



Lessons Learned

The 2013 Reopening of Wooldridge Square

Ann S. Graham, Project Consultant for
the Reopening of Wooldridge Square Park, 2013

April 2014





Executive Summary

Edwin Waller was a visionary when he laid out the ground plan for Austin in 1839. Not only did he recognize the importance of the urban grid, but he had the foresight to preserve four, symmetrically placed public squares, ensuring that Austinites, present and future, would have access to open, green spaces as focal points for community gathering and civic life.

Because of the Squares' respective geographical and topographical placement and the way the built environment has developed around them, each of them has taken on a unique identity. Of the four (three remaining) squares, only Wooldridge retains its nigh-original landscape as an open, green, airy, shady, grassy, quiet respite from the urban pace around it.

After its first 100 years of use, followed by the critically important recent infrastructure improvements, Wooldridge Square has the opportunity to reenter the Austin civic landscape. Investing in the September 2013 reopening celebrations opened the door to raising renewed awareness of and interest in the Square and provided a teaser to programmatic possibilities. The content of this Wooldridge Square report provides insights into the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead for Wooldridge. The critical moment is here to reanimate and reactivate Wooldridge at the height of its renewal.

The time is now to take an active lead on reengaging the public in Wooldridge Square to ensure its long-term viability for the next 100 years by:

- Solidifying Wooldridge Square's role in the historic fabric of Austin as a welcoming public space amenable to the individual or for small or large gatherings
 - Focusing on maintaining a quality site with amenities and reasons to return
 - Inspiring programming that provides opportunities for diverse public use and reaches a diverse populace
 - Ensuring a positive return on the recent financial infrastructure investment
 - Providing eyes on the Square that promote safe, respectful and welcome use
 - Raising awareness amongst the weekday employees and visitors (i.e., library, courthouse, law offices, etc.) within walking, busing, and biking distance from Wooldridge of the availability of healthy, open space for respite or social interaction
 - Supporting and growing vital engagement of current stewardship efforts led by Friends of Wooldridge Square (FOWS), Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA), Austin Parks Foundation (APF), and Austin Parks and Recreation Department (PARD)
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- Capitalizing on an active discussion to cultivate public spaces across the city, as a model for civic intervention and engagement.

As Austin grows and more people come downtown to live and work, pressure increases on all of Austin's green spaces to accommodate daily use along with the challenges of an ever-increasing number of weekly outdoor events. Wooldridge Square has unique qualities that allow it to be both a respite and a welcome center for civic activity.

Wooldridge Square offers a place to read ... think ... eat ... roll ... skip ... dance ... listen ... paint ... make music ... discuss ... nap ... campaign ... share ... rally ... talk ... and more. Its place in the history of Austin is rich and its future is our responsibility to shape.



Photo credit: Ann S. Graham, May 2013



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Recommendations

Wooldridge Square beckons. From its location to its topography, from the historic bandstand to its quiet, green landscape, Wooldridge draws you in. However, after years of neglect followed by a significant investment in restoration, it will take time and intention to reintroduce people to the Square. Here are recommendations to that end.

1. Inspiring Use of Wooldridge Square

- a. Spontaneous, personal use – eating, reading, walking, talking, napping, music making, exercising, painting, and so forth. Ideally this would occur on a daily basis and be the primary way the Square is used.
- b. Intentional programmatic use – programs that are planned, permitted and promoted.

Intentional programming should take advantage of the landscape and the bandstand and build on the unique history, culture and identity of Wooldridge. Its 100 years of history provide a rich background and inspiration for infinite variations of programs and events that can provide joy, meaning, celebration, respite and contemplation.

2. Basic park infrastructure to support programming from the perspective of both the public and programming partners

SHORT TO MEDIUM TERM

CONTACT PERSON	Identify point person for questions pertaining to programming at Wooldridge. This would be a temporary assignment in lieu of a dedicated staff person described below – someone who can foster a vision for programming and provide insight into, and potentially help navigate, the permitting process.
SEMI-PERMANENT VENDOR ON SITE	Quality food sales on site will be a critical first step to drawing people to Wooldridge on a daily basis and giving them insight into the beauty of being in the park.
MOVEABLE SEATING WITH SHADE	Moveable tables and chairs have proven to be a successful ingredient in parks around the world and should be explored in conjunction with the food vendor. Providing shade with the seating is important to encourage regular use in hot summer months.
FOOD VENDING FOR EVENTS	Work with the vendor on site to remain open during events Provide contact information to other vendors to sell water or additional food at events, depending on scale of program(s).



LOADING ZONE/PARKING	Research/procure two or three load-in/parking spots for event producers Negotiate with Travis County to establish parking access to surface lots on east side of Guadalupe or parking garage on San Antonio for weekend/evening events; could be fee-based.
ELECTRICITY	Upgrade the electrical infrastructure on the bandstand, connecting to the power box on the west side of the park. The current two circuits are not adequate for all sound system needs commensurate to scale of park, necessitating generator rental/costs. Consider installing switch for "café lights."
PUBLIC ART	Understand City of Austin's Art in Public Places/Art Donation policy regarding requests for permanent or temporary artworks at the Square.
EVENT SPONSORSHIPS	Evaluate with DAA, PARK, APF, and FOWS potential for basic fundraising plan for event sponsorships.
COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENT PROMOTION	Identify person with programming partner who will coordinate communication with public and contact person Collate general list of Facebook pages or websites (e.g., FOWS, DAA, PARD, APF) to distribute to permit applicants to co-promote events/programs open to the public.
SIGNAGE	Install system to hang banners from the bandstand that will not damage the historic structure. Requests were repeatedly submitted during fall 2013 programming events to hang banners. It is a good way to promote events, recognize event sponsors and draw attention to the park as a venue.
SAFETY AND SECURITY	Ensure event producers understand their responsibility to provide any security needed. Be sure to give them all necessary contact information.
TOILETS	The Travis County Courthouse and the Austin History Center and library are open to the public and provide facilities for daily park users during the normal operating hours. Programming partners need to bring in portable toilets for events planned in the Square and improved infrastructure is needed to do this well. Install a temporary concrete pad at a strategic location for placement of two portable toilet units (rented per program). Identify the best choice for this concrete pad, out of the major view-shed from west-facing audiences, and not too close to the food vendor.
TRASH	Ensure event producers understand their responsibility to remove any trash Be sure to give them all necessary contact information.
ALCOHOL SALES	If alcohol sales are approved and fencing required, ensure event producers are given recommendations on appropriate fencing vendors, ideal fencing perimeter, etc.
MEMORIALS	Establish a policy to deal with potential requests for memorials/plaques. What is historically correct? Is there a potential revenue stream for "in honor of ..." or "in memory of ..." opportunities?
STORAGE FOR PERFORMERS	Consider cleaning out the space under the bandstand to create temporary, safe storage for material (e.g., music cases, boxes, etc.) during programming.



LONG TERM (PART OF LONG RANGE MASTER PLAN)

PERMANENT TOILETS	Consider installing permanent toilets. One example is the <i>Portland Loo</i> : www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/article/408156
WATER FOUNTAIN	Install historically accurate water fountain
ACCESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES	The park and bandstand do not meet ADA requirements. Attention needs to be given to ADA parking adjacent to the park, appropriate pathway grades, access to the bandstand.
PARKING	Obtain permission to allow evening/weekend parking in Travis County garage (west of the park on San Antonio for park events (could be fee-based).

3. Park Permitting Process

PARD’s permit site now provides online clarification that distinguishes between smaller “PARK ONLY” events and larger events requiring COA’s new comprehensive city-wide Special Event Application:

www.austintexas.gov/page/special-events-policies-procedures

FOR “PARK ONLY” EVENTS

Ensure information for reserving the Square for programming is readily available online and by phone at Wooldridge Square, PARD, APF, DAA, 311.

Improve and clarify Request Form and create online form –

www.austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Parks/Special_Events/policies/special_request.pdf

NOTE: Ann Graham discussed these points with Jason Mauer and he is amenable to them, but aims to keep form short and as easy/fast to complete as possible. Ann is willing to continue to work with Jason on this.

Add timely response function to reservation process – Immediate auto response when Request Form received.

Pre-determined time (i.e., “x weeks”) allowance for feedback, resolution of questions.

Pre-determined window (i.e., “x weeks or months”) of time for permit issuance .

Provide outline for time required to submit/secure permit.

Provide more space for all information.

Provide explanation for implications of “type of request” and “event details” including web links to City ordinances where relevant (i.e., what happens if I check this box? Curfew (time, noise), alcohol served or sold, sound permit, catering/vending, etc.).

Define “co-sponsorship” and “non-reservable site.”

Event details form: more room needed on form for description, event details.

Location requested: make address more explicit – where in a given park/square?



Fully detailed explanation of request: currently only one line.

Describe plan for litter, toilets, etc.: One line? What are the requirements for litter pick up or providing toilets?

What are the implications of ...

- Total estimated audience – are there different thresholds if you have more than X?
What are they (in terms of security, toilets, access, etc.)?
- Admission charge? What are the implications of yes/no?
Are there admission charges that trigger different permitting requirements?
- Will alcohol be served? Yes/no What are the implications?
- Sound permit needed? What triggers needing a sound permit?

Will there be catering/vending? If so, then what are the implications?

EVENT MARKETING

Current website includes this statement:

“City of Austin PARK Event Website information: I hereby grant permission to copy and to perform minor edits to promotional information from the event application, marketing or website material to use in posting a short publicly viewable information about the subject event on the City’s website.”

Consider adding web links where event/program producer can submit information to ensure COA/PARD web inclusion (i.e., FOWS, PARD, DAA, APR, Austin Creative Alliance, Culture Map, etc.)

COA NEW COMPREHENSIVE SPECIAL EVENTS PERMIT PROCESS

This process is much more detailed and required for more complex events than the “picnic rate” request (events that require staging, fencing, sound permits, alcohol permits, food safety permits, toilets, etc.). It has an 18-page application and requires a longer timeline. This application triggers attention from TxDOT, Capital Metro, APD, AFD, EMS, PARD, H&HS, COA Right of Way/Transportation, Building Inspection, etc.

The City of Austin has developed a comprehensive application for event planning to be used by special event applicants year-round. The application will be used by multiple city departments to help producers determine what permits and planning documents are required to meet internationally-adopted safety standards. austintexas.gov/news/city-austin-institutes-comprehensive-special-event-application



4. Dedicated Staff Support

After investing considerable (albeit part-time) attention to develop sustainable programming at Wooldridge Square, it is apparent that dedicated staff attention is required to inspire, promote, facilitate, support, and insure successful and engaging use of the Square and the bandstand.

Just because the Square is THERE does not guarantee spontaneous programming will take place. Ongoing outreach efforts to keep the Square in the minds of Austinites and to continue to plant seeds for new program ideas takes staff time and attention that currently doesn't exist (though the desire is there).

Current plans to focus attention on short and long-term development of Republic Square could provide a model for Wooldridge, but below are some ideas for what a dedicated staff person could address (building on our experiences these past months, and prior to that by FOWS, PARD, APF, DAA):

- Assess the assets/liabilities, opportunities/challenges
 - Identify and develop database of key partners and stakeholders (DAA, COA, PARD, APF, nearby employers, HOAs, businesses, residents, civic entities, preservation community, Shoal Creek Conservancy, etc.)
 - Clarify partner agreements (MOUs) with DAA, COA, PARD, APF, Economic Development (i.e., Cultural Affairs, Music Division)
 - Oversee master planning process
 - Survey stakeholders regarding potential uses
 - Assess physical aspects that invite unique programming without bringing-in additional resources (i.e. staging); identify and characterize both common and unique attributes of each that could shape programming ideas
 - Identify key times/days of year that are peak times for current users/stakeholders
 - Develop communication strategy for year round presence in the eyes of the community including both civic and privately produced programs and events
 - Develop programmatic vision for outreach and to curate events
 - Develop budget and fundraising goals; including exploring 501(c)(3) organizational base so that tax-deductible donations can be accepted for much needed fundraising to support programming, sponsorships, etc.
-



5. Communication and Outreach

Effective short-medium-long term 'Communication and Outreach' demands that human and financial resources are dedicated to initiate, respond to and follow through with ideas and opportunities. Whether a part of a given staff person's job description or a short-term part-time appointment or a dedicated staff position, attention is required to maximize an investment in programming communication and outreach.

It would be an asset if there were a dedicated web page for Wooldridge Square. Currently, there is the active Friends of Wooldridge Square Facebook page and the DAA, PARD and APF have calendars/schedules on their respective websites to promote (selective) events.

A quick Google search for Wooldridge Square revealed the following opportunities to update information, again, acknowledging that a point person needs to be identified to maintain these sites and implement any of the other suggestions listed below. There are likely myriad other online sites/links where Wooldridge Square's information could be highlighted and shared.

DAA: www.downtownaustin.com/maps and provide link to PARD Reservation Request site.

APF: www.austinparks.org/our-parks.html?ParkName=Wooldridge+Square&ParkAmenity=&ParkZip=&submit=Search+Parks

Trip Advisor: www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g30196-d558485-Reviews-Wooldridge_Square-Austin_Texas.html

Add FOWS/FB to FourSquare: www.foursquare.com/v/wooldridge-square-park/4ba5ce9af964a520562339e3

Other suggestions:

- Place Wooldridge Square logo on PARD, COA/Cultural Affairs/Music Division, APF, and DAA web sites that link to FOWS FB or PARD/Permit web pages
 - Build on existing database of stakeholders for regular communications about ongoing activities, reminders that the Square is available for use, special events, etc.
 - Create Wooldridge Square 'business card' or advertisement that could be included in County, APL, History Center, Preservation Austin, AIA, Austin Creative Alliance, COA/Cultural Affairs Division, etc. publications to promote availability as creative venue
 - Explore ways for Capital Metro to promote the Square online and on maps
 - Explore ways to include Wooldridge Square on Austin B-cycle literature and bike racks
 - Reach out to Judges/Justices of the Peace regarding availability of Wooldridge Square for weddings
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6. Long Range Master Planning

Parallel to the planning and implementation of the recent improvements to Wooldridge Square has been the intention to secure funding for a Long-Range Master Plan for the Square.

Drawing from the “Downtown Parks and Open Space Master Plan” the process should ensure the right players are at the table in the decision-making process and both short/medium-term and long-term infrastructure needs are being addressed.

Respect for the historical status of the Square is paramount – working closely with PARD and preservationists (i.e., THC, Preservation Austin, etc.) to ensure any changes (lighting, trash cans, benches, pathways, etc.) respect the historical integrity of the site.

In addition, it will be important to be alert to development changes on the periphery of the Square and their potential impact. For example, work to ensure APL/AHC redesign fronts Wooldridge Square; keep abreast of any future changes to east side of Guadalupe (i.e. Bank of America, surface parking lots).



Co6049 AHC – Dedication of the bandstand at Wooldridge Square Park.
Crowds gather around the bandstand, dressed in formal wear.



Photo credit: Ann S. Graham, Austin Symphony Big Band, October 2013



Attachments





A. Excerpt from June 2013 Survey Synopsis





EXCERPT FROM WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE PARK SURVEY RESULTS – Question 2

Compiled by Christina Wiese, Communications Intern at DAA

Tuesday, June 25, 2013

Question 2: What would you like to see in Wooldridge Square more than anything else? What would make you go out of your way to seek out Wooldridge as a place for fun, contemplation, repose, delight?

Categories	Responses
Concerts	62
Homeless Resolution	62
Family/community Events	47
Landscaping	47
Public Amenities	47
Water Feature	27
Picnics	22
Safety/Clean	22
Peaceful Place	17
Vendors	14
Playtime	11
Lunch Breaks	11
Politics/History	10
Library	10
No Answer	7
Do Not Want To Go	5
Chess	2



CATEGORY BREAKDOWN

- Chess
 - Concerts
 - ✓ Symphony
 - ✓ Jazz
 - ✓ Non-amplified
 - Do Not Want To Go
 - Family/Community Events
 - ✓ Art events
 - ✓ Ballet
 - ✓ Exercise
 - ✓ Farmers Market
 - ✓ Film series
 - ✓ Holiday celebrations
 - ✓ O'Henry Pun-Off
 - Homeless
 - ✓ Mobile Loaves & Fishes
 - Landscaping
 - ✓ Trees
 - ✓ Shade
 - ✓ Flowers
 - ✓ Green space
 - ✓ Lighting
 - Library
 - Lunch breaks
 - No Answer
 - Peaceful place
 - ✓ Relaxation
 - ✓ Oasis
-



- Picnics
 - ✓ Picnic benches
- Playtime
 - ✓ Playscape
 - ✓ Rolling down hills
- Political/History
 - ✓ Rallies
 - ✓ Campaigns
 - ✓ Explanation of park's history
- Public Amenities
 - ✓ Benches/seating
 - ✓ Car parking
 - ✓ Bicycle parking
 - ✓ Public restrooms
- Safety/Clean
- Vendors
- Water feature
 - ✓ Fountains
 - ✓ Splash pad
 - ✓ Pool
 - ✓ Pond

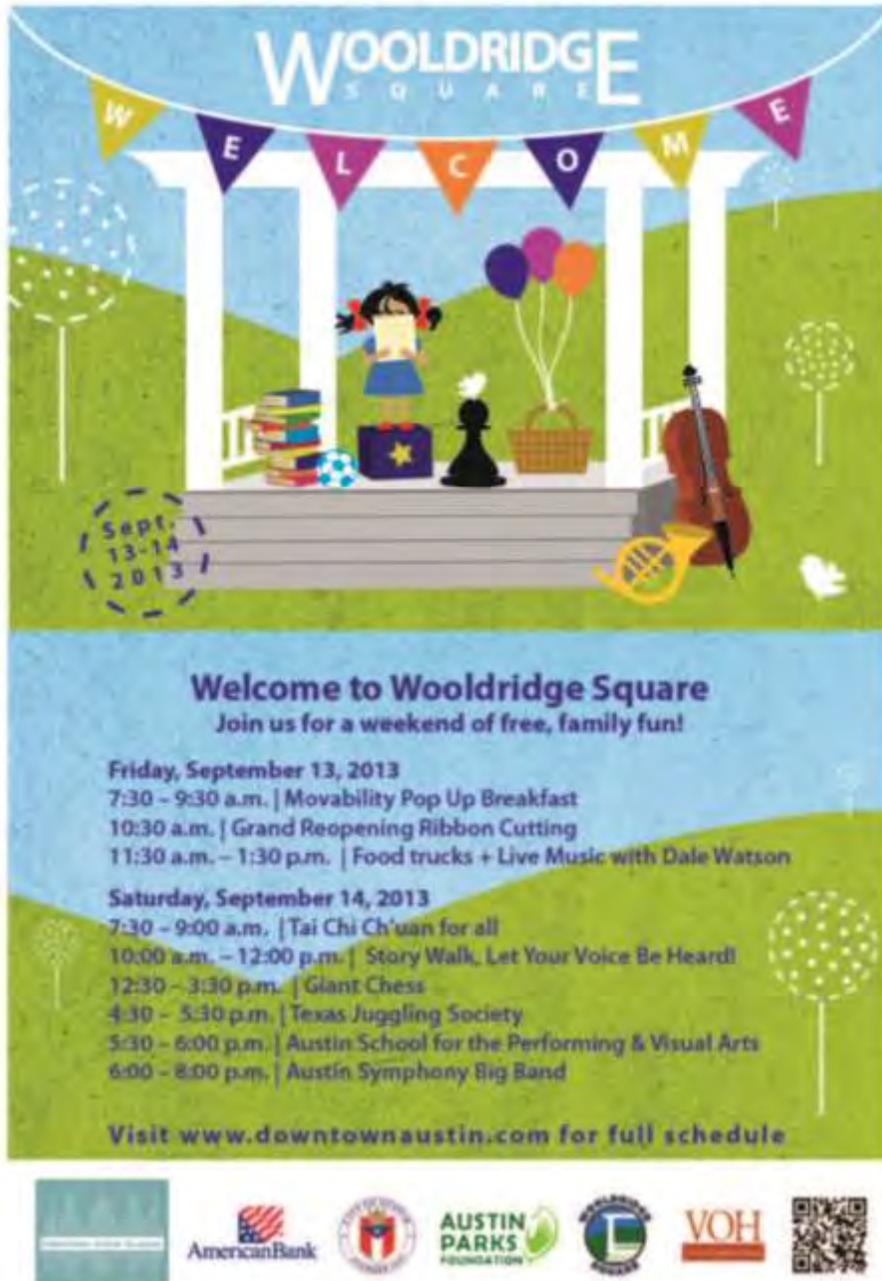
See Appendix G for full responses to Survey Questions 1 and 2.





B. Wooldridge Square Reopening Event Information





WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE

W E L C O M E

Sept. 13-14, 2013

Welcome to Wooldridge Square

Join us for a weekend of free, family fun!

Friday, September 13, 2013
7:30 – 9:30 a.m. | Movability Pop Up Breakfast
10:30 a.m. | Grand Reopening Ribbon Cutting
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. | Food trucks + Live Music with Dale Watson

Saturday, September 14, 2013
7:30 – 9:00 a.m. | Tai Chi Ch'uan for all
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Story Walk, Let Your Voice Be Heard!
12:30 – 3:30 p.m. | Giant Chess
4:30 – 5:30 p.m. | Texas Juggling Society
5:30 – 6:00 p.m. | Austin School for the Performing & Visual Arts
6:00 – 8:00 p.m. | Austin Symphony Big Band

Visit www.downtownaustin.com for full schedule



Wooldridge Square Reopening Celebration invitation postcard



REOPENING CEREMONY AND CELEBRATION FOR WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE PARK

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2013, 10:30 AM

900 GUADALUPE ST., AUSTIN, TEXAS

Reopening celebration activities, music and food follow on Friday and Saturday!
This is an outdoor park event, please dress comfortably.

The City of Austin is proud to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require assistance for participation in our programs or use of our facilities, please call (512) 974-6700.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

- ∞ Upgrade of site electrical to move overhead lines to underground conduit and added service capacity.
- ∞ Installation of full coverage irrigation system with automated controls.
- ∞ Installation of traffic/drought tolerant Tifway 419 turfgrass.
- ∞ Reinvigoration of existing trees including air spade work, fertilization and new mulch.
- ∞ 11 new tree plantings with drip irrigation and mulch.
- ∞ Addition of 5 new light fixtures along the interior sidewalk and near the bandstand.
- ∞ Replacement of memorial benches and added trash cans according to new fixture standards.
- ∞ Installation of new vendor pad area in northwest corner for permanent food vending opportunities with added bike rack.



WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE PARK REOPENING CEREMONY AND CELEBRATION

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2013
900 GUADALUPE ST., AUSTIN, TEXAS

Pied Piper Productions

Glenn Pieper

Austin Shakespeare

*"Welcome to Wooldridge"
Robert Faires and Jill Blackwood*

Greetings and Congratulatory Remarks

City of Austin Mayor and Council

Austin Parks and Recreation Department

Austin Parks Foundation

Downtown Austin Alliance

State of Texas Officials

Presentation of Lease

Closing Remarks

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Welcome to Wooldridge Reopening Event



September 13-14 2013

Event Logistics for Partners and Vendors

EVENT LOCATION

Wooldridge Square is located at 900 Guadalupe between 9th and 10th Streets, across from the Travis County courthouse.

Transit: Wooldridge Square is conveniently accessible via Capital Metro services. To find the route that best serves you, use Cap Metro's Trip Planner. Enter your address as the starting point, and 900 Guadalupe St as the End Point. You can reach Cap Metro's GO Line at (512) 474-1200.

SCHEDULE

Friday, September 13, 2013

7:30 – 9:30 a.m. | Movability Pop Up Breakfast *Sponsored by Starbucks*

10:30 a.m. | Grand Reopening Ribbon Cutting

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. | Food Trucks and Live Music with Dale Watson

Saturday, September 14, 2013

7:30 – 9:00 a.m. | Tai Chi Ch'uan for all

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. | Let Your Voice Be Heard!

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Story Walk

12:30 – 3:30 p.m. | Giant Chess

1:30 - 8:00 p.m. | Imagination Playground

4:30 - 5:30 p.m. | Texas Juggling Society

5:30 -6:00 p.m. | Austin School for the Performing & Visual Arts

6:00 – 8:00 p.m. | Austin Symphony Big Band *Sponsored by American Bank*

Welcome to Wooldridge Reopening Event

FOOD VENDORS

Bestwurst, Chi'lantro, Coolhaus, Gourdough's, Hey Cupcake, Mmmpanadas.

Park in the parallel parking spaces at the southwest corner of the park facing the sidewalk (see attached map for details). Individual locations within this area will not be reserved, they are first-come first serve. If your service window faces the opposite direction, you can flip your vehicle around. All vendors should have a current mobile food vending permit. Parking passes will be provided for the event and should be placed in a visible location on the vehicle.

Friday Required Hours: 10am-2pm (optional hours from 9am-5pm)

****Vendors must be set up and ready to serve before the ribbon-cutting ceremony starts at 10:30**

Saturday Required Hours: 5pm-8pm (optional hours from 10am-8pm)

****Vendors must be set up and ready to serve by 5pm**

PARKING

On-street parking options are available throughout the area, and there are several garages in the vicinity. Travis County is offering free parking for the reopening events on Saturday, September 14th ONLY (not on Friday) at their parking lot at the corner of Guadalupe and 10th directly east of the park, and at their parking lot at the corner of 10th and Lavaca next to the Constable Pct 5 building and University Savings Building. Bike parking is available at one of the racks near the park or library. Remember to lock your bike.

LOADING

The event loading zone is along Guadalupe Street at the southeast corner of the park (see the attached map for more details). Please pre-determine loading times with your event contact if necessary.

TRASH

Trash and recycling receptacles will be located throughout the park. The Downtown Austin Alliance maintenance crew will be helping to keep the park clean and free of trash during the event. Trash and recycling dumpsters will be parked along 10th street at the northeast corner of the park during the event (see the attached map for more details).

PORTAPOTTIES

Portapotties will be located on the northwest area of the park (see the attached map for more details).

PARK RULES

****Please note that this event is subject to all City of Austin park rules. Glass, styrofoam, and smoking are not permitted in the park.**

EVENT CONTACTS

General event questions: Melissa Barry, Downtown Austin Alliance, 512-354-5219 or mbarry@downtownaustin.com

Event performers and partners: Ann Graham, People + Art, 512-914-8096, annsgraham@gmail.com

Food vendors: Meredith Sanger, Downtown Austin Alliance, 512-423-5525 or msanger@downtownaustin.com

Maintenance and safety: Bill Brice, Downtown Austin Alliance 512-773-8929 or bbrice@downtownaustin.com

Media Inquiries: Julie Weaver, Downtown Austin Alliance, 512-381-6278 or jweaver@downtownaustin.com

WELCOME TO WOOLDRIDGE
Enriching Civic Life (and having a good time while doing it!)

Draft Schedule as of 8/27/13

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2013

7:30 – 9:30 a.m. Movability Pop Up Breakfast

Movability Austin's PopUp Commuter Breakfast is a special reward for commuters who use transportation options to get in and out of downtown as well as an opportunity to encourage those who might like to try using options for the first time. We invite those who bus, bike, carpool, train and walk to join us for a delicious alternative to sitting in rush hour traffic. Learn more about Movability Austin at <http://movabilityaustin.org/> SPONSORED BY STARBUCKS

10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Austin History Center – Wooldridge Square Photographs

Seek out the historic photographs mounted in the Wooldridge Square landscape. The images will be set in the locations in which they were taken in years past, giving the public a glimpse into history and how the view differs (or not) from today's perspective. Special thanks to the Austin History Center for this photographic installation.

**10:30 a.m. Speak Your Piece/Speak Your Peace –
Rhetorical Ribbon Cutting**

* Welcome Back Wooldridge Square – Thanks and Appreciations *

11:15 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. Dale Watson Kicks Off Welcome To Wooldridge!

Take your lunch break by picnicking from one of Austin's well known food vendors and celebrating the re-opening of Wooldridge Square with a live music performance by Dale Watson and his back up band! Watson, an American country/Texas country singer, guitarist, songwriter and all-time Austin favorite, champions "Ameripolitan" a new genre of original music!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2013

7:30 – 9:00 a.m. Tai Chi Ch'uan for all!

All ages and levels are welcome to follow along and try out the smooth, graceful and relaxed movements of Tai Chi as led by teachers from five of Austin's notable Tai Chi schools. Join Jingyu Gu of Tai Chi and Chi Kung Meditation Center, Jim Williams of The Four Seasons Tai Chi Chuan, Donna Minshew of The T'ai Chi Ohana, Vince Cobalis of Ip Sun Tai Chi and Schiller Liao of Schiller Liao Tai Chi. Tai Chi is a traditional Chinese martial art practiced for centuries and designed to enhance balance, coordination, flexibility, and wellness.

These five schools represent three of the five major styles of Tai Chi originated from China in addition to a Korean style Tai Chi. Jingyu Gu and Jim Williams represent the Wu style Tai Chi from Shanghai, China, Donna Minshew the Yang Style Tai Chi from Stan Rossi, Vince Cobalis the Korean Ip Sun Tai Chi, and Schiller Liao the Chen Style Tai Chi from Taiwan. It is a special opportunity for visitors to sample all of these styles and schools in one location within a single morning. Everyone is welcome to jump in and join these groups in this smooth, meditative but also energizing flow of a morning dance, a great way to start a day.

www.taichiimmortal.com, www.fourseasonstaichi.com, thetaichiohana.com, <http://www.ipsun-taichi.net>

10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Austin History Center – Wooldridge Square Photographs

Seek out the historic photographs mounted in the Wooldridge Square landscape. The images will be set in the locations in which they were taken in years past, giving the public a glimpse into history and how the view differs (or not) from today's perspective. Special thanks to the Austin History Center for this photographic installation.

10:00 a.m. – 12 noon Let Your Voice Be Heard! and "Story Walk" Creative Action, Austin Public Library, Foxing Quarterly

"Austin can be a better place for all if we _____"
"I can make a difference in Austin by _____"

Children of all ages are welcome to find-their-voice around ideas and issues that are important to them. Working with artists and writers, youth can create posters, draw pictures, write short speeches, poetry and haiku while exploring things that are important in their lives.

Creative Action, Austin Public Library and Foxing Quarterly will provide books, literature appropriate for all youthful ages, examples and models while creating a setting that allows children and their families to explore a variety of social issues and craft words/drawings to speak up about them.

Participants can then try their voice using the 'Soap Box' or 'Speaker's Corner' model to practice their speech/poem.

In addition, the Austin Public Library will provide a "StoryWalk" - a walk-at-your-own-pace through and around Wooldridge Square reading a favorite story book, selected to charm and engage all kids of all ages!

"The StoryWalk® Project was created by Anne Ferguson of Montpelier, VT and developed in collaboration with the Vermont Bicycle & Pedestrian Coalition and the Kellogg Hubbard Library."
www.creativeaction.org, <http://www.foxingquarterly.com/>, <http://library.austintexas.gov/>

12:30 – 3:30 p.m. The Return of Wooldridge Square's Giant Chess

Bring your own Chess Set or borrow one on-site! Don't miss the return of Wooldridge Square's Giant Chess Set!

4:30-5:30 p.m. Texas Juggling Society

Watch Austin jugglers at-work-and-play or pick up some balls and clubs and test your own juggling skills! <http://juggling.place.org>

(set up for Austin Symphony on Bandstand)

5:30 p.m. ASPVA Students Open for the Austin Symphony Big Band

Talented performers in grades 6 - 12 of the Austin School for the Performing and Visual Arts (ASPVA), located just down the street from Wooldridge Square, are serious about honing both their academic and artistic talents, and seize every opportunity to share their passion. To celebrate this special event, the ASPVA Improv Troupe and singer-songwriters will delight audiences of all ages.

www.theaustinschool.org

6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Austin Symphony Big Band

(Sunset: 17:30pm)

Bring your picnic basket and a blanket and join us!

Playing popular Big Band tunes by the likes of Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Woody Herman, Bert Bacharach, George Gershwin and Oscar Hammerstein, the Austin Symphony's 16 member Big Band will bring back memories of a simpler time when performances of familiar classics in downtown gathering places were commonplace.

Wooldridge Square has a rich legacy of notable performances presented in its historic 104 year old Bandstand, including many by the Austin Symphony. We are thrilled to be starting the Square's next century of musical offerings with the exceptional talents of the Austin Symphony Big Band.

Sample program:

http://www.austinsymphony.org/files/Austin_Symphony_CITP_June23_program.pdf

SPONSORED BY AMERICAN BANK

Good night!





C. Wooldridge Idea Calendar



**WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE PARK 2013-2014 IDEA CALENDAR** (as of 8/27/13)

Needs sponsorship:

- Austin Symphony Big Band Fall Concert Series (Sept. 14, Oct 26, Nov. 16)
- Children’s Literary Series (Saturday mornings at Wooldridge)
- Friday noon/picnic Music Series: 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
- Movies at Wooldridge
- Every Saturday, Sept. 21-Dec.21, 8:00 – 9:30 a.m. Free
- Tai Chi Ch’uan led by Jingyu Gu, Tai Chi and Chi Jung Meditation Center.
- www.taichiimmortal.com
- Tango Milonga – to promote the Day of Tango Festival (Dec. 6-8, 2013); an opportunity to share this cultural event with the broader Austin community. Juan Carlos Suarez, President, Academy of Tango, Texas.
- www.academyoftangotexas.org
- The Contemporary Austin –
- Tues, Oct. 29th, 10am-4pm (Rain date: Nov. 1st)
- Kurt Mueller’s *American Dream* takes the format of karaoke and invites the public to deliver one of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s most iconic speeches. Consider the power of words and the role of leadership by participating in this public installation, and then make your political voice heard during early voting at the adjacent courthouse.
- Texas Nature Challenge - Coordinated with PARD’s Margaret Russell who oversees this statewide project for Central Texas. Need organizer for Wooldridge

SEPTEMBER

- SEPTEMBER 13-14, 2013 Reopening Events
- September 16 Diez y Seis
- September 20 PARKing Day
- September 22 Austin Museum Day
- HAMM Music Day

OCTOBER

- Austin Film Festival
- Texas Book Festival
- Via la Vida Festival (Mexic-Arte)
- Octoberfest (German-Texas Heritage Society)

NOVEMBER

- November 1 – Arbor Day
- AIA Homes Tour
- Election Day
- Wooldridge Square Giant Chess Tournament (Gary Gaiffe/Chris Riley)
- EAST



DECEMBER

- Holiday Stroll
- Christmas/Hanukkah/Kwanzaa

JANUARY

- MLK Day of Community Service

FEBRUARY

- Restaurant Week

MARCH

- It's My Park Day
- SXSW
- St. Patrick's Day
- Easter (or April) – Egg Hunt

APRIL

- Fusebox
- Art City Austin
- Moontower Comedy Festival
- Global Youth Services Day
- Earth Day
- WEST Austin Studio Tours (late April/early May)

MAY

- Election day
- Bike To Work Week
- **Cinco de Mayo (Travis County)**
- RISE Austin

JUNE

- June 18, 1909 Wooldridge Square Birthday
- **Juneteenth (Travis County)**
- Father's Day

JULY

- 4th of July
- Bastille Day

AUGUST

Fashion Week



D. Wooldridge Artist/Organizational Outreach List





Groups Ann Graham reached out to over the course of the Wooldridge Square project (2013-2014):

ARTISTS/ARTS ORGANIZATIONS:

Austin Acoustic Café (David Crabb)
Austin Chamber Music Society (Michelle Schumann)
Austin Creative Reuse
Austin Jazz Network
Austin Museum of Art (Andrea Mellard)
Austin Shakespeare (40th Anniversary at Wooldridge 2014)
Austin Symphony
Austin Tango Communiccty
Ballet Austin
Creative Action (Karen LaShelle)
Crying Monkeys
Djembabes (Sherry Gringas)
Glass Half Full Theater, Trouble Pupper Theater
Henna Chou, cellist
Mexic-Arte
Peace Through Pie (Luanne Stovall)
Texas Folklife (Cristina Balli)
Texas Juggling Society (Jim Maxwell)
Women & Their Work
Johnny Walker

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

APL/Austin History Center
Austin School of Performing & Visual Arts (Carol Cardenas)
Travis County
Central Christian Church
Khabele School
ACC (Department of Arts & Humanities; Dean Lyman Grant; dance teacher Darla Johnson)
Pease Elementary
AIA
Tai Chi Community



POSSIBLE AWARDS:

Preservation Texas

Keep Austin Beautiful – Governor’s Community Achievement Awards

Keep Texas Beautiful

POSSIBLE GRANTS:

ACVB – Heritage (Cultural Tourism)

Texas Commission on the Arts – Touring Roster (presenter) grants



E. News Clippings - Summer-Fall 2013



State Representative ELLIOTT NAISHTAT DISTRICT 49 REPORT



P.O. BOX 2910
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768-2910
512-463-0668

ELLIOTT NAISHTAT
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 49

The State of Texas
House of Representatives
Austin

Dear Friends:

It is an honor to have represented you for a twelfth legislative session and I'm pleased to report about significant session accomplishments, my legislative program and my work as a member of the Human Services Committee and the Public Health Committee.

In the 83rd Regular Session, the Legislature dealt with 6,061 pieces of legislation, ultimately sending 1,447 bills to Governor Perry for his signature. Nine constitutional amendments were approved and a two-year, \$197 billion budget was adopted. In three special sessions called by the Governor, six bills and one proposed constitutional amendment passed. Voters were asked to approve nine of the constitutional amendments this November; one will be on the ballot in November 2014.

The Legislature passed a constitutionally-mandated balanced budget, significantly restoring dramatic cuts made in the previous session to state programs and services. Public and higher education will continue to receive the bulk of the state's financial resources. Funding for health and human services is a close second. Major legislation was passed reforming public school accountability and meeting critical state water infrastructure and transportation needs.

I am pleased to have passed bills that will benefit you, your families and friends, including legislation that closes a loophole in the stop-and-render-aid law that incentivized drivers to flee the scene of an accident, provides coverage for PTSD under health benefit plans, raises standards in state supported living centers, strengthens educational supports for special needs students, and assures continued City of Austin stewardship of our three historical downtown parks. During the interim, my office is pleased that the laws we passed are implemented in accordance with the Legislature's intent for the people of Texas.

Representative Naishtat's Legislation

During the Regular Session of the 83rd Legislature, Rep. Naishtat authored or sponsored 21 bills that passed both houses. Six additional bills were amended onto other bills that passed. All were signed into law by Governor Perry. Rep. Naishtat's legislative package included bills regarding public safety, the judiciary, human services, public health, tenants' rights, consumer protection, and education. The following bills were among those enacted into law.

Austin Public Squares

HB 2604/SB 1023 authorizes 99-year leases from the State of Texas to the City of Austin for three historic downtown squares (Wooldridge, Republic and Brush). The City has been the steward of these squares for 175 years, and the bill gives the citizens of Austin assurance that its stewardship and investments in the properties can continue for another 99 years.

ERVICES; PUBLIC HEALTH. VICE CHAIR



PRESERVATION — AUSTIN —

Summer 2013 Volume 17 No. 3

Wooldridge Square Looking Forward to a Bright, Green Future

Over the past year, Wooldridge Square, a downtown park that dates back to Edwin Waller's original 1839 plan for the city of Austin, has undergone a beautiful transformation. Please join us on Saturday, September 14, 2013 on Re-Opening Day for this historic square.

Preservation Austin recently worked with local and statewide preservation, parks and downtown advocates in successful support of legislation that would renew the land grants of the three remaining downtown squares, Wooldridge, Brush and Republic, for the next 99 years.

Closed for the past year for an overhaul including new irrigation, a new lawn, new tree plantings and more, the Park will once again become

a welcome respite from busy downtown under the shady, cool grove of pecans, and oaks. Fundraising is still continuing for the restoration of the 1910 Page Brothers designed bandstand and the Friends of Wooldridge Square are gathering donations through the Austin Parks Foundation. In just a few short months, the public will be welcomed back into the verdant green landscape and celebrate a bright future for a treasured green space and, hopefully, a restored bandstand.

The Friends of Wooldridge Square also recognize that a robust schedule of diverse programming is critical to the renewed life of the park and have an 'Action Team' planning a fun



After a period of rest and some improvements, Wooldridge Square is looking wonderful.

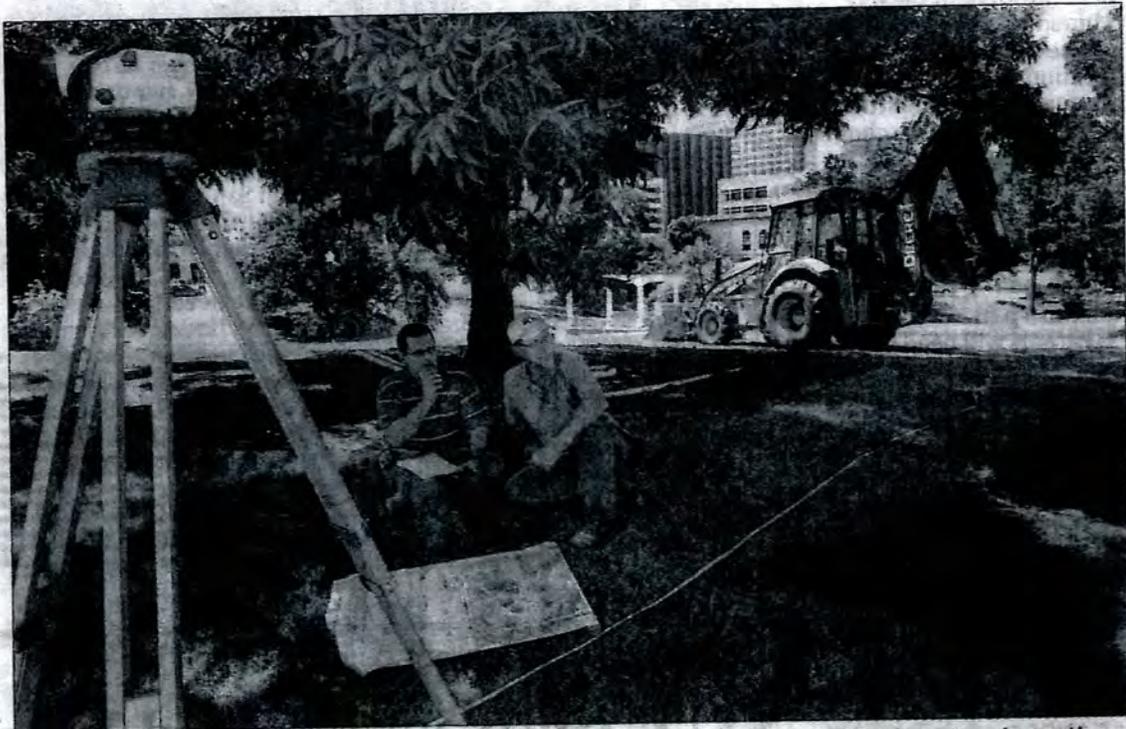
and welcoming Re-Opening day-long celebration on Saturday, September 14th, followed by a fall season of programs to put Wooldridge back in the hearts and souls of the greater Austin Community. Check for updates at www.facebook.com/wooldridgesquarepark or if you're interested in the fundraising or programming efforts of the Friends of Wooldridge Square, please contact Michael McGill at mmp167@gmail.com.

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WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE PARK

Renovations near completion



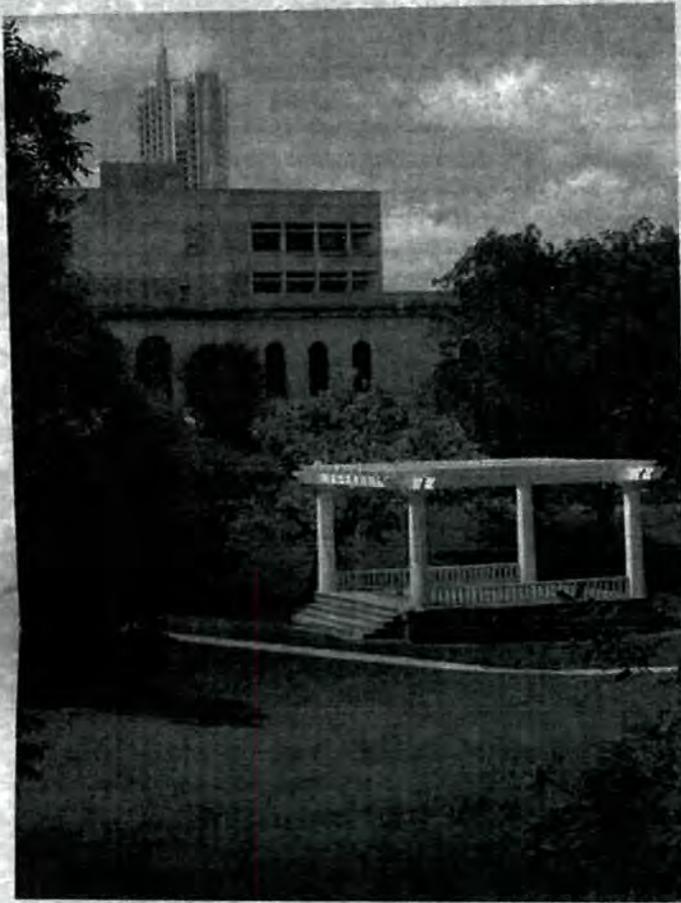
Fred Fuller (left) and Kraig Harris with city of Austin Parks and Recreation find a shady spot underneath a pecan tree Monday in Wooldridge Park to plan improvements to the downtown site. The renovation has been about a year long, with work being done by the city and the Friends of Wooldridge Square. Fuller and Harris are working on a gravel patio area that will have a mobile vending area serving food, with cafe tables and chairs. Some of the other work includes a new sprinkler system, new grass and trees, park benches, trash receptacles, a bike rack, and five pedestrian poles for park lighting. The historic bandstand gazebo is also undergoing a historically correct renovation, receiving new stairs and a new deck. The opening event is planned for Sept. 13, with music and activities. LAURA SKELDING / AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Austin Remembers...

"Collective Memory of
Austin & Travis County"

FALL, 2013

Austin History
Center Association



Wooldridge Square in May 2013 after restoration – new plantings, irrigation, lighting and food vendor. Photo courtesy Ann S. Graham.

WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE: A SECOND CENTURY

By Julie Weaver

With the commitment of the Austin Parks and Recreation Department, Austin Parks Foundation, Downtown Austin Alliance and many other community partners and volunteers, Wooldridge Square will enter its 104th year as a transformed and vibrant public space for Austin.

Designated in 1838 by Edwin Waller as part of the original downtown Austin street grid, the square spent many years as an unofficial city dump before being formally dedicated by Mayor A.P. Wooldridge on June 18, 1909 as the park we see today. The bandstand, constructed in 1910, put Wooldridge Square on the map as a focal point for Austin and Texas' political history. The bandstand has always been a popular location for political rallies, campaign launching, debates, and ceremonies. It has also been a beacon for music performances with many Austin residents having fond memories of sitting in the shade listening to live music.

"The significance of Wooldridge Square is that it is the only one of the four original downtown squares that has retained all of its historic integrity," said Charles Peveto of the Friends of Wooldridge Square. "The bandstand, designed by C.H. Page & Bro. in 1909, has been refurbished, but never replaced, and the same holds true for the sidewalk. Wooldridge is also the only square with three historic designations: State Archeological Landmark, National Register of Historic Places, and Austin City Landmark. I'm pleased we are seeing such a significant investment made to maintain this important piece of our history."

The effort being made today will restore *Continued on Page 4*

AUSTIN JOURNALISTS TO TAKE CENTER STAGE AT 2014 EBERLY LUNCHEON

By Geoff Wool

The Austin History Center Association's annual Angelina Eberly Luncheon has cemented its reputation as the event where Austin's history-makers and witnesses to that history come together to celebrate and explore our collective identity. This year, Austin journalists will add their unique perspective to the mix.

Mark your calendars now for next year's Eberly luncheon, Friday, Jan. 31, 2014, as a panel of Austin's most seasoned journalists offer a behind-the-scenes look at how some of the biggest news stories of the 70s, 80s and 90s were collected, processed and delivered to Austin homes. Veteran Austin television news

journalist Ron Oliveira leads what promises to be a lively mix of tall tales and revealing insight from a group of TV, radio, and newspaper reporters who have literally been eyewitnesses to our city's history, and who have adapted their work to changes in culture and technology.

"News, by its very nature, is fast-paced and vastly different from day to day," said Oliveira. "And it's competitive. Keeping up in that environment is a challenge and anyone who's covered news for a living has entertaining stories to tell about what people don't see in their newspapers or on TV. This should be fun."

Seating is limited so plan now and stay tuned for ticket information.



Ron Oliveira

WOOLDRIDGE from Page 1

Wooldridge Square to its former glory through landscape restoration including a renewed lawn, tree maintenance, new plantings, new irrigation system (using reclaimed water in the future), added lighting, a food vendor, and the restoration of the bandstand. Long-term, the Parks and Recreation Department will work with the Friends of Wooldridge Square and other stakeholders on a master plan for the park. A community reopening celebration will take place September 13th & 14th and will kick off a diversity of events and programs for the fall reopening of the park.

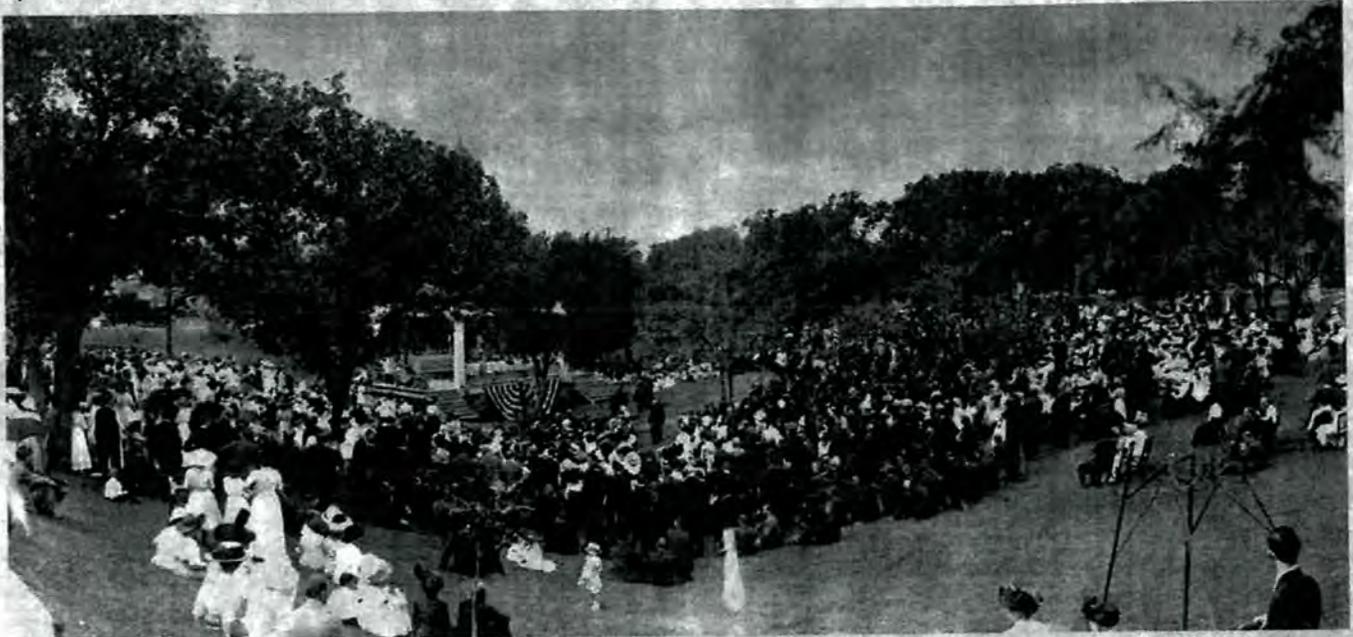
Wooldridge Square is unique in its rich historical background, its topography, and proximity to neighbors like the Capitol, Governor's Mansion, Bremond Block, Travis County, Austin Public Library, and Austin History Center. "I remember going to the square as a child with my daddy to hear stump speeches of all the local candidates," said Downtown Austin

Alliance Executive Director Charlie Betts. "The park was always full of people when speeches were happening and food vendors would line the edges of the park. I'll never forget meeting Governor Allan Shivers there." The fond memories it evokes in the hearts and souls of individuals who grew up using the Square, married there, or heard concerts or speeches there for the first time gives inspiration to create new memories for future generations.

As Wooldridge Square moves into its second century, a partnership of public and private supporters aim to reinvigorate its role in Austin's public life and reclaim its prominence as one of our most precious downtown landscapes.

Please join us on September 13th and 14th for the Wooldridge Square reopening celebrations and take a moment to become reacquainted with this gem in our city.

For more information about Wooldridge's celebrations and future, go to www.downtownaustin.com.



Hundreds of people turned out for the dedication of the new bandstand in Wooldridge Square Park in June 1910, one year after the park opened. Over the years, thousands of children (and adults) slid down the hill on cardboard, hundreds of concerts staged, and dozens of political campaigns launched. Image # C06049, Russell Chalberg Photograph Collection, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library.

PARK RESTORED BY FRIENDS

By Charles Peveto

I moved to Austin over 30 years ago after graduating from Texas A & M in the Preservation Program. Shortly after my arrival, the Director of the Texas A & M Foundation asked if I would be interested in living in the Carriage House of the recently restored Hirshfeld Mansion at Lavaca and 9th, just across from Wooldridge Square Park. I researched the historic squares in Austin and became very aware of their importance and what they had meant in Austin's history.

Wooldridge has three important historic designations: 1979 National Register, 1981 State Archeological Landmark (SAL) and 1990 City Landmark. In the 80s the park functioned well downtown and attracted continuous use. I often read in the park after dinner and loved the symphony

performances at noon. Families and many other individuals enjoyed the park daily.

In the following years I moved to other downtown locations while remaining very interested in Wooldridge Square Park. At present, I reside three blocks from the park and walk by Wooldridge every morning. Sadly, about ten years ago, I noticed a decline in the care of the park. Gradual disease and death had claimed a number of the heritage trees. The old irrigation system had been turned off. The dreadful drought of two years ago browned the little green square.

By the time I realized how much the Wooldridge conditions had declined, the park had become a delivery stop for the feeding program of Mobile Loaves and Fishes social service organization. The program delivered food to homeless groups gathered at the edge of the park. Over time, the deliveries contributed to the deterioration of Wooldridge.

About four years ago I joined the Friends *Continued on Page 7*

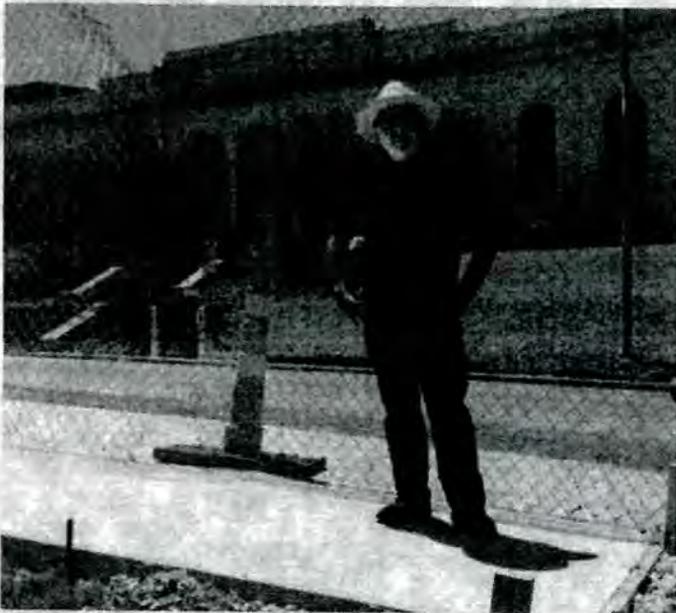
EBERLY from Page 1

Proceeds from the Angelina Eberly Luncheon, hosted once again at Austin's historic Driskill Hotel, go to the Austin History Center Association, supporter of the Austin History Center archives for Austin and Travis County.

TANIGUCHI from Page 2

that is dedicated to universal peace. According to the *Good Life Magazine* article, "Isamu hoped that by contemplating fern-festooned waterfalls, gem-colored fish, and the arch of a moon-viewing bridge, visitors would enjoy beauty and forget the competitive urges that drove them to war, and more specifically, the use of atomic weapons. The Isamu Taniguchi Oriental Garden was opened to the public in 1969."

(To read the complete *Good Life Magazine* article, visit www.goodlifemag.org and find the list of archived issues on the right, click 2005, and click December issue).



Historian Charles Peveto selects site for Bettie Naylor's memorial bench at Wooldridge Square across 9th St. from the Austin History Center August 13th, 2013.

NOVEL from Page 5

Fowler for self-publishing, nothing except reading and "writing, writing, writing" prepared her for fiction. She thought *The Spirit of Missions* history took "forever" to write, when she completed it in three years. By comparison, *Drawn* took 12 years "to ponder" after the initial dream, and then 12 years to write.

But write it, she did. It's an eerie story that makes you wonder: How would you face the apocalypse?

It could happen any time, whether you look at it from a religious or scientific standpoint. The sun supposedly has enough hydrogen to burn for thousands of years, but are we sure of that?

Fowler's dreams and Eva's experiences tell a different story.

Jim Goodson is a former editor and publisher of Park Cities People and currently edits the national men's ministry magazine St. Andrew's Cross, issued by the Anglican and Episcopal churches. Also a freelance writer, his work has appeared in many Texas and Colorado newspapers, including The Dallas Morning News and the Colorado Springs Sun.

FRIENDS from Page 4

of Wooldridge Square (FOWS). The group met many times to discuss how future programming could welcome all citizens to appropriate park activities. The Friends group promoted the park's importance to the community and identified potential funding for a complete restoration, including updated programming to bring Wooldridge "current" while respecting its historical integrity.

At the same time, the Friends and other organizations worked with Mobile Loaves and Fishes for its continued feeding program in alternative locations. The Friends desired for all citizens to enjoy appropriate programming activities at Wooldridge Square. For example, "quiet green space" is part of Wooldridge programming. Thousands of downtown dwellers and workers will notice a relaxing new lunch "get away" at Wooldridge, part of the immediate new park programming. Appropriate activities may soon follow like noon and early evening symphonies.

About a year ago the Friends, chaired by Michael McGill, began working with the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) and Downtown Austin Alliance (DAA) to realize a long term vision for the square. The State of Texas actually owns Wooldridge, like two other historic squares, Republic Square and Brush Square, and the City of Austin leases Wooldridge. Now the Friends, PARD and DAA have secured the State of Texas agreement to the next 99-year lease of Wooldridge Square.

As the restoration of the park nears completion, I personally thank Sara Hensley, Parks Director, and her wonderful staff for a remarkable job. In addition, the Austin Parks Foundation, the Friends group and PARD will rehab the historic 1910 Wooldridge Bandstand. Preservation architect Tere O'Connell will oversee the Bandstand project, designed by Page Brothers, and five memorial park benches and lighting will also be installed.

Plans by the Friends, PARD, DAA and the entire community will create a Wooldridge Square master plan that sustains the park for generations to come. Reopening events will be September 13-14, 2013, when Wooldridge Square returns to the City after being closed for over one year.

They tell of a Texas countryside scorched by wildfires – which is exactly what happened in 2011.

Eva's Austin experiences will make you look at familiar sights differently. And if you're unconcerned about the end times, you'll still enjoy Fowler's knowledge about her hometown. Her story may inspire you to take a walking tour through downtown Austin and the Capitol to follow Fowler's sketches and descriptions "and see what Eva sees."

Liz Bremond, founder of Tuesday Night Time-Out Ministry and a native Austinite agrees.

"You'll never look at the State Capitol the same way again," she says. "*Drawn* is a riveting eschatological thriller you can't put down until the final revelation."

Wooldridge Square Park Reopening

Posted by [Michael Reilly](#) on Friday, September 6th, 2013 at 3:01am.

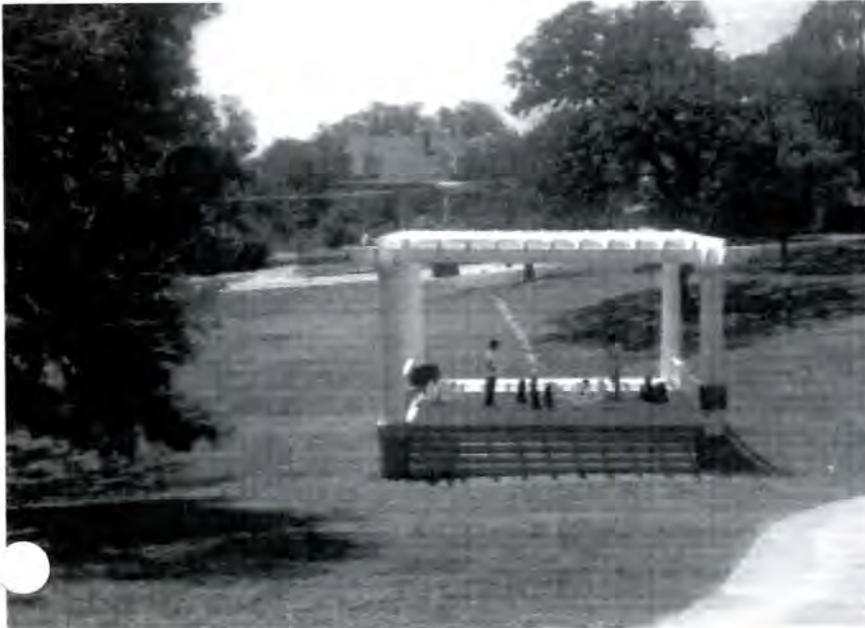


Photo courtesy of Steve Labinski

After being closed for over a year, Wooldridge Square Park in downtown Austin is reopening! The Austin Parks and Recreation Department, along with support from the Friends of Wooldridge Square organization and other sponsors, has completed extensive renovations to restore this historical square to all its former glory. In order to celebrate this hard work, the department is hosting a grand re-opening celebration on Friday, September 13th, complete with live music by Dale Watson. The celebration continues on Saturday, September 14th, beginning with Tai Chi in the early morning and concluding with live performances by the Austin Symphony Big Band. There will be plenty of family-friendly activities going on throughout the day, not to mention the delicious food truck vendors.

Wooldridge Park has a history as old as the city of Austin itself. The park was created as part of the original Austin city grid plan in 1839, but remained vacant for 70 years. In 1909, Austin Mayor A.P. Wooldridge made an effort to clean up and redesign the space. The large gazebo that currently rests at the center of the park was built during this time. Friday night concerts and other city events have been held at Wooldridge Park since its opening, and the park was recognized as a historical site in 1979. As the city of Austin has grown, however, there have been fewer events held here as the need for renovation continued to grow. Saturday chess games with giant pieces were one of the few activities still held at Wooldridge Park.

The funds raised by the Friends of Wooldridge Park and the Austin Parks and Recreation Department allowed

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renovations to begin in June of 2012. The park has since undergone construction for a new irrigation system and fresh turf. Existing trees have been fertilized and new trees have been planted. A new lighting system, park benches, trash cans and picnic tables have also been installed. The park's crowned jewel, the white gazebo, has been updated with new wooden boards and steps - and a fresh coat of paint. Austinites can expect more community and private events to be held at Wooldridge Park, such as fitness classes and public concerts. The renovation plan also allows for food truck vendors to set up shop at Wooldridge Square on a weekly basis. Those involved with the project hope that these renovations will attract more visitors to the park and serve as the starting point for revamping other downtown Austin parks.

Everyone is invited to celebrate the grand debut of Wooldridge Park on September 13th & 14th. The park is bordered by West 10th Street, Guadalupe Street, West 9th Street and San Antonio Street in downtown Austin. Check out the full schedule of events [here](#).

Blog Tags

- [Austin News \(34\)](#)
- [Downtown Living \(5\)](#)
- [Events \(5\)](#)

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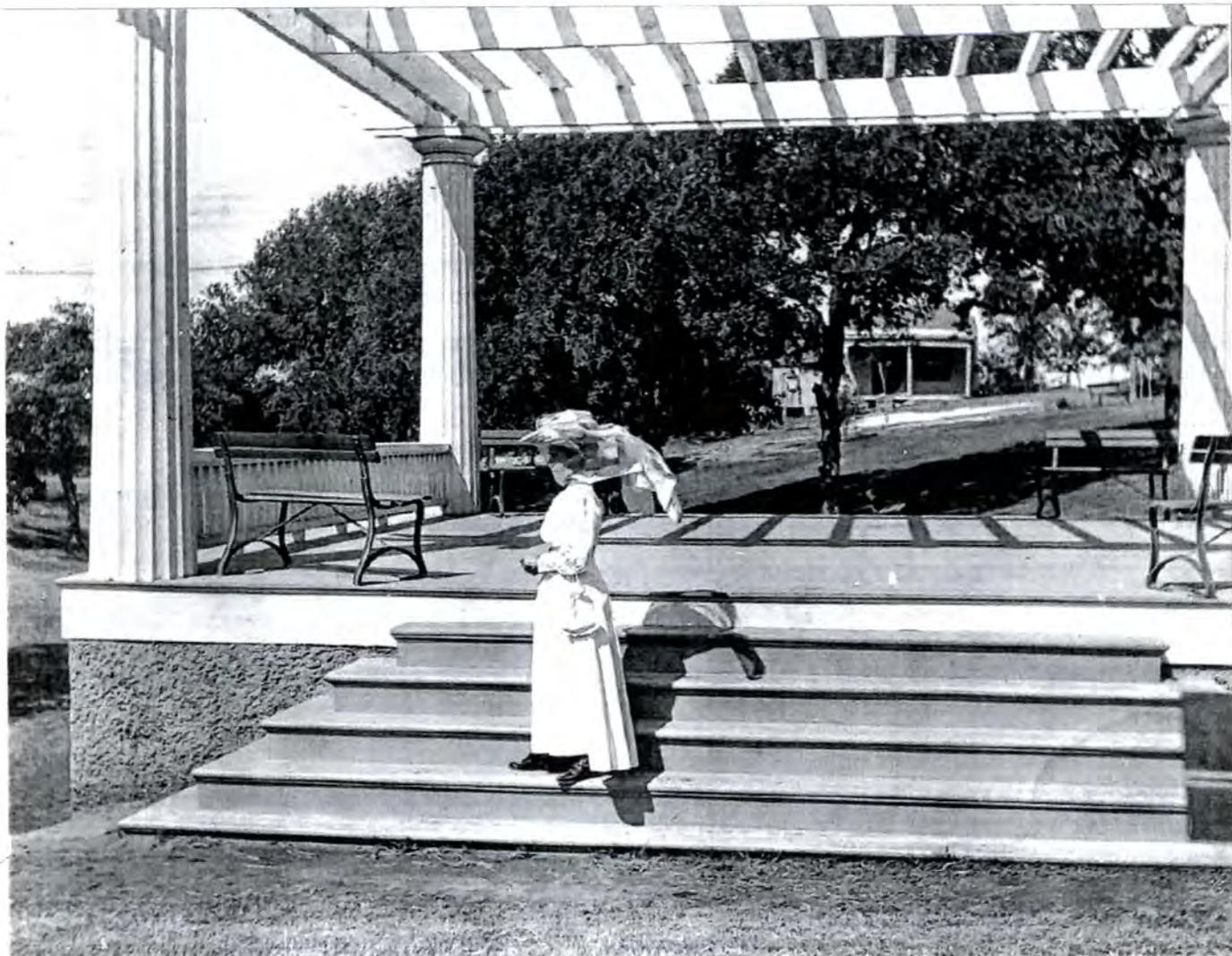
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- August 2012
- June 2011
- February 2011
- November 2010
- September 2010
- April 2011
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- February 2009
- December 2008
- October 2008
- August 2008
- June 2008
- October 2007
- July 2007
- May 2007
- March 2007
- January 2007



LEFT: A historian dates this formal portrait in Wooldridge Park to 1915.

CONTRIBUTED BY

AUSTIN HISTORY

CENTER / PICA 14549

WOOLDRIDGE SQUARE PARK REOPENING EVENTS

7:30-9:30 a.m.: Movability Pop Up Breakfast 10:30 a.m.: Grand Reopening Ribbon-Cutting 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.: Food Trucks and Live Music with Dale Watson

Saturday 7:30-9 a.m.: Tai Chi Ch'uan for all 10 a.m.-noon: Let Your Voice Be Heard and Story Walk 12:30-3:30 p.m.: Giant Chess 1:30-8 p.m.: Imagination Playground 4:30-5:30 p.m.: Texas Juggling Society 5:30-6 p.m.: Austin School for the Performing & Visual Arts 6-8 p.m.: Austin Symphony Big Band

Despite his “familiar hillbilly musical accompaniment ... only a sprinkling of the political faithful turned out.”

and Decay renewal , disuse

After 1960, civic and cultural groups sporadically attempted to revive the park. Musicians played chamber tunes. Actors declaimed Shakespeare. Gamers moved around giant chess pieces.

At times, Wooldridge Square Park reverted to its role as a community-wide gathering spot. In 2001, the Rev. Sterling Lands, pastor of Greater Calvary Baptist Church, spoke to a crowd of 1,000 soon after 9/11.

Yet it appeared the little park was always endangered. In 1966, a large building was proposed for the site, just as a bulky church was raised on the matching former civic square in downtown’s northeast quadrant.

The Wooldridge faithful, however, were not satisfied with the status quo. They sought and obtained historic designations. In 2009, urban planners proposed improved Capitol views, a bus transfer station, underground parking and rigorously scheduled events.

Among those who campaigned tirelessly was historian Peveto.

“I found it interesting to see such a little ‘jewel of a park’ in downtown Austin,” he says. “The fact that it is the cornerstone of an important corridor of significant architectural landmarks was even more intriguing.”

Lawyer Craig, who also campaigns for upgrades to Pease Park, passed by it every day.

“I thought it was embarrassing to have litigants from out of town parade past its desolation,” he says. “James Michener’s ‘Texas’ has a chapter talking about courthouses and courthouse squares being the pride of the community. Every little town would make sure the grass was green on their courthouse lawn, no matter how bad any drought ever got. Simple civic pride.”

True in small towns, but not in Austin?

“This civic pride seemed to have been lost in the midst of all the new uber-slick downtown skyline and glitter,” Craig says. “We had lost our way badly with Wooldridge — symbolic of the problems with all of our parks and park funding in this supposed environmental mecca.”

Alarmed by the decline, Peveto and Craig helped form Friends of Wooldridge Square, headed by Michael McGill.

“Austin now has thousands of downtown residents,” Peveto says. “It is important to rehabilitate all of our public parks to benefit all of our community for appropriate park enjoyment.”

Interest by folks like Peveto, Craig and McGill inevitably clashed with the fact that, each day, volunteers with Mobile Loaves and Fishes fed the homeless in the square. As an open public gathering place near a public library, that seemed a natural function. Yet in practice, the meals reinforced an impression that the place was reserved for the homeless, park supporters argued. They successfully persuaded Mobile Loaves and Fishes to choose another location.

Once the park was revived, the Friends group teamed with the Austin Downtown Alliance to assure that it will be used for movies, exercise groups, chess tournaments and, once again, community music.

“Hopefully, it doesn’t let us rest,” McGill says. “Even after this investment, the park will still have challenges, like a lack of ADA access, a lack of shade on the bandstand or seating areas and similar obstacles. Done right, such enhancements can convey more of the history of this place, while also making it alive in the present and long into the future.”

Contact Michael Barnes at 512-445-3970 or mbarnes@statesman.com.

Publication: Austin American Statesman; Date: Sep 8, 2013; Section: Life & Arts; Page: D1

HISTORY

A gem once more

One of Austin's original public squares, Wooldridge Park bursts back to life

By Michael Barnes MBARNES@STATESMAN.COM

The woman stands upright on the first step of the bandstand. The camera catches her in profile, dressed in summer whites, plunged in full sunlight. A gossamer veil billows from her wide-brimmed hat.

The year, according to one Austin historian, is likely 1915. The place is unquestionably Wooldridge Square Park, one of the city's four original public squares, transformed from an informal dump into a pristine urban retreat in 1909.

For decades after this photograph was taken — the bandstand was added in 1910 — the bowl-shaped park served as an outdoor venue for concerts, a gathering place for children and a launching pad for statewide political campaigns.

Then it began to disintegrate.

"The grass is dead," lawyer and parks advocate Richard Craig wrote in 2008. "The ground is bare. The irrigation system is broken. The sidewalk is cracked and crumbling. The trees are in need of an arborist."

No longer. The city closed the park — named for crusading Mayor A.P. Wooldridge, who pushed for a city parks system — to update the landscaping, mulch the trees, fix the irrigation, reconstruct the bandstand and develop a plan for future activities.

Friday and Saturday, Wooldridge Park on Guadalupe Street reopens with a full slate of concerts, games and other attractions.

The scale is infinitesimal — 1.75 acres out of 100-plus square miles of parks and preserves in the Austin area — yet advocates are ecstatic about the prospect of a new start.

"Austin, in my opinion, has a park system that most cities would be envious to own," says architectural historian and activist Charles Peveto, whose first Austin home was right across the street from Wooldridge. "I now have hopes, as a downtown resident, we can maintain our important parks in downtown, as well as citywide for the future."

'A dismal dump'

Wooldridge Square Park sits in a natural basin above a spring. Once, two tiny streams flowed down to Little Shoal Creek, a waterway that wound along Nueces Street to join Shoal Creek just before it disgorges into the Colorado River.

Because of urban development, Little Shoal Creek now runs almost completely underground, an eternal lure for would-be spelunkers.

Back at the city's birth in 1839, Mayor Edwin Waller had designated this depression a public square for the city's northwest quadrant. As often was the case in frontier settlements, it turned into something of a cesspool.

One newspaper account called it a "dismal dump, a disposed flaw to the scenery."

When it rained, a little lake formed in the basin: 50 feet wide, 300 feet long and 4 feet deep. In 1900, the city installed an 18-inch culvert to drain the lake.

The Statesman predicted that year: "It will remain dry hereafter."

The early 20th century welcomed the determined spread of civic upgrades across the country. Mayor Wooldridge, who had previously organized the city's first public school system, first Colorado River dam and the main north-south railroad, jumped on board.

Among the "City Beautiful" upgrades for Austin: A civic park.

"It will mark the beginning of the establishment of a system of parks in Austin," an article in the June 16, 1909, Statesman foresaw. Trees would be preserved and musicals organized. "A very high class of music is assured for these summer concerts. The park will be the nearest indoor playground for the people of Austin."

(Yes, the reporter used the word "indoor.")

The Page Brothers Architecture firm — predecessor to today's Page Southerland Page — designed the simple, square Classical Revival pergola. A flagpole rose from its roof, and its balustrades were soon draped in bunting for holidays, revivals and political rallies.

Citizens donated the \$550 to build it. Resident Nelson Davis, who had given \$250 for a bandstand, also erected a "handsome drinking fountain." That ornamental delicacy, seen in early photographs, was later replaced by a rough-hewn stone fountain, pictured in a 1938 image from Boys and Girls Week in the park.

Like Brush Square and Republic Square, the other two squares that survived from the 1839 city plan, Wooldridge Square is actually owned by the state of Texas. It is leased to the city. That lease ends in 2016; it's expected to be renewed.

Center of the state

Aside from kids in knee britches and adults in their promenading finest, the park's most prominent users were crowds who gathered for musical concerts or political mass meetings.

During World War I, as many as 10,000 civilians and soldiers, some up from Camp Travis in San Antonio, attended a community sing-along.

"The sing-song was held under the auspices of war camp community service," reports the Aug. 11, 1918, Statesman. "When the director called for all the married ones in the assembly to sing, a ripple of laughter ran over the crowd. The sergeant was not satisfied with this, however, and before the evening was over, he had called in turn upon the unmarried, those wishing to marry, the children under 16, the men in uniform, the men not in uniform and the ladies. The response of those who desired to marry was noticeably lacking in volume."

It must be noted that the folk songs included nostalgic odes to the Old South such as "Old Black Joe" and "My Old Kentucky Home" that, in their original versions, would not be welcome at most civic gatherings today.

So was the park, then, exclusively for Austin's whiter west side? Although the faces recorded in images of Wooldridge Park at the Austin History Center are overwhelming white, African-American children appear alongside white companions in several shots.

A natural speaking place, Wooldridge Park echoed with the stentorian sounds of office-seekers such as President Lyndon B. Johnson and Govs. Allan Shivers, Pat Neff, Dan Moody, Jimmy Allred, Jim Ferguson and W. Lee "Pappy" O'Daniel. Flanked by the art deco Travis County Courthouse and Beaux Arts-style Austin Public Library (now the history center), it became the customary spot to launch a campaign with free food, drink and decorated hand fans.

Once, Ferguson offered \$50 to heckler if he'd agree to fight him onstage. Police restrained the man who strained toward the campaigner. "Turn a-loose of me," he said. "I need that \$50!"

Gov. Ross Sterling chose the park as a site to debate Louisiana Gov. Huey P. Long long-distance from Baton Rouge, aided by wireless and loudspeakers.

Biographer Robert Caro sets a scene from LBJ's 1948 senatorial race there: The future president suffered from kidney stones and was in extreme pain. Indefatigably, he leaped from a car, parted the crowd, bound onto the bandstand, threw his Stetson into the crowd and gave a barn-burning speech covered live by 20 radio stations statewide.

"Before TV after World War II, the kickoff speech of every statewide politician was (at) this park," Haver Currie wrote in a personal note, housed at the history center, in November 1985. You can "trace out the appearance on this stand of would-be governors and U.S. senators and their friends."

Air conditioning, television and a more sophisticated electorate put a stop to that. As late as 1960, the Texas Public Employee magazine reported, the folksy former governor and U.S. Sen. O'Daniel made "one last attempt to resurrect a dying tradition" by holding a rally at Wooldridge Square Park.



Children line up to drink at a newer water fountain during Boys & Girls Week in 1938.

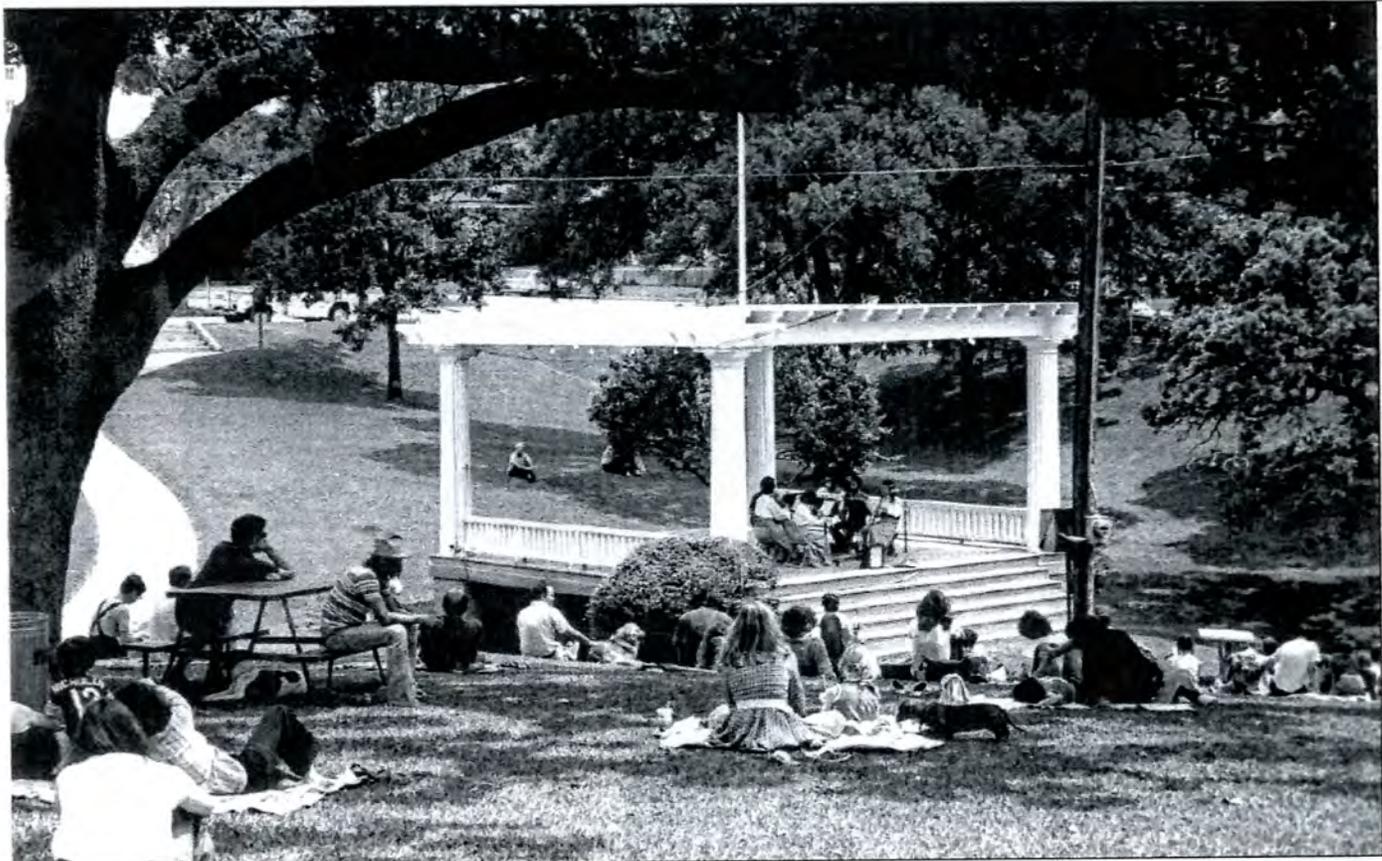
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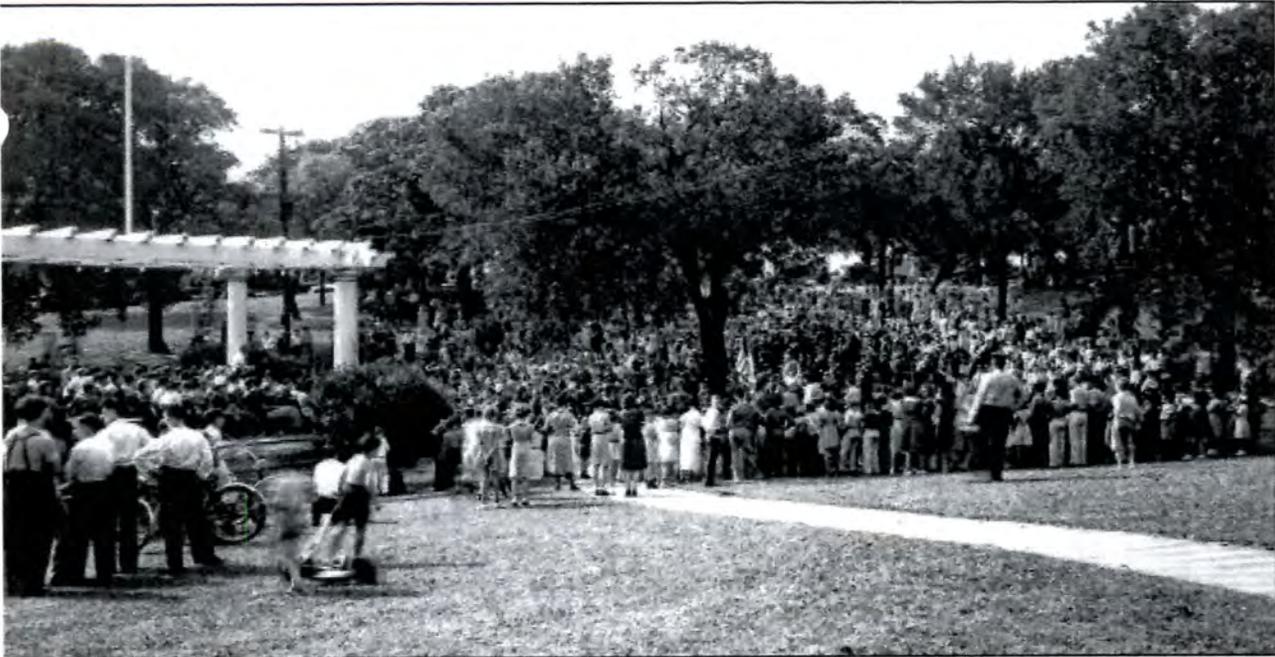
Children with pets visit Wooldridge Park, 900 Guadalupe St., during the 1930s.



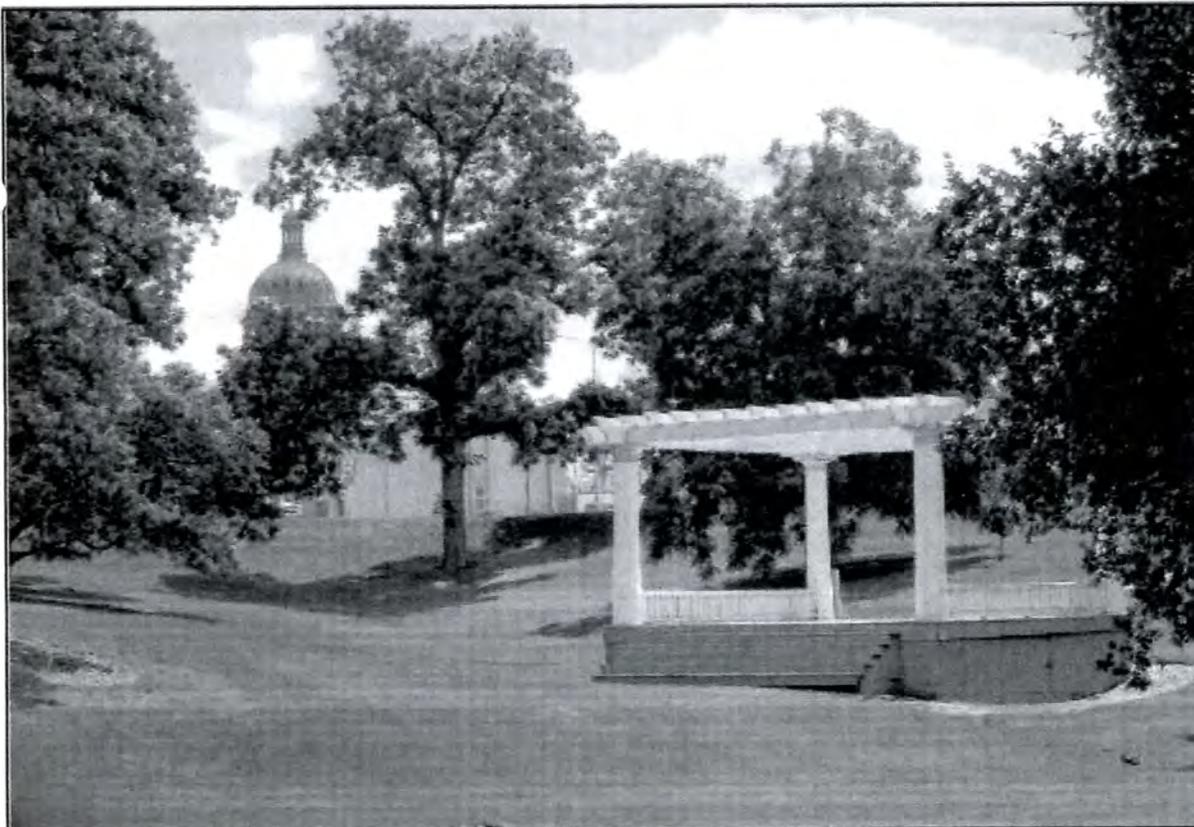
Woolldridge Park was draped in snow on Jan. 23, 1940. PICA 00960



A concert by Austin Chamber Players at the "bandstand" in Woolldridge Park. Community music has been a frequent activity at the park since 1910. 10670



Wooldridge Park was the site for many large gatherings, political and otherwise, such as this one, dated May 1, 1938.
PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED BY AUSTIN HISTORY CENTER / PICA 20338



BELOW: Wooldridge Park today after a landscaping renovation.

CONTRIBUTED

Wooldridge Square Park reopens with fun events on Sept. 13 and 14

By Forrest Preece

Over the past year, Wooldridge Square Park, a downtown park that dates back to Edwin Waller's original 1839 plan for the city of Austin, has undergone a transformation to restore its beauty.

On Friday, Sept. 13 and Saturday, Sept. 14, festivities are planned for the reopening of the historic square, located between Guadalupe and San Antonio Streets and West 9th and West 10th Streets.

After being closed during the past year for an overhaul by the Austin Parks and Recreation Department including a new irrigation system, fresh lawn sodding, and plantings of additional trees, the park's shady grove of pecans and oaks will again become a respite in Austin's busy downtown.

According to Ann Graham who was contracted by the Downtown Austin Alliance to help plan the reopening programs, "We have an Action Team planning a fun and welcoming reopening two-day-long celebration for Friday, Sept. 13 and Saturday, Sept. 14, followed by a fall season of programs ideas to put Wooldridge back in the hearts and souls of the greater Austin community."

Activities start Friday, Sept. 13 with a PopUp Breakfast from 7:30-9:30 a.m. hosted by Movability Austin and sponsored by Starbucks, promoting diverse transportation options for commuters.

It will be followed by a reopening celebration at 10:30 a.m. with city and state dignitaries expressing thanks and sharing stories of Wooldridge Square's rich civic history.

They will be joined by members of Austin Shake-



This logo for the Friends of Wooldridge Square was created by Will Hornaday of Hornaday Design.

dom.

Dale Watson, one of Austin's favorite guitarists and songwriters, will have the crowd celebrating with his band from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

On Saturday, Sept. 14, the public is invited to join teachers from five Austin area Tai Chi Chuan schools as they lead an open class for all levels from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.

From 10 a.m.-noon Austin's school children will hone their speaking skills around issues that are important to them. Creative Action, a leader in arts and education in Central Texas, partnering with the literary journal Foxing Quarterly and the Austin Public Library, will feature young people telling how "Austin can be a better place for all if we..."

Then, Wooldridge Square's Giant Chess Game reopens from 12:30-3:30 p.m. on the bandstand. It was relocated to Brush Square during the Wooldridge restoration.

Square. The bandstand will go through complete restoration under a future Master Plan of Wooldridge Square. The Austin Parks Foundation generously provided funding for the bandstand restoration.

"It is so exciting to see a new irrigation system, new sod, eleven new trees and work on the historic bandstand. Wooldridge Square is more beautiful than it has been in decades. We also have a wonderful new logo for FOWS, explained on page 3 (see WOOLDRIDGE)



This trio is happy with the progress of work at Wooldridge Park. They have all had key roles in the effort and recently posed on the historic bandstand that is being refurbished. Left to right: Tere O'Connell, Vice O'Connell Watson Architects; James Holm, James Holm Construction; and Kim McKnight, Austin Parks and Recreation Dept. Photo credit: Mason Moore.



Architectural historian Charles Peveto shows the pad in Wooldridge Square for Bettle Naylor's Memorial Band, given in her memory by Friends of the Westgate.

Graham said that the annual Giant Chess Tournament will be back on the bandstand on Nov. 9.

There will be a break during the heat of the afternoon and then Texas Juggling Society will hold demonstrations and "how-to" sessions from 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Then at 5:30 p.m. young talent from the Austin School of Performing and Visual Arts will deliver a 30-minute performance preceding the grand finale of the Celebration, the Austin Symphony Big Band concert from 6-8 p.m., sponsored by American Bank.

Graham says, "Austinites are invited to bring a picnic and enjoy the return of the Big Band, playing tunes by Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Woody Herman, George Gershwin and more." She added that glass, styrofoam, and smoking are not permitted in the park.

The Symphony Big Band will return for concerts on Oct. 26 and Nov. 16.

Check out <http://www.downtownaustin.com/daa/wooldridge-square> for more details.

Charles Peveto, architectural historian and a member of the Friends of Wooldridge Square (FOWS) said, "The 1909 Page Brothers-designed bandstand is currently undergoing 'heavy maintenance' overseen by preservation architect Tere O'Connell and coordinated by Kim McKnight (PAR) and Michael McGill, chair of Friends of Wooldridge

ing. I had to keep telling myself that this person's sin was no different than the person who has addictions to other

steps, thoughts, and conversations with that person after the truth is revealed and wonder how we could have been

own sins to confess. None of us will escape this lifetime without disappointing someone. While I try to pray for

metime, Lord. We know we cannot get through it without your guidance.

"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows."

GALATIANS 6:7 (NIV)

WOOLDRIDGE continued from front



Some participants in the restoration of Wooldridge Park. Top row, left to right: Tere O'Connell, Volz O'Connell Hutson Architects; Mitchell McGovern, Downtown Austin Neighborhood Association; Ann Graham, Community Engagement Consultant; Claire Witter-Hempel, Design Workshop. Bottom row, left to right: Mike Miller, Austin History Center; Rory Burbeck, SXSW; Julie Weaver, Downtown Austin Alliance; Melissa Barry, Downtown Austin Alliance; Michael McGill, Friends of Wooldridge Square; Steve Moore, Design Workshop

designed by Will Hornaday of Hornaday Design."

Fundraising is still continuing for the restoration of the historic bandstand and the Friends of Wooldridge Square are gathering donations through the Austin Parks Foundation.

Preservation Austin recently worked with local and statewide preservation, parks and downtown advocates in successful support of legislation that will renew the land grants of the three remaining downtown squares, Wooldridge, Brush and Republic, for the next 99 years.

See updates at www.facebook.com/wooldridge-squarepark or to find out more about fundraising or programming efforts of the Friends of Wooldridge Square, contact Michael McGill at mpm167@gmail.com.

Schedule of events for Re-Opening of Wooldridge Square

For complete details visit: <http://www.downtownaustin.com/daa/wooldridge-square>

Friday, September 13

7:30-9:30 a.m. Movability Breakfast, sponsored by Starbucks
10:30 a.m. Speak Your Piece - Re-opening Celebration
11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Dale Watson joined by his band on the bandstand.

Saturday, September 14

7:30-9:00 a.m. Tai Chi Chu'an - all levels welcome
10:00 a.m. - Noon Creative Action, Foxing Quarterly, Austin Public Library
"Let Your Voice Be Heard" Austin children speak about issues that are important to them

12:30-3:30 p.m. The Return of Wooldridge Square's Giant Chess Game

1:30-8:00 p.m. Imagination Playground
4:30-5:30 p.m. Texas Juggling Society
5:30-6:00 p.m. Students from Austin School of Performing and Visual Arts in concert
6:00-8:00 p.m. Austin Symphony Big Band, sponsored by American Bank

Food vendors will be present during the concert. Glass, styrofoam, and smoking are not permitted in the park.

tered space for after-care students waiting to be picked up,



Kiran Joyce sits on the structure he built on the St. Francis athletic field.

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Wooldridge Square Park reopens

By Forrest Preece

Several years of hard effort, cajoling, planning, digging, and planting all came to fruition with the grand reopening of Wooldridge Square Park in downtown Austin Friday, Sept. 13 and Saturday, Sept. 14.

On Friday, noted local actors Robert Faires, Jill Blackwood, and Robert Stevens started things with a brilliantly crafted invocation combining lines from several Shakespeare plays to honor the Capital City.

Then a group of dignitaries including state Sen. Kirk Watson, Rep. Elliott Naishtat, Mayor Pro Tem Sheryl Cole and City Council Member Chris Riley gave thanks to all those who were involved.

Others who talked included Charlie Betts of the Downtown Austin Alliance, Marty Stump from the Parks and Recreation Dept., and Colin Wallis, executive director of the Austin Parks Foundation.

Then they cut a red ribbon to symbolize the reopening of this jewel of a park that is bounded by W. Ninth, W. Tenth, Guadalupe and San

Antonio Streets.

The opening ceremonies were followed by a Dale Watson concert at lunchtime.

On Saturday a slate of family-friendly activities culminated in a free concert by the Austin Symphony Big Band.

One of the four squares/greenspaces designated by Edwin Waller when he laid out Austin's original plan, Wooldridge had fallen into a state of brown-grassed deterioration after years of overuse and neglect.

Architectural historian Charles Peveto, who has been a key member of Friends of Wooldridge Square, the group of private citizens that spearheaded the park's renewal, mentioned a number of improvements that had been made.

"Among other things, there has been an installation of a full-coverage watering system with automated controls; planting of traffic/drought tolerant Tifway 419 turfgrass; plus reinvigoration of existing trees and the planting of 11 more, complete with fertilization and mulch," he said.

Five new classically-styled



Ribbon cutting to reopen Austin's historic Wooldridge Square Park. Left to right, Sen. Kirk Watson; Marty Stump, PARD; Mayor Pro-Tem Sheryl Cole; Collin Wallace, Austin Parks Foundation; City Council Member Chris Riley; Rep. Elliott Naishtat; and Charlie Betts, Downtown Austin Alliance, help do the honors.

lighting fixtures are installed along the interior sidewalk and near the historic bandstand, which has been renovated.

The unattractive overhead electric lines have been buried in conduits and now offer added capacity, as well.

Michael McGill, president of Friends of Wooldridge Square, who has spent many hours in this effort, pointed out that the memorial bench-

es have been replaced and that there are now trash cans that meet acceptable new fixture standards, along with a vendor pad area for food trucks in the northwest corner.

McGill said, "The way this beautiful park looks now is proof that public and private efforts can combine for a wonderful result."

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September 19, 2013

West Austin News

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Wooldridge Square Comes to Life

Submitted by Rob Hodges on Wed, 09/11/2013 - 4:11pm

Categories: [Community Development](#)

By Kim McKnight, Cultural Resource Specialist, Austin Parks and Recreation Department



1920s photo of Wooldridge Square and its 1910 bandstand, courtesy of the Austin History Center.

and platted as the capital of the Republic of Texas (1836–1845). In 1909, Austin Mayor A.P. Wooldridge led a beautification effort to formally dedicate Wooldridge Square as a park. The 1.75-acre park sits directly south of the Travis County Courthouse and is characterized by its unusual bowl-shaped topography resulting in a natural amphitheater with generous slopes of green grass. The 1910 Classical Revival bandstand, designed by prominent Texas architect Charles Page, is the centerpiece of the park. Wooldridge Square was listed in the [National Register of Historic Places](#) in 1979 and designated as a [State Antiquities Landmark](#) (SAL) in 1981. SAL designation gives the Texas Historical Commission (THC) permitting authority over changes made to the park and ensures the historic integrity of the site is preserved. The park is also a City of Austin Historic Landmark.

After the especially unforgiving drought, Wooldridge Park was ready for tender loving care. The park has been closed since June 2012 to allow the Austin Parks and Recreation Department to complete major site improvements, including electrical upgrades, a new irrigation system, the installation of drought-tolerant grass, and the planting of new trees. A further collaboration with Friends of Wooldridge Square and the Austin Parks Foundation resulted in the installation of new benches and trash receptacles, new light fixtures, and a new space for a food vendor and café tables. The historic bandstand also received an extensive maintenance upgrade with new decking, paint, and lighting.

One of Austin's original historic downtown squares will come to life this weekend after a much-deserved year of restoration and repair. The celebration for the reopening of [Wooldridge Square](#) kicks off early Friday morning with a ribbon-cutting celebration. Two days of fun and family-friendly activities follow, ending with a Saturday night concert featuring the Austin Symphony Big Band.

Wooldridge Square dates to the Waller Plan of 1839, when the City of Austin was surveyed



Photo credit: Austin History Center.

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Photo credit: Austin History Center.

“Wooldridge Park, and the bandstand specifically, is a pure and fairly pristine vignette of an original Austin park,” said Tere O’Connell, AIA, principal with VOH Architects, a firm that donated its time and expertise to the bandstand maintenance project. “The bandstand gives us a clear and unmistakable physical reference point that helps tell the history of public celebration, recreation, and civic involvement in Austin.”

Park advocates, downtown residents, and the business community hope the



Photo credit: Austin History Center.

recent investments in Wooldridge Square will enable the park to once again become the center of civic life in Austin. The park has a long history of hosting performance and political activities. In 1911, Governor Colquitt began the tradition of launching campaigns from the square, followed by Govs. Allan Shivers, Pat Neff, Dan Moody, Jimmy Allred, Jim Ferguson, and W. Lee “Pappy” O’Daniel. Lyndon Baines Johnson famously announced his bid for the U.S. Senate in 1948 at Wooldridge Square.

Despite the excitement about the park’s reopening, there is still work to be done. Future plans for Wooldridge Square include the development of a long-term master plan to guide the development of programming at the park, as well as more extensive physical improvements to address access and shade. As a stakeholder in this planning process, the THC will work to ensure the historic character of the park is showcased while allowing for compatible improvements.



Photo credit: Austin History Center.

In the meantime, Austinites will enjoy a weekend of celebration. For more information about the Wooldridge Square Grand Reopening, visit the [Downtown Austin Alliance website](#). Learn how to support Wooldridge by visiting the [Friends of Wooldridge Square Facebook page](#).

Guest blogger Kim McKnight is the THC’s former Texas Main Street Program Coordinator and now a historic preservation partner with the Austin Parks and Recreation Department.

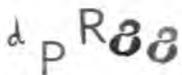
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Author/boxing legend to speak at Walker Co. Historical Commission meeting in Huntsville on Mon. [bit.ly/1g2UTEh](#)

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Guest blogger Kim McKnight shares history/current info about Austin’s Wooldridge Square Park: [bit.ly/1ekd4tP](#)

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AUTUMN ARTS GUIDE



What's coming soon in art, music, dance, theater



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SPORTS, C1

Longhorns: Starting slowly is quickly getting old

YOUR WEATHER, B8



Today
Mostly sunny. Slight chance of rain. **100/74**

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Austin American-Statesman

Friday, September 13, 2013

Breaking news at statesman.com

GOVERNMENT SPENDING DOWNTOWN AUSTIN

Wooldridge Park reopening with several renovations

By Andrea Ball
aball@statesman.com

When Austinites gather to celebrate the reopening of Wooldridge Square Park on Friday, they'll be greeted by a space designed to lure them back.

Thick, green grass carpets the sloping land. Freshly planted and mulched trees are scattered about. The century-old bandstand is coated in brilliant white paint. New benches invite visitors to relax.

Now the question is how to

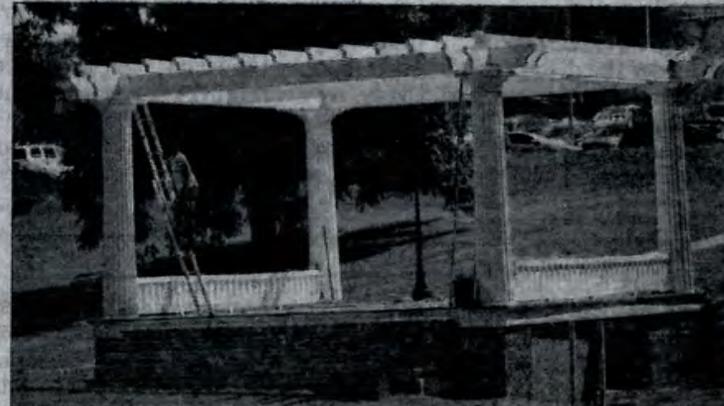
my STATESMAN.COM

Learn about the history of Wooldridge Park in Michael Barnes' feature on the downtown landmark. Read it with this story online at MyStatesman.com.

keep it that way.

For years, this 1.75-acre park nestled between the city library and courthouses on Guadalupe Street has been a

Park continued on **A4**



A worker puts finishing repairs on the century-old bandstand Thursday at Wooldridge Square Park. RICARDO B. BRAZZIELL / AMERICAN-STATESMAN

Homeless services reach out

Park

Continued from A1

source of tension in the community because of its primary visitors: homeless people. During the day, they stretched out on the grass or sat on the bandstand. In the evenings, they flocked to greet meal trucks bringing them food.

That wasn't the only problem, said Michael McGill, founder of Friends of Wooldridge Square Park. The ground was bare. The irrigation system was broken. Trees were dying.

City and community leaders are determined to keep that from happening again. The key to that goal isn't to banish the homeless or simply plant new grass, they say. The

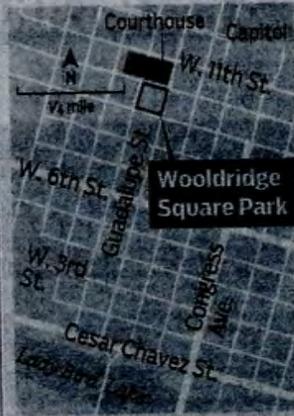
key is to create a park so vibrant, beautiful and fun that everyone wants to go there, McGill said.

"I hope people come out, eat lunch there and make it their own park," he said.

The \$340,000 renovation of Wooldridge Square Park started about a year ago. The space was cordoned off by a chain-link fence as workers began rehabbing it. City health officials and homeless services providers reached out to people there, telling them the square was closing and directing them to community programs.

Meanwhile, Mobile Loaves and Fishes — a nonprofit whose food trucks deliver meals to the homeless — decided to cease making daily stops at the park. It wasn't because of public pressure to do so, but because the food trucks essentially had become traveling soup kitchens for large groups, said founder Alan Graham.

Making the park pret-



LINDA SCOTT / STAFF

tier won't deter the homeless, he said. Its proximity to the library and court buildings gives people easy access to air conditioning, bathrooms, computers and other things.

"My guess is that the people who love to hang out at the library are going to keep going to that park," he said.

City officials say they plan to make the rules clear with signs outlining banned activities, such as no open flames, no glass containers and no camping, said Marty

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY

7:30 - 9:30 a.m.: Movability Pop Up Breakfast sponsored by Starbucks

7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.: Wooldridge Square photographs

10:30 a.m.: Grand reopening ribbon cutting

11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.: Food trucks and live music with Dale Watson

SATURDAY

7:30 - 9 a.m.: Tai chi ch'uan for all

7:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.: Wooldridge Square photographs

10 a.m. - noon: Let Your Voice Be Heard!

10 a.m. - noon: Story walk

12:30 - 3:30 p.m.: Giant chess

1:30 - 8 p.m.: Imagination Playground

4:30 - 5:30 p.m.: Texas Juggling Society

5:30 - 6 p.m.: Austin School for the Performing & Visual Arts

6 - 8 p.m.: Austin Symphony Big Band sponsored by American Bank

Stump, project management supervisor for the city of Austin. Such signs are posted at other parks across the city.

"The bottom line is that if they are not breaking a park rule or violating the law, they are free to be there," he said.

The worries about the homeless at Wooldridge ultimately come down to the fundamental issue of the city's need for more affordable homes, said Jo Kathryn Quinn, executive director of

the nonprofit Caritas. In November, Austinites will decide whether to approve a \$65 million bond for more low-income housing.

"While concerns may arise about the homeless population misusing this new space, it is critical to remember that we need high-level solutions to ending homelessness that go beyond simply moving people away from Wooldridge Park," she said.

Making the square a

success isn't about driving the homeless out but bringing new people in, said Charlie Betts, executive director of the Downtown Austin Alliance. Community leaders are lining up appearances by the Austin Symphony Big Band and lunchtime concerts by other musical acts. They want to find a permanent food vendor, host chess tournaments and screen movies for the public.

Over the past year, the park has received electrical upgrades, a new irrigation system, drought-tolerant turf grass, 11 new tree plantings and mulch for all existing trees. A new mobile vendor pad with electric connections and gravel surface was installed in the park's northwest corner. Lights, benches and trash receptacles were also added to the park.

McGill hopes these improvements will make visitors fall in love with their park again.

"The best thing you can do to help the park is to use it," McGill said.

Contact Andrea Ball at 512-912-2506.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2013 | B3

DOWNTOWN AUSTIN



Wooldridge Square Park reopens

Aline Guillot enjoys the scene at the reopening of Wooldridge Square Park on Friday. She said she has been visiting the park for years. The 1.75-acre park was closed for about a year during a \$340,000 renovation that included fixing up the century-old bandstand, seen behind Guillot. Dozens attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony that included a performance by Dale Watson and the Lone Stars on the bandstand. Watch video of the ribbon-cutting festivities at statesman.com/go/multimedia. JAY JANNER / AMERICAN-STATESMAN

WESTGATE COMMUNIQUE

VOLUME 8: ISSUE 2 OCTOBER 2013

WOOLDRIDGE REOPENS

After years of planning and a year of landscaping, Wooldridge Square Park reopened on Sept. 13 with two days of festivities, speeches by dignitaries, chess games, food vendors, juggling, and an Austin Symphony Big Band concert. In addition the Friends of Wooldridge Square received a very generous \$40,000 grant from the Austin Parks Foundation to do "Heavy Maintenance" to the important 1910 Bandstand designed by the Page Brothers (firm still operates today as Page Southerland Page). The work on the bandstand is ongoing and is being overseen by preservation architect Tere O'Connell and coordinated by Kim McKnight (PARD) and Michael McGill, chair of Friends of Wooldridge.

The park looks beautiful and is once again ringing with the sounds of Austinites. Congratulations to the Friends of Wooldridge for all the hard work and to Westgate members, Charles Peveto and J. P. Grumbles. Be sure to check out Bettie Naylor's bench, donated by her Westgate friends. If you missed the celebration, the Symphony Big Band will return for concerts on Oct 26 and Nov 16.

DIRECTORS

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- *Ann Dolce, Vice President*
- *Lee Gaddis*
- *Charles Peveto, Secretary*

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- *Gordon Johnson, President*
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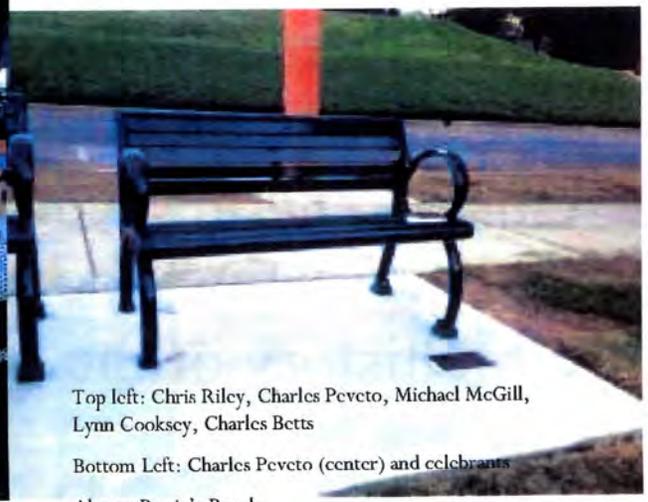
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- *Finance Committee, Brock Kyle*
- *Personnel, Sandy Monzingo*
- *Policy Committee, Ann Dolce*
- *Architectural Committee, Charles Peveto*
- *Downtown Committee, J. P. Grumbles*



Top left: Chris Riley, Charles Peveto, Michael McGill, Lynn Cooksey, Charles Betts

Bottom Left: Charles Peveto (center) and celebrants



Above: Bettie's Bench

Welcome to Wooldridge Square

Join us for a presentation about Wooldridge Square and its place in Austin's park system by **Kim McKnight**, MSHP, Project Coordinator & Cultural Resource Specialist with Planning and Design in the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation Department. Joining Kim will be **Ann Graham** who is serving as a Community Consultant with the Downtown Austin Alliance to help develop a dynamic season of programming at Wooldridge to welcome the community back to this treasured Square. Also joining us will be **Tere O'Connell**, architect with Volz O'Connell Hutson and immediate past president of Preservation Austin, who will talk about the architectural history of the bandstand and Square.



Thurs, Sept 19; 7pm; HBH



JANA BIRCHUM

Jessica Amaya, 12, (r) and Cassandra Amaya, 8, play Big Chess on the historic bandstand at Wooldridge Square on Sept. 14 during the park's reopening festivities. The city closed the park a year ago for grounds improvement work.



State, city and community leaders gather at the park's reopening ceremony Sept. 13.

Wooldridge Square Park reopens to the public

DOWNTOWN After being closed more than a year, Wooldridge Square Park reopened to the public Sept. 13 with a new irrigation system, trees and turf grass.

WSP, 900 Guadalupe St., had been closed since May 2012 for the restoration project. The \$300,000 project was covered by parkland dedication fees.

"This is a park that is important, but it has had a history of neglect," Mayor Pro Tem Sheryl Cole said. "Now we are going to change that tide, and we do that today by the community dedication to its reopening."

WSP is Austin's oldest park and was part of the original plan of the city created in 1839. Restoring the park to a good condition was important given its history, Councilman Chris Riley said.

"To bring it back to the condition that we expect of it is a real statement about what we expect of our parks in general," he said.

At the opening ceremony, Charlie Betts, Downtown Austin Alliance executive director, said WSP looked better than it did when he attended politicians' stump speeches at the park as a child. The DAA will provide programming for the park, he said.

"We are so appreciative of the city's magnificent efforts to make this a magnificent park," he said.

WOOLDRIDGE PARK



Music lover

Wooldridge Park was the perfect setting on Sunday for Dave Rhodell to practice his new hobby, playing the guitar. "When I retired, I wanted to learn to play a musical instrument. It was Christmastime, and there was a sale on guitars," he recalled. "I just love it. I'm a terrible singer, but I love it," said Rhodell, who formerly worked as a computer programmer.

RALPH BARRERA / AMERICAN-STATESMAN

THE AUSTIN CHRONICLE

<http://www.austinchronicle.com/blogs/arts/2013-10-22/art-in-the-park-american-dream/>

Art in the Park: 'American Dream'

BY ROBERT FAIRES, OCTOBER 22, 2013, 2:00PM, ALL OVER CREATION

You've no doubt heard **Martin Luther King Jr.**'s "I Have a Dream" speech. Maybe you've read the words as well. But have you ever spoken them yourself – allowed those righteous calls for justice to rumble in your chest and ring forth from your mouth? If not, you should, and you can today at Wooldridge Square, courtesy of **The Contemporary Austin**.

Until 4pm this afternoon, **Andrea Mellard**, the museum's director of public programs and community engagement, and a team from the institution, will be set up on the newly repainted gazebo of the recently refurbished park with **Kurt Mueller's** *American Dream*, an interactive artwork that includes a transcript of the speech projected on a monitor screen, karaoke-style; the recorded responses of the crowd from its original delivery during the March on Washington a half-century ago; and a microphone connected to a speaker. The idea is for the public to have the opportunity to deliver that historic message, to let it resonate in their own bodies, and feel some of the power – and responsibility – that live in them.

It might sound like a set-up for failure to have Jane and John Q. Public step into the shoes – or at least utterances – of a mighty orator such as Dr. King. But as was proven when the work was exhibited in the museum's 2008 edition of "New Art in Austin" (when it was still the **Austin Museum of Art**), the work is actually a stirring example of civic participation. Hearing the speech through the voices of women and men, of people with skins of different shades, of those who can recall the speech when it was given and those who belong to the generations since, reaffirms Dr. King's call to all of society to shake off injustice and embrace equality. No one expects to hear those immortal phrases peel the way they did when Dr. King delivered them. They want to hear how it sounds coming from the people to whom Dr. King was speaking, the people charged with bringing that dream to reality.

It's a powerful thing. I arrived at Wooldridge shortly after the Contemporary team set up the installation at 10am, and a young man was working his way through the speech. He must have been born a good 25 years after the March on Washington, a world away from the dangers and battles of the Civil Rights Movement. He was white, and his anti-authority T-shirt and punkish haircut suggested that he wasn't the likeliest candidate for this particular experiment in social discourse. But he took it very seriously, and his commitment to honoring every word gave me pause. It made the words still vital, still meaningful. "They're still revolutionary," insisted Mellard when he was done, and I had to agree. And when I was asked to step up and do the same, I could hardly refuse.

They're big ideas to climb inside of – or to let climb inside you. To admire them from a distance, as we do when we watch videos of Dr. King deliver the speech, is one thing, but you really feel their size, the hugeness of the vision this man had for an America that lived up to all of its founding ideals, when you take his words into yourself and push them back out in your own voice. You have to work to keep pace with Dr. King's original tempo, and sometimes you're just fighting to get every word out, but those big ideas rattle and thrum in your chest and up your throat, and the experience will affect you. As Mellard has noted, it is "a little intimidating" and yet "powerfully rewarding." If you can get to Guadalupe and Ninth by 4, do so. For more information, visit www.thecontemporaryaustin.org/2013/art-installation-american-dream.

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Prop. 6: Strange Bedfellows on Both Sides

For decades, Texans have bemoaned leaking pipes across the state and a lack of coherent thinking about water planning. With Proposition 6 – a constitutional amendment and a plan to put billions into the state's crumbling and drought-wracked infrastructure over the next half century – November voters have a chance to put their money where their mouths are. **Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter** Water Resources Coordinator **Jennifer Walker** said, "We don't think that Prop. 6 is a solution to all our water supply challenges in this state, but we think that it's a good step toward addressing some of the issues."

The proposal is based on the 2012 **State Water Plan**, authored by the **Texas Water Development Board**. It lists \$53 billion worth of projects the state needs over the next 50 years, with local water authorities estimating the state will need to cover half of that. So during the last legislative session, lawmakers passed House Bill 4, which places Prop. 6 on the November ballot. If approved by voters, it will establish the **State Water Implementation Fund** for Texas, or SWIFT, and place \$2 billion in its coffers, to be loaned out to regional authorities for projects approved under the water plan. According to former **Texas Environmental Quality Commission** Water Utilities Division Director **Steve Walden**, having a centralized fund will cut loan costs, especially for smaller entities. He argued it will also encourage more large scale public-private partnerships and statewide thinking, rather than local agencies paying premium prices to build infrastructure.

that Prop. 6 is a very Austin measure scaled statewide – something that's good for the economy while preserving the environment.

Rep. **Jason Isaac**, R-Dripping Springs, argued there was historical and environmental precedent for investment. "Sixty years ago, the state legislature responded to the worst drought on record by passing legislation that led to the building of many of the reservoirs you see today around the state. Now 60-some odd years later, we have the worst drought of record, and the Legislature has led by passing what is now on the constitutional ballot."

Like the Democrat/Republican confluence of supporters, Metzger admits the pro-Prop. 6 campaign has led to some strange bedfellows. **Environment Texas** is on the same side as **BP**, **Shell Oil**, and multiple chambers of commerce. Their advocacy comes in no small part from business self-interest, with corporations already expressing concern about how they can keep going with no water. While it's an odd experience, Metzger concedes that having companies on board undoubtedly helps. "It's not like Katrina, where you had poor-people advocates asking for the money. Here we have some of the most powerful people in the state twisting arms to make this happen." Not that he thinks that this is necessarily the beginning of a new era in the middle

panic button." Calling the water plan's projects "a wish list of big-ticket items that will take water from rural areas to the cities," Bunch wrote them off as nothing but a gimme for developers. The plan, he said, is "a mirage ... most of the money is to increase supply from an already overstretched source."

Bunch was also critical of the plan for only setting targets, not firm numbers, for conservation and recycling projects. However, Metzger argued that those soft targets were necessary. "The 2012 state water



Sen. Kirk Watson, speaking, is joined by GOP Rep. Jason Isaac (c) and former Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce Chair Clarke Heidrick (l) at a Prop. 6 press conference Monday, the first day of early voting.

RICHARD WHITTAKER





F. Selected pages from the Parks and Open Space Master Plan



Draft

DOWNTOWN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

Downtown Austin Plan



Prepared for the City of Austin by ROMA Austin and HR&A Advisors

Revised January 19, 2010

F. What are the guiding principles to achieving great public spaces?

Parks and public open spaces require careful planning, programming and design. It is not enough to provide real estate for open space: a successful public space must be accompanied by the highest levels of thoughtful and purposeful design and the institutional and financing structures to sustain it through time. The following ten principles provide a basis for the design and implementation of great public parks and open spaces.

- 1. Meaning and Significance:** Build on the positive existing patterns of use within and around the open space, and celebrate the distinct history, culture and identity of the place.
- 2. Attractions and Destinations:** Create multiple activities and features that can attract a diversity of people and establish a constituency of “stewards”.
- 3. Flexibility and Adaptability:** Allow the space to respond to daily, weekly and seasonal fluctuations over time.
- 4. Positive Edges/“Frame”:** Promote a form and pattern of development at the edges of the public space that provide positive activity and spatial definition.
- 5. Connections:** Design streets and pathways as an extension of the public space itself.
- 6. Design Excellence:** Procure the highest levels of design professionalism capable of creating successful, world-class public spaces.
- 7. Public Art and Artful Design:** Introduce public art that raises community consciousness and reinforces an authentic sense of place.
- 8. Green Design:** Promote the highest levels of sustainable design and construction.
- 9. Strong Management:** Establish appropriate governance that can coordinate successful programming, maintenance and security.
- 10. Sustainable Financing:** Secure adequate levels of funding to assure ongoing high quality maintenance and operations of the open space.

2. Wooldridge Square

Location and History: Wooldridge Square is located in the northwest quadrant of the original city plan, southwest of the Capitol Square site. It is bounded by Tenth Street on the north (formerly Mulberry Street), Guadalupe Street on the east, Ninth Street on the south (formerly Ash Street) and San Antonio Street on the west. In the Waller Plan, the Square was planned to be flanked with churches on its south and was destined to serve as the focal point of Austin’s first residential neighborhood. However, for 70 years, the dedicated public square did not become a park, and in the early 20th century, it was used as a dump, perhaps because of its depressed physical form.

In 1909, Austin’s Mayor Wooldridge initiated and completed the effort to transform the space into a true park and civic space, including a series of ponds created by damming the existing brook running through the park. In the following year, a pergola-covered bandstand was dedicated, and the Statesman newspaper remarked on the park’s “suitability for public speaking” as well its capacity to “comfortably seat between 2,000 and 3,000 people”, noting that “in all parts of the park the slightest word or faintest note of music could be heard”.¹¹ Upon its completion, Friday evening concerts were held at the bandstand for over 20 years, and the park became the preferred forum for political speeches and rallies. In the 1928 City Plan, Wooldridge Park was described as a “neighborhood park” and was considered attractive and well-kept, a beauty spot and breathing place”. In 1971, a Texas Historical Marker was dedicated at the Park.

Existing Conditions and Constraints: The most remarkable physical characteristic of Wooldridge Square is its depressed topography, forming a steep bowl and an amphitheater-like shape. Mature trees in clusters throughout most of the park create a pleasant environment, although the southwest quadrant, which is the deepest part of the bowl, is fairly barren with eroded slopes where runoff is funneled to a large area drain. Today, the historic wooden bandstand/pavilion still stands near the center of the depressed area of the park. It has been repaired and somewhat altered through the years, but still maintains its architectural

integrity. A lockable storage area has been built underneath the bandstand. A random mix of furnishings are scattered throughout the park: picnic tables, benches, a few trash bins. The park’s main users are transient, who congregate to meet the Mobile Loaves and Fishes van, which serves lunch and dinner from San Antonio Street every day.

Wooldridge Square has a history of being used as a gathering space, like the dedication of the bandstand in 1910.



¹¹ Harpman, Sowell, Koenig. Wooldridge Square Site Study. The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture. 2007.

Framing Uses and Activities: The block to the south of Wooldridge Square was obtained from the Texas Legislature in 1913 for a public library, which was completed in 1933 and served as Austin’s central library until 1979. The building now houses the collection of the Austin History Center (AHC), which has become a stakeholder and a “Friend of Wooldridge Park”. The AHC has held events in the park and would like to engage it more, but the relative topography of the two sites makes it difficult for activity to flow between the two areas.



The Travis County Courthouse faces the square and creates an opportunity for an exchange of activity between the park and building.

The Travis County downtown campus, on the other hand, is teeming with employees, judges, jurors and all kinds of services throughout buildings on the north, east and west sides of the Square. The County sees the park as the heart of their future, revitalized downtown campus, and appreciates being identified with Wooldridge Square. On the north face of the Square, the County’s 1930 Art Deco style Herman Marion Sweatt Courthouse is the architectural gem of their campus, a great civic building which addresses both the Square and Guadalupe Street. The Courthouse was expanded in the 1950s and 1960s, a jail and an annex were added, and San Antonio Street, between Tenth and Eleventh was closed in order to consolidate the complex of buildings and facilitate the secure movement of prisoners. The building was recorded as a Texas Historic Landmark in 1993. In 2001, the high-rise Blackwell-Thurman Criminal Justice Center was constructed to the west.

Currently, the County is undergoing a facilities assessment and master planning process for its complex, with the intention of building significant new court facilities in this vicinity. Several of their properties may be redeveloped (e.g., the Holt, USB, Ned Granger and Rusk Buildings), however, Capitol View Corridors severely limit building heights on the entire block to the east of Wooldridge Square. The southern half of the block to the east of the park is owned by Bank of America and is used as a drive-through banking facility. It is unlikely that this half of the block will redevelop, as the maximum height of buildings on this site ranges from nine to 25 feet.

On the half-block to the west of the park, Travis County constructed a five-story parking garage for employees. On the half-block to the south of the parking garage is a single-family home that appears to be unoccupied. This quarter-block site is one of the few sites around the park with an opportunity for higher density uses that could create a more vibrant and active edge to the park.

Current Programs and Activities: Wooldridge Square has some regular activities, but the overall programming of the park is lacking. Currently, programmed activities include: Saturday giant chess, summer concert series, Cinco de Mayo celebrations and Juneteenth celebrations.



- 1. Parallel parking
- 2. Historic band stand
- 3. Water fountain
- 4. Steep slope

Wooldridge Square Existing Conditions

Long Term Vision and Recommendations: The newly formed group “Friends of Wooldridge Square” is in the process of developing a vision for the park. Although a consensus position has not yet been established, some common themes are emerging: the natural character of the park with its rolling topography and its mature tree clusters should be maintained; the historic and cultural significance of the square should be preserved and highlighted, including the central gazebo; and its traditional role as a space for smaller-scaled activities, such as “giant chess”, theatrical performances, concerts and civic celebrations, should be enhanced. The usability and accessibility of the park should be improved and redevelopment around the square should be promoted to create a stronger population of park users and stewards. Long-term investment recommendations include the following:

- **Create a more usable and accessible meadow in the southwest quadrant of the park,** through sensitive re-grading that would allow for more direct pedestrian access to the park from the sidewalk. The current grade-change discourages use of this part of the park. Re-grading will require careful treatment to preserve existing trees and to provide for drainage. For example, the construction of a bio-filtration meadow, which would “fill” the space and provide for a more sustainable method of drainage could be considered.
- **Create an accessible path through the park, from the southeast to the northwest corner.** As part of the grading improvements of the park, it would be possible to create an accessible walkway suitable for mobility-impaired people, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A path with less than a five percent slope, not requiring handrails, should be designed as part of the natural setting of the park and its topography.
- **Enhance opportunities for the use of the northeast quadrant of the park for informal amphitheater seating:** Grading improvements should be undertaken to enhance the viability and comfort of the “bowl” for performance seating. Consideration should be given to slope re-grading and/or the introduction of terraced seating that could make the venue more suitable and comfortable for community-oriented events.
- **Preserve the existing bandstand as part of a more viable and accessible stage area.** The current bandstand is difficult to access, dissuading many event organizers from choosing Wooldridge Square as a venue. An expanded central stage area should be created, while still allowing the bandstand to be an important focal point in the park, whether it is located “center stage” or in another strategic position in the park.

Giant chess is one of the few activities that attracts people to the park on a regular basis.



- **Introduce a more active plaza and café on the northwest corner of the park:** The flatter topography in the vicinity of 10th and San Antonio Streets offers the opportunity to introduce activities that the County Courthouse and garage are unable to provide. It is recommended that this area be designed as a small informal plaza and gathering space, preserving the existing tree canopy, and introducing a small concession or café that can activate the park. Such a facility could serve County employees, jurors and park visitors, and help provide permanent oversight and “eyes” on the open space.

Near Term Investment Recommendations: Recognizing that these long-term recommendations may take a period of time to be funded and implemented, the following near-term actions are proposed:

- **Introduce an affordable, quick food offering in the park,** through mobile carts, a food van or semi-permanent kiosk at the northwest corner of the park, where there is a flat space and shade that could provide a place for dining on moveable furnishings.
- **Make moveable tables and chairs available for public use.** (These could be stored under the bandstand.)
- **Introduce Great Streets and transit improvements:** If Capital Metro implements improved and more frequent bus service along Guadalupe Street as planned, Great Streets improvements should be made in concert with bus shelter construction. Special care should be taken to assure that the pedestrian circulation of the park and the public right-of-way does not conflict with that of bus patrons and that the transit area is clearly defined within the public right-of-way rather than spilling into the park. (See the proposed on street bus transfer station on the following page.)

Informal amphitheater seating would enhance Wooldridge Square as a gathering place for events and performances.



- **Work with Travis County to construct public restrooms.** Consideration should be given to constructing public restrooms within the footprint of the County’s existing San Antonio parking garage, as part of a larger downtown strategy to provide public restrooms in public garages near public parks and major destinations. Rather than freestanding structures that consume open space area and create management and nuisance issues, parking garages could provide the opportunity to integrate restrooms at less cost and impact.

KEY GOALS

- Preserve the historic role and landscape character of the square.
- Improve the accessibility, usability and safety.
- Promote redevelopment and active uses around the square.

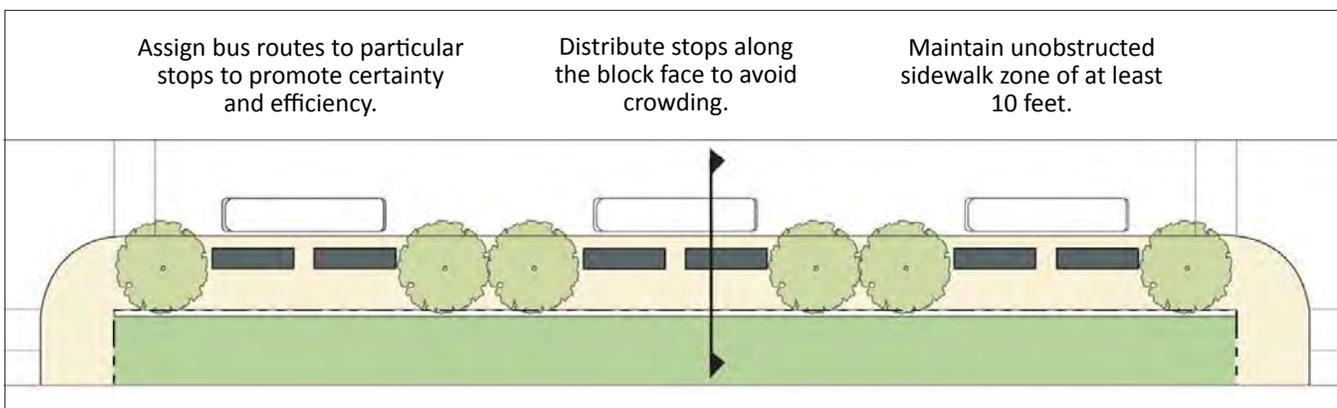
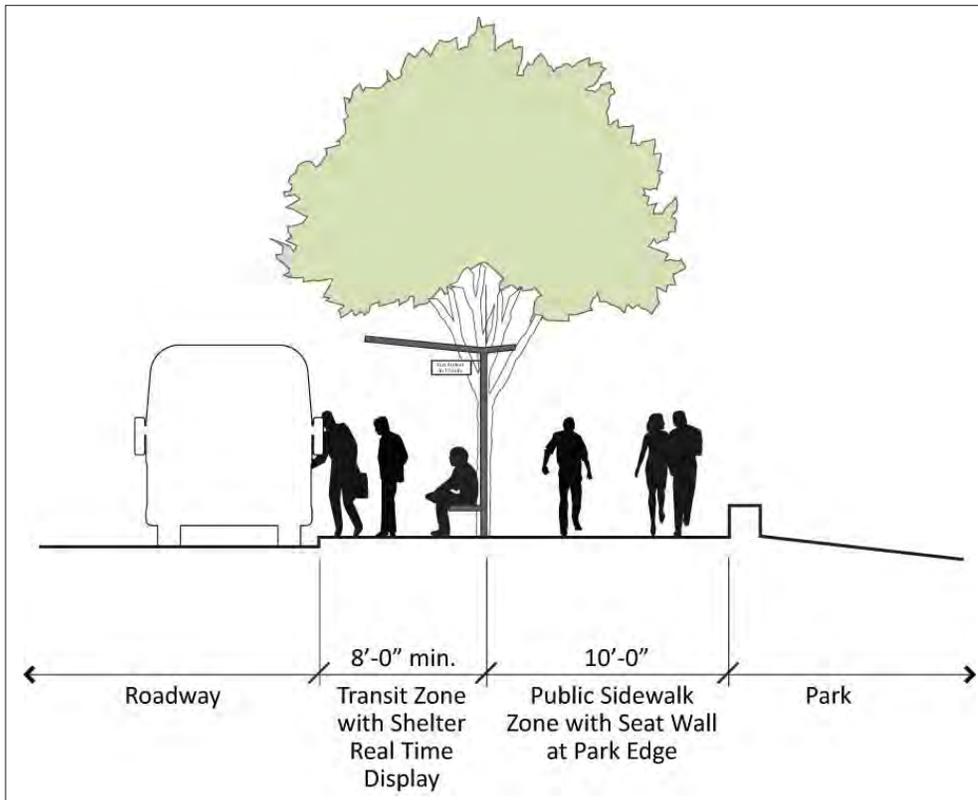


SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❶ Implement Great Streets sidewalks and street trees. ❷ Provide bus shelters along Guadalupe Street (CMTA). ❸ Introduce food kiosk with seating. ❹ Create shady informal gathering area. ❺ Leave area as unprogrammed open green space. ❻ Fill and re-grade area to create more usable meadow. ❼ Re-grade and shape to enhance amphitheater-like setting. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❽ Create ample and accessible stage area. ❾ Preserve historic bandstand and integrate into stage design. ❿ Create an accessible path through the park. ⓫ Require pedestrian-oriented uses facing park. ⓬ Keep West 10th Street open to traffic. ⓭ Consider constructing public restrooms within existing garage. |
|---|---|

Wooldridge Square Improvement Concept

- **Develop interpretive exhibits that celebrate the history of Wooldridge Square:** Through the AIPP, and with the support of the Austin History Center, Travis County and Capital Metro, a series of photographic interpretive exhibits should be developed to tell the story of Wooldridge Square and the surrounding area.
- **Take immediate action to improve tree health, and provide irrigation throughout the park.**



Possible On-Street Bus Transfer Station Layout



G. Results from DAA's Survey - "Re-Imagine Wooldridge Square"



1. 1) Please share a favorite event, image, or feature of a public park that brings back rich memories. What was it about that experience or park that sparked that feeling?

	Response Count
	178
answered question	178
skipped question	14

2. 2) What would you like to see in Wooldridge Square more than anything else? What would make you go out of your way and seek out Wooldridge as a place for fun, contemplation, repose, delight?

	Response Count
	186
answered question	186
skipped question	6

Q1. 1) Please share a favorite event, image, or feature of a public park that brings back rich memories. What was it about that experience or park that sparked that feeling?

1	I kissed my future wife at the Sound Sculpture Garden in Seattle. Parks are where you fall in love.	Jun 18, 2013 7:29 PM
2	A concert in the park. Sitting on the lawn listening to music is always a good thing :-)..	Jun 18, 2013 3:02 PM
3	Just being able to hang out with friends in a safe, beautiful environment.	Jun 17, 2013 2:36 PM
4	Seeing people get married there. Seeing performances by mariachis and ballet folkloricos	Jun 17, 2013 12:57 PM
5	On March 22, 1986 my wife and I were married at Wooldridge Square. I grew up in west Austin and have fond memories of the old library and the Square. The portico/band stand is a nice reminder of the many events that have taken place there and hopefully will be preserved for future generations. Robert Wucher	Jun 17, 2013 10:11 AM
6	n/a	Jun 17, 2013 8:30 AM
7	HAVING THE BEST PASTRAMI SANDWICH OF MY LIFE FROM THE DELI THAT USED TO BE OVER BY THE CAPITAL BACK IN 1981. WATCHING THE SYMPHONY ON SUNDAYS IN THE PARK. LOVED GOING TO LIBARAY THEN SITTING AT GAZEBO READING.	Jun 16, 2013 5:12 PM
8	I had all 3 of my swearing-ins as mayor for all 3 terms I served as Mayor of Austin in the late 70's and early 80's in Wooldrige Square in the gazebo--this historic beautiful original park square is like the City of Austin--open and accessible to all--and it was what I promised for our Austin City government--that it would be open and accessible to all--before that, swearing-ins were in the council chambers and by invitation only--we invited all of Austin in the newspaper--and kids had a wonderful time, and, like my own 4 young sons, many went home with grass stains on the knees of their pants from sliding down the grass slopes which were once, from the days of old, a gravel pit. (I was the youngest woman mayor of a major city in the United States, and the first woman mayor of Austin--still the only woman mayor of Austin.) I would be delighted to share the full "happening",	Jun 16, 2013 2:17 PM
9	I attended a beautiful wedding there. When my son started middle school and wasnt enjoying his spanish homework. I took him there to listen to a horns band play while doing his homework. He was playing the sax at the time.He went on to complete 4 years of high school spanish.	Jun 16, 2013 1:55 PM
10	The historic photos of the park with huge gatherings, and a wonderful water feature. Also attending a performance on the gazebo.	Jun 16, 2013 12:48 PM
11	I have lived in Austin for 45 years, and have many fond memories of Wooldridge. In the 1980's and early 90's I worked at the Capitol complex, and frequently ate lunch in Wooldridge Sq. It was lovely, green, and shady. But my favorite feature is the old band gazebo, and my very favorite memory is the summers when the symphony played chamber concerts there on Sunday evenings.	Jun 15, 2013 5:09 PM
12	Activity and openness.	Jun 15, 2013 3:24 PM

Q1. 1) Please share a favorite event, image, or feature of a public park that brings back rich memories. What was it about that experience or park that sparked that feeling?

13	I like the chess board. I also saw a film there with many projectors running at once	Jun 14, 2013 10:16 PM
14	Fireworks and symphony in the park suitable for families, i.e. no booze and no bums.	Jun 14, 2013 3:56 PM
15	I attended a wedding ceremony in the 1970s. We had a good crowd sitting and reclining on the grass. Prisoners in the jail (top of the Courthouse at the time) joined in the singing and applause.	Jun 14, 2013 3:25 PM
16	Seeing the Mobile Loaves and Fishes truck pass out food to the homeless population in downtown with the large trees of the park offering shade. I always was struck by the contrast of the park offering a resting place for the downtrodden of society while the governor's mansion loomed not far away.	Jun 14, 2013 9:34 AM
17	It is a beautiful park! And the location is wonderful right in the middle of the working district.	Jun 14, 2013 8:25 AM
18	KITE FLYING CONTEST	Jun 13, 2013 11:02 PM
19	Symphony in the early, lazy summer evening.	Jun 13, 2013 6:57 PM
20	What a gift it is when a park is provided to give people a lovely place to enjoy music! My first association with Wooldridge Park came through the free summer evening concerts performed by various ensembles from the Austin Symphony. Wooldridge Park was full of families, the elderly, students, people who just happened upon the concert, and lots and lots of dancing children. I believe people left those concerts with an appreciation for a city that values and provides these wonderfully simple and yet essential moments.	Jun 13, 2013 6:43 PM
21	A great event in a park such as music, a speech, or other program. Also, information about the history such as in Boston's public spaces. And great landscaping, usually by a landscaping professional.	Jun 13, 2013 5:48 PM
22	I love to go to Wooldridge for hobo watching. There is always a rich variety of hobos to observe. Seeing them in their natural habitat is a special treat!	Jun 13, 2013 5:46 PM
23	picnic under the trees -	Jun 13, 2013 4:27 PM
24	family picnics	Jun 13, 2013 4:05 PM
25	Austin History Center 5X5Y 25 Years of SXSW Fest - Movies at Wooldridge Square Park	Jun 13, 2013 3:44 PM
26	As a kid ,with date forgotten, I slid down the grass slopes on a piece of cardboard to Band music...or sat with family and listen political speeches with the" Light Crust Doughboys" playing periodically. Sometimes "Pappy" W. Lee O'Daniel (or maybe Molly) speaking or entertaining. It was always great fun and no problems.	Jun 13, 2013 3:12 PM
27	Giant Chess in Wooldridge Park.	Jun 13, 2013 3:10 PM
28	the gazebo has always been associated with this park for me - would love to see	Jun 13, 2013 2:17 PM

Q1. 1) Please share a favorite event, image, or feature of a public park that brings back rich memories. What was it about that experience or park that sparked that feeling?

some music venue there with hillside picnics - maybe chamber music?

29	My friends were married in Woolridge Square (the bride arrived by horse-drawn carriage), and another friend hired a band to play for her 35th birthday in the park. Both were memorable events!	Jun 13, 2013 2:09 PM
30	In a park area on my college campus, a small running man-made stream connected two larger fountains. On one evening, a good friend and I took our shoes, put our feet in the stream, and sat chatted for hours. Between the scenery, well-thought landscape lighting, the great people-watching, and the feeling of cool water on our feet, the atmosphere was something close to perfect, and we still relish that memory and the good quality time we had there.	Jun 13, 2013 1:34 PM
31	I grew up in Dallas, on a corner across from "Preston Hollow" park, where I spent my summers swimming in the concrete pool, playing under the concrete pavilion and on the old and then the new playground equipment, participating in plays and musicals my mother wrote for the free summer camps held each year. I also patrolled with my dad the park -- for teenage drinking, port-a-potty "tipping" and all sorts of mischief (which I took part in my later years!). Still, the park was OUR park, and I respected its always-there presence out our kitchen windows. And, ironically, as Dallas grew, the neighborhood grew "up." My childhood home is now gone, razed to make way for a grander home, but the park -- its trees, ball diamonds, tennis courts, though not the pool -- remains.	Jun 13, 2013 1:29 PM
32	Listening to the Symphony ensembles on Sunday evenings	Jun 13, 2013 1:21 PM
33	Water features. The fountain with a face at each end in the new park in Chicago along Michigan Ave.	Jun 13, 2013 1:20 PM
34	As a child on the way to check out books at the old Austin Public Library (now the Austin History Center) I remember rolling down the hills in Woolridge Park. At least once, I had a sheet of cardboard to use as a "sled" to slide down a hill.	Jun 13, 2013 1:13 PM
35	One sunny day, while working at my desk on the first floor of the AHC, I looked out my window to see 4 children joyfully running up the hillside and rolling back down again! From across the street, I could feel their giggles and laughter and see the making of a magical day in the park that would not be forgotten.	Jun 13, 2013 1:11 PM
36	Picnicers enjoying Sunday afternoon band concerts in the Woolridge Park, circa 1940s. Also political rallies by candidates running for office.	Jun 13, 2013 12:59 PM
37	I liked listening to music there. Blankets spread out and kids running around gives it an old-fashioned, democratic feel.	Jun 13, 2013 12:53 PM
38	Playscape, especially swings.. brings back childhood memories. Unfortunately, Woolridge Square Park doesn't seem a place for what is usually found in a neighborhood park (playscape, picnic tables, etc).	Jun 13, 2013 12:45 PM
39	Childhood memories of picnics with my family, rolling down the slopes of lush St. Augustine grass.	Jun 13, 2013 12:38 PM
40	Shady, safe, family-friendly	Jun 13, 2013 11:56 AM

Q1. 1) Please share a favorite event, image, or feature of a public park that brings back rich memories. What was it about that experience or park that sparked that feeling?

41	The energy of golden gate park in SF. Lots of diverse people enjoying the outdoors together.	Jun 13, 2013 11:32 AM
42	One memory that comes back every time I look into Wooldridge Square (sans bums) is of a Spring or perhaps Summer evening when a candidate for Governor was making a speech to a large gathering of people lounging on the green grass. The candidate was Jimmy Allred, as I recall. On another occasion W. Lee O'Daniel and Lightcrust Doughboys band, led by Leon, made use of the Square as a candidate for Governor.	Jun 13, 2013 11:21 AM
43	As a kid, rolling down the slopes of Wooldridge after a visit to the library.	Jun 13, 2013 11:05 AM
44	Having movies in the park at night.	Jun 13, 2013 10:42 AM
45	Free concerts and plays. Space to roam and sit without interruption.	Jun 13, 2013 10:38 AM
46	Central Park in New York City as a girl. What made it a significant event was that I was walking around with loved ones and seeing lots of other people enjoying the park by socializing, picnicing, sunning, listening to music on radios, playing board games, etc.	Jun 13, 2013 10:37 AM
47	Outdoor jazz concert	Jun 13, 2013 10:31 AM
48	Probably just lazing in the shade on the hill by Barton Springs pool. No special event, just hanging out there on a nice day.	Jun 13, 2013 10:26 AM
49	The Human Be-In at Golden Gate Park on Jan 1, 1966.	Jun 13, 2013 10:08 AM
50	First, I never heard it called Wooldridge Square until the past several years--it was always called Wooldridge Park. Until it was renamed for Mr. Wooldridge, I don't know whether it was called a "square" or a "park." I have no childhood memories of Wooldridge Park except of political rallies held there. In the 1940s & '50s, the primary elections were held in June & runoff elections in July. Prior to TV, which came to Austin only in November 1952, candidates had rallies in Wooldridge Park with the bandstand being used as the speaker's platform. Few people had air conditioned homes, so it was just as comfortable to spend an evening at Wooldridge Park hearing candidates as to stay home. Those were very social events when Austin still had a small-town feeling.	Jun 13, 2013 10:08 AM
51	I got married in Wooldridge Park on Oct. 15, 1988. We celebrated after divorce proceedings at the courthouse at Wooldridge Park in March 1998.	Jun 13, 2013 10:05 AM
52	O'henry pun-off	Jun 13, 2013 9:56 AM
53	When the symphony would play their summer concerts there, we would bring our kids with a picnic to eat and listen to the wonderful music. They were learning the different instruments of the symphony music.	Jun 13, 2013 9:53 AM
54	I always enjoyed seeing the giant chess game at the park. There was a public art event in the park that I thought was great. There was a gathering in the park after the 911 terrorist attacks to show solidarity and to help in the healing process for the city. I have heard others talking about marriages in the park.	Jun 13, 2013 9:45 AM

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55	Ability to safely roam in a crowd, away from my parents but knowing they are there, while being able to make the space "mine". Refreshments.	Jun 13, 2013 9:44 AM
56	When I was a student in the early 70s I used Wooldridge Park as my salon. I would invite friends for a picnic and to listen to music in the park. I seem to remember there being a classical music series on Sunday afternoons. I think of those days every time I drive by Wooldridge and hope that I might be able to enjoy the park in this way again someday.	Jun 13, 2013 9:36 AM
57	Pease Park as a child: how huge it felt,with endless trees and so much space. Later as a teen and young adult, walking the trail countless times, loving nature and shade and a nearby place to walk endlessly..	Jun 13, 2013 9:28 AM
58	When we were children in the early '50s my brother Harry and I would play in the park during trips to the library (now the History Center) and we would roll on the lush grass from the top of the park down to the lower areas. Plus we would climb the trees, which were then more numerous and larger than the ones still there.	Jun 13, 2013 9:20 AM
59	My Brownie troop met there numerous times. We put on plays and caught lighting bugs.	Jun 13, 2013 8:56 AM
60	Regular usic at the bandstand	Jun 13, 2013 8:52 AM
61	O. Henry Pun Off location. I spent a lovely day at the park listening to the contestants at the pun-off. It was filled with laughter and sharing with a group of individuals who were there to have a good time.	Jun 13, 2013 8:49 AM
62	I loved ballet in the park at Zilker this year. I always loved the trees in parks. And being able to lay out a blanket underneath them to play games or lay in the cool shade or read while sharing space with my mom.	Jun 13, 2013 8:46 AM
63	My favorite memory, te park across the street from my family home, is not appropriate for Wooldridge: it had a slide and swings and a merry-go-round for families. And a creek to explore.	Jun 13, 2013 8:43 AM
64	I have lived in Austin since 1948, so I have fond memories of going to the Austin Public Library with my family. The Park, it seems, was park of that "going to the Library" experience. It gave a serene setting to a building that was in downtown Austin.	Jun 13, 2013 8:41 AM
65	I played there as a child, rolling down the slopes and have heard political speeches and concerts there as an adult.	Jun 13, 2013 8:34 AM
66	Music -- with a sense of proximity to the performer and community with the audience (Blues on the Green, etc.)	Jun 13, 2013 8:30 AM
67	THE library (now the history center) was my family's library. We would go to the library and then go across the street and read books under the beautiful trees. And then, best of all, we would roll down the sides of the park to the gazebo.... And then we would itch.	Jun 13, 2013 8:26 AM
68	best moments are walking the High Line or Central Park in NYC and the sense of discovery....but they both offer winding spaces instead of a big open expanse.	Jun 13, 2013 8:22 AM

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69	It is an iconic space for Austin-----badly tarnished by neglect and abuse by the transient population. I've been going there since the early 70's when I was at UT. I've stopped going because it has been dirty and unsafe.	Jun 13, 2013 8:21 AM
70	ONE of my best friends got married in Wooldridge Park.	Jun 13, 2013 8:17 AM
71	My favorite park event is Shakespeare, especially a the Rock Island. Vandals put that event to rest. The Hillside Theatre is also special. There are many arts groups in town -- bands and drama groups that would love to perform in public area if City of Austin quit charging them \$1000 or more in return for 'allowing' them to pass the hat and pick up a couple of hundred \$\$ for their hard work planning and rehearsing before hand. FYI, my worst memory of public parks is when City o'Austin decided to make parks a profit center instead of a public recreation and entertainment center. City o'Austin has lost their way and forgotten their mission of the public good. They have become just another crass money-grubbing organization that has lost their imagination and sense of mission.	Jun 13, 2013 8:16 AM
72	Shakespeare in the Park at Zilker. Every summer. Community.	Jun 13, 2013 8:13 AM
73	Fourth of July celebration with games and a concert., Everyone in the neighborhood participated, brought picnics, had fun.	Jun 13, 2013 8:12 AM
74	My first times spent in Woolridge Park was during my early tenure working at Travis County DA 's Office back in the 60's. My husband at the time and I would spend our lunch hour there. He worked for the UT COOP. He would buy lunch and bring it with him.	Jun 13, 2013 8:09 AM
75	Youth soccer and family picnics. We were outside, not hemmed in by "over-prettification" (apologies for the made-up word), and the parks were easy to access-- no need to drive for miles or make long-term advance plans.	Jun 13, 2013 7:31 AM
76	Free concerts at Wooldridge Square Park in the 1960s	Jun 13, 2013 7:26 AM
77	When I first came to school at UT, the Austin History Center was the public library for Austin. I can remember getting my books and going across the street to the park to read a bit while waiting for my sister to pick me up. There were others like me there, of all ages. Also, mothers would bring their children to the park to play and people would let their dogs scamper about.	Jun 13, 2013 7:24 AM
78	Kids Chess tournament in the park. Great use of a public space.	Jun 13, 2013 7:22 AM
79	I worked for several branches of APL when the building was a library, and went to the central location on a rotation when I was first in training. It was a joy to be able to park by that lovely oasis of green in the middle of all those pale gray buildings.	Jun 13, 2013 7:18 AM
80	Honestly, I have never used this park due to safety fears	Jun 13, 2013 7:00 AM
81	This was where I was sworn into as a member of the City Council in May 1977 along with Carole McClellan, Ron Mullen, Richard Goodman, Jimmy Snell, Betty Himmelblau and John Trevino. Lee Cooke	Jun 13, 2013 7:00 AM

Q1. 1) Please share a favorite event, image, or feature of a public park that brings back rich memories. What was it about that experience or park that sparked that feeling?

82	Public announcements, musical events	Jun 13, 2013 6:55 AM
83	Girl Scout meetings in a park. Trees. Shade.	Jun 13, 2013 6:34 AM
84	In the 80's I went to a concert there, sat on the grass and had a picnic.	Jun 13, 2013 6:11 AM
85	Concerts in the park	Jun 13, 2013 6:10 AM
86	Catching the Homeless trying to break into my car. They were there thanks to the Mobile Loaves and Fishes van that comes there like clockwork.	Jun 12, 2013 11:06 PM
87	Invite Austin Civic Wind Ensemble to give a concert for the public. They play for Pflugerville Pfireworks and often at Westminster	Jun 12, 2013 1:05 PM
88	I love Wooldridge Park in it's simplicity and want it to remain as it looks now. Just take down the fencing right away. Why is it still up? This is our park and we need to have access to it. I have enjoyed the Cinco de Mayo events there, especially. I like that people can go and sit there to enjoy the green space.	Jun 12, 2013 10:38 AM
89	Picnics, tree-plantings.	Jun 12, 2013 10:30 AM
90	When the Play Me I'm Yours pianos were all over town there was a pink one at the pavilion. It was somebody's idea to hold a pink piano party there, and people dressed up, brought pink drinks, played lawn games, played the piano and generally had a fun goofy time. http://www.flickr.com/photos/ranadelmaya/6444901933/	Jun 12, 2013 10:14 AM
91	In Pioneer Square in Portland, the live music at noon during the summers on Thursdays was an amazing fun opportunity for everyone to grab lunch at a food truck and sit on the steps while listening to performances. This would fit great in Austin. http://www.thesquarepdx.org/calendar_july2012.htm Also, Montreal's weekly summer event Piknic Electronik may be one of the best activities I have ever seen planned for a public space: http://www.piknicelectronik.com/en/	Jun 12, 2013 9:56 AM
92	They used to have Easter-egg hunts in the park, and I remember those fondly. Mainly I just remember it as a place where we (the kids) could just run around and invent imaginary scenarios. Even in the 1950's, I don't think the bandstand was used for anything on a regular basis.	Jun 12, 2013 9:03 AM
93	My mother, born in 1910, grew up on Nueces Street in Austin. All my life she told me about the music events in Wooldridge Square Park. As she was growing up, families would gather at the park, the children would play and roll down the steep sides as the adults listened to the music.	Jun 12, 2013 8:58 AM
94	Picnic-many times	Jun 12, 2013 12:04 AM
95	Have only lived here 3 years. No memories. Live downtown and love it, but we do need more great parks for people to relax and enjoy some nature.	Jun 11, 2013 8:55 PM
96	Many weddings in the park. Remember one where a red carpet was rolled down the hill on the east side for the bride and the wedding party.	Jun 11, 2013 5:08 PM
97	I've always really liked seeing weddings conducted at the gazebo. Also, hearing	Jun 11, 2013 4:32 PM

Q1. 1) Please share a favorite event, image, or feature of a public park that brings back rich memories. What was it about that experience or park that sparked that feeling?

	live music with the musicians on the gazebo.	
98	Aqua Fest when Willie Nelson played. It was a magial moment in time	Jun 11, 2013 3:48 PM
99	Picnic lunch in the shade with the smell of blooming honey suckle in the air and views of young families enjoying lawn games. A family reunion or large gathering with lots of food to share, stories to tell, and new family/friends to meet and conversations to enjoy. All above occurring in a very clean and safe environment. Free of litter and homeless. Water feature for viewing and listening pleasure.	Jun 11, 2013 3:43 PM
100	Riding a merry-go-round; drinking beer at night.	Jun 11, 2013 2:28 PM
101	Millenium Park in Chicago - seeing all the people enjoying the park and especially the water feature. Families, tourists, and couples all spending time in the park - walking, reading, playing, roller skating, riding bikes, eating (some bringing a picnic others purchasing food from vendors) and engaging with others through conversation, kids playing, and just watching. Truly placemaking at its best.	Jun 11, 2013 1:26 PM
102	Political events and campaign kickoff speeches by prominent state and local candidates beginning in my childhood and continuing over many years. It is Austin's public square.	Jun 11, 2013 12:42 PM
103	We went there after a wedding and enjoyed the courtyard to take some pictures. I really enjoyed the square and the pictures for the most part came out beutiful.	Jun 11, 2013 12:25 PM
104	Decades ago the gazebo was a great place to take a book one had just checked out from the library. It was a comfortable, safe place to relax.	Jun 11, 2013 12:07 PM
105	The Music in the Park was a family event. Since, it has been moved to Auditorium Shores. Great loss to my family.	Jun 11, 2013 11:29 AM
106	Keep the bandstand and the grass. Please water it.Beautiful grass until the city stopped watering it.	Jun 11, 2013 11:20 AM
107	The Jazz fest that used to be in Pease was fun but too hot.	Jun 11, 2013 11:05 AM
108	a band playing, snow cones, lots of fun!	Jun 11, 2013 10:37 AM
109	We used to enjoy listening to the Sunday night free symphony.	Jun 11, 2013 10:24 AM
110	The only experience I've had with this park is related to the homeless people who frequent it. Those memories are just sad.	Jun 11, 2013 9:47 AM
111	healthy trees, safety	Jun 11, 2013 9:44 AM
112	music, food vendors, gardens	Jun 11, 2013 9:43 AM
113	My favorite memory of Wooldridge is after 9/11 and the memorial that took place on the grounds and watching the sea of diverse people coming in the park from all sides because of it's open accessibility.	Jun 11, 2013 9:07 AM

Q1. 1) Please share a favorite event, image, or feature of a public park that brings back rich memories. What was it about that experience or park that sparked that feeling?

114	Cinco de Mayo and Juneteenth celebrations at Woolridge Park. I love seeing a diverse population using and enjoying this historic park.	Jun 11, 2013 8:58 AM
115	Orchestra music events in the evenings.	Jun 11, 2013 8:47 AM
116	It's nice to walk down the street and see a park in the middle of the city.	Jun 11, 2013 8:27 AM
117	As a child, my grandmother would take the grandkids down to the park and we'd roll down the hills toward the gazebo. Great memory!	Jun 11, 2013 8:18 AM
118	Wedding Farmer's market	Jun 11, 2013 8:18 AM
119	Petting the homeless peoples dogs.	Jun 11, 2013 8:10 AM
120	I remember going to this park after a school field trip, it was so nice due to the large trees, the rolling grassy hills and we had fun playing on the bandstand.	Jun 11, 2013 12:12 AM
121	I have no pleasant memories of this park. I've been living and working in downtown since 1997. It's an uninviting bowl, especially when there are drug addicts, foul smelling vagrants, and social deviants who hang out there.	Jun 10, 2013 10:33 PM
122	Sharing lunch with my wife...too many times to count.	Jun 10, 2013 9:34 PM
123	I like weddings in the park.	Jun 10, 2013 7:41 PM
124	A path around the park for strolling, a water feature.	Jun 10, 2013 6:50 PM
125	Live Music Bands and Music during lunch or even late hours. Also the history of the park including famous political speeches.	Jun 10, 2013 5:45 PM
126	Live entertainment and vendors in Central Park. I used to love grabbing a hot pretzel from a vendor in central park and then listening to live music from a park bench. It was relaxing and made me feel connected with the city.	Jun 10, 2013 3:34 PM
127	Being married in the heart of Austin on a warm afternoon in September 1985 in the Gazebo. I was still fairly new to Austin while my husband was born there. It turned out to be the perfect place to exchange our vows in front of the Justice of the Peace, Mike Renfro.	Jun 10, 2013 2:18 PM
128	A lot of my best memories of parks are events held there. It think the programming is important to keep the park lively.	Jun 10, 2013 1:22 PM
129	a swimming pool, picnic tables, BBQ pits, lots of people with lots of food, caring and sharing for and with one another.	Jun 10, 2013 12:01 PM
130	My favorite event in Woolridge Square took place not as a public function, but friendly and musical encounter. I had met a musician from England who was temporarily working in Austin and I discovered that is musical tastes were similar to mine. We sat on bench under a beautiful shade tree on a hot summer afternoon and swapped folk songs together. I like to think, in addition to the more public events, that this cordial meeting between two like-minded musicians normally separated by a large pond, is just the type of encounter parks like Wooldrige Square are waiting to welcome with the open arms of cool autumn	Jun 10, 2013 10:28 AM

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breezes, tall oaks and lush greenery. It is the opportunity for the natural growth of multicultural meetings, friendship and education. It the opportunity to hear multiple points of view in an peaceful environment that discourages conflict and encourages contemplation. The chance to look for, find and build on the common ground of creation.

131	I like the community events the county hosts (Juneteenth, Cinco de Mayo) in Wooldridge Square - good for employees and good for the community to be able to drop by and enjoy the food, entertainment and fellowship.	Jun 10, 2013 9:59 AM
132	I miss music in the park during lunch hours before transients took it over.	Jun 10, 2013 7:43 AM
133	I attended a wedding in the park about 10 years ago and it was a beautiful outdoor venue at that time. The park was beautiful and clean.	Jun 7, 2013 12:31 PM
134	Don't really have any experiences to speak of. Over the past 10 years have only really seen the park used as a sleeping grounds for the homeless.	Jun 7, 2013 9:07 AM
135	When my daughter was little, her friend had a ballet birthday in Wooldridge Park. A Ballet Austin ballerina came and danced in the gazebo!	Jun 7, 2013 9:00 AM
136	I love having a picnic in the park - it's wonderful as a downtown resident to have a clean, safe, verdant, quiet spot to enjoy some lovely shade and listen to the birds singing while enjoying an al fresco meal on the grass.	Jun 7, 2013 8:56 AM
137	Always like the County's events that are held there. Pleasant spot.	Jun 7, 2013 8:25 AM
138	The shade from the beautiful trees. Many trees are cut down for expansion but to see trees downtown Austin is a joy for many working downtown. To be able to get away from the office and walk to the park is something we should'nt take for granted.	Jun 7, 2013 8:16 AM
139	Fourth of July picnics, concerts, and fireworks. People of all ages getting together socially, good food and conversation.	Jun 6, 2013 10:10 PM
140	N/A	Jun 6, 2013 4:07 PM
141	homeless population sleeping in the gazebo	Jun 6, 2013 3:31 PM
142	Having lived in Austin since 1967 and downtown since 2004, I have enjoyed walking by and through the park. It is a wonderful place of beauty, peace, and quiet in the middle of a bustling downtown.	Jun 6, 2013 2:39 PM
143	LIVE MUSIC ON THE GREEN. REMINDS ME OF SUMMER PASSIONS AND FIRST LOVES	Jun 6, 2013 2:19 PM
144	The gazebo reminds me of growing up in Houston and going to the International Festivals downtown, where we would always visit the historic homes area and park (with gazebo) near City Hall/Buffalo Bayou.	Jun 6, 2013 1:45 PM
145	Back in the early 80's, this areas was nice. but with all the recent growth it has declined.	Jun 6, 2013 1:24 PM

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146	Austin Symphony concerts were so much cozier and better at Wooldridge than at the Long Center where you have to sit unnaturally and crane your neck upwards to see the band. Also, street parking was much better at Wooldridge.	Jun 6, 2013 12:44 PM
147	Just seeing it when I came out of the library.	Jun 6, 2013 11:36 AM
148	nice biking by on way to school but nothing really set it apart. Looking forward to seeing what becomes of it.	Jun 6, 2013 11:29 AM
149	My favorite memories of public parks always include family outings and cook-outs. Bar-b-que grills, playground equipment for the kids, relaxing good times.	Jun 6, 2013 11:14 AM
150	Rolling down the hill as a child! Was there an annual Easter egg hunt held in Wooldridge Park in the 1960s? I think I remember being dressed up and rolling down the hill (as an adult I think "no! no! grass stains!" but as a child I had no such concerns.)	Jun 6, 2013 11:12 AM
151	I love coming here to listen to members of the symphony play. The grassy area is perfect for laying out a blanket and enjoying an evening together.	Jun 6, 2013 11:11 AM
152	When the O. Henry Pun-off was held there.	Jun 6, 2013 11:10 AM
153	A sprinkler pad playdate at Pease Park, with kids, barbecue, cake, etc. lots of fun.	Jun 6, 2013 10:51 AM
154	Shade and splash pad	Jun 6, 2013 9:22 AM
155	I love going to parks that have interactive events like chess games, horseshoes and plays/performances. These things spark "park unity" for me.	Jun 5, 2013 9:24 PM
156	I got married there.	Jun 5, 2013 6:57 PM
157	I have been on the platform when people announced their political campaigns for office. It was very festive and positive.	Jun 5, 2013 3:08 PM
158	We used to go to the Austin Public Library (now the Austin History Center) across the street and then play in the park and spend hours rolling down the hill in the Park.	Jun 5, 2013 2:44 PM
159	When I first visited Austin in 1998 (which was several months before I moved here) I went to this park. It was near downtown, and I was still unsure of where I was going or what I was doing. The park was quiet and green. It provided a welcome space to rest for a moment, before taking in the vibrant downtown scene.	Jun 5, 2013 2:40 PM
160	I have always loved that Wooldridge Park has been a very Olmstead-like, romantic park. It is our quiet park. And in the middle of downtown, quiet parks are more needed than ever. That is not to say that there can't be more staid or focused things happen there: chess is great and wouldn't it be nice to have a political rally there like in the olden days.	Jun 5, 2013 2:36 PM
161	I enjoy parks with creative lighting, in the trees, small strings of lights at the bandstand (as an option for events), and adequate lighting for safety the rest of	Jun 5, 2013 2:35 PM

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the time. Public parks that have the sound of running water are always nice. Close proximity to coffee or food for breakfast or lunch in the park is also very nice. The area does not have adequate restaurants. The chess game has always been fun to watch at Wooldridge. For a special event, you might consider the women's drumming circle, a classical concert, or a dance performance.

162	I remember being on a Jury for about a week and having my lunches in the park. It was a contentious child custody dispute so the park served as a nice distraction in the middle of the day where I could forget about the drama of the courtroom.	Jun 5, 2013 2:31 PM
163	As a tourist once in NYC, I came across a small public park after walking all day throughout the city. I was tired and was so happy to see a patch of green to stretch out on and relax. A quartet was setting up and the sun was setting, I spent the rest of that evening listening to music, watching families emerge out of buildings and subways into this little green place, and I enjoyed seeing the skyline from a completely different view. It's probably the one thing I remember of that day, this place of respite and relaxation after a long day of trying to do and see too much.	Jun 5, 2013 2:13 PM
164	A friend of mine got married in the old gazebo.	Jun 5, 2013 1:43 PM
165	I have no memories of enjoying the park. Since I was a child the park has been squatted by homeless and criminals. It would be nice to reclaim the park for the working community and the neighborhood. Really the only way of doing this politically correct is to schedule events for downtown residents and workers to actually visit and use the park. It would be nice if APD enforced sit / lie ordinance for the homeless, but I guess they can't be discriminatory. So, what's the best way to get residents and downtown workers to use the park? Make it appealing with events such as music and theater performances, encourage Pease Elementary, Khabele School, and ACC to utilize the park for different events. Encourage and plan workout programs (yoga, cross fit, etc) to meet and use the park. Encourage downtown dog owners to bring there dog there. Possibly attract one or two food trucks during the week that can sell food for people to enjoy on picnic benches, the grassy lawn, or the pavilion. Mobile Loaves and Fishes has got to go which will help the homeless issue, but really the only way to reclaim the park for the hard working residents and people of downtown is to provide them with an attractive reason to use the park. Food, tranquility, peaceful relaxation, and scheduled events.	Jun 5, 2013 10:14 AM
166	I have made a point of not visiting that park because it never feels safe, even in the middle of the day.	Jun 5, 2013 9:24 AM
167	I think that "surprise" yard art is fun to see. Something subtle that one has to do a little exploring to find.	Jun 5, 2013 8:19 AM
168	I have pretty much no memories other than homeless people taking it over	Jun 4, 2013 3:48 PM
169	cleanliness, flowers	Jun 4, 2013 1:21 PM
170	Listening to a symphony concert while having a picnic with my sister and her family. They had just moved to Austin from Houston and I had lived here for	Jun 4, 2013 9:12 AM

Q2. 2) What would you like to see in Wooldridge Square more than anything else? What would make you go out of your way and seek out Wooldridge as a place for fun, contemplation, repose, delight?

1	Variety of activities, such as concerts in the park, movies in the park, programmed classes like T'ai Chi.	Jun 18, 2013 7:29 PM
2	Years ago, they would have concerts in this park. In particular jazz concerts. I miss that. Lunch time concerts would be great. Maybe in the fall instead of summer.	Jun 18, 2013 3:02 PM
3	It's really what I'd like to see around it - more robust, pedestrian-friendly types of businesses. Without them, Wooldridge will have a hard time holding together.	Jun 17, 2013 2:36 PM
4	I would be attracted to a place with picnic areas, beautiful landscaping, a fountain, a zen garden and an absence of the smell of urine and human excrements. I would like a place where I could close my eyes and feel safe.	Jun 17, 2013 12:57 PM
5	Keep it as simple as possible, the natural landscape makes for a great place to relax. I'd only ask that the fire ants be kept at bay.	Jun 17, 2013 10:11 AM
6	I think it would be cool to see seating built into the hillside, and have it be a place for performances or other activities. Also, I would LOVE for downtown Austin in general to have public restroom facilities, and it seems like there would be an opportunity here.	Jun 17, 2013 8:30 AM
7	THE SAME AS BEFORE ESPECIALLY THE CHAMBER MUSIC SYMPHONY.	Jun 16, 2013 5:12 PM
8	This incredible asset not only belongs to all Austinites, as the capital city, it belongs to all Texans---and we must keep it as a place for all ages; political stump speaking like I used to watch as a kid on my Dad's shoulders; band and music concerts and poetry and performance in the gazebo--free and open to all; and open space for small and large informal people gatherings and conversation on a daily basis, with the view of the Capitol--and a well-maintained and secure park square representing government in the sunshine at its best!	Jun 16, 2013 2:17 PM
9	food offerings, more recurring events, comfortable seating in the shade, water feature, more people, dog races!	Jun 16, 2013 12:48 PM
10	I very much would like to see a return of concerts (classical, jazz, big band, or show tunes) in the band stand. What I DO NOT want is for the park to again be a place for distribution of meals to the homeless - unfortunately, that seems to inevitably result in the demise of the park.	Jun 15, 2013 5:09 PM
11	Music and parking. I also hope that plans are in operation to keep the park accessible to the community without unwanted distraction.	Jun 15, 2013 3:24 PM
12	Clean park. Please try to get delivery of food for homeless to a more appropriate location.	Jun 15, 2013 11:53 AM
13	More art and music under the bandstand	Jun 14, 2013 10:16 PM
14	No bums. Music concerts, kinda like the symphony in the park, but cooler, e.g. a quartet or small symphonic band playing (non amplified) popular music (with no vocals) in the park every (one weeknight), Friday and Saturday nights such as (hitting each recent era) Sinatra (1940s), Elvis (1950s), Simon and Garfunkel(folk)/Beatles(rock) (1960s), Carly Simon (pop)/Pink	Jun 14, 2013 3:56 PM

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Floyd(rock)(1970s), Hall and Oates (pop)/U2(rock), etc.

15	It should be tobacco-free, as the neighboring Courthouse campus. If smoking is allowed, persons who cannot smoke on Travis County property will go to the park. The result would be heavy concentration of smoke and debris. There is no safe level of second-hand smoke. Distributing food and clothing to homeless persons should be done no closer than two blocks from the park. (The block on Colorado between 10th and 11th is now pedestrian only and would be a safe place.) A lot of homeless people living in the park reduces its availability for others. Homeless people should be welcomed for visits, like anyone else.	Jun 14, 2013 3:25 PM
16	I would like to see the park continue to serve as a resting place for the homeless community with organizations like Mobile Loaves and Fishes offering food underneath the trees.	Jun 14, 2013 9:34 AM
17	I would like to stop feeling scared walking by the park because of all the homeless people sleeping there.	Jun 14, 2013 8:25 AM
18	MUSIC THAT IS NOT OVERAMPLIFIED	Jun 13, 2013 11:02 PM
19	Lots of swings, benches, shade.	Jun 13, 2013 6:57 PM
20	I don't know if it's feasible with our current drought, but some kind of water feature would be a lovely addition to the park. I know my children have always enjoyed playing around, leaping over, splashing through, or poking at anything with water. I love the sound of water flowing, and even if you're just looking at it, it gives some relief from our summer heat.	Jun 13, 2013 6:43 PM
21	Woolridge Park should educate users about the history of the park as it is such a historic park in Austin, serving as the town center for political campaigns. A sculpture of its namesake, Governor Pease, or a frequent speaker at the park, such as Pappy O'Daniel would be a great addition. And a weather-proof outdoor kiosk for the Austin History Center Association's "Austin Past and Present would be a great experience for park users. Partner with the Austin History Center Association for the kiosk and partner with CAST for the sculpture.	Jun 13, 2013 5:48 PM
22	Installation art.	Jun 13, 2013 5:46 PM
23	shade trees, public entertainment events	Jun 13, 2013 4:27 PM
24	pretty lighting in the trees, a beautiful water feature for children, beautiful beds with flowers, and park benches for everyone to sit and share the beauty	Jun 13, 2013 4:05 PM
25	If we could relocate the vagrants and homeless people.	Jun 13, 2013 3:44 PM
26	To see events that families and children would safely enjoy...such as regular Band playing events...also possible sing songs...weather suitable for kids to slide down the grass on a piece of cardboard. Sometimes speeches in weather suitable for sitting and listening..usually Fall to early Spring. I would hate to see it become a gathering pad or bedroom for the homeless or vagrants...for these there should be a better place for their rest and care.	Jun 13, 2013 3:12 PM
27	More chess!	Jun 13, 2013 3:10 PM

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28	anything will be very difficult with the parking situation in downtown - open up government parking areas in the evenings and not charge admission - some type of fountain would be great	Jun 13, 2013 2:17 PM
29	The return of the O.Henry pun-off (Wooldridge Square has hosted the event in the past); acoustic concerts (ragtime, barbershop quartet, orchestra, string quartet); History Center exhibit-related picnics (in cooler weather); dog and cat shows; historical re-enactments; history talks (Austin servant girl annihilator story? famous residents of Oakwood cemetery?); political debates (city council?); pumpkin carving. Hard to do with Austin being so large now, and many events draw too large a crowd.	Jun 13, 2013 2:09 PM
30	Some sort of public art, sculpture, fountain, or structure that allows individuals to interact with it. Not just a piece of art that sits there and looks pretty, but instead, something that invites people to come and engage. The Cloud Gate sculpture and Crown Fountain in Chicago's Millennium Park are perfect examples. Because of a great design and those interactive features, the park has become a must-visit aspect of Chicago. I think something similar would thrive in Austin.	Jun 13, 2013 1:34 PM
31	Many bike racks, and maybe a fountain, with shaded space for reading on a blanket.	Jun 13, 2013 1:29 PM
32	Music events and or exhibits that lend themselves to the outdoors	Jun 13, 2013 1:21 PM
33	color- flowers, etc. Not easy in Austin's climate, so maybe artistic metal flowers! Or colorful ground cover.	Jun 13, 2013 1:20 PM
34	Flowers in bloom. Roses might require too much water - weren't there roses there once before? Perhaps the native rock rose or other native, drought hardy blooming plants could be added to the landscape.	Jun 13, 2013 1:13 PM
35	Adult & children's events, such as learning about Heritage Trees & how to protect Austin's trees and environment, teaching the importance of trees to our survival and scenery, tree identification & the care of trees, pet parades, picnics, live music, and Park Appreciation Festivities!	Jun 13, 2013 1:11 PM
36	Make it family oriented and find another place for transients and homeless to overnight.	Jun 13, 2013 12:59 PM
37	Not really sure, because .. Wooldridge Square Park doesn't seem a place for what is usually found in a neighborhood park (playscape, picnic tables, etc). Even though it's not very big, perhaps a gravel pathway from the four corners, leading to the gazebo?	Jun 13, 2013 12:45 PM
38	You asked, so I'm answering frankly. I don't imagine Austin has provided any alternative for the large numbers of homeless people who use Wooldridge Park, so I expect as soon as the fence comes down, it will go back to being their place and not mine. The homeless have to be somewhere, and until a solution is found, it's their park.	Jun 13, 2013 12:38 PM
39	Outdoor theater with free plays, concerts, etc. where you can bring a blanket and a picnic basket and sit on the hillside.	Jun 13, 2013 11:56 AM

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40	Shade, nice grass or places to sit, events to attend	Jun 13, 2013 11:32 AM
41	Bring in two or three local bands on Spring, Summer and early Fall Sunday evenings to play for any and all interested families. On 10th Street between the Square and the Courthouse, allow food vendors to set up and sell bar-b-que, etc.	Jun 13, 2013 11:21 AM
42	Jazz concerts in the bandstand	Jun 13, 2013 11:05 AM
43	I think utilizing it as an informal amphitheater for music, performance art, plays, etc. could be a great use of the natural topography of Wooldridge Square. Festivals that don't require too many booths could be nice as well. Movies in the park that are currently at Republic Square could also be another use. I see it as a flexible open space with soft programming events throughout the year.	Jun 13, 2013 10:48 AM
44	Music concerts and other kind of entertainment, or perhaps some kind of carnival event, especially if they were family-friendly and free.	Jun 13, 2013 10:42 AM
45	Water the grass. Keep it from becoming a homeless campground. Concerts. Not big names needed, but high school jazz bands, etc. not keeping with the historical context, but additional temporary shade for the hottest months.	Jun 13, 2013 10:38 AM
46	I would like to see it as family friendly where people are socializing, picnicing, etc with out fear of being harrassed by the disenfranchised and mentally unbalanced, antisocial/homeless element we have seen in there over the last few years, First, start by relocating Move Mobile Loaves and Fishes to a place away from the park! Program musical and other fun events on a regular basis to draw people, start a farmers market at that location.	Jun 13, 2013 10:37 AM
47	Music	Jun 13, 2013 10:31 AM
48	I would like to see the park function as a park and not as an outdoor homeless shelter. Since it has been fenced off the homeless population has moved to other areas, but I'm sure they will return when the park is re-opened. I really can't see myself going to Wooldridge Park unless something is done about the homeless problem there. With Loaves and Fishes feeding the homeless there every day, and then homeless men taking over the park daily, urinating and defecating on the grounds, and harassing anyone who passes by, it really makes it unsuitable for use as a park by the average citizen.	Jun 13, 2013 10:26 AM
49	I would like to see the City continue to care for the park properly so that it remains an OASIS in our concrete jungle. We should not invite parties and music and crowds, but rather keep it available for quiet, clean, safe contemplation. Perhaps for a quiet picnic lunch, or to just to sit and read a book or watch the birds and squirrels - for people passing through, who live or work in the area. IT SHOULD NOT BE A HOMELESS CAMP OR MECCA!!!	Jun 13, 2013 10:25 AM
50	The most important thing would be to make the Park off-limits to loitering and inhabiting by homeless people. Homelessness is a different issue for the city to solve, but the presence of homeless people in Wooldridge Park is a deterrent to any other activities in the Park. A playscape and a water feature might bring young families to the Park. Picnic tables and a kiosk selling soft drinks, snacks, etc., would also be people-friendly. Park benches and nice landscaping would	Jun 13, 2013 10:08 AM

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create a place people living downtown could go just to enjoy being outside.

51	I would just like to be able to see it again period.	Jun 13, 2013 10:05 AM
52	A small pond or water feature. Less homeless park residents	Jun 13, 2013 9:56 AM
53	I would love it if we could go there anytime without having to worry about the homeless hanging out there.	Jun 13, 2013 9:53 AM
54	Maintain the landscape and trees and make sure they are watered and cared for. It looks beautiful right now!	Jun 13, 2013 9:45 AM
55	It will need to become a gathering place for special events (concerts, movies, farmers markets, art fairs).	Jun 13, 2013 9:44 AM
56	Music in the bandstand. We loved the percussion concert staged there during the 'performance art' festival about four years ago.	Jun 13, 2013 9:36 AM
57	First, its very preservation, not only as precious green space but for its history back to its beginning. Second, and sadly, a solution to homelessness: they need a place to be and to be fed, but others are simply not going to enjoy being there at the same time. Mid-side public events will help: concerts, 4-sided screenings of movies, special events. I used to go over there and read library books, which would be great now, but public safety is an issue so don't and don't think anyone else is, either.	Jun 13, 2013 9:28 AM
58	A thick, healthy and well-maintained lawn, more numerous, large and well-cared-for trees.	Jun 13, 2013 9:20 AM
59	Just a well manicured, nicely landscaped public spot that was safe and off limits to the homeless.	Jun 13, 2013 8:56 AM
60	Music, entertainment, and festivals. Also, "free parking" is essential....maybe have the County open their garage at 8th.	Jun 13, 2013 8:52 AM
61	Working water fountain source would be terrific along with fully leafed trees and beautiful grass.	Jun 13, 2013 8:49 AM
62	Community garden!	Jun 13, 2013 8:46 AM
63	Comfortable benches under some of those beautiful live oaks for sitting, resting, reading (across from the library) and contemplating.	Jun 13, 2013 8:43 AM
64	It needs a beautiful fountain. It needs flowers, flowers, flowers around the border of the park. It needs more covered areas where people can talk. A society protecting the park would be nice. Some signs stating that there will be no illegal substances and no alcohol allowed on the premises, and anyone found doing so will be prosecuted. The presence of gardeners, society members or security guards might help. Gardening activities for garden clubs, etc. might be nice. Signs stating no bedrolls and all pets on a leash would be good. No panhandling, roller blading, skateboarding or bicycling on grounds. Making big signs stating that this is a PROTECTED area and part of a HISTORICAL area that is monitored might help. Finding a bird or an animal that is endangered on	Jun 13, 2013 8:41 AM

Q2. 2) What would you like to see in Wooldridge Square more than anything else? What would make you go out of your way and seek out Wooldridge as a place for fun, contemplation, repose, delight?

the property might help protect the area.

65	A beautiful park with shade and a place to sit first. Attractions might include music concerts, plays -Austin Shakespeare in the park, political rallies or picnics, good food trailer and interpretive signage on the park's history.	Jun 13, 2013 8:34 AM
66	A performance area/stage for youth musicians/actors/debaters, etc.	Jun 13, 2013 8:30 AM
67	Maintenance of trees and grass--just a place of beauty and greenery--and for it to be safe again.	Jun 13, 2013 8:26 AM
68	I think parks should be havens from the bustle of the city so....bubbling fountains, benches, shade trees, music but not too harsh.	Jun 13, 2013 8:22 AM
69	If they can't figure out a way to keep the homeless people from congregating there (i.e. STOP delivering food to them there!), the whole project will have been a colossal waste of money. I'm often by there on my way to the Courthouse. I have parked for years on Guadalupe because I got tired of aggressive panhandlers and being meanced/threatened by the homeless people. It's been a disaster. The only thing that'll get people back to using it is for it to be safe and clean----both of which require the police to keep people from camping/living there. And, that is possible. We used to have that problem on the Pfluger Bridge over Town Lake----trash, people camping, etc.-----and the park police now keep that from going on.	Jun 13, 2013 8:21 AM
70	It is not what's there, it is what's not there, that would bring us back to the park. Could the city collaborate more effectively with social services programs, public & private, have a greater presence and provide better services to the homeless?	Jun 13, 2013 8:17 AM
71	A place to park. PDRD is so intent on filling up downtown with rich people who want to live in a black and stainless steel 700 sq ft apt. on the 20th floor high rise surrounded by bars, that the other 995,000 residents don't feel comfortable coming to downtown. All retail stores and shopping areas have left downtown. There is nothing down there but expensive restaurants and bars. Not where I am going to bring my grand children for an evening out to watch a play or hear a concert. Moreover, there is no way to get there in the evening -- few buses -- and no where to park a car. Walking five miles from Allandale, carrying a picnic lunch on a 99 degree day is not much fun. Schlepping your ice chest back home at 10pm is even less fun. Where does PARD think this is going? What is City Council and PDRD thinking? Making Downtown nothing but expensive restaurants and bars. This is not a family friendly environment. This is an environment for car less drunks. Something to avoid like the plague.	Jun 13, 2013 8:16 AM
72	Shade.	Jun 13, 2013 8:13 AM
73	benches under the trees and no bums.	Jun 13, 2013 8:12 AM
74	A Swing. Reason being I have discovered that while swinging my creative juices tend to flow.	Jun 13, 2013 8:09 AM
75	In the abstract, music in the bandshell, with considerable advance publicity of a fixed schedule. A second would be a scattering of picnic tables, but that's a	Jun 13, 2013 7:31 AM

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distant second.

76	Private family and group events by reservation; left as-is with free public access the rest of the time.	Jun 13, 2013 7:26 AM
77	I would like to see people in the park again: reading, picnicing, children playing, dogs chasing about, bands playing in the gazebo.	Jun 13, 2013 7:24 AM
78	Keep the bums out of the park. They have ruined it for the whole city.	Jun 13, 2013 7:22 AM
79	Keep it as green as possible. The gazebo is a treasure! A programmable water fountain would be a nice addition, without changing the flavor of this lovely oasis downtown.	Jun 13, 2013 7:18 AM
80	A trash free, safe park.	Jun 13, 2013 7:00 AM
81	Casual place to relax in the heart of the city	Jun 13, 2013 7:00 AM
82	Music festivals, art exhibits, Farmer's Markets. Not haven for homeless people.	Jun 13, 2013 6:55 AM
83	Places to sit. A fountain. No one sleeping there. Tourist spot. (Other people around). Music.	Jun 13, 2013 6:34 AM
84	Acoustic music concerts at noon and weekends. Don't let it be a vagrant hangout anymore!	Jun 13, 2013 6:11 AM
85	Remove the transients permanently	Jun 13, 2013 6:10 AM
86	Get the homeless to stop camping there. It will never be a nice place until that is accomplished.	Jun 12, 2013 11:06 PM
87	Somewhere to park	Jun 12, 2013 1:05 PM
88	Take the fencing down! I would be going there now to enjoy it. Give us our park back.	Jun 12, 2013 10:38 AM
89	A beer festival like Portland's	Jun 12, 2013 10:30 AM
90	Maybe a couple of grills and picnic tables, a small native wildlife habitat garden, vegetative barriers to drown out traffic noise...	Jun 12, 2013 10:14 AM
91	Food trailer in or around the park, live music, special events, movie screenings	Jun 12, 2013 9:56 AM
92	Summer concerts in the bandstand.	Jun 12, 2013 9:03 AM
93	Music events ... although I realize that might not be good for the grass. Weddings. Paths and benches.	Jun 12, 2013 8:58 AM
94	Shade and trees	Jun 12, 2013 12:04 AM
95	Live downtown and want and need more green space for residents, workers, visitors and area folk who enjoy coming into town. CRITICAL - Homeless are NOT allowed in the park at any time!!!!!!!!! They have taken over the benches	Jun 11, 2013 8:55 PM

Q2. 2) What would you like to see in Wooldridge Square more than anything else? What would make you go out of your way and seek out Wooldridge as a place for fun, contemplation, repose, delight?

	around the downtown and on the LBL Trail. The city must have a humane and long term solution, so that we can have a safe and clean and welcoming downtown. Who is working on this huge problem???? Need to fund ample money for upkeep - flowers, trees, mowing, etc.	
96	Music. Have a variety of bands. Schedule some in the winter/spring/fall. (Why are most music events in Austin during the sweltering summer??) Food trucks during concerts, soup, hot chocolate.	Jun 11, 2013 5:08 PM
97	More places to sit, more shaded areas, maybe more picnic tables. It would be a great place for a picnic.	Jun 11, 2013 4:32 PM
98	Live music in the afternoon.	Jun 11, 2013 3:48 PM
99	Shade covered seating, tables for eating, food trailers, live music not amplified, onsite maintenance and security personnel, native plantings with floral displays such as wildflowers. Public art with a participatory aspect maybe water play for a cooling effect. Broad walkways to accommodate various uses. Lawn for picnic, sunbathing, and resting. Limit skateboards, roller blading, bicycling. Educational feature, maybe part of the art.	Jun 11, 2013 3:43 PM
100	Live music in the band stand.	Jun 11, 2013 2:28 PM
101	Less homeless people More activity - more scheduled events/activities/programming and more places to sit and enjoy, like tables for picnics and a water feature to enjoy and watch others enjoying	Jun 11, 2013 1:26 PM
102	Retain and improve the gazebo. Schedule events on a regular basis of various kind to attract people. Parks & Rec. should work with the Library and AISD to arrange Saturday and summer reading events for kids. High School bands and music groups from all AISD schools should be regularly scheduled. Work with the City to provide alternative for the homeless who sleep there because there is no crowd/activity/noise that would make it less inviting.	Jun 11, 2013 12:42 PM
103	A community garden, there really isnt much that could be done with a land lock square but a community garden would be really wonderful investment for the community.	Jun 11, 2013 12:25 PM
104	SHOWS, EVENTS	Jun 11, 2013 12:16 PM
105	I would like Woolridge to be safe and welcoming. It's good bird habitat there-- how about some low key water features to draw them in.	Jun 11, 2013 12:07 PM
106	Any free music events: high school groups, theater groups, any of the music camps that are in town, general music interest groups, ie: marching bands, folk music, jazz jams, bluegrass jams, ragtime.	Jun 11, 2013 11:29 AM
107	Get rid of the Mobile Loaves and Fishes. They are just enablers of the homeless people who congregate in Wooldridge park. I dont me to cruel but I dont like enablers whether it is drug or food.	Jun 11, 2013 11:20 AM
108	I stopped going there because it had become a flop house for the disenfranchised. The fact that the mobile food wagon stops there encouraged	Jun 11, 2013 11:05 AM

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this. They should stop distributing food there and perhaps altogether. It encourages people to come here from other cities. There is no where to sit in the shade without encountering people who ask you for money or are drunk or mentally ill. Not a place for kids. Clean up the weird element and add some shade. The more shade the better. I would go to see music, but not out in the heat of the day. Why do we provide so much for homeless who come here from other cities and states? We should only provide for those homeless we generate here in Austin and instead of just feeding them in the street, get them on their own two feet when possible. And, as always, people who are mentally ill need to be cared for in an institution not in the street. Unless the bad odors and nutty people are gone, few people are going to want to go there.

109	Where is it? Events, music.	Jun 11, 2013 10:45 AM
110	I would love to see a variety of interesting/comfy places to sit among gardens of native plants that attract birds and bees. I would like to check out a book from a library cart and read until the sun goes down. Oh, and there's a small jazz combo playing on the gazebo.	Jun 11, 2013 10:24 AM
111	I would like there to be something physical that informs people about the historical significance of the park - with so many new people moving into Austin, it would be a cultural service. I would also like to see a very contemporary approach to marrying the historical with current art/technology/site furniture which could draw people in to consistently and actively use the park in every season.	Jun 11, 2013 9:47 AM
112	healthy heritage trees that are watered properly and are given at least 3/4 of the critical root zone (a circular area about 30 ft. long from the trunk out) to be of low use, with few people standing on it and no tents or benches to not compress the soil, and with at most 3 inches of mulch so that the mulch does not absorb all the water intended for the tree. For 6-12 months after soil aeration (that was done to all heritage trees last September), it is critical to continue to provide ADEQUATE amounts of water (about 600 gallons per tree every 3 weeks of no rain from June to September) so that new feeder roots grow to replace the many that were destroyed by the soil aeration. Forever after soil aerations, it is important to reduce the use of the critical root zone to avoid recompacting the soil, or at least give the tree a break for 3-5 years to let roots grow again in soft soil. Do not let any vehicle (trucks, golf carts, bicycles) drive under the canopies of the trees. This includes riding mowers, so keep the trees mulched so that mowers do not drive on the root zone. Check mulch thickness to not exceed 3 inches because mulch absorbs water and the roots will get much less water with deeper mulch layers, unless the automatic irrigation is adjusted based on soil moisture 6 inches deep in the soil to compensate for this. Ask PARD to water these trees during Summer every 3 weeks of no rain. For more information email us at joinAHTF@gmail.com	Jun 11, 2013 9:44 AM
113	shade, flowers	Jun 11, 2013 9:43 AM
114	I would love to see more live music in the park.	Jun 11, 2013 9:07 AM
115	Music at noon, more weekend events and benches on which to sit and watch the activities.	Jun 11, 2013 8:58 AM

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116	The park must be kept clean	Jun 11, 2013 8:47 AM
117	I would like to see a ban on overnight sleeping. I used to walk by in the morning and see people just waking up and already drinking and smoking pot. Pretty disgusting to see this in a nice park.	Jun 11, 2013 8:27 AM
118	Hate to say it, but I don't feel safe there with all the homeless folks milling about. Perhaps, the new irrigation system coming on in the morning will encourage these folks to move along, like at Republic Square Park.	Jun 11, 2013 8:18 AM
119	Interesting built features like Millennium Park in Chicago - huge splash pad, amphitheater, etc	Jun 11, 2013 8:18 AM
120	I would rather have a park closer to my home than having to drive to Woolridge Square. If we are trying to be an eco-friendly, eco-conscious city that has a public park in every neighborhood why would I want to support Woolridge Square?	Jun 11, 2013 8:10 AM
121	I would like to see some shade added to the park on the edges with large trees planted. I would love to have some flowering plantings that brighten up the area. The park used to be a picnic area during long court trials back when Mr. Wooldridge donated the space. How about some permanent seating options with benches added again around the perimeter.	Jun 11, 2013 6:01 AM
122	Keep it clean, and not let the homeless take it over for camps, hang outs etc. It would be a great place to have concerts, poetry slams, and such on a cool star lit evening	Jun 11, 2013 12:12 AM
123	No longer used as a feeding destination for the homeless by various charitable organizations. It keeps the people away who contribute to the greatness of the city and county.	Jun 10, 2013 9:34 PM
124	I'd like to feel safer. The homeless folks hanging around are totally fine, but the dogs off leash scare my and my child.	Jun 10, 2013 7:41 PM
125	Musical events	Jun 10, 2013 6:50 PM
126	Shade and open-green space. Programming in the pavilion. Concerts/presentations/something other than giant chess.	Jun 10, 2013 6:25 PM
127	Interactive components. Such as board games, musical instrument (piano), yoga, MikeDatx@gmail.com	Jun 10, 2013 5:45 PM
128	I wish we had more food cart vendors in and around the park. In addition, I wish there were music/entertainment performances during lunch hours. There could even be busking (licensed) in and around the park.	Jun 10, 2013 3:34 PM
129	Please do not tear down the Gazebo whatever you do. I think it would be a nice location to take a sack lunch. A good sized water feature would be a nice addition. Quirky seating areas?	Jun 10, 2013 2:18 PM
130	It's not near anything I go to regularly, so I'm not sure. It would take a specific event or maybe some interactive feature like a cool art installation or a fun	Jun 10, 2013 1:22 PM

Q2. 2) What would you like to see in Wooldridge Square more than anything else? What would make you go out of your way and seek out Wooldridge as a place for fun, contemplation, repose, delight?

	playground for my kid.	
131	nice clean table and benches, under the trees so that you can go outside and have your lunch. You can have a nice clean quiet to just sit and relax for 30 minutes.	Jun 10, 2013 12:01 PM
132	In order to go out of my way to enjoy this park, would mean it would have to be a place I would want to take my children, so a decent playground and splash pads would be ideal. During the work day, I think I would be more inclined to visit the park if it had adequate seating/eating areas - I could enjoy the outdoors during the lunch hour.	Jun 10, 2013 9:59 AM
133	No homeless camping out.	Jun 10, 2013 8:18 AM
134	It was a great place to sit on the grass during lunch times to visit with friends or read until transients took it over.	Jun 10, 2013 7:43 AM
135	A police presence to keep the homeless from camping in the park, ruining the grass, trashing the park and using it for a restroom. The homeless that have taken over the park prior to the renovation made the park someplace I did not want to go.	Jun 7, 2013 12:31 PM
136	What would make me utilize the park would be for the homeless and EDP people not to be laid out all across the park with their dogs not on leashes. Since you cannot control that I will not be using the park. I'm sure they will enjoy the new grass you planted to slepp on with city tax dollars.	Jun 7, 2013 9:07 AM
137	Music!	Jun 7, 2013 9:00 AM
138	Frankly, more than anything else I would like to see Mobile Loaves and Fishes be prohibited from using the park as a feeding station. If MLF returns to the park I will not go there.	Jun 7, 2013 8:56 AM
139	Less homeless people	Jun 7, 2013 8:53 AM
140	Please stop the loitering of the homeless folks in the park. While I have nothing against those folks, the begging is a difficult thing to deal with.	Jun 7, 2013 8:25 AM
141	some picnic tables and a regulation on loitering. Maybe even a seperate doggy area.	Jun 7, 2013 8:16 AM
142	Music! Small orchestra or band ensemble. Music to stroll, congregate, picnic to. Not so much a "rock concert" type of atmosphere.	Jun 6, 2013 10:10 PM
143	Less homeless people who use the park to sleep at night and then staying there most of the day as well. Ok for sleeping but not for daytime occupation.	Jun 6, 2013 4:07 PM
144	Comfortable places to sit on the grass. Benches.	Jun 6, 2013 3:48 PM
145	an empty gazebo	Jun 6, 2013 3:31 PM
146	Perhaps just a few more, but not too many, benches, etc., for sitting and enjoying the park.	Jun 6, 2013 2:39 PM

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147	LIVE MUSIC ON THE GREEN. DRUM CIRCLES AND FEWER SCARY HOMELESS PEOPLE	Jun 6, 2013 2:19 PM
148	Movie nights in the park would be a fun way to get people to come enjoy it in those cooler autumn evenings--the hills are great for everyone to have a view. Outdoor classical music concerts? Or perhaps a pie social? Is Austin too big for that?	Jun 6, 2013 1:45 PM
149	The park has been an area that I have found unsafe due to the large population of homeless persons making their home there. There is always trash and the strong smell of urine around the large trees. I would not bring my children there unless there was some security or permanent fencing. Also, the stage appears to be facing the wrong direction for performances-just an fyi.	Jun 6, 2013 1:24 PM
150	Concerts.	Jun 6, 2013 12:44 PM
151	It's a tiny park, so the less you put in it, the better. Keep it as green as possible. Trees and flowers. Occasional UNAMPLIFIED musical performances. Nothing that would attract a mob and beat the park to death.	Jun 6, 2013 11:52 AM
152	I would like to see it restored and maintained. Its original design is just fine and doesn't need any embellishment.	Jun 6, 2013 11:36 AM
153	Make it bike friendly. Get the homeless out of there. That was the majority of what I saw every time I went by.	Jun 6, 2013 11:29 AM
154	Fewer homeless folks camping out on the gazebo.	Jun 6, 2013 11:22 AM
155	Keep the bandstand!	Jun 6, 2013 11:14 AM
156	events with music in the gazebo maybe? like, in the early evening when it's a little cooler?	Jun 6, 2013 11:12 AM
157	I'd love to see a regular weekly or monthly get together- a symphony, plays, movies- free and open to the public with information presented on a website in advance. Just something by the community for the community to enjoy.	Jun 6, 2013 11:11 AM
158	I'd eat lunch there if there were food trailers nearby.	Jun 6, 2013 11:10 AM
159	A splash pad.	Jun 6, 2013 10:51 AM
160	Car and bike parking; shade; splash pad or other water feature; festivals.	Jun 6, 2013 9:22 AM
161	green space, large trees, no trash cans, no bums, return of Sunday afternoon concerts that used to take place in the early 70's	Jun 6, 2013 7:32 AM
162	I would love to have Wooldridge sponsor "jazz evenings" or ensemble performances since it is a natural amphitheater. Also,, in the past...very long ago past, it was the center of activity. Hard to recreate now but events and performances seem an obvious choice. Even movie nights? The shift towards Waller Creek will no doubt have a gravity that will be hard to overcome but Wooldridge can compete by offering completely different types of events like concerts, plays ballets....perhaps a zach scott event. just a thought.	Jun 5, 2013 9:24 PM

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163	Bands in the gazebo	Jun 5, 2013 6:57 PM
164	I am not in that area enough to be likely to use the park no matter what it has to offer. However, I hope that the historic pavilion can be preserved and that the historic character can be maintained.	Jun 5, 2013 3:08 PM
165	It is not what I would like to see in but what I don't want to see - which is a poorly maintained park and the vagrants.	Jun 5, 2013 2:44 PM
166	I now have a 4-year-old and I would like to see more kid-centered activities.	Jun 5, 2013 2:40 PM
167	When I saw Charleston mayor Joseph Riley speak in Austin last year at the Paramount (Preservation Austin event), he spoke to the importance of having development and historic preservation work hand in hand, walking the same path in a parallel relationship. AND, he mentioned the importance to his city of not having every green or open space be an event center. He said that you also need the parks where you can meet a friend, eat lunch, sunbathe, etc. without the noise pollution of a party or band or rally. I am concerned that in Austin there is too much anxiety around having EVENTS go on ALL THE TIME and have them be INCREDIBLE and AWESOME because we are SUCH A COOL CITY. Chill, dear neighbors. We are bringing people into our fair city for a multitude of reasons, and we'll keep them for a multitude of reasons, but we won't lose them because there isn't something to do in a park one weekend. People like to be in touch with their history, and Wooldridge Park is ideal for that. With its bowl-shaped topography and its location between the library and the county complex, it doesn't readily lend itself to too much outside of easily paced activities. Let it be what it is, and let's not try to force it to be anything more. Delightful repose doesn't have to be less desirable than active, sensory events requiring food, permits, security, etc.	Jun 5, 2013 2:36 PM
168	more shade! fewer homeless people!	Jun 5, 2013 2:35 PM
169	I would like to see more shade and accommodations for picnicking. I think people who work in that area might enjoy that.	Jun 5, 2013 2:31 PM
170	Music, games, a take-and-leave library.	Jun 5, 2013 2:13 PM
171	Maybe some interesting sculptures and/or water features.	Jun 5, 2013 1:43 PM
172	Music Theater School events Workout / Cross Fit Dog Park Downtown events / happy hours Picnics No homeless	Jun 5, 2013 10:14 AM
173	Make it safe feeling by keeping vagrants from hanging out there. Fill it in so it doesn't feel so seperated from the street and isolated.	Jun 5, 2013 9:24 AM
174	Please, oh please, make sure there are nice public bathrooms available so I don't have to go to the jail to tinkle. That was a HORRENDOUS experience and didn't seem to match with the lovely symphony music that we were enjoying. That was the first and last time I went to Wooldridge Square Park.	Jun 5, 2013 8:19 AM
175	I'd love to see big limestone slabs anchored into the hills so you can sit on them or lean against them to read a book.	Jun 4, 2013 3:48 PM

