

AN INFORMAL HISTORY OF
SUNSET VALLEY, TEXAS
1954-2004



*“Sunset Valley... where yards are wide, roadways are narrow,
people are few and rural life is cherished.”*

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The City also expresses its gratitude to Jayme Foley, Deputy City Administrator of Sunset Valley, for researching and coordinating the printing of this publication, to the members of the Community Development/Public Relations Committee (Mary Black, chair, Penny Cedel, Betty Dunn, Anne Gault, Mary Jo Light, and Lisa Scheps), for gathering photographs and stories and for proofreading the manuscript, to Mickie Powers and Ella Hancock for writing previous articles on Sunset Valley, and to the citizens of Sunset Valley for sharing their memories and photographs.

The City extends a special **thank you** to all the residents who have volunteered their time over the past 50 years to protect and preserve the special quality of Sunset Valley. Their dedication to the city continues to make it a unique place to live.



July 20, 2004

Community Development/Public Relations Committee Meeting

Committee members swap stories with guests while discussing a book about the history of Sunset Valley. Left to right: Mary Black, chair, Penny Cedel, Judy Issacson, Betty Dunn, Anne Gault, Jayme Foley, Mary Jo Light (standing), Lisa Scheps, Betty Grubbs, Neal Bouldin, Harvey Bouldin, Beth Bouldin Brown

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INTRODUCTION

On September 17, 1954, the area referred to as Sunset Valley was officially incorporated. As our community celebrates its 50th anniversary, we stand at the brink of another new era. The last remaining portions of the Weaver Tract are scheduled for development, the rapidly expanding population of Austin is pushing at our borders, and the roads surrounding our community are becoming ever more congested.

In the midst of the hustle and bustle of Austin, Sunset Valley remains a place of quiet beauty, where acres of conservation land protect native plants and provide a home for hummingbirds, owls, foxes, armadillos, possum, deer, and coyotes. And where the stars still shine at night because we care enough to protect the night sky from light pollution.

While planning for the changes that will inevitably occur, we need to remember our city's history, honor its vision, and become actively involved in deciding its future. Newcomers moving to Sunset Valley because they long to live in a quiet community surrounded by natural beauty will have an opportunity to carry on the legacy of preserving and protecting two of our greatest resources, our land and our water.

To celebrate the City's five decades of existence, residents and staff of Sunset Valley gathered information, stories, and pictures to give readers a glimpse of our history and the people who have made Sunset Valley what it is today. This book is the result of their efforts.

CHAPTER ONE

EARLY HISTORY

The area now referred to as Sunset Valley has a fascinating history, which, for our purposes, begins with the Mexican colonization laws of 1821-1830. When Theodore Bissell applied to the Mexican government for a grant of land in the area that eventually became the City of Sunset Valley, two of the men mentioned in his colonization documents became legends in their own time, Benjamin Rush Milam and his land agent, Robert McAlpen Williamson.

MEXICAN NATIONAL COLONIZATION LAW

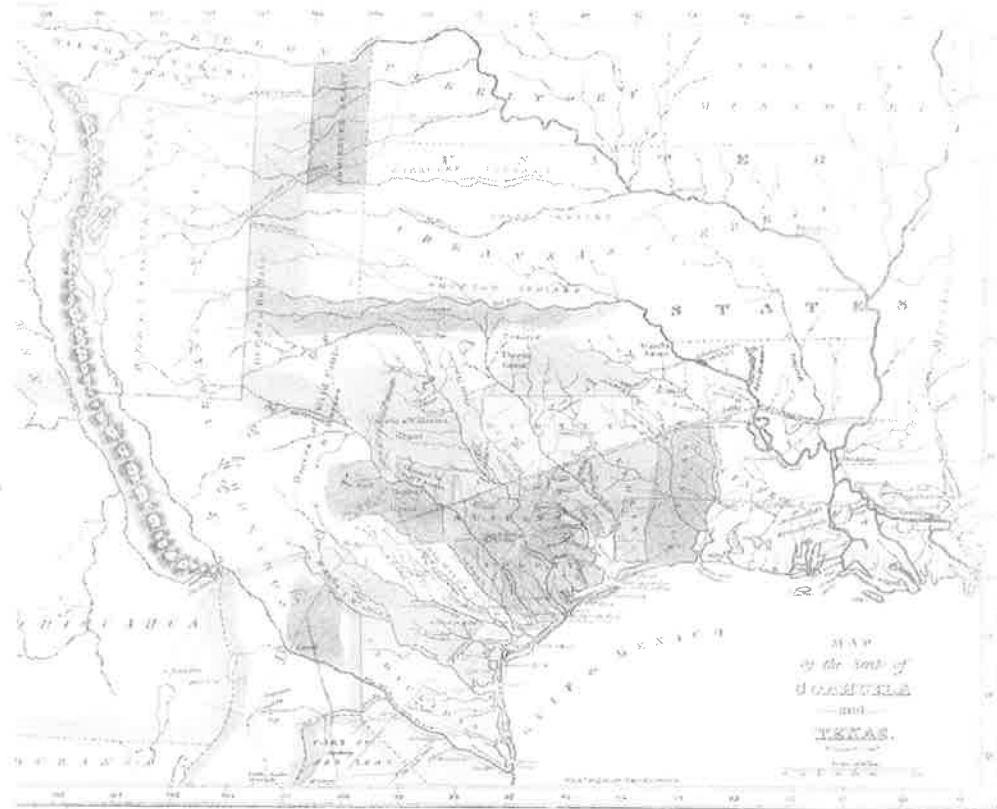
After the fall of Emperor Iturbide, Mexico adopted a federal system of government similar to that of the United States. To encourage settlement in the country's vast, unappropriated lands, the new federal congress of Mexico passed a national colonization law in 1821. That law, and the state colonization law of Coahuila and Texas, passed in March 25, 1825, became the basis of all colonization contracts affecting Texas.

The national colonization law gave Mexican states the authority to dispose of unappropriated land for colonization, subject to certain limitations and requirements. In Coahuila and Texas, state laws granted a league of land to heads of families who agreed to migrate to the area. In return, the state expected families to settle on the land permanently, to farm or raise livestock, and to pay the state the equivalent of about \$160.00 for their league of land. The fee was charged to cover the state's administrative costs, as well as the cost of the survey, clerical fees, and the paper on which the agreements were written. Although \$160.00 was not an inconsiderable sum of money in the 1820s, a league of land consisted of 4,428.4 acres, meaning the cost to a settler was about four cents per acre. Settlers were expected to pay the fee in installments, the first due after their third year on the land, with the remainder due at the end of the fourth, fifth, and sixth years. In addition to receiving land, the colonists received automatic status as Mexican citizens.

To expedite settlement, the colonization law authorized state executives to enter into contracts with individuals who would assume responsibility for settling a specified numbers of families in a particular area. The individuals were called *empresarios*. For their services *empresarios* received five leagues of choice land for every hundred families they could persuade to settle in their contracted area. The *empresarios* usually had six years to fulfill the requirements of their contracts. If an *empresario* could settle two hundred families, he received ten leagues of land, more than 44,000 acres. Over

the years, more than thirty empresario contracts were made, some more successful than others.

1833 Map of the State of Coahuila and Texas



BENJAMIN RUSH MILAM

Benjamin Rush Milam, the empresario for the land that concerns us, was born in Kentucky in 1788. He traveled to New Orleans, where he met up with adventurers, then sailed to South America, looking for better markets for a shipment of flour. During the journey, most of the men died of yellow fever and the ship was almost lost, but Milam and a few friends were rescued.

Milam began trading with the Comanche Indians in Texas in 1818, then returned to New Orleans, where he joined an expedition to aid Mexican patriots in their rebellion against the emperor. After the formation of the Mexican republic, Milam joined the Mexican army and became a Mexican citizen. During these same years, he sought an empresario grant from the Mexican government. Arthur G. Wavell selected Milam as his agent to help settle his empresario grant, but the project eventually failed. Sometime during this period, Milam received his own empresario grant and selected Robert McAlpen Williamson as his agent.

Milam became interested in the prospect of navigating the Red River by steam boat. However, during his expeditionary travels, he and a company of men were captured by Martin Perfecto de Cos. Milam escaped and joined the battle at Goliad, where he was killed on December 7, 1835. He was buried with military honors.

ROBERT MCALPEN WILLIAMSON

R.A. Williamson served as the agent for Milam's empresario grant, and was the person with whom Theodore Bissell dealt while petitioning Mexico for a grant of land. Williamson, for whom Williamson County and Williamson Creek may be named, was born in Georgia in 1804 or 1806. When he was 15 years old, he contracted an illness that left him crippled, his right leg drawn back at the knee. The wooden leg he wore from his knee to the ground led to his widely known nickname, "Three-Legged Willie." Williamson became a lawyer and migrated to Texas in 1826.

Williamson made an early appeal to Texans to resist the "Mexican tyranny," and fought in the battle of San Jacinto. After Texas won its battle for independence in 1836, he served as a judge, and then was elected to serve first in the Texas Congress, then in the Senate, where he earned his reputation as a Texas legend. In 1837, an illness affected his mental acuity, which was further impaired by the grief he experienced after the death of his beloved wife in 1858. He never recovered from the combined shocks and died in 1859.

THEODORE BISSELL

In his collected works, *The Annals of Travis County and of the City of Austin from the Earliest Times to the Close of 1875*, Frank Brown writes,

It is of record that Talbot Chambers, Commissioner of Coahuila and Texas, issued a grant to Theodore Bissell, March 24, 1827, for one league, which was located on Williamson Creek, four miles south of Austin. This was outside the limits of Austin's upper colony, and was in fact issued about nine months before the grant to that empresario.

In his petition for a grant of land, Theodore Bissell said he was born in Connecticut and described himself as a married, 31-year-old farmer with three children. He also said he was a member of the Christian religion.

It was important to include this information in his petition for several reasons; (1) as head of a family, a married man was eligible to receive a full league of land instead of the 1/4 league allocated to unmarried men, (2) settlers were expected to farm or raise livestock so Mr. Bissell's experience as a farmer was valuable, and (3) the Mexican state wanted settlers who belonged to the Roman Catholic church. By listing his religion as "Christian," Bissell met the letter of the law, but not its spirit. To avoid religious discrimination, settlers who belonged to Protestant denominations described themselves as Christians, rather than as Presbyterians, Baptists, etc. By doing so, they

told the truth and, at the same time, avoided mentioning they were not members of the Roman Catholic faith.

1835 field
notes
describing
Bissell's
league of
land

Plot fully miles of our League of land surveyed
B.W.C. under the direction of G. W. C. and
Capt. A. Williamson agent of G. B. Holman
Compt. situated on the waters of Williamson Creek
beginning at the S.C. corner of League 40.18. from which
is a line 100 ft. in due S. 5.73 E. 170 ft. a line 100
ft. in due S. 31 E. 280 ft. thence N. 80 E. 37500 ft.
is a Creek running E. 7400 ft. to a Stake and N.E.
corner of League 40.18. from which is a Creek
100 ft. in due S. 5.65 E. 200 ft. a do 100 ft. in due S.
N. 41.15. 100 ft. thence N. 60.15. 500 ft. to Williamson
Creek running E. 33000 ft. to a Stake and S.W.
corner of League 40.18. from which is a Creek 5
40.15. 200 ft. a do 100 ft. in due S. N. 41.15. 10 ft. thence
S. 30.15. 1650 ft. to Williamson Creek 6500 ft. is a Creek
that runs S. 86000 ft. to a Stake and S.W. corner of
40.18. from which is a black jack 6 ft. in due S. 50.
15. 20 ft. a do 100 ft. N. 71.6. 9 ft. thence E. 3850 ft.
is a Creek running E. 37000 ft. to the place of begin-
ning.

36 Sabots temporal
& Mousty - Patherland

Mr. Bissell's petition to settle in Milam's Colony was directed to Mr. Talbot Chambers, the land commissioner, and signed on March 19, 1835. In the complete petition, Mr. Robert McAlpen Williamson is referred to as the agent for Mr. B.R. Milam. Because Spanish was the official language of business, the petition was written in that language, as were all other documents pertaining to the grant. After the petition was complete, Mr. Bissell signed it with a clear, well-formed signature, complete with flourishes. His signature indicates he was an educated man, accustomed to signing his name to various documents. Although Mr. Brown lists the date of Mr. Bissell's land grant as March 24, 1827, the official petition is dated March 19, 1835.

The original documents, including the field notes that were translated into English, are located in the State Land Office in Austin. They are written on paper purchased by Theodore Bissell and are now beautifully yellowed with age.

In a similar petition, signed on March 14, 1835, a man named Thomas Anderson described himself as a 45-year-old widower with two children, who was born in Virginia and was a physician by trade. Like Bissell, Anderson received a grant of one league of land, located north of Bissell's league.

Over the years, after the Republic of Texas joined the United States, portions of the Bissell and Anderson properties were sold. When John and Lorraine Dowdy purchased their lot at 1 Pillow Road, their deed mentioned a purchase of 1,500 acres by Theodore Bissell on March 19, 1835, recorded in Bastrop County. Mr. Bissell sold the property to James Brodie in 1896. In 1947, a portion of the land was sold to Waverly Thurman and other purchasers, including the Allreds, Pillows, and Brodies. Later, in 1947, C.R. Flournoy and Henry Wendlandt bought one acre, then sold it to Reaugh Watson in 1952. The Dowdys purchased the one-acre property on March 13, 1959, and moved into their new home on September 1, 1959.

In the early 1950s, two brothers, M.H. and Clarence Flournoy, purchased a large tract of land located twelve miles from Austin to develop as a subdivision. Clarence and his wife, Gloria, built their home on Sunset Trail. They were still living in the city when it was incorporated. Malcolm Flournoy (Reese Drive), son of M.H. Flournoy, recalls that people thought his father and uncle were crazy to buy land so far from Austin. Now, the City of Austin completely surrounds the land they acquired — the area called Sunset Valley.

NOTES:



1950 The Fowlers
Nannie (Anita), Buddy, Gordon, Marie, and Spotty (the dog) on their land in Sunset Valley

CHAPTER TWO

DECADE OF 1954-1963

INCORPORATION

The idea of incorporating Sunset Valley was conceived at a meeting at Ben Garza's house on Brodie Lane, where plans were made to distribute a petition asking residents to support an election to incorporate the area. Twenty-five citizens signed the petition.

On August 31, 1954, at 8:45 AM, Judge Tom E. Johnson filed the petition and recorded:

A petition signed by Bud Fowler and more than twenty persons has been filed with me requesting an election for the purpose of determining whether or not the qualified voters within the proposed corporate limits of the hereinafter described unincorporated village of Sunset Valley, Texas desire to incorporate the same into a body corporate for municipal purposes under the provision of Chapter 4, Title 28 of the Revised Civil Statutes of Texas, 1925.

The petition stated that the area to be called Sunset Valley, Texas consisted of less than two square miles of superficial land area and was inhabited by more than two hundred people.

Judge Johnson ordered an election to be held on September 13, 1954 at the residence of Bud Fowler to determine "whether or not the qualified voters ... wish to incorporate." The election results showed fifty-one valid, legal votes were cast, forty-five in favor of incorporating and six against. The Village of Sunset Valley was officially incorporated on September 17, 1954, with Clinton Vilven serving as the Village's first mayor.

The following people signed the original petition:

W.R. "Bud" Fowler, H.G. Grubbs, Joe Jacks, Emily B. Haston, Gordon R. Fowler, Anita E. Fowler, Anna L. Pillow, Mrs. C.W. Vilven, C.W. Vilven, Lucy Smithson, Gloria Haston, Helen R. Vaughan, E.A. Vaughan, A.C. (unknown), J.J. Smallwood, Mrs. J.J. Smallwood, Charles N. Allred, Mrs. R.P. Allred, R.P. Allred, Burke Matthew, C.E. Mulholland, C.H. Cummings, Owen Schnell, Mrs. Owen Schnell, and Mrs. Bernice Mulholland.

The petition was filed at 8:45 am on August 26, 1954.

Petition to incorpor- ate Sunset Valley

THE STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF TRAVIS

TO THE COUNTY JUDGE OF TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS:

We, the undersigned resident, qualified voters of the area
set out in the boundaries attached hereto as an exhibit, hereby
make application for the purpose of incorporating such area
under the provisions of Chapter Eleven, Title 23 of the Revised
Civil Statutes of Texas, such town and/or village to be known
as Sunset Valley, Texas. We hereby represent that
there is included in such boundaries less than two square miles
of superficial area; that more than two hundred (200) people
live within such boundaries, and that all of such area is intended
to be used for strictly town purposes. We attach hereto as ex-
hibits a description of the boundaries desired to be included in
this town and also a plat of the area described.

Mr. West Fowler
H. G. Babbitt
Joe Packard
S. J. Stanton
John C. H. Fowler
C. W. Gilmore
John E. Johnson
W. C. H. F. Johnson
C. W. Gilmore
Lacy Jonathan
George Stanton
William E. Vaughan
John C. H. F. Johnson
Dr. C. Mather
Dr. C. Mather
Dr. C. Mather

Chamber of Commerce
Mrs. L. F. Allen
R. P. Allen
Burke Mathews
R. E. McAllister
R. L. Thompson
Owen Schneid
Mrs. Owen Schneid
Mrs. Berneice Mulholland

Aug 26, 1954
at 8:45 o'clock, A.M.
Sam L. Johnson
Deputy Judge

HOW SUNSET VALLEY GOT ITS NAME

Helen Vaughan (Mrs. Ed) (Sunset Trail) recalled that the name, Sunset Valley, was based on the area's topography and location. She said, "The entire area was a tree-filled valley surrounded by gently rolling hills located on the western edge of Austin, where it was closest to the sunset. The name, Sunset Valley, seemed to be a natural choice."

When remembering the Village's earliest days, Mrs. Vaughan focused on its physical beauty. "When we told people we lived in Sunset Valley, they asked us if it was the valley with all the beautiful trees, and we proudly said, 'Yes!' There were very few streets then, and West Gate was just a dirt road. In those days we could get on our horses and take midnight rides all through the valley, up to where the West Gate Shopping Center is now located. Then, we could ride over the hills to where William Cannon Drive is now. When the moon was full, its light shone on the valley stretching out in front of us. There was such a quiet stillness... it was beautiful back then."

The *4th Annual Sunset Valley Youth Rodeo Program Guide*, printed in 1963, noted that Sunset Valley was located "about seven miles southwest of the State Capitol building in Austin." The brochure described Sunset Valley as "an area of quiet dignity of homes among stately oak and elm trees with plenty of shade as well as beauty surround (sic) each homesite." It also emphasized the area's quiet nature, reporting, "The laws of the City permit no business establishments to be erected or maintained within the City, hence the quiet relaxation of country living with city conveniences."

The Village's unique, rural character and close proximity to Austin, attracted families who wanted to live in a country setting located close to the conveniences of Austin. On September 5, 1957, the Council minutes recorded the official population of Sunset Valley as 181 people. Six years later, according to the Youth Rodeo Program Guide, the population of Sunset Valley had increased to 280 men, women, and children, along with eighty horses and some cattle, rabbits, and chickens.

BOUNDARIES

When the Village was first incorporated, its boundaries stretched from the area where West Gate Shopping Center now stands, east to Manchaca Road, north past Prather Lane, and southwest to the east side of Brodie Lane. (See page 20 for the revised boundary map.)

First De-Annexation

On October 21, 1954, approximately a month after the Village's incorporation and the first election of Village officers, Mayor Vilven accepted an application from several petitioners to de-annex significant amounts of land in Sunset Valley. The application, signed by B.F. Priest, Walter Eskew, Jr., W.A. Crenshaw, W.L. Lundelius, Western

Hills Inc., R.E. Canfield, Ben Garza, Ed Fleming, John Mayner, William Montez, and Charlie A. Allred, identified three tracts of land for de-annexation:

- Tract One included properties near Taylor Gaines along the Fredericksburg Road and the Becker property west of Brodie Lane. The Becker Tract was later developed into the Sunset Valley Marketfair shopping center.
- Tract Two included lands south and west of Homer Grubbs' property, and all lands west of Brodie Lane, including the right-of-way property.
- Tract Three included all lands from Manchaca Road west to what is now West Gate Boulevard and north to Fredericksburg Road.

No official notes or minutes formalizing the de-annexation of the three tracts can be found in the city's records, but subsequent maps clearly show that the three tracts are located outside the boundaries of the corporate limits.

Boundary Confusion

Confusion about the boundaries of Sunset Valley is reflected in the minutes of Council meetings over the next ten years, during which time numerous tracts were annexed and de-annexed.

- On January 31, 1956, the Council de-annexed ten acres owned by H.E. Brodie and Clinton Eskew.
- On January 23, 1957, at the request of Clarence Flournoy, the Council de-annexed approximately 25 acres on both sides of Sunset Trail (north section). However, the relevant ordinance identifies only ten acres to be de-annexed.
- On May 2, 1957 and again in May 1959, Col. Chase, then mayor, requested a new map showing the true limits of Sunset Valley. However, new maps showing the Village's corporate boundaries were not prepared until 1964.
- On September 8, 1960, a petition was accepted to annex the Barton View Subdivision but no formal action can be found in the Village's records.
- On December 10, 1962, the Council annexed 377 acres stretching from Pillow Road to Jones Road to Brodie Lane to Oakdale Drive. The land included property on the east and west sides of Fowler Road (now Lone Oak Trail), the Weaver tract, and all land located on the north side of Oakdale Drive, including property facing Brodie Lane.

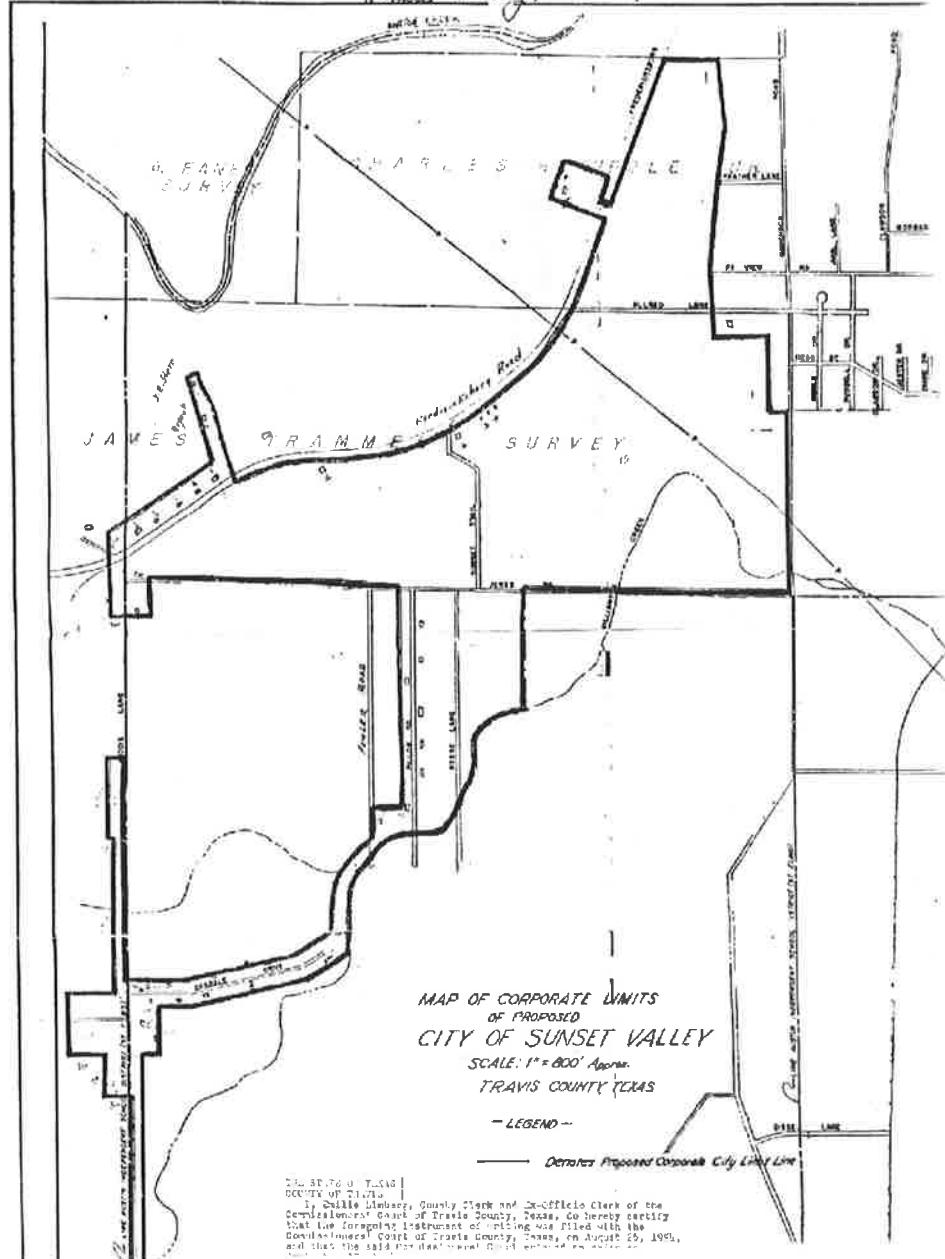
Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

In August 1963, the Texas Legislature authorized cities to regulate development in unincorporated land adjacent to their Village limits by establishing extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJ). A city's size determined the amount of unincorporated land it

For original Field Notes and
for C/P order Declaring Results of special Election
see Deed Record Book 1607, Pages 363-369,
Deed Records, Travis County, Texas

For Ordinance Re: Annexing a
portion of the original City of Sunset Valley
Pages 362-369 Deed Records 1607

Dallas Limburg, to C.P.

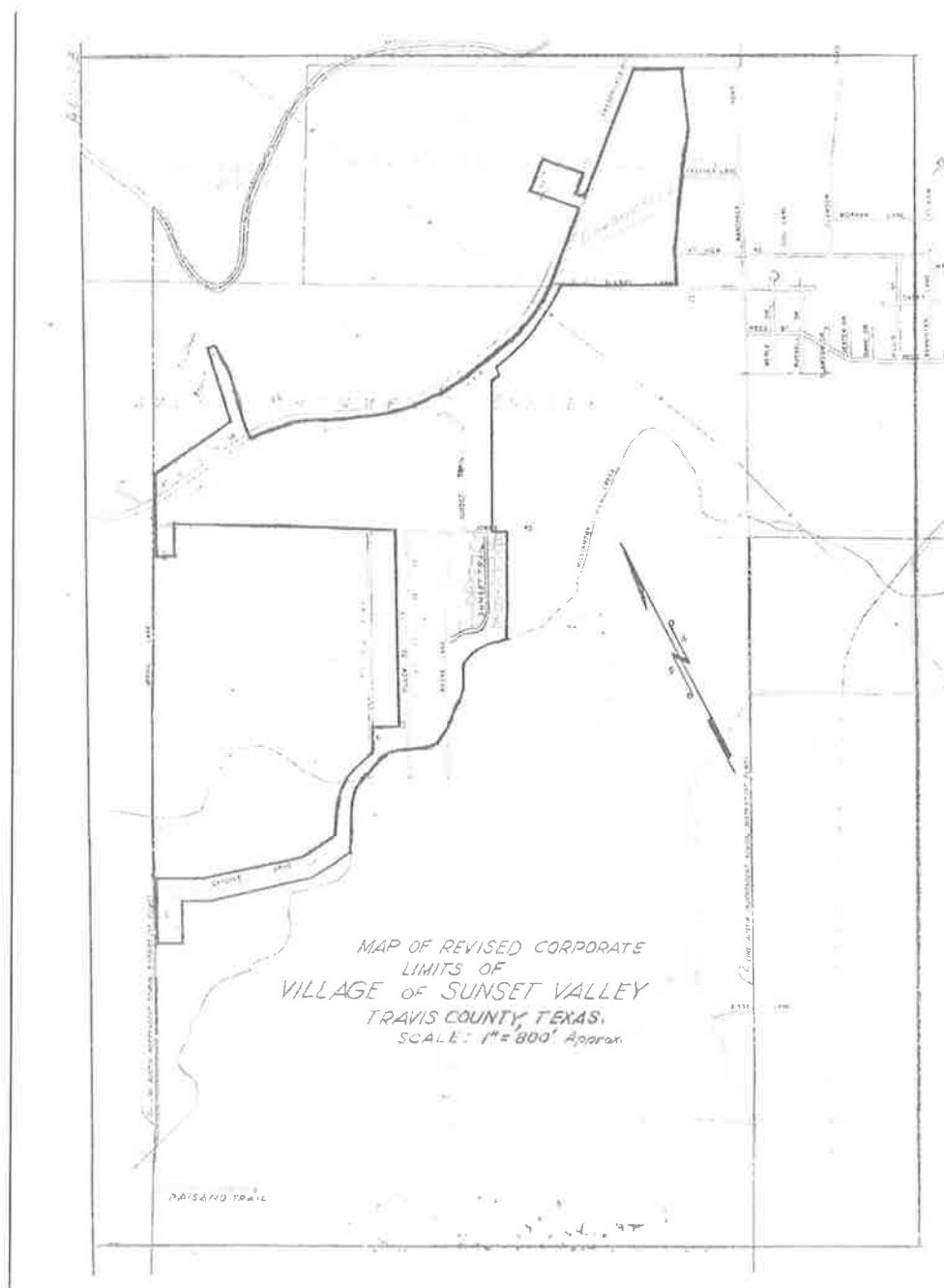


Proposed boundaries of Sunset Valley drawn from the original field notes. The boundaries were used when declaring the results of the special election and when writing the ordinance de-annexing the area from Austin. The map is included in the Travis County Deed Records

Could claim as being under its jurisdiction. Austin was granted a five-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Sunset Valley's ETJ consisted of land within a half mile of its city limits. Because the corporate limits of Austin and Sunset Valley were located within five miles of each other, their ETJs often overlapped. Neither city could annex land without permission from the other. Over the years, Sunset Valley received several requests from property owners asking to be released from Sunset Valley's ETJ.

In November 1963, the City of Austin requested that Sunset Valley relinquish all rights to all land located in its ETJ. In the minutes of a meeting on November 5, 1963, the Mayor of Sunset Valley indicated he would consider written requests from property owners wanting to de-annex specific tracts.

Corporate
limits of
Sunset
Valley prior
to the 1964
annexations,
Ordinance
15



VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

Many residents have supported Sunset Valley by serving as mayor or as a member of the City Council. Even a cursory review of the minutes from 1955 through 2004 reveals a long history of hard work, successes, frayed nerves, accomplishments, personality clashes, and cooperation as citizens worked together to establish and maintain the Village's quiet, rural nature in the midst of Austin's rapidly sprawling growth.

Year	Mayor	Council Members
1954	Clinton Vilven	Richard Canfield, Ed Vaughan, Julian J. Smallwood, Joe Jacks, and Owen Schnell
1955	Clinton Vilven	Richard Canfield, Ed Vaughan, Julian J. Smallwood, Joe Jacks, and Owen Schnell
1956	Charles Bustin	Dunning Bright, Clayton L. Fox, Tom Gray, Jr., Milton Lindsay, and Ed Vaughan
1957	Earl Chase	Curtis Barnett, Homer Grubbs, Tom Gray, Jr., Charles Bustin, and Ed Vaughan
1958	Tom Gray, Jr.	B. G. Blount, Bud Fowler, Earl Chase, Gordon Fowler, and Bill Gannon
1959	W.R. "Bud" Fowler	B. G. Blount, Gordon Fowler, D.R. Stearnes, J. M. Head, and Fred Adams, Jr.
1960	W.R. "Bud" Fowler	Sam Allred, Don Stearnes (later replaced by Harvey Bouldin), Cecil Mulholland, J. Manley Head, and Fred Adams, Jr.
1961	Tom Gray, Jr.	Harvey Bouldin, Earl R. Chase, Henry Miller, Cecil Mullholland, and H. F. Severn
1962	Tom Gray, Jr.	Cecil Mulholland, Harvey Bouldin, Doug Deison, Henry Miller, and Earl Chase
1963	Tom Gray, Jr.	Cecil Mulholland, Harvey Bouldin, Doug Deison, Henry Miller, and Earl Chase

First Election

On October 9, 1954, Sunset Valley residents elected their first officers. Twenty-six valid, legal votes were cast during the election, which was held at Ben Garza's home. The first elected officers were: Mayor, Clinton Vilven; Marshal, W.R. "Bud" Fowler,

and Aldermen Richard Canfield, Ed Vaughan, J.J. Smallwood, Joe Jacks, and Owen Schnell.

Council Minutes

For twenty years, from 1955 through 1977, the minutes of council meetings were left undisturbed in manila folders strewn among various desk drawers. When Frances Underwood (Pillow Road) discovered them, she had them bound in two volumes at her own expense. One set was stored at City Hall and the other in her home. Since February 1977, council minutes have been stored in notebooks at City Hall and are available for reference.

The early minutes are fascinating because they provide a tantalizing glimpse of village life in the 1950s. Even a brief reading reveals a wide range of unusual topics and issues that the Council faced.

- February 2, 1955: Mayor Clint Vilven handwrote Sunset Valley's first council minutes on three sheets of 9" x 6" lined paper. (See page 23.) During the meeting, two issues arose which continued to be topics of discussion for the next fifty years—taxes and road repairs. Other issues, including water, sewerage, and development, arose soon after, providing additional challenges for the Council for years to come.
- July 2, 1956: The Council requested signs to mark the boundary limits of Sunset Valley and installed speed limit signs on the main streets.
- June 1, 1957: The minutes report that the creek crossing at Sunset Trail was finally passable and could be used by residents whose homes were on the other side.
- July 11, 1957: The entire minutes, recorded by Mayor Earl R. Chase on one-half of a small sheet of paper, included the following statement: "Refreshments were served by Mrs. Chase, the pie & coffee was most delicious." The same minutes reported that the Council had asked the State Health Department to fog Sunset Valley to "rid our germs and mosquito hazards." The minutes from October 3, 1957 reported that Austin refused to use its fogging equipment on small unincorporated towns.
- May 1, 1958: The Village purchased street signs from the Municipal Street Sign Company.

First Minutes

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Clinton Vilven & all members, board of aldermen, were present. Others present Bud Fowler, Marshal, Gordon Fowler & Mr. Clarence Flornoy (sic). Mr. Joe Jacks mentioned an amount must be decided on to ask each homeowner. A motion was made & seconded to refund Mr. Flournoy a portion of his contribution of \$100.00 in proportion to other donors of equal amount of land. Mr. Fowler made the motion & seconded by Mr. Jacks to charge \$25.00 to each new family that have occupied as of January 1, 1955. Mr. Jacks made the suggestion we mail a list of home owners who have paid to owners who have not paid as a possible means of collection of additional funds.

Mr. Bush made the motion & seconded by Mr. Jacks to charge 25.00 per home with acre of land but not to exceed five acres, any additional acres would be \$1.00 per acre. This was voted on & carried.

It was suggested by Mr. Vilven to change road sign from present Bouldin Drive to Sunset Trail to conform with county platt (sic). This was voted & carried in favor of Sunset Trail. Mr. Gordon Fowler was asked to explain the commissioner's comments as to road repairs in Sunset Valley. Mr. Fowler suggested we, the city of Sunset Valley, put up a token amount to Travis County precinct 3 to make repairs. A committee was appointed to call on Bob Barker commissioner 10 AM Monday to decide on what policy will be required to obtain future road repairs.

A motion by Mr. Bush & seconded by Mr. Jacks to draw up an ordinance to prohibit hog ranches; goats & sheep, poultry and etc.

The meeting adjourned.

Clint Vilven

Minutes of
the first
Council
Meeting,
held on
February 2,
1955

- August 6, 1958: Council member Buck Cummings was impeached for "not being able to attend any council meetings." Mr. Cummings was elected to office in March, but missed the April 3, 1958 swearing-in ceremony and all subsequent meetings. Donald Stearns was appointed by the mayor to fill Mr. Cummings's place. The minutes also included a "hearty" endorsement of the Sunset Valley Garden Club, which was being organized by the "ladies of Sunset Valley." The Garden Club was active in the community for many years. In 1960, it sponsored a community-wide meeting on health-related services available to Sunset Valley. Club membership grew rapidly, eventually including members from the Austin area.
- March 5, 1959: The minutes reported that work had begun on Oakdale Drive.

- May 7, 1963: The minutes described the paving of Sunset Trail from Highway 290 to Jones Road, which was completed by Mr. Barker. Pillow Road was paved in 1969, and Reese Drive during 1970.
- May 7, 1959: Mayor Bud Fowler authorized Gordon Fowler to mail postcards to all Sunset Valley families warning them of the danger of rabies and poisonous snakes. Thirteen unvaccinated dogs were identified during the June 4, 1959 council meeting, after which a motion was passed to offer free vaccinations for the animals.
- May 6, 1960: Twenty-five visitors attended the Council meeting at Fred Adams' house (Sunset Trail). Due to crowded conditions, the Council passed a motion to hold meetings in the homes of other residents. Major Joseph Petronis (Sunset Trail) offered the use of his home for the June 2, 1960 meeting.
- August 1, 1961: The Council meeting, held during an open dish supper at Frances and Henry Miller's home, attracted 75 adults. At this meeting, mention of an elementary school in Sunset Valley first occurs in minutes.
- April 2, 1963: The Council discussed gun shots fired at the Edwards place (South Lamar) and decided that a road block should be formed at Jones Road to "secure these people."

During the late 1950s and early 60s, Sunset Valley was known for its Christmas light displays. "Shine at Christmas Time" was advertised in the newspaper and people came from all over Austin to look at the houses on Sunset Trail, most of which were covered with Christmas lights. During the December 3, 1959 meeting, Council members each donated \$2.00 to pay for a Christmas greeting sign to be erected by the Sunset Valley Garden Club.

Village Secretary

From 1955 through 1959, the mayor appointed a Council member to serve as Village secretary. Ed Vaughan served from 1955 through 1957. In 1958, Col. Earl R. Chase was appointed, and, in 1959, Donald Stearns (Stearns Road) served as secretary and treasurer until March 3, 1960, when the Council voted to hire a permanent recording secretary.

Ellen Caruthers was hired on April 7, 1960 to serve as secretary. She worked for five hours each month at a salary of \$120.00 per year. The last copy of the minutes signed by Ellen M. Caruthers was dated September 8, 1960. Although the minutes do not mention Mrs. Caruthers' resignation or the hiring of Marie E. Fowler as secretary, Ms. Fowler signed the May 2, 1961 minutes as Secretary. Apparently Ms. Fowler was not able to serve for long because her letter of resignation, dated the following day,

May 3, was read during the June 6, 1961 council meeting. Mayor Tom Gray then re-appointed Col. Chase as secretary.

Zoning

The first Zoning Commission was appointed on September 12, 1963, with R.E. Adamson (Pillow Road), Curtis Barnett (Oakdale Drive), Mrs. Curtis Barnett, Robert Braden (Reese Drive), and Ella Hancock (Hwy 290) serving as members. On November 5, 1963, the Council passed the first zoning ordinance for Sunset Valley.

VILLAGE SERVICES

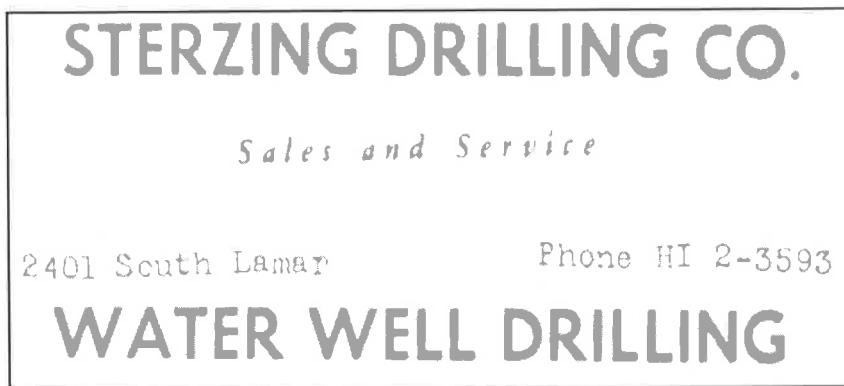
Water

On August 11, 1952, M.H. and Clarence Flournoy "granted and conveyed unto the said C.T. Sterzing the free and uninterrupted use, liberty, privilege and easement of passing in and along a certain tract of land now owned by us and adjoining the 40'x60' tract hereby conveyed to C.T. Sterzing." Such was the beginning of Sunset Valley's water system, a system that provided its users with water and some frustration for many years.

On February 5, 1958, the Council minutes authorized Bud Fowler to investigate "why Sunset Valley cannot secure water from the water district."

On June 2, 1960, Mr. Sterzing asked the City of Austin to provide more electricity to power two additional water pumps required to increase water pressure in Sunset Valley. After

the pumps were installed, the Council minutes reflect years of ongoing discussion about the water system.



Sterzing's ad in the 1962 Youth Rodeo Program

Natural Gas

On October 1, 1959, the Council asked Fred Adams and Gordon Fowler to petition the local gas company to extend their lines down Jones Road and into Sunset Valley.

Police Department

From the earliest Council meetings, determining the need for police protection has been a frequent topic of conversation. Minutes from Council meetings reflect ongoing discussions about the optimum number of police personnel, the number of vehicles needed, and the size of the department's budget.

W.R. "Bud" Fowler, who was elected Marshal in the fall of 1954, provided the first police protection for Sunset Valley. On July 11, 1957, after some deliberation, the Council approved the purchase of a \$10.00 badge for the marshal. On April 3, 1958, the Council authorized Marshal Fowler to appoint a deputy marshal from east Sunset Valley. He appointed Roy Locke and asked the Council to authorize the purchase of a deputy badge.

VILLAGE BUDGET AND TAXES

For years, the Village was operated on a shoestring budget, supported by a voluntary tax and proceeds from a Youth Rodeo.

- February 6, 1958: The Council minutes included a Treasurer's Report which mentioned "cash on hand" in the amount of \$242.90 and receipts of \$180.00, for a total of \$422.90.
- June 2, 1960: The Minutes included a discussion of a voluntary tax. A motion was passed to raise taxes to \$15.00 for each lot with a house on it, and to \$5.00 for each lot without a house, with the taxes due on or before January 1, 1961. Mayor Bud Fowler stated he would send a letter to residents asking them to cooperate with the Village's voluntary tax program. Majors Joe Cox and Joe Petronis volunteered to talk with residents with delinquent taxes who did not respond to the letter.

YOUTH RODEO

The heyday of Sunset Valley's horse-related activities occurred during the late 1950s and early 60s. For four years, Sunset Valley sponsored a youth rodeo, an annual event that became the largest youth rodeo in the State of Texas, attracting 250-300 participants and more than a thousand attendees.

The first mention of the rodeo occurs in the May 1, 1958 Council minutes, which state, "Problem of Junior Rodeo was followed up by Bud Fowler and Gordon Fowler and a further report will be made to the Council."

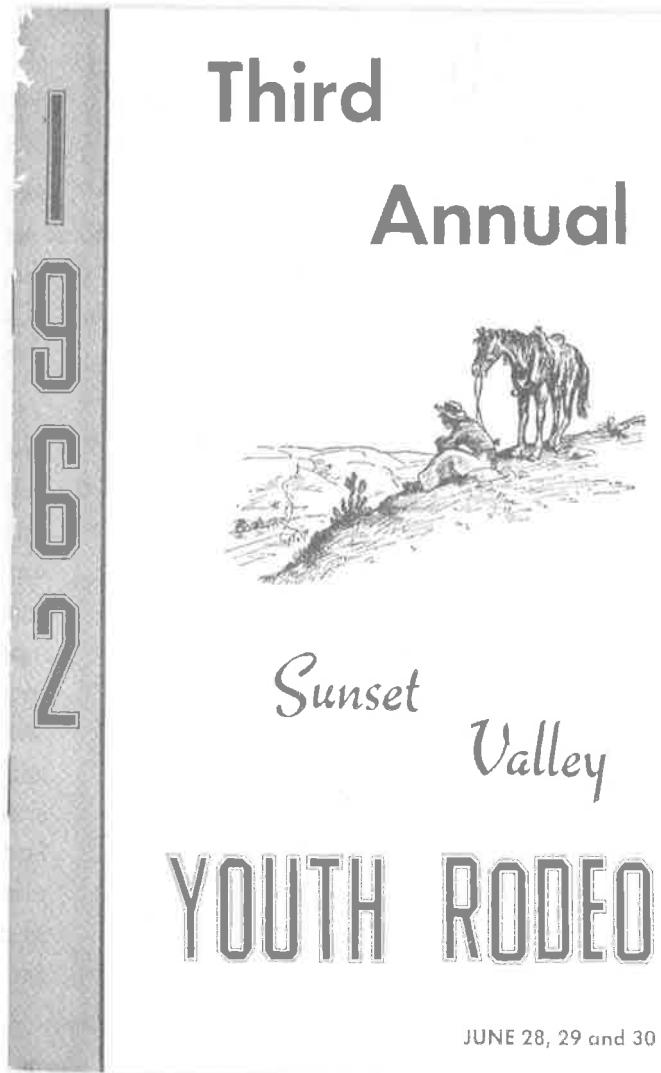
No further mention of the rodeo is made until February 4, 1960, when the Council voted to sponsor a junior rodeo for the purpose of raising funds for the Village Treasury. Mayor Bud Fowler appointed Gordon Fowler and Doug Deison to make arrangement for a site and establish a date for the rodeo.

On July 7, 1960, Mayor Bud Fowler appointed Gordon Fowler to coordinate plans with Cecil Hill for a rodeo to be held in August at Mr. Hill's arena in Oak Hill. The Mayor agreed to personally provide the necessary funds up to \$250.00, an amount to be reimbursed from gate receipts. Over the years, Bud and Gordon Fowler continued to direct and coordinate the rodeo, with help from residents of Sunset Valley who served on various rodeo committees.

The first rodeo was held at Hill's Arena on August 26-27, 1960. Carol Deison was Rodeo Queen and Janet Simmons was Mascot. Rodeo profits were split 50/50 with Cecil Hill, who furnished the arena and provided the stock. Events included bareback riding, bull riding, steer wrestling and riding, cloverleaf barrel racing, and ribbon roping. After expenses, the Village made a \$285 profit on the first rodeo. The rodeo champions represented Texas at the National High School Rodeo in Tarkio, Missouri.

The second rodeo was held June 29-July 1, 1961. Advertising was sold to local businesses to help cover expenses. Four Austin banks donated trophy saddles for prizes. Marie Fowler, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Fowler, was elected Rodeo Queen and Jaynell Fowler was Mascot. The second rodeo made a profit of \$115.34.

The third annual rodeo was held on June 28-30, 1962. Cathaleen Shupe was elected Rodeo Queen and Jill Bouldin was Mascot. Due to crowded conditions during the first two rodeos, the residents of Sunset Valley helped build a 27-tier concrete block stand to provide seats for 1000 more people. Work proceeded on nights and



Cover of
1962
Rodeo
Program

Saturdays from May 16 to June 14. However, heavy rains fell every day during that year's rodeo, which affected attendance. The rodeo lost \$414.59.

1962
Rodeo
Mascot, Jill
Bouldin,
and
Queen,
Cathaleen
Shupe

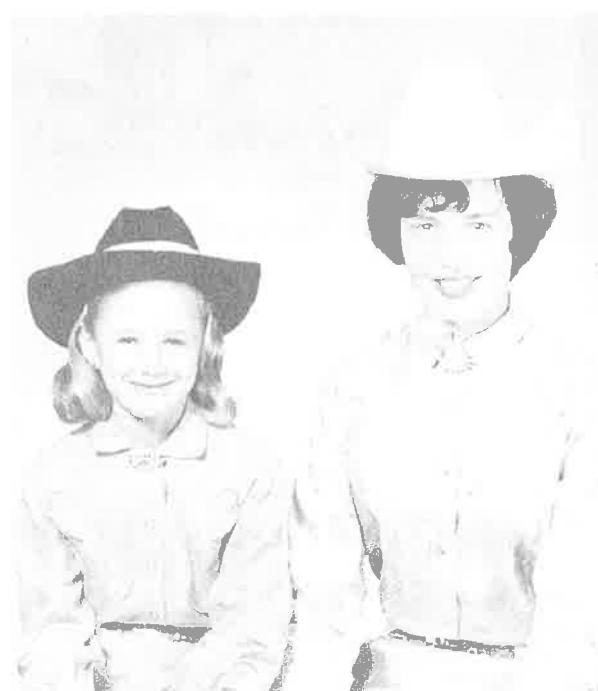


The fourth annual rodeo, again at Hill's Arena in Oak Hill, was held from June 27-29, 1963. It attracted more than 200 participants from southern Texas. Patsy Thompson was Rodeo Queen and Roxanne Bouldin was Mascot. A photograph of Governor John Connally and Roxanne appeared in the Austin American Statesman.

EQUESTRIAN DRILL TEAM

The rural nature of Sunset Valley attracted families who wanted to live in the country. After several "horse-keeping" families moved to the Village, they decided to organize an equestrian drill team as a way of keeping their children busy and out of trouble. Helen Vaughan, a certified equestrian drill team instructor, served as teacher.

1963 Rodeo
Mascot,
Roxanne
Bouldin,
and Queen,
Patsy
Thompson



The Drill Team, which eventually included eighteen members, practiced on a two-acre tract of land on Sunset Trail for at least two hours a day, and sometimes longer during warmer months. The Team received recognition throughout Texas, and participated in horse shows and rodeos all over the state. An article in the Austin American Statesman, along with several pictures, describes the drill team as the first-ever to perform in the San Antonio Stock Show.

Members of the team included Beth Bouldin, Neal Bouldin, Roxanne Bouldin, Wolf Bouldin, Paula Bush, Carol Deison, Kenny Deison, Teddy Eggeling, Ann Eklund, Linda Gray, Mike Gruver, Pete Hunt, Connie Potts, Paula Powell, Janet Smallwood, Bobbie Thompson, Patsy Thompson, Philip Thompson, and Sandy Turner. Team members wore light pants, matching blue hats, and vests decorated with a patch depicting a horse surrounded by a large gold horseshoe and the words, "Sunset Valley Youth Drill Team." The horses were "costumed" with matching blue leg wraps.

Helen Vaughan fondly remembers the Drill Team and her beautiful black horse, JaVa, who was named after her son, Jack (Ja), and his girlfriend, Vanise (Va). Linda Cox, the daughter of one of Helen's neighbors, rode JaVa during team practices and events. Cynthia Braden, another supporter of the drill team, bought a black horse for her daughter, so the two girls could ride matching black horses during team events.

As much as the families enjoyed participating in the Drill Team, the horses may have enjoyed it even more. Helen Vaughan remembers the day a neighborhood boy accidentally opened the gate to JaVa's pasture. Seeing his chance, JaVa made a mad dash through the gate, jumped a hedge, and ran through a neighbor's garden to get to a team practice that was proceeding without him. JaVa seemed pleased because he achieved his goal of participating in the practice. Mrs. Vaughan was not so pleased because she had to spend the next several days replacing her neighbors' hedges and gardens.



Cathy Shupe and Beth Bouldin modeling their Youth Equestrian Drill Team uniforms

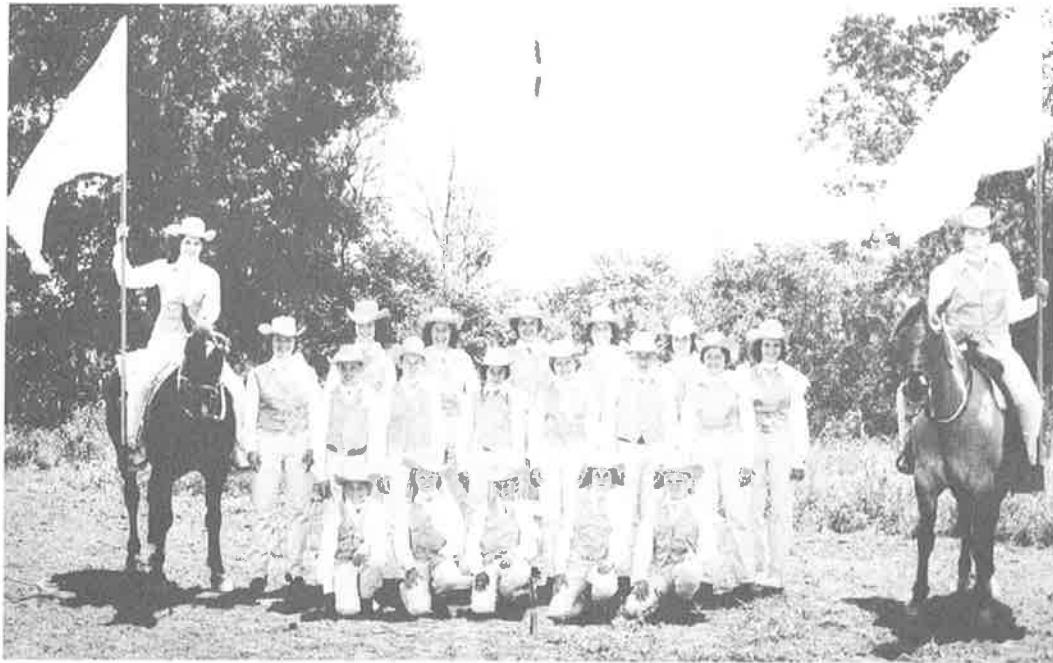
Sunset
Valley
Youth
Drill
Team



Top row: Kenny Deison, Pete Hunt, Teddy Eggeling, Roxanne Bouldin, Linda Gray, Bobbie Thompson, Beth Bouldin, Ann Eklund;

Middle row: unknown, unknown, Paula Powell, Paula Bush, Mike Gruver (standing);

Bottom row: Connie Potts, Philip Thompson, Janet Smallwood, Carol Deison, unknown, Patsy Thompson, Sandy Turner, and Wolf Bouldin.



1963 Sunset Valley Youth Drill Team, Photograph in 4th Annual Youth Rodeo Program

Back row, left to right: Patsy Thompson, Linda Head, Betty Head, Sandy Gray, Cathy Shupe;

Middle row: Linda Gray, Philip Thompson, Kenny Deison, Paula Bush, Debbie Pugmire, Jerry Landers, Sandy Turner, Carol Deison;

Front row: Wolf Bouldin, Ann Eklund, Neal Bouldin, Mickey Rogers, Beth Bouldin; flag carriers, left: Connie Potts; right, Mike Gruver.

NOTES:

CHAPTER THREE

DECade 1964-1973

Sunset Valley faced new challenges during the decade of 1964-1973. Volunteers and staff worked hard to maintain Sunset Valley's unique rural character while also providing adequate services for its residents. During this decade, the Council focused on boundaries, water delivery, street maintenance, fire protection, and a battle with the Austin Independent School District (AISD).

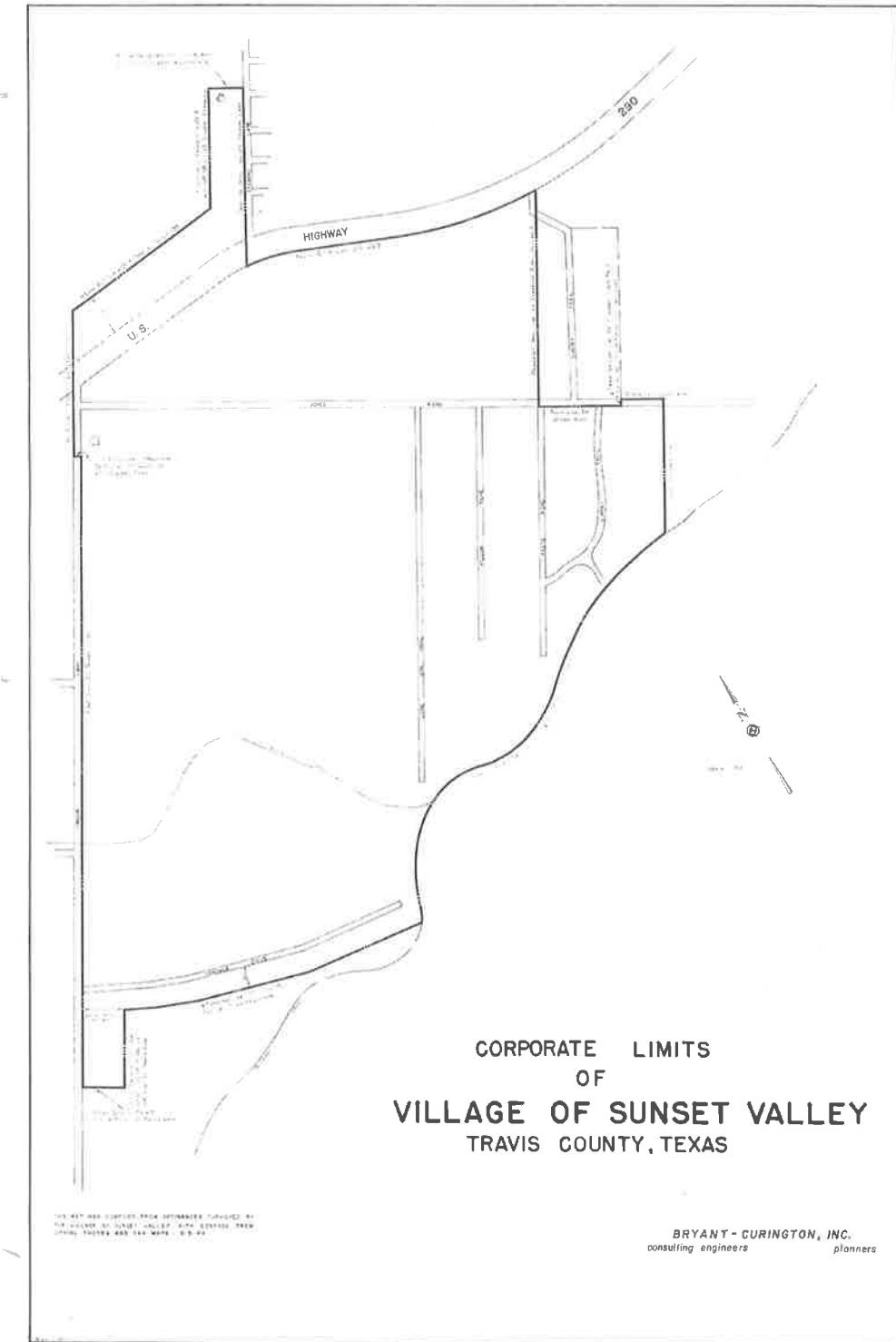
BOUNDARIES

In 1964 a new corporate map showing the Village's boundaries was prepared. Throughout the decade, disagreements about the overlapping extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJs) of Sunset Valley and Austin, coupled with Sunset Valley's concerns about omissions of property thought to be included in the original petition of incorporation, led to ongoing tension between the two cities.

- February 11, 1965: The Council de-annexed land owned by Charles Allred & Joellion Smither.
- March 3, 1964: The Council approved a request from Bill Milburn to release a 142.9-acre tract (Somerset West) from Sunset Valley's ETJ.
- December 1964: The Council organized efforts to annex property not included in the original survey of 1954. The desired property included Highway 290, Stearns Lane, and land located east and west of Sunset Valley.
- March 4, 1965: Sunset Valley asked Austin to release from its 5-mile ETJ a 19.68 acre tract on Oakdale Drive and a 10.57 acre tract on the ~~southeast~~ boundary of Sunset Valley so they could be incorporated into Sunset Valley.
- August 12, 1965: The Council approved a request from developers, West Gate Square, Inc., to release to Austin a 2.24 acre tract on the northwest boundary of Sunset Valley.
- October 8, 1968: The Council denied a request from Dr. Weaver to de-annex his property. The minutes noted that the village would "notify him his application is not favorably considered as it would not be mutually beneficial to both parties at the present time."
- October 1968: Sunset Valley officials learned from an article in the Austin American Statesman that Austin had begun proceedings to annex 16.85 acres

of land located in Sunset Valley's ETJ without submitting a request to the Council. By December 1968, Sunset Valley had written a letter to the City of

1964
Corporate
limits after
annexation



Austin requesting that the boundary of Sunset Valley be corrected in exchange for de-annexing the requested acres. Sunset Valley also wanted to annex property that had been inadvertently left out of the original incorporation and to change its zoning to "single family residential."

- By March 1969, Austin had approved Sunset Valley's request to annex 19.68 acres located along its southern boundary—the property on the south side of Oakdale drive, including the properties fronting Brodie Lane. The annexation was completed in April.
- April 10, 1973: The Council approved a request from Clyde Copus to release land in its ETJ located east of West Gate between Jones Road and the creek. Mr. Copus planned to build four-plex residences on the property and assured the Council that the structures would not be unsightly.
- July 10, 1973: The Council approved a request from the Austex Development Company (Nash Phillips-Copus) to release from its ETJ a 173-acre tract abutting the southeast corner of Sunset Valley.

VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

Year	Mayor	Council Members
1964	Harvey Bouldin	Henry Miller, J.E. Dowdy, Earl Chase, Max Nave, and Tom Eklund
1965	Max Nave	Paul Beck, Earl Chase, J. E. Dowdy, Tom Eklund, and Ella Hancock
1966	Max Nave	Ella Hancock, Tommy Eklund, Earl Chase, C. L. Sherrod, and Harvey Bouldin
1967	T. C. Eklund	S. M. Allred, W. R. Fowler, C. L. Sherrod, B. A. Shupe, and Phil Thompson
1968	T. C. Eklund	J. C. Cox, Phil Thompson, Benny Shupe, Art Sprinkle, and Col E. R. Chase
1969	Charles Burton	Benny Shupe, Cullen Cox, Tommy Eklund, Phil Thompson, and James Dunn
1970	Charles Burton	Sam Allred, Phil Thompson, James Dunn, Denny Shupe, and Tommy Eklund
1971	Charles Burton	James W. Dunn, Wm. F. Hair, Virgil Waggoner, Sam Allred, and Phil Thompson

1972	Nolan Sims	James Dunn, Wm. S. Rider, Wm. S. Hair, Phil Thompson, and Virgil Waggoner
1973	Nolan Sims	Bob Denman, Sam Chrisco, Phil Thompson, William Rider, and Burford Westlund

The minutes of Council meetings continued to address issues ranging from delinquent taxes to potholes.

- February 10, 1966: The Council adopted an ordinance addressing “loose unattended animals.”
- November 19, 1968: The Council voted to purchase three acres of land at the corner of Jones Road and Lone Oak Drive from Mrs. Alice Walker for \$7,500. The property was designated as the future site of the Village’s first official administrative building.
- February 8, 1972: The minutes noted that Dr. Weaver had surveyed his land for possible development. The council agreed that a notice of delinquent taxes on his property should be filed in the Travis County records.
- February 13, 1973: A request was denied to rezone a 2.2-acre tract of land for the purpose of building a church. The tract was located on the Fredericksburg Road between properties owned by Mathews and Richardson.

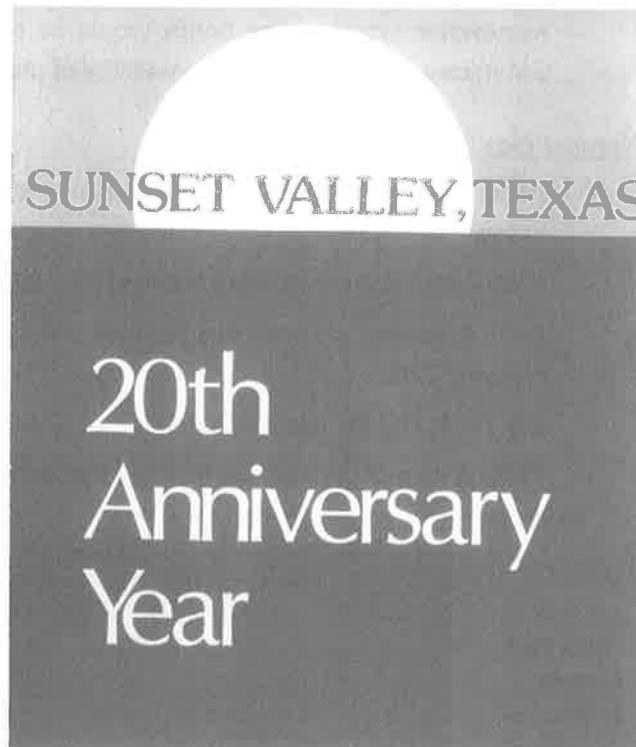
March 4,
1967
Birthday
Party
Stevie Lucas,
Robert
Kotrola,
Lawrence
Adams,
Merry
Adams,
Roxanne
Bouldin,
Tracy Purcell,
and Stuart
Adams



- March 12, 1973: Travis County Commissioner, Johnny Voudouris, informed Sunset Valley that the County was no longer able to maintain the west end of Jones Road due to other demands placed on the county's road maintenance budget and crew. Later that year, a woman sued Sunset Valley, claiming that the pot holes on Jones Road caused her to lose control of her car and suffer an automobile accident. The suit was settled for \$1,500. Because the Village lacked sufficient funds to repair the road, it was temporarily closed with barricades to deter traffic. Lawrence Adams Jr. (Sunset Trail), a teenager at the time, fondly recalled his job as a barricade guard:

"The City appointed a bunch of us boys to act as barricade guards, and we loved it. We took turns riding our bikes to Jones Road and manning the barricades. The job gave us a role in city life, and transformed us from a bunch of vandals into protectors of the city!"

- March 14, 1973: Major Tom Storey (Sunset Trail), a prisoner of war, returned to his home in Sunset Valley.
- September 15, 1973: A celebration marking the 20th anniversary of Sunset Valley's incorporation was held at 7:30 pm in the cafeteria at the Sunset Valley Elementary School. The Celebration Committee was co-chaired by Robert Duncan and Frances Miller. William Rider designed the cover of the program, which included a five-page article on the history of Sunset Valley written by Ella Hancock. Mr. Joe Wells, Austin National Bank, was the featured speaker for the evening.



Cover of program for 20th year celebra-tion

VILLAGE SERVICES

Water

In the early 1970s, the Council discussed purchasing the Village's water system and upgrading it.

- January 11, 1972: The Village interviewed an engineering firm about developing plans to meet the Village's water and wastewater needs.
- June 13, 1972: Council minutes state that the Public Health Department was contacted because water was not being tested as required by law.
- June 22, 1972: Mr. Jim Hudson purchased the water system from Mr. Sterzing for \$15,000.
- February 13, 1973: Council minutes indicate that Mr. Hudson looked into the possibility of installing a water storage tank and looping system.
- May 16, 1973: Mr. Hudson offered to sell the water system to the Village. The Council directed an advisory committee to explore the possibility of issuing bonds to pay for improvements to the Village's streets and to the water and wastewater systems. The bonds would be payable from property taxes. The committee also explored the possibility of phasing in the improvements.

Natural Gas

- 1965: The Southern Union Gas Company installed natural gas lines to Sunset Valley.
- 1969: Natural gas lines were installed for residents on Pillow Road.
- 1973: A six-inch gas main was installed along Jones Road, Brodie Lane, and Highway 290.
- July 1973: The gas line was extended to Lone Oak Drive.
- 1975: A natural gas line was installed for residents on Oakdale Drive.

March 1967
Roxanne
Bouldin, Lisa
Katrolla,
Tracy Purcell,
and Merry
Mattie Adams
(front)



Fire Protection

- 1964: Sunset Valley bought an old LaFrance Fire Truck.
- April 11, 1971: The Council minutes state, “Sunset Valley will receive a 1974 Chevy panel wagon with a 300 gallon tank particularly useful for grass fires.” The minutes indicate that an additional truck was on order from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Army Surplus.
- July 1973: The Village sponsored a citywide garage sale to raise money for fire equipment and a structure to house the fire truck.
- September 11, 1973: An ordinance was passed establishing the office of Fire Marshal. Doug Deison (Reese Dr.) was appointed to serve as the first Fire Marshal.
- October 9, 1973: The Manchaca Fire Department agreed to provide fire protection for Sunset Valley. No formal agreement was reached but donations of \$10.00 were solicited. The Manchaca Volunteer Fire Department provided fire protection for Sunset Valley until August 1998.

Police Protection

- August 12, 1969: The Council decided to reimburse the Village Marshal for Village-related travel at a rate of twelve cents per mile.
- May 8, 1973: Village Attorney Dennis advised Marshal Braden to refrain from wearing a gun during council meetings.



November
1972
Nolan
Sims (l)
and Fred
W. Adams,
Sr.

Parks and Greenspace

- March 14, 1972: The 3-acre tract of land purchased by Sunset Valley from Alice Miller and located at the corner of Lone Oak and Jones was named the Fred W. Adams Park.
- 1973: Clyde Copus donated 1.43 acres for a park, which was dedicated during Sunset Valley's 25th anniversary celebration. The park was named “Valley Park.” In her article about Sunset Valley, *A Brief History*, Micki Powers notes that the Flourney families had used the same area for picnics during the 1940s.

The boundaries of the park, located at the end of Reese Drive, stretched from the road to the middle of Williamson Creek. Malcolm Flournoy recalled that he and his brother used to “pop” soda cans into the creek with a single shot from a 22 rifle.

VILLAGE BUDGET AND TAXES

- February 4, 1965: The Treasurer reported a bank deposit of \$320.00, which represented annual tax payments of \$10.00 from thirty-two families living in Sunset Valley. Monthly expenditures were listed as \$4.40, with a balance of \$1,474.72.
- February 20, 1968: The first tax rate was based on Austin’s school district property values.
- April 1973: The Village accepted \$1,083 in revenue sharing income from the Federal Government and designated it for fire protection improvements.
- September 1973: The Financial Report showed \$6,694.37 in operating funds, with expenses of \$5708.43. The Village had \$2,969.53 in a savings account.

AISD ATHLETIC COMPLEX AND BUS LOT

The construction of the AISD athletic complex and the bus storage parking lot on Jones Road resulted in more confrontations between Sunset Valley and AISD than any other issue. Despite community opposition to the proposed project and a legal battle that reached the Supreme Court of Texas, AISD won the right to construct a 15,000 seat football stadium, a 3,000 seat baseball stadium, a field house with a 5,000 seat indoor stadium, and a parking lot for more than 150 buses, all within the corporate limits of Sunset Valley. The events leading up to the construction of the sports complex and bus barn are briefly noted in council minutes.

- April 7, 1970: The Council discussed AISD’s request to de-annex property “for reason (sic) of water supply and sewage.” According to the minutes, AISD proposed to build a new school on the property. The Council denied the request.
- June 8, 1971: The Council asked Mayor Charles Burton to write a letter to the AISD Board outlining Sunset Valley’s concerns about the proposed athletic complex and school bus parking lot. The three primary issues were: (1) Sunset Valley’s inability to handle large crowds, traffic and litter; (2) the Village’s inability to provide adequate police protection; and (3) the Village’s inability to provide adequate fire protection.
- July 13, 1971: Virgil Waggoner reported that the Miller property had “definitely been sold to the Austin Independent School District and there was nothing we could do about the use of this property.”

- August 11, 1971: The Council read a letter from Mr. Will D. Davis, President of the Board of Trustees of AISD:

August 11, 1971

The Austin Independent School District needs the property located in the City of Sunset Valley for public school purposes. The School District has contracted to purchase the property and intends to do so. The School District will construct an athletic facility on this property.

As we view the situation it would be a simple matter for Sunset Valley to de-annex the property so it could be annexed to the City of Austin, which would in turn furnish the required municipal facilities. As you know, the citizens of Sunset Valley are also residents of the Austin Independent School District. Their children attend our public schools and will receive the benefit of the modern athletic facility. We can see no reason why we should not proceed with the construction of the facility in Sunset Valley, just as we construct other public schools in Austin or the new elementary school recently named "Sunset Valley Elementary School."

Yours very truly, Will D. Davis

Letter from
Mr. Davis to
Sunset
Valley

- Mr. William F. Hair, Mayor Pro-tem, wrote a letter to AISD, stating in part, "Sunset Valley is a residential community only, and our ordinances and zoning laws do not provide for the type facility the school board intends to put on this property; therefore, your reconsidering this matter would certainly be appreciated."
- September 14, 1971: During the Council meeting, Mr. Patterson, an AISD attorney, made a presentation outlining the desirability of the property, the power of eminent domain, and the right of the school district to take property for athletic facilities. Mr. Patterson stated, "There is a constitutional decree to maintain a public school and we have a constitutional right to build a school house and the city couldn't prohibit us from doing it by zoning." When asked if AISD could proceed anywhere it wanted to within the corporate limits of Sunset Valley, Mr. Patterson replied, "Maybe not that far." Most residents of Sunset Valley opposed the project and could not understand AISD's contention that a stadium, field house, and bus barn were in the same category as a school. In 1961, Sunset Valley had welcomed the construction of an elementary school but it did not want an athletic complex, stadium, and bus barn within its corporate limits.
- November 9, 1971: The Council minutes referred to a letter from Mr. Patterson requesting a building permit for a stadium, field house, and other improvements and facilities.

- December 2, 1971: The Council asked attorney Hal Haralson, hired by the City on November 9th, to answer the lawsuit of AISD vs. Sunset Valley.
- February 29, 1972: The *Abstracts and Index to the Typed Copy of the Sunset Valley City Council Early Minutes: 1955-1978* refer to a February 29, 1972 letter from Mr. Haralson to Mayor Burton reporting the results of a pre-trial hearing regarding the athletic complex. Judge H. Jones ruled for AISD and against Sunset Valley. The judge's main points were: (a) AISD School Board action supersedes the actions of City Councils, and (b) Sunset Valley's zoning ordinances are invalid and unenforceable.
- April 6, 1972: Mr. John Dennis, an attorney from Legal Aid, reported on the status of the suit. He told the Council that he was the attorney who was arguing the case before the court and said the court's decision on the case would affect future negotiations between cities and school districts throughout the state and the country. According to the minutes, the court's final decision could "put cities at the merch (sic) of School Districts, or the School Districts to be bounded (sic) by the restrictions of (sic) the City." Mr. Dennis offered to take the case to the Supreme Court for \$1,000 plus court costs and \$500.00 for Court of Civil Appeal's costs, reimbursement for the \$240.00 work he had already completed, and an agreement to pay him approximately \$320.00 more in fees. The Council hired Mr. Dennis to represent Sunset Valley in this matter.
- November 20, 1973: The minutes referred to a court decision in favor of AISD, but the decision did not require Sunset Valley to de-annex its property because state law required annexed property to be contiguous with current city property. The court also decided that AISD was not bound by Sunset Valley's zoning requirements. Mr. Dennis said no further motions on the suit were possible, but advised the council to meet with Mrs. Miller and her attorney.
- December 11, 1973: The minutes reported that Mr. Davis, a member of the AISD Board of Trustees, attended the council meeting and explained AISD's desire to be cooperative. He conceded that he knew nothing about the community or its traffic patterns, and acknowledged the school district may have made a mistake. Phil Thompson replied, "We didn't want it, but we are stuck with it, and will try to be good neighbors." Mr. Davis promised to investigate the fee AISD was charging the Village to use the Sunset Valley Elementary School facility. The Council agreed to hold its future at the elementary school.

At the conclusion of the two-year battle, which some residents refer to as the battle between David and Goliath, Goliath won and the facilities were constructed during 1976.

The Austin American

Monday, May 14, 1973

Sunset Valley 'Just Like Any City' But Most People Like the Lifestyle

By JOHN SUTTON
Staff Writer

The sign says, Sunset Valley, POP 292.

Blink and you might miss it traveling along at 60 m.p.h. south on U.S. 290. But it's a city just like any other city, "making an effort at self-government" said Mayor Nolan Sims Saturday over a cup of Sanka.

Sims, who lived in South Austin for 43 years, moved to Sunset Valley seven years ago and retired from his job with the Rand McNally Publishing Company. He has served as mayor of Sunset Valley for the past year, "trying to preserve the quality of life and the dignity of the people."

He receives no salary for the position.

Sunset Valley, bordered by the Westgate and Cherry Creek sections of Austin and by Travis County, "started out as a rural area, but as a result of growth in the last few years, we're kind of surrounded by an urban sprawl," Sims said.

Sims said Sunset Valley was incorporated about 20 years ago when Tom Miller was mayor of Austin. The original tax rate was \$25 and later was lowered to 10. It is now 25 cents per \$100.

Sims said the city structure "pretty much follows the rules and regulations of most city management." The city has septic tank construction guidelines for zoning, builds its own roads and provides for water for its citizens.

"Sunset Valley is woven into the fabric of Austin as is every town in the area," Sims said. Sunset Valley depends on Austin for its electricity and an Austin based firm provides a garbage service for the town.

Sims said the town is zoned completely residential. "We're probably the only town in the state that doesn't even have a gas station," he quipped. There are not even



Staff Photo

NOLAN SIMS, MAYOR OF SUNSET VALLEY
Speaks of life in Sunset Valley

any stores, medical clinics or apartments within the city limits.

"The uniqueness of the city is there are no businesses," Sims said. The proximity of downtown Austin is probably closer for Sunset Valley residents than for 50,000 Austin residents that live farther out on U.S. 290," he said.

The six-member city council meets once a month unless special meetings are called at the mayor's home, in Sim's book-lined study. Sims said the meetings are well attended and will be moved someday to the planned city hall to be built on a three-acre tract of land. But the building

may be in the distant future.

The city operates on a yearly budget of about \$8,100. With a budget that small it is difficult to do everything necessary to run a city. Sims said taxes could always be raised, but there is resistance to that. "In one sense, we are a ward of the county, but we are trying to handle our own affairs," he said.

This year's federal revenue sharing funds will be spent on the Sunset Valley fire department. The Fire Marshall John Kelleher, a junior at St. Edward's University, has organized a troop of Explorer Scouts to form a fire fighting brigade,

under the auspices of Lt. Ray M. Brownlee of the Austin Fire Department, Sims said.

An army surplus "crash firetruck" was bought for the city from an airbase and Sims said it needs some repair, but "works after a fashion." Fireplugs are numerous throughout the city so there is no real problem if the firetruck is not in first class working condition, he said.

Sims said the city management is "sort of like a builder, who subcontracts all the labor." There are no city departments. Each home has its own septic tank. The garbage service provides sanitary facilities, a private company supplies the water from two wells located in the city; and streets are paid for by the residents who live on them.

"Some of the streets are paved and some are gravel," Sims said. The wooded area along the streets lends to the rural flavor of the town. But Sims said, "it is not just a country lane, but has urban closeness while preserving the rural demeanor of the area."

Sims said Sunset Valley really doesn't encourage growth in population. There are only a few rent houses and Sims said that in the seven years he has lived in the city, there have been only a couple of new houses built.

Although a lot of people would like to move to Sunset Valley, Sims said, there just is not any available property.

Sims said some of the residents may have moved to Sunset Valley because of the low tax base, but many enjoy the autonomy of the area, have their own wells and consider themselves as independent as the farmers of the area felt in the past.

"Most people like our lifestyle out here. We don't compete economically with Austin so we have a good rapport with the city," Sims said.

NOTES:

CHAPTER FOUR

DECade 1974-1983

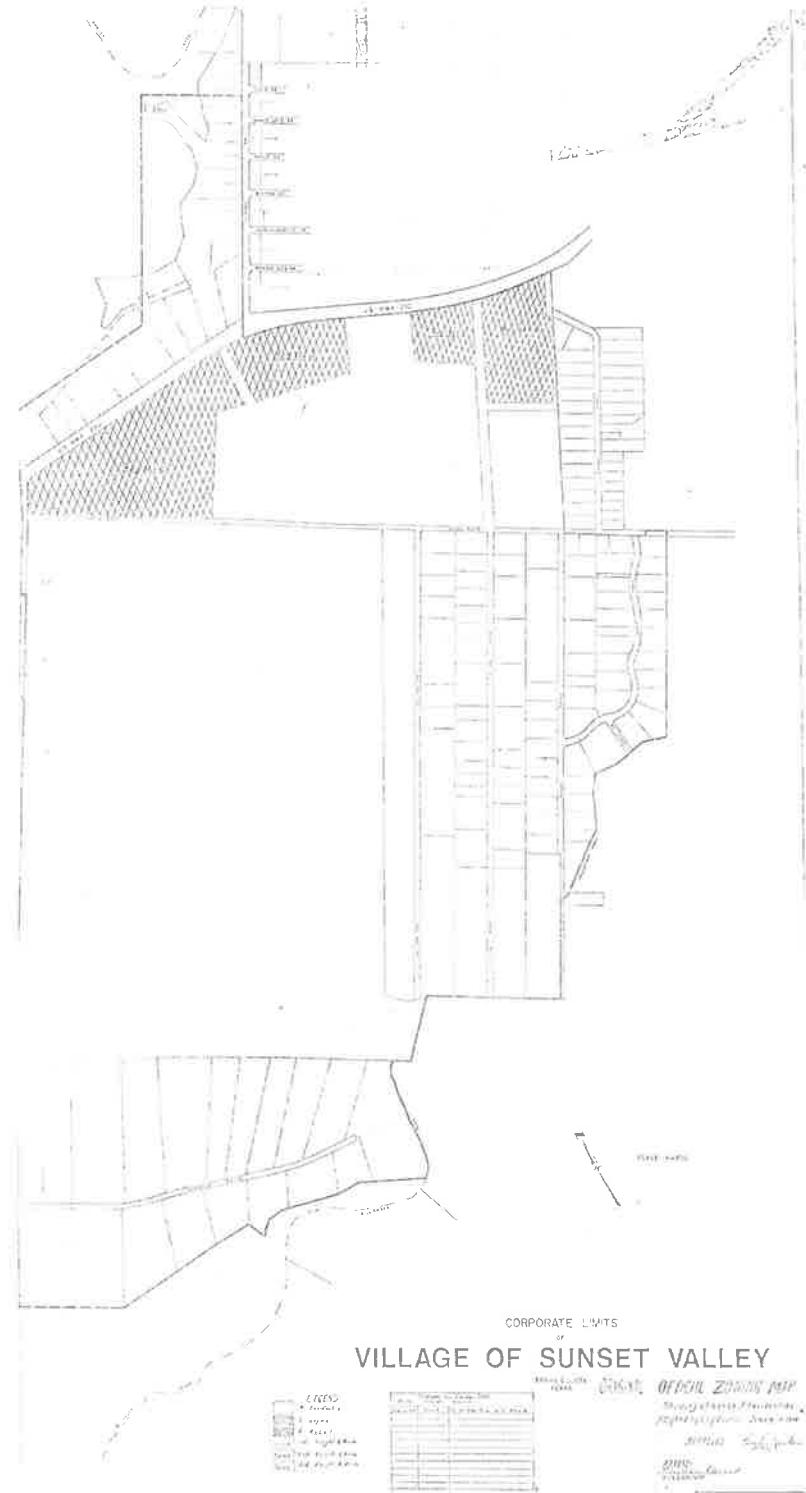
BOUNDARIES

The boundaries of the City of Sunset Valley and its ETJ changed again during this decade for several reasons; the City settled a boundary dispute with the City of Austin, land was de-annexed, and a boundary dispute with property owners along the city's north boundary was resolved.

- February 19, 1974: At the request of the Nash Phillips Copus, Inc., the City released 101 acres from its ETJ. The area, known as Western Hills, Lots 3-10 and Lots 13-66, was located on the north and south sides of William Cannon between West Gate Boulevard and Brodie Lane. At the same meeting, the City also released a small triangular piece of property, known as the Stewart property, located on one corner of the Bannockburn development.
- December 9, 1975: The City adopted a new official map of Sunset Valley that had been prepared by Snowden & Myer on November 20, 1975.
- March 10, 1977: The City approved a map drawn to settle the ETJ boundary dispute with Austin. Two months later, Austin countered with a proposal to retain all land west of Brodie Lane in its ETJ. Residents of the area wanting to be included in Sunset Valley's ETJ were advised to initiate a petition.
- August 18, 1977: At the request of the West Gate Apostolic Church, the City released property in its ETJ at 4700 West Gate to the City of Austin.
- April 25, 1978: The City of Sunset Valley and the City of Austin agreed to allocate the land in their overlapping ETJs to one city or the other. From then on, neither City could contest the other's decision to annex land from its own ETJ.
- May 1, 1979: The City called a special meeting to discuss a boundary dispute with several residents on Stearns Lane. The dispute between property owners Gaines, Stearns, Wood, Jacobson and Hornung and the City was based on the interpretation of field notes delineating the corporate city limits and the boundaries of their properties. In August, the Council instituted legal action to resolve the issue. When the suit was finally settled in January 1981, only the Stearns property remained within the City limits.

- August 29, 1979: The Council agreed to release a 40-acre tract located in its ETJ and owned by T. U. Bryant to the City of Austin in exchange for an agreement allowing Sunset Valley to tie into Austin's wastewater line and sanitary sewer.

1978
Corporate
limits
establish-
ed by
Ordinance
780110



CITY GOVERNMENT

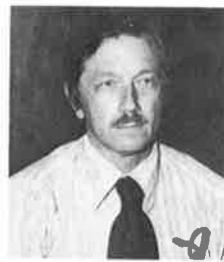
Year	Mayor	Council Members
1974	Phil Thompson	William Rider, Bill Bolger, Bob Denman, Sam Chrisco, and Burford Westlund
1975	Phil Thompson	Sam Chrisco, Arlon Bindseil, Frances Underwood, William Rider, and Bill Bolger
1976	W.R “Bud” Fowler	Sam Chrisco, Arlon Binseil, Frances Underwood, Susan Jung, and Burford Westlund
1977	W.R “Bud” Fowler	Susan Jung, Burford Westlund, Robert Lehman, Frances Underwood, and Eugene Powell
1978	Frances Underwood	Susan Jung, Burford Westlund, Robert Lehman, Eugene Powell, and Philip J. Wylie
1979	Frances Underwood	Susan Jung, Donny Hurwitz, Robert Lehman, Gene Powell, and Burford Westlund
1980	Frances Underwood	Susan Jung, Donny Hurwitz, Pat Barber, Russell Harding, and Burford Westlund
1981	Frances Underwood	Pat Barber, Rosemary Follis, Russell Harding, Donny Hurwitz, Mickie Powers, and Cynthia Kunz
1982	Frances Underwood	Sandy Cox, Rosemary Follis, Larry Hada, Russell Harding, Mickie Powers, and Cynthia Kunz
1983	Rosemary Follis	Larry Hada, Pat Barber, Russell Harding, Aaron Morris, and Mickie Powers

During the mid 1970s, the Council focused on improving city government, constructing the city's first administration building, creating a Police Department, and purchasing a water system for the city. Ordinances and other regulations were adopted to preserve and protect the community's health and welfare.

- January 2, 1974: The residents of Lone Oak Trail filed a petition protesting the use of city land located at the corner of Jones Road and Lone Oak Trail as an obstacle course and race track for motor bikes.

- January 15, 1974: The city adopted its first ordinance requiring building permits for construction within city limits.
- March 12, 1974: The City received official designation as the *City of Sunset Valley* after adopting Chapters 1-10 of Title 28, Revised Civil Statutes of Texas, 1925.
- April 25, 1974: The Council voted to proceed with a lawsuit against Dr. Weaver to collect back taxes. His attorney said Dr. Weaver would pay any alleged back taxes if the City would de-annex Dr. Weaver's property, located along Jones Road. The Council rejected the offer.
- April 5, 1975: A Special Election was held to adopt a 1% sales and use tax. The residents approved the measure with 67 votes in favor and 18 votes against.

Officials of Sunset Valley, Texas



BURFORD WESTLUND
Councilman



SUSAN JUNG
Councilwoman



BUD FOWLER
Mayor



GORDON FOWLER
Police Marshal



SAM CHRISCO
Councilman

ARLON BINDSELL
Councilman

FRANCES UNDERWOOD
Councilwoman

- May 27, 1975: The City applied to join the federal National Flood Insurance Program. Legislation passed in 1968 prohibited lending agencies from lending money to communities not participating in the program.

- June 8, 1976: The Council authorized a Request for Proposals to construct a 20 foot by 40 foot fire station and meeting hall. The Council also ordered the City to pay the balance owed to Alice Miller for the 3-acre tract at the intersection of Lone

Oak and Jones Road. The City needed a clear title to the land, designated as the future site of the city's administrative buildings.

- July 22, 1976: The City settled with Dr. Weaver regarding his delinquent taxes. Dr. Weaver agreed to pay the back taxes in full and to dedicate to the City a fifteen-foot right of way along Jones Road. In return, the city agreed to purchase the right of way for an amount of money equal to one-half of the back taxes.
- December 7, 1976: Frances Underwood introduced an ordinance to establish Council Committees. After heated discussion, and over Mayor Bud Fowler's objections, the motion passed. Sam Chrisco, also on the council, introduced an ordinance establishing a Zoning Commission, as required by law. The ordinance passed unanimously, but Mayor Fowler exercised his right of veto, stating for the record, "I feel this ordinance presented by Sam Chrisco, it (sic) designed by Mrs. Underwood, is not in the best interest of the City of Sunset Valley. Therefore I am exercising my power as Mayor to veto same."
- January 11, 1977: Sam Chrisco re-introduced his motion regarding the establishment of a Zoning Commission. After the motion passed, Katy Bolger was appointed to serve as the first member of the Commission. Frances Underwood introduced an amended ordinance to establish Council committees, which passed unanimously.
- February 8, 1977: The Council established three standing committees: Planning, Public Relations, and Environment.
- July 12, 1977: The minutes refer to the Council's discovery that six people had been appointed to serve on the Zoning Commission instead of the required five. The Council remedied the situation by asking Zoning Commission members if one of them would resign.
- August 9, 1977: During the Citizen Comments portion of the Council meeting, a resident asked the Council to confine its discussions to city business instead of verbal abuse of other Council members.
- September 11, 1977: The Council allowed the Crockett High School "Tex-Ann" Drill Team to use City Hall for a Halloween Spook House.
- January 10, 1978: The City adopted the first zoning ordinance allowing retail and office space within the city limits. Until then, all land inside the city limits had been designated as "single family residential" property.
- February 14, 1978: The Council discovered that properties located at the end of Stearns Lane had been accidentally left off the tax rolls since 1968.
- March 14, 1978: Residents objected to the Council's decision to reimburse Mayor Fowler for the cost (\$50.93) of a letter he had mailed to all residents because it was political in nature.
- March 17, 1978: The City sponsored its first "Meet the Candidates Party," held at City Hall.

- July 11, 1978: The Council passed an ordinance prohibiting loud noise from musical instruments, loud speakers, or amplifiers between 10:30 pm and 7:00 am.
- September 19, 1978: The Council authorized the City Marshal to police the school crossing at Reese Drive and Jones Road from 7:00-8:30 am and from 2:00-3:30 pm.
- December 12, 1978: The Council accepted the City's first Flood Plain Study and adopted its first Flood Plain ordinance.
- February 12, 1980: Susan Jung was recognized for buying trees and planting them on the grounds of the Municipal Building.
- February 10, 1981: The Council gave Dick Leigh permission to install, at his own expense, two road signs on Pillow Road. He was concerned about speeding and hoped the signs, *Children at Play* and *Loose Livestock*, would slow traffic.
- March 2, 1981: The City established a Municipal Court and appointed Bill Ashbaugh (Oakdale) to serve as judge.
- April 6, 1981: The Council adopted an ordinance establishing a Board of Adjustments to hear requests for variances from zoning requirements.
- March 18, 1982: The City joined the Municipal League and, by doing so, acquired one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in liability insurance coverage. In September 1983, Workers Compensation was added.
- April 5, 1982: The City authorized an expense of \$50 to purchase a tape recorder to record council meetings.
- June 8, 1982: After hearing complaints from residents, the Council adopted an ordinance prohibiting the harboring of an animal that created a public nuisance.
- December 14, 1982: The Council recognized Victor Peterson and his friend for removing abandoned furniture and large appliances that had been littering the City.
- May 10, 1983: Mrs. Allie Wood (Pillow Road) was given an opportunity to respond to a complaint filed by Mary Black about her 26 barking dogs. Mary had a nightmare that Mrs. Wood had fallen and broken her hip and been eaten by her dogs, who then jumped over a fence and ate the neighbors, then swerved across the street and ate those neighbors, and were headed up the hill to Mary's house, when Mary woke up to the sound of barking dogs.

The dream prompted Mary to file the complaint under the Nuisance Ordinance. She went to court and Municipal Court Judge, Bill Ashbaugh (Oakdale Drive) told Mrs. Wood that she could only keep four dogs and would need to find homes for the rest of them. Evidently, she couldn't do it because three weeks later one of her dogs was discovered hanging from a tree in her yard.

This made Mary realize that she was not the only one disturbed by the barking dogs so she went back to court. Judge Ashbaugh gently explained to Mrs. Wood that she could keep four dogs but now she had to name and describe the four that she wanted to keep. Then, Judge Ashbaugh volunteered Mary to find home for the other twenty-two. It took all summer but, with help from Mickie Powers and other friends, homes were found for all of them.

Later, when Mrs. Wood did fall and break her hip, the neighbors became involved and discovered that she was hiding dozens of cats and a litter of 6-month old puppies in her home. The house had no plumbing and the animals had never been outside.



October
1977
Unknown,
Tony Gier,
Ed Vaughan,
and Mary
Black

CITY SERVICES

Home construction on Reese, Pillow, and Lone Oak presented new challenges for the community, as did inadequate water pressure, lack of maintenance on the water system, street repairs, and septic systems.

Water

According to a report on the water system prepared by Frances Underwood in the mid 1970s, the two-inch galvanized water lines installed when the Flournoys developed the subdivision on Sunset Trail had been just adequate to deliver water to the original subdivision's residents. But, when homes were built on Reese Drive, Pillow Road, and Lone Oak Trail, the water system was no longer able to generate enough water pressure to serve most of its users.

The report also indicated that the water system had received almost "no maintenance under the last private owner." The report goes on to say, "Holes in the pipes were left for months without being repaired until members of the Council pressured the State Health Department to force the issue." The chlorinator had frozen and State Health Department tests showed the water was so badly contaminated it had to be "boiled before drinking." The report continues, "For many years there was no water in the day time at the end of the streets." Residents on Pillow Road living on the far side of the hill were unable to use second story bathrooms due to poor water pressure and were without water during much of the summer.

- May 11, 1974: An election was called to vote on five bond proposals to improve city streets and the water and sewer systems. The bonds were to be repaid through property taxes. All five proposals failed.
- July 8, 1974: After the bond proposals failed, the Council authorized the issuance of \$180,000 in Revenue Bonds to acquire, construct, and improve a water system for the City. Cost estimates for the bond issue were based on purchasing the existing water system, constructing a well and tank at 2 Lone Oak Trail, and running water lines to serve residents on Sunset, Reese, Pillow, and Lone Oak roads.
- July 1, 1975: A Phase One preliminary report proposed that the City obtain water from Austin through two meters, one located on Reese and the other on Pillow, and that pressure be maintained by looping the water lines.
- May 11, 1976: The Council continued to investigate the possibility of purchasing the Sunset Valley Water Department from Leon Griffin and improving it instead of building a new system because the cost was prohibitive.
- July 6, 1976: Mayor Bud Fowler told the Council that Mr. Griffin would sell the water company to Sunset Valley for \$15,000, contingent on the City's awarding a contract to Mr. Griffin to improve and update the system.
- July 22, 1976: Mayor Fowler told the Council that Mr. Griffin accepted Sunset Valley's offer to buy the system for \$17,500, provided he was paid by September 1, 1976.
- August 31, 1976: The city issued another \$125,000 in Revenue Bonds and authorized the purchase of the water system from Mr. Griffin for \$17,500.
- September 14, 1976: The person digging the new city well on the municipal property at Lone Oak and Jones reported he was "down 300 feet and getting close to water."
- October 12, 1976: The Council authorized installation of six-inch water lines on Lone Oak and Reese and four-inch and two-inch lines on Pillow.

- November 9, 1976: Construction started on the well casing and the pressure plant.
- February 1977: The water storage tank was completed and the drilling company reported: "We have hit an underground river," that would allow the city to pump 40-50 gallons of water per minute. The "river of water" was located in a section of the Edwards Aquifer.
- April 1977: The City accepted the improvements to the water plant.
- June 21, 1977: The Council called an emergency meeting to discuss continued difficulties with the water system.
- May 9, 1978: The Council discussed the color of the water coming from the water system. Members were told that the City's hard, highly corrosive water had rusted the old steel water lines. The Council decided not to flush the lines more often. Instead, they raised the chlorine levels to create a coating inside the older pipes.
- July 21, 1978:
The Council called an emergency meeting because the State Health Department had given the city only 90 additional days to use its old wells.
- October 1978:
The Council approved a contract to repair the water system.



April 1978
Maura,
Frances,
Kay,
and Herbert
Underwood
and
unknown

Wastewater

- 1980: The city applied for a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to develop of a wastewater collection system. The City also signed its first contract with Austin to a maximum of 800 Living Unit Equivalents (LUEs). The contract was renegotiated in 1986.
- 1981: The City adopted an ordinance regulating the construction of septic systems.

Natural Gas

- 1975: Gas lines were installed to provide gas for residents on Oakdale Drive.

Fire Protection

- May 11, 1976: The Manchaca Volunteer Fire Department agreed to provide the city with a fire truck when the fire hall was completed.
- April 11, 1978: The Manchaca Volunteer Fire Department gave the city a 1948 Chevy panel wagon with a 300 gallon tank to be used primarily for fighting grass fires.

Police Protection

- May 1977: The City signed a lease/purchase agreement for \$1,150.00 to buy its first radar gun.
- July 12, 1977: After discussion of the number of fines collected by Marshal Gordon Fowler and the wear and tear on his car, the Council voted to increase the marshal's salary to \$200.00 per month.
- January 10, 1978: Mayor Fowler reported he had sworn in Herman J. Price as Deputy Marshal and asked for a \$50.00 car allowance for the new deputy. Much discussion followed.
- February 14, 1978: After reviewing the \$598.00 in fines brought in by Deputy Marshal Price, the Council voted to allowed him a \$50.00 per month expense allowance.
- April 7, 1978: The newly sworn in mayor, Frances Underwood, advised Marshal Gordon Fowler that his deputy officers must refrain from wearing Sunset Valley badges or carrying guns until after their appointments were approved by the City Council, as required by law. She stressed the need for compliance with the standards and education requirements of the Commission on Law Enforcement.
- June 13, 1978: The City passed an ordinance creating a police reserve force and appointed Alva R. Crouch, Mitchell R. Johnson, Mickey Spence, and Raymond A. Deba as reservists. The council hired Johnny Milan as Deputy Marshal to replace Mr. Price, who had resigned.
- August 8, 1978: The City purchased a bar light, an electronic siren, and magnetic signs for Deputy Marshal Milam's car to ensure its adequate identification as a police car.
- November 21, 1978: The Council passed an ordinance establishing the Sunset Valley Police Department, to take effect following the current term of Marshal Gordon Fowler. The minutes then record a difficult chapter of the City's history. According to council minutes, Marshal Fowler's declining health was

discussed during the December 12, 1978 council meeting, and an official hearing was scheduled to investigate the matter. However, the scheduled hearing was canceled because the Council had received no correspondence from Marshal Fowler and he failed to appear at the hearing. At the continuation hearing, Marshal Fowler's attorney, Mr. Michael Mankins, presented a physician's letter stating Mr. Fowler could not be involved in stressful situations. On March 13, 1979 Marshal Fowler was removed from office due to health reasons.

- February 12, 1980: The City passed an ordinance creating a Police Department, with Johnny Milam serving as Acting Chief until a new chief could be hired.
- June 24, 1980: The City hired Mr. Kaywood Henry Rodgers to serve as police chief.

Parks and Greenspace

- March 8, 1977: Jim Haynes offered to sell to the City a 3.85 acre tract of land located at the end of Reese Drive for \$5,000 per acre for possible use as a park. The Council declined the offer.
- March 13, 1979: The Sunset Valley Women's Club presented an 8-part development plan for parkland located at the end of Reese. Nash Phillips Cupus, Inc had donated the land. The Club also presented the results of a poll to name the park. The Council accepted the plan and the proposed name, "Valley Creek Park."
- April 5, 1982: The City scheduled a work day to install tables at the park.

Streets

- February 19, 1974: The City agreed to maintain and repair Sunset Trail, Clarmac, and Reese Drive, services formerly provided by the county as courtesy.
- October 15, 1975: The City approved installation of a 4-way stop sign at the intersection of Pillow and Jones Roads.
- March 9, 1976: The City signed an agreement with Travis County to maintain Jones Road, a courtesy that the County had provided before budget constraints forced them to stop providing the service. Later, the City approved the widening of Jones Road after receiving additional right-of-way footage from Dr. Weaver.
- September 28, 1976: The Council approved the installation of a 400 watt vapor light at the intersection of Brodie and 290 because so many traffic accidents had occurred there during the past year.

Telephone/Cable

- August 12, 1974: The City allowed Southwestern Bell to install telephone poles and other structures along the city's rights-of-way in exchange for 20% of the gross receipts collected for services sold in Sunset Valley.
- 1975: The Capital Cable Company agreed to provide services to residents on Sunset, Reese, Pillow, and Lone Oak.
- June 8, 1982: The City requested cable service for residents on Oakdale Drive.

CITY BUDGET AND TAXES

Over the years, disputes about city finances sometimes led to disagreements between mayors and council members. During the December 7, 1976 council meeting, Sam Chrisco recommended that no city purchases be made, or services contracted, without approval from the Council. After much heated discussion concerning city expenditures, council members passed Mr. Chrisco's resolution unanimously. Mayor Bud Fowler noted for the minutes that the resolution did not affect his Mayor's Fund.

Changes in the method of determining the value of properties located in Sunset Valley increased city revenues. From 1978 to 1979, the valuation of property increased from more than three million dollars to more than eight million dollars. The increase occurred, in part, because of recommendations made by Henry A. Ramsey, the city's certified public accountant (CPA) who suggested that the city use standard methods for determining property valuation.

Ellen McKenzie, the city's newly appointed tax assessor and collector, instituted Mr. Ramsey's recommendations to use the Austin Independent School District's valuations for determining property values in Sunset Valley and to assess commercial properties at fair market value. She also followed Mr. Ramsey's suggestion to realistically assess the value of two of the largest properties located in the city—those owned by the Weavers and the Millers.

Year	Budget	Taxes	Valuation of all Property
1977-78	\$ 27, 205	.58 per \$100 at 100%	\$ 3,722,093
1978-79	52,842	.55 per \$100 at 75%	\$ 8,560,948
1979-80	72,698	.75 per \$100 at 75%	\$ 9,528,169

- January 11, 1983: The City contracted with Greg Braker, CPA to provide computer-generated financial statements for \$240 per month.
- 1983: The City adopted a budget with expenses of \$83,792.88 to be supported by a tax rate of 44.7 cents per \$100 at 100% valuation.

NOTES:

CHAPTER FIVE

DECADE OF 1984-1993

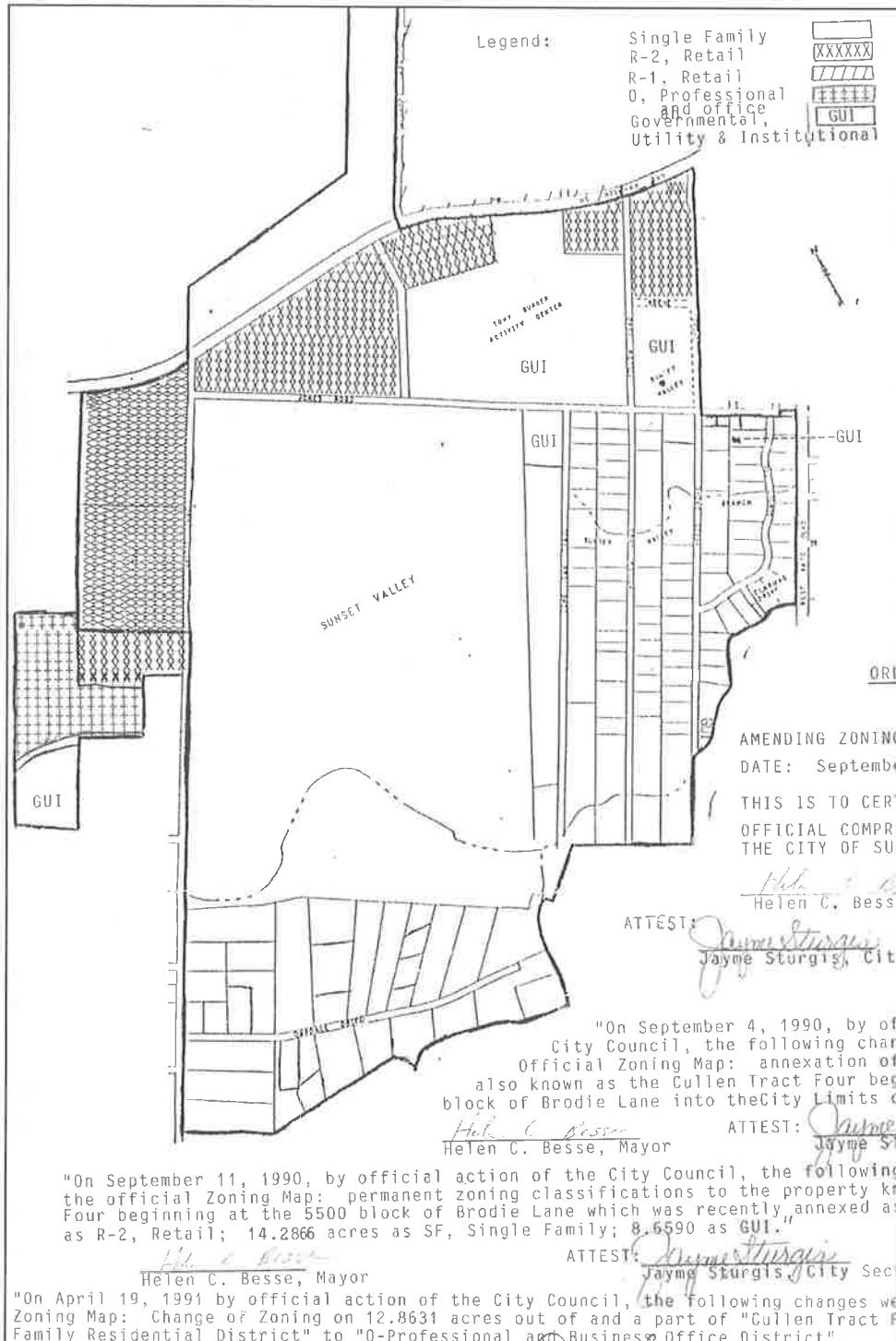
During this decade major changes affected nearly every aspect of city life, from its roads, boundaries, parks, retail development, and revenue to its water and wastewater systems.

BOUNDARIES

- September 16, 1986: The owners of the 40-acre Becker Tract, located in Sunset Valley's ETJ, asked the City to include their property in the City's Master Plan for future development. On November 14, 1986, the owners petitioned the City to annex their land.
- November 18, 1986: Because the widening of Highway 290 would make it difficult to provide services to people living north of Highway 290 and Stearns, the Council met with Austin Mayor Frank Cooksey to discuss a land exchange. When the potential land swap was reported on the 6:00 pm news, the residents on Stearns expressed disappointment that they had heard about the plan from a television broadcast instead of from their elected officials. The residents' views must have prevailed, because the minutes included no further references to a land exchange. Today, the area remains inside the city limits.
- September 4, 1990: The City annexed a 32.01-acre tract owned by Cullen Bank. The City planned to add a portion of the tract (Cullen Tract Four) to the Becker Tract, scheduled for development as a shopping center to be named Sunset Valley Marketfair. Later that month, the city rezoned 9.0665 acres of the Cullen tract for retail development, retained the single family zoning of 3.1096 acres, and rezoned 8.6590 acres that was dedicated to the city as Governmental Utility and Institutional (GUI).
- February 5, 1991: The City annexed a 4.0770-acre tract known as Cullen Tract Two. The land was dedicated to the city and added to the 8.6590 acres that had been dedicated in 1990 and zoned GUI.
- June 15, 1993: The City annexed 11.50 acres from Austin to use as right-of-way. The annexed areas included properties along the 2800-2900 blocks of Jones Road, the 4970-5000 blocks of Highway 290, and the 4600-4800 blocks of Highway 290. The City also annexed two other tracts: 21.894 acres located north of Highway 290 and west of Stearns Lane that was dedicated by Taylor

and Inez Gaines, and 8.69 acres located west of Brodie and north of Country White Lane that was dedicated by the Austin Tower Company.

1990
Corporate
limits by
Ordinance
900911



CITY GOVERNMENT

Year	Mayor	Council Members
1984	Rosemary Follis	Larry Hada, Helen Besse, Mickie Powers, Dan Huebner, and Frances Underwood
1985	Larry Hada	Dan Huebner, Helen Besse, Mickie Powers, Rosemary Follis, and Frances Underwood
1986	Larry Hada	Helen Besse, Mickie Powers, Frances Underwood, Dan Huebner, Cole Corser
1987	Larry Hada	Helen Besse, Frances Underwood, Mickie Powers, Daniel Huebner, and Russell Harding
1988	Helen Besse	Daniel Huebner, Russell Harding, Stephen Bell, Linda Williams. Michael Francis was appointed to serve the balance of the unexpired term of one year.
1989	Helen Besse	Marcia Gragert, Michael Francis, Scott Kelley, Linda Williams, and Stephen Bell
1990	Helen Besse	Michael Francis, Melinda Barber, Russell Harding, Cheryl Sokol, and Scott Kelley
1991	Helen Besse	Michael Francis, Cheryl Sokol, Frances Underwood, Melinda Barber, and Terry Cowan
1992	Michael Francis	Melinda Barber, Frances Underwood, Terry Cowan, Mattie Adams, and Erwin Haddon
1993	Michael Francis	Mattie Adams, Frances Underwood, Erwin Haddon, Melinda Barber, and Terry Cowan

- March 15, 1984: The City adopted a subdivision ordinance establishing one acre as the minimum size for a lot.
- March 20, 1984: The Council discussed the adoption of a leash law ordinance but decided it wasn't necessary because people should be responsible for controlling their own animals without needing an ordinance to tell them what to do.
- June 16, 1984: The Council adopted an interim ordinance addressing development in watershed areas. The ordinance established impervious cover limits at 40%.

- August 21, 1984: Lee Choate proposed a subdivision plat, Sunset Oaks that included 16 lots on the west side of Lone Oak Trail.
- September 7, 1984: The City authorized legal counsel to seek an injunction

April 1,
1993
Mayor
Francis
swearing
in Chief
Kniffen



against Dr. Weaver prohibiting him from placing fill in the one hundred year flood plain on his property. The fill violated the Watershed and Flood Plain Ordinance. The City's records showed that Dr. Weaver had received limited approval to place equipment and fill from a construction

project on West Gate Boulevard on his property, as long as it was kept outside the flood plain. The Court granted a temporary restraining order, but the dumping continued. After the Mayor filed a Contempt of Court complaint, the dumping continued until an Agreed Judgment Order was signed by a judge in October 1987.

- December 4, 1984: The City adopted a resolution supporting legislation to create a ground water district to protect the Edwards Aquifer through conservation measures and sustainable use requirements. At the same meeting, the City adopted its first Comprehensive Master Land Use Plan.
- March 5, 1985: The City adopted its first ordinance regulating outdoor signs and landscaping.
- March 15, 1985: The Council appointed the first members to the Board of Adjustment: Robert Pavlica, Mary Jo Powell, Betty Dunn, Nell Hielscher, and Buddy Cox. Alternate members were Marilyn Bindseil, Pat Barber, Dick Leigh, and Donny Hurwitz.
- September 3, 1985: In response to complaints about trucks on Jones Road, the City adopted an ordinance prohibiting through truck traffic on all the City's public streets, with the exception of Highway 290 and Brodie Lane.
- September 17, 1985: The Council adopted a resolution in support of extending south MOPAC (Loop One) as a parkway.

- November 12, 1985: A temporary Special Use Permit was granted to sell Christmas trees at the corner of Brodie Lane and Jones Road.
- January 21, 1986: The City joined the “Computer Age” when it authorized the purchase of two IBM personal computers.
- February 18, 1986: The City contracted with a game warden to investigate reports of what sounded like high caliber rifle shots in the early morning hours.
- June 3, 1986: Sunset Valley received a certificate designating it as a *Texas Independence Community*. The City also received a Texas Sesquicentennial Flag.
- September 13, 1986: The City celebrated its 32nd year of incorporation and its designation as an official Sesquicentennial Community with a day of activities including a bicycle parade, horseshoes and other games, a Bar-B-Que dinner,



Displaying the Sunset Valley flag are, from left, Cherie Pavlica, designer Robert Skewis with his daughter Rachel, Mayor Larry Hada, and his wife Venetta, who sewed the flag.

and an ice cream “freeze off” contest. A hand-made flag, designed by Robert Skewis and sewn by Venetta Hada, was presented to Mayor Larry Hada by Cherie Pavlica, coordinator of the celebration. During the ceremonies, city officials buried a time capsule, to “lie in state” under a concrete marker in front of City Hall until March 2, 2026, when it will be opened during Sunset Valley’s seventy-second year of incorporation. The Planning Committee included Cherie Pavlica, chairperson, Venetta Hada, Ernest Hielscher, Herbert Underwood, Kelli Corser, Cynthia Nelson, Kathryn Fowler, and Robert Pavlica.



With Greatest Honor
The Texas 1986 Sesquicentennial Commission
Hereby Designates

SUNSET VALLEY

As A

Texas Independence Community

With all rights, benefits, and privileges which accompany this sanction in recognition of its participation and contribution to the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary celebration of Texas' independence and progress as a state. With our deepest appreciation and gratitude on behalf of the Texas 1986 Sesquicentennial Commission,

In Testimony Whereof, We have hereto signed our names and caused the Great Seal of the State of Texas to be affixed at the City of Austin, Travis County, this the

1ST day of MAY A.D., 1986.



Governor

Chairman

Executive Director



- Due to the proposed widening and elevation of Highway 290, the City approved a preliminary plan delineating ingress and egress routes for the city, AISD facilities, and the Miller property. The plan, commonly referred to as the "Tri-Party Agreement," provided for the following:

- ➔ Relocation of Henry Miller Drive (in the late 1990s, the street was renamed “Ernest Robles Way”)
- ➔ Extension of Reese Drive north to the Highway 290 frontage road, made possible by right-of-way dedications by the Millers and AISD
- ➔ Construction of a new road, Stadium Lane, just north of Sunset Valley Elementary School
- November 17, 1986: The Texas Water Commission approved the creation of an Edwards Aquifer District, contingent on approval by voters. In June 1987, the Texas Legislature set the election date for August 8, 1987.
- March 3, 1987: The City approved the Oak Hill Optimists Club’s request to use the field behind the water plant for baseball practices.
- September 9, 1987: In response to a citizen’s request to reconsider establishing a leash law with the city limits, the Council included an opinion survey in the city’s newsletter. When the results of the survey were tabulated in November, 14 households had voted for a leash law and 14 had voted against it. The city attorney was asked to revise an existing nuisance ordinance to provide for more effective control of nuisance animals. At the same meeting, Mayor Hada reported that Governor Clements had sent a letter asking Sunset Valley to participate in the restoration of the Capitol by purchasing a \$300 paving stone to be placed in a walkway leading to the Capitol. The stone would be inscribed with the City’s name. The issue died for lack of a motion.
- October 6, 1987: The Council tabled discussion of a proposal to convert the Sands Motel into a housing unit for paroled ex-convicts who were being re-integrated into society. At the same meeting, the council passed a resolution controlling the discharge of firearms and prohibiting the hunting of wild game within the city limits.
- December 15, 1987: Encore Communications, owner of the local K-98 radio station, presented a proposal to build a communication tower in Sunset Valley. The company’s proposal included the purchase of approximately 9 acres of land in the city’s ETJ, annexing it into Sunset Valley, building the communication tower on it, and donating the rest of land to the City for use as parkland. To accommodate the proposal, the City amended its zoning regulations to allow radio stations with one transmitter tower to construct a tower in Sunset Valley.
- October 1, 1988: In response to complaints of speeding, the Council advised the Police Chief that local residents were not exempt from the law and were required to obey posted speed limits.

- August 8, 1990: The City Council and Zoning Commission held hearings to consider the inclusion of fast food establishments and self-service gas stations with convenience stores within a commercial retail zoning district. The Council voted to approve both amendments but Mayor Besse exercised her veto right and vetoed the inclusion of gas stations. Five days later, the Council reconsidered the ordinance amendment and approved it, with three members voting “yes,” one voting “no,” and one abstaining.
- January 8, 1991: The City adopted an ordinance restricting smoking in public places.
- June 18, 1991: The City adopted an ordinance prohibiting the sale, possession, use, and discharge of fireworks within the corporate limits of Sunset Valley.
- November 17, 1992: The City authorized the Environmental Committee to spend up to \$100 to present “Eco-Child Workshops” at City Hall.
- July 20, 1993: A resident on Oakdale Drive lodged a complaint about an emu farm located next to his property, saying the farm had devalued property along Oakdale Drive. During its investigation, the city discovered that the business, Silver Dollar Ranch, was operating in violation of city ordinances. In August, the city negotiated with the owner and agreed on a phased plan to remove the birds and the business from the neighborhood.
- November 9, 1993: The Council heard a proposal to develop a 280-acre tract owned by the Weaver Family. The proposal included the formation of a Planned Unit Development (PUD), construction of multi-family homes, and construction of a road connecting Industrial Oaks Blvd (since renamed Home Depot Blvd) to north Henry Miller Drive. The proposed road would run through the Weaver Tract. (The proposed road and north Henry Miller road have since been renamed Ernest Robles Way).



Sunset
Valley
Marketfair
opens in
December
1991

Administration

- April 16, 1986: The City hired its first full-time City Secretary/Clerk, Jayme Sturgis Foley. She was responsible for processing building permits, billing for utilities, serving as City Treasurer, and covering the Municipal Court until the part-time court clerk arrived in the afternoon. Jayme supervised the installation of the city's first computerized accounting system and, as the City grew, she worked with the Mayor and the City Council on the development of a balanced budget to meet the changing needs of the community and its residents. By 1993, the department's budget had grown to \$199,195.00.

CITY SERVICES**Water**

- January 17, 1984: The Council reviewed plans submitted by Ron Zent to extend the water line to serve a subdivision on Pillow Road.
- February 21, 1984: The costs associated with maintaining the water system and making bond payments exceeded city revenues. The Council hoped that increased sales of water during the summer months would compensate for shortfalls during the winter.
- January 9, 1986: The Council approved the City of Austin's plan to install a 42-inch waterline along Jones Road.
- April 7, 1987: The City approved a water service contract with the City of Austin. The contract provided for installation of service point connections in areas not served by the city's well system (i.e., Stearns Lane, Highway 290, Brodie Lane, and Oakdale Drive). The City of Austin approved the contract in September.
- January 19, 1988: The City approved the addition of a second 44,000-gallon water storage tank.
- February 16, 1988: The Council approved plans to construct the 44,000-gallon tank.
- May 3, 1988: The minutes indicate problems with obtaining suitable water samples for testing. High levels of rust had contaminated samples, rendering them unusable for coliform counts. The State Health Department agreed to an alternative method of testing and a member of the Council reported that the city "may be back on its own system on Friday."
- January 15, 1991: The City authorized an engineering firm to design an emergency interconnect water line from Jones Road to the city's water storage tanks.

- Summer 1993: During the summer-long drought of 1993, the city experienced renewed difficulties with its antiquated water delivery system. The water pipes on Pillow Road broke so many times, some residents were without water seven times during a two-month period, once for four days. Ernest Robles, Director of Public Works, spent much of the summer digging holes in the street, trying to repair the out-dated system. Aided by off-duty Sunset Valley police, Mr. Robles worked ten to twelve hours at a time to repair the system and “cool off” the sometimes disgruntled residents of Pillow Road. While digging, he discovered two code violations: (1) the original contractor had failed to install a bed of sand to protect the pipes, and (2) in some cases builders had installed t-connections for water, instead of providing each house with its own connection to the water main.

Wastewater

During the mid 1980s, the preservation of water quality became a citywide issue. The city's growing population and its reliance on septic systems, combined with its location on Williamson Creek and the Edwards Aquifer, led to concerns about water quality.

Larry Hada, an engineer who served as mayor from 1984-1988, spearheaded a much-needed wastewater project. His tenacious persistence resulted in the initial planning of a wastewater system that has continued to benefit the citizens of Sunset Valley. Until the system was constructed, the City approved the use of temporary holding tanks to address concerns about increased population growth and septic tank failures.

After many delays, construction of the wastewater system started in November 1992 and was completed in June 1993. The system is buried under the city's streets and empties into Austin's wastewater system, which runs along Williamson Creek and the Sunset Valley Branch of Williamson Creek. Now, all new homes and houses that are resold must connect to the wastewater system. When problems occur with existing septic systems, homeowners are required to connect to the wastewater system.

- May 5, 1987: The City approved the construction of a 42-inch wastewater line along the north branch of Williamson Creek.
- August 4, 1987: The Council approved an agreement with an engineering firm, Jones & Neuse, to design a wastewater collection system for the city.
- September 22, 1987: The Council authorized the Mayor to apply for a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to construct a wastewater system. The EPA awarded the grant in April 1988, and the city began the process of issuing Tax & Revenue Certificates of Obligation in the amount of

\$350,000. The funds were to be used to construct wastewater lines and a maintenance and storage facility.

- August 30, 1990: The City approved funds to construct a wastewater sleeve under Highway 290 while the highway was under construction.
- October 15, 1991: The City decided not to construct a wastewater line to serve Stearns Lane because it could not acquire needed easements from property owners.
- January 21, 1992: The City decided not to construct a wastewater line to serve one property on Oakdale and two properties on Brodie Lane because it could not acquire needed easements from property owners. After repeated requests for service by residents on Brodie, the Council agreed to pursue condemnation to allow for easements along Lots 3 & 4 of Rosemary Estates. The easements would allow the wastewater line to be extended from Oakdale Drive to the back of properties on Brodie Lane. On November 3, 1992, the City authorized \$4,000 to purchase the wastewater easement.
- May 5, 1992: The City authorized an additional \$100,000 in Certificates of Obligation to construct the wastewater collection system.

Fire Protection

- June 19, 1984: The City started planning a new garage to house the fire truck. The city contacted the Sunset Valley Women's Club about raising funds to help pay for it.
- March 7, 1989: The Council advertised bids for the construction of a 2,700 square foot maintenance / storage building. A contractor was selected in May. The Manchaca Volunteer Fire Department offered to contribute \$4,000 toward construction of the building. The Manchaca Fire Department also planned to provide a larger truck for the City after construction was completed.
- June 16, 1992: The Council supported aggressive recruitment of additional volunteer fire personnel to improve response time to fires occurring during daytime hours.



Robert Pavlica, volunteer fireman

Police Protection

- By 1990, Chief of Police Kaywood Rodgers was replaced by Richard Clark, who was hired as Chief and served until 1992. The area in the City Hall that had housed the fire truck was remodeled to provide office space for the growing police department.
- April 1993: The city hired Scott Kniffen to serve as Chief of Police. Under his direction, the department grew to include five full-time officers, eight reserve officers, and a part-time clerk. A new building was purchased for \$14,000 to house the rapidly expanding department. The department also purchased an additional police car, bringing the number of vehicles to three, and became fully computerized, with three computers and new software. The department's budget for 1993 was \$ 203,840.
- November 2, 1993: The Council learned that the portable building purchased to house the Police Department was scheduled for delivery later that month.

Because Sunset Valley is so small, the City's police officers provide special services for citizens, including close watches of homes when residents are out of town. Sometimes, Sunset Valley police find themselves in situations not covered during police academy training; for example, when Officer DeCuir spent an hour rounding up loose cows on Lone Oak Trail at 6:30 am on a Sunday morning!

Parks & Greenspace

- October 28, 1986: The Council heard a proposal to finance the construction of a recreational park on property owned by Gloria Buchanan on Brodie Lane. The park would be financed through the sale of general obligation bonds. The City expressed interest but wanted to pursue a grant from the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife.
- April 22, 1991: As part of the negotiations to develop Sunset Valley Marketfair, 12.65 acres of land were dedicated to the city for use as parkland.
- June 26, 1991: Taylor and Inez Gaines donated 21.894 acres as a gift to the people and future generations of Sunset Valley for recreational use or to use as a park, a greenbelt, and/or a preserve. The property, conveyed as the "Gaines Greenbelt," is adjacent to property located north of Highway 290 and east of Stearns. Its boundary runs to the middle of Gaines Creek, which drains into Barton Creek and ultimately into Barton Springs.
- July 16, 1991: The City established rules and regulations regarding the use of public parks.
- February 4, 1992: The City accepted 8.69 acres of land donated to the city by the Austin Tower Company.

- April 7, 1992: A sinkhole was discovered on the 12.65-acre tract that had been dedicated to the City during negotiations to develop the Sunset Valley Marketfair shopping center. The Texas Cave Preserve worked with the city to develop a management plan for the site, now called Sunset Valley Cave. The plan included placing a locked cover over the opening to protect it.

Streets

- During this decade, Brodie Lane, formerly a two-lane road, was widened to a four-lane, divided roadway, Highway 290 was transformed from a four-lane divided road to an eight-lane elevated highway with a two-lane frontage road on each side, the intersection at Jones Road and Brodie Lane was permanently closed, as was the intersection at Pillow Road and Highway 290, and the crossover lane at Dudmar and Highway 290 disappeared permanently when Highway 290 was elevated.
- November 25, 1985: The City outlined the terms of an agreement with the developer of the Sunset Oaks Subdivision (Lone Oak Trail) to settle disputes over street and drainage repairs.
- October 7, 1986: Travis County committed funds to widen Brodie Lane. Construction was planned to start in 1987 and end in 1988.
- April 16, 1991: The City dedicated 1.5054 acres for an additional right of way along Industrial Oaks Boulevard. In December, 2001, the street was renamed “Home Depot Boulevard.”
- January 21, 1992: Funds were approved to install sleeves under Brodie Lane to transport water to the medians, if needed in the future.
- October 19, 1993: After construction of the new portion of Henry Miller Drive connecting Brodie to Highway 290, the city approved the release and abandonment of the old Henry Miller Drive, which had connected the Toney Burger Center to Highway 290. The old section of Henry Miller Drive divided the land where the Wolfe Nursery building stands today.

Public Works

For many years, Sunset Valley employed maintenance men to keep the city's streets, water system, drainage easements, and parks in good condition. Rudi Harimillo, Mike Gragert, and Robert Pavlica served in this capacity until 1991, when the city hired Ernest Robles, who had a license and experience in operating water and wastewater systems.

In 1993, the City established a Department of Public Works and appointed Mr. Robles as director, with a department budget of \$ 70,000. Tom Breitkreutz was hired to assist Mr. Robles. Under Mr. Robles' direction, the Public Works Department

supervised the installation of the new wastewater system and began preparations to upgrade the water supply system. In addition to planning and completing these major projects, the department provided special services not available in larger cities. For example, when one of the City's older citizens was no longer able to roll her garbage can out to the street, a public works staff person drove by her house on Monday mornings and moved her garbage can for her.

CITY BUDGET AND TAXES

As the city's population grew and businesses were allowed to locate in the area, Sunset Valley's revenue and budget increased. One of the most dramatic increases in the city's budget occurred after the City's first shopping center, Sunset Valley Marketfair, opened in 1991. In 1989-90, the year prior to the center's opening, the City's budget was \$223,915, with a tax rate of .50 per \$100 at 100% of valuation. By 1993-94, after the center had been in operation for just two years, the city's budget had grown to \$956,504, a 427% increase! That year, the city was able to reduce property taxes to .31 per \$100 at 100% of valuation.

SHOPPING CENTERS

Sunset Valley Marketfair, a 60-acre shopping center located at the corner of Brodie Lane and Highway 290, was built during 1990-91. When the first store opened, (Ross Dress for Less), its first customers were Helen Besse, Mayor of Sunset Valley, Jayme Sturgis Foley, City Secretary, Linda Bennet, Court Clerk, and Frances Underwood, Council Member. They purchased a small Christmas decoration for the City and saved the receipt, which is still kept at City Hall. After returning to City Hall, Ms. Foley discovered that the store had incorrectly charged them Austin's 8% sales tax instead of Sunset Valley's rate of 7.25%. When she called the store to report the mistake, quick changes in the store's cash registers remedied the situation. Home Depot opened in December 1991. By December 1992, the shopping center was fully occupied.

December
1991
Home Depot
opened at its
first location
Sunset Valley
Marketfair



CHAPTER SIX

DECade OF 1994-2003

BOUNDARIES

- January 20, 1998: The City annexed the 40-acre tract it had purchased in 1995 as a conservation area, now known as the South Hills Conservation Tract.
- July 21, 1998: The City annexed a 1,527 square foot strip of land along Highway 290 that was owned by Sam and Mary Kate Kelly.
- October 17, 2000: The City annexed a 0.98-acre tract of land on Highway 290 that was part of a 4-acre tract owned by Triple Gem Properties.
- November 29, 2001: The City annexed a 2.642-acre tract of land on Brodie Lane owned by Robert and Marie Holt, which was the former site of the Appletree Day Care Center. Now, the land is part of the new Home Depot complex. The Holts donated to the City the statue of a horse that stood in front of the day care center. The statue is now located at the new City Hall. (See page 120.)
- April 15, 2003: The City annexed two tracts of land for right-of-way: One tract was located along Home Depot Blvd and the other on the east and west sides of Brodie Lane to the Williamson Creek bridge.



June 17, 1997
City accepts a
limited edition
print by Ronnie
Wells from the
Forestry Service
and Texas Urban
Forest Council.
Left to right:
Mayor Cowan,
Cat Quintanilla,
member of
Environmental
Committee,
Ronnie Wells, and
Mark Baker,
Environmental
Specialist.

CITY GOVERNMENT

Year	Mayor	Council Members
1994	Michael Francis	Mattie Adams, Frances Underwood, Susan Jung, Terry Cowan, and Erwin Haddon
1995	Michael Francis	Mattie Adams, Susan Jung, Terry Cowan, Frances Underwood, and Barbara Wilson
1996	Michael Francis	Mattie Adams, Terry Cowan, Susan Jung, Barbara Wilson, and Frances Underwood
1997	Michael Francis	Terry Cowan, Mattie Adams, Barbara Wilson, Susan Jung, and Scott Draker
1998	Terry Cowan	Mary Black, Barbara Wilson, Donny Hurwitz, Scott Draker, and Bill Waller
1999	Terry Cowan	Scott Draker, Cat Quintanilla, Bill Waller, Donny Hurwitz, and Mary Black
2000	Terry Cowan	Mary Black, Mickie Powers, Cat Quintanilla, Scott Draker, and Donny Hurwitz
2001	Terry Cowan	Scott Draker, Mickie Powers, Cat Quintanilla, Donny Hurwitz, and Mary Black
2002	Terry Cowan	Mary Black, Cat Quintanilla, Kelly Lee, Scott Draker, and Mickie Powers
2003	Terry Cowan	Kelly Lee, Mickie Powers, Cat Quintanilla, Mary Black, and Scott Draker
2004	Terry Cowan	Cat Quintanilla, Mary Black, Scott Draker, Jeff Mills, and Charles Goyette

- January 21, 1995: The City held a special election to raise the sales and use tax rate from 7.25% to 7.75%, effective October 1, 1995. The measure would allow a reduction in the property tax rate in Sunset Valley. Voters approved the measure, 38 votes in favor and 3 against.
- February 21, 1995: The City approved a watershed development permit for JPI to construct a 210 unit, multifamily project in Sunset Valley's ETJ west of Brodie Lane.
- October 3, 1995: The City learned that HEB planned to develop a tract of land at the corner of Brodie Lane and William Cannon Drive.

1994
National
Night Out
Betty
Dunn and
Flo
Wright



- November 7, 1995: Sunset Valley asked the City of Austin to deannex the 40-acre conservation tract purchased by Sunset Valley so it could be annexed into the City of Sunset Valley. The Council approved a Restrictive Covenant on the land designating it as a conservation easement and describing permitted improvements.
- December 5, 1995: The residents of Oakdale presented a petition asking the City Council to either take legal action to stop the development of another JPI multi-family project to be built on the T.U. Bryant tract, located in Sunset Valley's ETJ south of Oakdale, or to purchase the tract of land.
- January 23, 1996: The City agreed to hold a referendum on April 6th to approve \$5,000,000 in bonds to acquire property for parks, playgrounds, recreational areas and open space, to construct roadway and drainage improvements, and to construct water and wastewater facilities.
- April 2, 1996: The City adopted an ordinance requiring voter approval of all proposed City contracts to acquire land for parks or open space. Earlier in the meeting, residents had heatedly discussed a letter distributed to their homes, which implied that the proposed bond funds would be used solely to purchase the T.U. Bryant Tract. Included with the letter was a copy of an offer made by JPI to sell the land for \$4.5 million dollars. The letter did not mention the City's proposed adoption of an ordinance calling for voter approval of City contracts before acquiring open space or parkland.
- April 6, 1996: The bond proposal failed. One hundred and thirty-five qualified voters cast ballots during the election—thirty-nine (39) votes in favor and ninety-six (96) opposed.

- April 16, 1996: The Council funded a “Conservation Rangers Program” to train residents to patrol the 40-acre conservation easement purchased by the City. The Rangers tasks were to inventory species, assess the need for fencing, monitor erosion, pick up litter, and report unwanted activity. The City closed public access from Lone Oak Trail, permitted access to the area only by Conservation Rangers, and agreed that no formal trails would be constructed in the Conservation Area.



May 1999 After-Election Celebration

Back Row: Bob and Cheryl Sokol, Paul Turner, Terry and Maggie Cowan, Ron and Mary Jo Light, Russell Harding, John Frick
Middle Row: Roy Solis, Molly Minus, Cat Quintanilla, Mary Black, Bill and Annette Waller, Mickie Powers
Front Row: Julie Sokol and friend, Norma Olivarez, Miguel Huerta and Irena, Karen Medicus, Susan Jung, Tricia Murphy and Kali the Dog

- May 21, 1996: A resident on Reese Drive complained about roosters crowing in the early morning hours. His neighbor on one side owned three roosters and the neighbor on the other side owned another. When the roosters

started crowing back and forth about 4:45 am, they woke him up. He asked the Council to include animals other than dogs in the city's nuisance ordinance.

- July 16, 1996: The William's rooster on Reese Drive was shot and killed over the weekend.
- March 18, 1997: The City implemented an Oak Wilt Management program.
- May 6, 1997: The City Council received a petition signed by children living on Lone Oak requesting that the ice cream truck be allowed in Sunset Valley. Mayor Francis told Sara Huebner (Lone Oak Trail) that he would investigate the matter and encourage the ice cream man to return.
- May 20, 1997: The City received the "Good Things Come in Small Packages" award from the Austin Independent School District.
- June 17, 1997: The City received the "Small Cities" award from the Texas Forestry Service and Texas Urban Forest Council. The award, a registered copy of a limited edition print by Ronnie Wells entitled, *Sam Houston's Bois d'Arc*, can be viewed in the lobby at City Hall.
- August 19, 1997: The Council approved the Lone Star Girl Scout Troop #1025's request to hold their bi-monthly meetings in city hall.
- November 8, 1997: The City held a non binding referendum election on issuing debt instruments, in an amount not to exceed two million six hundred thousand dollars, to pay for improvements to the city's water and wastewater

May 18, 1999
City Council
and Visitors
Mr. Dowdy,
Russell
Harding, Ed
Vaughan, Mary
Black, Terry
Cowan, Helen
Besse, Bill
Waller, Scott
Draker,
Barbara
Wilson, Donny
Hurwitz,
Michael Francis



systems, streets, and drainage, and to construct a new roadway that would connect Brodie Lane to Hwy 290 via the existing Henry Miller Road. Eighty-four qualified voters cast ballots with 71 voting in favor of the proposal and 13 against it.

- March 3, 1998: The Council approved the first permit allowing the sale of beer and wine for off-premise consumption. The permit was issued to Cost Plus World Market.
- July 7, 1998: A noise ordinance was adopted that included procedures for determining the amount of unreasonable noise produced by animals.
- October 1998: The City sent a demand letter to the Greater Austin Area Telecommunications Network (GAATN) requesting the removal of lines encroaching on the city's right of way easements. By February 1999, the City negotiated a telecommunication line easement agreement establishing an annual fee the company would pay per linear foot for using the city's right-of-way.
- December 1, 1998: The City granted the State of Texas a temporary special use permit that allowed state employees working at the Capitol to use part of the Toney Burger Center as a park and ride facility during the 76th Legislative Session. Because construction at the Capitol had reduced available parking, the General Services Commission and Capital Metro entered into an agreement to provide two temporary park and ride facilities for employees, one located on North Burnet Road and the other at the Toney Burger Center.
- April 6, 1999: The City approved the subdivision plat for Sunset Valley Meadows. The plat consisted of 60 lots, 57 for residential development and 3 for water quality ponds to treat runoff from new roads in the subdivision.
- June 1, 1999: City entered into an interlocal agreement with AISD to maintain a new playground to be constructed at the Sunset Valley Elementary School. The school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the City of Sunset Valley would each place \$5,000 in a restricted account. The city's contribution would be used to replace the playground equipment as needed.
- October 19, 1999: The city approved additional funding to modify the construction plans for a pedestrian trail running from Ernest Robles Way, through the Village shopping center buffer area, to Lovegrass Lane. The additional funds would allow construction of a bridge for pedestrians to use when crossing the drainage channel.



January 1996
Tree Planting
at City Hall (2
Lone Oak)
Carol and
Peter Knight

- December 29, 1999: The City purchased the property at 1 Sunset Trail and a 40 foot strip off 3 Sunset Trail as the location for a water treatment facility to treat runoff from Jones Road. In 2003, after investigating the cost of a treatment facility, the Council determined that the costs outweighed the benefits of a facility at that location. In February 2004, the Council released funds to complete the landscaping portion of the original project and enhance the entry sign.
- August 8, 2000: After working on various proposals for the design of a new city hall complex, the City selected the architectural firm of Morales & Associates, Inc. to design the building.
- December 5, 2000: The city adopted a resolution urging citizens to stop feeding white tailed deer in an attempt to limit the rapidly growing deer population to what the native habitat could sustain.
- March 20, 2001: The U.S. Post Office agreed to recognize "Sunset Valley, Texas" as a destination for the delivery of mail. Residents no longer had to list their delivery address as Austin.
- April 3, 2001: The City adopted an ordinance prohibiting the feeding of white tailed deer and established penalties for violations.
- January 15, 2002: The city approved a design for the Community Bulletin Boards to be placed on each street. The bulletin boards would be used to post agendas of city meetings and notices of city events.
- May 21, 2002: The city accepted approximately 0.384 acres of land deeded by the J.D. Weaver Family Limited Partnership, as required by the Agreed Judgment in the lawsuit filed by the Partnership against the city. The land included the water quality pond serving the northern portion of Ernest Robles Way.
- August 5, 2002: City purchased .998 acres on Lone Oak Trail for drainage improvements. The tract, located adjacent to the city's 3-acre parcel at the corner of Jones Road and Lone Oak Trail, included part of the Sunset Valley Branch of Williamson Creek. The city also acquired a 60-foot drainage easement from Mr. Huebner, which also included part of the creek.
- August 13, 2002: Two years after selecting an architectural firm to design the city hall complex, the City hired Rizzo Construction, Inc. to construct the facility.
- August 20, 2002: The City approved funds to purchase a back up generator to serve the city's water treatment plant. The generator would provide power in the event of an electrical failure.
- October 15, 2002: The City granted a Temporary Special Use Permit allowing a Texas Hearing & Service Dog Walk in Sunset Valley on April 12, 2003. The

3-mile route started at Burger Center, went to Lovegrass Lane, then returned to the Center. At the same meeting the Council entered into an Interlocal Agreement with the City of Austin, Travis County, the Lower Colorado River Authority and the Corps of Engineers to conduct a Flood Control Feasibility Study for Onion Creek and the Williamson Creek Watershed.



February
6, 1995
Map
showing
zoning
cate-
gories

- April 15, 2003: When property owners on Country White Lane expressed an interest in being annexed into Sunset Valley, the Council approved a work order to analyze costs associated with providing residents with water and wastewater services and street improvements.
- May 24, 2003: For years, the city used clips to attach informational notices to residents' mailboxes. Then, the post office suddenly confiscated approximately 40 city directories that had been clipped to mailboxes in the Meadows Subdivision. The post office advised the City that notices could no longer be clipped to mailboxes. After discovering that the post office had disposed of the directories, the City filed a claim for reimbursement. The post office denied the claim, saying the amount of postage the city had avoided paying would offset the city's cost of reprinting the directories. The Post Office informed the City that continued use of resident's mailboxes without proper postage could result in penalties.

Zoning

- December, 1994: The engineering company, Hejl, Lee & Associates, Inc., prepared a map of Sunset Valley delineating its zoning categories. The map was updated on February 6, 1995. (See the map on page 81.)

CITY SERVICES

Wastewater

- February 15, 1994: The City worked with Franklin Federal Savings to develop a program that would encourage residents to connect to the wastewater system. Franklin Federal provided a discount on loans to residents to install wastewater lines serving their property.
- January 2, 2001: The City approved a resolution to alleviate immediate public health problems caused by malfunctioning septic tanks on Stearns Lane until the wastewater collection line was completed. The resolution authorized the Public Works Department to contract for septic tank pumping services when needed. The collection line was completed in January 2003.

Parks & Greenspace

- February 15, 1994: Bill Howell offered to sell 40 acres of land to the City as a greenbelt buffer. The land was located in Austin, adjacent to Sunset Valley's southern boundary.

- May 7, 1994: The City held an election to purchase the 40 acres for conservation purposes. The measure passed with 70 votes in favor and 40 opposed.
- April 27, 1995: The City finally purchased the 40 acres from Mr. Howell. The delay resulted from a requirement in the contract that the property be platted prior to closing. However, the City of Austin had initiated a moratorium on subdivision plats. When the moratorium ended, the land now known as the "South Hills Conservation Tract" was purchased for \$ 140,00.00.
- September 19, 1995: The City rejected an offer from the owner of a vacant lot adjacent to Valley Creek Park to sell the property to the City.
- September 3, 1996: Lukers, Inc. dedicated a 2.81-acre tract of land to the city. The land was located between the 40-acre conservation tract owned by the City and properties south of Oakdale Drive.



April 12,
1997
Conservation
Rangers
Training
Back: Ernest
Robles, Shelly
Bjorkman,
Ruth
Dawson,
Wheat
Whitfield,
Burford
Westlund,
Terry Cowan
Front: Darren
Pavlica, Ruth
Pifer &
Jonathan,
Mark Baker

- March 18, 1997: The city implemented the Conservation Rangers Program. Carol Knight (Pillow Road) developed the program curriculum and taught the first training session on April 12th. Seven citizens and four staff members attended.
- November 11, 1997: The Council established a Greenways Task Force to study the city's greenways and open spaces and recommend management options. On January 6, 1998, the Task Force recommended the construction of a trail along Roadway B, now called Ernest Robles Way.
- January 28, 1998: Per agreement, the City received two parcels of land dedicated by the J.D Weaver Family Limited Partnership. The first tract,

approximately 8.5 acres of land, was dedicated as the site of a new city hall complex. Construction of the new complex began in 2003. The second tract, approximately 64.59 acres, was dedicated for conservation and recreational purposes. It is located south of Lovegrass Lane and north of Oakdale Drive.

- February 17, 1998: Per agreement, the City received a 6.87-acre tract of land dedicated by J.D. Weaver Family Limited Partnership. The tract is located along the Sunset Valley Branch of Williamson Creek just south of the Weaver Barn and runs east to the bridge at Ernest Robles Way.
- August 11, 1998: The City installed bicycle racks at the park on Reese Drive and next to City Hall.
- June 15, 1999: The City approved an erosion control project for Valley Creek to reduce the loss of trees and parkland. In February 2000, another \$2,500 was approved to install a fence along the bank and install landscaping, and irrigation.
- October 19, 1999: The City adopted a management plan for the 42.81 acres of conservation land purchased from Mr. Howell and named it the South Hills Conservation Area. The area consisted of the original 40-acre tract purchased by the City and the 2.81 acres dedicated by Lukers, Inc. The Council instructed the city attorney to file suit against any person or persons living adjacent to the city's land who encroached into the conservation area.

June 2001
Constructing
Sunset Valley
Elementary
School
playground
Left to right:
Ernest
Robles,
Michael and
Carol Francis,
and Scott
Draker



- October 12, 2000: Per agreement, the City received 16.502 acres dedicated by the J.D. Weaver Family Limited Partnership to construct an off-site detention

pond serving development on the Weaver Tract. Use of the property was restricted to storm water detention, water quality, and landscaping. This tract runs along the Sunset Valley Branch of Williamson Creek from the bridge at Ernest Robles Way westward to properties on Lone Oak Trail.

- November 7, 2001: The City purchased an off-road vehicle for police to use when patrolling the city's conservation areas. Construction of a fence around the Community Garden was started and scheduled for completion by the end of the month.
- September 17, 2002: The City accepted 0.19 acres of land conveyed by gift deed from Triple Gem Properties. The deeded tract was adjacent to the Gaines Greenbelt.
- May 6, 2003: The City approved construction of a pedestrian crossing connecting the trail along Ernest Robles Way with the Village Buffer Trail.

Streets

- August 16, 1994: The City of Austin advised the Council that the NPC Trust had requested rezoning of a tract of land adjacent to Sunset Valley's western boundary. The Trust wanted to construct multi-family housing on the property and build a road that would connect Mopac to an unimproved right-of-way in Sunset Valley leading to Brodie Lane. The proposed road would be named Industrial Oaks Blvd. The Council did not want to encourage construction on the proposed Industrial Oaks Blvd (now called Home Depot Blvd) or permit a road that would increase traffic on Brodie Lane.
- July 18, 1995: The Highway Department planned to complete the Highway 290 overpass at Brodie by spring of 1996.
- September 12, 1995: The first Neighborhood Watch street signs were installed.
- December 10, 1996: The City vacated the closed portion of Jones Road located between Henry Miller and Highway 290.



March 3, 2000
Public Works
Open House
Left to right: Cat Quintanilla, Katy Phillips, and Betty Dunn

- January 28, 1998: Per agreement, the City received a 6.395 acre tract of land dedicated by the J.D. Weaver Family Limited Partnership for a road connecting Jones Road south to Brodie Lane. The road was later named Ernest Robles Way.
- September 2, 1998: The members of an appointed Task Force presented their recommendations to the Council regarding modifications to Jones Road. The Task Force was convened in response to citizen's concerns about the likelihood of increased traffic when Roadway B was connected to Jones Road.
- November 17, 1998: The City approved the construction of left turn lanes on Brodie Lane and additional traffic control improvements at Roadway B and Brodie Lane. Funding for the improvements was to be partially offset by a \$145,000 grant from the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO).
- March 2, 1999: The Council requested citizen input for renaming Roadway B. Options on the survey included Sunset Boulevard, Henry Miller Drive, and a "write" in suggestion. The citizens responded as follows: Sunset Boulevard (7 votes), Dr. Weaver Drive (2), Maura's Way (1), Ranch Road (1), Weaver Blvd/Lane/Way (9), Roadway 'B' or "Bee"(2), Henry Miller Drive (4), Valley Boulevard (2), Underwood Drive (1), Sunrise Drive (1), Moonlit Way (1). With no apparent consensus, the Council continued to call the road "Roadway B."
- October 19, 1999: The City changed the names of Henry Miller Drive and Roadway B to Ernest Robles Way in honor of the Director of Public Works.

1999

Cutting ribbon
for opening of
Ernest Robles
Way: Mayor
Cowan and
Ernest Robles



- April 2, 2002: Travis County agreed to improve Brodie Lane from Highway 290 to the Williamson Creek Bridge, to clean the hazard material traps serving Brodie, and to allow the flashing light at Lovegrass Lane to be relocated to the proposed intersection of Brodie and Home Depot Blvd. In return, Sunset Valley agreed to share up to 50% of the costs and to annex a portion of Brodie Lane running to Williamson Creek.
- October 1, 2002: The City accepted approximately 627 square feet of right-of-way at the intersection of Highway 290 and Ernest Robles Way dedicated by SVM-I Ltd. The additional area would improve the turning radius at the corner.
- September 12, 2003: The City awarded a contract to reconstruct the granite trail along the south portion of Ernest Robles Way and to construct two additional granite gravel trails, one along the north side of Jones Road from Pillow Road to Ernest Robles Way and the other along the north portion of Ernest Robles Way.

CITY BUDGET AND TAXES

- February 15, 2000: The City adopted an ordinance establishing a hotel occupancy tax in anticipation of the construction of a residential inn in Sunset Valley,
- March 21, 2000: The Council adopted an ordinance to opt out of the Sales Tax Holiday passed by the Texas legislature. The intent of the tax holiday was to provide relief for families purchasing clothing and school supplies during the first weekend in August. Because Sunset Valley's budget was solely dependent on sales tax revenue, the Council wanted additional time to study the issue, but their decision to opt out resulted in negative publicity because Sunset Valley was the only city in Texas to do so. The retailers in Sunset Valley granted the sales tax relief to their customers anyway, then paid the Comptroller the amount that would have been collected out of their profits. In December 2000, after deciding that the sales tax holiday would not negatively affect the City's operations, the Council reinstated the Sales Tax Holiday in Sunset Valley.
- August 11, 2001: The city held a special election to increase the sales and use tax by one-fourth of one percent to raise funds to pay for street maintenance and repair. Eighty-four valid votes were cast at the election, sixty-one in favor and twenty-three against. The tax increase took effect on January 1, 2002 and would remain in place for four years.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Sunset Valley Organic Community Garden

In 2000, Anne Gault and Betty Dunn presented plans to the City Council for a community garden that would be divided into small plots for use by Sunset Valley residents and staff. By the summer of 2001, an eight-foot deer fence had been installed around the 100'X80' garden, located behind City Hall, and gardening had begun.

A Garden Committee meets to develop basic guidelines (for example, only organic products are used), set goals, and make plans for the future. In 2003, the Committee received non-profit status, allowing it to apply for grants and accept donations. Volunteer work days are scheduled twice a year to build raised beds, spread mulch for walkways, and pull unsightly weeds. Four garden beds are reserved for the Children's Program.

In 2003, Girl Scout Troop # 895 planted vegetables and flowers during a fall work day.

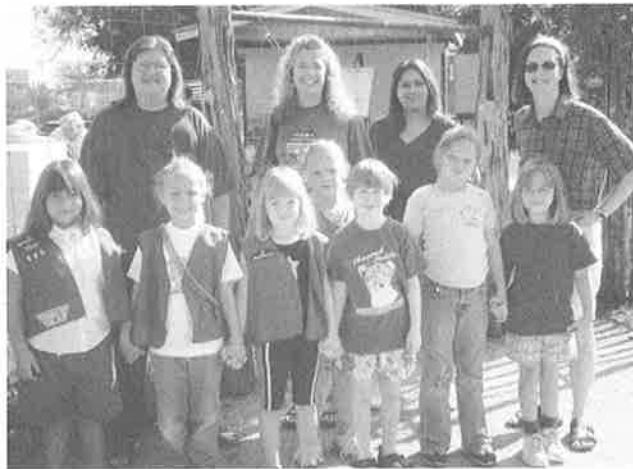
Eighteen families are currently growing vegetables and herbs to eat and share with neighbors and wildlife, especially birds and a variety of insects. Throughout the year, gardeners share work, information, and help one another, which promotes a real sense of community.



May 8, 2004 Garden Work Day

Back row: Anita Stuckey, Betty Dunn, Robyn Shannon, Charles Goyette, Ron Light, Terry Cowan, Susan Jung

Front row: Anne Gault, Tricia Murphy, Mary Black, Mary Jo Light



2003
Scout Troop in
Sunset Valley
Community
Garden

Teen Program

In 1995 a resident of Sunset Valley mentioned that he was looking for summer employment for his son. In response, Ernest Robles, then Director of Public Works, initiated a Teen Program to provide teens with more than just summer jobs—they would also learn how city government functions and acquire leadership skills. After working out the logistics, the Public Works Department hired four teenage employees.

Nine years later, the program is going strong with no end in sight. In 1996 the program was nominated for an Attorney General's Award as one of the best community service programs in the state of Texas. Over the years the Council has expanded the program, now hiring 10 teens each year. So far, approximately 32 teens have participated in the program, currently managed by Katy Phillips, Director of Public Works.



June 1999
Teen
Program
Diana
Pavlica,
Jayme
Foley,
and Jared
Sturgis

August 5, 2004

Teen Program

Left to right:

Staff: Joe Flournoy

and Carolyn

Meredith

Teens: Monte Smith,

David Follis, Forest

Greene, Katie Leigh,

Eric Egan, Will

Leigh, Mike

Calderon (staff), and

Dusty McKenzie,



June 2, 2001

Town Loop

Planting

Front Row: Mary

Black, Ramona

Hutchison,

unknown

Second Row:

Jennifer

Demarest and

Maggie Cowan





Village Buffer Trail Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
1999

Front row left to right: Terry Cowan, unknown woman, Polly and Bill Ashbaugh, Jacob Castillo, Mary Black and Cat Quintanilla (cutting ribbon) Helen Besse, unknown girl, Bailey Hayes, Aspen Huebner, Scott Kniffen (with cap), Ernest Robles, Michael Melinger, and Jerod, Theda, and Crosby (baby) Lambert
Back row left to right: Steve Borochoff (walking), Donny Hurwitz (in sun glasses), Charles Warnken, Tessa and Roanne Draker, Scott Draker, Lanette Bond (large hat), Mickie Powers (to right of Mary Black), Eschelle Gonzales (girl in front of Mickie), two unknown men, Susan Cassano, Betty Dunn, Robert Pavlica, unknown, Dan Huebner, and Russell Harding (far right behind Lamberts)

SHOPPING CENTERS

Construction on a new shopping center, Sunset Valley Village, began in 1998. Special features included an outdoor courtyard with seating and a water wall, xeriscape plantings, and access to a walking trail located behind the center.

LAW SUITS

JD Weaver Family Limited Partnership vs. Sunset Valley

From 1994 to 1996, the City and the JD Weaver Family Partnership disagreed over the Weaver family's plans to develop their 280-acre farm located on Brodie Lane. Many residents opposed the development because it seemed to ignore the City's vision for the future, which allowed for some retail development while retaining the city's unique semi-rural qualities.

The Weaver's initial plans called for commercial development east of Brodie Lane, multi-family housing, and roadway alignments that did not comply with the City's newly adopted Master Plan. In June 1996 the Council rezoned a 26-acre portion of the land for commercial development but the two parties could not agree on plans for developing the rest of the property. To avoid a lawsuit, members of the City Council and the Zoning Commission met with the developers on August 17, 1996 to mediate a global settlement. After twelve hours of hard work and painful compromises, the parties agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding outlining global development of the property. On September 3, 1996, the City Council and Zoning Commission approved a formal Settlement Agreement outlining a process for moving forward with rezoning specific tracts for commercial development, dedicating land to the city, aligning and constructing a roadway connecting Brodie Lane to Jones Road, and approving needed variances. In November 1996 and December 1997 the City approved the developer's preliminary subdivision plat for the entire tract and rezoned a 47-acre tract from single family to commercial retail.

January
2002
Installing
the
pedestrian
bridge in
Village
Buffer
Trail



In January 1998, the city received a right-of-way dedication to construct "Roadway B" from Jones Road to Brodie Lane, as shown on the preliminary plat. The city authorized engineers to design and prepare construction documents and moved forward with issuing bonds, including

1.2 million dollars to pay for the road. When the road was almost completed, a dispute arose over the construction of a water quality pond to treat runoff from the northern section of the road. Without the pond, that section of the road could not be opened for public use. On June 30, 1999, the J. D. Weaver Family Limited Partnership filed a lawsuit against the City, claiming that the City had failed to satisfy conditions and obligations imposed under the Settlement Agreement and the Special Warranty Deed. They asked the courts to revert the title of the road back to the J.D. Weaver Family Limited Partnership.

On October 2, 2000, a jury was empanelled and the case proceeded toward trial. On October 9, 2000, both sides reached agreement on several matters before the court and the jury was dismissed. Under the terms of the interlocutory judgment, the Weavers agreed to dismiss all claims to the road unless the City vacated or abandoned it, to dedicate the pond to the City after it was completed, and to grant an easement for the City to maintain and repair the re-irrigation system. The City agreed to install pedestrian lighting along the trails on the east side of the road and to provide underground electrical service to the water quality pond. The judge established a "grandfather date" for rules for reviewing all subsequent permits to develop the Weaver property under the 1994 Code for land use and 1996 Code for water quality purposes.

A dedication ceremony was held on November 13, 1999 and Roadway B was renamed Ernest Robles Way.

Slider vs. Sunset Valley

In May 1997, Ken Slider, owner of properties at 37 and 39 Pillow Road, submitted applications to build two residential homes on portions of the lots located in the water quality transition zone. The city applied its 1997 regulations to the applications and required nine restrictions under a restrictive covenant. Mr. Slider brought a lawsuit against the City arguing that the lots were covered under the grandfather provisions of Senate Bill 1704. Because there were no watershed regulations in effect at the time the property was platted, he believed that the city could not apply its current regulations to the lots. The Court ruled that the regulations were related to health and safety issues, which were covered by exceptions outlined in Senate Bill 1704. The city prevailed and Mr. Slider signed the restrictive covenant.

City of Sunset Valley vs. Texas Department of Transportation:

When Highway 290 was expanded in 1991 and 1992, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDot) took a section of Jones Road, which served as one of Sunset Valley's main roads. In May 1998, the City filed an inverse condemnation suit against TxDot, claiming that the elimination of the intersection at Brodie Lane and Jones Road resulted in unacceptable delays when police and emergency response vehicles had to

travel from one part of the city to the other, a delay that could only be solved by building an alternate road. The city voiced several other complaints: the highway expansion violated state pollution regulations, the high mast floodlights created a nuisance to area homeowners, and TxDot failed to provide city limit and exit signs for travelers on stretches of Highway 290 located within Sunset Valley's city limits.

In November 1998, the city won a partial summary judgment in District Court. Judge Lowry denied TxDot's claim that the City lacked standing to sue for inverse condemnation. The remaining question concerned the amount of damages suffered by the City. TxDot appealed the District Court's decision, and the Third Court of Appeals reaffirmed the District Court's decision on the takings claim but remanded the determination of damages.

District Judge Suzanne Covington presided over the trial and found in favor of the City, awarding Sunset Valley the following relief: (1) \$836,192.80 for the cost of a substitute road through Sunset Valley; (2) \$810,978.60 in prejudgment interest; (3) a judgment that TxDot violated administrative regulations relating to noise and lighting; (4) an injunction to abate the private nuisance caused by lighting on Highway 290; and (5) attorney fees in the amount of \$34,075.

TxDot appealed the decision to the Texas Supreme Court. The case went before Justices Wainwright, Schneider, O'Neill, Hecht, Phillips, Owen, Jefferson, Smith and Brister. The docket reads in part:

"The principal issues include (1) whether Sunset Valley has a property interest in a road sufficient to support a "takings" claim against the state, and (2) whether the Transportation Code allows the city, as an "agency of the state," to maintain an inverse-condemnation claim against the Transportation Department. In this case Sunset Valley, a municipality surrounded by Austin, sued in part to recover the cost of a substitute road when TxDot destroyed a portion of an existing road for a highway expansion. Environmental violations also were alleged as a result of the highway expansion. The state argues in part that a municipality controls its streets as public trustee, but the streets themselves are owned by the state."

As of this writing, the City is still waiting for a decision from the Texas Supreme Court.

Sunset Valley vs. Lowe's and the City of Austin

In early 2002, Sunset Valley considered releasing property located in its ETJ to the City of Austin to reduce the City's expenses for providing fire protection to the area. Under consideration were lands north and south of Ben Garza Lane and land serving the River Oaks Apartments located east of Brodie. In addition to reducing Sunset Valley's costs for providing fire protection, releasing the land to Austin would subject it to Austin's stricter watershed regulations for impervious cover in the event the

property was developed. The stricter regulations would help preserve water quality over the Edwards Aquifer and mitigate potential creek erosion resulting from higher density development.

The Council planned to release the property during its meeting on November 4, 2002. That morning, an attorney, an engineer and a developer representing Lowe's Home Centers, Inc. presented documents for a preliminary subdivision permit. The Deputy City Administrator, Jayme Foley, reviewed the documents and determined that the submittal was administratively incomplete; therefore, Lowe's did not have an application pending. Later that evening, the City Council released the properties from its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Lowe's then filed documents with the City of Austin but they were rejected as administratively incomplete. When the application was resubmitted, Austin imposed the SOS standard of 15% impervious cover on the property, which was stricter than Sunset Valley's impervious cover limit of 40%. Lowe's filed a lawsuit against the City of Austin and asked for help from the Texas Legislature to change the law. Senator Jeff Wentworth sponsored a bill, commonly referred to as the "Lowe's Law," which allowed Travis County's watershed regulations to prevail whenever, after September 2002, a municipality released land within its extraterritorial jurisdiction to another jurisdiction when an application was pending in the original jurisdiction. The Legislature adopted the law.

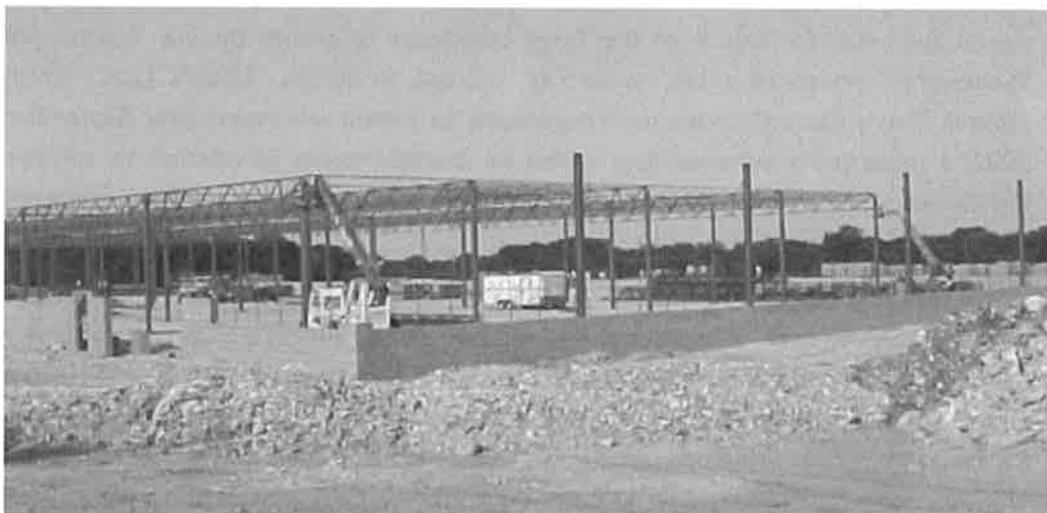
Lowe's argued that the documents they attempted to file with Sunset Valley were pending, therefore they were not required to meet Austin's SOS standards for development and could conceivably construct 100% impervious cover because the County had no watershed standards. Sunset Valley argued that Lowe's did not have an application pending; therefore, the "Lowe's Law" did not apply and the development was subject to SOS standards. The City also argued that the legislative bill determined whose rules applied when approving a subdivision plat but did not address watershed standards.

In December 2003, the City of Austin approved a settlement agreement with Lowe's and the landowners, Eli Garza, Geraldine Fleming, Marcia Rose White, Trustee, and William Reese, allowing the site to be developed with impervious cover at 40% rather than SOS's impervious limit of 15%. The agreement also failed to limit post-development runoff of 12 contaminants specified in the SOS Ordinance to pre-development levels. When Austin approved the settlement agreement, Lowe's dropped its lawsuit and purchased the properties. Lowe's also paid the City of Austin one million dollars to purchase other land to mitigate the higher density development over the Edwards Aquifer.

In reaction, the City of Sunset Valley, the Save our Springs Alliance, Inc., and the Save Barton Creek Association, Inc. filed suit against the City of Austin and Lowe's,

asking the Court to void the settlement because Austin failed to comply with the SOS Ordinance. On April 22, 2004, Judge Lora Livingston heard arguments on some of the claims in the matter. On June 15, 2004 she ruled in favor of the City of Sunset Valley, the Save our Springs Alliance, and the Save Barton Creek Association. While the judgment and order were being drafted, Lowe's and the City of Austin took the position that Lowe's could continue construction on the site.

Sunset Valley requested and was granted a temporary restraining order with bond set at \$20,000. The restraining order forced Lowe's to stop construction at the site. Because temporary restraining orders are valid for only 14 days, the City sought and obtained a temporary injunction to stop construction for a longer period of time. The temporary injunction bond was set at \$80,000. The temporary injunction is likely to remain in place until trial.



June 16, 2004 Construction on Lowe's located on Brodie Lane

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING SUMMARIES

Budget and Staffing History**Budget and Staffing History**

Budget Year	Police	Administrative	Municipal Court	Public Works	Total
	Employees	Employees	Employees	Employees	Operating Budget
1985 - 1986	2	1	1	1	\$174,893
1986 - 1987	3	1	1	1	\$242,500
1987 - 1988	3	1	1	1	\$242,116
1988 - 1989	2	1	1	1	\$172,947
1989 - 1990	2	1	1	1	\$223,915
1990 - 1991	2	1	1	1	\$231,674
1991 - 1992	2	1	1	1	\$320,702
1992 - 1993	3	2	1	1	\$664,426
1993 - 1994	5	3	1	2	\$956,504
1994 - 1995	7	3	1	3	\$1,136,828
1995 - 1996	7	3	1	4	\$1,373,300
1996 - 1997	8	3	1	4	\$1,589,450
1997 - 1998	8	3	1	4	\$1,777,400
1998 - 1999	10	3	1	4	\$2,532,775
1999 - 2000	11	4	1	5	\$2,808,286
2000 - 2001	11	4	1	5	\$3,203,385
2001 - 2002	11	4	1	5	\$3,766,410
2002 - 2003	11	4	1	6	\$3,982,300
2003 - 2004	11	4	1	6	\$3,913,309

Sales and Use Tax Summary

Sales & Use Tax Historical Summary

Budget Year	Amount	Budget Year	Amount
1981 - 1982	\$497.93	1992 - 1993	\$700,391.52
1982 - 1983	\$1,503.86	1993 - 1994	\$910,786.98
1983 - 1984	\$2,522.26	1994 - 1995	\$986,961.30
1984 - 1985	\$3,305.52	1995 - 1996	\$1,522,106.67
1985 - 1986	\$8,569.39	1996 - 1997	\$1,756,847.07
1986 - 1987	\$2,071.37	1997 - 1998	\$1,911,032.90
1987 - 1988	\$4,636.00	1998 - 1999	\$2,509,536.60
1988 - 1989	\$7,137.01	1999 - 2000	\$3,257,790.67
1989 - 1990	\$7,489.97	2000 - 2001	\$3,336,373.10
1990 - 1991	\$5,606.19	2001 - 2002	\$3,459,015.95
1991 - 1992	\$394,456.60	2002 - 2003	\$3,859,102.92



March 9, 2002 Valley Creek Park Playground renovation

MAYORS

2/2/55-4/6/56	Clinton Vilven	Sunset Trail
4/7/56-3/7/57	Charles Bustin	Sunset Trail
3/8/57-4/2/58	Earl Chase	Oakdale Drive
4/3/58-4/6/59	Tommy Gray	Sunset Trail
4/7/59-4/3/61	W.R. "Bud" Fowler	Oakdale Drive
4/4/61-4/13/64	Tommy Gray	Sunset Trail
4/14/64-4/7/651	Harvey N. Bouldin	Sunset Trail
4/8/65-4/12/67	Max H. Nave	Oakdale Drive
4/13/67-4/7/68	T.C. Eklund	Pillow Road
4/8/68-4/7/70	W.R. "Bud" Fowler	Oakdale Drive
4/8/70-4/5/72	Charles Burton	Brodie Lane
4/6/72-4/8/74	Nolan Sims	Sunset Trail
4/9/74-4/4/76	Phil Thompson	Sunset Trail
4/5/76-4/6/78	W.R. "Bud" Fowler	Oakdale Drive
4/7/78-3/11/82	Frances Underwood	Pillow Road
3/12/82-4/1/84	Rosemary Follis	Oakdale Drive
4/17/84-5/6/88	Larry Hada	Reese Drive
5/7/88-5/1/92	Helen Besse	Oakdale Drive
5/2/92-5/18/98	Michael Francis	Lone Oak Trail
5/19/98-present	Terry Cowan	Stearns Lane

HOW THE STREETS GOT THEIR NAMES

SUNSET TRAIL

North Sunset Trail, between Jones Road and Highway 290, was originally named Bouldin Drive. During a meeting on February 2, 1955, the Council changed the name of the street to Sunset Trail to end the confusion caused by another street in Austin already named Bouldin Drive.

Helen Vaughan recalls that the name "Sunset Trail" was chosen because the gravel road resembled a "trail winding through a beautiful valley."

Malcolm Flournoy recalls that Mac and Clarence Flournoy purchased a strip of land to provide access to the Flournoy subdivision from Highway 290. The strip became north Sunset Trail. They wanted to avoid a pig farm located along Jones Road at Manchaca Road because cars were not air conditioned then and the smell from the pig farm was "very bad."

JONES ROAD

The street was named for the real estate agent, "Speedy Jones," who helped M.H. (Mac) Flournoy and his brother, Clarence Flournoy, find and purchase the farm that became Flournoy Acres. Mr. Jones also purchased land in the area.

CLARMAC ROAD

This is a short road off of Sunset Trail that was named after the developers, M.H. (Mac) Flournoy and Clarence Flournoy.

PILLOW ROAD

Pillow Road was named after Anna Pillow, the first person to live on the street. Several residents have mentioned the large number of rattlesnakes on Mrs. Pillow's property.

REESE DRIVE

Named after the Reese family, the first family to build a house on the street.

LONE OAK TRAIL

Lone Oak Trail was originally named Fowler Road, after the Gordon Fowler family, who lived at the end of the road. The name was changed to Lone Oak Trail, in recognition of a large Live Oak tree, which stood beside the road. Later, someone just

cut it down. For years, its remains could be found lying along the creek bed, west of the bridge across Lone Oak Trail.

OAKDALE DRIVE

Probably named after the oak trees.

STEARNS LANE

Stearns Lane was named after the Stearns family, one of the first two families on the street. Mrs. Stearns recalls, "We were the only family on the road except for Mr. and Mrs. Bryant. Back then, developers traditionally named streets after families. Since we were the last family on the road, they named the street after us but for some time we didn't realize the street had been named, much less named after us."

CITIZENS' MEMORIES

The first edition of this book, *Sunset Valley: An Informal History and Other Tales, 1954-1994*, included the memories below that are dated "1994". New memories added to this publication are dated "2004".

HELEN VAUGHAN – 8 SUNSET TRAIL (1994)

We had so much fun back then! Sunset Valley was smaller and everyone seemed so community minded. When we moved here in 1953, there were about 30-50 families. None of us wanted the streets to be paved because we were getting deluged with people, and we hoped the gravel roads would keep most of them out.

Lots of military people moved in about the time we did. They were social and active in the community and lots of fun to be around. Since we played bridge and were interested in horses, we had a lot in common. During our bridge games in the early 60s, some of the military people started getting mysterious calls and, after they hung up, they'd suddenly leave the party. Later, we found out they were involved in planning escape routes in case a war with Cuba broke out after the Bay of Pigs. We weren't supposed to know what was going on, but we began to figure it out after one of the men suggested we design an escape route. Some of us got together and planned a route for the citizens of Sunset Valley to escape to Burnet. One night, in the midst of the countrywide war scare, a huge siren went off at midnight. We woke up, scared to death, and thought we were all going to have to run to Burnet! But the siren was just an accident.

At Halloween, a lot of us dressed up in costumes and rode around Sunset Valley in a flat bed truck to trick-or-treat. Mr. Cox organized a "house of horrors" in an old house trailer in his back yard. Late one evening, while he was still in our kitchen taping horror music, I dropped a whole load of pots and pans on the floor right behind him. He let out a blood-curdling scream, which we caught on the tape and used for the horror house. One year, one of our neighbors, whose name I can't remember, was so wound up in white "mummy" gauze he couldn't even open his mouth. After he knocked on Grace Bustin's door, he couldn't say anything; all he could do was just stand there silently in the moonlight. Grace was so terrified she screamed for her husband to come save her.

ED VAUGHAN - 8 SUNSET TRAIL (1994)

We were living in Austin when the appraisal office raised our taxes. Because we couldn't get the appraisal changed, we moved out to the country—to Sunset Valley—

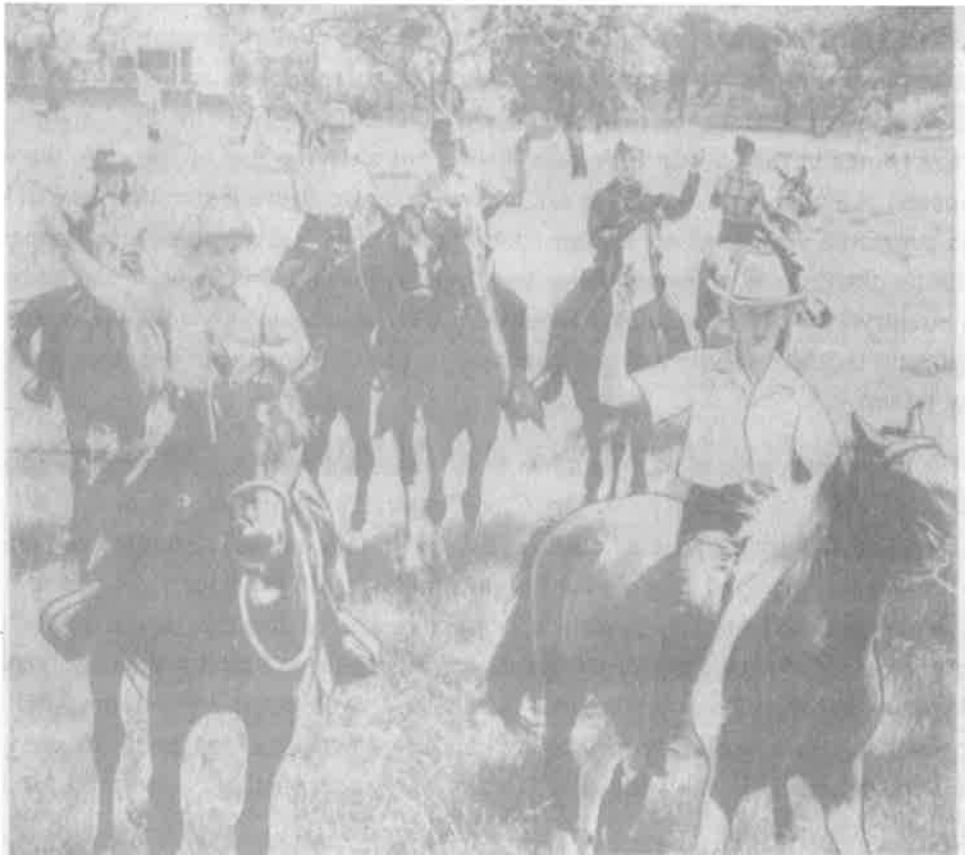
where the taxes were lower. Ben White was just a dirt road then and so was West Gate Blvd. In fact, West Gate ended at Jones Road.

As a council person, my proudest accomplishment was keeping taxes low. At first, the city just needed enough money to cover our insurance—\$85.00 a year. Then, we joined the Municipal League, which helped us set up the city.

Mayor Phil Thompson was instrumental in getting our roads paved but Charlie Bustin and I used to collect \$15.00 from each family in Sunset Valley to pay for the paving. One time, when all the road work came to a halt, Charlie and I went down to see what was going on. When the county man told us they were out of money, Charlie and I both figured we'd be put in jail for collecting the citizen's money but not getting the roads finished.

Things were different back then—usually we had to pay a little extra to get things

June 2, 1955
Austin
Statesman
article
about
Sunset
Valley with
photo of
children
riding to
school to
pick up
their report
cards.



TEXAS STYLE FINALE—Seven jangs at Jerry Dublin School gathered for the second year. This year's students, received their report cards and some money for bus money. The second group, living in Austin's Sunset Valley addition, decided the last day of school was a good

Austin American-Statesman photo.
time to show off their horses. The group includes Marie Fowler, Gordon Fowler, Mary Jane Weaver, Jackie Barnett, Louis Don King, Bill Hutchinson and Leroy Bush. (See related stories, Page 19.)

Left to right: Marie Fowler, Gordon Fowler, Mary Jane Weaver, Jackie Barnett, Louis Don King, Bill Hutchinson, and Leroy Bush.

done. Once, we had to buy the road man a hat just to persuade him to finish sprinkling our streets. Another time the road company charged us for the use of a steam roller, until we discovered that they didn't even own that kind of equipment.

Chris LeDeux, who lived at 7 Sunset Trail, became a famous cowboy singer, artist, and world champion rodeo bareback rider. He got his start in the Sunset Valley rodeo. Col. Joe Cox's son, Cullen, used to ride in the rodeo too, but as an adult he got burned so bad in bed one night they had to amputate his legs.

I knew Gov. Stevenson, Gov. Shivers, and Gov. Connally. One morning, when I arrived at the Governor's mansion and went into the kitchen, Gov. Stevenson asked me if I'd had my morning coffee. When I said "No," he invited me to sit down and have a cup with him. You couldn't do that these days.

Author's Note: Mr. Vaughan served as manager of the local office of the Otis Elevator Company. He installed the elevator in the Governor's Mansion, which had to be custom made to accommodate the needs of the governor's wife, Mrs. Stevenson. Because she was confined to a wheel chair and her legs had to be positioned straight out in front of her, Mr. Vaughan built the elevator two feet deeper than usual. The Otis Company was not pleased with his plan but he built it anyway and it is still in the mansion.

ERNEST GARZA - 25 LONE OAK TRAIL (1994)

We moved here in 1989 because of the country setting and quiet atmosphere. We work in Austin, where it's all rushed and noisy, but when we get home in the evening, Sunset Valley has such a peaceful, relaxed feeling, we know it's worth the drive. When our friends come to visit they can't believe how many stars they can see from our back yard!

FRANCES UNDERWOOD - 23 PILLOW ROAD (1994)

Back in the 1930s, when I was in elementary school, my family lived in Travis Heights and kept horses there. My father also owned the land between Highway 290 and Jones Road, from Brodie Lane to Pillow Road, where he built a few outbuildings, a riding ring, and a barn where he kept more horses. We hired a caretaker couple who lived in a small house on the property and took care of the horses. When I was little, I loved coming out to the "country" and riding where Sunset Valley is now. The whole area was beautiful back then—it was covered with wild plum trees. Now, it's covered by the Tony Burger Center and huge parking lot.

Since buying and selling farms was my father's hobby, he eventually sold the land in Sunset Valley and bought 1,700 acres in Cedar Park, but parts of some of the old buildings still remain at the end of Pillow Road. While Herbert and I were in the

military, we bought two lots on Pillow. After he retired, in the 70s, we built our house on one lot and later built a house for our daughter on the other lot. Now, I'm back in the area where, as a little girl, I used to ride horses. Note: The September 9, 1965 Council minutes report that Mr. Herbert A Underwood, from Zenia, Ohio, purchased the property from Robert Pringle.

LORRAINE DOWDY - 1 PILLOW ROAD (1994)

On May 23, 1975, a tornado hit Sunset Valley at 4:30 p.m. It tore part of the roof off our house, broke all our windows, and left our garage full of mud. I remember the date well because it was our wedding anniversary. My husband had planned to take me out to dinner but the tornado delayed him. When he finally got home, he had a bag full of Kentucky Fried Chicken and we ate our anniversary dinner sitting in the dark in our living room.

There was a big flood in Sunset Valley in the 1980s; during the time my husband was in the hospital. Many of the houses on Reese were under water, and, once again, we had no electricity or telephone service. But, despite all of that, Sunset Valley is a great place to live!

CAROLYN STEARNS - STEARNS LANE (1994)

We bought the land in 1951 from Taylor Gaines because it had the best view in town—we could see far and wide. There was no one else around. For years the White family, who ran White Dairy, had owned the land in that area. Their original log home is still standing behind the Lutheran Church on Highway 290. The Whites later sold land to some developers, who constructed Barton View shopping center on their old property.

We built our house with our own hands and moved in during 1954. We had to make sure our first child didn't wander into our back yard because the cliff behind our house drops 200 feet to the creek bed below. We always kept the doors locked but one day, after our second son was born, we saw him wandering around in the back yard. That's when we discovered that our oldest son had learned to unlock the door, not only for himself, but also for his brother. We gave up on the lock and put up a red picket fence, some of which is still there.

We like living in Sunset Valley. We have lots of deer and we still have a family of gray foxes. This summer we have a coyote. Back when the City was smaller we knew most of the residents. It was a laid back community; we had very few laws and no zoning so it was mostly a "live and let live" community. Phil Thompson used to raise chickens and sell eggs. Frances Miller and her husband lived in a large stone house, about where the Burger Center is today. They used to host community barbecues at

their house and people brought covered dishes. The Sunset Valley Garden Club provided a nucleus of close friends for the women in the community. The 1970-71 directory lists forty-nine members from all over the area.

JAYME FOLEY (1994)

Jayme, Deputy City Administrative Assistant, recalled: Every spring a pair of mockingbirds builds a nest near the City building and attacks anyone who walks near it. When they built their first nest, they started attacking Ernest Robles, then Director of Public Works. Ernest tried everything he could think of to dissuade them; he changed his hat, his shirt ... anything to keep them from coming for him. Eventually he had to carry a stick around to beat off the "killer" birds. We laughed at him until the birds started going for us too. One year a baby mockingbird accidentally flew into the building and the mother started attacking the windows. We raced around as fast as we could, trying to get the baby out before the mother got to us. Life is never dull at City Hall.

ERNEST ROBLES (1994)

Ernest, former Director of the Department of Public Works, said: My grandfather always told me, "Some towns may be small, but they have big hearts." When my mother was ill, I discovered this statement applied to Sunset Valley. Dozens of citizens called to say they were praying for her ... and many others visited while I was with her in the hospital. Their support meant a lot to me, just like it does when I'm working all night on the water system, and they bring me food to keep me going. Sunset Valley has a big heart.

JAMES V. SOLETTI - 1 YELLOW TAIL COVE (2004)

After living in the Westlake area since 1979, my wife, Ricki, and I decided we wanted a change. Our daughters, Amber and Samantha, had graduated from college and we no longer wanted to pay the high property taxes in the Eanes School District. We started to search for an affordable home close to the city. After weeks of looking, we discovered Sunset Valley Meadows. The first day we drove into the subdivision and saw the large lots and surrounding trees, we signed a contract to build a home. The area offered the better of two worlds. It felt like a small, friendly community in the country where people were safe and knew their neighbors and yet, it was close to Austin with all its shopping, restaurants, and medical services. We felt like we had discovered an oasis! We loved the fact there were no city property taxes, excellent police protection, deer, and even free garbage service! We were so excited about our discovery that we sold two additional homes to be built in Sunset Valley Meadows to neighbors from our old subdivision in Senna Hills. Now, we have some old friends here and, with all the community activities sponsored by the City of Sunset Valley, we

have made many new friends too. In May 2004, we will have lived here for three years. Every day, we continue to discover new things that make us proud to call Sunset Valley our home. We hope to spend the rest of our lives here.

BILL DAY & TRACY GRAEBER - 23 LOVEGRASS LANE (2004)

Back in April 2002, we were like many other couples, trying to decide where to live in Austin. Having moved from San Antonio we didn't know much, so, with the help of a realtor, we visited a few areas in town. Nothing seemed promising. Then, luckily, we stumbled onto Sunset Valley. We loved the spacious secluded community of Sunset Valley Meadows, the beautiful homes, and the close proximity of shopping. We enjoy the quietness of the community and the friendliness of our neighbors. We feel truly safe here. I couldn't be happier that this is our home.

JUDY LOCKE ISAACSON - 5 SUNSET TRAIL (2004)

My family moved to Sunset Valley the summer of 1952, when the small settlement was known as Flournoy Acres. There was only one approach to the subdivision from Austin, and that was Fredericksburg Road (now Hwy 290 W). The landmark turning signal was Charlie Allred's big red barn on the left. Sunset Trail was a dusty, bumpy country road ending at Jones Road. Our street was called Bouldin Drive in honor of Jim and Vida Bouldin, who lived on the corner. Because there was confusion regarding our street and Bouldin Avenue in Austin, our street's name was soon changed to Sunset Trail.

In the early days, there was nothing except woods and thicket between our property at 5 Sunset Trail and Manchaca Road. We could hear a woman calling her cows in the late evenings on her Manchaca Road farm. Our mailboxes were located in a cluster on Fredericksburg Road. Each day, I rode my bike to get the mail.

The Becker family lived at the corner of Brodie Lane and Fredericksburg Road. Alice Ann and Erwin, the Becker twins, were school friends of mine. Mr. Becker owned Becker Lumber Company and was a beekeeper on the side. His huge apiary was a landmark for people driving out Fredericksburg Road in search of Brodie Lane. Luby's Cafeteria is now located where their house once stood.

Once when I was a very young teen and learning to drive, I was practicing my newly acquired skill solo up and down our nearby roads. I drove our old '51 Ford up Pillow Road and had a flat tire right in front of the house at the top of the hill. There were no other houses in sight. At this time there was a mere handful of houses on the entire street, and I didn't have the vaguest notion who lived in this one. I jumped out, not knowing what on earth to do, when Mrs. Pillow emerged from the house, identified herself, and came to my rescue. She knew exactly what to do. She got the jack and spare from the trunk and went to work immediately. She was not a young

woman and I remember that she was breathing heavily by the time she finished. I thanked her as I left and never saw her again but have always felt a debt of gratitude to her, especially as time has passed and I have realized how difficult it must have been for her. Wherever you are, Mrs. Pillow, I remember you fondly for your act of kindness.

Another one of my fond memories was of my Dad. He was a hunter and a collector of antique guns. On the wall of our den were his pride and joy: two very old shotguns. One evening, my family was entertaining several people in the neighborhood, our honorable mayor, Clint Vilven and his wife Lois among them. Our next-door neighbor, Dave Hawk, was an outdoor enthusiast and was interested in viewing one of the guns at closer range. He asked Daddy if he could take it down to look at it. Daddy said, "Sure...it's not loaded." Dave carefully removed the gun and rested the butt of it on his knee, so that the barrel was pointed toward the ceiling. He was running his hand up and down the gun with great admiration when it fired! After what seemed like an eternity, someone said, "Did it go all the way through the roof?" Daddy looked up and said, "Yep. I see stars." Daddy could always find humor in even the most solemn and horrific events. My mother was not amused. Needless to say, the party was over.

BILL AND POLLY ASHBAUGH – 767 OAKDALE (2004)

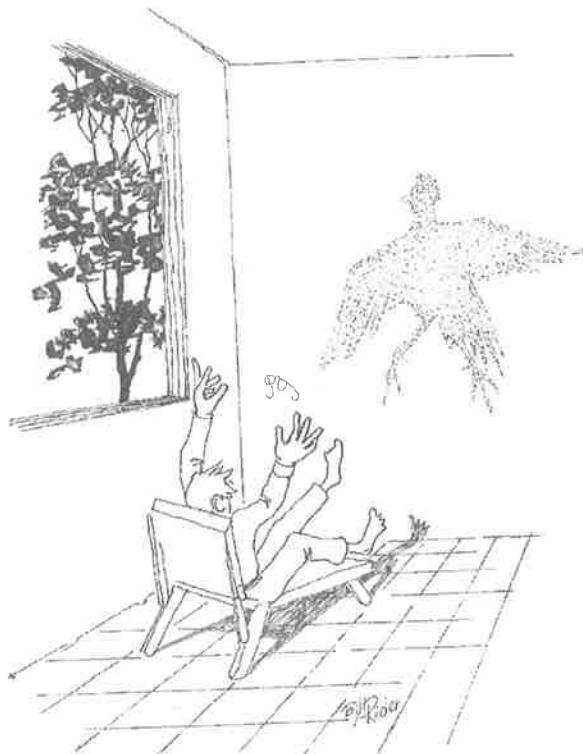
As late as 1978, when Bill and Polly Ashbaugh moved to Oakdale Drive, they felt they lived in the country. They really enjoyed driving their convertible, top down. They felt the cool air and could see all kinds of wildlife. The unexpected rattlesnake lurking in vines on the front porch met its demise when a neighbor came to shoot it. Life has changed here in the 2000s. Brodie is four lanes. There are shopping centers and too much traffic. Municipal Judge Ashbaugh now hears cases dealing with shoplifting, assaults, and traffic violations. He used to hear disputes involving four-legged trouble makers.

CYNTHIA NELSON – 12 SUNSET TRAIL (2004)

Classify Cynthia Nelson an "old timer" in Sunset Valley for she was 19 years old when she moved to Sunset Trail in 1960. As their family grew, the Nelsons changed the house to accommodate the family. In those days, children played in the streets—Reese Drive and Sunset Trail. Most families had "stay-at-home moms" who knew where their children were. It has been a comfortable and neat place to live.

BILL RIDER – 802
OAKDALE (2004)

Bill Rider recalls that a long time ago his neighbors, Beverly Nance (Oakdale Drive) and Henry Miller (Hwy 290) provided a lot of special care for their fighting roosters. Henry even went so far as to install air conditioning for them in one of his old trailers so they wouldn't suffer from the Texas heat. One night Beverly was exercising the roosters on an old bed spring in a little barn near his house. The illumination from a bare light bulb in the barn projected one of the rooster's images onto the wall of the patio at the house next door, where his father-in-law, Jim Hazeltine, was taking a nap. When Jim suddenly woke up and saw the "angel" flying around the room, he thought he'd died and ascended to heaven!



MARY JO POWELL – 11 LONE OAK TRAIL (2004)

Before my husband, Gene, and I moved to Sunset Valley, we lived on Pack Saddle Pass Road. One day, before West Gate Blvd. was extended past Jones Road, a big grass fire broke out in the pasture behind Sunset Trail, near where West Gate is now. When some men who were working at the Toney Burger Center saw the fire, they called the Austin Fire Department, but the Department said they couldn't help, even though they had a fire truck nearby, because the fire was outside their jurisdiction. I called the Manchaca Volunteer Fire Department, which also had a truck nearby, but all of the men who knew how to drive it were at work. So Gene and I filled a big 55 gallon drum with water, because we had water pressure and Sunset Valley didn't, and went over to help fight the fire. Betty and Doug Deison, who lived at the end of Reese, had a jeep so Doug helped us get the drum near the fire. They also had several tow sacks (large feed sacks made of jute, which absorb lots of water). Everyone dipped the sacks in the water, and then used the wet sacks to beat the fire. We fought it for hours and finally put it out.

After that experience, Frances (Mickie) Underwood, who was serving as Mayor, said she'd go with me to the next meeting of the Manchaca Fire Department. We

wanted to join up because we wanted to be able to drive the fire truck when the men weren't around to do it. When we arrived at the meeting, the men said they'd be glad to have two ladies in the department because they were tired when they got back from fighting fires and wanted someone to wash and roll up the hoses, then wash the truck and fill it up. Frances said, "We're not here to fill up the truck; we're here to empty it!" When the men responded by saying that ladies wouldn't be able to drive the truck, I told them that I could drive anything with tires and a starter. They gave up and asked Mr. Nixon to teach us to drive it. After we'd driven it for a little while, he told us that we could drive it better than most men could on their first time out.

Another fire occurred after a new couple moved into the house on Lone Oak Trail where the Sokols live now. When the propane man came to fill up their propane tank, the wife said she couldn't wait for her husband to get home to turn on the water heater so the man did it for her. Neither of them realized that the shut off valve on the dryer was still open. Later, when the couple left to get hamburgers at the nearby A&W stand, their house caught on fire. Their teenage daughter knocked on doors up and down the street trying to find someone to help. When she got to my door, she said that she thought her house was on fire. I called the Manchaca Fire Department. Then I stood with her at the corner of the street so her parents could see immediately that she was alive and well even though they'd also be able to see that their house was on fire.

Later, the Manchaca Fire Department donated \$3,000 to Sunset Valley to help pay for a building to house a fire truck. Before we could afford a real fire truck, Doug Deison bought an old water truck for the City to use to fight grass fires. Some of the residents who served on the Volunteer Fire Department included Stan Powers, Robert Pavlica, Roy Solis, Frances and Herbert Underwood, my son, Bobby, and me.

SUSAN PRICE JUNG - 14 REESE DRIVE (2004)

I was 16 years old in 1963, when my parents, Leonard M. and Norma Price purchased property at 30 Reese Drive from Hugh L. and Lucille Morrison. Several of our friends thought it was too far out from Austin. The roads were narrow and unimproved with a base of gravel and caliche. But it was a great place to grow up, with lots of room to explore and a creek in our front yard! There were only two other homes on the east side of Reese Drive. My dad kept a large garden and we planted everything -- corn, potatoes, squash, radishes, beans, tomatoes, etc. We also used the "Back 40" as a baseball lot — we had the equipment because my dad had coached Little League teams. Even with the distances between homes, the residents maintained a close sense of community with family picnics and covered dish suppers at the Miller's property on South Lamar.

In March 1973, my husband, David, and I purchased a house at 14 Reese Drive, just down the street from my dad's house. We planted peach and plum trees and a

huge garden and built flower beds. Our son Robert was born in 1978, and still lives in the house. Unfortunately, David died in 2001, and isn't here to see the three large Spanish Oak trees we planted when Robert was 1 year old.

I was elected to the city council in 1977. Frances Underwood (Pillow Road) and I planted the shrubs across the front of the new city hall building and trees in the yard. She and I also planted trees across the street at the Burger Center to help hide the metal wall along the baseball field. Rosemary Follis (Reese Drive) and I made lots of trips to Howard Nursery on Koenig Lane to purchase trees.

While volunteering at Sunset Valley Elementary School in the 1980s I planted all the trees along Pillow Road over one Valentine's Day weekend. Stan and Mickey Powers (Sunset Trail), who owned a landscape business, generously donated those trees and others. Over the years we asked the Sunset Valley PTA and parents to donate other trees, shrubs, flowers and ground cover to landscape the school.

One of my most terrifying moments while living in Sunset Valley occurred in 1986 when a fire consumed the duplex at 20 Reese Drive. Sirens and shouts woke us up in the middle of the night. Two families lost everything and a young woman suffered severe injuries. The community responded by holding a huge garage sale and donating the proceeds to help the families.

I remember several fires in Sunset Valley, some caused by residents burning brush in their yards. At one of these fires, Mrs. Underwood drove the tank truck to the site and then she and I dragged the fire hose, which, even empty, weighed a ton! She manned the hose while the rest of us used garden hoses from all around the neighborhood. That fire was put out without damage to homes.

ROBERT JUNG -14 REESE DRIVE (2004)

I grew up on Reese Drive during the 1980s and 90s but for a time I didn't much like it. My friends in elementary school all seemed to live near each other farther down West Gate and they always had great stories to tell about what they did on their streets. There was a time when my father decided that we suffered from over-policing and I had to agree. I was "busted" for driving my go-kart on the public road. I had to give up my Saturday to paint all the fire hydrants in the city. It was a blast. I met Ernest Robles and Tom Breitkreutz.

I've watched the city grow up around me. New road, police department, go-karts, bamboo forest. Now, a family is discussing cutting down that forest. Things certainly are different. A police car drives by my house once an hour, or more, now.

MALCOLM & KAREN FLOURNOY - 23 REESE DRIVE (2004)

Karen and I built our home at 23 Reese Road (Drive) and moved in Christmas of 1975 with our sons, Trey (5) and Brandon (1). Mother and Dad thought that it would

be great if family were living in the original Flournoy Acres Subdivision. We chose a lot close to the old picnic grounds where I used to play as a child, today it's known as Valley Park. Back then we had a picnic table under the great oak trees. Dad only allowed us a single shot rifle that we took turns shooting soda cans in the creek.

Perhaps I should back up and explain about two brothers, my Dad, M.H. (Mac) Flournoy and my Uncle, Clarence R. Flournoy, who after serving in WWII, bought a rural farm in Southwest Travis County and started a subdivision. Dad and Uncle Clarence were assisted in their purchase by a real estate agent called Speedy Jones. Mr. Jones also bought land in the area and Jones Road was named for him. The brothers named several of the streets in Flournoy Acres after those who bought the first houses from them. Reese Road was named that way. Pillow Road was another. There is one short street off of Sunset Trail called Clarmac Drive. The brothers combined their first names for this one.

At the time there was no Ben White Blvd. or West Gate Blvd. Jones Road started from Manchaca Road and went west over to the subdivision. The only problem with this route was a pig farm on the north side of Jones starting at Manchaca Road. Cars did not have air conditioning then and the smell was strong to drive by. There were also two low water crossings that flooded between Manchaca Road and the subdivision. To solve this problem, they bought a strip of land from Jones Road out to the old Frederickburg highway and put in Sunset Trail to the North.

When the brothers went to the City of Austin to see about running electricity out to their rural subdivision, Austin wanted a great deal of money to run the wires way out here. LCRA offered to run their lines at no charge. The City of Austin changed its position and provided the electricity.

In 1954, Uncle Clarence was living at 18 Sunset Trail, and was involved with the incorporation of the City of Sunset Valley. Other landowners joined their land with the original subdivision and formed the City, as we know it today.

It has been interesting for us to watch what started as a small rural subdivision grow to a thriving community. We will have lived out here 30 years this coming Christmas. We have gone from crushed stone roads that the county occasionally would spray oil on to control the dust, to beautiful road ways and trails. Shopping and restaurants abound now, where once we had little choice.

RICHARD FLOURNOY (2004)

‘ In an email to Karen and Malcolm Flournoy, Richard Flournoy said, “I have some fine memories of “star watching on a blanket” episodes at the barbecue pit by the creek that used to be behind your home, “overnight outings” at Jeannine’s cabin that used to be on the top of the hill behind your house, and many nights of “fogging the windows” while parking in the meadow at the end of Pillow road....”

(Note: Richard Flournoy and Jeannine Shirey are the grown children of Clarence Flournoy, one of the developers of the first subdivision in Sunset Valley.)

FORREST GREENE – 18 REESE DRIVE (2004)

I have participated in the Teen Program over the past 'few summers ('02-'04), and every day when I get home my parents ask me what I did at work that day. The answers are rarely the same. Over the past couple weeks alone I have learned dozens of tricks for pouring concrete; how to operate a variety of construction equipment; a great deal about how City Hall, Public Works and the Sunset Valley Police Department function; how to use power point; and dozens of other things. All of this is in addition to getting some healthy exercise and earning money to help with college.



Teen
Program

The teen program helps the City finish many projects cheaper and faster than would otherwise be possible. For example, Ben Kane ('95-'97) designed one of the Public Works offices and helped build it with the rest of the teens. The Sunset Valley webpage was first implemented by teens. The teens are constantly offering their expertise to accomplish tasks that would have required hiring outside help. There is also an incredible variety of projects that would have been delayed or never even started without the extra help from the Teen Program. One City employee can take a group of teens out into the field and accomplish in a few hours what might have otherwise taken days to complete.

Ernest Robles started a legacy that, over the years, has grown. Although the teens eventually move, the program will continue. Many of us have younger siblings who we will encourage to participate in the program so that they will also have the chance not just to earn money from a summer job, but also to learn about and be active in the Sunset Valley community and develop a wide variety of real world job skills that could be obtained nowhere else.

HARVEY BOULDIN – PILLOW ROAD (2004)

The early 60s proved to be quite an exciting time in Sunset Valley, at least as far as snake sightings go. There were numerous reports of people finding snakes in their yards but things got serious when Suzie Katrola was bitten by a rattlesnake while picking dew berries near the corner of Jones Road and Reese Drive. After Kenny Deison was bitten by a rattlesnake in his yard, close to the house, the City Council

decided that it was time to bring in a "snake hunter" to help rid the community of the dangerous beasts.

Owen Schnell (Oakdale Drive), a well-known snake exterminator, was summoned to help. He sprang into action early one cold Saturday morning, starting in the creek behind Doug Deisons' home. Many residents were there to watch as Schnell cautiously and methodically moved through the cliffs of Williamson Creek. Most watched with a great deal of respect for Schnell's skill as he gassed 36 rattlers from their den on that first Saturday morning. The next day he pulled about 25 more rattlers from the same den. That afternoon he proceeded to dump his catch onto Tommy Gray's (Sunset Trail) front yard for the neighbors to see. It was cold that day but not cold enough to keep the snakes from moving away very quickly. Not to worry though. Schnell hooked them all and returned them to the box where he stored them.

All in all, over 200 rattlesnakes were removed from their dens that winter in Sunset Valley, thus making everyone feel much safer. However, after riders spotted several rattlers sunning on the rocks in the creek near Jones Road, Jim and Harvey Bouldin (Pillow Road) used a crow bar to move rocks so that several more snakes could be removed and killed. Living in the country means always being alert for snakes.

You may ask, what did Owen Schnell do with all those snakes? He used parts of them to make pictures, for example, a map of Texas and an Indian Head.

MARY BLACK – 15 PILLOW ROAD (2004)

In 1978 the first sound ordinance was enacted immediately after one of the many parties put on by my sons, Robert and Jimbeaux. They would invite anyone with a good band to come play in our field below our house. Their parties were known as "Hilltop Madness Productions" and attracted kids and bands from all over town. To this day I still meet Austinites now in their 40s who, upon learning where I live, tell me about the great party they went to in the '70s or '80s on Pillow Road. Around City Hall the rule was known as the Black Ordinance.

The parties didn't stop after the ordinance was passed, they really just got better. They started at about 3:00 pm in the afternoon and the music stopped at 10:00. (There was a 10:30 pm deadline, but I needed the margin because I knew the Sheriff's department would show up. One time they sent six cars. It must have been a slow night in the county.) After the bands stopped, we would light a bonfire. The neighbors loved that!

Bonfires were quite the affair at our house. The kids would work for weeks gathering wood to burn. We had 16 big oaks die after the tornado that touched down in 1975, so there were always dead trees to be cut up. Then water hoses were brought down to the field and shovels and carpet scraps were gathered to put out any potential grass fire. I would always light the fire myself and only if there was no wind.

At one time the chief of the Manchaca Volunteer Fire Department, responding to a neighbor's complaint, came out to investigate our preparations. He approved of our preparations but he came up with another rule. He said that we could only have a bonfire if it was for a ritual or a ceremony. Well that made our bonfires even more special!

These days, the kids are grown up, Sunset Valley has a brush pick up and mulching program—and we still have great parties on the hill!

CAT QUINTANILLA – 43 PILLOW ROAD (2004)

The year was 1954; it was the time of Eisenhower and black and white TV. Downtown Congress Avenue Austin, a.k.a. "the shopping district," had a Sears, Kress, a five and dime, and of course Woolworths and the Picadilly Cafeteria. Davis hardware served as about the only "home improvement center" anybody would ever want or need.

Austin was a thriving young metropolis with lots of development. Growth sprawled all the way to Airport Blvd. north, Springdale out east, Redbud Trail out west and Oltorf to the south. The corner of South Lamar and Ben White was crowned by a large sheep ranch, a small sea of wooly whites with the occasional black ewe to seemingly protest any sameness in nature. The land in the area where the sheep lived was largely grazing fields garlanded with dense natural thickets especially where the terrain was rough along the Williamson Creek basins and of course the Barton Creek Canyon. Small winding roads coming off South Lamar served as access to points south and into the ranch land parcels. It was here at this time a community to be called Sunset Valley sat nestled between the Barton Creek Canyon and along the ridge of "hills" now known as Cherry Creek. This community of Sunset Valley folk shared a penchant for independent living and a sharp watchful eye to the burgeoning Austin to the north.

It was 1954 that our city's founders decided to incorporate to become an official city. East Austin, where I was raised, and Sunset Valley had one thing in common back then and even today, and that was the presence of a more than average amount of vegetation... trees and such. East Austin because it was once river bottom before the dams were built, and Sunset Valley because it had so much of what was called creek bottom, considered "unbuildable" and therefore not necessarily valuable.

Fast forward to around 1986 when my husband and I stumbled across property for sale in Sunset Valley while hunting for a place to build our home and in fact to flee Austin. At the time we did not even notice a little brown sign perched on Jones Road at West Gate that read in one simple line SUNSET VALLEY, TX. We had no idea Sunset Valley was even a "real city." My connection to the land on our very first visit

was immediate. This was to become our permanent homestead where we would raise our little girls Xochi and Marina and later, the light of our lives, our grandson Diego.

In the whirlwind that is a family's life I was blessed with a schedule that gave me the time to become involved in local volunteer work and later in the city government. Over the next ten years I would witness several events that would result in Sunset Valley acquiring nearly 200 acres of land as open space. This land would become a very important element of the very spirit of what Sunset Valley is today.

Working with friends like Cheryl Sokol (Lone Oak) and many other folks we kept a watchful eye on local issues like the ever-increasing presence of big time developers. It was about then that the Gaines Ranch was being developed across 290. One day I got an excited call from Cheryl, who at the time was serving on the city council. She told me that the Gaines family had about 25 acres of canyon land that had been designated for conservation. The land (now identified as warbler habitat) turned out to be in our extraterritorial jurisdiction. She came driving right over with a land plat in tow and she eagerly asked me "What do you think ... Do we take it?" My answer to her was "Why the heck not?" I had begun to think a lot about the future. As I planted each tree in my yard I would think about what my babies' babies would see... that is after I had long since gone to my glory. So why the heck not? After all the only sure way of protecting a thing is to own it, right?

In this same time a radio tower sprouted up along Williamson Creek and while the citizens mostly spoke against its construction, it was built anyway because it fell in the city's ETJ (where regulatory powers are minimal). As an upside, its construction brought a donation of 8 acres more to our inventory and today it is one of the finest small-scale prairie land restorations in the area, with a wide swath of native Indian grass that puts on a show every year. We have nicknamed this parcel, "The Prairieland."

As it turned out many good and foresighted citizens have shared the greenspace vision through these years, because right on the heels of acquiring the Gaines Preserve, another friend, Helen Besse (Oakdale Drive), spearheaded along with Mary Black (Pillow Road), a citizen's referendum to purchase some 40 acres of greenspace that serves today as wildlife habitat and a special treed buffer between the southwestern edge of Sunset Valley and the Austin Cherry Creek neighborhood. We call this land the South Hills.

When the first shopping center came here (Marketfair), the building density was put close to Brodie and the back 12 acres or so was donated to the city to protect (next to what is now the new Home Depot). This connects with the Prairieland's 8 acres.

By the time the 283-acre Weaver Ranch on Brodie was master planned for multi-use, the conservation-minded path taken by the city leaders was clear... Own it....

Protect it...Love it. In this plan nearly 120 acres of creek belt and natural areas came to the city to balance the development density downward to about 20% over all. These two negotiated areas are now called the Cougar Creek Belt and the Sunset Valley Nature Area and both have established nature trails in them. This was due in no small part to a lot of hard work by my friend and the mayor, Terry Cowan (Stearns) as well as lots of folks that served on Council and in citizen groups like Planning and Environmental, the Greenways Task Force and the Conservation Rangers. Today most citizens are only moments away from communing with nature from any given doorway.

All said and done at this point at the city's 50th birthday the citizen's greenspace inventory, upwards of 200 acres, is under full restoration with management plans, and is threaded with nature trails and great wonderful stretches of natural flora and fauna. The city's green spaces are what make Sunset Valley different from the surrounding areas and our people...well, our people...they won't have it any other way.

The land lives if for no other reason other than just to be. And, this land, Sunset Valley land, has become our heritage to share with tomorrow.

BURFORD WESTLUND - 792 OAKDALE DRIVE (2004)

The Austin and Oatmanville railway was chartered for the purpose of transporting limestone building material from the quarry at Oatmanville, now Oak Hill, to the construction site of the new State Capitol building. The year was 1883. Before joining the International and Great Northern Railway at a small station named Kouns located north of Crockett High School, the line traversed only six miles from Oak Hill. About a mile of it went through what is now Sunset valley, Texas. Austin was miles away, and Sunset Valley was not even a whisper of a dram. The small station named Kouns was located at a rail curve just north of what is now Stassney Lane. The quarry is best known as Convict Hill.

We might call our portion of the Austin and Oatmanville Railway the "Sunset valley Limited," for limited it was in its cargo. That cargo is an integral part of the most striking state capitol building in the United States. The cargo was not the beautiful pink granite we see and admire, rather it is not seen, and yet is a most important element. The bulk of the new capitol is resting on Travis County, Glen Rose limestone, and the inner walls are faced with it. It is estimated that almost 280,000 cubic feet of limestone were delivered from the quarry. Only a rail line could do it; the alternate transportation was slowly moving ox or mule wagon.

Now, very little remains of the rail bed. A small and high segment has escaped human manipulation and high water to be seen near the east bank of the Dry Branch of Williamson creek in Sunset Valley. It quickly disappears under debris from dumping of construction type material. New construction rests atop it, Westgate Blvd. Obliterates it. Manchaca Road almost obscures it except for a slight rise in the road near the library.

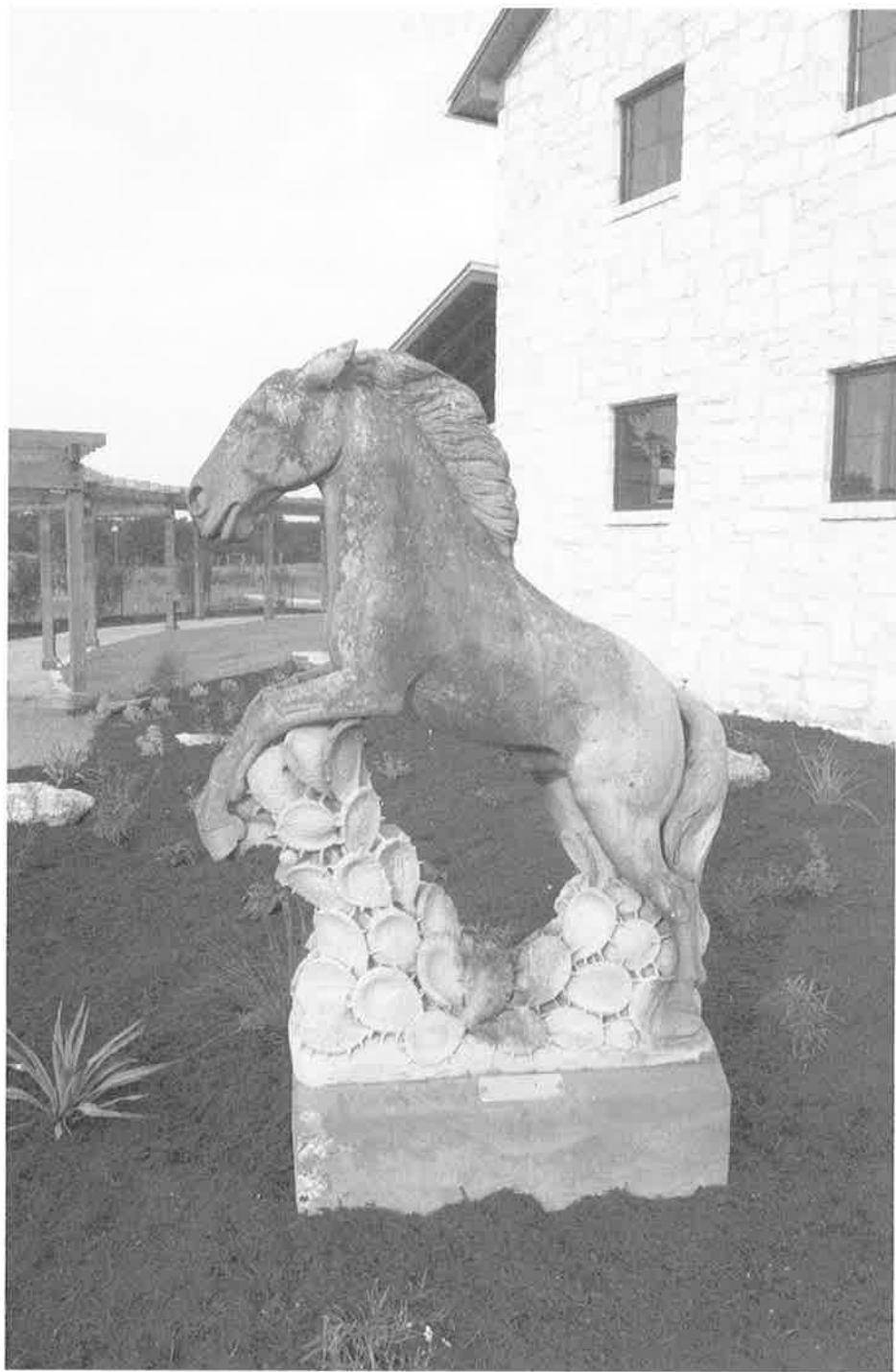
After the dedication of the capitol building in 1888, the line was abandoned. Gone is the wail of the steam whistle echoing through the Williamson Creek valley. Gone is the clanking of the wheel driving bars as the engine labors to rise out of the creek to higher grades to meet the International and Great Northern Railway at Kouns. But its specific cargo will always remain an unseen and important part of the most splendid state capitol building in the United States of America.

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4. Galen D. Greaser. Private communication from Mr. Greaser, translator for the Texas Land Office.
5. Eva Hancock. "Brief History of Sunset Valley. " Sunset Valley, Texas: 20th Anniversary Year Program. September 15, 1973.
6. Mickie Powers. "A Brief History of Sunset Valley: In Commemoration of 25 Years of Incorporation in 1979." Sponsored by Sunset Valley Women's club. This history also appears in the Sunset Valley Phone Directory: 1986.
7. Frances Underwood. Briefing on History of Development of Water System. Sunset Valley. Written by during the mid 1970's.
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9. Election Order. August 31, 1954. Notarized Certificate: Doris Shropshire, County Clerk, Travis County, Texas, Signed and Sealed March 19, 1974
10. Petition. Filed August 26, 1954. Notarized Certificate: Doris Shropshire, County Clerk, Travis County, Texas, Signed and Sealed March 19, 1974
11. Order Declaring Result of Special Election. September 17, 1954. Notarized Certificate: Doris Shropshire, County Clerk, Travis County, Texas, Signed and Sealed March 19, 1974
12. 3rd Annual Sunset Valley Youth Rodeo Program. 1962.
13. 4th Annual Sunset Valley Youth Rodeo Program. 1963.



March 9, 2002 Construction of Sunset Valley Community Organic Garden

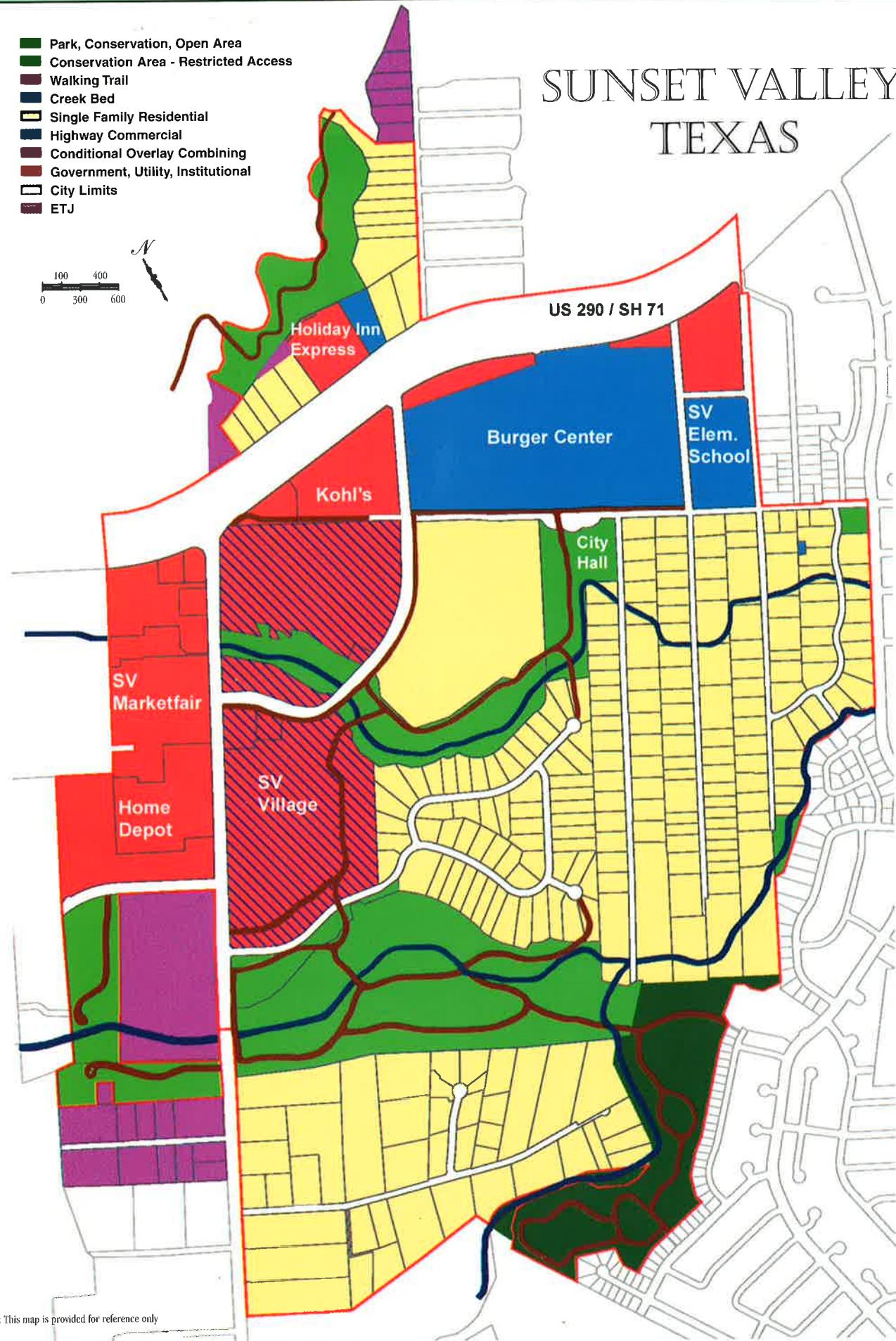


Statue donated to Sunset Valley by Robert and Marie Holt.
Photograph by Erwin Haddon.

NOTES

- [Green Box] Park, Conservation, Open Area
- [Dark Green Box] Conservation Area - Restricted Access
- [Purple Box] Walking Trail
- [Dark Blue Box] Creek Bed
- [Yellow Box] Single Family Residential
- [Dark Blue Box] Highway Commercial
- [Dark Purple Box] Conditional Overlay Combining
- [Dark Red Box] Government, Utility, Institutional
- [White Box with Red Border] City Limits
- [Dark Purple Box] ETJ

SUNSET VALLEY, TEXAS



NOTE: This map is provided for reference only