Our work this semester explores the potential of implementing quality-of-life improvements, as laid out by Imagine Austin, in conjunction with the preservation of affordable multifamily residential buildings in Austin, Texas. Four case studies demonstrate the power of using urban design along with more traditional interventions to preserve affordable housing. We believe that these proposals are a physical manifestation of the course theme; they are both “green” and “inclusive.”

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English Aire Apartments

English Aire Apartments are re-envisioned as a green and inclusive family-friendly community. Preservation of affordability and proposed changes to the land use code allow underutilized parking spaces to be transformed into a vibrant community garden, playgrounds, and green space for all ages to enjoy.

**Strategies**

- Madison’s Troy Gardens + Cohousing Community
- Austin’s 2014 Complete Streets Ordinance
- New York City’s Reduced Parking Requirements for Affordable Housing

**Facts + Figures**

- **Year Built:** 1973
- **Unit types:** Studio, One-, Two-, and Three-bedroom
- **Number of Units:** 229
- **Number of Parking Spaces:** 300
- **Typology:** “Big Box”
- **Ownership:** Corporate
- **Average Rent:** $575-1,120/month
- **Nearest Schools:** Linder (1.1 mi.), Baty (1.6 mi.)
- **Nearest Safe Street Crossing:** 1/3 mi.
- **Nearest Park:** 1.4 mi.

**Implementation**

1. Reduced parking requirements for affordable housing.
2. Complete Street prioritization along Imagine Austin corridors with affordable housing.
3. Partnership with community organizations such as Sustainable Food Center or Green Corn Project.

**Proposal**

Community gardens replace redundant parking along Burton Road creating a green community amenity and providing access to fresh, healthy food.

**Complete Streets**

Complete Streets roadway improvements create a safer street environment for all road users and improve residents’ access to transit.

**Community Gardens**

Community gardens replace redundant parking along Burton Road creating a green community amenity and providing access to fresh, healthy food.

**Play**

Playscape and central lawn provide passive recreation and community-building opportunities.
Warren House

Warren House is situated at 2439 Town Lake Circle. With development pressure in the Riverside area, Warren House remains a viable site for acquisition and/or improvement. Connections in the area via urban pedestrian/bike trails can enhance livability and connectivity. Additionally, xeriscaping is a cost-saving option that can be implemented by the property owner. This simple quick fix can effectively reduce maintenance and save money in the long term.

Strategies

1. Easement acquisition can be headed by the City of Austin to acquire trail right of way. Property owners might be open to offering an easement that benefits their tenants. The City would be able to acquire through other means via the Riverside comprehensive plan.

2. A walkway and bikeway can be designed to provide a safe and secure trail. Safety concerns remain an issue of residents in the area.

3. Reach out to the property owner regarding xeriscape and cost saving potential.

Facts + Figures

- Year Built: 1975
- Unit types: Studio, One-bedroom
- Average Rent: $456-632/month
- Number of Units: 58
- Ownership: Corporate
- Nearest Grocery Store: 750ft
- Nearest Transit Stop: .25 mi.
- Nearest Park: .5 mi.

Steps to Implementation

1. Easement acquisition can be headed by the City of Austin to acquire trail right of way. Property owners might be open to offering an easement that benefits their tenants. The City would be able to acquire through other means via the Riverside comprehensive plan.

2. A walkway and bikeway can be designed to provide a safe and secure trail. Safety concerns remain an issue of residents in the area.

3. Reach out to the property owner regarding xeriscape and cost saving potential.

Xeriscaping is cost effective for property owners.
- Saves water and money
- Low maintenance (less landscaping costs)
- Perfect for hot summer conditions

The Riverside Master Plan envisions connectivity via enhanced street networks and bicycle/pedestrian trails.
Green and Inclusive Corridors

5317, 5403, 5402, 5406 Jeff Davis

These four properties, all owned by the same small investor, offer an opportunity in the Burnet corridor to design a community complete with green infrastructure and transit-oriented development.

**Steps to Implementation:**

1. Replace traditional asphalt parking lots with permeable pavement.
2. Provide open space for clean air, community, recreation, and drainage.
3. Install crosswalks and signage to indicate that this is a shared right-of-way.

**Facts + Figures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buildings:</th>
<th>Casa Norte</th>
<th>Elm Tree</th>
<th>Saliito</th>
<th>Casa del Sol</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner:</td>
<td>Ronald Bruce Aitken</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Number of Units:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Number of Parking Spaces:</td>
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<td>Average Rent:</td>
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<td>Closest MetroRapid Stop:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closest Park:</td>
<td>1.7 mi.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Jeff Davis is a unique right-of-way: low-traffic, but just off busy Burnet, where retail and transit are readily available—ideal for a shared street on which travelers are reminded that all modes of transit are welcome.

The rebuilt lot between Casa Norte and Elm Tree, already in use as an informal dog park, provides a potential centerpiece in an area relatively far from the nearest park.

Abutting the floodplain, this lot is ideal for flood control through green infrastructure.

**Community and Regional Planning**

School of Architecture

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The University of Texas at Austin

Community and Regional Planning

School of Architecture
Muroc Street (North Ridge Terrace)
Muroc Street is re-envisioned as a comfortable street full of amenity for low-income households. Preservation of affordability and urban design changes using traffic calming and a shared streets model as a guide will achieve this goal.

Precedents

Facts + Figures

- Years Built: 1967-1969
- Ownership before: W Sun Trust Bank
- Ownership After: Nonprofit
- Number of Buildings: 7
- Number of Units Before: 46
- Number of Units After: 70
- Amenities Before: Pool
- Amenities After: Pool, Park, Playground, Comfortable Shared Street, Shade

Proposal

Amenity

- Concrete Wasteland to Outdoor Amenity
- Hostile and Barren to Shared and Shaded

Implementation

1. Nonprofit acquisition and rehab including energy retrofits and playground installation.
2. Nonprofit gain approval for lowered parking ratio for 2103 Muroc.
3. Partnership with City to transform right of way.