

Transforming Waller Creek

The University of Texas at Austin is launching a project to transform the stretches of Waller Creek and Hemphill Branch that flow through or near campus. (See [campus map](#).) The project is intended to improve sustainability of the creek area by removing invasive species and planting native and adaptive plants, an approach similar to that recently implemented by the university on Waller Creek in the new Health District. The project is also intended to enhance safety and



visibility within the campus area of the creek.

A consultant team of Michael Van Valkenburgh and Associates, Applied Ecological Services and the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center will support the

university's Landscape Services, Environmental Health and Safety, police and other university staff members to develop a management and restoration plan for the university's portion of Waller and Hemphill creeks. Van Valkenburgh and Associates served as the City of Austin consultant on the City's Waller Creek restoration project, south of 15th Street.

On July 19, 2016 Landscape Services began the first phase of implementing the management and restoration plan by pruning overgrown ornamentals and removing invasive species. In addition to removing invasive, non-native plants and trees, Landscape forestry and installation staff are also trimming trees. These efforts will improve safety and visibility while also ecologically restoring the creek. This first phase of the creek transformation effort will range from about Clark Field (west bank) to 24th Street and is expected to be completed by August 24.





Landscape staff will address additional areas as time permits. Future phases will address other sections of the creek.

The Waller Creek project supports a key recommendation of the university's [2014 Landscape Master Plan](#) and [2012 Campus Master Plan](#). The

Landscape Master Plan was developed as a companion document to the Campus Master Plan approved by the Board of Regents in 2013. One of the eight key recommendations of the Campus Master Plan was to transform Waller Creek and the San Jacinto corridor, making it less of a division within campus.

Photos courtesy of Elise Cardenas.