



**Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC)**

c/o Austin Energy  
AUSTIN CITY CLERK  
811 Barton Springs Road #425  
RECEIVED  
Austin, Texas 78704

2014 OCT 24 PM 2 19

October 24, 2014

**VIA HAND DELIVERY**

The Honorable Jannette Goodall  
Austin City Clerk  
301 W. Second St.  
Austin, TX 78701

RE: ICRC Report Explaining the Final Redistricting Plan Certified on November 25, 2013

Dear City Clerk Jannette Goodall:

Please find enclosed for filing the Report required by the City Charter explaining the final redistricting plan for the City of Austin which was Certified on November 25, 2013, to the Austin City Council specifically describing the district boundaries of each of the ten council districts for the City of Austin. See City of Austin Charter, Article II, Section (3)(G)(1).

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

David R. Richards  
General Counsel  
Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission

Javier P. Guajardo, Jr.  
General Counsel  
Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission

Enclosures;

File-Stamped Copies:

File;

The Hon. Magdalena Blanco, Chair, ICRC, via hand delivery;

The Hon. T. J. Costello, Vice Chair, ICRC, via hand delivery;

The Hon. Dolores "Dee" Lopez, Director, Travis County Voter Registrar, 5501 Airport Boulevard, Austin, TX 78751-1410, via U.S. Mail;

The Hon. Lee Leffingwell, Mayor, 301 W. Second St., Austin, TX 78701, via hand delivery;

The Hon. Sheryl Cole, Mayor Pro Tem, Place 6 (Austin City Council), 301 W. Second St., Austin, TX 78701, via hand delivery;

The Hon. Chris Riley, Place 1 (Austin City Council), 301 W. Second St., Austin, TX 78701, via hand delivery;

The Hon. Mike Martinez, Place 2 (Austin City Council), 301 W. Second St., Austin, TX 78701, via hand delivery;

The Hon. Kathie Tovo, Place 3 (Austin City Council), 301 W. Second St., Austin, TX 78701, via hand delivery;

The Hon. Laura Morrison, Place 4 (Austin City Council), 301 W. Second St., Austin, TX 78701, via hand delivery;

The Hon. Bill Spelman, Place 5 (Austin City Council), 301 W. Second St., Austin, TX 78701, via hand delivery; and

The Hon. Marc Anthony Ott, Austin City Manager, 301 W. Second St., Austin, TX 78701, via hand delivery.



# Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC)

811 Barton Springs Road #425  
Austin, Texas 78704

Dear Citizens of Austin,

On November 18, 2013, Austin made history! It became the first city in the United States to have city council districts drawn by a completely independent group of ordinary residents not selected by any legislator, judge or other public official.

In a process approved by 61% of voters, Austin set the standard for open and transparent mapping of districts that will choose city councilors. At a time when confidence in elected officials has fallen to a historic low, Austin's Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC) demonstrates a new way for citizens to be heard.

ICRC spent countless hours ensuring that our process was fair and impartial. We held 40 open meetings, including 14 public hearings throughout the city, and solicited verbal and written testimony. The input received by the Commission included 532 in-person testimonials given in 3-minute sessions by 418 Austin residents, seven "invited presentations" involving 22 speakers, and 566 emails or letters from Austinites. On November 18, 2013, we unanimously adopted a final plan (district map) of Austin's first ten-member city council districts.

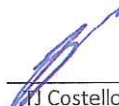
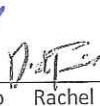
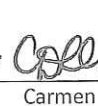





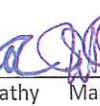
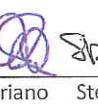

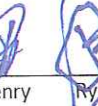

This unique process began on May 22, 2013 when the initial eight commissioners were selected at random. Their first task was to choose the remaining six commissioners to achieve diversity in race, ethnicity, age, gender and geographic representation. Hoping for a unanimous final decision, the 14 commissioners worked collaboratively and cohesively over the course of six months.

The Commission labored to underscore its independence from Austin's City Council. We hired an executive director, legal counsel and a mapping consultant. We established our own website. We managed our marketing and communications. Most important, we strictly adhered to the City Charter, upholding the law throughout.

ICRC is pioneering a new frontier. We eagerly await the fulfillment of our plan when ten City Councilors and a Mayor are elected in November 2014. As you step into the ballot booth to vote, know that we thank you for the opportunity to serve the city we all call home.

Sincerely,

  
Magdalena P. Blanco, Chair

												
JJ Costello Vice Chair	Rachel Truair	Carmen Llanes Pulido	Arthur Lopez	Maria Solis	Harriett Harrow	Anna Saenz	William Hewitt	Cathy Cocco	Mariano Diaz- Miranda	Stefan Haag	Henry Johnson	Ryan Rafols



# Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission

Of Austin, Texas

**Final Report**

**District map adopted November 18, 2013**

**Certified November 25, 2013**

**Presented to the City Clerk November 27, 2013**

**Table of Contents**

Acknowledgements ..... 2

Executive Summary ..... 3

Background: How the ICRC was formed ..... 5

Commission Members ..... 8

Ten-District Overview ..... 13

    Final 10-District Map ..... 14

    District 1 ..... 15

    District 2 ..... 16

    District 3 ..... 17

    District 4 ..... 18

    District 5 ..... 19

    District 6 ..... 20

    District 7 ..... 21

    District 8 ..... 22

    District 9 ..... 23

    District 10 ..... 24

    Intentions for Future Annexations by the City of Austin ..... 25

    Commissioner Comments and Final Vote on the Official Map ..... 26

    Conclusion ..... 29

    APPENDIX ..... 30



## Acknowledgements

Our task would have been impossible without City of Austin staff and ICRC staff. Thanks to Jawana Gutierrez, Trinh Bartlett, Channel 6 employees, the City legal team assigned the Commission in its early stages, the City Auditors Office, and the City of Austin Demographer. We deeply appreciate the crucial work performed by staff that ICRC hired, including Executive Director Craig Tounget, Legal Counsel David Richards and Javier Guajardo, and Mapping Consultant Fred Hejazi.

We are also grateful to managers of venues who made it possible for ICRC to solicit public input at hearings throughout Austin including local libraries and schools, Montopolis Recreation Center, Concordia University, Austin Energy, LBJ School of Public Affairs, Travis County Court, Goodwill Industries, Millennium Youth Entertainment Complex, The Lodge, Asian-American Resource Center and Austin Community College.

Finally, we cannot acknowledge enough the thousands of Austin residents who attended our meetings, sent letters or emails, made presentations or simply followed our deliberations in the media. Our work was weighty and our deadline, demanding. If we succeeded in serving Austin well, it is because your energy and interest sustained us.



## Executive Summary

The Inaugural 2013 Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC) is vested with the sole and exclusive authority to adopt plans that specify the boundaries of districts for the City of Austin's City Council, until the 2020 U.S. Census can be used by a subsequent ICRC. Austin city code, article II, section 3 was enacted by the voters in 2012 to create an ICRC to draw city council districts in compliance with the law.

On November 18, 2013, by unanimous vote of all 14 commissioners the ICRC adopted the final plan (district map). In preparing the final plan, the ICRC conducted an open and transparent process enabling full public consideration of comments on the drawing of district lines; with integrity and fairness, independent from influence and representative of the city's diversity; and followed these principles:

1. Districts shall comply with the United States Constitution. Each council district shall have reasonably equal population with other districts, except where deviation is required to comply with the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 or allowable by law.<sup>1</sup>
2. Districts shall comply with the federal Voting Rights Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 1971 and following) and any other requirement of federal or state law.
3. Districts shall be geographically contiguous.
4. The geographic integrity of any local neighborhood or local community of interest shall be respected in a manner that minimizes their division to the extent possible without violating the requirements of any of the preceding subsections. A community of interest is a contiguous population that shares common social and economic interests that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation. Communities of interest shall not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.
5. District boundaries shall be drawn to encourage geographical compactness such that nearby areas of population are not bypassed for more distant populations.
6. To the extent practicable, district boundaries shall be drawn using the boundaries of existing election precincts.
7. District boundaries shall be drawn using geographically identifiable boundaries.
8. The place of residence of any incumbent or potential political candidate shall not be considered in the creation of a plan or any district. Districts shall not be drawn for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against any incumbent, political candidate, or political group.

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<sup>1</sup>According to the 2010 U.S. Census, Austin had a population of 797,830. To achieve equal population within a maximum deviation of 10%, the Commission's target population range was between 75,794 and 83,771 residents per district.



By adhering to the City of Austin Charter, the 14 Commissioners produced a fair map for the new city council plan that represents the City of Austin in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The 10 city council districts devised by the ICRC are (by district number):

- 1 – Representing the citizens of East and Northeast Austin
- 2 – Representing the citizens of Southeast and South Austin
- 3 – Representing the citizens of East-Central and South-Central Austin
- 4 – Representing the citizens of North-Central Austin
- 5 – Representing the citizens of South-Central and Far South Austin
- 6 – Representing the citizens of Far Northwest Austin
- 7 – Representing the citizens of North and Northwest-Central Austin
- 8 – Representing the citizens of Southwest Austin
- 9 – Representing the citizens of Central Austin
- 10 – Representing the citizens of West-Central and Northwest Austin

This map represents the hard work of the ICRC and not only offers a fair opportunity for representation, but should be used as a template (per the Charter) for all future ICRC Commissioners.





## Background: How the ICRC was formed

On November 6, 2012, sixty-one percent of Austin voters answered “Yes” to the following question:

*Shall the city charter be amended to provide for the election of council members from ten geographical single-member districts, with the mayor to be elected from the city at large, and to provide for an independent citizens redistricting commission?*

Single-member districts have been proposed six times in the last thirty years in Austin, but always voted down. This winning Proposition 3 ballot item was spearheaded by a citywide grassroots coalition calling itself Austinites for Geographic Representation (AGR). They started meeting in March 2011 with a goal of passing a city charter amendment 20 months later.

AGR launched a public campaign named “10-ONE” to educate Austinites about the benefits of ten single-member districts they hoped would replace the decades-old system of six city council members and a mayor, all elected at-large, and the “gentlemen’s agreement” that informally reserved seats for one African American council member and one Hispanic council member, regardless of where they lived. Many voters felt that Austin’s population growth (nearly 800,000 residents) and increased annexation of farther reaching areas demanded the change. Others believed a council member living in their own area would be more responsive, and running for election would be more cost-effective and practicable for community leaders.

Eventually AGR’s 10-ONE plan was endorsed by 30 community groups including the League of Women Voters, NAACP, City Firefighters and Police Associations, Austin Neighborhoods Council, Texas AFL-CIO, Mexican American Democrats, the Central Texas Republican Assembly, Gray Panthers, Travis County Green Party, Austin Gay and Lesbian Democrats, and the UT Student Government.

With a rallying cry of “Let the people draw the maps,” AGR’s petition drive gathered 33,000 signatures. That ensured Proposition 3 got on the ballot when the City chose to endorse an alternative hybrid district plan. The Austin-American Statesman endorsed it, and on November 6, 2012, Proposition 3 prevailed.

The voter-approved city charter amendment described what would happen next. Ten single-member districts would be drawn by a commission of 14 “independent citizens.” Strict eligibility requirements sought to lessen the chance that these commissioners would have a political agenda (City Charter 3(1)(3)) or a conflict of interest in City governance (City Charter 3(D)(1)). These were voluntary eight-year positions with no pay but long hours for at least the first six months, when the maps would be drawn.

The Austin City Council voted an allotment for the commission. Its charter says only that the Council “shall appropriate sufficient funds to meet the operational cost of the commission and the cost of any outreach program to solicit broad public participation in the redistricting process.” That outreach started with inviting applicants to serve on both the ICRC and the Applicant Review Panel (ARP) that would select qualified applicants to draw the lines.



The City Auditor's office fielded a campaign to encourage auditors to apply for the ARP, and for Austin voters to apply for the ICRC, promoting a large pool of applicants of various races, ethnicities, ages and neighborhoods. Applicants were asked to describe their analytical skills, ability to be impartial and appreciation for Austin's diverse demographics and geography. Other questions screened for conflicts of interest. One seat was reserved for a student commissioner.

Three auditors were selected at random from a pool of 13 qualified applicants, to serve on the independent Applicant Review Panel (ARP). Michele DeFrance, Senior Auditor at the Texas State Auditor's Office; Caroline Limaye, Auditor from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; and Martha Parker, Audit Senior Manager at Myers and Stauffer L.C., were chosen to serve on the ARP.

By the deadline for ICRC applications, February 22, 2013, 544 applications had been submitted. The ARP eliminated 100 of these that were incomplete or did not meet eligibility requirements, then narrowed the pool from 444 applications down to 60 contenders most qualified to serve.

As per Charter instructions, the standing City Council members were each permitted to strike one applicant from the pool of sixty, but all members chose to waive this option and leave the pool with all 60 applicants.

The first eight members of the ICRC were chosen randomly from the pool of 60 at City Hall on May 22, 2013. In a drawing some compared to a Powerball lottery, numbered balls matched to each applicant went spinning in a metal drum.

The eight Commissioners drawn that day were:

Magdalena Blanco  
Mariano Diaz-Miranda  
Rachel Farris  
William Hewitt  
Carmen Llanes Pulido  
Arthur Lopez  
Anna Saenz  
Maria Solis

Four of these individuals live in South Austin, the rest in East, Northeast and North Austin (none are from West of MoPac). Five are women, three are men, and six are Hispanic. Five are age 45 or older. The first task these Commissioners faced was selecting six more from the remaining pool of applicants to diversify the Commission.

At the first three meetings, Commissioners pored over qualifications, demographics, and geographic dispersion of the remaining 52 top contenders, and made their choices. On June 19, the names of the six final Commissioners were announced:

Catherine Cocco  
TJ Costello  
Stefan Haag  
Harriett Harrow  
Henry Johnson  
Ryan Rafols



According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2010, Austin's population was 49% white, 35% Hispanic, 8% African American, 6% Asian, and 2% other. Commissioners on the full ICRC are 36% white, 43% Hispanic, 7% African American, 7% Asian, and 7% other. Seven Commissioners are women, seven are men. Ages range from 22 to 72, including the required student representative.

Our charter asked that at least three Commissioners live in each of the four Travis County Commissioner precincts, if possible. Three Commissioners live in each of precincts one, two and three. Five Commissioners (all randomly drawn) live in precinct four. The goal of making the Commission more diverse and representative had been met.

The Commission met in full for the first time on June 26, 2013. Shortly thereafter, the Commission elected Magdalena Blanco as Chairwoman and TJ Costello as Vice-Chair.



## Commission Members

The fourteen Commission members are diverse in age, geographic location, race, gender, and ethnicity. They were required to meet certain eligibility requirements per the City Charter. The Commission consists of the following:

### **Magdalena Blanco (Chair)**

Magdalena Blanco has over 10 years combined experience in the public sector and small business. Her experience spans public finance, government information systems, economic development, and program development and management. Magdalena received her master's in public administration from Texas State University, and her B.A in political science from California State University – San Marcos. In 2010 she became a published author of "Economic Development Corporations in Texas – Preliminary assessment of statutory compliance of 4A and 4B EDCs in Texas with the Development Corporation Act of 1979."

Magdalena began her public service in 1989 as a junior leader at the San Dieguito Boys & Girls Club, and over the last 20 years has continued as a community volunteer. In addition to her service on the Austin Redistricting Commission, she is also a Director on the Travis County Strategic Housing Finance Corporation, which promotes creative financing for affordable housing in Travis County. In 2002, Magdalena, her husband, and three children moved to the Austin-metro area from southern California; and since 2006 have been residents of Northeast Austin.

### **TJ Costello (Vice Chair)**

TJ Costello serves as an economist for the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts in the Economic Development and Analysis Department where he analyzes and interprets the economic impact and incremental tax benefit from business development activities. He also assists Texans and non-Texans with economic analysis as directed by the Comptroller. Previously, TJ worked with local, national, and international organizations earning a reputation as an expert in the fields of applied economics, market research, qualitative analysis and facilitation. This includes work as the Director of Economic Development at the Greater Austin San Antonio Corridor Council, National Marketing Coordinator for the American Arbitration Association, and working with other state and local organizations through Box Free Thinking.

Originally from the New York City area, TJ holds a degree in applied economics from Ithaca College and a master's from the LBJ School of Public Affairs with a Graduate Portfolio in Dispute Resolution from the UT Law School. TJ is also an award winning high school basketball coach as well as a former basketball coach and lecturer at Concordia University. He has served on several municipal boards including the Vision 2000 Task Force and Zoning Board in South Brunswick, NJ and the Citizens Action Team in Hillsboro, TX. TJ is long-time member of the Texas Rugby Union and has served as president of the LBJ School Austin Alumni. He is a frequent speaker on market research methods as well as leadership and teamwork.

### **Catherine Cocco**

Cathy Cocco was born in Taipei, Taiwan and grew up in New York City. She attended college in Tokyo, Japan and at Cornell University, receiving an electrical engineering degree. In 1992, she transferred with her husband to Austin, and their two children attended AISD schools. At IBM, Cathy worked in engineering development, sales and consulting, and is now a marketing executive. She is trilingual and has worked with IBM teams worldwide, including a two-year assignment in China. She serves on the



boards of several Austin non-profits including the LASA HS Robotics Team, Salon Concerts and the Cornell Club of Austin.

Cathy lives in the Great Hills Neighborhood in Northwest Austin. She owns rental property in East Austin, working with a local architect and builder to help revitalize a neighborhood. She has turned a two-year temporary stay in Austin into a 21-year love affair with the city.

#### **Mariano Díaz-Miranda**

Mariano Díaz-Miranda came to the United States as an eleven-year-old immigrant. His mother and father had only a sixth-grade education and were deeply hurt when Mariano dropped out of high school. He bounced from one menial job to another for a couple of years until enlisting in the military, “a reality I share with many in the Hispanic community.”

Military service gave Mariano confidence when he found he could learn quickly, excel at tasks and teach others. Soon he became an instructor and after being honorably discharged, he enrolled at the local college in Wichita Falls, Texas. Though lacking a high school diploma or GED, Mariano was accepted at Midwestern University on his ACT scores. He completed bachelor’s and master’s degrees, and finally his doctor of philosophy degree at the University of Texas. “I left our city to teach at the University of Rhode Island,” Mariano says, “but eventually returned to Austin because I felt this was the place where I belonged.” He is presently Director of the Latino/Latin American Studies Center and Chair of the Mexican American Studies Department at Austin Community College.

#### **Rachel (Farris) Truair**

Rachel (Farris) Truair is a native Austinite and lifelong Austin resident. After growing up in the Zilker neighborhood, Rachel lived throughout many parts of the city before purchasing a home in East Austin in 2010.

As the Chief of Staff for PetRelocation, an Austin-based company that handles the door-to-door logistics of moving pets around the world, Rachel has spent the last seven years helping to build an online communications and marketing strategy, designing and implementing operational processes, and now works on strategic growth initiatives with the executive team.

An avid writer and communicator, Rachel’s work has been published in the *Texas Observer*, *Texas Monthly*, and the *Huffington Post*. She has spoken about social media and online communications at the University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs, Texas State University’s “Mass Communications Week,” and St. Edward’s University. She was also the recipient of the Michele Kay Memorial Award at St. Edward’s University.

#### **Stefan Haag**

Stefan Haag moved to Austin in 1979 to accept a position as instructor of government at Austin Community College (ACC). He taught sociology and political science courses at Kaskaskia College in Centralia, Illinois for ten years prior to moving to Austin. During his tenure at ACC, Stefan coauthored two textbooks on Texas politics and government for college-level government courses, chaired a college-wide committee on faculty advising for students, and chaired and served on several departmental committees. He retired in 2007. Since retiring, Haag has authored two reports for ACC’s Center for Public Policy and Political Studies: Voter Turnout in Austin City Council Elections and Early Voting in Texas.

#### **Harriett Harrow**

Harriett Harrow lived on both coasts before moving to Austin in 1989 when Inc. magazine named it “the best U.S. city for entrepreneurs.” As a communications consultant, Harriett crafted award-winning projects for clients in high tech, finance, cable television, automotive, real estate and many more



industries. She has served the Summerwood Homeowners' Association in Northwest Austin as president, treasurer and archivist. Now retired, Harriett is still writing; her columns in the *Austin American-Statesman* have explored the death penalty, child labor in agriculture, health care and Santa Claus. Trained as a journalist, Harriett has lectured on communications to university classes in three states, and taught journalism to prison inmates.

#### **Phil Hewitt**

William (Phil) Hewitt is married and lives in South Austin. He is the same kind of Texan as Sam Houston and David Crockett—one from Tennessee. He is a writer, an historian and a collector of Texas tales. He believes that the best representative government is the one that is closest to the citizens—hence his interest in participating in the Austin redistricting process. He raises cactus, kayaks Texas rivers and lakes, and is an avid but mostly inept fisherman.

#### **Henry Johnson**

A native of Greenville, Texas, Henry earned a bachelor's degree from Jarvis Christian College and a master's in public administration from Southwest Texas State University. His career included 28 years of service at the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles, General Services Commission and Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

A U.S. Army veteran, Henry served in Vietnam with the First Cavalry Division. He has been an active member of several municipal, county and state boards and commissions but says that ICRC "is the most unique." An Austin resident for 38 years, Henry is married with one son and two grandchildren.

#### **Arthur Lopez**

Art was born in Laredo, raised in El Paso and graduated from the University of Texas El Paso with a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering. He moved to Austin in 1985 to begin a career working in industries as diverse as aerospace, medical, defense, computer and telecommunications, from small start-ups to large conglomerates.

Art's leisure pursuits include major hands-on projects around the house, rebuilding car engines and spending time with his dog Lucy. He feels fortunate his family is not far away. One sister lives in Austin and another in San Antonio; his mother and two brothers live in El Paso.

#### **Carmen Llanes Pulido**

Carmen is a community organizer and native of Austin. For the past four years she has worked for Marathon Kids, engaging parents and teachers at 20 Austin elementary schools to build healthier campuses. Carmen has worked with a variety of other groups citywide and across the country, including People Organized in Defense of Earth and her Resources (PODER), Sustainable Food Center, Texans United For Families (TUFF), Urban Roots, Austin Fair Trade Coalition, Southwest Network for Environmental & Economic Justice (SNEEJ) and Alma de Mujer Center for Social Change. She graduated in 2007 from the University of Chicago (AB, Environmental Studies) and now resides in the Delwood II neighborhood with her husband.

Inspired by the vast diversity of communities that supported 10-1, Carmen is honored to be part of a Commission whose work represents a giant leap toward equal representation in Austin's city governance.

#### **Ryan Rafols**

A native of Weatherford, Texas, Ryan is the student commissioner and resides in newly drawn District 9. In the Army, Ryan earned a bachelor's degree in electronic engineering. He now has dual enrollment at the University of Texas and Austin Community College. He served as ACC's veteran's representative,



lobbying the Texas Legislature for benefits like the state-funded College Credit for Heroes, a program designed to help vets get course credits for training received in the service. Ryan's goal on ICRC was to engage more students in city politics and ensure their voices are heard.

Ryan graduated high school early to join the U.S. Army as a Patriot Missile Systems operator and systems engineer. He worked at Fort Bliss and White Sands Missile Range for four-and-a-half years of service, deployed overseas for a year. He is a Distinguished Honor Graduate of the Army's Air & Missile Defense Artillery School. Upon graduation, he was Assistant to the Tactical Director of 31st Air and Missile Defense Command's Missile Defense Operations in the South Arabian Gulf.

Ryan is the President, Re-founder, and on the Board of Directors for the Omega Chi Chapter of Delta Kappa Epsilon. Founded in 1844 at Yale, Delta Kappa Epsilon boasts the most Presidential Alumnae of any fraternity. Ryan plans to attend the University of Texas School of Law and looks forward to a career in politics.

### **Anna Saenz**

Anna Saenz grew up determined to be a professional dancer. To attain that goal, she studied ballet, modern dance and Mexican folk dance. She performed at Hemisphere '68 and at Fiesta Noche del Rio in her native city, San Antonio. Turning to a different art form, Anna studied pottery at the Dougherty Art Center and Laguna Gloria Art Museum. She also studied art history while at Wellesley College, sculpture at the Elizabeth Ney Sculpture Conservatory, and oil painting with Glenda Buehring. Anna exhibited her oil paintings at a juried art show in Buda, TX.

After completing a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish, Anna taught Spanish at Manor Junior High School, St. Michael's Academy and Lamar Middle School. Anna now volunteers with the Ladies Club of St. Catherine of Siena, using her skills of sewing and crocheting, and is a South Austin Senior Activity Center Advisory Board member.

For many years, Anna worked at the voting polls, sometimes counting ballots with tally marks. She sees her work on ICRC as an extension of her commitment to her community.

### **Maria Solis**

Maria Solis has been self-employed as a massage therapist since 1990 and is the owner of Massage Concepts in South Austin. Originally from Brownsville, Texas, Maria obtained her Associate of Arts from Texas Southmost College at Brownsville in 1978. She also attended the University of Texas at Austin.

A single parent, Maria became a massage therapist when her daughter started grade school so that she could be available to care for her daughter. She was not able to be a stay-at-home parent but was determined to do it as best as she could. As her daughter was growing up, most of Maria's volunteer activities were school related. She was often a homeroom mom and held different offices in school PTAs. She was also a Band Booster parent and traveled on many trips with the band. Maria was the Band Booster president while her daughter was at the Johnston High School Liberal Arts Academy.

Maria has been the Southwood Neighborhood Association president and served on several committees including the Traffic Calming Committee.





Members of the 2013 Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission





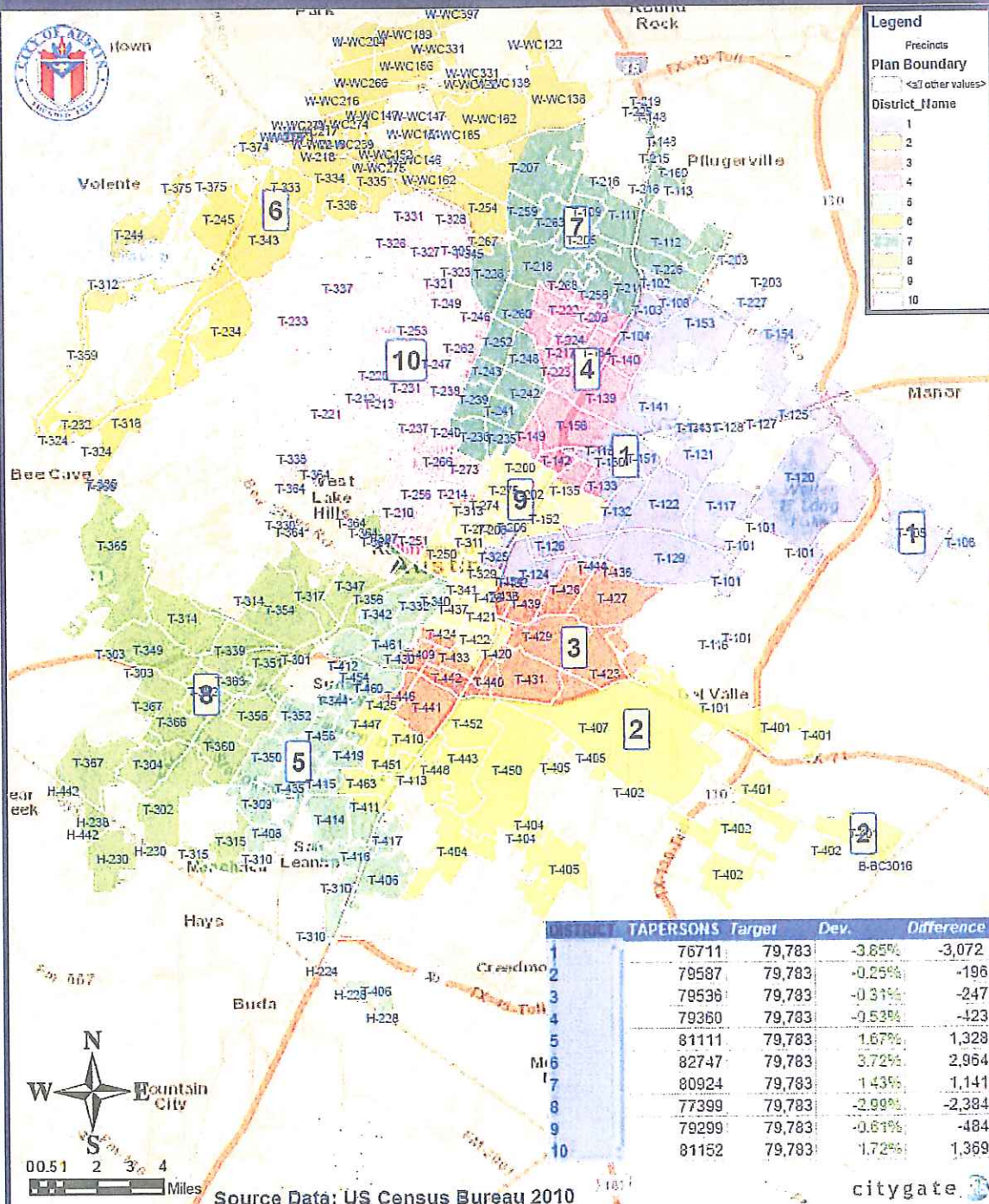
## Ten-District Overview

The following pages offer a summary of findings about the ten Austin city council districts created per the City Charter.

All ten districts comply with the Voting Rights Act and Constitutional mandate of one-person, one-vote and all are contiguous. Districts are compact and preserve neighborhood integrity to the extent practicable.

Final 10-District Map

City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013



## District 1

### Approximate geographic distribution

East and Northeast

### Demographics

- Total Population: 76,711 Deviation: -3.85%
- Racial/Ethnic Population (%): White: 44.45%; Hispanic: 43.14%; Black: 29.15%; Asian: 3.32%

### Major landmarks

George Washington Carver Museum & Cultural Center, Huston-Tillotson University, Travis County Expo Center, Walter E. Long/Decker Lake, LBJ Presidential Library & Museum, Texas State Capitol, Millennium Youth Sports Complex, Texas State Cemetery, Gus Garcia Recreation Center, University Medical Center Brackenridge

### Major arteries

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., U.S. Hwy 183, U.S. Hwy 290 East, Loyola Lane, Manor Road, Springdale Road

### A sampling of district neighborhoods

Rosewood, Windsor Park, University Hills, Blackland, Chestnut, Coronado Hills, Springdale, Colony Park, Copperfield, Pioneer Crossing, Heritage Hills, Sendero Hills, North Oaks, Las Cimas, River Ranch, Frontera, Parker Acres, Woodcliff

### Rationale

Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, this area of Austin qualified as a minority opportunity district under the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA), as it contained a large concentration of Austin's African American community. The Commission was also aware of the surrounding communities and historic neighborhoods. Certain precincts, such as 133 and 156, were split in order to comply with the VRA. Residents of the University Hills Neighborhood Association requested that it and precinct 151 be kept in one district.

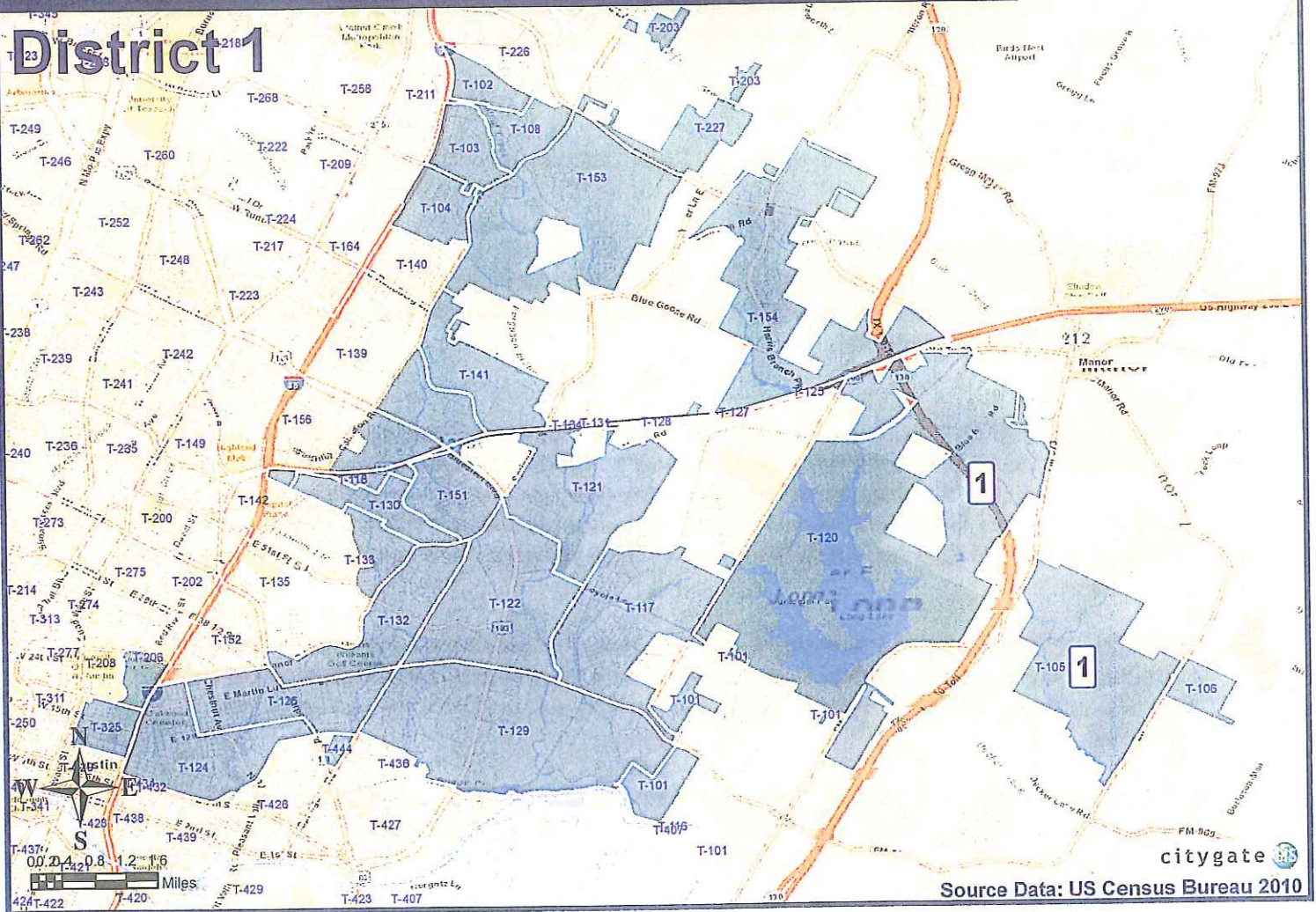
Members of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Austinites for Geographic Representation (AGR) and others well versed in the VRA testified that this district as drawn would provide the best opportunity for African Americans to elect a City Council member of their choosing.

Including the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library and State Capitol in District 1, a minority opportunity district, was a symbolic gesture made by the Commission, recognizing that President Lyndon Johnson signed the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law.



City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013

# District 1



## District 2

### Approximate geographic distribution

Southeast and South

### Demographics

- Total Population: 79,587 Deviation: -0.25%
- Racial/Ethnic Population (%): White: 56.12%; Hispanic: 68.94%; Black: 8.85%; Asian: 1.29%

### Major landmarks

Austin Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA), Dove Springs Recreation Center, Circuit of the Americas, Ditmar Park, McKinney Falls State Park, Onion Creek Soccer Complex & Park.

### Major arteries

William Cannon, IH-35 South, Hwy 183 East, South Congress Ave., East Riverside Dr., Nuckols Crossing, Hwy 130, East Highway 71 (East Ben White Blvd and Bastrop Highway)

### A sampling of district neighborhoods

Dove Springs, Franklin Park, Bluff Springs, Nuckols Crossing, Sweet Briar, Stoney Ridge

### Rationale

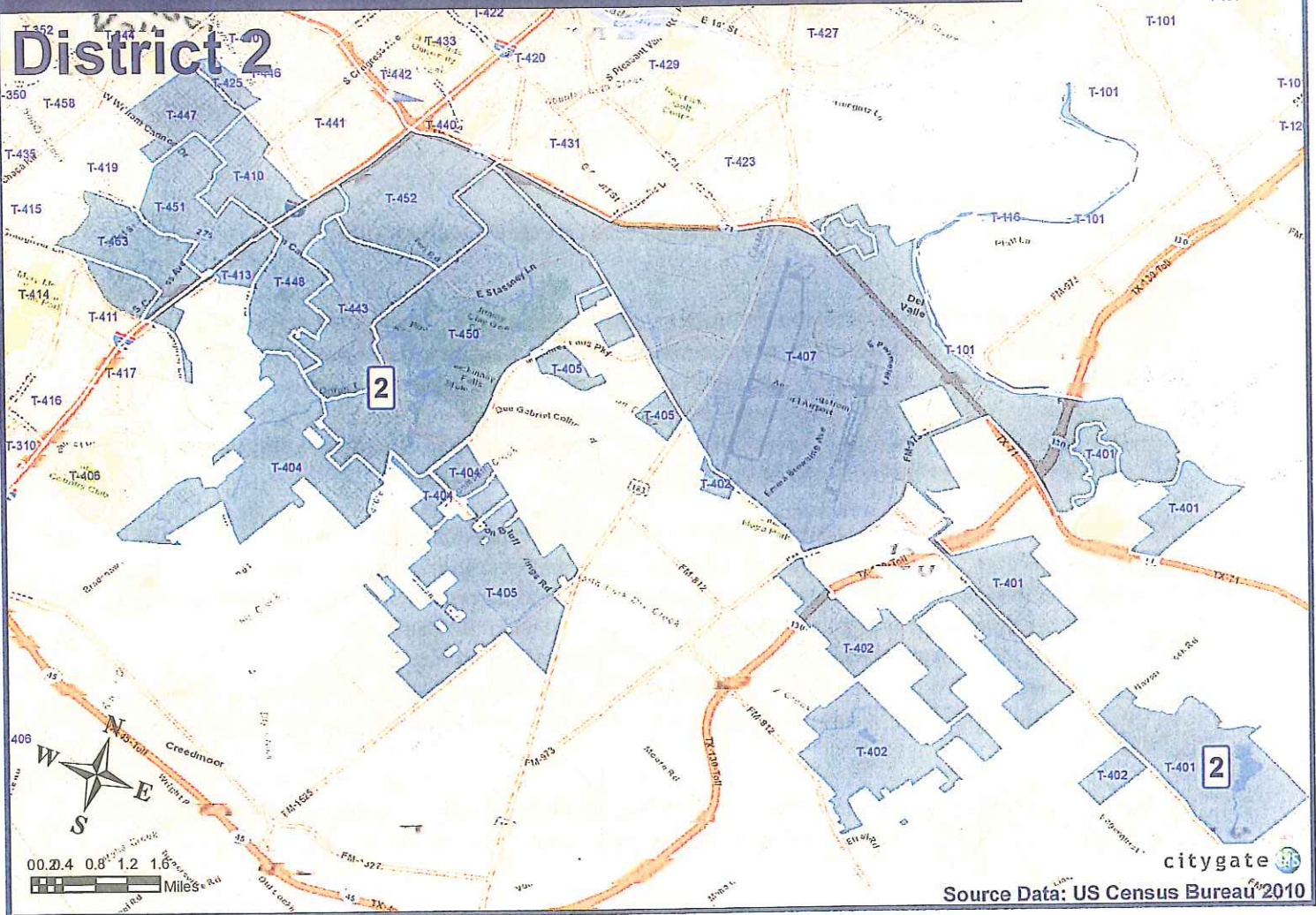
Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, this area of Austin qualified as a minority opportunity district under the Federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA), as it contained a large concentration of Austin's Hispanic community. The Commission was also aware of the surrounding communities and historic neighborhoods. Certain precincts, such as 447, were split in order to comply with the VRA. Precinct 411 was also split in order to keep South Boggy Creek Neighborhood together in District 2, as requested by representatives of South Boggy Creek Neighborhood Association.

Many residents of Dove Springs requested that their area be kept together because of major community efforts to improve and preserve a historically underserved area. The Commission also received testimony that the area South of William Cannon and East of IH-35 shares schools with the Dove Springs area. Residents from the Montopolis area expressed a desire to be in the same district as Dove Springs; Dove Springs residents agreed that the two communities share similar concerns and issues. After initial attempts to keep the two communities in one district, it became evident through public testimony and advice from legal counsel that it was necessary to place them in separate districts in order to comply with the VRA.

Individuals informed on the VRA, ranging from Austinites for Geographic Representation (AGR) to long-term residents of the city, testified that this district as drawn would provide the best opportunity for minority representation.



City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013



## District 3

### Approximate geographic distribution

East-Central and South-Central

### Demographics

- Total Population: 79,536 Deviation: -0.31%
- Racial/Ethnic Population (%): White: 57.79%; Hispanic: 60.84%; Black: 8.72%; Asian: 2.87%

### Major landmarks

Colorado River, Montopolis Recreation Center, St. Edward's University, Austin Community College Riverview Campus, Roy G. Guerrero Colorado River Park, Eduardo Cantu Pan American Park, Krieg Field, Fiesta Gardens

### Major arteries

East Cesar Chavez St., East Riverside Dr., Pleasant Valley Rd. Hwy. 183, Montopolis Dr., East 7<sup>th</sup> St, Airport Blvd

### A sampling of district neighborhoods

Montopolis, Govalle, Johnston Terrace, River Bluff, Gardens, Dawson, Galindo, Holly

### Rationale

Based on the 2010 United States Census, this area of Austin qualified as a minority opportunity district under the Voting Rights Act (VRA) as it contained a large concentration of Austin's Hispanic community. The Commission was also aware of the surrounding communities and historic neighborhoods. Certain precincts, such as 420, 424 and 433 were split in order to comply with the VRA.

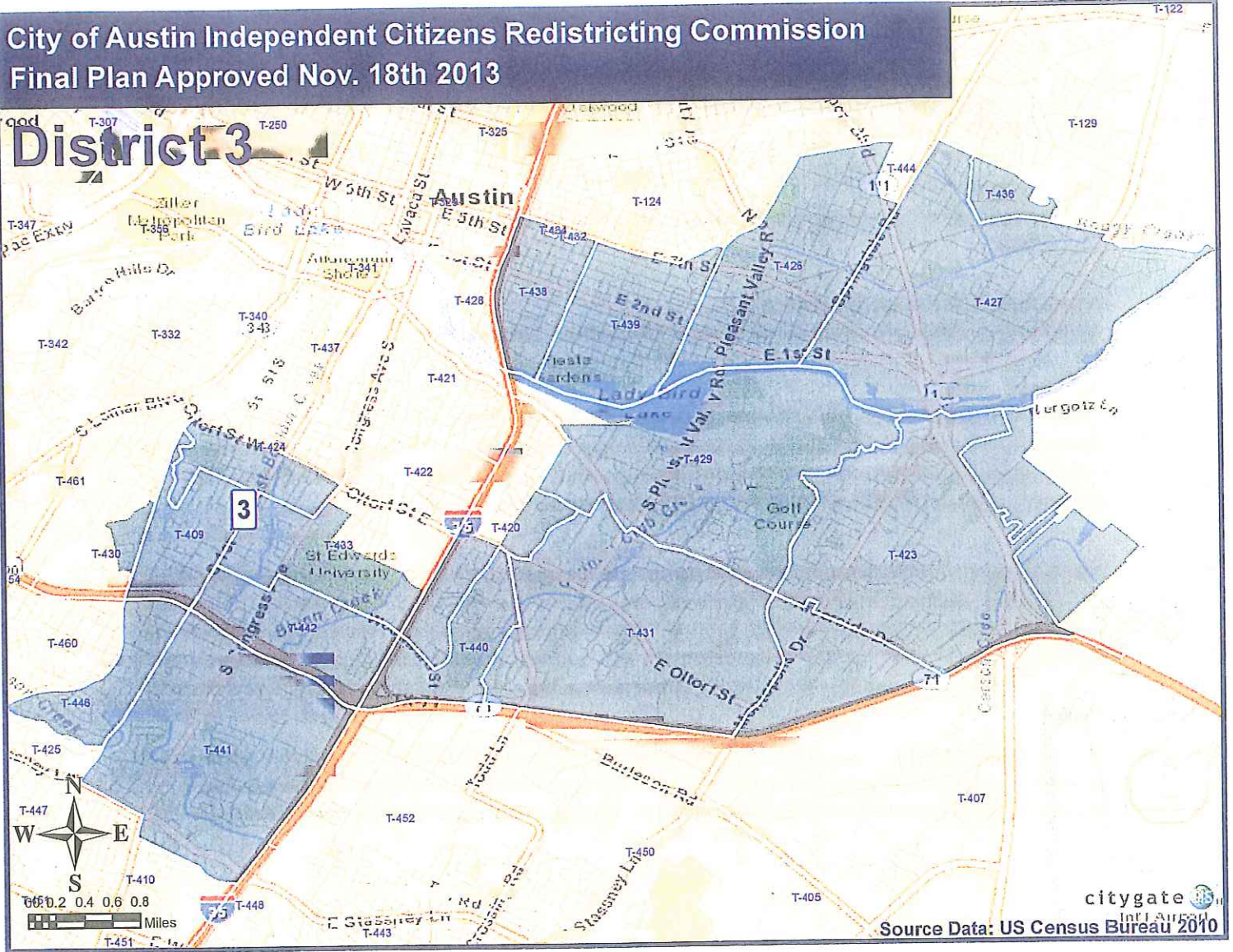
Many residents from the Montopolis area expressed a strong desire to be in the same district as Dove Springs. After initial attempts to keep the two communities in one district, it became evident through public testimony and advice from legal counsel that it was necessary to place them in separate districts in order to comply with the VRA. The Commission also received input that Montopolis was developed during the same time period as the historic Central East Austin neighborhoods in District 3 and shared similarities.

Many residents testified that IH-35 had been a segregating boundary since its construction, dividing East and West, and that the Commission had the opportunity to cross that boundary with this new map. Others urged the crossing of IH-35 to maintain communities of interest. District 3 is bisected by IH-35.



City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013

# District 3





## District 4

### Approximate geographic distribution

North-Central

### Demographics

- Total Population: 79,360 Deviation: -0.53%
- Racial/Ethnic Population (%): White: 54.73%; Hispanic: 65.22%; Black: 10.28%; Asian: 3.04%

### Major landmarks

Austin Community College Highland Mall Campus, Quail Creek, Fiskville Cemetery, Bartholomew District Park

### Major arteries

North Lamar Blvd, Kramer Lane, Rundberg Lane, IH-35 North, St. Johns Avenue

### A sampling of district neighborhoods include

North Park Estates, Woodbridge, Norwood Park, Quail Creek, Georgian Acres

### Rationale

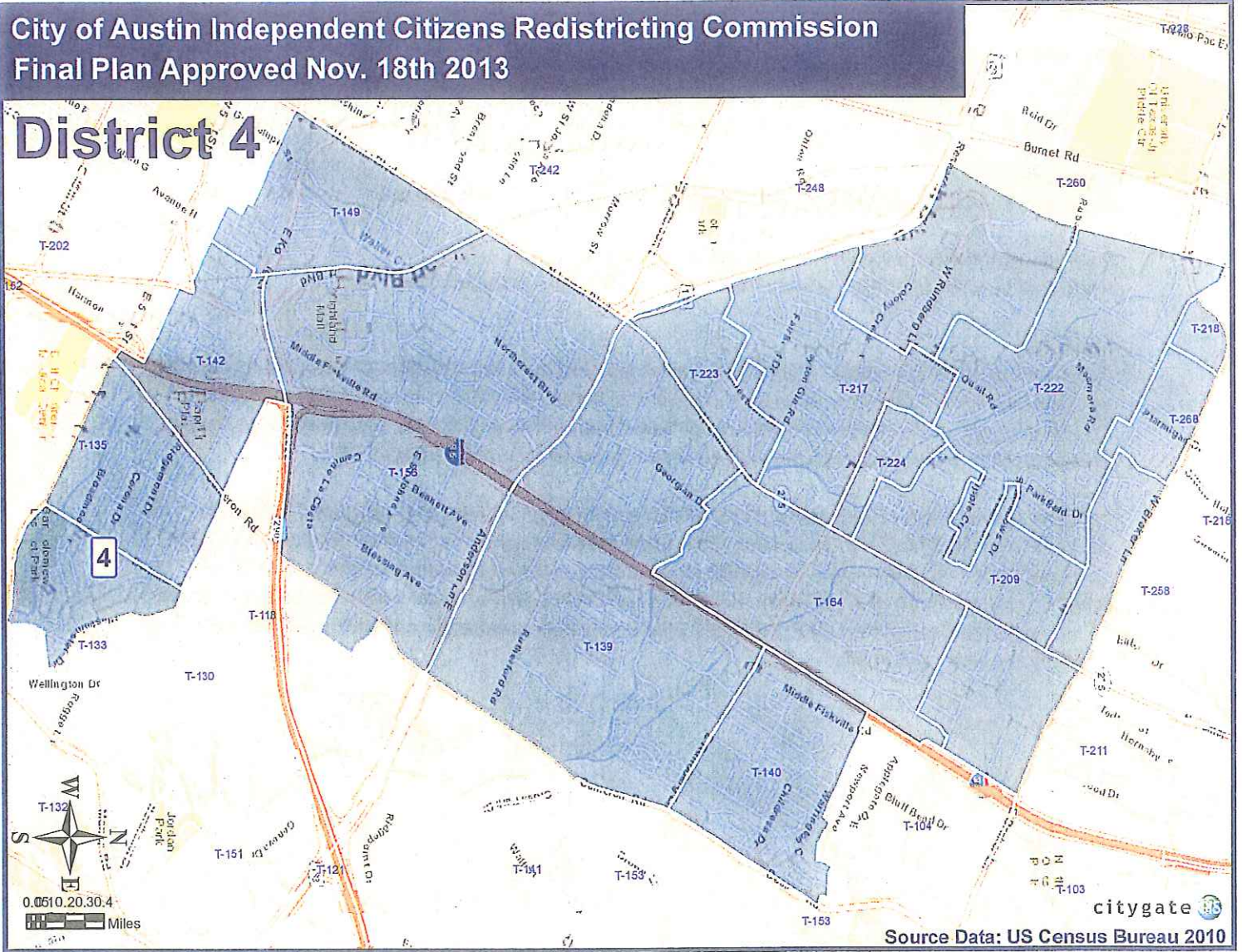
Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, this area of Austin qualified as a minority opportunity district under the Voting Rights Act (VRA) as it contained a large concentration of Austin's Hispanic community. The Commission was also cognizant of the surrounding communities and historic neighborhoods. Certain precincts, such as 211, 260, 133, and 135 were split in order to comply with the VRA.

The Commission took into account public testimony regarding the unique geographical and socio-economic concerns faced by the communities along Rundberg Lane, North Lamar Blvd and Hwy 183. These included high crime rates, struggling school achievement and traffic congestion. The City of Austin's "Restore Rundberg" initiative, federally funded through the Austin Police Department, covers an area encompassed by this district. District 4 is the most geographically compact due to its high population density in the area.



City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013

# District 4



## District 5

**Approximate geographic distribution**  
South-Central and Far South

### Demographics

- Total Population: 80,675 Deviation: 1.15%
- Racial/Ethnic Population (%): White: 78.64%; Hispanic: 31.14%; Black: 4.49%; Asian: 2.95%

### Major landmarks

South Congress Business District, The Broken Spoke, Southpark Meadows, Zach Theater, Mary Moore Searight Metropolitan Park, Austin Community College South Campus, Barton Creek Greenbelt East

### Major arteries

Manchaca Rd, South Lamar Blvd, Westgate Blvd, South 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Slaughter Lane

### A sampling of district neighborhoods

Onion Creek, Garrison Park, Zilker, Barton Hills, Westgate

### Rationale

This district borders two VRA-protected Districts, 2 and 3, which traversed IH-35 into south-central Austin. Ultimately the most difficult decisions were not the Northern or Southern boundaries, but where to establish the Eastern boundaries.

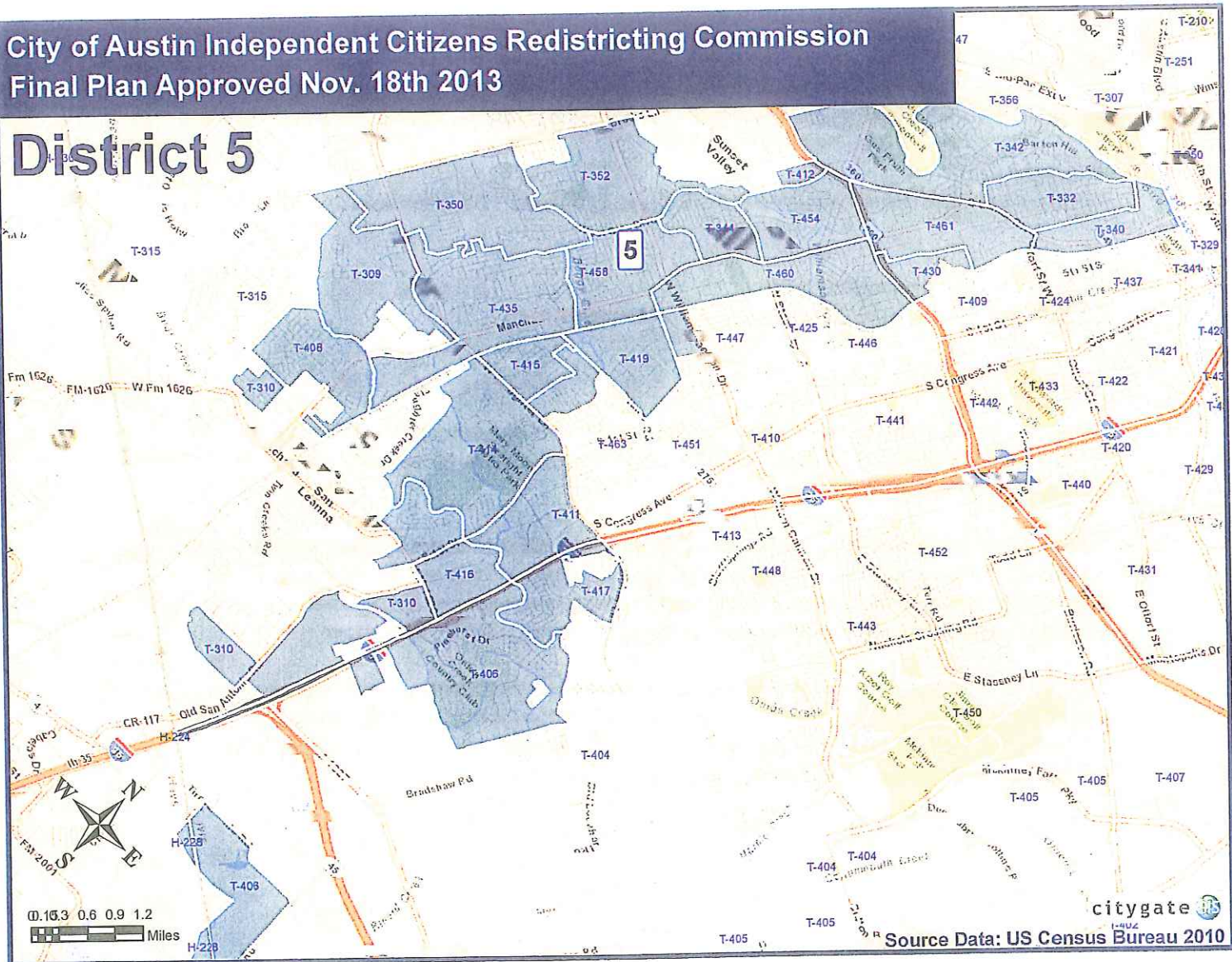
Some residents of Onion Creek made a strong plea to keep this district south of Ben White Blvd. The one-person one-vote mandate combined with limitations faced in meeting the VRA mandates in adjacent districts kept this idea from realization. Similarly, residents from the South Austin Combined Neighborhoods offered compelling arguments facing the same statutory limitations.

The Commission received testimony from District 5's residents regarding precinct 340. Representatives from Zilker neighborhood argued that the area North of Barton Springs Road near South Lamar Blvd should be included with District 5 as opposed to District 9, since these neighbors have served as advocates and stewards of the parkland along Lady Bird Lake.



City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013

# District 5



## District 6

### Approximate geographic distribution

Far Northwest

### Demographics

- Total Population: 82,747 Deviation: 3.72%
- Racial/Ethnic Population (%): White: 74.28%; Hispanic: 15.20%; Black: 4.69%; Asian: 13.24%

### Major landmarks

Canyon Creek, Concordia University, Steiner Ranch, Avery Ranch, Metrorail Lakeline Station, Mansfield Dam, Windy Point

### Major arteries

Ranch Road 620, Parmer Lane, Anderson Mill, SH 45, U.S. Hwy 183, McNeil Drive

### A sampling of district neighborhoods

Four Points, Grandview Hills, Canyon Creek

### Rationale

Neighborhood representatives from this area testified repeatedly that they felt Williamson County should be contained in one district. The Commission also received testimony that the area along the Highway 620 corridor would be best served by a representative who lives outside central Austin and understands their concerns and challenges.

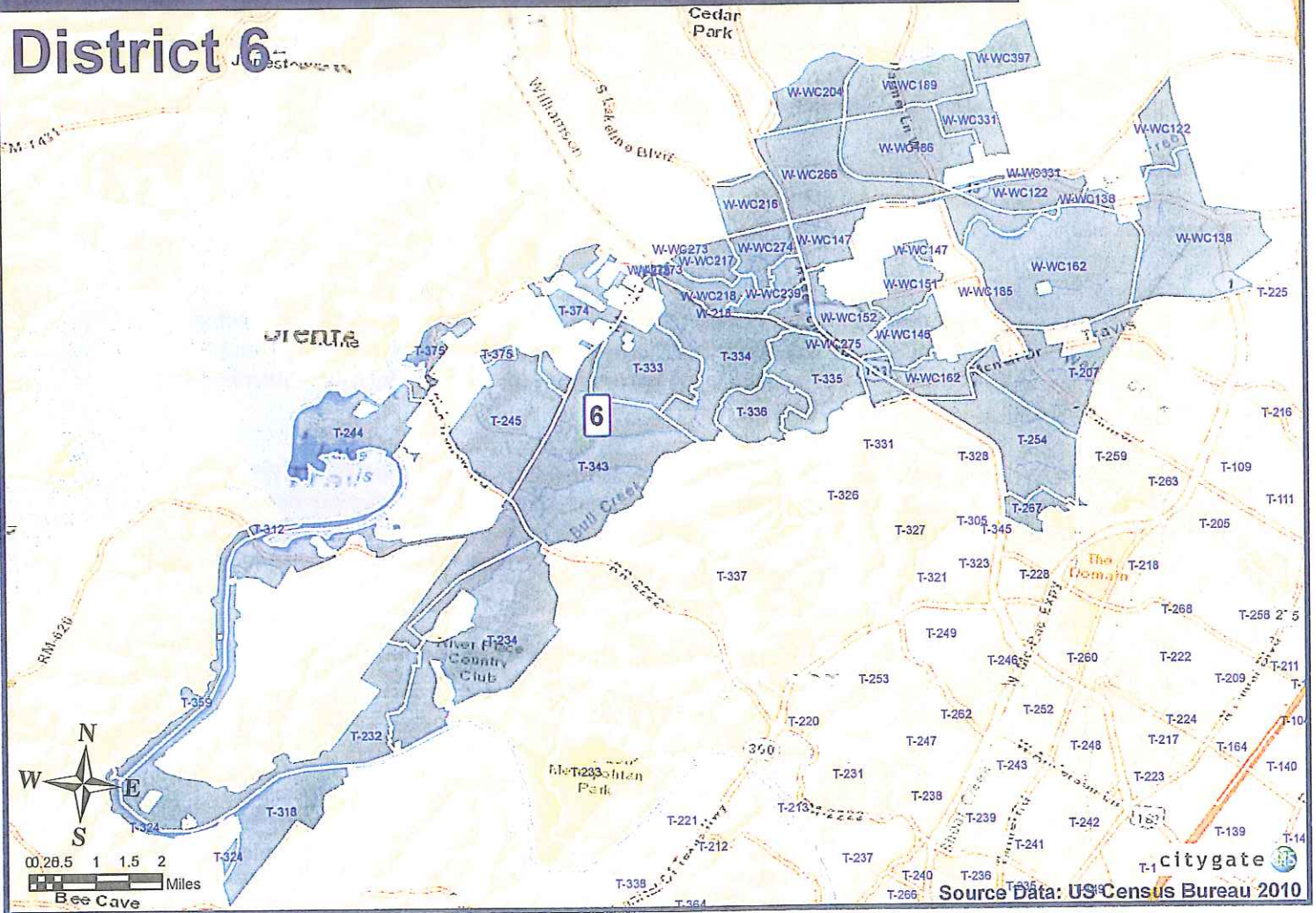
The Commission kept Williamson County united in one district. Additional population was needed to comply with the one-person one-vote mandate, so the Commission followed a corridor along Ranch Road 620 to group areas with similar interests and concerns around transportation and education issues. The Commission was also conscious of the fact that a large portion of Austin's Asian American population lives in District 6 near Westwood High School.

Recognizing the Union Pacific rail line as a natural border to the east, the Commission split Precinct 207 at this point to maintain a consistent boundary along this natural barrier.



City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013

# District 6



## District 7

### Approximate geographic distribution

North and Northwest-Central

### Demographics

- Total Population: 80,924 Deviation: 1.43%
- Racial/Ethnic Population (%): White: 71.37%; Hispanic: 22.54%; Black: 8.19%; Asian: 9.65%

### Major landmarks

The Domain, Quarry Lake, University of Texas Pickle Research Center, Shoal Creek, Austin Memorial Park Cemetery, Austin Community College Northridge Campus

### Major arteries

Burnet Road, Parmer Lane, Gracy Farms Lane, Metric Blvd, Shoal Creek Blvd.

### A sampling of district neighborhoods

Gracy Woods, Allendale, Wooten, Wells Branch, Scofield Farms, Gateway, Brentwood, Crestview, North Shoal Creek, North Burnet

### Rationale:

The areas of Northwest-central Austin that wrap around District 4 fall into four distinct communities that share many similarities and concerns: Parmer at MoPac Blvd., Gracy Farms Lane, Wells Branch and Burnet Road South of Hwy 183.

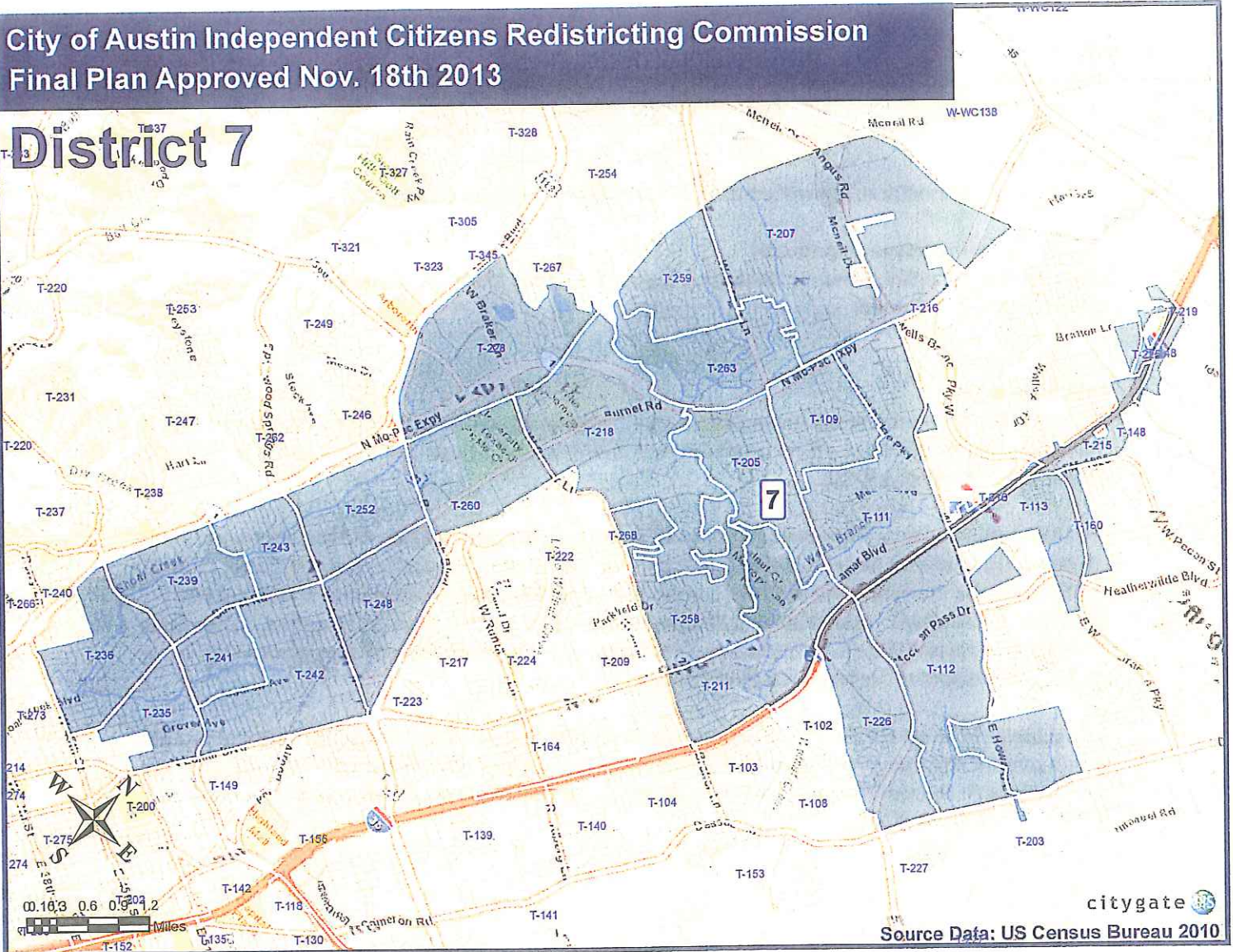
In public testimony, residents asked that Allendale, Brentwood, Crestview, North Shoal Creek and Wooten neighborhoods be kept in one district as a community of interest. The areas in District 7 share similar suburban transportation and land use patterns, age and income demographics, and growth pressures such as traffic and urban infill. Testimony pointed out Burnet Road as “the spine” of the area, driving many issues related to transportation and small business development. Several residents in the area also testified that the Domain is their “downtown.”

Recognizing the Union Pacific rail line as a natural border to the west, the Commission split Precinct 207 at this point to maintain a consistent boundary along this natural barrier. Public testimony influenced the Commission to keep Wooten neighborhood wholly contained in District 7 instead of splitting it at the Cap Metro railroad tracks.



City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013

# District 7





## District 8

**Approximate geographic distribution**  
Southwest

### **Demographics**

- Total Population: 77,399 Deviation: -2.99%
- Racial/Ethnic Population (%): White: 82.07%; Hispanic: 17.65%; Black: 2.39%; Asian: 7.98%

### **Major landmarks**

Barton Springs Greenbelt, the “Y” at Oak Hill, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Zilker Park, Austin Community College Pinnacle Campus, Veloway

### **Major arteries**

South MoPac Blvd (Loop 1), Southwest Parkway, Escarpment Rd, Hwy 360, West Slaughter Ln, Hwy 290, Hwy 71

### **A sampling of district neighborhoods**

Oak Hill, Circle C Ranch, Travis Country, Western Oaks, Scenic Brook, Sendera, Maple Run

### **Rationale**

The Commission centered this district around Oak Hill and incorporated areas affiliated with the Oak Hill Association of Neighborhoods (OHAN). As more residents were needed to reach the target population, the Commission followed a corridor along MoPac to group areas with similar interests and concerns around transportation, water and green space.

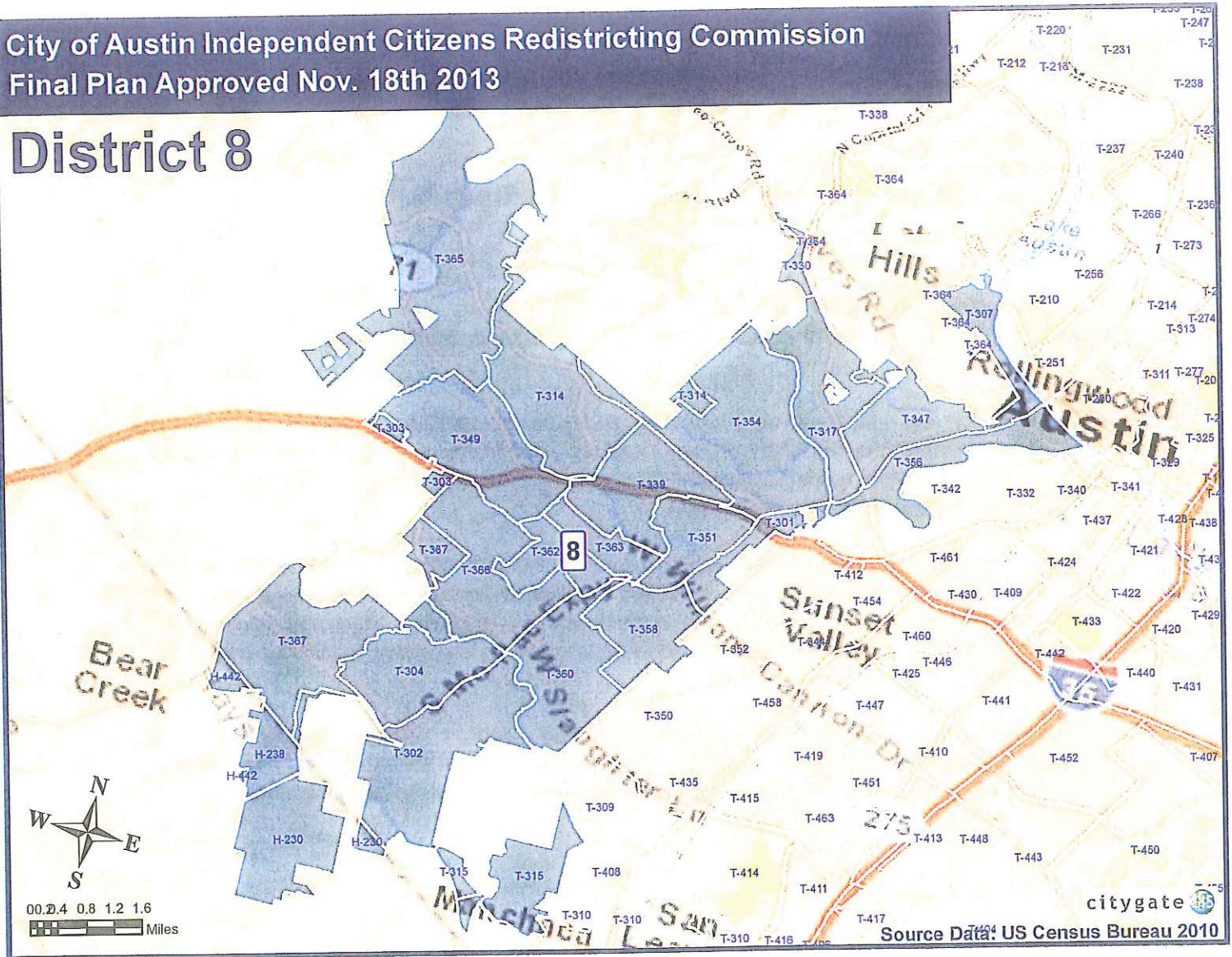
The neighborhoods in this district share common concerns and constitute communities of interest. The main transportation artery is MoPac, which provides residents of southwest Austin their primary access route to downtown Austin. MoPac Boulevard south of Lady Bird Lake is entirely encompassed by this district. Environmental concerns related to the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone and Barton Creek also unite the neighborhoods in District 8.

Representatives from Oak Hill Association of Neighborhoods supported the area as defined in this district. Representatives from Travis Country Home Owners Association voiced a desire to remain in District 8. Other testimony was offered on issues related to Barton Creek and the environmentally sensitive Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone.



City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013

# District 8



## District 9

### Approximate Geographic Distribution

Central

### Demographics

- Total Population: 79,735 Deviation: -0.06%
- Racial/Ethnic Population (%): White: 77.71%; Hispanic: 17.15%; Black: 3.69%; Asian: 10.00%

### Major landmarks

University of Texas at Austin, 6<sup>th</sup> Street Entertainment District, Lady Bird Lake, Auditorium Shores, Waller Creek, City Hall; Bouldin Creek, Austin Convention Center, Congress Avenue Bridge

### Major arteries

Congress Avenue, Barton Springs Road, Riverside Drive; 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Red River Street, Airport Blvd, 45<sup>th</sup> St., East 38<sup>th</sup> St., Guadalupe St., 6<sup>th</sup> St

### A sampling of district neighborhoods

Travis Heights, Hyde Park, West Campus, North University, Eastwoods, Hancock, Bouldin, Mueller

### Rationale

The Commission recognized that Austin's growth and development undermined the usefulness of traditional boundaries like rivers and highways. Looking at the entire city and our target population of 79,783 per district, the Commission determined that Austin's central core encompassed a large area and included neighborhoods that may or may not consider themselves similar. The Commission believes District 9 represents much of the foundation and heart of the city, and its economic lifeblood. The Commission also set out to create a district with a large concentration of students from the University of Texas.

Residents from both Mueller and its surrounding neighborhoods gave extensive testimony about Airport Boulevard and other transportation corridors, the demographics of Mueller's citizenry as compared with surrounding areas, and how light rail might affect the neighborhood. The Commission decided that the Mueller neighborhood would be best served in District 9, partly because this recent development has a demographic base unlike the surrounding districts.

Representatives of the Downtown Austin Alliance described the multi-year Downtown Austin Plan, and with the exception of the capitol complex, the Commission was able to keep the Plan's boundaries within District 9. The Commission also received testimony on the Travis Heights Neighborhood's borders and community of interest.

Based on public testimony and Voting Rights Act requirements, the Commission divided precincts 420, 424, 429 and 433 at the block level to provide neighboring districts with larger minority populations.





## District 10

### Approximate geographic distribution

West-Central and Northwest

### Demographics

- Total Population: 81,152 Deviation: 1.72%
- Racial Population (%): White: 85.28%; Hispanic: 9.32%; Black: 1.76%; Asian: 8.52%

### Major landmarks

Pennypacker Bridge, Emma Long City Park, Arboretum, Mount Bonnell, Lake Austin, Brushy Creek, Camp Mabry, Laguna Gloria Art Museum, Mayfield Park

### Major arteries

Mesa Drive, Exposition Blvd, RM-2222, North Capitol of Texas Hwy (Loop 360), Spicewood Springs Road

### A sampling of district neighborhoods

Great Hills, Jollyville, Bryker Woods, Tarrytown, Mesa Oaks, Highland Hills, Northwest Hills, Cat Mountain, Mayfield Park, Jester Estates

### Rationale

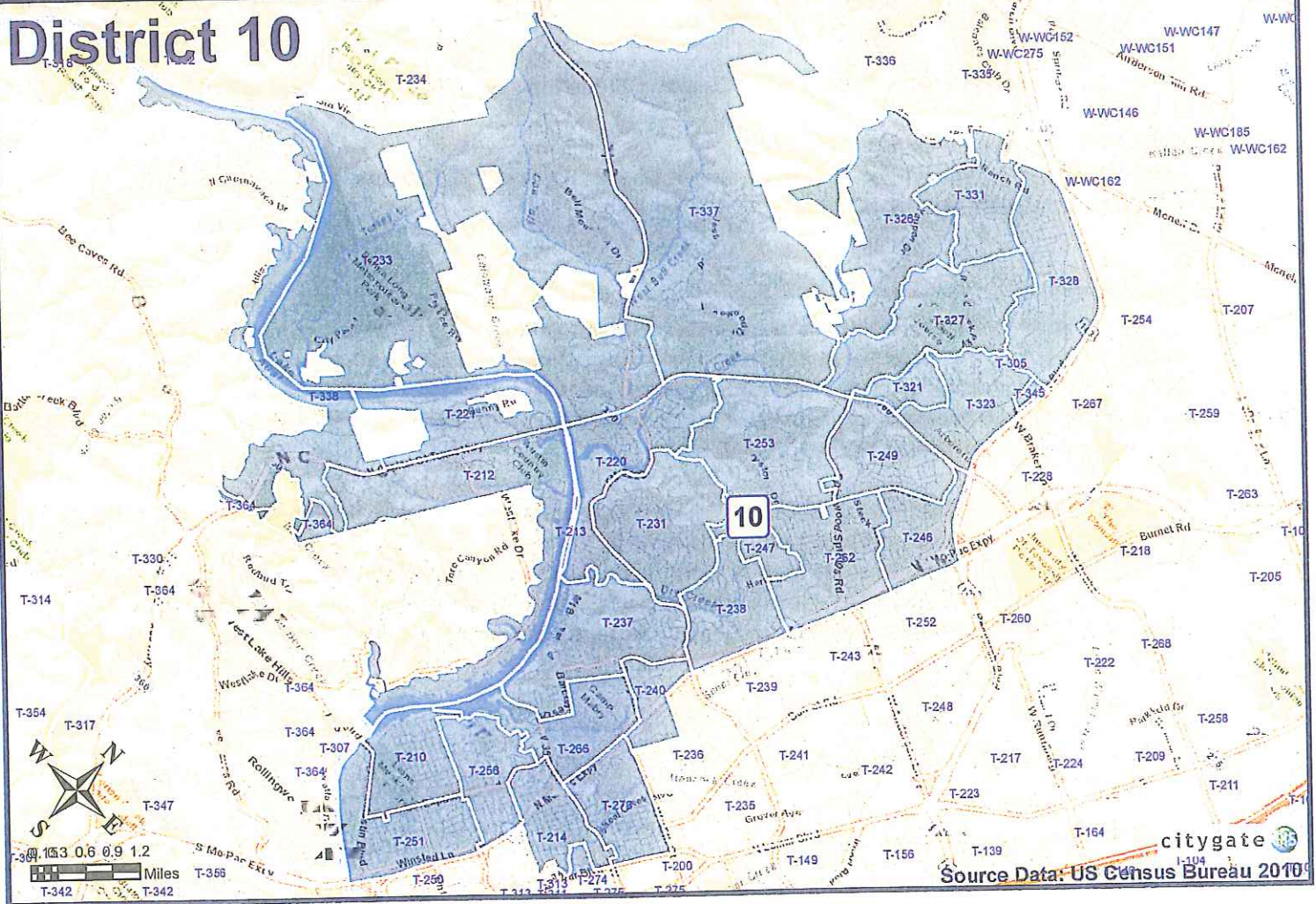
The Commission honored requests not to split the northwest part of Austin at Mesa Drive and to keep neighborhoods near Anderson High School together. To meet the one-person one-vote mandate, additional population was needed. Public testimony indicated that economic factors such as built-out communities, rental housing, access to MoPac, and its expansion created a community of interest between the areas north and south of RM 2222.

Representatives of Highland Park West Balcones Area Neighborhood Association (HPWBANA) testified that they should be aligned with Tarrytown, Bryker Woods, Rosedale and other central Austin neighborhoods across MOPAC as well as Northwest Hills. Certain communities on the East side of MoPac in the 35<sup>th</sup> street area were included in this district based on testimony that they faced the same issues as their west-of-MoPac neighbors, regarding transportation and age of housing structures.



City of Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission  
Final Plan Approved Nov. 18th 2013

# District 10



citygate

Source Data: US Census Bureau 2010

## Intent for Future Annexations by the City of Austin

In this section, the ICRC establishes its policy toward future annexations by the City of Austin. The ICRC has the exclusive responsibility under the City Charter and, it is its intent, to incorporate newly annexed areas into appropriate city council districts. Newly annexed areas or future annexations are those areas not within the city of Austin at the time of the drawing of the most recent redistricting map drawn by the ICRC pursuant to its Charter.

It is the ICRC's intent that any future annexations will be drawn to ensure that all potential and eligible voters will be entitled to vote in Austin elections and be incorporated into appropriate city council districts. The ICRC will attach any newly annexed areas to the immediate adjoining district. If a newly annexed area adjoins more than one electoral district, it is the intent of the ICRC to attach the new area to the district with which it shares the longest border.

The ICRC will reconvene at the call of the chair (or vice-chair if the chair is unavailable) to address all issues involving future annexations.



## Commissioner Comments and Final Vote on the Official Map

The following is a transcription of statements from Commissioners during the vote to adopt the final plan (transcribed from the audio recording of the meeting held November 18, 2013):

**Anna Saenz:** Madam Chair, I vote yes. I think we have worked very long and hard. We have listened to all of the citizens. We've tried very hard to increase the minority district's strength so that they can elect a candidate of their choice. We have kept certain neighborhoods together and I think we have done an excellent job because Fred's been here to help us. Otherwise we would not have been able to do this map.

**Ryan Rafols:** I would vote yes on this. I completely agree with Anna. I'm sure a lot of people agree with me, I remember when we tried to draw this, there were crayons; there were markers. I was like "We need Fred." I think we have come very, very far and we've come with a really complete result. We haven't made everybody happy, I'm sure everybody thinks there are small tweaks. I think ten years from now they will be able to do an even better job. We're starting something that is very unprecedented and I thank everybody for dealing with each other, negotiating and working as a team. There wasn't nearly as much hot-headedness as you see in the City Council Chamber, maybe. I especially appreciated everyone listening to me, especially with students. That was my big issue and it was a community of interest. I could have dropped it a couple of times, but it definitely came out I think in favor of everybody.

**Mariano Diaz-Miranda:** I'm glad that we have this map. From the very beginning I thought that having, or supporting, those ethnically minority groups, having that voice was great. The "Gentlemen's Agreement" is bad. It is out of place right now and there is no place for it. But I also wanted to say that even those folks who felt unhappy for whatever reason about how we divided the districts, we can tell them for the first time that they really are represented. They have full representation that they have not had before. And this is a start and ten years from now this whole project will go again. And I think right now we will have a much better government. It's a great legacy that we are leaving behind. - Yes.

**Art Lopez:** I vote yes. I have reservations; you know, not about 1 through 4, but some of the others. Some of the things that citizens are asking for, some of these require wholesale changes and we've spent a lot of time on this thing. I recall an email, I don't remember who it was, a citizen, saying, "Hey, I voted against 10-1 redistricting, but it's here so let's move forward." I forget where he said he lived, but he was right on, close, to a border. He didn't like it, but he said something like, "Hey, now I have new neighbors and I'll learn to work with them and we'll move forward." That's how I feel.

**Harriett Harrow:** I vote aye. - No [comments]

**Cathy Cocco:** I would agree with Art that not everybody is happy with this 10-1 map, but I think we've accomplished all the goals. I think we have fulfilled the City Charter to the best of our abilities and there are compromises that neighborhoods and communities have had to make. And I think that we as commissioners have expedited this process. I want to thank all of you. I think you fellow thirteen have really shown that an independent citizen's commission is not an experiment. I think it is a successful model for the rest of the nation to follow. I also wanted to thank the staff, including Craig and our two wonderful legal counsels who have really provided sound judgment and also Fred. I also want to thank all the public who has followed us for this entire process. They are the ones who really proposed this





change and have given us the impetus to move on and complete our project on a timely basis. I am looking forward to this positive vote. And my vote is aye for this map. Thank you.

**Henry Johnson:** I vote yes. I'd just like to say that I'm glad it's over and we have a map. I never anticipated that we would get a hundred percent buy-in from all the citizens, but I think what we tried to do, what I feel we did, we did the best that we could to make sure that they are represented. They might like who they are represented by or with who they were paired, but at least they will have representation. And I do feel that we did listen to the citizens and so you guys did an excellent job.

**Carmen Llanes Pulido:** I vote yes. We've made some compromises here, as have representatives from several areas and individuals, but overall I think we have created a map that satisfies our most important requirements and we have taken huge amounts of input and made many, many changes based on what citizens have asked of us. I'm incredibly proud of my town. I'm proud of Austin for passing 10-1. I've never in my lifetime seen such a unifying rally around any one item, where people from every part of town, most parts of town, really, really got behind something and put aside differences to create geographic representation. And I'm proud of all the neighborhood representatives and all the individuals who have written to us and have come and spoken. And I am proud that we have buried the "Gentlemen's Agreement" once and for all. So after my lifetime of seeing single-member districts come up in debate and on the ballot, and waiting for this moment, this is really exciting. And as the daughter of neighborhood advocates, I know how much it means to Austin that this citizen's commission has truly been independent, truly been free of political ties and has a very human element, very real, genuine commitment to this process. Thank you.

**Stefan Haag:** I vote yes. I really appreciate the opportunity to serve on this commission. I am so glad to see single-member districts come to Austin, Texas. It is long overdue. And I think that for the first time people who have not been represented in Austin city government will be represented and for that I think it is a great benefit.

**William "Phil" Hewitt:** Yes, first of all I sent in that application, what is it almost a year ago, first of all because I had seen how representative government worked in cities in a couple of other places I had lived in. It is not often that historians get a chance to make history, usually we write about it. I thought the city I lived in deserved representative government, the people who had been so overlooked for so long deserved representative government, and what we have done in the last five and a half, six months is for me democracy in action. We have all worked really hard at it; everybody has put out good faith efforts. We have listened to the public. We have provided, I think, a fair map, we're not going to please everyone, but it is a map that the citizens of this city can use to build on for the future. So I vote yes.

**Rachel Truair:** As a native Austinite, as someone who grew up in Zilker and lived in South Austin as an early adult, and now live in East Austin, I can tell you that the areas are very different, but we are not as different as we think. We all deserve representation and we all deserve a voice in government. I am very proud of all the citizens who have contributed to this final product through their input, suggestions and ideas and I very much value what everyone had to say. I am also so incredibly proud of the teamwork on this commission and I think that if the fourteen of us can find a way to get along and agree unanimously on something, I have faith that the ten new City Council districts can work together as well. So, this is a very historic night and I vote yes on this map.

**Maria Solis:** Thank you. We had testimony from lots of people: individuals, organizations, neighborhood groups that all wanted something specific. And if maybe we had twenty districts to draw



we could have made a whole lot more people happier. But we only had ten. I feel very confident that I complied with my charge. I had certain things to look out for and I know that I did a good job of doing that. The only good thing I've got to say, on a previous occasion I have talked about it is time to form new relationships. When we have change, sometimes we can't live with the old standards we have to have new criteria, we have to make new ground rules. And I've said it is time to go find new relationships, so maybe we are being forced to find new relationships and hopefully they are going to turn into good relationships. I think one of the things we are going to have is that anybody that wants to run for City Council knows what the boundaries are. They know what they are dealing with and they have to please their constituents. So I'm very happy for that and I vote yes.

**TJ Costello:** Thank you Madam Chair, members of the commission. I learned a lot over the last four months. I learned that it is very easy to draw a map in a vacuum. I drew seven of them and I brought all sorts of ideas in here. I learned new things. I learned new names, 'Llanes Pulido.' I learned about new places. And it is important to note that things will be changing in the next ten years or so. The city may be very different in ten years, but we set a template for the next ICRC, and the next ICRC, and the next ICRC and so on. We did listen to everyone who visited us and we did read all the emails. We did study the city. We did focus on 2010, Austin 2010. We set the stage for the future. As a student of President Johnson, proud resident of the City of Austin and an enthusiastic member of the original ICRC I vote yes.

**Magdalena Blanco:** So I'm the final vote here and I vote yes. I just want to say that it has been a pleasure working with all of you and leading this group. It hasn't been easy the entire time and I've even had my own personal struggles. But I think that over the last five months that we've done something, to support what Phil was saying, is where we are going in this country and where we need to go. I think that regular citizens can come to the table, can make sound arguments, can pull in facts, can analyze and can work together to make really good sound decisions. And I think we met all of that. We had a great foundation with our Charter, it was laid out for us by some wonderful experts in the field that have pulled information together over years of experience of doing it in a vacuum, of doing it behind closed doors. I think that being very transparent in this process, putting the information out there, listening to the public testimony, we've done an amazing job. And you should all be commended and pat yourself on the back. I think we've achieved the minority representation, and as the Latina, one of the Latinas because we've got several on this commission. But as a Latina leading this group it has been an amazing experience. I was having a conversation with Henry and telling him that you know when you are discriminated against at a very young age it is daunting on you. And I've moved away from always looking at race and I just look at people. People are people. Female, male, white, black, purple, yellow, orange, whatever. And I struggled with it. I struggled with having to be race focused on this commission. I know what the issues are, what the concerns are in the community, that we don't have somebody that looks like us on the commission or even understands our ethnic background, our concerns, our family structure, our history. And we're doing that. We did that. This inaugural commission made that effort. We have three opportunity districts for Hispanics. We have an African American opportunity district and I think in the next commission we are going to have Asian. We're going to have Asian representation there. I think we're moving in that direction with the dynamics of the demographics in the City. We stuck to our Charter. As painstaking as it was, we stuck to it. We did follow the seven priorities that we had. We were impartial and we were non-political. And I think, finally, is that we are pioneering a new frontier for Austin, making new relationships, new neighborhoods, new neighborhood coalitions, and working together for a better represented Austin. So, thank you all. The motion is passed unanimously.



## Conclusion

The final map proposed by the inaugural Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission represents the culmination of a successful process driven by transparency and independence. Its commitment to the City Charter requirements, its quilting together of the city's diverse and beloved characteristics, and its step forward from the past toward a more representative, equal city government should bring pride to every citizen of Austin.

The map respects the requirements outlined by the City of Austin Charter by complying with the United States Constitution in establishing "reasonably equal population" in each district, as well as the federal Voting Rights Act. The map also maintains geographic contiguity and compactness while accommodating the geographic integrity of existing neighborhoods and communities of interest. Finally, the map respects existing election precinct lines and follows geographically identifiable boundaries whenever possible, while giving no regard to any place of residence for any incumbent, political candidate or group.

People love Austin for many reasons: its natural environment, strong economy, vibrant culture, and friendly people all blend together to create a unique and multi-faceted city. Just as Austin is not defined by one characteristic, each of the ten new districts represents a cultural cross-section of Austin's most incredible qualities. It would have been impossible to create a district of 80,000 residents with the same exact interests or cultural makeup. Instead, districts span multiple areas of influence while still following the requirements of the City Charter. Over the course of this process, it became clear that any person who decides to run for City Council in one of the ten districts will be obligated to listen to and advocate for his or her entire district's concerns, not just one group.

Finally, to say this was a redistricting effort does not fully describe the process. It was a transparent, citizen-driven initiative that undid an antiquated and inequitable tradition. The Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission concludes its final report with a brief history lesson. In 1938, then-Congressman Lyndon B. Johnson gave a landmark speech in support of public housing known as the "Tarnish on the Violet Crown." This speech called for the citizens of Austin to "apply the polish" to the housing inequities that were prevalent "just a few short blocks from Congress Avenue." Congressman Johnson recognized that a "blight" on the city of Austin not only hurt the people most immediately affected, but also created a "cancerous blight on the whole community." The inaugural redistricting effort has further achieved a more vibrant, equitable city known as the Violet Crown.

The fourteen Commissioners thank the city's commitment to the independence and transparency required to make this process a success. The map represents more than just political constructs; it represents justness, equality and full representation for all. While there may be lines and boundaries, they must all still meet together to make up one great city.

