

(Oct. 1990)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**



560

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: Deep Eddy Pool, Eilers Park

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 301 Quarry Street
CITY OR TOWN: Austin
STATE: Texas **CODE:** TX **COUNTY:** Travis **CODE:** 453 **ZIP CODE:** 78703
NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A
VICINITY: N/A

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this (☒ nomination) (☐ request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property (☒ meets) (☐ does not meet) the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant (☐ nationally) (☐ statewide) (☒ locally). (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official

Date

4-17-2003

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ See continuation sheet

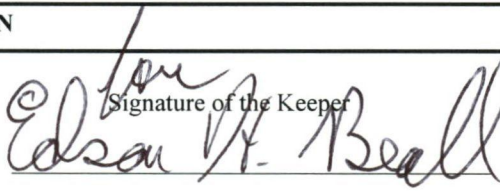
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action



6/23/03

5. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY: Public-Local

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: District

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING
	1	0 BUILDINGS
	1	0 SITES
	1	0 STRUCTURES
	0	0 OBJECTS
	3	0 TOTAL

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation = swimming pool and park

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation = swimming pool and park

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Other: National Park Service Rustic

MATERIALS: FOUNDATION CONCRETE
WALLS STONE: Limestone
ROOF METAL
OTHER

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-6).

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Narrative Description

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach (renamed Eilers Park in 1948), on the north bank of the Colorado River in Austin, Texas, is known simply as "Deep Eddy" by most local residents. A 1935 rustic style L-plan limestone bathhouse with a multi-tiered, pagoda-like roof sits atop a hill overlooking the 1916 concrete swimming pool. Concrete steps and limestone bleachers lead southwest and down to the pool. A grassy lawn, cordoned off by a five-foot chain link fence, surrounds the pool, which is separated by a two-foot limestone retaining wall. The property also includes several large trees and a non-contributing playground and picnic area constructed in 2001. The bathhouse, lawn and pool very closely resemble their appearance in the late 1930s. Additions made to the bathhouse in the 1960s have recently been removed, and the property retains a high degree of integrity.

The Colorado River enters Austin from the north and shifts course to the east just before reaching downtown. Deep Eddy Bathing Beach, or "Deep Eddy," sits at this bend in the river, giving the site a northwest/southeast orientation. (Map 1, Page 14) Deep Eddy Avenue, which begins at Lake Austin Boulevard and dead-ends at the Deep Eddy parking lot, provides the only street access to the park. To the northwest is a City of Austin maintenance yard, and to the southeast is mostly undeveloped land. From the parking lot one can either enter the pool area, through the south side of the bathhouse, or the playground area, via a curving concrete walkway that terminates at the Austin Hike and Bike Trail. (Plan 1, Page 25)

From the bathhouse and parking lot, a grassy hill dotted with cottonwood trees leads down to the pool area, where the site levels off. Terraced into the hill, bleachers with limestone risers and concrete seats provide spectator seating. Adjacent to the bleachers, a concrete stairway framed by a three-foot concrete wall topped with a three-foot chain link fence leads to the pool. The 204-by-99.5-foot pool ranges from nine inches to eight feet deep and is divided into a shallow end and lap pool by a concrete wall. Its blue painted floor gives the un-chlorinated spring water an ultra blue hue. The pool sits a few feet below the plane of the lawn, which is held back by a two-foot high limestone retaining wall. The wall steps in and out around the pool with stairs at the northwest and southeast ends to provide access to the lawn. Four elevated lifeguard chairs sit along the edge of the pool on the concrete perimeter walkway. A few yards southwest of the pool are the steep banks of the Colorado River, which is barely visible through thick vegetation.

Three non-historic storage structures and a pump house, none of which are substantial in size or scale, occupy the pool grounds. A square limestone building, a fenced and roofed area along the southwest fence, and a small square limestone building at the north corner of the pool are used for storage. The pump, which is built into the ground with only a gabled metal cover visible, is found on the northwest lawn near the concrete ramp.

The bathhouse, designed by local architects Dan Driscoll and Delmar Groos, originally had a main entrance at the inside northeast corner of the L, facing the parking lot. The main entrance led to a central reception room under the pagoda roof. This area however, is currently empty, and the primary entrance is an external ticket counter on the southwest elevation. An administration and storage room behind the ticket counter doubles as a divider between the men's and women's dressing rooms. While the dressing rooms are open-air, a flat roof that covers the storage area extends over the ticket counter, supported by columns. (Plan 2, Page 26)

The locker rooms and storage area are the only parts of the bathhouse currently being used. The original men's dressing room, to the northwest, has been divided into the two changing areas and storage room. The square, central section of the building housed the original reception area, an octagonal space centered on crossing halls that led from the entrance to the

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patio and changing areas. A single office occupied each corner of the central section, each one with a diagonal wall facing toward the center of the room to create the octagonal space. Originally, an octagonal administration desk in the center of the room accentuated the room's shape, but it has since been removed. From the reception desk patrons would proceed to their respective dressing rooms at opposite ends of the bathhouse, men to the northwest, and women to the now empty room which forms the stem of the L. The patio, which overlooks the pool, is also currently unused. A large boarded-up window on the south wall of the bathhouse once served as a concession window for the patio.(Figures 1-6, Pages 15-17)

The exterior of the one story bathhouse is simple and unadorned, with little distinction between primary and secondary elevations.(Figures 7-8, Page 18) Built of rough-faced, coursed ashlar limestone capped by a course of wider stones, the bathhouse has very few openings. Doors and windows have simple limestone lintels. The most salient feature of the bathhouse is the pagoda-like roof, composed of three square metal platforms of decreasing size that seem to float a few inches above each other. The flat roof system covers only part of the building, with the rest left uncovered for open-air dressing rooms. The northeast elevation, facing the parking lot, includes the old main entrance, a glass door that is now boarded up.(Figure 9, Page 19) Framing the door are two horizontal rectangular windows, five feet off the ground. A windowless metal door has been added to this elevation to access the storage space behind the ticket counter. The short northwest elevation has no openings. The southwest elevation, which faces the pool, has doorless entries to the two dressing rooms, which are hidden from view by a recessed wall. The patio area has one large window, the old concession window, framed by two smaller horizontal rectangular windows.(Figure 10, Page 19) Continuing southeast, the building steps back to the original women's changing area, which also has a doorless entry screened by an interior wall. Least prominent is the windowless southeast elevation, which faces a grove of trees and is blocked by a chain link fence.

The interior of the bathhouse is equally simple. The load bearing limestone masonry serves as the interior wall finish, and the floors are concrete. The original reception area has plastered ceilings with exposed wood beams and a perimeter beam capping the stone walls. The unused areas of the bathhouse have some damage, mostly to the roof and ceilings, but are in fairly good condition. The current dressing rooms are divided into individual changing areas and shower or toilet stalls by concrete block partitions with shower curtain doors.

Although the rustic bathhouse has a strikingly modern roof, it does not compete with the natural setting of the park. When viewed from the pool, the bathhouse appears as another horizontal limestone tier of the bleachers, and the roof platforms emphasize the horizontally even further.(Figure 11, Page 20)

The site and context of the park have changed little in the past sixty years; it has not been encroached upon by the development of neighboring properties and retains its integrity of location, setting and feeling. The concrete pool, one of the oldest outdoor pools in Texas, is essentially unchanged from its 1916 construction. Although the bathhouse has been reconfigured and only a small area is being used, its original design is still intact. All of the constructed features therefore retain integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. Still in use as a recreation facility, Deep Eddy clearly also retains its integrity of association.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

- ☒ **A** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH EVENTS THAT HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE BROAD PATTERNS OF OUR HISTORY.
- ☐ **B** PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVES OF PERSONS SIGNIFICANT IN OUR PAST.
- ☒ **C** PROPERTY EMBODIES THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION OR REPRESENTS THE WORK OF A MASTER, OR POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUE, OR REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT AND DISTINGUISHABLE ENTITY WHOSE COMPONENTS LACK INDIVIDUAL DISTINCTION.
- ☐ **D** PROPERTY HAS YIELDED, OR IS LIKELY TO YIELD, INFORMATION IMPORTANT IN PREHISTORY OR HISTORY.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Recreation; Architecture

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1902-1953

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1902, 1916, 1935

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Dan Driscoll and Delmar Groos, architects (bathhouse)

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-7 through 8-12).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheet 9-13).

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:

- ☐ State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission*)
- ☐ Other state agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other -- Specify Repository: Austin History Center

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Statement of Significance

In 1902 Mary and Henry Johnson, an enterprising brother and sister, turned a natural reservoir of deep cool water in the Colorado River on their father's land into a private recreational facility open to the public. With its easily accessible location at the end of a streetcar line, Deep Eddy thrived, and the Johnsons sold the bathing beach in 1915 to Austin businessman A.J. Eilers. Eilers built a pool on the site in 1916, and manager George Rowley brought in a new level of summertime entertainment with traveling shows, trapezes and movies. When business began to slow during the depression, Eilers sold the park to the City of Austin. Taking advantage of new money available through the New Deal, the City built a limestone bathhouse on the site in 1935. The new bathhouse followed recent trends in park building design; a compact floor plan with group changing areas kept costs down, open air dressing rooms provided ventilation and sanitation, and the rustic limestone exterior allowed it to blend into its natural setting. Today the property is eligible at the local level of significance under Criterion A in the area of Recreation, for its long history as an Austin recreation area, and Criterion C in the area of Architecture for its excellent example of New Deal-era park architecture.

Recreation Areas in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries

Although the origins of publicly accessible recreation areas can be traced back at least as far as the "pleasure gardens" of 16th and 17th-century Europe, it was not until the mid 19th century that the United States would embrace the concept. With large-scale growth and massive waves of immigration, America's cities grew increasingly crowded. Urban residents who were afforded leisure time began looking for ways to escape the city temporarily. Entrepreneurs responded quickly to the rising demand, developing picnic groves and beer gardens on the edges of cities across the country. These early recreation areas were typically multi-functional social gathering places consisting of open green spaces, frequently along a body of water, that could be used for picnicking, swimming, boating, games, music, dancing and any number of other activities.(Futrell, 1-3)

Perhaps the most significant factor in the early development of recreation areas was the introduction of the electric streetcar in the late 19th century. In cities across the country, rapidly spreading networks of electric streetcars provided easy access to the cities' edges. At the time, trolley companies were charged a fixed rate for their electricity, and to compensate they sought new ways to increase weekend ridership. The companies quickly recognized that establishing recreation areas at the end of trolley lines would serve their interests in several ways, and "trolley parks" sprang up across America. Like the earlier recreation areas, trolley parks were often very simple operations that provided open space for a variety of activities.(Futrell, 3)

As the parks grew increasingly popular, the attractions grew increasingly elaborate. The "Shoot-the-Chutes," in which a boat traveled down an inclined ramp and into a pool, debuted in 1889 and variations of it soon proliferated. The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago introduced the public to the Ferris Wheel, among other rides, and initiated a boom in the development of amusement devices and attractions. The larger trolley parks, like New York's Coney Island, would soon resemble what we know as modern amusement parks.(Futrell, 3-4)

Although not always on pace with the amusement parks of larger cities, the development of recreation areas in Austin followed these national trends. The city's first recreation area grew up around the State Lunatic Asylum, built on the northern edge of Austin in 1861. The asylum was adjacent to a large, flat open area that had been cleared of its native post oak groves, and by 1870 the area was being used as a horse racetrack. The racetrack proved to be incredibly popular and was a primary reason for the 1874 decision to construct the state fairgrounds at the site. Austin hosted the State Fair

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there from 1875 until 1884 (it reopened in Dallas in 1886). Attractions over the years included beer, music, horses, a poultry hall, a rifle gallery, trapshooting (with live pigeons), cockfighting, and a 150-pound cake.(Sitton, 3-7)

Even after the State Fair ceased operation, the fairgrounds continued in use as a racetrack and an informal recreation area, even hosting early University of Texas football games. Beginning around 1890 Monroe Martin Shipe, who had recently established Austin's first electric streetcar company, began to develop the fairgrounds as a new residential neighborhood named Hyde Park, at the northern end of the streetcar line he had just completed. Shipe dedicated a large piece of land in the neighborhood's southwest corner to serve as a recreation "resort," adding a substantial lake and a large pavilion that would host dances and other events and giving the citizens of Austin their first trolley park.(Sitton, 9)

An even larger recreational amenity also emerged in the 1890s, when Austin first dammed the Colorado River. Completed in 1893, the dam's backwater soon formed Lake McDonald. A railway constructed to transport materials to the dam became an electric trolley line and a pavilion and grandstand were built. In addition to theatre and music, a variety of spectacles would entertain the lake's visitors. All types of boating became popular, and large excursion ships like the *Chautauqua* and the *Ben Hur* (the latter of which held 2,000 passengers) began offering cruises and attractions. (Humphrey, 140-141)

The initial planning behind the dam proved to be faulty, however, and by 1897 the water level was routinely very low, leaving only muddy banks. By 1900 the lake held only half of its original capacity, and its popularity as a recreation area naturally declined as well. The dam burst in April 1900, and the city would not even begin to rebuild it for another decade. (Humphrey, 153) Austin's demand for recreation would soon be met, however, with the establishment of a new recreation area at Deep Eddy, just below the dam's site on the Colorado River.

Deep Eddy's Beginnings

In 1858 Charles Johnson, a Swedish immigrant, bought forty acres of land on the Colorado River for thirty dollars an acre. He opened a limestone quarry, on what is now the Deep Eddy parking lot, and operated a lime kiln. Using stone from his quarry, Johnson built a house for himself and his German wife, Emelia Loeschman. Although considerably altered, the house remains just east of the park and is used as an American Legion Post.

In 1902, Mary and Henry Johnson, two of the Johnson's thirteen children, opened the Deep Eddy Bathing Beach on the property.(Figure 12, Page 21) With Lake McDonald gone and a trolley line already in place, the Johnson children had, whether they knew it or not, made a very sound business decision. The name for the bathing beach came from a dangerous eddy in the river caused by a limestone outcropping. Soon after Deep Eddy's opening, however, one of the Johnson brothers dynamited the rock, eliminating the eddy itself but not the name.

A 1908 Austin Statesmen article described the popularity of the recently opened beach:

During the past year or two, "Deep Eddy," that beautiful stretch of the river below the dam, has become a very popular camping ground and at present there are at least thirty tents on both sides of the river along the eddy. Businessmen who are unable to secure vacations can reach these camps by a short walk from the end of the car and spend the nights in this delightful cool place...It is estimated that this point will increase in popularity considerably during the next few years.(Barren)

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With a diving board and a suspended hand trolley, on which swimmers could swing out over the river and fall in, Deep Eddy did thrive. Campsites were often rented for the summer. One gentleman even built a dance floor outside his tent and brought out a phonograph, and another man operated a horse-powered merry-go-round on the site.(Beal, 46) Deep Eddy was not only a popular recreation area, it was also a successful business. At some point during their ownership of the Beach, the Johnsons leased it to Joshua Merrit to manage. Merrit is remembered for strictly enforcing a rule that all girls over the age of 12 must bathe in stockings.(Beal, 46)

The Expansion of Deep Eddy's Attractions

In 1915 A.J Eilers and Partners purchased the Deep Eddy Bathing Beach and hired contractors Max Brueggerman and William Maufrias to build the concrete swimming pool. Reputedly the first open-air pool in Texas, the new pool was open for business by the summer of 1916. (Figure 13, Page 21) Eilers, President of McKeon, Eilers and Co., a wholesale goods firm, was the primary owner of the beach at fifty percent. Ownership of the other two interests of twenty-five percent each changed hands several times. Among these part owners were: Roy Rather, Mr. Tolhurst, Mr. Mather, and George Rowley. Little is known about the smaller shareholders except Rowley, who became part owner and manager in 1916 and used his skills as a promoter to create a carnival-like atmosphere at Deep Eddy.

A former movie theater owner from San Antonio, Rowley erected a movie screen on which free movies played every night during the summer. He used his circus connections to bring acts like Jack Frieth, the human fish, who ate a banana under water, Marcia Burke, the five year old "World Famous Diving Baby," and Lorena and her Diving Horse who, every night at 8:45, dove off a platform into a water-filled, manmade hole near the pool.(Figures 14-15, Page 22) Rowley's son, Bobby Rowley, who was three or four years old at the time, was charged with carrying a sign reading "Horse Dives at 8:45" to advertise.

Bobby Rowley grew up at the pool with his five brothers and sisters and describes the pool as the perfect place for children. There was a Ferris wheel, hobby horses, a high slide, a trapeze, rings all the way across the pool, and a 50 foot diving platform –with intermediate platforms at 20 and 10 feet for the more timid.(Figure 16-17, Page 23) Nineteen rental cottages sat on the hill overlooking the pool. Although they were simple wooden structures intended as summer rentals, Mr. Rowley remembers most of them being occupied by families who lived there year-round. At that time the bathhouse was also a wood structure with wood slat floors in the dressing rooms. The Rowley boys would crawl underneath and collect change that had fallen through.(interview) George Rowley managed the resort until 1925, when Eilers's brother-in-law, Alonzo McKean, took over as manager.

The Transfer to Public Ownership

Around this same time the City of Austin was beginning to focus efforts on the development of a city park system. The first Park Board was appointed in 1926, and a comprehensive city plan was developed. That same year, \$200,000 in park development funds was authorized through a bond election. In 1928 the city adopted a five-year plan and hired its first paid director of Parks and Recreation, James Garrison. The five-year plan was to develop a system of parks ranging from small neighborhood playgrounds to large nature reserves. From 1929 to 1939 the city actively acquired new parklands, among them Deep Eddy.(Zilker Park National Register Nomination).

On May 11, 1935, A.J Eilers sold Deep Eddy Bathing Beach to the City of Austin. "I had cherished the idea of making the city a gift of the park," he said, "but financial conditions of the past few years prevented me from realizing that wish." ("City Purchases Deep Eddy Park") It was, of course, the middle of the depression, and business had also suffered from

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competition with city-owned Barton Springs. During the negotiations the Statesman published a list of property to be included in the sale:

The property offered by Mr. Eilers includes two swimming pools, one for adults and one for children, seven lots and a tract of 4.1 acres, 19 rent houses, bath house, pumping plant, motion picture machine, shooting gallery building, plumbing plant, scales, buildings and equipment, bathing suits, towels, furniture and fixtures. The property also includes store stand equipment, and a radio valued at \$ 4550.04... ("Deep Eddy Sale to City Sought")

Eilers' initial asking price was \$10,500, and he ultimately sold it for \$10,000. Only the land, bathhouse, cottages and concession stand are named in an article written after the sale, so perhaps the other items were sold off elsewhere. In March of 1948, the city renamed the park Eilers Park, after A.J. Eilers. Just as dynamiting the rock that created the eddy, however, it failed to change Deep Eddy's name in people's minds or common usage.

Improvements Under the New Deal

Less than one month after the city purchased the park, a flood destroyed all of the buildings and filled the pool with debris. The pool, which is built on a bed of solid limestone, survived steam shovels being driven into it for cleaning, but the park's wood structures were beyond repair.(Beal 49) By taking advantage of New Deal funds for work relief projects, the city was able to rebuild quickly. Of the \$25,000 needed, \$16,900.19 came from the Works Progress Administration (WPA), with the remainder provided by the city. In addition to a new bathhouse, the project included new landscape features like the limestone stairway and retaining walls. Ground was broken on the project on October 5, 1935, and by the following summer, the bathhouse was open for business. 4,000 people reportedly attended the opening ceremony for the new building. Both dressing rooms were open for inspection, so those who wanted to swim had to come already dressed in their bathing costumes. (Annual Report)

All WPA projects were initiated by a local sponsor, in this case the City of Austin. The sponsor was responsible for bearing a percentage of the cost of a project, however their contribution could come in forms other than cash, like skilled labor, supplies or land. In their application the sponsor was required to provide architectural and engineering sketches, as well as cost and labor analyses that included the contribution they were prepared to make.

The primary goal of the WPA was to get money to people as quickly as possible through federal work relief. They required that ninety percent of the workers on their projects be relief recipients, meaning the majority of the workforce was unskilled. WPA buildings were therefore generally of simple concrete or stone construction with limited and simple ornamentation. The simplicity of modern architecture was well suited to the limits of the WPA workforce, not to mention the limited funds. The Final Report on the WPA describes the relationship between economy and architecture in their building projects.

Throughout the whole WPA building construction program there were notable developments in certain architectural features, and definite economies were effected by the use of particular materials. The WPA followed the newer tendencies toward simplification in architectural style. Simplicity of design was best suited to the limited skills usually available for WPA work.... Reinforced concrete was used very extensively in new construction work, in designs which fitted the local architectural traditions.... When other structural materials were used, they were generally native to the region, easily accessible, and not expensive. (Field 52)

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Conveniently, simplicity of design and local materials were also being promoted by the National Park Service for the creation of "natural" or "rustic" buildings. During the depression, the national parks also benefited from New Deal funds and labor, specifically through the Civilian Conservation Corps. This national park building boom effectively spread the rustic style to parks across the country, and its influence can be seen in the design of the Deep Eddy Bathhouse. The National Park Service's primary concern was that buildings not compete with the natural beauty of parks, they should "appear to belong to and be a part of their settings" (Good, VII). To this end, the park service built log cabins in heavily wooded areas and stone buildings in rocky areas.(Figure 18, Page 24). Texas has a long history of native limestone buildings, and the limestone used at the Deep Eddy Bathhouse was quarried from nearby Zilker Park.

The 1935 Deep Eddy Bathhouse

In October of 1935, the Statesman described the new bathhouse; "[it] is of modern design and a new movement in bathhouse construction. Through ventilation has been featured in the newly designed structure which will facilitate a high degree of sanitation" ("*Ground is Broken*"). The bathhouse reflected a relatively new trend in the design of park buildings. *Park and Recreation Structures*, published by the National Park Service in 1938, provided plans and design recommendations for everything from maintenance facilities to drinking fountains. Economy, sanitation, and natural designs were the main objectives of park architecture. This national guidebook, which was heavily relied upon for many New Deal park structures, recommended that bathhouses be as compact as possible; reducing square footage would minimize usage fees for the public. *Park and Recreation Structures* recommended group changing areas where bathers could rent a locker or basket to store their belongings for the day. (Plans 3-4, Page 27) While this may not seem revolutionary today, the previous standard had been private dressing rooms that were rented for a day or entire season. Instead of the tents that the Johnson's rented for the summer, or the cottages that Eilers rented year-round, the new bathhouse could accommodate more bathers with less space. Patrons would pay to rent towels and lockers at the central reception desk, then men and women could change in their respective dressings rooms. The book also suggests that dressing rooms be left uncovered for ventilation and sanitation.

The City of Austin hired local architects Dan Driscoll and Delmar Groos to design the new bathhouse. According to an interview with Groos for the nomination of Zilker Park, the bathhouse was designed to have covered dressing rooms, but the project went over budget and the architects decided to leave the dressing rooms open air. Whether the Deep Eddy bathhouse was left open air because of budget constraints, or because of a new trend in park architecture is unclear. Whatever the reason, it proved to be so popular that when the architects were asked to design a bathhouse for Barton Springs in 1946 (Figure 19, Page 24), they modeled it after Deep Eddy and left the roof off, intentionally. (Zilker Park Nomination)

Alterations were made to the bathhouse in 1962 when The Austin Natural Science Center moved into the building. The Center featured educational programs and exhibits of native Texas wildlife. The patio on the southeast corner of the building was covered over and animal pens were built outside the eastern wall. Pool activities were consolidated into the western area of the building. What had been the men's changing area was converted into dressing rooms and administration and storage space with an external ticket counter.

While the Natural Science Center moved to Zilker Park in the 1980s, the area it occupied remains unused. An effort to reclaim those areas of the bathhouse is currently being spearheaded by The Friends of Deep Eddy, a local organization. So far the group has succeeded in locating city funds to demolish the animal pens, remove the patio cover and clean up the abandoned portion of the building. The group continues to raise funds for architectural plans and further work on the bathhouse.

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Although it has evolved over the years and changed ownership several times, Deep Eddy has served Austin continuously for one hundred years, with no significant physical changes since 1935. This much beloved swimming hole has developed with the city from a privately owned public beach in the early 20th century, to a lively pleasure ground in the 1920s, to a city-owned park in the 1930s. During its long tenure, Deep Eddy has made significant contributions to the history of recreation in Austin, and it is nominated under Criterion A in the area of Recreation at the local level of significance. The 1916 concrete swimming pool is one of the oldest in Texas, and Deep Eddy's bathhouse and limestone landscape features are significant local examples of New Deal-era park architecture. It is therefore nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, also at the local level of significance.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: 8.96

UTM REFERENCES	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
1.	14	617960	3349980
2.	14	618120	3349900
3.	14	618080	3349780
4.	14	617940	3349900

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The nominated property includes all of Block 4 (Lots 1 through 6) of the Johnsons River Addition, bounded by Deep Eddy Avenue to the east, Walter Street to the North and Quarry Street to the East, which includes the bathhouse and parking lot. The property also includes a 4.1-acre, U-shaped parcel southwest of Block 4, which includes the swimming pool and park. Block 4 and the U-shaped parcel are combined as one legal lot, the boundary of which is delineated on Map-1, Page 14.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION The boundary represents the current legal boundary. It includes all significant extant resources and is believed to include all of the property historically associated with the district.

11. FORM PREPARED BY (with assistance from Peter Ketter, THC Historian)

NAME/TITLE: Hannah Swenson, Student

ORGANIZATION: University of Texas at Austin

DATE: May 1, 2002

STREET & NUMBER: 3004 French Pl

TELEPHONE: 512-482-9717

CITY OR TOWN: Austin

STATE: TX

ZIP CODE: 78722

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS (see continuation sheet Map-14)

PHOTOGRAPHS (see continuation sheet Photo-28)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS (see continuation sheets Figure-15 through Figure-24 and Plan-25 through Plan-27)

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: City of Austin, Parks and Recreation Department

STREET & NUMBER: PO Box 1088

TELEPHONE: (512) 974-2000

CITY OR TOWN: Austin

STATE: TX

ZIP CODE: 78767-8865

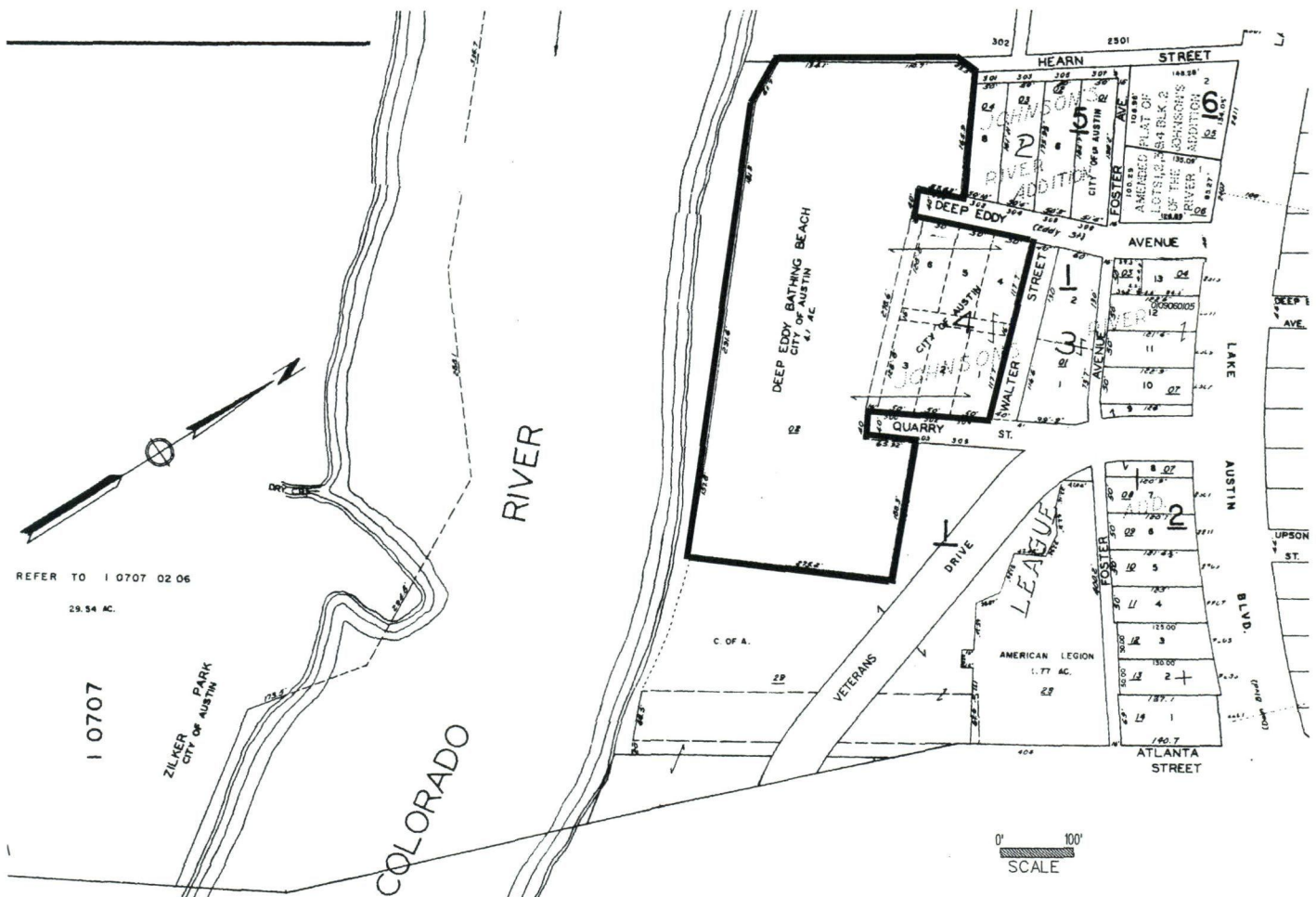
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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section MAP Page 14

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Map 1: Property Boundaries (scale indicated) *Adapted from Travis County Central Appraisal District Plat Map*



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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 15

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 1: Original reception room, c.1935. *Courtesy of Austin History Center*

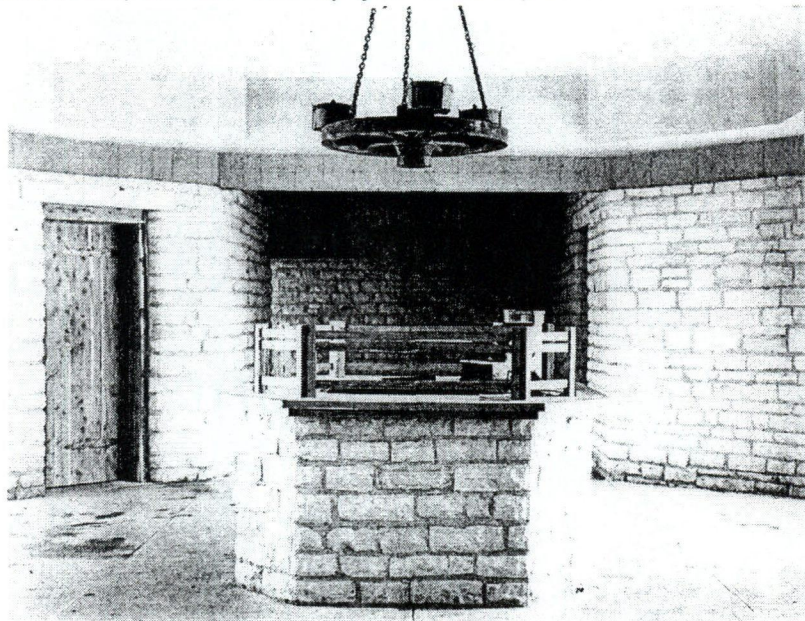
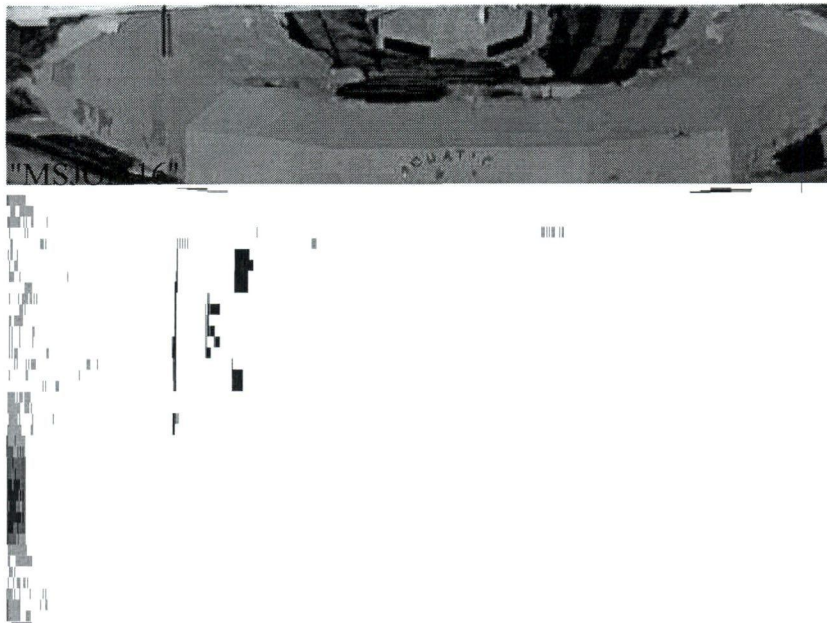


Figure 2: Original reception room, 2002. *Hannah Swenson*



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National Park Service

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Section FIGURE Page 16

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 3: Patio, c.1930. *Courtesy of Austin History Center.*

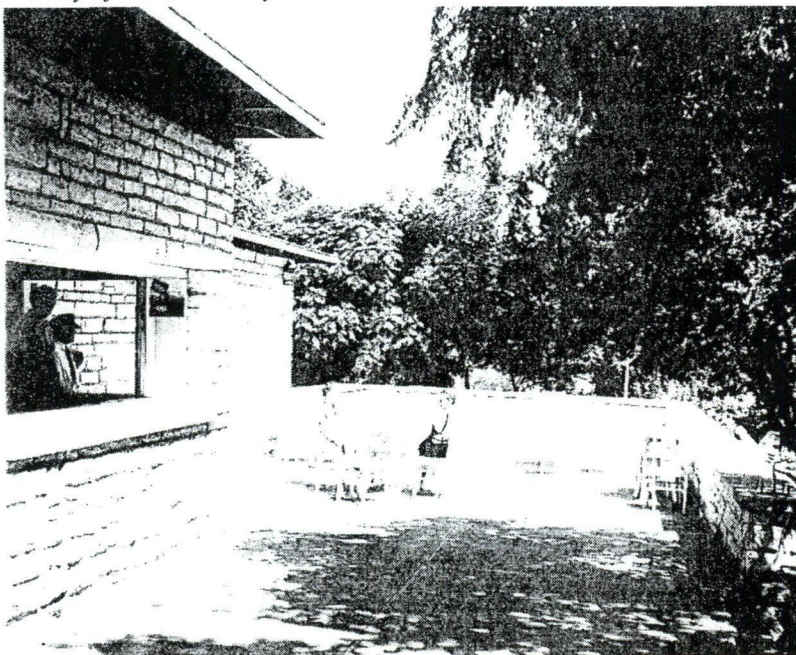


Figure 4: Patio, 2002. *Hannah Swenson.*



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National Park Service

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Section FIGURE Page 17

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 5: Original men's dressing room, c.1935. *Courtesy of Austin History Center.*

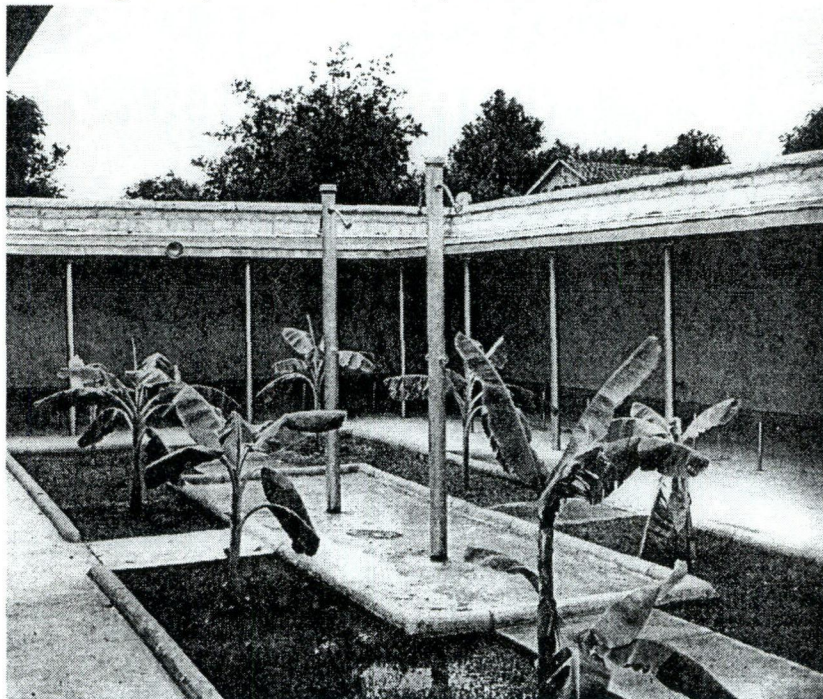
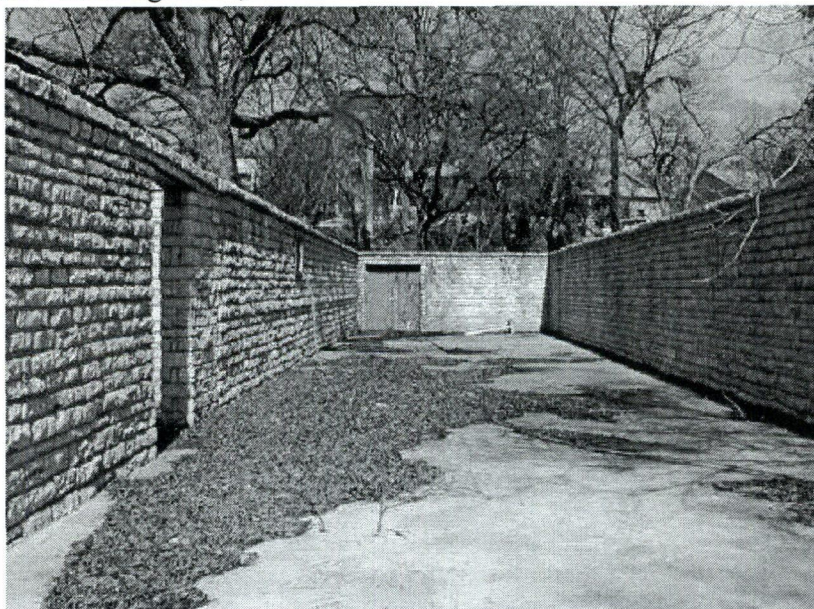


Figure 6: Original women's dressing room, 2002. *Hannah Swenson.*



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Section FIGURE Page 18

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 7: Northeast corner, circa 1935. *Courtesy of Austin History Center.*

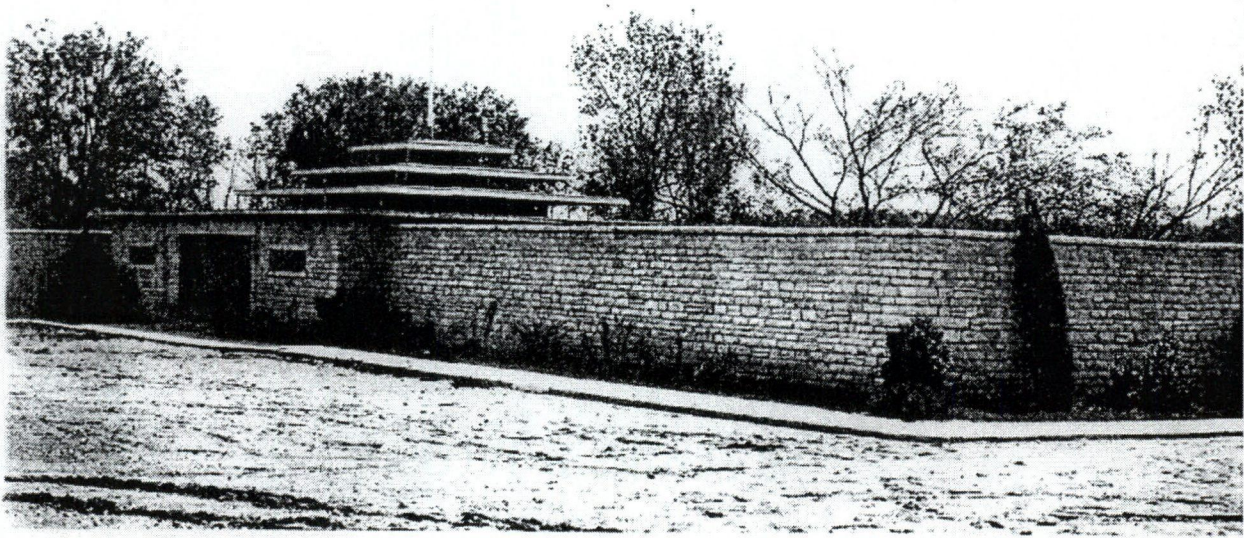


Figure 8: Northeast corner, 2002. *Hannah Swenson.*



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Section FIGURE Page 19

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 9: Original main entrance, 2002. *Hannah Swenson.*



Figure 10: Southwest elevation, 2002. *Hannah Swenson.*



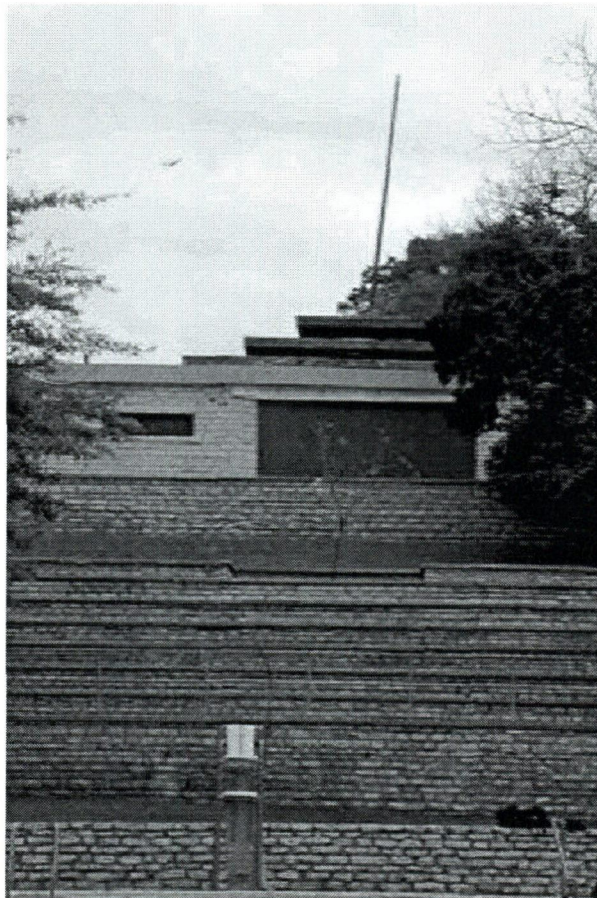
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 20

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 11: Bathhouse as viewed from pool, 2002. *Hannah Swenson.*



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Section FIGURE Page 21

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 12: Historic postcard of Deep Eddy Bathing Beach. *Courtesy of www.austinpostcard.com*

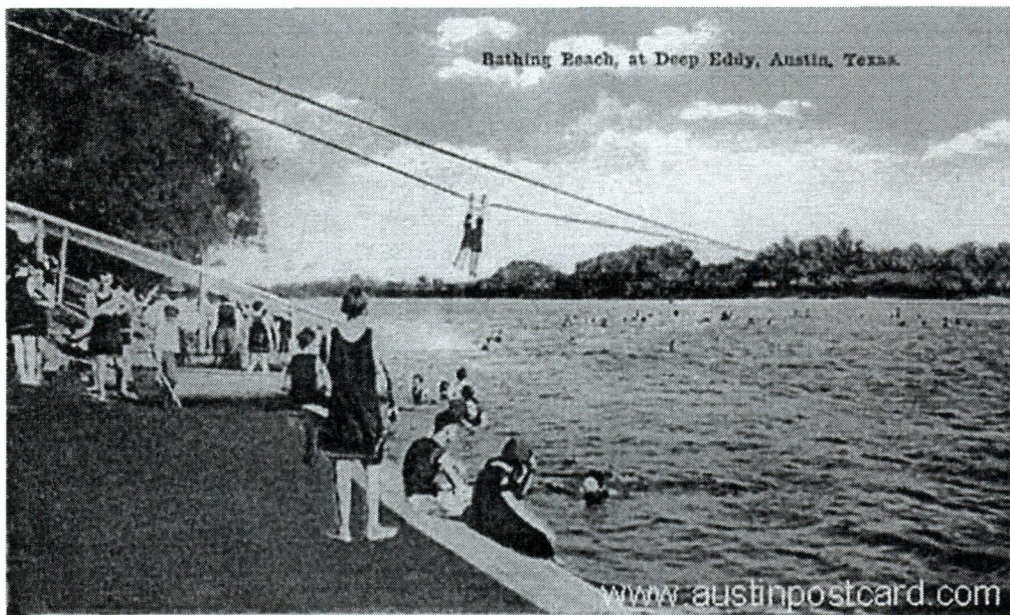


Figure 13: Deep Eddy Pool, 1916



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Section FIGURE Page 22

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 14: Marcia Burke the World Famous Diving Baby. *Courtesy of Austin History Center.*

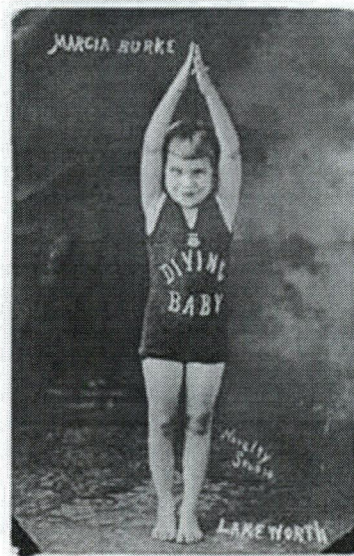


Figure 15: Lorena, without her diving horse. *Courtesy of Austin History Center.*



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Section FIGURE Page 23

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 16: Deep Eddy, 1925. *Courtesy of Austin History Center.*

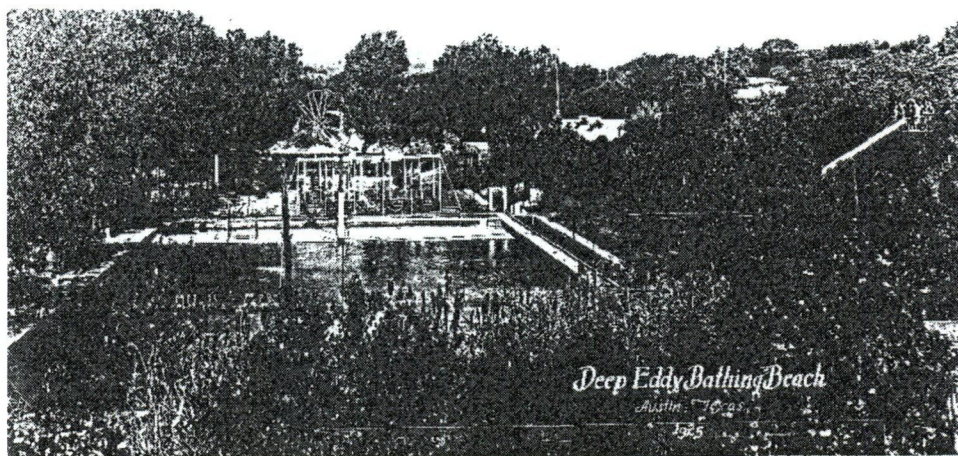


Figure 17: Cover of brochure published under George Rowley. *Courtesy of Austin History Center.*



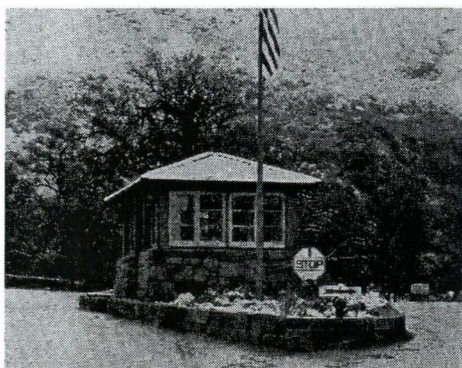
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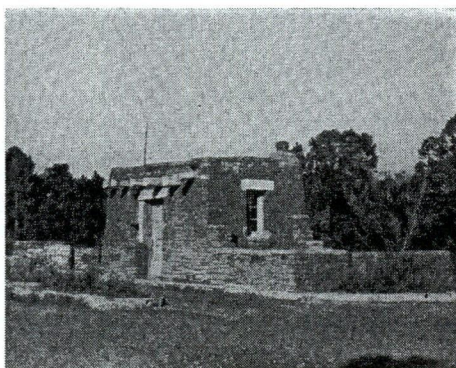
Section FIGURE Page 24

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 18: Three versions of a park entrance station based on local vernacular architecture. *From Park and Recreation Structures.*



Entrance Checking Station, Sequoia National Park

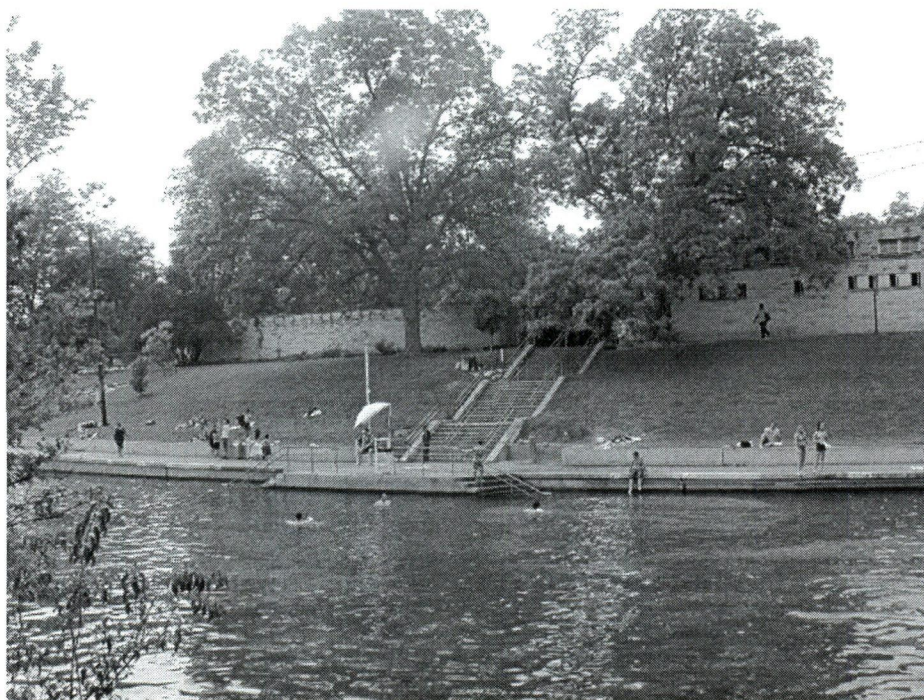


Entrance Checking Station, Mesa Verde National Park



Entrance Checking Station, Bryce Canyon National Park

Figure 19: Barton Springs Bathhouse. *Taylor Vaughan.*



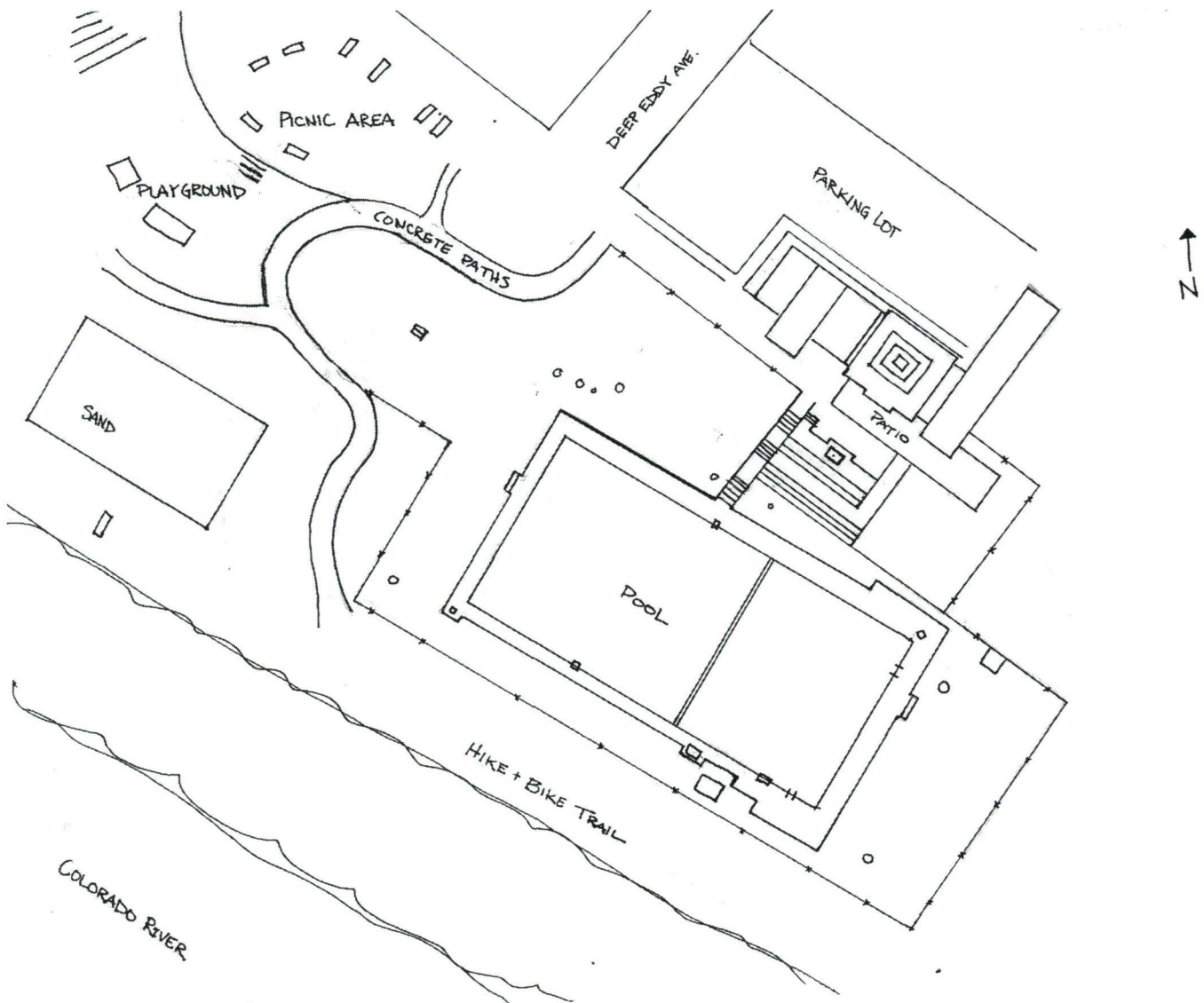
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Section PLAN Page 25

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

PLAN 1: Site Plan, no scale. *Hannah Swenson.*



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National Park Service

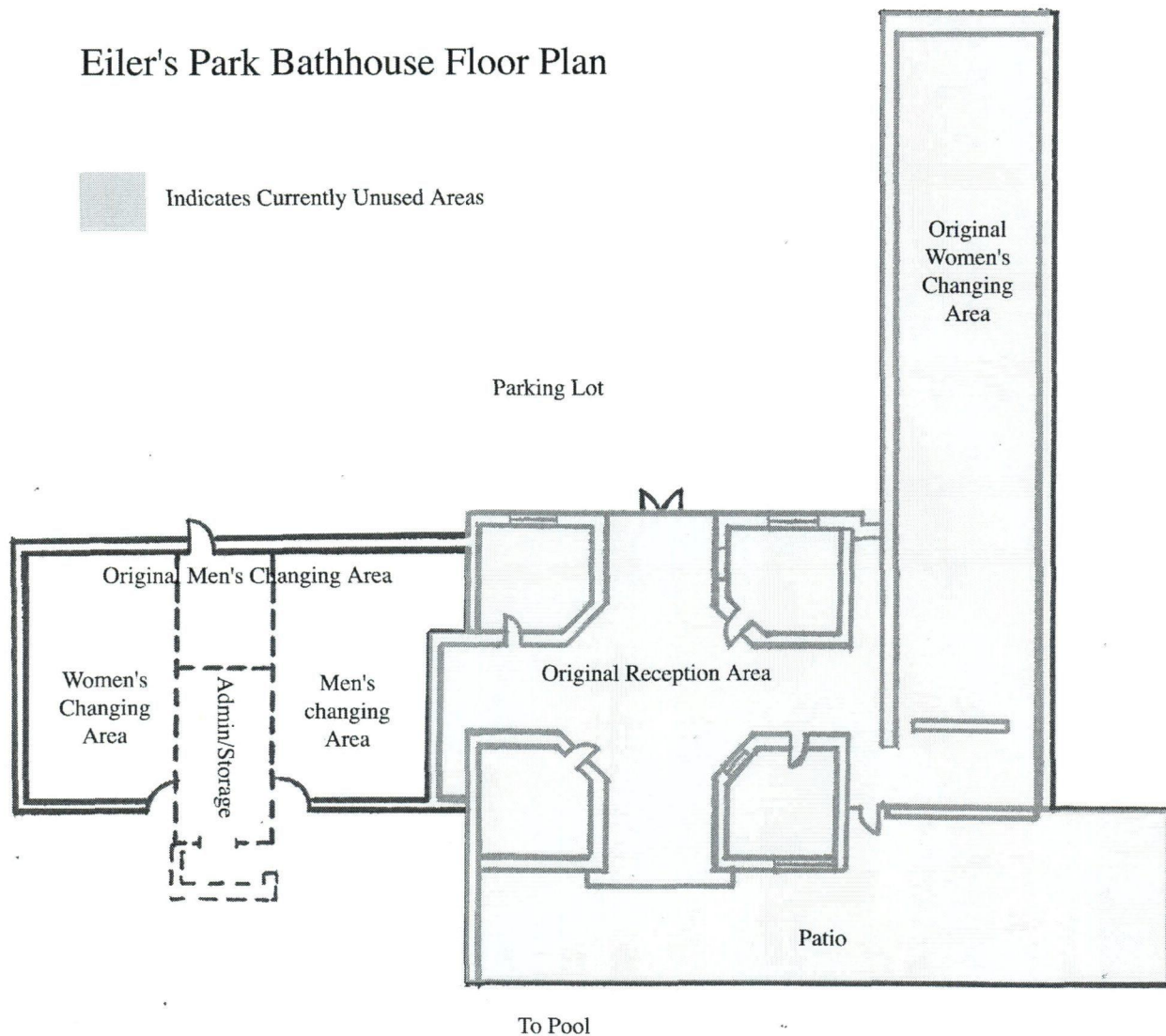
National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section PLAN Page 26

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

PLAN 2: Floor plan showing current and original usage, no scale. *Hannah Swenson*

Eiler's Park Bathhouse Floor Plan



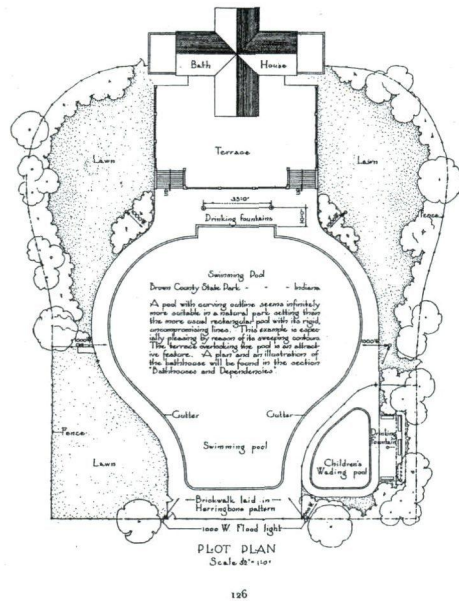
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

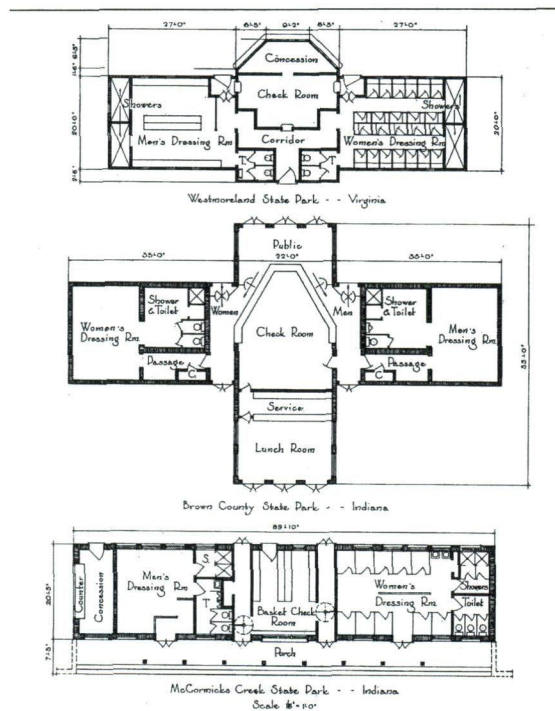
Section PLAN Page 27

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

PLAN 3: Sample site plan. *From Park and Recreation Structures.*



PLAN 4: Sample bathhouse floor plan. *From Park and Recreation Structures.*



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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section PHOTO Page 28

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Photo Log

Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
301 Quarry Street
Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photographed by Hannah Swenson, April 2002
Negatives on file with the Texas Historical Commission

Bathhouse
Northwest oblique, camera facing southeast
Photo 1 of 3

Stair and pool
Camera facing southeast
Photo 2 of 3

Lawn and bathhouse
Camera facing northeast
Photo 3 of 3

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Deep Eddy Bathing Beach
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Travis

DATE RECEIVED: 5/09/03 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/06/03
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/22/03 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/23/03
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 03000560

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 6/23/03 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



DEEP EDDY BATHING BEACH

401 DEEP EDDY AVENUE

AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 3



DEEP EDDY BATHING BEACH

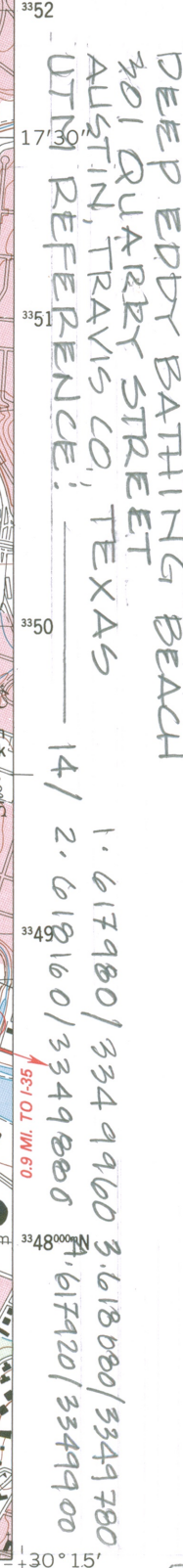
401 DEEP EDDY AVENUE

AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 3



DEEP EDDY BATHING BEACH
401 DEEP EDDY AVENUE
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO, TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 3 of 3



Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map



TEXAS

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

AUSTIN WEST, TEX.
SE/4 LAKE TRAVIS 15' QUADRANGLE
30097-C7-TF-024

DMA 6444 IV SE-SERIES V882

