

CITY OF SUNSET VALLEY

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

Existing Conditions Report



INTRODUCTION

About Sunset Valley

Sunset Valley is a vibrant city distinguished by a culture that is distinct from its surrounding context, and this has played a large role in defining the environmental character of the city and its parks and open space resources. These lands are largely comprised of conservation-focused areas and greenspaces, such as greenbelts, preserves, nature areas, and the City's extensive trails systems. These spaces are well-loved by Sunset Valley's closely knit population, who are passionate about maintaining a high quality of life and the natural character and high environmental quality of their City. Residents are proud of their city, eager to participate in local governance, and protective of the values on which the city was originally founded. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to work with the outstanding residents and the City of Sunset Valley Staff and City Officials to develop a Parks and Open Space plan that reflects a commitment to environmental integrity, conservation of natural resources, active recreation, and community togetherness.



EXISTING PLANS AND INITIATIVES

The following provides an overview of existing plans and initiatives that the City of Sunset Valley has undertaken, and their relevance to the development of the Parks and Open Space Plan.

City of Sunset Valley Comprehensive Plan (1995)

The City of Sunset Valley Comprehensive Plan is an update of and replacement to The Master Plan for the City of Sunset Valley formerly adopted on February 21, 1995. The comprehensive plan centers on providing development guidance regarding density, road and utility infrastructure, environmental protection of natural resources, and preservation of local cultural, historical, and built assets to ultimately support the health and wellbeing of city residents. The plan defines five core goals for the city. The first goal is to preserve and protect the pleasant quality of life to ensure the city retains its unique livability, recreation, and natural features. The second and third goals account for the strategic preservation of the city's environmental features and preparation for hazard mitigation: preserve the community's natural resources to support species diversity and create accessible community greenspaces and protect existing watersheds; and protect existing and future development from increased flooding potential and erosion of soils. Goal four seeks to promote healthy development that maintains and enhances the City's unique character, with a particular focus on celebrating a distinct aesthetic and built identity from the City of Austin. Finally, the fifth goal seeks to provide quality services and public facilities without burdensome fees or taxes.

Valley Creek Park Trail (2022)

Embedded within the city's Capital Improvement Plan, the Valley Creek Park Trail initiative is set to create a single trail, hiking path linking Valley Creek Park with the South Hills Conservation Area. While the trail layout has been finished, it is officially set to open in May of 2022, and no bicycles will be permitted on the course. From an engagement perspective, American Youthworks has been actively involved in developing project scope and will begin assisting in construction in mid-April 2022.

Urban Forest Management Plan (2005)

The Urban Forest Master Plan establishes the City's commitment to a healthy urban forest in Sunset Valley. It provides guidelines on tree management and planning for the future of Sunset Valley. The protection of trees was given a high priority in all aspects of City activities. Currently trees with a 12-inch diameter as measured at 4 ½ feet above the ground are protected and require permits for removal per the City's Tree Protection Ordinance. Maintenance of trees within the right of way or on public property is the responsibility of the City of Sunset Valley. The Plan emphasized the entrances into the City, as primary areas for plantings. Lone Oak Trail has been identified as an opportunity for tree planting. Valley Creek Park has about 65% Cedar Elms (as of 2005) and has been identified as an opportunity for greater tree diversity.

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Beautification
Health & Wellness



Wildlife Management Plan (2015)

The plan provides guidelines and policies for managing wildlife within Sunset Valley. It establishes a framework for making wildlife management decisions, provides direction on regulatory and program changes, and outlines a set of actions for long-term management of human-wildlife conflicts. The Plan provides a list of the wildlife species that have been sighted within Sunset Valley, sets goals for wildlife management, and strategies for protecting and enhancing wildlife. These strategies include protecting and enhancing wildlife habitat, promoting environmental education, promoting volunteer involvement in wildlife habitat protection and management, and promoting internal education and consistency in department actions.

Community Wildlife Habitat Program

This is an ongoing local initiative to codify Sunset Valley as a Community Wildlife Habitat Program through the National Wildlife Federation. The program seeks to encourage complete community buy-in towards making Sunset Valley into a community that provides habitat for wildlife throughout the community – in individual backyards, on school grounds, in public areas such as parks, community gardens, and businesses. This interactive approach encourages individuals across the city to certify their backyards as wildlife habitats by planting native plants, reducing the use of harmful pesticides, providing wildlife watering areas, setting up roosting boxes or birdhouses, among other supportive actions for local species. Individual property certification costs \$20 for an application and sign fee.

Trails Master Plan (2015)

The Trails Master Plan outlines the current trail system and identifies areas for further development, improvements, and maintenance. The goal of this plan is to develop in a manner that "sustains the natural ambience of the land and wildlife habitat" as well as provides healthy recreational opportunities. The Trails Master Plan is to work in conjunction with the Park and Open Space Management Plan to provide appropriate recreational activities while maintaining environmental integrity. This plan provides an overview of trail usage, research, types, surfacing, borders, clearance, kiosks, signage, safety measures, barriers, and parking.

Open Space Management Plan

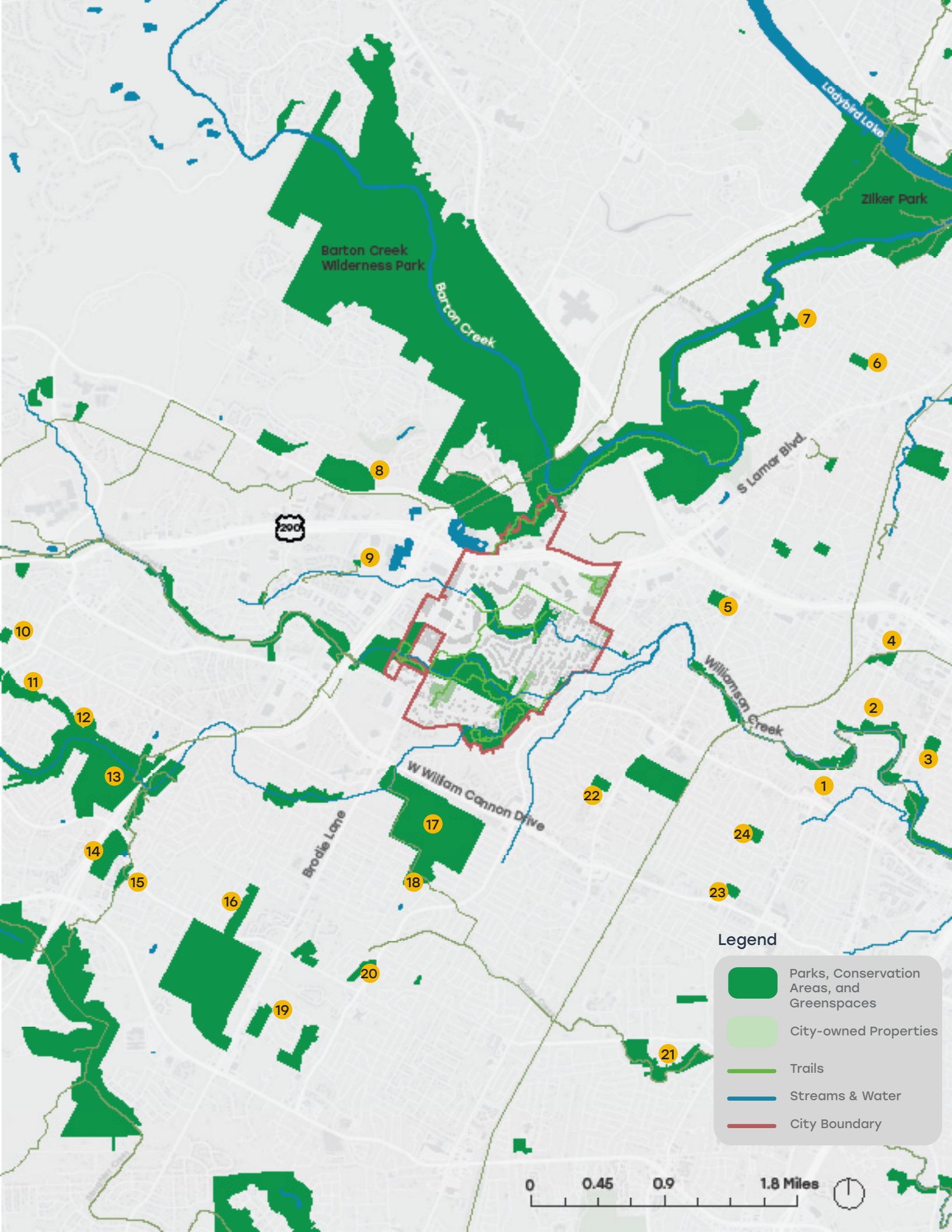
The goal for parklands and open spaces within the Sunset Valley is that they maintain diversity while supplying appropriate recreational opportunities. The Open Space Management Plan is separated into tracts based on habitat and management needs. Each tract contains: a description, recommended management program, and a system for monitoring management activities. There are 5 tracts: South Hills Conservation Area, Gaines Greenbelt, Indian Prairie Grass Preservation, Cougar Creek Greenbelt, Sunset Valley Nature Area.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan identifies how Sunset Valley will reduce its risks from wildland fire. The efforts include joining Fire wise communities, a country wide group aimed at reducing wildland fuels. The plan was prepared following the guidelines of collaboration, prioritized fuel reduction, and treatment of structures. This plan contains information about the city of Sunset Valley, climate change considerations, critical wildlife, inventory of structures, local conservation, and open space areas. Past incidents of fires and the preparedness of residents and the local fire department are included. Maintenance activities such as mowing, dead wood removal, and brush thinning are outlined for each conservation and open space area.

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Connectivity & Transit
Beautification
Health & Wellness





PARKS AND OPEN SPACE CONTEXT

The City of Sunset Valley is completely surrounded by the City of Austin, and many of the City's residents use the City of Austin's parks and recreation system to supplement the parks and trails within the City of Sunset Valley. Thus, it is important to understand the parks and open space context that surrounds the City of Sunset Valley. For example, it may not be necessary to include a specific amenity, such as tennis courts, if a City of Austin park is adequately serving the Sunset Valley community's needs.

PARK	AMENITIES
1 Emerald Wood Community Garden	Organic raised beds, educational gardens
2 Central Williamson Creek Greenway	Education areas, protected wildlife habitat areas, trails, gathering spaces, gardens
3 Battle Bend Neighborhood Park	Shelter, fitness and playground equipment, play meadow
4 St. Elmo School Park	Trails, field sports, sports courts
5 Joslin Neighborhood Park	Playground equipment, field sports, tennis courts
6 Little Zilker Park	Track, tennis courts, volleyball courts, disc golf course, multipurpose field
7 Barton Hills School Park	Picnic tables, trails, playgrounds, pavilion
8 Gaines Creek Neighborhood Park	Trails, rock climbing
9 Archstone Greenbelt	Trails
10 Convict Hill Quarry Park	Trails, historic site
11 Legend Oaks Neighborhood Park	Pool, picnic tables, pavilion, playground
12 Latta Branch Greenbelt	Trails, picnic tables, pavilion
13 Dick Nichols District Park	Grills/BBQ pits/fire pits, trails, showers, picnic tables, playground, pavilion
14 Deer Path at Maple Run Preserve	Playgrounds, trails
15 Sendera Mesa Neighborhood Park	Playground, pool
16 Goat Cave Karst Nature Preserve	Caves, trails, playground
17 Stephenson Nature Preserve	Trails, nature preserve
18 Longview Neighborhood Park	Courts, playground, trails
19 Cherry Creek Neighborhood Park	Playground, picnic tables
20 Piney Bend Park	Picnic tables, playground
21 Dittmar District Park	Playground, trails picnic tables
22 Cunningham School Park	Playground, trails, picnic tables
23 Armadillo Neighborhood Park	Trails, picnic tables
24 Odom School Park	Playground, picnic tables, courts

SUNSET VALLEY PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

Parks and Open Spaces

The City of Sunset Valley has an robust parks and open space system connected by an extensive pedestrian and bicyclist trail system. There are three types of parks and open spaces in Sunset Valley, each with their own zoning regulations as defined by the City's Land Use Code- parks, greenspace areas, and Conservation Areas. These definitions provide guidelines for the types of activities and construction that is allowed within each of the defined areas.

Parks Zoning

To provide publicly owned parcels for parks and recreation, including active and passive recreation, water quality protection, air purification, and continuity of aesthetic open space and nature area buffering for the citizens of Sunset Valley.

Greenspace Areas Zoning

To provide publicly and privately owned parcels for permanent open space or preservation purposes, including passive recreation, wildlife habitat, ecological and historical preservation, water quality protection, air purification, science education, nature observation, and continuity of aesthetic open space and natural area buffering for the citizens of Sunset Valley.

Conservation Areas Zoning

To provide publicly and privately owned parcels for permanent conservation purposes including space for wildlife habitat (including federally listed endangered species habitat), ecological and geological preservation, water quality protection, air purification, science education, nature observation, and continuity of aesthetic open space and nature area buffering for the citizens of Sunset Valley.

Current Parks and Open Spaces

While the City of Sunset Valley owns many parcels that are used by Sunset Valley residents as parks and open space, for the purpose of this plan, only parcels zoned as parks, greenspace/ preservation areas, and conservation areas will be designated as a current Park and Open Spaces. These include:

Conservation Area

- Gaines Greenbelt
- South Hills Conservation Area
- Indiangrass Prairie Preserve

Greenspace Areas

- Upper Cougar Creek Greenbelt
- Lower Cougar Creek Greenbelt
- Sunset Valley Nature Area

Parks

- Valley Creek Park

Other City-owned Properties

There are many properties owned by the City of Sunset Valley or other entities that are currently used by community members as parks and open spaces, even though they are not formally a part of the Sunset Valley parks and open space system. Many of these properties are, however, already zoned as greenspace areas or parks. These exist across a spectrum of uses, with some properties having trails and other amenities on them, and some without trails or amenities and are infrequently used for recreation. All these properties are identified here as "Opportunity Areas." These properties include:

Greenspace Area Zoning

- 10 Sunset Trail
- 764 Oakdale Drive (Manly Tract)

Park Zoning

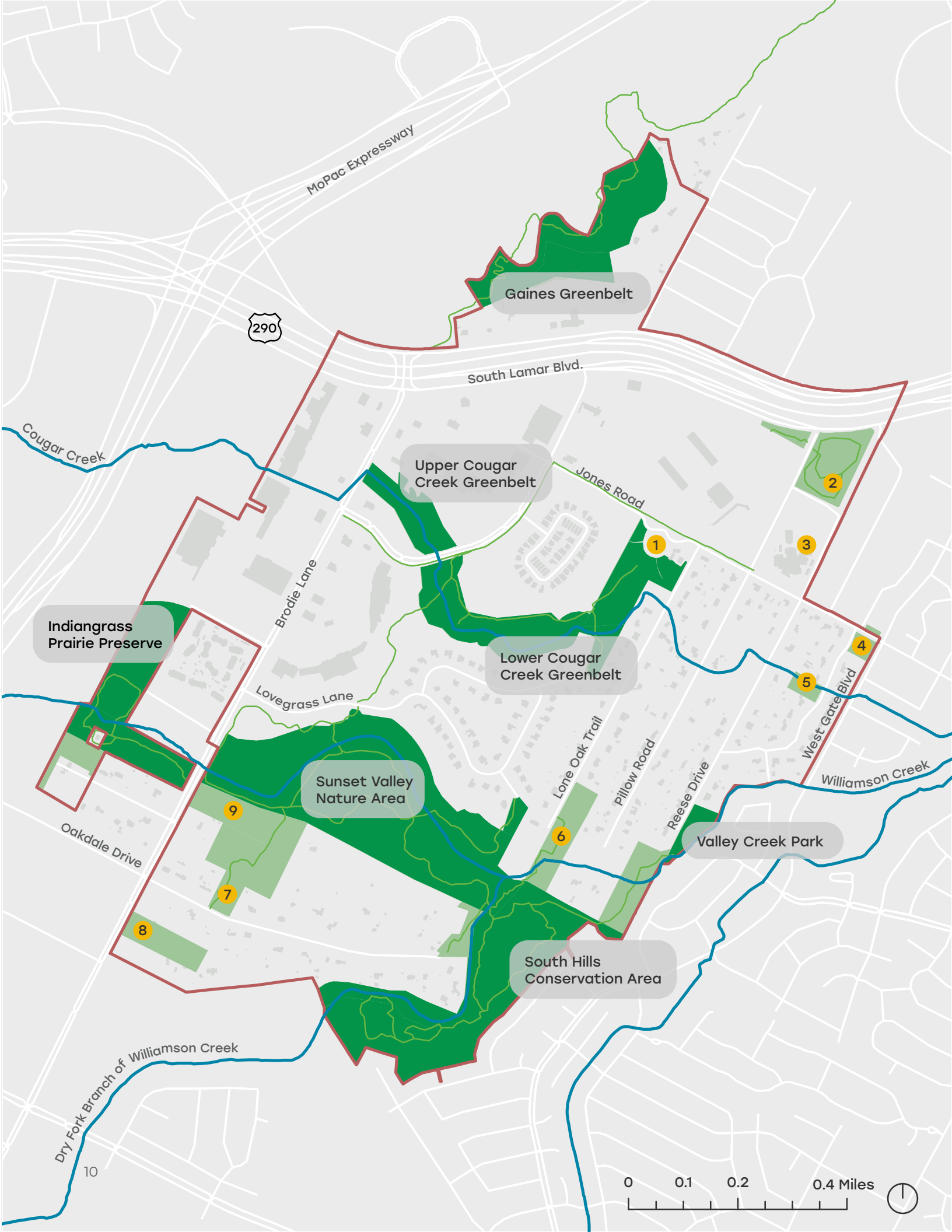
- 1 Sunset Trail

Single Family Home Zoning

- 6401 Brodie Lane
- 6107 Brodie Lane
- 37 Lone Oak Trail

Government, Utility, and Institutional Zoning

- City Hall and Community Garden
- The Uplands (zoned as Government, Utility, and Institutional)
- Sunset Valley Elementary School (owned by AISD)



Current Parks and Open Spaces and Opportunity Areas

CURRENT PARKS + OPEN SPACES

AMENITIES

Gaines Greenbelt
Upper Cougar Creek Greenbelt
Lower Cougar Creek Greenbelt
Indiangrass Prairie Preserve
Sunset Valley Nature Area
Valley Creek Park
South Hills Conservation Area

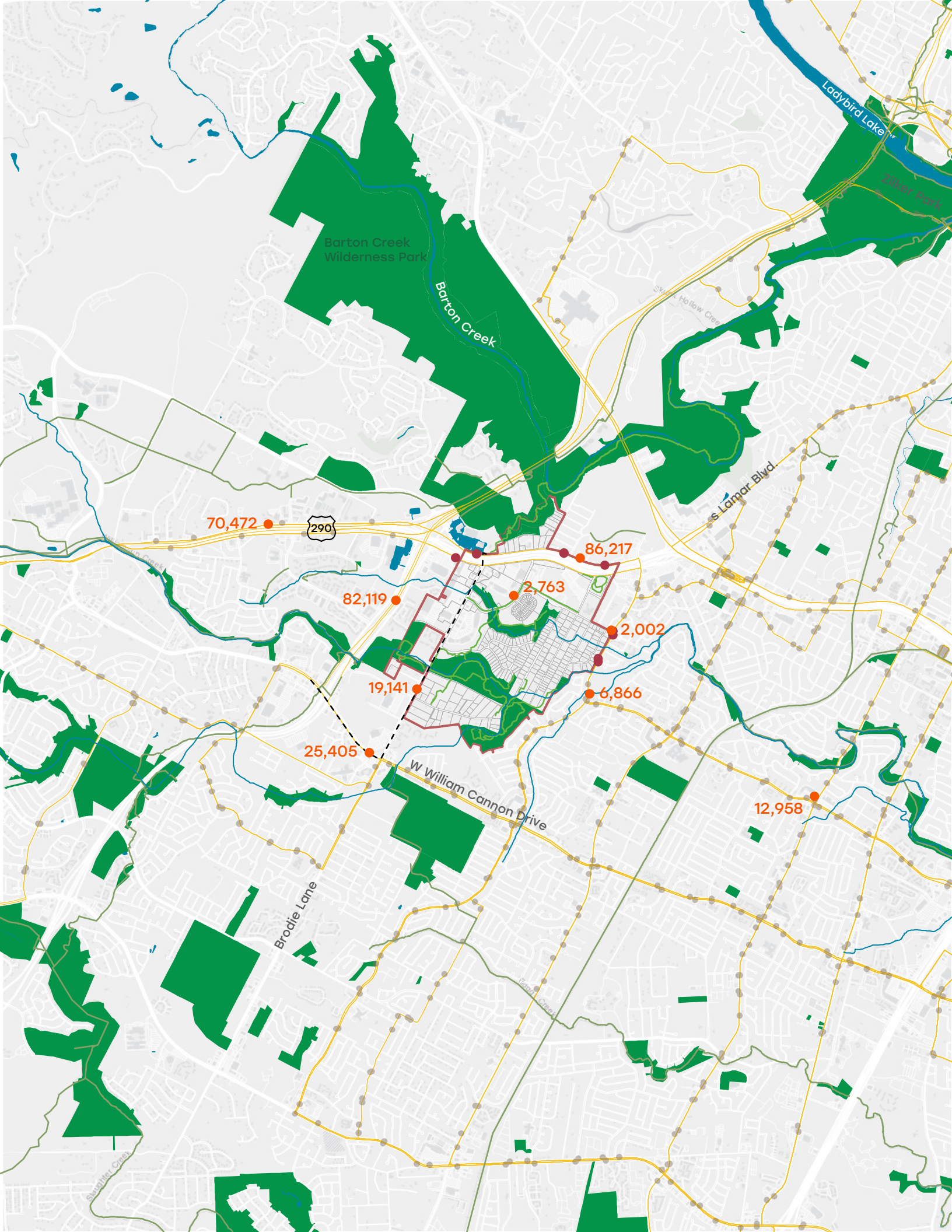
OPPORTUNITY AREAS

AMENITIES

1	City Hall Community Garden
2	The Uplands
3	Sunset Valley Elementary School
4	1 Sunset Trail
5	10 Sunset Trail
6	37 Lone Oak Trail
7	764 Oakdale Drive (Manly Tract)
8	6401 Brodie Lane
9	6107 Brodie Lane

Legend

- Parks, Conservation Areas, and Greenspaces
- City-owned Properties
- Trails
- Streams and Water
- City Boundary



CIRCULATION

The majority of traffic circulation is taking place on highway 290 and highway 1. These highways are a continuation of those going through Austin to the north and east. This is a likely route for Austin residents traveling to Sunset Valley parks.

Sunset Valley residents are likely to travel to parks and open spaces via Brodie Lane. This road has the highest traffic count by far within the city at 19,141. Brodie Lane is in close proximity to a number of parks and is likely also a route to travel between parks as well. These parks include: the Indian Grass Prairie Preserve, Sunset Valley Nature Area, and the Cougar Creek Greenbelt. West William Cannon Drive is a common route to get to the nearby Stephenson Nature Preserve.

There are few transit stops in close proximity to City of Sunset Valley so this is an unlikely method for residents to use when traveling to parks. Residents from Austin and the surrounding suburbs are more likely to utilize this vast public transportation network.

Other highly trafficked roads include: Ernest Robles Way (2,002), Jones Road (2,763), West Gate Boulevard (6,866), and W Stassney Lane (12,958). Many of these are major roads going to and from shopping centers in the area.

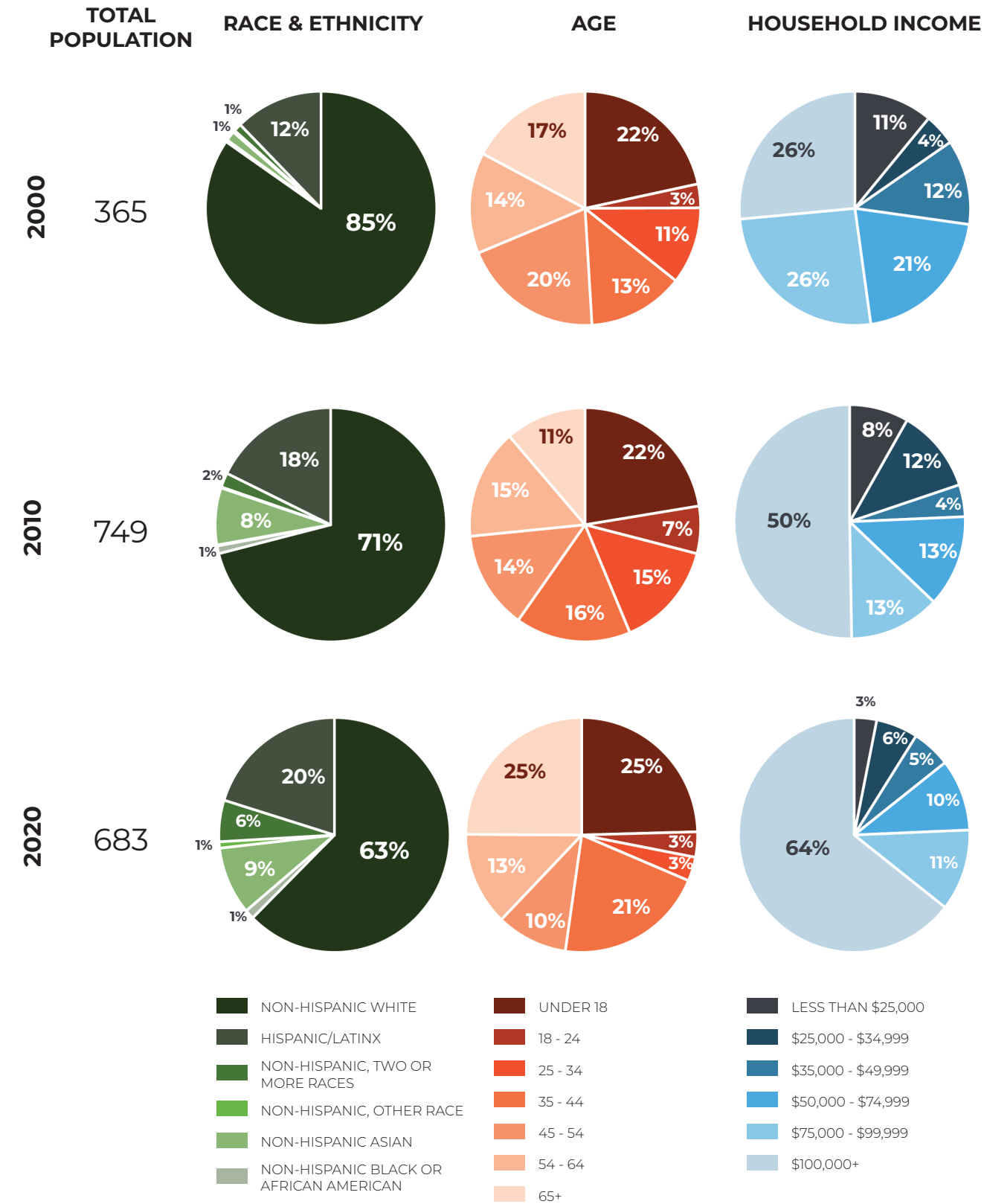
The Violet Crown Trail is the first regional trail system in Central Texas and is currently 13 miles going from Zilker Park to Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. The second phase of the trail project, Violet Crown Trail North, will connect Sunset Valley to the trail system. The trail will extend from Home Depot Boulevard to Mopac, north of William Cannon Drive. This portion of the project is scheduled to be completed by Winter 2023.

Legend

- Parks, Conservation Areas, and Greenspaces
- Trails
- Streams and Water
- City Boundary
- Public Transit Routes
- Violet Crown Trail Expansion
- Public Transit Stops
- Public Transit Stops near Sunset Valley
- Traffic Count

THE VIOLET CROWN TRAIL

The Violet Crown trail is one of the first regional trail systems in Central Texas. As of 2022, the trail is 13 miles long and runs from Zilker Park to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas. The completed trail is set to span 30 miles, providing unique recreational experiences. The trail is planned to enter the north end of Sunset Valley at 290, travel along Brodie Lane, and exit Sunset Valley at the southwestern border of the City along Brodie.



COMMUNITY

Demographics

The Sunset Valley community and its surrounding area of South Austin has seen many changes over the past twenty years. The figures on the opposite page illustrate some of the ways in which the demographics of the census block group Sunset Valley lies within, which also captures some of South Austin, has changed since 2000.

Race & Ethnicity

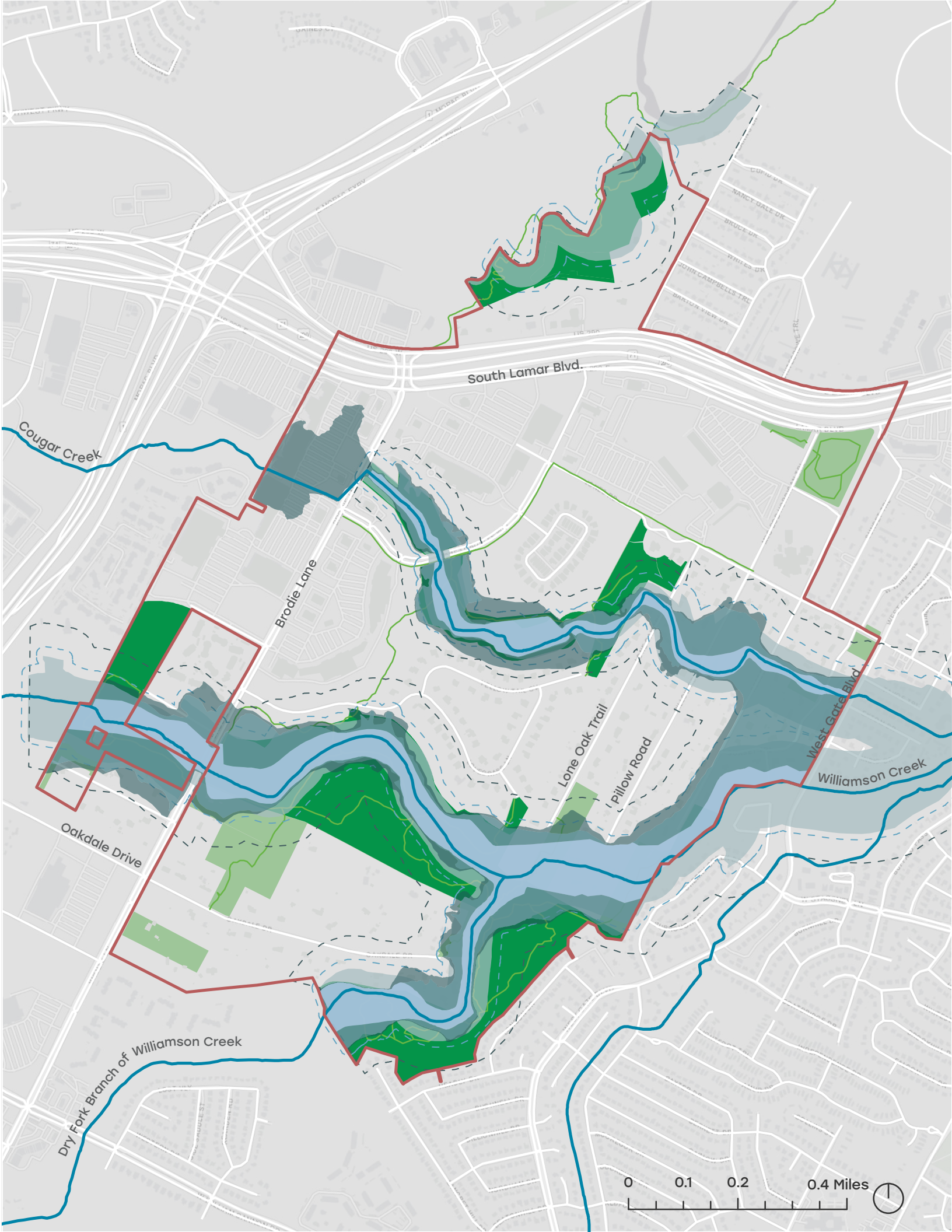
Since 2000, the area has become more diverse, with the non-Hispanic white community falling from 85% in 2000 to 64% in 2020. The non-Hispanic Asian community has grown the most, increasing by 8%.

Age

The 65 and over community has seen some fluctuation, but overall has grown in the past 20 years, from 17% in 2000 to representing a quarter of the population in 2020. Understanding the age distribution of the Sunset Valley community is important, as it helps the City make decisions on the types of amenities and activities to invest in considering the abilities and desires of a range of ages.

Household Income

Household income has increased over the past twenty years, with the population of household income over \$100,000 increasing by 38% from 2000 to 2020. While some of this may be explained by inflation, it also may be indicative of an increasing cost of living in the greater Austin area.



NATURAL RESOURCES

City-wide Hydrology

Williamson Creek is the most prominent waterway that flows through Sunset Valley. There are two branches of the creek that flow north and south of a main branch of the creek. The Dry Fork branch of Williamson Creek runs along the western border of the South Hills Conservation Area. To the north, the Sunset Valley Branch of Williamson Creek, commonly known as Cougar Creek, flows east to west through upper and lower Cougar Creek Greenbelt. The floodplains of Williamson Creek and its branches shown in the map.

City-wide Tree Canopy

Sunset Valley has extensive tree canopy coverage, which provides shade over private properties, along City streets, and coverage over much of the City's trail systems.

Parks and Open Spaces

The geology, hydrology, and vegetation of Sunset Valley's parks and open spaces vary across the City. The following pages gives a brief overview of the natural resources within each park.



Legend

- Parks, Conservation Areas, and Greenspaces
- City-owned Properties
- Trails
- Streams & Water
- City Boundary
- Existing Floodway
- 500 year Floodplain
- Critical Water Quality Zone
- 75 ft. Buffer to Critical Water Quality Zone
- Water Quality Transition Zone

NATURAL RESOURCES

Parks and Open Spaces

Sunset Valley is located in the Edwards Plateau ecoregion of Texas. This is commonly known as Texas Hill Country and is comprised of grasslands, juniper/oak woodlands, and plateau live oak savannah. Limestone in the Plateau makes up thousands of caves that are home to unique species found no where else in the world. The Edwards Aquifer is below the eastern edge of the ecoregion is the regions largest underground water supply. The Edwards Aquifer is responsible for providing water to a large part of central Texas. Sunset Valley lies over the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone.

VALLEY CREEK PARK

Valley Creek Park is the only park area currently within Sunset Valley. This 1.5 acre park contains a playground, picnic tables, and handicap accessible spaces.

Geology: Valley Creek Park is set along Williamson Creek, making the soil in the park primarily Mixed Alluvial Land with limestone and gravelly alluvium.

Hydrology: Williamson Creek runs through Sunset Valley and adjoins Valley Creek Park at the southeastern edge.

Vegetation and Plant Communities: A majority of trees within the Valley Creek Park are cedar elm, live oak, ashe juniper, and sugar hackberry. The hardy and drought tolerant ground cover zoysiagrass is planted in the understory of the trees. Landscape beds are planted with perennials to make up the area around the park sign.

SOUTH HILLS CONSERVATION AREA

The South Hills Conservation Area makes up 43 acres of Sunset Valley's southern edge. A vast array of wildlife call this conservation area home. Common species inhabiting the area include coyotes, diamondback rattlesnakes, and opossums.

Geology: The South Hills Conservation Area is crossed by fault lines including the Balcones Fault, which has exposed various substrates including Edward's limestone, Georgetown limestone, Del Rio clay, and Buda limestone. Soils include Ferris-Heiden and Tarrant series soils.

Hydrology: The Dry Fork Branch of Williamson Creek is along the western border of the conservation area with the main branch being at the northwestern edge. The creek channel has exposed various layers of limestone.

Vegetation and Plant Communities: The South Hills Conservation Area is abundant with trees including: cedar elm, live oak, sugar hackberry, Texas persimmon, and the pencil cactus. Several grasses also make up the vegetation at the Conservation Area including side-oats grama, silver bluestem, tall dropseed, and Alabama lipfern.

GAINES GREENBELT

The Gaines Greenbelt connects with the City of Austin's Barton Creek Greenbelt and extends for 22 acres. Although various wildlife species inhabit the Gaines Greenbelt, the endangered Golden-cheeked Warbler nests within the ashe juniper and oak woodlands and are essential to the ecosystem of the area.

Geology: Tarrant soils and rock outcrops make up the majority of soils in the Gaines Greenbelt. Stony clay or clay loam seven inches thick overlays limestone.

Hydrology: Gaines Creek runs through the Gaines Greenbelt and is a tributary of the greater Barton Creek, which runs for around 40 miles.

Vegetation and Plant Communities: Oak and juniper trees make up the woodlands of the Greenbelt. The most common tree is the ashe juniper with others including: live oak, Texas oak, cedar elm, shin oak, Texas ash, sugar hackberry, and escarpment black cherry. Small trees and shrubs in the understory include: Texas persimmon, Carolina buckthorn, and red buckeye. Because of the slopes and cliffs in the Gaines Greenbelt, various ferns are also able to thrive.

INDIAN GRASS PRAIRIE PRESERVE

The Indian Grass Prairie Preserve is made up of 21 acres and features a Sunset Valley Cave along the northern edge. This feature allows for habitat of invertebrate species and migratory birds.

Geology: Soils on the Preserve are Tarrant and Speck soils as well as gravelly alluvium. These soils sit atop limestone substrate.

Hydrology: In addition to being located along the Williamson Creek, the Indian Prairie Grass Preserve contains the Rattlesnake Sink. This sink serves as a recharge feature for the Edwards Aquifer.

Vegetation and Plant Communities: A Midgrass vegetative community makes up the Indian Prairie Grass Preserve and features native grasses such as: indiagrass, purple threeawn, curly mesquite, and side-oats grama. Major tree species include: live oak, ashe juniper, cedar elm, sugar hackberry, and Texas ash.

NATURAL RESOURCES, CTD.

Parks and Open Spaces

SUNSET VALLEY NATURE AREA

The Sunset Valley Nature Area comprises 65 acres of land and connects with the South Hills Conservation Area and the Indian Prairie Grass Preserve. Trail networks for hiking, biking, and horseback riding are present throughout the nature area.

Geology: This nature area is composed of Tarrant and Speck soils, well-drained clay soils that are found atop limestone. These limestones include Edward’s limestone and Buda limestone.

Hydrology: The Sunset Valley Nature Area is bisected by Williamson Creek however the flow is ephemeral with no permanent body of water.

Vegetation and Plant Communities: The Sunset Valley Nature Area is a Plateau Live Oak and Midgrass plant community. Common trees include live oak, cedar elm, juniper, and honey mesquite. Grasses include side-oats grama, purpletop, curley mesquite, and buffalo grass. Numerous species occupy the stream banks including oaks, hackberry, and wildflower species.

COUGAR CREEK GREENBELT (UPPER AND LOWER)

Cougar Creek Greenbelt makes up 23 acres of land in Sunset Valley and consists of a wetland area and trails. The Greenbelt is located along the Sunset Valley Branch of Williamson Creek which is commonly referred to as Cougar Creek.

Geology: Soil types of the Greenbelt include Crawford clay, Speck stony clay loam, and Tarrant soils. Buda limestone is present on the eastern portions of the Greenbelt.

Hydrology: An ephemeral wetland is present on the southwestern portion of the Cougar Creek Greenbelt as a result of berm construction and irrigation. Berms constrain the flow of the creek on site and a concrete dam has also been constructed.

Vegetation and Plant Communities: The Cougar Creek Greenbelt has plant communities of the plateau live oak Midgrass series. Live oak and cedar elm make up the majority of canopy trees with the elbowbush, prickly pear, and pencil cactus occupying the understory. Grasses include: buffalo grass, annual bluegrass, and silver bluestem. The wetland areas are home to several species of rush including sand spikerush and large spike spikerush. and side-oats grama. Major tree species include: live oak, ashe juniper, cedar elm, sugar hackberry, and Texas ash.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENTS

Methodology

In April 2022, Asakura Robinson conducted in-depth site assessments for four parks and five open space areas in Sunset Valley. The nine site assessments are intended to provide a baseline for future evaluations and inform decision-making regarding priorities for future investments. All park and conservation area assessments were conducted using an Evaluation Tool. Two versions of the Evaluation Tool were developed, one for Park Spaces and one for Conservation Areas and Greenspaces.

The Park Evaluation tool assessed the existing park areas based on seven criteria factors:

- **(1) Park Access:** assessed the number and location of entrances to the parks, appropriate signage, support for a variety of transportation types, and connections between other parks and greenspaces.
- **(2) Park Features:** Looked at the recreational and education uses within the park and scored them based on their condition, usability, appearance, and maintenance. Examples include picnic areas, amphitheaters, and plazas.
- **(3) Supportive Facilities:** include non-recreational amenities such as restrooms, trash and recycling receptacles, and drinking fountains.
- **(4) Safety and Maintenance:** evaluated safety and maintenance concerns both inside the park and in the surrounding context. Examples include animal waste in parks, vegetation maintained, and evidence of substance abuse.
- **(5) Aesthetics:** assesses the park spaces on a variety of features including quality and cohesion of materials and signage, placement of trees and site furnishings, and sounds in and around the park.
- **(6) Health:** takes a holistic look at the

combination of opportunities for physical health, mental health, and environmental health within the park. Physical health assesses recreation opportunities for all ages, mental health evaluates opportunities for social connections and connections with nature, and environmental health considered the vegetation and stormwater infrastructure present.

- **(7) Culture and Convenience:** considered existing public art, educational opportunities, and inclusive features on the site.

The Evaluation Tool for Conservation Areas and Greenspaces is a similar tool but instead evaluates these sites on five criteria:

- **(1) Access:** assessed the number and location of entrances to the parks, as well as appropriate signage, support for a variety of transportation types, and connections between other parks and greenspaces.
- **(2) Environmental Quality:** evaluated the health and diversity of vegetation on the site, as well as evidence of erosion and invasive species and quality of riparian areas.
- **(3) Unique Natural Features:** assessed if the site contains any Critical Environmental Features, rare or endangered species, unique geology, or special views.
- **(4) Safety and Serious Maintenance Concerns:** evaluated safety and maintenance concerns both inside the greenspaces and conservations areas and their surrounding context. Examples include evidence of animal waste along trails, easy to understand trail layout, and evidence of substance abuse.
- **(5) Community:** included site amenities such as benches, interpretive signage, and shelter, as well as a variety of landscape types, and opportunities for nature observation.

Within each category, there were a number of factors that were graded on a scale of 1 to 5 in which:

5 = abundant, well provided, excellent condition, very attractive, no concerns, true, and other similar characterizations.

1 = scarce, very unappealing, very concerning, false, and other similar characterizations.

If a park or conservation area did not qualify for an element listed in the criteria, it received a score of N/A and no points were counted against the site in that category.

VALLEY CREEK PARK
Assessment Type: Park

Category	Averaged Score
Park Access	2.36
Park Features	3
Supportive Facilities	2.5
Safety and Maintenance	4.46
Aesthetics	2.89
Health	2.44
Culture and Convenience	2



UPPER COUGAR CREEK + DOC'S PLAYGROUND
Assessment Type: Park

Category	Averaged Score
Park Access	2.54
Park Features	4
Supportive Facilities	0.5
Safety and Maintenance	3.73
Aesthetics	3.38
Health	4
Culture and Convenience	2.75



CITY HALL
Assessment Type: Park

Category	Averaged Score
Park Access	2.91
Park Features	0.5
Supportive Facilities	3.67
Safety and Maintenance	4.53
Aesthetics	3.5
Health	3.40
Culture and Convenience	2.5



UPLANDS
Assessment Type: Park

Category	Averaged Score
Park Access	0.5
Park Features	0
Supportive Facilities	0
Safety and Maintenance	0.67
Aesthetics	1.4
Health	1.8
Culture and Convenience	0



SUNSET VALLEY NATURE AREA

Assessment Type: Conservation/Greenspace Area

Category	Averaged Score
Access	1.22
Environmental Quality	4.5
Unique Natural Features	0
Safety and Maintenance	4.45
Community	3.83



LOWER COUGAR CREEK GREENBELT

Assessment Type: Conservation/Greenspace Area

Category	Averaged Score
Access	2.2
Environmental Quality	4.79
Unique Natural Features	2.5
Safety and Maintenance	4
Community	3.71



GAINES GREENBELT

Assessment Type: Conservation/Greenspace Area

Category	Averaged Score
Access	2.83
Environmental Quality	4.46
Unique Natural Features	3.75
Safety and Maintenance	4.5
Community	4.71



SOUTH HILLS CONSERVATION AREA

Assessment Type: Conservation/Greenspace Area

Category	Averaged Score
Access	2.2
Environmental Quality	4
Unique Natural Features	2.5
Safety and Maintenance	3.58
Community	3.33



INDIANGRASS PRAIRIE PRESERVE

Assessment Type: Conservation/Greenspace Area

Category	Averaged Score
Access	1.64
Environmental Quality	3.79
Unique Natural Features	3.75
Safety and Maintenance	3.72
Community	2.33



PARKS AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM OPPORTUNITIES

Sunset Valley's rich open spaces present the potential to

1) CLUSTER additional park amenities at nodes of activity throughout the park and open space system to provide places to gather while minimizing environmental disturbance.

2) DRAW people together through the creation of a major, signature park near downtown Sunset Valley.

3) CONNECT all parks and open spaces through a clear network of trails, and when necessary, sidewalks.

4) PRESERVE city-owned properties that are currently being used informally as parks and open space by formalizing them as parks, conservation areas, or greenspace.

5) COMMUNICATE wayfinding and environmental education throughout the Sunset Valley trails system through additional signage and align signage with Sunset Valley's branding.

6) INTEGRATE ADA-accessible experiences into the Parks and Open Space system.