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# CRESTVIEW

## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

### NEWSLETTER

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DECEMBER 2020

## Ryan Drive Project Enters Request for Proposal Phase

By Anne-Charlotte Patterson, CNA Vice President

You've probably seen the old cartoon that was created to help kids understand the lengthy, multi-step process of how a bill gets signed into law, told from the perspective of a talking, singing and very hopeful bill. After working with the City of Austin for almost 3 years on a development path for the lot at 6909 Ryan Drive, I know how that little bill feels! It's taken a while, but we've reached an exciting milestone – the Request for Proposals (RFP) stage!

Quick (sorta) history: The process of transforming the dusty, city-owned 5-acre storage facility on Ryan Dr. got kickstarted years ago by some visionary neighbors who recognized that the land had the potential to provide tremendous community benefits. Efforts to convert the parcel to parkland stalled out at the city level as ATX housing costs rose. In 2017, Council Member Pool restarted things by asking Crestview Neighborhood Association (CNA) to form a subcommittee tasked with community outreach and recommendations for the parcel. The Ryan Dr. Working Group was born! This diverse 14-person team was made up of residents from the nearest neighborhoods, including me as facilitator.

Our group built a detailed community survey which received over 600 thoughtful responses, and from that data created a robust recommendation report that CNA submitted to the City in May 2018. City staffers were quite impressed with the high level of community engagement (duh, obviously our neighborhood is awesome!) The report's 4 main stated objectives are: 1. Housing, 50% of which should be affordable. 2. Good-sized chunk of amenity-rich parkland 3. Easy, bike- and pedestrian- friendly access to the transit at Crestview Station 4. Flexible, affordable, community and creative space.

In fall 2018, working group members helped write a city council resolution based on the report, then we hustled to garner council member support. City council voted yes, unanimously! Next up, in 2019/2020 we provided community guidance to a team of city staffers and consultants as they worked out various development scenarios based on the 4 objectives noted above. They held presentations and sought more feedback from the community. Once again, y'all showed up – with excellent input and support.

At long last, this fall the city issued a RFP inviting developers to submit plans and bids for the parcel. This was the big reveal! Would the RFP match what the community has been asking for??

Whew. It pretty much does. The RFP specifies: housing with at least 50% affordable units, at least 1.25 acres of park/open space, 7K sq. ft. of community/creative/local retail



Sample development scenarios for the Ryan Drive property from the City of Austin Economic Development Department Request for Proposal packet



space, and transit access. The RFP packet, which is about a million pages long, includes the Ryan Drive Working Group Report. Some of the potential bidders have reached out to the CNA board and working group members to get more insight into community expectations, which we've been happy to provide. Proposals are due Dec 17.

So is our work done? Definitely not – we're like that little bill who's survived several steps but is still a long way from becoming a law. After the City's purchasing department reviews all proposals, they'll recommend a proposer(s) to Council in mid-2021. Then as a neighborhood, it's time for us to re-engage so the plan City Council passes aligns with the objectives that the community and staff worked so hard to define. Not gonna lie – it probably won't be simple or easy. It takes a village, y'all. But if any village is up for the task, it's this one! If you have any questions at all, feel free to contact me – [annecharlottep@gmail.com](mailto:annecharlottep@gmail.com). More updates to come...

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### NEWSLETTER

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#### CNA Contact Information

P. O. Box 9505, Austin, TX 78766  
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CNA General Meetings are held the second Monday of every month at 7:00 PM at the Crestview United Methodist Church, 1300 Morrow St.

Treasurer: [joincrestview@gmail.com](mailto:joincrestview@gmail.com)

Twitter: @CNAneighbors

Facebook: [CrestviewNeighborhoodAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/CrestviewNeighborhoodAssociation)

#### Neighborhood Email Groups

[crestview-gardeners@googlegroups.com](mailto:crestview-gardeners@googlegroups.com)  
[crestview-parents@googlegroups.com](mailto:crestview-parents@googlegroups.com)

## COVID-19 Rock Art

Photos by Marilyn Querejazu

I took these photos along the Arroyo in the early pandemic months. Thanks to the anonymous artists for lightening our lives a little.



**Quote: Susan Hale: "Love all the people you can. The sufferings from love are not to be compared to the sorrows of loneliness."**

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## It's Not Too Early to Renew Your 2021 CNA Membership Dues (or join as a new member)

Since the early 1980's when the Crestview Neighborhood Association was formed, CNA has been dedicated to preserving our neighborhood as a safe, livable place for its residents. To join the association or to renew your dues through December 2021, use the form below. Make checks out to Crestview Neighborhood Association or CNA. Or you can use PayPal by going to <https://crestviewna.com/join/>



Crestview Neighborhood Association  
PO Box 9505, Austin, TX 78766  
[www.crestviewna.com](http://www.crestviewna.com)

All residents are invited to join  
Annual dues are \$10 per household

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ New Member [ ] Renewing Member [ ]

Household Members (List up to 4): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



## Howdy Neighbor!

By Mike Lavigne, CNA President

Not that one day is much distinguishable from another these days, but the holidays are upon us and we'll soon be closing out what for so many has been a pretty rough year. I'll forgo the end of year platitudes as we'll all spend enough time doom-scrolling over the coming "break".

But let's remember that the holidays are already a tough time for many, and this year the "many" will be more than last year. Let's look out for our neighbors and friends and try and be a little nicer to each other as we (hopefully) enter the final rounds of mass quarantine and look forward to most of next year being a bit better than this one.

While we are at it, let's also look out for each other's packages! Doorcams are great and all but even better is a neighbor with eyes on your porch. And to that end, let's try and remember to leave our porch lights on at night. Our neighborhood has some dark pockets on our streets and a little porch light can go a long way towards theft prevention and safety.

### Lil' Lane Of Lights!

I'm excited to announce that some of your regular community event planners are cooking up a festive, socially distant holiday embrace for the neighborhood! The first ever Lil' Lane of Lights will be a display of 7-8 distanced stations in the side yard of the Resurrection Episcopal Church across Justin Lane from Lala's Lil' Nugget.

It will have a path to walk along and feature 8 local businesses and organizations that have volunteered to create "social media worthy" lit photo-ops. It will kick off with a lighting party at the church from 5-7pm on Dec 11th and run, unstaffed, every night through January 3rd. You and your pod

will be able to experience what will undoubtedly be a very weird experience at your own pace and comfort level.

Each display will have an opportunity to "up-vote" the entry by giving electronically to the charity of their choice. Lala's and the Violet Crown Clubhouse will also be selling limited edition t-shirts to commemorate the event and raise a few more bucks for a good cause.

This is our first go at this, so we will welcome any feedback but also please understand that we are 100% making this up as we go!

As usual, I can be found at the VC Clubhouse Wednesday mornings around 10am for coffee and Thursday evenings for libations. If you'd like to share an idea, opinion, gripe or drink with me come on by and let's chew the fat.

I do hope you have a safe holiday and happy new year. It continues to be an honor and true privilege to serve the best neighborhood in Austin.



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# Wildflower Area in Brentwood Park

by Friends of Brentwood Park (FOBP)

Austin Parks and Recreation (PARC) has approved plans for a wildflower area in the northwest corner of Brentwood Park between the Yates' fence line and gravel trail. The project is intended to provide ecological diversity, visual interest, support for wildlife, a platform for discussing the region's history, and an opportunity for park users to become more familiar with plants native to the Austin area.

The project location was determined after completion of a smaller trial wildlife area in the northeast corner of the park. The details of this project's boundaries and installation (see diagram below) were made in consultation with PARC's program coordinators and park maintenance team.

Initial installation will involve removing bermuda grass, rye grass and other weeds by hand to expose bare dirt, scattering wildflower seeds and then tamping the seeds to ensure good contact with the soil. Depending on germination rates, we may introduce native grass plugs. Although we discussed options such as solarization, tilling and deep removal of existing plants, the experience of FOBP members and of PARC staff indicates that a program of timed mowing and seed scattering will be as or more effective in this location.

We hope to see the native wildflowers become established over a three year period. During that period, we anticipate scattering new seeds each fall and mowing the area at intervals that discourage bermuda and rye grasses while enabling the wildflowers and native grasses to flourish. We anticipate removing invasive/nuisance weeds during regular spring and fall workdays. We also anticipate monitoring the planting for any encroachment onto the trail. If the wildflowers fail to become established over that period or if the area is beyond our anticipated ability to maintain, we will allow it to revert to its current condition.

The installation is scheduled for December 9, 2020, 9am-12pm. Anyone interested in volunteering to join us can sign up here: <https://austinparks.givepulse.com/event/213579-Private-Volunteer-Opportunity-Wildflower-Meadow-installation-at-Brentwood-Park%21>

The below diagram is general but is intended to show:

- a setback from the trail of ~12"-18" to allow trail maintenance equipment and mowing equipment space to work and maneuver around the area;
- a groundcloth buffer of ~12" along the ground inside the fence line to limit the extent to which wildflowers/grasses protrude through the fence;
- the boundary lines, which run from the Texas Mountain Laurel in the Waterboxx to the end of the grassy area at the opening in the fence.





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## City of Austin COVID-19 Health and Wellness Support Line

The COVID-19 Health and Wellness Support Line provides short-term counseling and support to Austin workers and families whose mental health has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Austin residents can speak with a counselor from Alliance Work Partners through a confidential 24-hour support line.

- For help, please call 1-888-855-7483
- Hours: Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week until December 30, 2020.
- Services are free and available in over 150 languages.
- Alliance Work Partners' counselors support individuals experiencing stress, depression, anxiety, domestic violence, alcohol and drug abuse/dependency, marital and family issues, and more.
- Counselors also provide resources and referrals for various needs, including childcare, eldercare, legal, and financial support.

The COVID-19 Health and Wellness Support Line with Alliance Work Partners is funded through the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and will close on December 30, 2020 due to CARES Act requirements.

## Thank You to the Supporters of the Crestview Pet Waste Stations!

Crestview Neighborhood Association would like to thank the people who have contributed to the upkeep of the two pet waste stations in the neighborhood (one at the corner of Woodrow and Arroyo Seco and the other at Arroyo Seco and W. St. Johns). First, thanks to Nina Hanson for her many years of loyal attention to her station. Although she

recently "retired", Dave Austin has graciously volunteered to step into that role. Thanks, also to the Lavigne family for their continued maintenance of their station. Be sure to give them all some positive strokes if you see them!

CNA would also like to thank the generous contributions from neighbors that go towards the purchase of pet waste bags and trashcan liners. Since May of 2019, CNA has spent \$540 dollars on bags and liners for the stations that was offset by \$125 in contributions to help keep them stocked.

Dog waste cleanup makes the environment healthier for pets, their owners and non-pet owners as well. Everyone wins when dog waste is properly picked-up and disposed of.

If you would like to make a small donation yourself of \$5, you can use the QR code posted at the stations which will take you to the website, or you can go directly to [http://crestviewna.com/pet-stations\\_donate/](http://crestviewna.com/pet-stations_donate/) and use the PayPal button.

## Tips for Avoiding Holiday Scams

With the holiday shopping season in full swing, scammers are shopping too - looking for people to separate from their money. Here are some tips to help you outsmart those scammers and donate safely.

Pay for online purchases with a credit card. Credit cards often offer benefits and protections for returns and online purchases. If unauthorized charges pop up on your statement, you'll be able to dispute those charges. Credit card protections can vary, so check with your issuer.

Buy gift cards for gifts, not for payments. Gift cards are a scammer's favorite way to steal your money. Anyone who contacts you and demands that you pay them with a gift card, for any reason, is always a scammer.

Research charities before you donate to make sure your donation goes where you want it to, not into the hands of a scammer. If someone calls, asking you to give to a charity, don't let them rush you into making a donation.

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