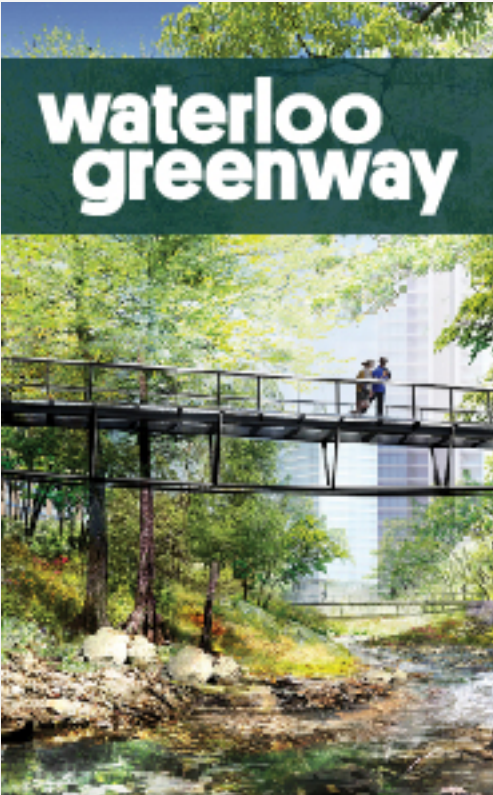
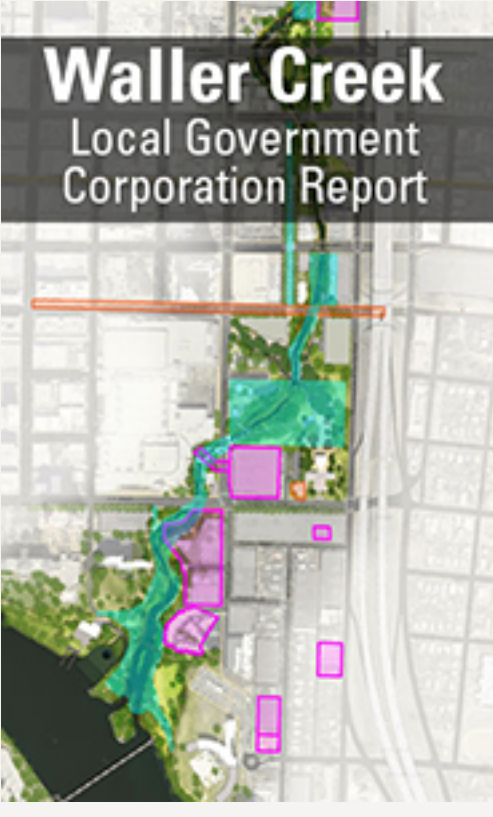


Waller Creek District and Tunnel

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Stretching from Waterloo Park to Lady Bird Lake, the Waller Creek Tunnel helps reduce the risk of flooding in downtown Austin.

The tunnel reduces the size of the floodplain along Waller Creek. In doing so, it helps revitalize the eastern part of downtown. This area is called the Waller Creek District.

The tunnel is approximately 5,600 feet long. It lies 70 feet below the surface and ranges in size from 22 to 26 feet in diameter. It captures floodwaters and releases them into Lady Bird Lake.

The Waller Creek Tunnel was funded through “tax increment financing,” or TIF. The TIF only uses funds generated from the increased property values and property taxes within the Waller Creek District. The TIF not only pays for the tunnel. The TIF is also helping to fund the redevelopment of Waterloo Park as an event venue with the Waterloo Greenway Conservancy. The conservancy and the TIF are also funding a chain of parks and trails along the creek.



The Waller Creek Tunnel releases floodwaters into Lady Bird Lake at this outlet facility.

Tunnel Benefits

- Reduces flood risk to buildings and roads
- Helps revitalize the Waller Creek District
- Allows for reinvestment in parks and trails
- Improves water quality and wildlife habitat in and along Waller Creek
- Provides a constant flow of water in the creek.

Waller Creek District

Because of the tunnel, businesses, governments and nonprofits are able to invest in the Waller Creek District. The City of Austin, the Waterloo Greenway Conservancy and the Waller Creek Local Government Corporation created a vision for the district to guide that investment. There are a mix of private and public projects in the works for this district, including 37 acres of parks and open space. The documents below provide more information:

- [February 2021 Report](#)
- [Waller Creek Corridor Framework Plan](#)

For the [appendices and other documents associated with the Waller Creek Corridor Framework Plan](#), look at the backup documents from the November 9, 2015, meeting of the Waller Creek Local Government Corporation.

Operations and Maintenance

The Waller Creek Tunnel is operated by the City of Austin’s Watershed Protection Department. During floods, staff are on hand to remove debris at entrances to the tunnel. Sometimes, the tunnel must be cleaned to remove sediment and debris.

Except during cleanings, the tunnel is almost always full of water. To maintain water quality, fresh water is drawn in from the lake. This provides a system to maintain a constant flow of water in the creek during dry periods.



A sneak peak inside the tunnel during construction. The tunnel is usually full of water.

Floodplain Status and Redevelopment

The tunnel significantly reduces flood risk between 12th Street and Lady Bird Lake. Post-tunnel floodplain maps are available at www.ATXFloodPro.com. The City of Austin is currently using the post-tunnel floodplain to review development applications.


The hike and bike trail along the creek is still subject to flooding. Flooding may occur quickly along the trail. Users should be aware of their surroundings and be cautious using the trail in heavy rain.

Flood Insurance

Businesses and residents in or near any floodplain should consider flood insurance. Flooding is expensive, and flood insurance protects your finances. In some cases, flood insurance may be required by a lender.

Lenders use FEMA’s Flood Insurance Rate Maps to decide whether flood insurance is needed. These maps are different than the ones the City of Austin has already updated for reviewing new developments. The FEMA maps do not yet reflect the post-tunnel floodplain. The City of Austin is in the process of submitting new floodplain information to FEMA. Lenders may still require flood insurance until new FEMA maps are approved.





- Related Links**
- [Waterloo Greenway Conservancy](#)
 - [Waller Creek Local Government Corporation](#)
 - [Field Operations](#)
 - [FloodPro](#)

- East Austin Environmental Initiative** 
- [East Austin Environmental Initiative \(Spring/Summer 2020\)](#)
 - [Finding Fresh Flow for Fish](#)
 - [Bull Creek District Park - Environmental Features Hike](#)
 - [East Austin Environmental Initiative \(Fall/Winter 2019\)](#)
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