

ZONING CHANGE REVIEW SHEET

CASE: C14-2025-0072 –
Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park Rezoning

DISTRICT: 9

ZONING FROM: UNZ and CBD

ZONING TO: P

ADDRESS: 200 North Interstate Highway 35 Service Road Southbound and 201 ½ Red River Street

SITE AREA: 3.02 acres (131,551 sq. ft.)

PROPERTY OWNER: City of Austin

AGENT: City of Austin (PARD - Paul Books)

CASE MANAGER: Cynthia Hadri 512-974-7620, Cynthia.hadri@austintexas.gov

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The staff recommendation is to grant public (P) district zoning.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION / RECOMMENDATION:

September 9, 2025: *APPROVED THE STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION FOR P.
[A. POWELL; N. BARRERA-RAMIREZ - 2ND] (12-0) – ONE VACANCY*

CITY COUNCIL ACTION:

October 23, 2025:

ORDINANCE NUMBER:

ISSUES:

In May 2025, City Council adopted Resolution No. 20250508-042, initiating the zoning process for the park to apply a base zoning district consistent with its current and long-standing use. ***Please refer to Exhibit D (Resolution No. 20250508-042).***

CASE MANAGER COMMENTS:

The property in question is approximately 3.02 acres, has access to both East Third Street (level 3) and Red River Street (level 3), and borders East Second Street (level 3), Sabine Street (level 3) and North IH 35 Service Road (Southbound) (level 4). The property is designated as Unzoned (UNZ) and zoned as central business district (CBD). The surrounding area is characterized as mixed use, the properties to the north, west and south have a base zoning of central business district (CBD and CBD-CURE), the Palm Square Community Center is zoned GR-H. The east of the property borders Interstate 35 service road. Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park and has been dedicated as parkland since 1929 and is in both the Palm District Plan and The Downtown Austin Plan. ***Please refer to Exhibits A (Zoning Map) and B (Aerial View).***

The applicant is requesting to rezone the property to public district (P) through a City-initiated rezoning effort in response to Resolution No. 20250508-042. The purpose of this rezoning is to designate the property as parkland and support the development of new park amenities and improvements envisioned through community engagement efforts dating back to 2016. Planned improvements include revitalization of the historic Shelter House, creation of multiple play areas, new plantings, shade structures, and other community-requested amenities. This rezoning will help implement the community's vision for Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park while supporting the goals of the Palm District Plan and Downtown Austin Plan. ***Please refer to Exhibit C (Applicant's Summary Letter***

Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park Shelter House, historic rezoning case C14H-2025-0077, was also City initiated by Resolution No. 20250508-042. The resolution directed staff to pursue historic landmark zoning for the shelter house to comply with Heritage Preservation Grant funding regulations. The shelter house is on the east side of the property for rezoning case C14-2025-0072. 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 programing in the early twentieth century. On August 8th, the Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) unanimously approved the rezoning.

Staff is recommending public (P) district zoning, as it reflects the property's current and long-term use as a public park. The applicant is in agreement with the staff recommendation.

BASIS OF RECOMMENDATION:

1. *The proposed zoning should be consistent with the purpose statement of the district sought.*

The proposed public (P) district is intended for land owned or leased by federal, state, county, or city government.

2. *The proposed zoning should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the City Council.*

This action directly implements City Council Resolution No. 20250508-042, adopted in May, which initiated this rezoning effort. This rezoning coincides with City Council Resolution No. 20250508-042 for the Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park Shelter House.

EXISTING ZONING AND LAND USES:

	ZONING	LAND USES
<i>Site</i>	UNZ and CBD	Park and Recreation Services
<i>North</i>	CBD	Hotel-Motel and Restaurant
<i>South</i>	CBD-CURE and GR-H	Hotel-Motel and Community Recreation
<i>East</i>	Not Applicable	North IH 35 Service Road (Southbound)
<i>West</i>	CBD	Restaurant and Convention Center

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREA: Downtown Austin Plan (Waller Creek District)

WATERSHED: Waller Creek (Urban)

SCENIC ROADWAY: No

CAPITOL VIEW CORRIDOR: Yes (North-Bound Lanes of IH-35 Between Third Street and The Waller Creek Plaza)

SCHOOLS: Austin Independent School District

Mathews Elementary School

O Henry Middle School

Austin High School

COMMUNITY REGISTRY LIST:

Austin Independent School District
Austin Neighborhoods Council
City of Austin Downtown Commission
Downtown Austin Alliance
Downtown Austin Neighborhood Assn.
(DANA)
El Concilio Mexican-American
Neighborhoods

Friends of Austin Neighborhoods
Homeless Neighborhood Association
Lower Waller Creek
Preservation Austin
Tejano Town,
Waterloo Greenway

AREA CASE HISTORIES:

NUMBER	REQUEST	COMMISSION	CITY COUNCIL
C14H-2025-0066 – Austin Convention Center	CBD-H to CBD (Tract 1), CBD to CBD (Tracts 2 and 3), and CBD to CBD-H (Tract 4)	To Grant CBD-H to CBD (Tract 1), CBD to CBD (Tracts 2 and 3), and CBD to CBD-H (Tract 4). (August 12, 2025)	Scheduled for City Council on September 25, 2025.

C14-2014-0151 Castleman - Bull and Trask House Venue	CBD C14-2011-0113	The case Expired	The case Expired
C14-2011-0113 Block 11- Convention Center Hotel	CBD to CBD-CURE	To approve staff's recommendation with the following added conditions; 1000 room limit, Parking developed underground, Great Streets on all 4 sides and that it meets design guidelines (October 25, 2011)	Approved CBD-CURE with the following added conditions; hotel-motel use with at least 1000 rooms, F.A.R. may not exceed 16:1 and parking shall be constructed underground (May 24, 2012).

RELATED CASES:

C14H-2025-0077 - Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park Shelter House: The City of Austin is proposing to zone approximately 592 square feet from Unzoned to P-H for the Shelter House.

ADDITIONAL STAFF COMMENTS:

Comprehensive Planning:

The proposed zoning change appears to be consistent with the goals and priorities of the Downtown Austin Plan and the site's existing use as parkland.

Waller Creek District Design Goals:

- Transform Waller Creek into an urban greenway and linear open space that connects to the surrounding community.
- Create a continuous pedestrian and bicycle access between Lady Bird Lake and UT in/near the creek corridor.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between East Austin, UT, Waller Creek, and Core/Waterfront district.
- Maintain and enhance environmental and habitat value of the creek as a riparian corridor.
- Encourage new development that promotes the area as a diverse, livable, and affordable mixed-use district with a distinctly local feel.
- Establish activities along Waller Creek that contribute to its safety and vitality and to the area's economic revitalization.
- Promote as a place for creative and cultural activities, including live music venues, galleries, studios.
- Improve Palm and Waterloo parks to better serve adjacent neighborhoods and to provide opportunities for community-wide events and recreation.

Urban Design Priorities from the Downtown Austin Plan (page 57):

- Implement creekscape, trail and open space improvements as an integral part of the Waller Creek Tunnel project.
- Promote a pattern of development that re-engages Waller Creek with the surrounding downtown, and creates a positive and sustainable greenway between UT and Lady Bird Lake.
- Enhance connection to the Convention Center, 6th Street, and Red River Street to create a premier visitor/tourist destination.
- Revitalize Palm Park as a family-friendly, water-oriented place that reflects its importance to the Hispanic community.
- Promote development opportunities at a variety of scales, including mid-rise development on small parcels.
- Promote the development of facilities for the creative community (e.g., workspace, rehearsal space, galleries, etc.).
- Control the number and intensity of bars and cocktail lounge uses, particularly along East 6th and Red River streets.
- Require ground-level space suitable for active, pedestrian oriented uses, including retail, particularly along Red River, East 6th and Sabine streets.
- Establish a program for off-site parking (e.g., in-lieu fees and centralized public/private parking facilities) that can reduce the need for on-site parking, create opportunities for affordable housing, and allow smaller parcels to redevelop more effectively.

Drainage:

The developer is required to submit a pre- and post-development drainage analysis at the subdivision and site plan stage of the development process. The City's Land Development Code and Drainage Criteria Manual require that the Applicant demonstrate through engineering analysis that the proposed development will have no identifiable adverse impact on surrounding properties.

Environmental:

The site is not located over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. The site is located in the Boggy Creek Watershed of the Colorado River Basin, which is classified as an Urban Watershed by Chapter 25-8 of the City's Land Development Code. It is in the Desired Development Zone.

Zoning district impervious cover limits apply in the Urban Watershed classification.

According to floodplain maps there is no floodplain within or adjacent to the project location.

Standard landscaping and tree protection will be required in accordance with LDC 25-2 and 25-8 for all development and/or redevelopment.

At this time, site specific information is unavailable regarding vegetation, areas of steep slope, or other environmental features such as bluffs, springs, canyon rimrock, caves, sinkholes, and wetlands.

This site is required to provide on-site water quality controls (or payment in lieu of) for all development and/or redevelopment when 8,000 s.f. cumulative is exceeded, and on site control for the two-year storm.

At this time, no information has been provided as to whether this property has any preexisting approvals that preempt current water quality or Code requirements.

Fire:

No Comments.

PARD – Planning & Design Review:

PARD supports this rezoning. Please ensure that all parkland is clearly labeled “City of Austin (Parkland)” on any plans that come about from this rezoning. No further comments.

Site Plan:

Because the proposed zoning is P, any site plan application with limits of construction over an acre will require Land Use Commission approval.

Austin Transportation Department – Engineering Review:

A transportation assessment/traffic Impact analysis shall be required at the time of site plan **if triggered**, when land uses and intensities will be known per LDC 25-6-113 and TCM 10.2.1.

The Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) calls for 80 feet of right-of-way for Sabine ST. There appears to be sufficient right-of-way, however this should be confirmed with the first subdivision or site plan application. [LDC 25-6-51 and 25-6-55].

The Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) calls for 80 feet of right-of-way for Red River ST. There appears to be sufficient right-of-way, however this should be confirmed with the first subdivision or site plan application. [LDC 25-6-51 and 25-6-55].

The Austin Strategic Mobility Plan (ASMP) calls for 80 feet of right-of-way for E 3rd ST. There appears to be sufficient right-of-way, however this should be confirmed with the first subdivision or site plan application. [LDC 25-6-51 and 25-6-55].

Existing Street Characteristics:

Name	ASMP Classification	ASMP Required ROW	Existing ROW	Existing Pavement	Sidewalks	Bicycle Route	Capital Metro (within ¼ mile)
N IH 35 SVRD SB	Level 4 (TxDOT)	N/A	338' (from SB to NB SVRDs)	30' (SB SVRD only)	Yes	No	Yes
Sabine ST	Level 3	80'	83'	31'	Partial	No	Yes
Red River ST	Level 3	80'	81'	40'	Yes	No	Yes
E 3 rd ST	Level 3	80'	80'	31'	Partial	No	Yes

Austin Water Utility:

No comments on zoning change.

FYI: The landowner intends to serve the site with existing City of Austin water utilities.

Based on current public infrastructure configurations, it appears that service extension requests (SER) will be required to provide service to this lot. For more information pertaining to the Service Extension Request process and submittal requirements contact the Austin Water SER team at ser@austintexas.gov.

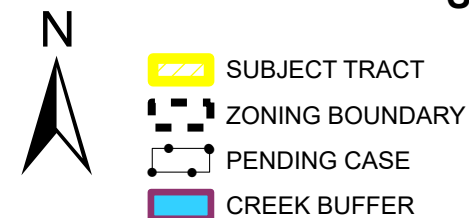
INDEX OF EXHIBITS AND ATTACHMENTS TO FOLLOW:

- A. Zoning Map
- B. Aerial Map
- C. Applicant's Summary Letter
- D. Resolution No. 20250508-042
- Correspondence from Interested Parties



Sir Swante Neighborhood Park Rezoning

ZONING CASE#: C14-2025-0072
 LOCATION: 200 N IH 35 Svrld SB;
 201 Red River St
 SUBJECT AREA: 3.02 Acres
 MANAGER: Cynthia Hadri



June 18, 2025

Lauren Middleton-Pratt
City Of Austin
Planning Department
6310 Wilhelmina Delco Drive
Austin, TX 78752

Subject: Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park Zoning Application

On behalf of the Parks and Recreation Department, we respectfully request the rezoning of Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park from Unzoned (UNZ) to Public (P). The subject property is approximately 3.02 acres and has been dedicated as parkland since 1929.

In May 2025, City Council adopted [Resolution No. 20250508-042](#), initiating the zoning process for the park to apply a base zoning district consistent with its current and long-standing use. Rezoning the property to Public (P) will formalize its designation as parkland and support the development of new park amenities and improvements envisioned through community engagement efforts dating back to 2016.

Construction of the updated park is anticipated to begin in 2026, with completion expected in 2028. Planned improvements include revitalization of the historic Shelter House, creation of multiple play areas, new plantings, shade structures, and other community-requested amenities.

Approval of the requested rezoning will help implement the community's vision for Sir Swante Palm Neighborhood Park as well as support the goals of the Palm District Plan and Downtown Austin Plan.

Sincerely,
Paul Ray Books, Planner Principal

Cc:
Jesus Aguirre, MBA, CPRE, Director
Liana Kallivoka, PhD, PE, LEED Fellow, Assistant Director
Ricardo Soliz, Division Manager
Randy Scott, Program Manager

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