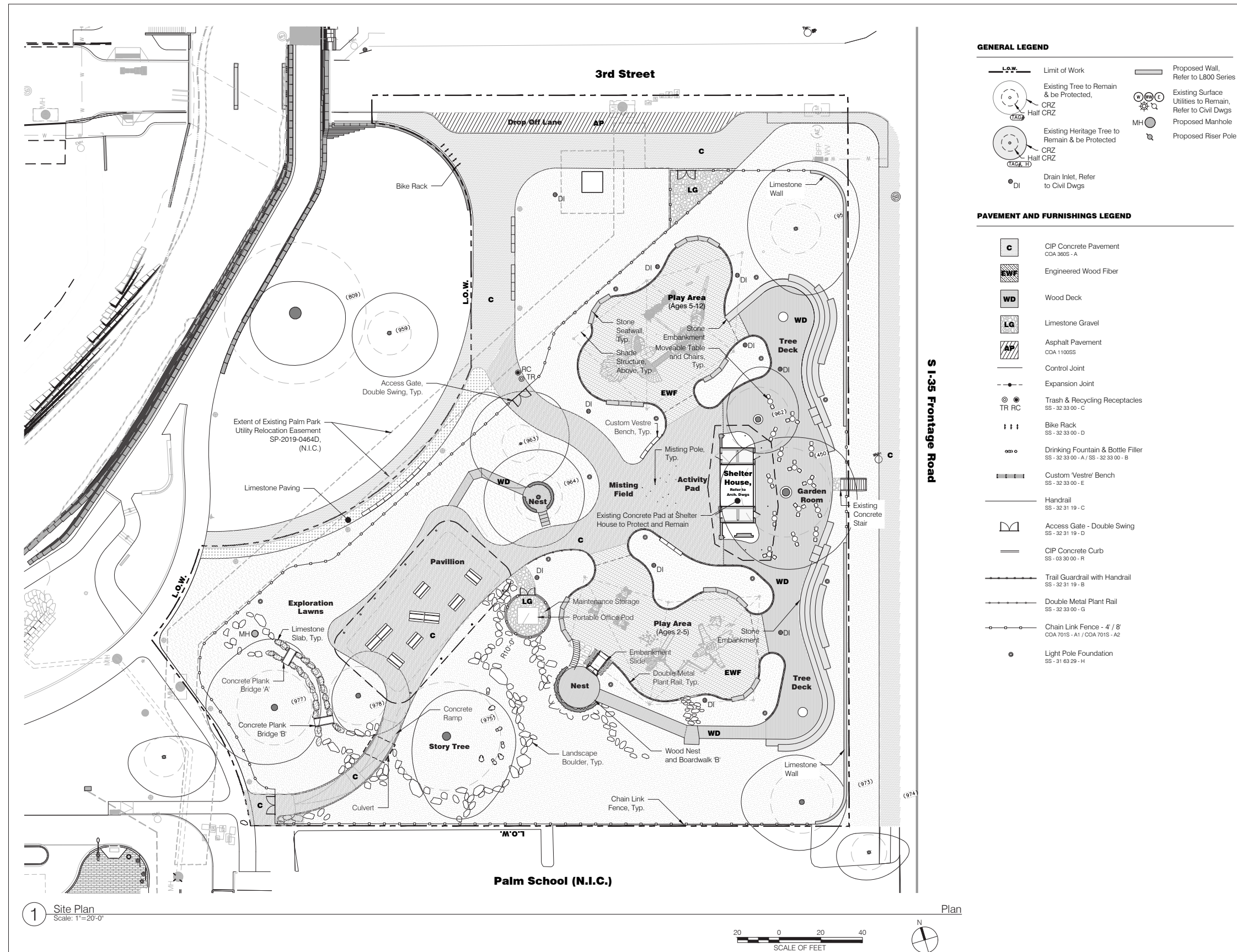


Shelter House Existing Condition



Shelter House Existing Condition





**COLOR KEY**

- INDICATES DEMOLITION OR REMOVAL, SEE NOTES
- INDICATES REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT, SEE NOTES
- INDICATES STEEL TO BE RETAINED, SEE STRUCTURAL

**SELECTIVE DEMOLITION AND REPAIR NOTES**

1 - REMOVE RAMP AND RAILING

2 - REMOVE EXISTING STEEL DOOR - LEAVE JAMB IN PLACE, REFER TO DETAIL

3 - REMOVE WOOD LOUVERS - SEE ELEVATIONS FOR NEW FENESTRATION AND SCREEN NOTES

4 - REMOVE STEEL STRUCTURE, BRACING BAR WELED TO STEEL FLANGE TO REMAIN - REFER TO STRUCTURAL FOR DEMOLITION NOTES AND IMAGE ON NEXT SHEET

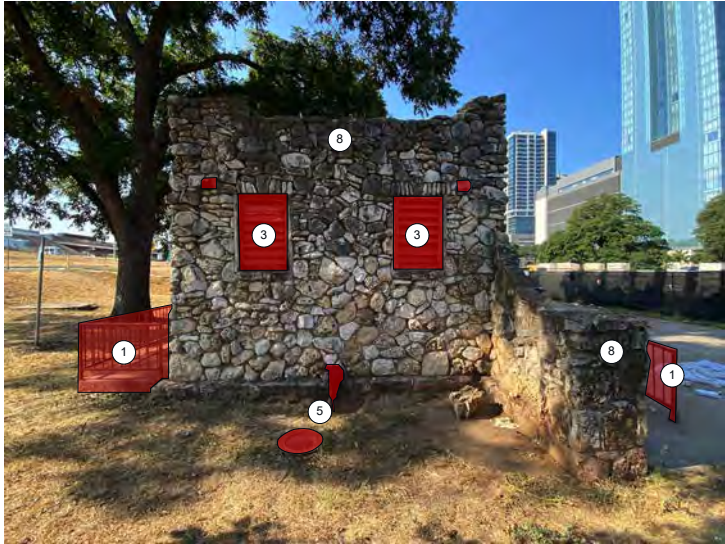
5 - REMOVE AND ABANDON ALL ELECTRICAL AND PLUMBING SERVICES - REFER TO MEP FOR DEMOLITION NOTES

6- REMOVE FLATWORK, SLAB AND CURB TO REMAIN - SEE ENLARGED PHOTO

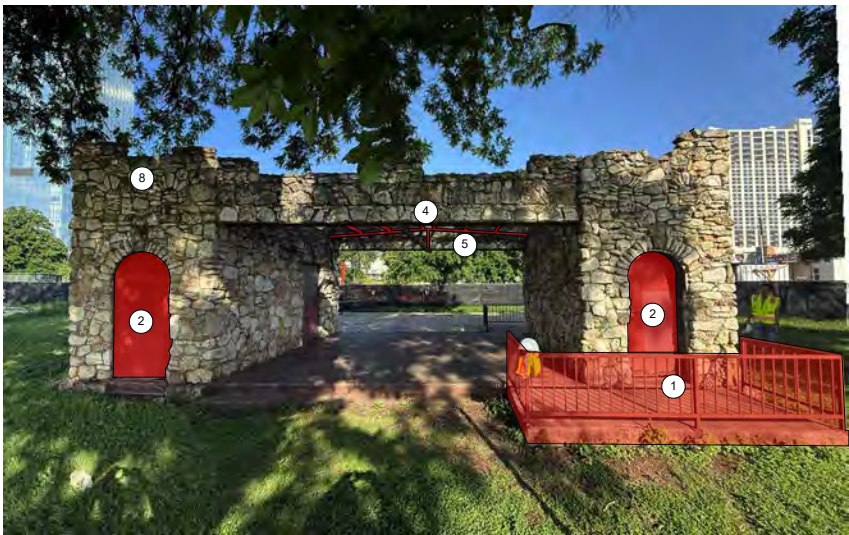
7- REMOVE EXISTING ROOF AND STRUCTURE

8 - CLEAN ALL MASONRY AND REPOINT CRACKING OR DAMAGED AREAS: CLEAN, PRESSURE WASH AND APPLY PENETRATING SEALER TO ALL INTERIOR CONCRETE SURFACES CONSULT ARCH IN FIELD

SEE DEMOLITION PLAN AND PROPOSED DRAWINGS FOR FURTHER NOTES



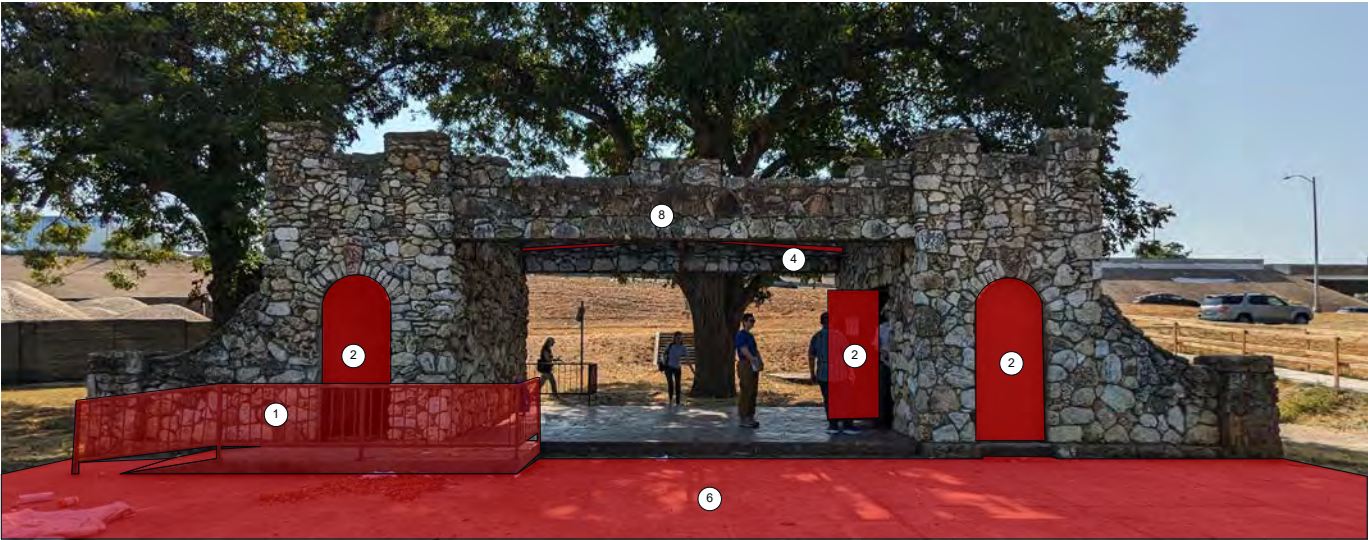
NORTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

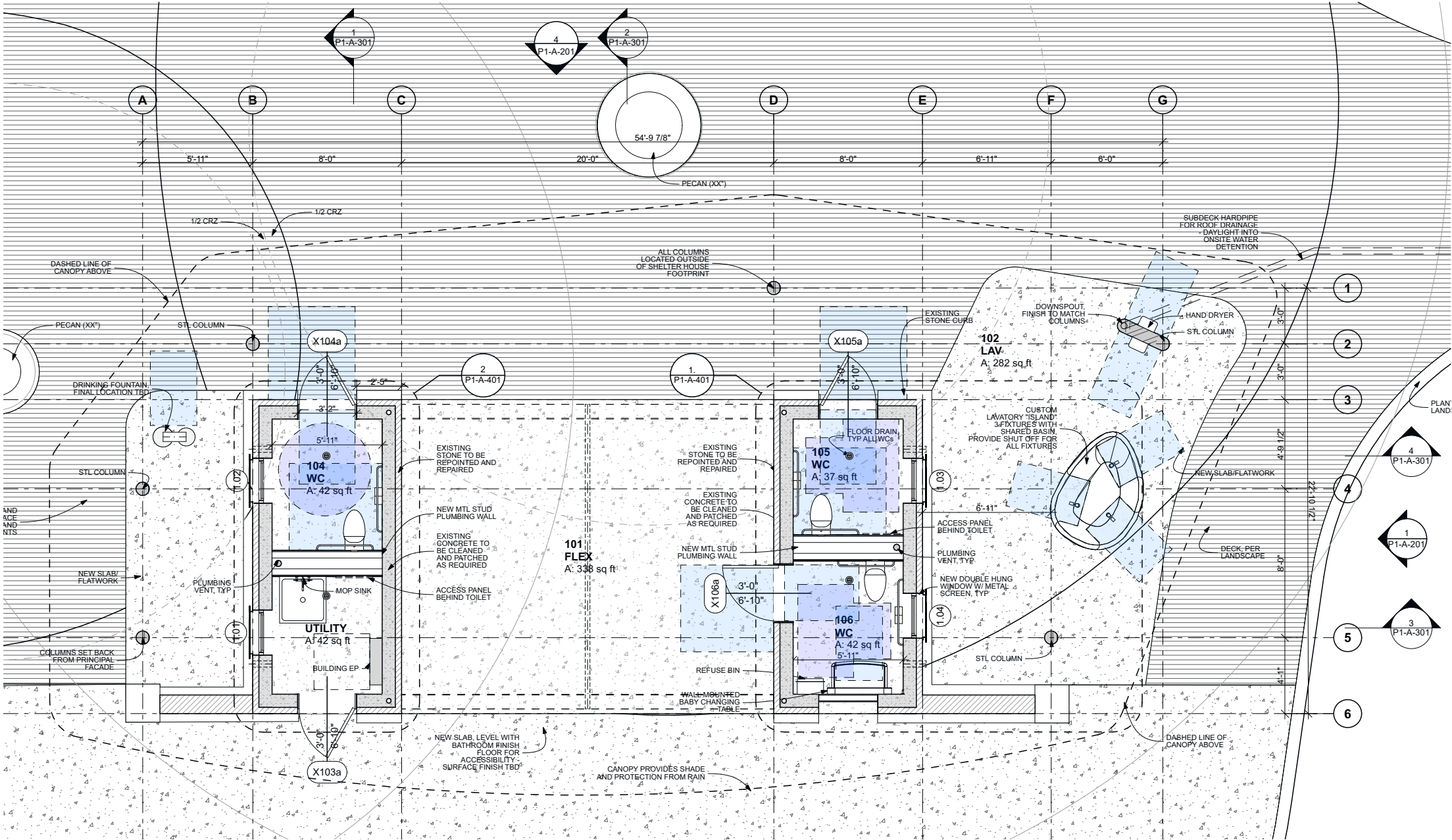


SOUTH ELEVATION

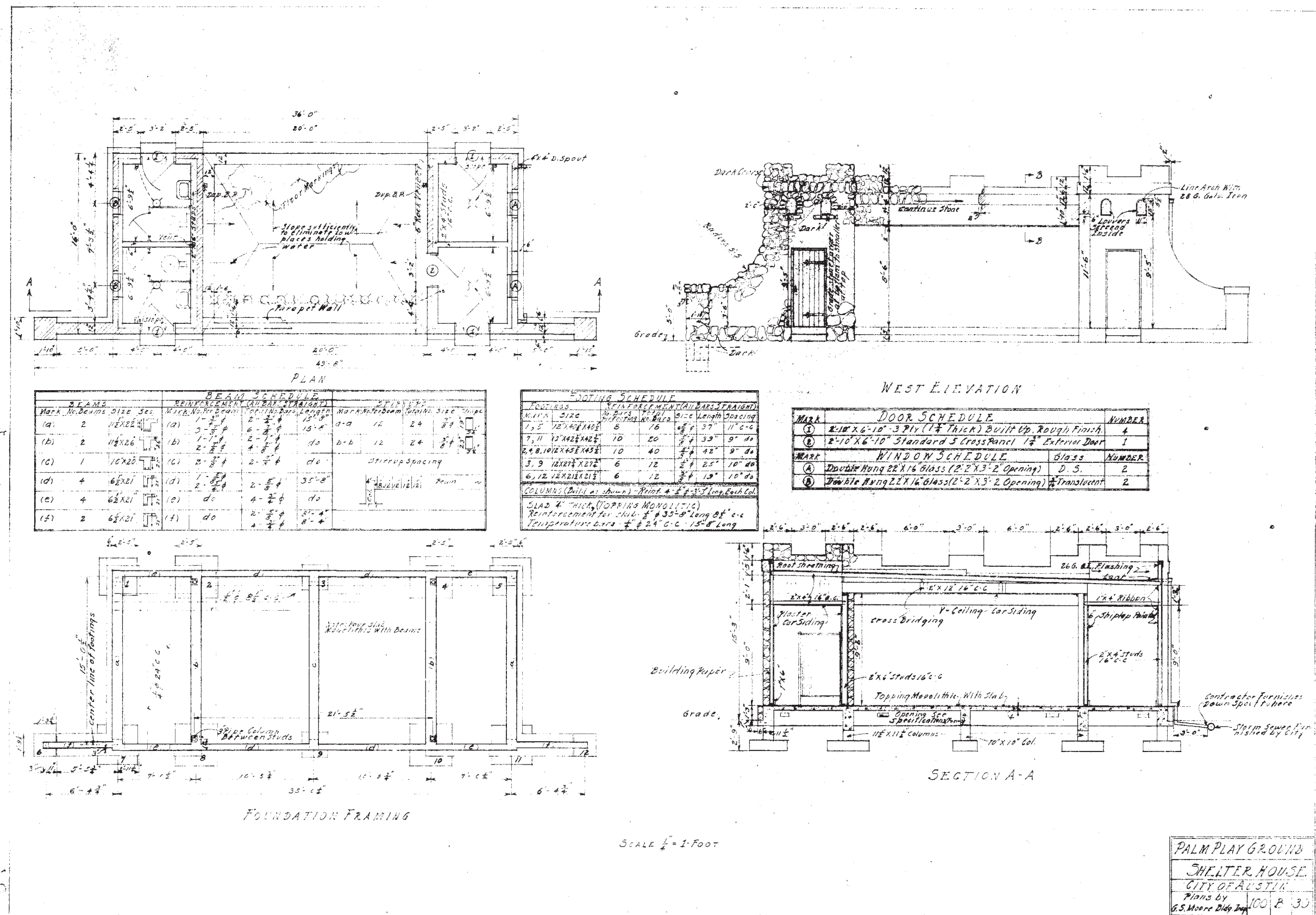


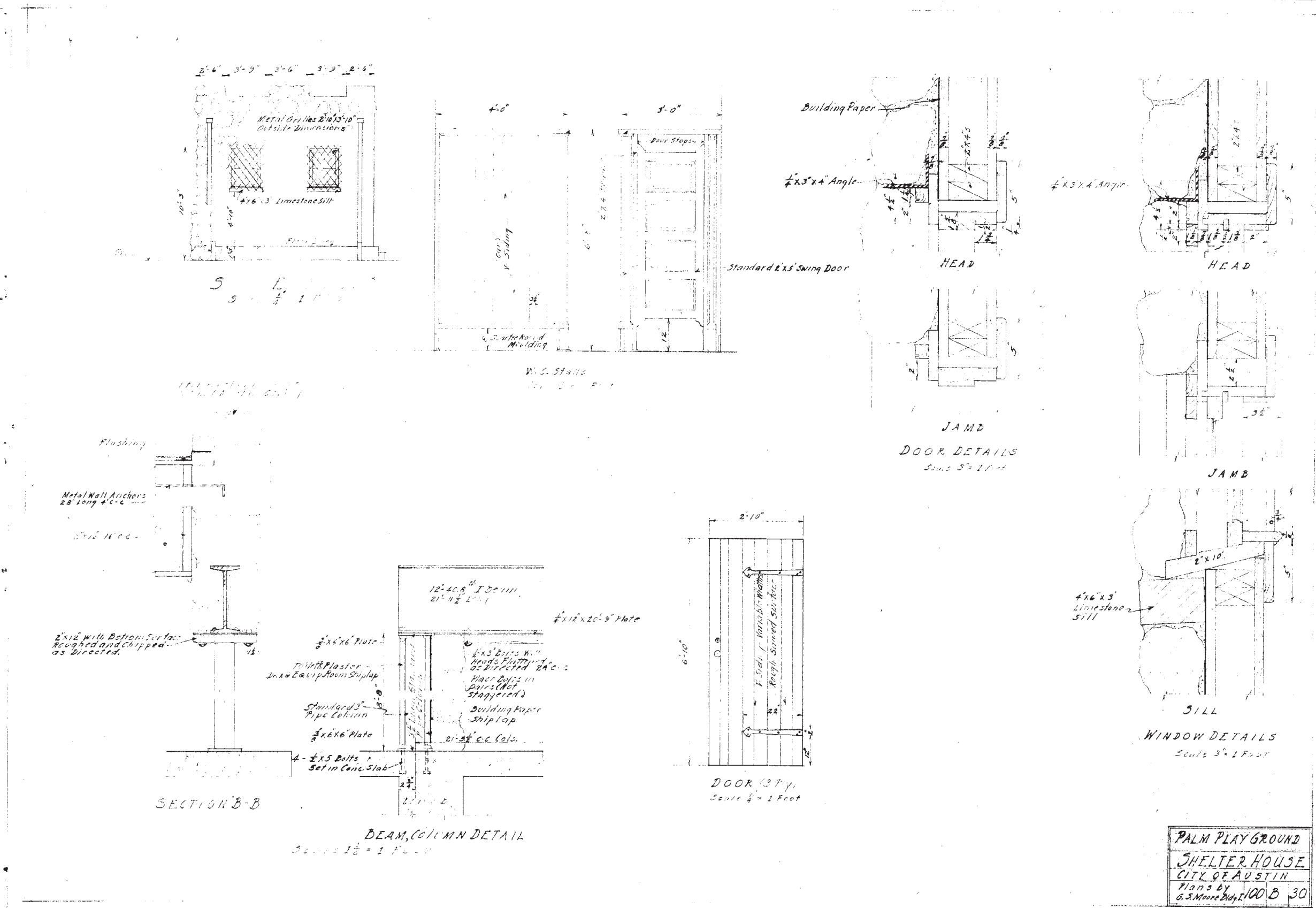
WEST ELEVATION (PRINCIPAL FACADE)

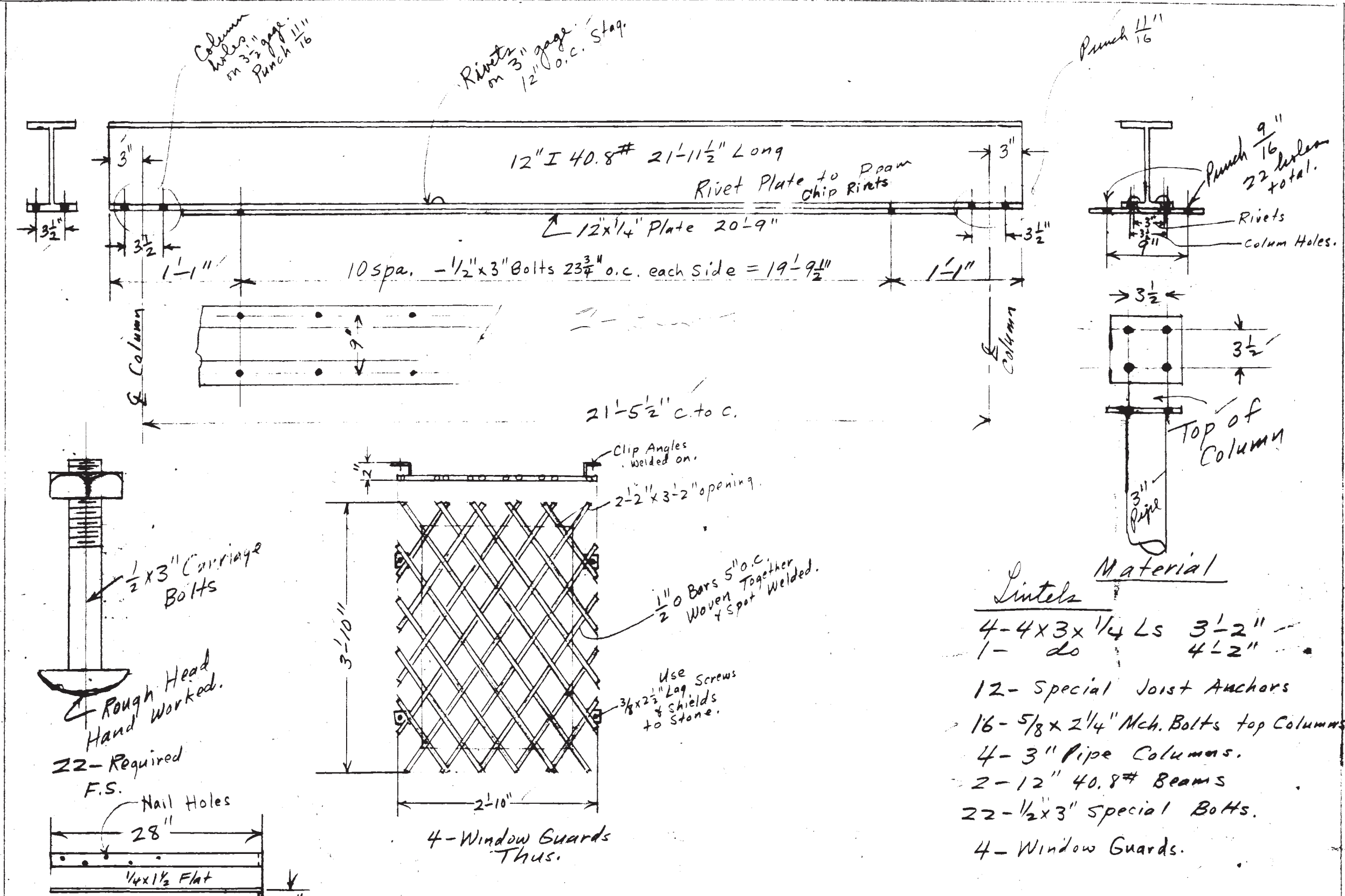
Demolition Diagrams



Proposed First Floor Plan: NTS









Rendering West “Front” Elevation

## **Shelter House Rehabilitation - Project Description**

### **Historic Context**

The Shelter House is a masonry structure located in Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park, designed by Hugo Kuehne to serve as a park restroom and shade structure. It is one of several similar "Shelter Houses" built between 1930 and 1951 in parks throughout the city.

Each Shelter House features a unique design in a "rustic" style. The Palm Park Shelter House is particularly unusual—it resembles a small castle with rustic stone cladding and crenellations. Like many of the Shelter Houses, it follows the "dog trot" pattern: two interior spaces connected by a covered porch. In the original configuration, one side served as restrooms while the other provided storage for operations and maintenance (O&M) of the park. The center shade structure served as a stage and lending library for students at the nearby Palm School.

The Shelter House was originally built as a stick-framed structure with stone-clad walls and a low-slope metal roof that drained through scuppers in the parapet wall. Between the 1950s and 1980s, the stick-framed walls and roof began to fail. The walls were replaced with concrete, and the roof with a steel frame. That replacement roof has now failed again, and the building has fallen into disrepair.

Concrete ramps were also built up to the structure to provide accessible access to the restrooms. The original wooden doors and double-hung windows were removed and replaced with steel doors and wooden louvers.

Despite the lack of maintenance and these changes over the years, the original masonry and principal facade remain largely intact. The ramps, failed steel structure, and replacement steel doors and louvers are in poor condition but appear readily removable without damage to the historic portion of the structure.

### **Proposed Rehabilitation**

This project is a portion of the Waterloo Greenway Chain of Parks, and part of a broader renovation of Palm Park intended to create a destination park for families with children. The park also will provide access to the Waterloo Greenway with pedestrian and bike connections to other parks along Waller Creek. The rehabilitated Shelter House will be owned and operated by the City of Austin Parks and Recreation and managed by the Waterloo Green Way Conservancy.

This rehabilitation intends to return the shelter house to its original use, with adjustments to meet the ventilation and safety standards expected of modern park amenities, while preserving the existing structure for future generations. As part of this rehabilitation, we are pursuing a different roofing strategy than the original design.

The two side rooms will be used as restrooms and O&M space (matching the original use). A new outdoor lavatory area will be added on the south side of the structure, which is visually obscured by the "wing wall" of the historic structure. The central dog trot will be used as a flexible space for park activities and programming (matching the original use).

We anticipate that any attempt to replicate the building's original roof strategy will eventually fail and that attempts to flash into the historic masonry will cause damage to the structure.

Rather than an in-kind replacement based on the original design, the existing retrofitted steel structure will be removed and the existing masonry will be stabilized and repointed as required.

The new roof design is an approximately 1,760 SF steel shade structure that will fly over the historic masonry building with significant overhangs that extend 5'-0" to 8'-0" beyond the existing structure. This new roof will protect the shelter house, allow daylight into the bathroom spaces, and provide ample natural ventilation. The new overhang is particularly important for the protection of the parapet over the dog trot area, which consists of an original steel W-section embedded within the stone. (See the included structural engineer report for further evaluation.) Protecting this venerable feature from rain will help to increase the lifespan of the structure.

The shade structure is designed to have a cantilevered overhang with a thin edge to minimize the visual impact on the historic structure. All columns and vertical elements of this addition are also located behind the principal west facade and outside of the existing building footprint to avoid any damage or compromise to the historic portion. The soffit of this canopy is shaped to avoid the existing tree canopy while providing maximum shade and rain protection for the programmed area underneath. The surface will be clad in gray wood siding (see RCP on P1-A-103 for material sample image) to blend in with the surrounding trees.

The existing concrete ramps will also be removed. New paving and surfaces will be level with the shelter house slab to facilitate accessible routes while restoring the building's original relationship with the surrounding park. The non-original doors and louvers will also be removed and replaced with new wooden doors and double-hung windows based on the original design drawings. The decorative metal screens over these windows will also be rebuilt and replaced. We have historic images from the 1940s as well as original design drawings, which will be the basis for this rehabilitation.

All of these proposed interventions are reversible. All significant changes like the canopy and new lavatory area are placed outside of the footprint of the original structure.



## General Information

Location: **200 N IH 35 SVRD SB**  
Parcel ID: **0204041701**  
Grid: **MJ22**

## Planning & Zoning

\*Right click [hyperlinks](#) to open in a new window.

Future Land Use (FLUM): **No Future Land Use Map**

Regulating Plan: **No Regulating Plan**

Zoning: **UNZ, UNZ**

Zoning Cases: [C14-2025-0072](#)  
[C14H-2025-0077](#)

Zoning Ordinances: **19990225-070b**

Zoning Overlays: **ADU Approximate Area Reduced Parking  
Capitol View Corridors: NORTH-BOUND LANES OF IH-35  
BETWEEN THIRD STREET AND THE WALLER CREEK PLAZA  
Convention Center  
Downtown Austin Plan Districts: Waller Creek  
Downtown Density Bonus: FAR - 15 | No Max Height  
Downtown Creeks: WALLER  
ETOD Overlay: Subdistrict 1, Subdistrict 2  
Green Building Mandatory: Central Business District/Downtown  
Mixed Use  
Residential Design Standards: LDC/25-2-Subchapter F  
Transit Oriented Development: CONVENTION CENTER  
Selected Sign Ordinances  
Selected Sound Ordinances**

Infill Options: **--**

Neighborhood Restricted Parking Areas: **--**

Mobile Food Vendors: **--**

Historic Landmark: **--**

Urban Roadways: **Yes**

## Zoning Guide

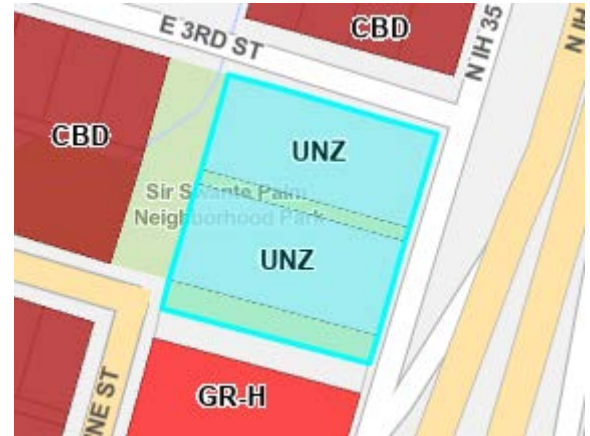
The [Guide to Zoning](#) provides a quick explanation of the above Zoning codes, however, the [Land Development Information Services](#) provides general zoning assistance and can advise you on the type of development allowed on a property. Visit [Zoning](#) for the description of each Base Zoning District. For official verification of the zoning of a property, please order a [Zoning Verification Letter](#). General information on the [Neighborhood Planning Areas](#) is available from Neighborhood Planning.

## Environmental

Fully Developed Floodplain: **City of Austin Fully Developed 100-Year Floodplain, City of Austin Fully Developed 25-Year Floodplain**  
FEMA Floodplain: **.2 PCT ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD, AE**  
Austin Watershed Regulation Areas: **URBAN**  
Watershed Boundaries: **Waller Creek**  
Creek Buffers: **No**  
Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone: **No**  
Edwards Aquifer Recharge Verification Zone: **No**  
Erosion Hazard Zone Review Buffer: **Yes**

## Political Boundaries

Jurisdiction: **AUSTIN FULL PURPOSE**  
Council District: **9**  
County: **TRAVIS**  
School District: **Austin ISD**  
Community Registry: **Austin Independent School District, Austin Neighborhoods Council, City of Austin Downtown Commission, Downtown Austin Alliance, Downtown Austin Neighborhood Assn. (DANA), East Austin Conservancy, El Concilio Mexican-American Neighborhoods, Friends of Austin Neighborhoods, Homeless Neighborhood Association, Lower Waller Creek, Preservation Austin, Tejano Town, Waterloo Greenway**



Zoning Map



Imagery Map



Vicinity Map