

VOTE

## Spanning six county lines, voting district awaits judgment

U.S. Supreme Court to rule on Central Texas 'gerrymandering'

BY EMMA FREER

As recently as 1990, one member of the U.S. House represented all of Travis County. Today the county is divided into five U.S. House districts. The city of Austin, which extends into Hays and Williamson counties, comprises a sixth district.

Without a devoted representative, the city and county's interests may be eclipsed by those of residents hundreds of miles away, which are often quite different.

Two-thirds of Travis County voters were Democrats in the 2016 presidential election, for example. But only one of the county's five representatives, Lloyd Doggett of District 35, is a

CONTINUED ON 20

## TWO METROS, SIX COUNTIES, ONE DISTRICT

A federal court ruled in August that U.S. House District 35 was unconstitutionally gerrymandered because the Texas Legislature used race as a central factor in drawing it. See your representatives on Page 21.

KEY  
--- County lines  
■ District 35

### WHAT IS GERRYMANDERING?

The practice of drawing voting districts that provide a special advantage to one party or group

### PERCENT OF HISPANIC OR LATINO RESIDENTS

According to the federal court ruling, the Legislature "packed" Latino voters into District 35 in an attempt to minimize their influence in surrounding districts.

35.1%  
Austin

61%  
District 35

SOURCES: TEXAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

Map not to scale

## LIVING IN 'FLASH FLOOD ALLEY'

Austin lies in the middle of "Flash Flood Alley"—one of the most flood-prone areas in North America. Flash floods are considered the most dangerous type of flood due to their power and unpredictability. Austin has experienced several significant flash floods since 1981.

The 2015 Memorial Day flood inundated parts of Central Austin, including House Park, Austin High School's football stadium.

## Austin aims to correct 'sins of the past,' bolsters flood protections

BY CHRISTOPHER NEELY

Hurricane Harvey rocked the Gulf Coast, but Troy Kimmel, a meteorologist and University of Texas at Austin severe weather professor, said although it is 165 miles inland from Houston, Austin was "lucky" to come out unscathed.

Areas only 20 miles east of the capital city received 15-20 inches of rainfall—an amount that has had devastating results for Central Texas in the past, Kimmel said.

Austin's rainfall may not have been the 50 inches of rain and "biblical flooding" experienced by Houston,

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## CENTRAL AUSTIN EDITION

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15	16	17	18	19	20 SA 7:30	21 SA 7:00
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**ABOUT US**

John and Jennifer Garrett began *Community Impact Newspaper* in 2005 in Pflugerville, Texas. The company's mission is to build communities of informed citizens and thriving businesses through the collaboration of a passionate team.

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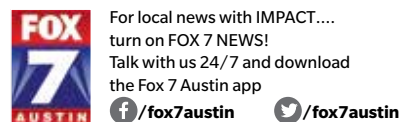
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## I'll see you at the polls

Do you see voting as a right, a privilege or a responsibility? When I turned 18, I was excited to register to vote and felt a sense of pride after casting my first ballot. Sure, I was taught it was my civic duty, but it was also a chance to exercise a new right—as well as a rite of passage—and I felt fortunate to be able to do so.

Over time it's only natural for the newness to wear off and the logistics of jam-packed schedules and traffic to weigh in, but it's important to vote in every election. "Every vote counts" is never a truer statement than in a local election. Remember—we are also setting an example for our families and our youth

not only by showing up to the polls, but by arriving prepared and knowledgeable about the issues. That's where *Community Impact Newspaper* comes in.

Part of our mission is to build communities of informed citizens. I encourage you to take a look at our Election Guide (see Page 20) to learn about polling locations in your neighborhood for early voting and Election Day and the issues on the ballot affecting Central Austin.

Early voting is underway until Nov. 3. Election Day is Nov. 7. Whether you're there to exercise your right or just feel obligated, I hope to bump into you at the polls. I'll be the one wearing the "I voted" sticker.



*Deeda Payton Lovett*

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**GENERAL MANAGER**  
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## ASK THE EDITOR



*JJ Velasquez*  
JJ Velasquez  
**EDITOR**  
jjvelasquez@communityimpact.com

Do you have a question about how local government works or something going on in town? Send it to ctafeedback@communityimpact.com.

## Why is the city piloting a downtown public restroom project?

The city of Austin and the Downtown Austin Alliance launched on Sept. 28 a Downtown Public Restroom Pilot Project, which will help determine locations for permanent public restrooms downtown.

The 24-hour bathroom will provide a free-to-use, temporary, flushable and wheelchair-accessible toilet as well as a hand sanitizer dispenser.

Five downtown test sites include a first location at the intersection of I-35 and East Sixth Street on the west side of the highway. According to an official with the city's public works department, the next site will be in the 600 block of Neches Street.

Outdoor toilets could help reduce bacteria in the four city watersheds, according to city staff. Elevated bacteria levels pose a potential health risk to swimmers.

The city said the public bathrooms could provide a benefit to various demographics—including downtown visitors, runners, bikers, homeless individuals and late-night crowds. The city aims to make a determination on whether to fund permanent bathrooms ahead of the adoption of the fiscal year 2018-19 budget.

## FEATURED STORIES

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**Correction:**  
Volume 9, Issue 11

On Page 32 an infographic incorrectly explained the organics-diversion regulations of the city of Austin. Commercial properties are not required to compost but must divert food scraps and other organic materials from landfills.

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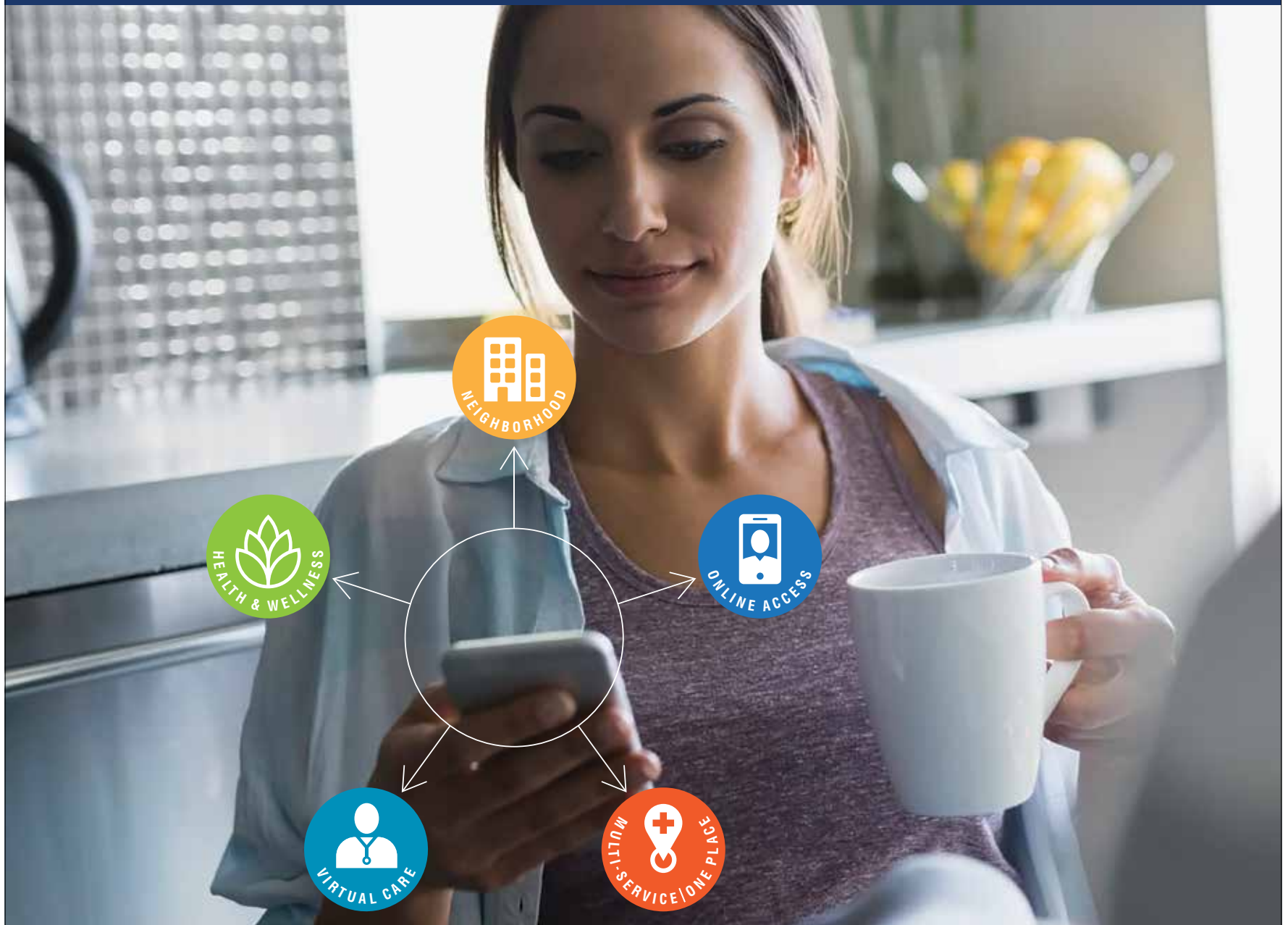
The Conservancy helped create and expand many Texas treasures from Enchanted Rock Natural Area to Padre Island National Seashore into public spaces.

Whole Earth stores will be accepting donations for the Conservancy from October 14th through November 12th. Any amount is gratefully accepted.

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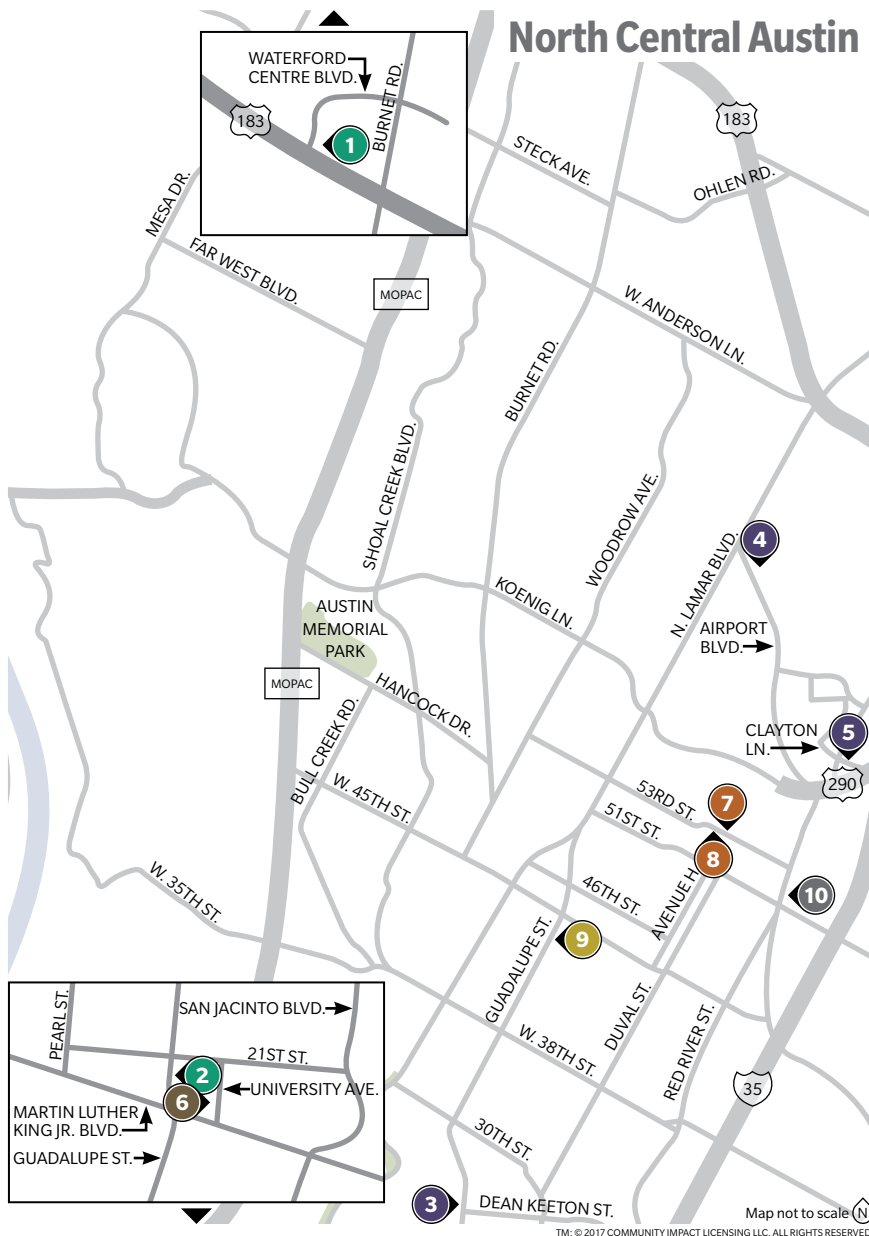
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## IMPACTS

Businesses that have recently opened, are coming soon, relocating or expanding



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## NORTH CENTRAL AUSTIN

### NOW OPEN

**1** Sisters Reyna and Maritza Vazquez opened on Sept. 24 their second brick-and-mortar location of **Veracruz All Natural**, 9003 Waterford Centre Blvd., Ste. 180, Austin. The popular East Cesar Chavez Street food truck began selling snow cones, smoothies and other drinks in 2008 before expanding its menu to include tacos and tortas. Its first brick-and-mortar location is in Round Rock. 512-222-3483. [www.veracruzacos.com](http://www.veracruzacos.com)

**2** **Poke Bay**, 2001 Guadalupe St., Ste. A-1, Austin, opened Sept. 8. The restaurant, which also serves Hawaiian barbecue, is the second poke spot on The Drag and one of many to have opened in Austin this year. 512-350-2419

### COMING SOON

**3** North Carolina chain **Rise Biscuits Donuts** announced on its website that it will open an Austin location in early 2018. The store will be at 2522 Guadalupe St., Austin, near The University of Texas campus. Rise serves biscuits, donuts and sandwiches. [www.risebiscuitsdonuts.com](http://www.risebiscuitsdonuts.com)

**4** California-based Asian-American supermarket **99 Ranch Market** will open its sixth Texas location at 6929 Airport Blvd., Ste. 110, Austin, by the end of the year, according to a company spokesperson. The supermarket will join Kula Revolving Sushi Bar at The Crescent, the 120,000-square-foot shopping mall purchased by Misuma Holdings in 2016. 800-600-8292. [www.99ranch.com](http://www.99ranch.com)

**5** Greystar Properties will open a new multifamily development, **Elan Parkside**, at 609 Clayton Lane, Austin, in November. The Highland Park apartments will offer downtown views, high ceilings and access to nearby Hyde Park. 512-298-3333. [www.elanparkside.com](http://www.elanparkside.com)

### EXPANSIONS

**6** The **AT&T Hotel and Conference Center**, 1900 University Ave., Austin,

COMPILED BY **EMMA FREER**  
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will debut a 30,000-square-foot expansion in January that will include the new 15,000-square-foot Zlotnik Family Ballroom. The AT&T Hotel and Conference Center is owned by The University of Texas. 512-404-1900. [www.meetattexas.com](http://www.meetattexas.com)

### NEW OWNERSHIP

**7** Ned Elliot, founder of North Loop spot **Foreign & Domestic**, sold the 306 E. 53rd St., Austin, location to chefs and business partners Sarah Heard and Nathan Lemley on Sept. 26. Heard and Lemley will run the restaurant as Elliot expands the brand, which he still owns, to his hometown of Cincinnati as well as to Houston. The restaurant serves New American-style dishes. 512-459-1010. [www.fndaustin.com](http://www.fndaustin.com)

**8** North Loop bar **Drink.Well.** reopened Oct. 4. On Aug. 16 the bar announced on Facebook that it was closing temporarily. On Oct. 4, Jessica Sanders and former bar manager Becca Yannone released a joint statement on Drink.Well.'s Facebook page announcing that former owner Michael Sanders had divested 100 percent of his ownership in the bar to his wife and will no longer manage the business. Drink.Well. is located at 207 E. 53rd St., Austin. 512-614-6683. [www.drinkwellaustin.com](http://www.drinkwellaustin.com)

### ANNIVERSARIES

**9** The **Austin Community Foundation**, 4315 Guadalupe St., Ste. 300, Austin, celebrated its 40th anniversary this month with a public event at the Long Center on Oct. 18. The nonprofit was founded in May 1977 to support local philanthropic efforts and has donated more than \$300 million across Central Texas. 512-472-4483. [www.austincf.org](http://www.austincf.org)

### CLOSINGS

**10** **House Pizzeria**, located at 5111 Airport Blvd., Austin, closed Sept. 24, after eight years in business. The North Loop restaurant gave no reason for the closing on its website. 512-600-4999. [www.housepizzeria.com](http://www.housepizzeria.com)



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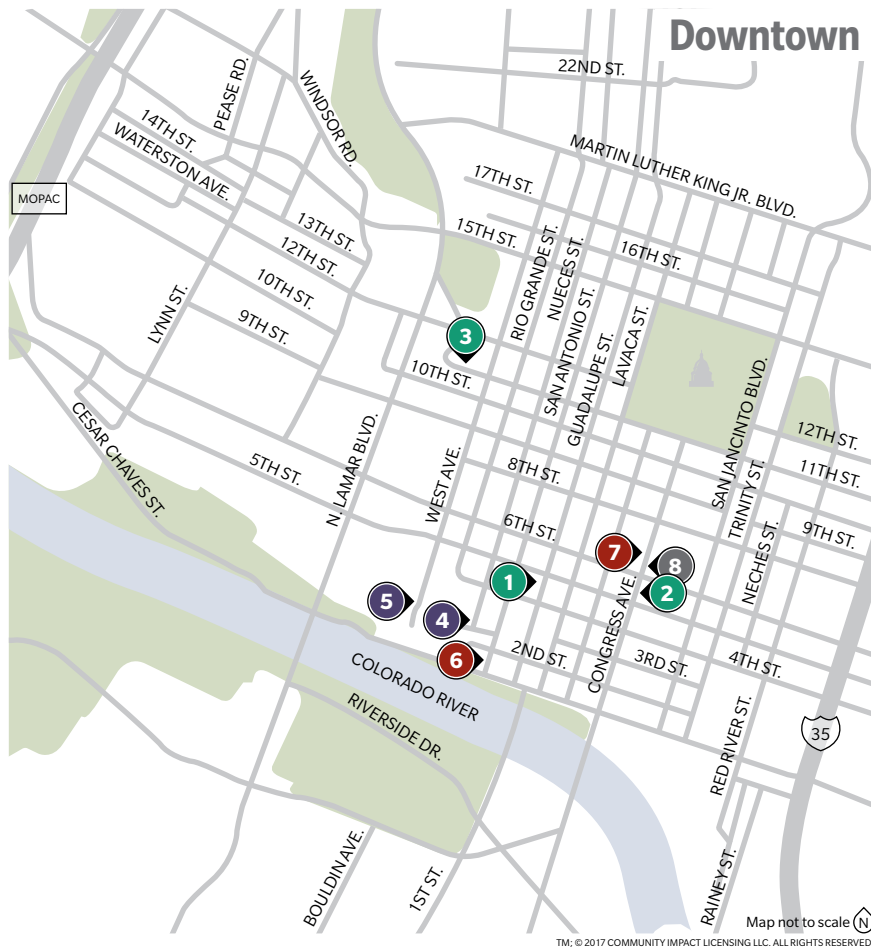
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Businesses that have recently opened, are coming soon, relocating or expanding



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## DOWNTOWN AUSTIN

### NOW OPEN

**1 Republic Square**, one of Austin's oldest parks, reopened Oct. 6 after a five-year, \$5.8 million renovation funded by the Austin Parks Foundation. The Downtown Austin Alliance, a nonprofit dedicated to enhancing downtown Austin, has taken over park maintenance per a partnership agreement with the city of Austin and the APF. Located at Guadalupe and Fourth streets, Republic Square now features a central lawn and a limestone wall made for sitting as well as a food kiosk and dining area slated to open in the spring. The park is located at 422 Guadalupe St., Austin, and is open from 5 a.m.-10 p.m. daily. 512-974-6700. [www.republicsquare.org](http://www.republicsquare.org)

**2 MassChallenge**, a nonprofit startup accelerator based in Boston, launched its Austin-based accelerator, **MassChallenge Texas**, on Oct. 16. The office, which is located at 515 Congress Ave., Austin, will serve the state. Companies supported by MassChallenge Texas will have access to its global network of programs in Boston, Israel, Mexico, Switzerland and the U.K. [www.texas.masschallenge.org](http://www.texas.masschallenge.org). [contact@masschallenge.org](mailto:contact@masschallenge.org)

**3 Chilly Betty MedSpa** opened Oct. 2 at 812 W. 11th St., Ste. 207, Austin. The spa offers state-of-the-art technology combined with owner Katie Adams' eight years of CoolSculpting expertise to help clients sculpt their bodies through personalized treatments. 512-545-8199. [www.chillybetty.com](http://www.chillybetty.com)

### COMING SOON

**4 Mexican restaurant Polvos** will open a third Austin-area location at 310 Neuces St., Austin, later this year. The original location opened in 1997 at 2004 S. First St., Austin. Well-known for its margaritas, the restaurant serves traditional Tex-Mex fare such as enchiladas, flautas, chiles rellenos and fajitas. 512-441-5446. [www.polvosaustin.com](http://www.polvosaustin.com)

**5 A San Antonio roasting company and chain of coffee shops** is gearing up for its Austin debut in the first week of November. **Local Coffee** will open in the Seaholm

district at 222 West Ave., Austin. Its coffee is roasted in small batches at sister company Merit Roasting Co. in San Antonio. In addition to coffee and teas, the shop will offer pastries, doughnuts, yogurt and homemade granola, toast and spread, and breakfast tacos. [www.localcoffee.com](http://www.localcoffee.com)

### RELOCATIONS

**6 Janet St. Paul Studio for Hair and Beauty** relocated to 110 San Antonio St., Austin, from its previous location at 830 W. Third St. on Sept. 21. The hair salon has also been named the U.S. flagship store for the French luxury hair care brand Phyto Paris. The new location offers facials and skin care services, waxing, makeup application, and brow and eyelash services. 512-474-5000. [www.janetstpaul.com](http://www.janetstpaul.com)

**7 Technology company Viridis Learning** is relocating its headquarters to 600 Congress Ave., Austin. The company aims to strengthen the workforce bridge between colleges and employers through internships, further education and job opportunities. The company plans to hire 25 additional employees from the Austin area in the next year. 646-854-9434. [www.viridislearning.com](http://www.viridislearning.com)

### IN THE NEWS

Precourt Sports Ventures LLC, which owns Major League Soccer club **Columbus Crew SC**, announced on Oct. 17, it is exploring moving its franchise to Austin. If it cannot reach a deal to build a new stadium in downtown Columbus, Ohio, the ownership group and MLS will look to privately finance and construct a soccer stadium in downtown Austin or in a "vibrant part of town," PSV officials said. The club is also looking into where to play temporarily, with The University of Texas's Mike A. Myers Stadium an option. [www.mls2atx.com](http://www.mls2atx.com)

### CLOSINGS

**8 Amplify Credit Union** will close its 607 Congress Ave., Austin, branch on Nov. 22. The credit union, whose services range from personal banking to wealth management, has seven other area branches. 512-836-5901. [www.goamplify.com](http://www.goamplify.com)

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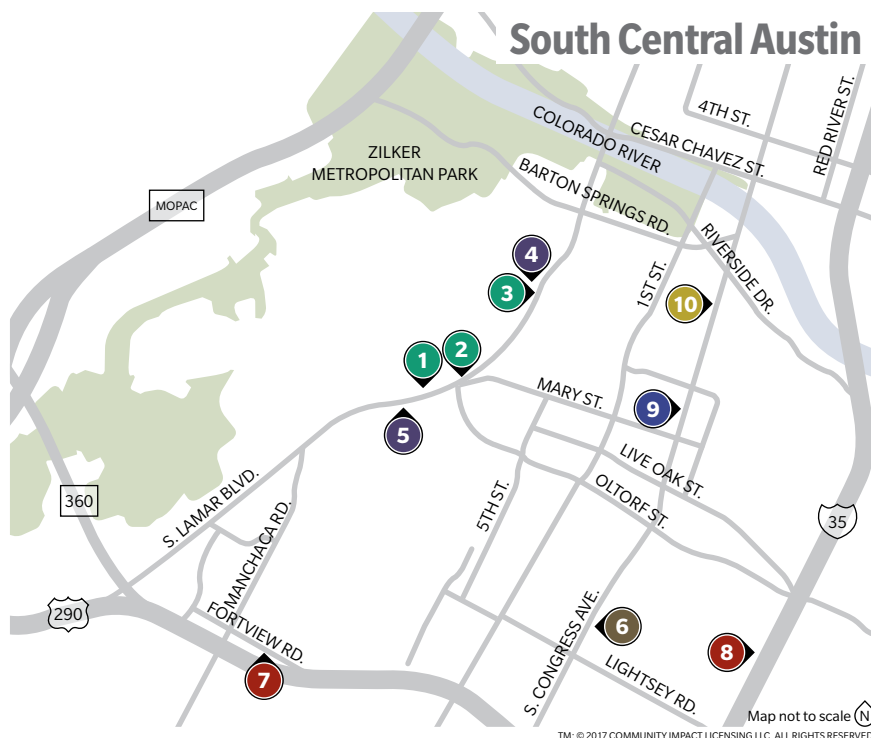
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## SOUTH CENTRAL AUSTIN

### NOW OPEN

**1** **Aviary Wine & Kitchen** reopened its 2110 S. Lamar Blvd., Ste. C, Austin, location Oct. 3 after an extensive renovation. Since closing temporarily in mid-January, the wine bar and restaurant has added a full-service kitchen and expanded its wine offerings from 26 varieties to 118. 512-916-4445.

[www.aviarywinekitchen.com](http://www.aviarywinekitchen.com)

**2** **Krua Thai** opened at 2024 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, on Oct. 23. The authentic Thai restaurant serves lunch, dinner and brunch. Chef and owner Sam Sampaotong also operates the Aroi Thai Cuisine food truck in West Austin. 512-296-2458. [www.kruaustin.com](http://www.kruaustin.com)

**3** Japanese restaurant **Soto** opened a second location at 1100 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, on Oct. 27. The high-end sushi restaurant's original location is in Cedar Park. 512-531-9142. [www.sotoaustin.com](http://www.sotoaustin.com)

### COMING SOON

**4** Family-friendly restaurant **TLC Austin**, 1100 S. Lamar Blvd., Ste. 1150, Austin, is slated to open in November. It will offer more than 50 beers on tap and regional Texas fare, including Oysters Rockefeller, fried shrimp sandwiches and deviled eggs. [www.tlcaustin.com](http://www.tlcaustin.com).

**5** **Barkin' Creek Dog Kitchen & Bath** will open in early 2018 at 2153 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin. Created by three Austinites, the store will comprise an open kitchen that will allow customers to see their natural dog food and treats being prepared, a grooming station and a dog day care. 512-982-6700. [www.barkincreek.com](http://www.barkincreek.com)

### EXPANSIONS

**6** **St. Edward's University** announced Oct. 10 that it will purchase the site of the former El Gallo restaurant at 2910 S. Congress Ave., Austin, as part of its Strategic Plan 2022. The site is directly opposite the main campus entrance. The redevelopment will likely include additional student

COMPILED BY **EMMA FREER**  
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Email us at [ctanews@communityimpact.com](mailto:ctanews@communityimpact.com).

### RELOCATIONS

**7** **Austin Community Wellness** moved from 3605 Manchaca Road, Austin, to 1711 Fortview Road, Austin, on Sept. 1. Husband-and-wife team Shane and Sarah Duke offer massage therapy and chiropractic services. The business shares a building with Pure Light Chiropractic and other complementary practitioners. 512-507-5672. [www.austincommunitywellness.com](http://www.austincommunitywellness.com)

**8** **The Upholstery Shop** relocated from 2714 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, to 2900 S. I-35, Ste. 102, Austin, on Sept. 5. The business—which specializes in residential and commercial upholstery projects, including antique restoration and custom designs—also celebrated its 51st anniversary Sept. 1. 512-443-8133. [www.theupholsteryshopaustin.com](http://www.theupholsteryshopaustin.com)

### RENOVATIONS

**9** **Big Top Candy Shop**, at 1706 S. Congress Ave., Austin, recently completed renovations that include an additional 400 square feet of retail space, a new marble-top soda fountain and an expanded soda menu. Featuring old-fashioned soda, ice cream, specialty chocolates, fudge, 400-plus bulk candies and more than 3,000 wrapped candies, the South Congress staple celebrated 10 years in business in October. 512-462-2220. [www.bigtopcandyshop.com](http://www.bigtopcandyshop.com)

### ANNIVERSARIES

**10** **Blackmail Boutique**, located at 1202 S. Congress Ave., Austin, celebrates its 20th anniversary Oct. 30. Opened by owner Gail Chovan in 1997, Blackmail has gained local and national acclaim for its selection of all things noir and its window displays. 512-804-5881. [www.blackmailboutique.com](http://www.blackmailboutique.com)



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Customers who have questions about the program call **(512) 974-2199** or [WaterCon@austintexas.gov](mailto:WaterCon@austintexas.gov)

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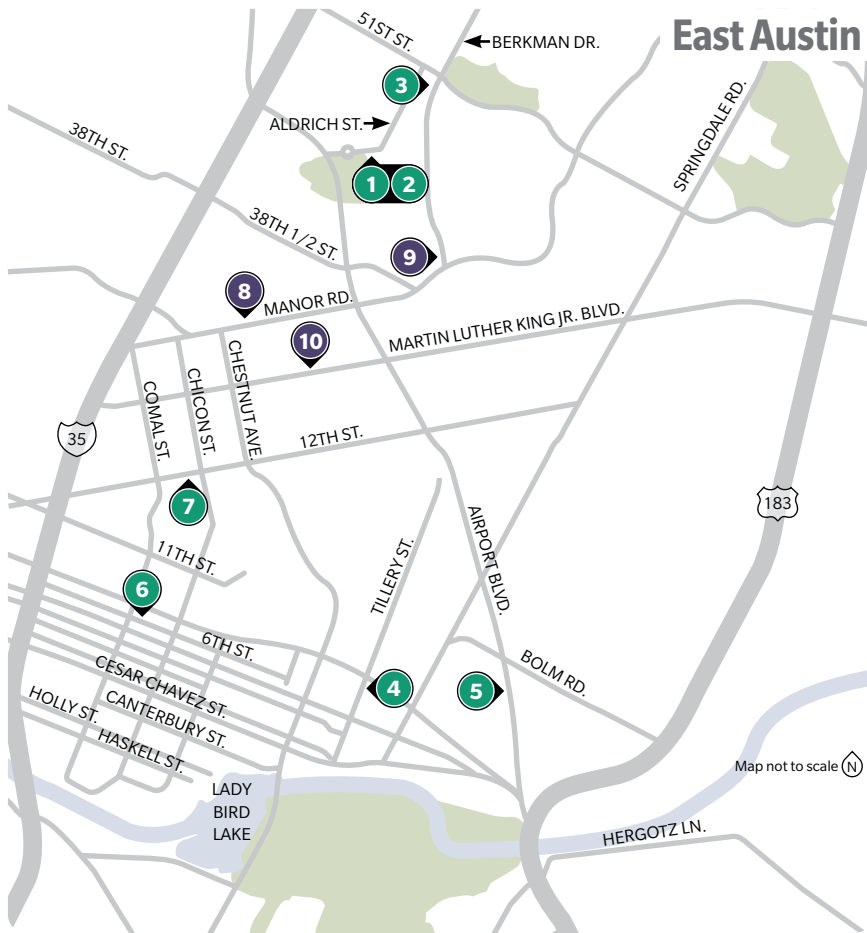
[www.dropcountr.com](http://www.dropcountr.com)

FOR MORE INFO:  
[austinwater.org](http://austinwater.org)



## IMPACTS

Businesses that have recently opened, are coming soon, relocating or expanding



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## EAST AUSTIN

### NOW OPEN

**1** Downtown Austin coffee shop and cocktail lounge **Halcyon** opened on Oct. 2 its flagship location at the Mueller mixed-use development in Central Austin. Located at 1905 Aldrich St., Austin, Halcyon is open daily from 7 a.m.-midnight. The menu includes breakfast plates such as the Maverick Migas and an acai bowl, sandwiches such as the Pineapple Express and Holy Fri-joli, salads, flatbreads, appetizers, brunch specials and dessert. 512-400-0445. [www.halcyoncoffebar.com](http://www.halcyoncoffebar.com)

**2** Farm-to-pizza eatery **Stella Public House** opened Oct. 2 at 1905 Aldrich St., Austin. The establishment offers a craft beer taproom and Napoletana-style pizza. 512-472-9637. [www.stellapublichouse.com](http://www.stellapublichouse.com)

**3** Retirement community **Overture Mueller** opened Sept. 15 at 4818 Berkman Drive, Austin, in the Mueller mixed-use urban village. The apartment complex is open to adults age 55 and older and offers an active adult community to residents. 512-645-3046. [www.liveoverture.com](http://www.liveoverture.com)

**4** **Harvest Lumber Co.** opened Aug. 19 at 641 Tillery St., Austin. The business sells quality lumber harvested from fallen trees in Austin's urban area and has partnered with local arborists and the city of Austin Urban Forestry Department to help facilitate the collection of tree trunks. Owners Kris Burns and Andrew Danziger are both Austinites with many years of experience in the local woodworking industry. 512-524-0818. [www.harvestlumberco.com](http://www.harvestlumberco.com)

**5** **Urban Axes**, a 7,000-square-foot facility where people can bring their own beer and wine and throw axes into bullseyes, opened Sept. 18 at 812 Airport Blvd., Austin. The Philadelphia-based business allows people age 21 and over to join leagues, play during open walk-in sessions or participate in two-and-a-half-hour group events with trained coaches. The object is to throw one's ax closest to the bullseye. 512-887-2937. [www.urbanaxes.com](http://www.urbanaxes.com)

**6** **Parlor Beauty Bar** opened Sept. 28 at 1621 E. Sixth St., Ste. 1125, Austin. Founder Charlotte Feliciano moved to Austin after

surviving two major car accidents that left her in a wheelchair temporarily. The salon offers blowouts; brow maintenance and microblading; makeup application; spray tanning; nail services; eyelash extensions, lifts and tints; and waxing. 512-770-6746. [www.parlorbeautybar.com](http://www.parlorbeautybar.com)

**7** Upscale women's clothing boutique **Altitudes** opened Sept. 18 at 1717 E. 12th St., Austin. The shop sells clothing from such designers as Alexander Michael Snyder, Rebecca Taylor and Tracy Reese. Before the official opening, owner Alta Alexander partnered with the Austin section of the National Council of Negro Women to offer Altitudes as a drop-off location for donations to those affected by Hurricane Harvey. 512-761-4292. [www.altitudes.com](http://www.altitudes.com)

### COMING SOON

**8** Specialty waxing salon **Wax That** will open a second location at 2406 Manor Road, Ste. C, Austin, in November. The salon offers waxing services for men and women as well as lash and brow tints. 512-789-8019. [www.waxthat.com](http://www.waxthat.com)

**9** **Austin Modern Lofts** will break ground early next year on 91 residential units—a mix of condos and townhomes—at the northwest corner of Berkman Drive and Tom Miller Street. The three-story development will also include first-floor commercial space. Nearly a third of the residential units will be included in Mueller's Ready, Set, Own income-qualifying affordable homes program, reserved for families who make up to 120 percent of Austin's median family income. [www.muelleraustin.com](http://www.muelleraustin.com)

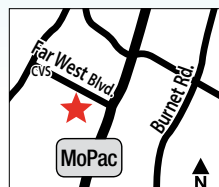
**10** **Houndstooth Coffee** will open a third Austin location this fall at 2823 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Ste. 101, at Platform, an East Austin mixed-use development. In addition to its standard coffee, espresso and tea menu, this location will also offer beer, wine and cocktails. [www.houndstoothcoffee.com](http://www.houndstoothcoffee.com)



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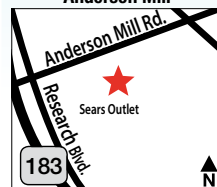
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## LOCAL EVENTS



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austinparks.org  
512.477.1566

**NOV. 4**  
**It's My Park Day set for fall**  
Austin Parks Foundation hosts its twice-annual citywide event, in which volunteers work to improve parks and greenbelts throughout the city. It's My Park Day drew 3,200 participants in the spring. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. Locations vary. 512-477-1566. [www.austinparks.org](http://www.austinparks.org)

COURTESY AUSTIN PARKS FOUNDATION

NOV. 2-5

### Vintage vehicles to take part in race at COTA track

The 2017 U.S. Vintage National Championship takes place over four days at Austin's F1 track. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. \$10 (Fri.), \$20 (Sat.-Sun.), \$35 (full weekend). Circuit of The Americas, 9201 Circuit of The Americas Blvd. [www.circuitoftheamericas.com](http://www.circuitoftheamericas.com)

NOV. 4

### Grupo Fantasma to play at Dia de los Muertos concert

The 2017 Dia de los Muertos concert features Austin-based Grupo Fantasma as well as Bombasta and Tiarra Girls. 5 p.m. (doors open). \$36.75 (general admission), \$111.50 (VIP). Stubb's Waller Creek Amphitheater, 801 Red River St. [www.austindiadelosmuertos.com](http://www.austindiadelosmuertos.com)

NOV. 3

### Austin Homebrew Festival returns with beer, ciders

Locally made beers, meads, ciders and kombuchas are celebrated at the annual Austin Homebrew Festival. More than a dozen homebrewers and homebrew clubs participate in the event. 6-9 p.m. \$12-\$60. Saengerrunde Hall, 1607 San Jacinto Blvd. [www.ahbfestival.org](http://www.ahbfestival.org)

NOV. 4-5

### Celtic heritage to be feted

The annual gathering of people with Irish, Scottish, Welsh or other Celtic heritage features music, dance and games. Noon-7:30 p.m. Free (age 12 and younger), \$15 (single-day ticket), \$25 (weekend pass). Pioneer Farms, 10621 Pioneer Farms Drive. [www.austincelticfestival.com](http://www.austincelticfestival.com)

## ✓ To-do list

Your ultimate local guide for events, business openings, meetings and more in November and December

Find more or submit Central Austin events at [communityimpact.com/cta-calendar](http://communityimpact.com/cta-calendar).

Event organizers can submit local events online to be considered for the print edition. Submitting details for consideration does not guarantee publication.



### NUMBER TO KNOW

**37,601**

37,601 current Austin residents

have served in the U.S. armed forces, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. On Nov. 11, Veterans Day is observed to honor U.S. service members. The federal holiday takes place on a Saturday and will be observed on Friday, Nov. 10.

### COMING UP

**Dec. 1-2 | Price of Liberty Monument**  
[www.priceoflibertyevents.com](http://www.priceoflibertyevents.com)

**Dec. 2 | Holiday Sing-Along**  
[www.downtownaustin.com/holiday-stroll](http://www.downtownaustin.com/holiday-stroll)

**Dec. 9-23 | Trail of Lights**  
[www.austrintraillights.org](http://www.austrintraillights.org)

**Dec. 10 | Austin Jingle Bell 5K**  
[www.austinjinglebell.com](http://www.austinjinglebell.com)

NOV. 4-5

### Book festival to be held

The annual Texas Book Festival features more than 250 nationally recognized authors, including Tom Hanks and Dan Rather, in more than 20 Austin venues. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sat.), 11 a.m.-5 p.m. (Sun.). Free. Locations vary. 512-477-4055. [www.texasbookfestival.org](http://www.texasbookfestival.org)

COURTESY TEXAS BOOK FESTIVAL

See a full list of events at [communityimpact.com/event-calendar](http://communityimpact.com/event-calendar).



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NOV. 5

### Top pitmasters on display

Some of the state's top barbecue purveyors are featured at the annual Texas Monthly BBQ Fest. 1-4 p.m. \$12.30 (age 5 and under), \$84.40 (general admission), \$171.95 (VIP). Long Center for the Performing Arts, 701 W. Riverside Drive. [www.texasmonthly.com](http://www.texasmonthly.com)

COURTESY TEXAS MONTHLY BBQ FEST

NOV. 9

### Recreation center hosting Thanksgiving dinner

The Metz Recreation Center and the city of Austin invite participants in the center's programs to a homemade Thanksgiving dinner along with their family and friends. 5:30-8 p.m. Free. Metz Recreation Center, 2407 Canterbury St. 512-978-2399. [www.austintexas.gov](http://www.austintexas.gov)

NOV. 11-12, 18-19

### Studio tour to be held

The 16th edition of the self-guided art event features more than 500 artist studios, exhibitions, special projects and events and provides opportunities for the public to meet artists in their creative spaces. 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Free. Locations vary. 512-939-6665. [www.east.bigmedium.org](http://www.east.bigmedium.org)

NOV. 18

### Toy drive, parade returns

The Chuy's Children Giving to Children Parade marks its 29th year. The interactive toy drive within a parade brings new, unwrapped toys to the Austin Police Department's Operation Blue Santa Program and features live music, floats and marching bands. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Congress Avenue. [www.chuysparade.com](http://www.chuysparade.com)



NOV. 4-5

### Native American heritage to be celebrated

Attendees convene for dancing, music and other events as Native American heritage is celebrated and attendees learn about American indigenous culture. 9 a.m.-10 p.m. \$6.24. Travis County Exposition Center, 7311 Decker Lane. [www.austinpovwow.net](http://www.austinpovwow.net)

NOV. 5

### Run to provide drinking water to those in need

The Run for the Water race includes 10-mile, 5K and kids K runs. Proceeds help secure access to clean drinking water in Burundi, Africa. 7-11 a.m. \$10 (kids K), \$30 (global run), \$40 (5K), \$70 (10-mile). South First Street Bridge, downtown Austin. [www.runforthewater.com](http://www.runforthewater.com)

NOV. 12-13

### Concert starts Salvation Army Red Kettle season

The Salvation Army's Rock the Red Kettle ATX Concert returns for its fourth year as Cory Morrow performs. 5:30 p.m. (Sun.), 9 a.m. (Mon. shotgun start). \$45 (general admission). LifeAustin Amphitheatre, 8901 W. Hwy. 71. [www.rocktheredkettleatx.org](http://www.rocktheredkettleatx.org)

NOV. 23

### ThunderCloud hosts annual Turkey Trot

The annual Thanksgiving tradition features a 5-mile run, 1-mile walk and a kids K. Times vary by race. \$8-\$40 (depending on race). Long Center for the Performing Arts, 701 W. Riverside Drive. [www.thundercloud.com/turkey-trot](http://www.thundercloud.com/turkey-trot)

COURTESY TURKEY TROT

NOV. 5

### Daylight saving time ends

The annual fall ritual of setting clocks back an hour takes place as daylight saving time ends at 2 a.m. in most of the United States. Some states and territories have opted out of the practice, but daylight saving time remains in effect throughout Texas. Most are likely to set their clocks back on the night of Nov. 4.

NOV. 7

### Election Day features local ballot propositions

Austin residents can head to the polls with Austin ISD proposing a \$1.05 billion bond for 21st-century enhancements to its schools and Travis County floating a \$184.9 million bond for various capital improvements. 512-238-8683. [www.traviscountytexas.gov](http://www.traviscountytexas.gov)

NOV. 15-19

### Holiday market features 200-plus merchants

A Christmas Affair: Haute Holiday market returns with market days, a cocktail party, a Breakfast at Tiffany's ladies' brunch and date night among other events. Times vary by event. \$15 (holiday market day ticket). Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road. [www.jlaustin.org](http://www.jlaustin.org)

NOV. 24, 27

### Shop Black Friday, Small Business Saturday

Local stores as well as online retailers offer discounts on merchandise as the Christmas shopping season ramps up. Annual artisan market Blue Genie Art Bazaar, located at 6100 Airport Blvd., kicks off at 10 a.m. on Black Friday. [www.bluegenieartbazaar.com](http://www.bluegenieartbazaar.com)

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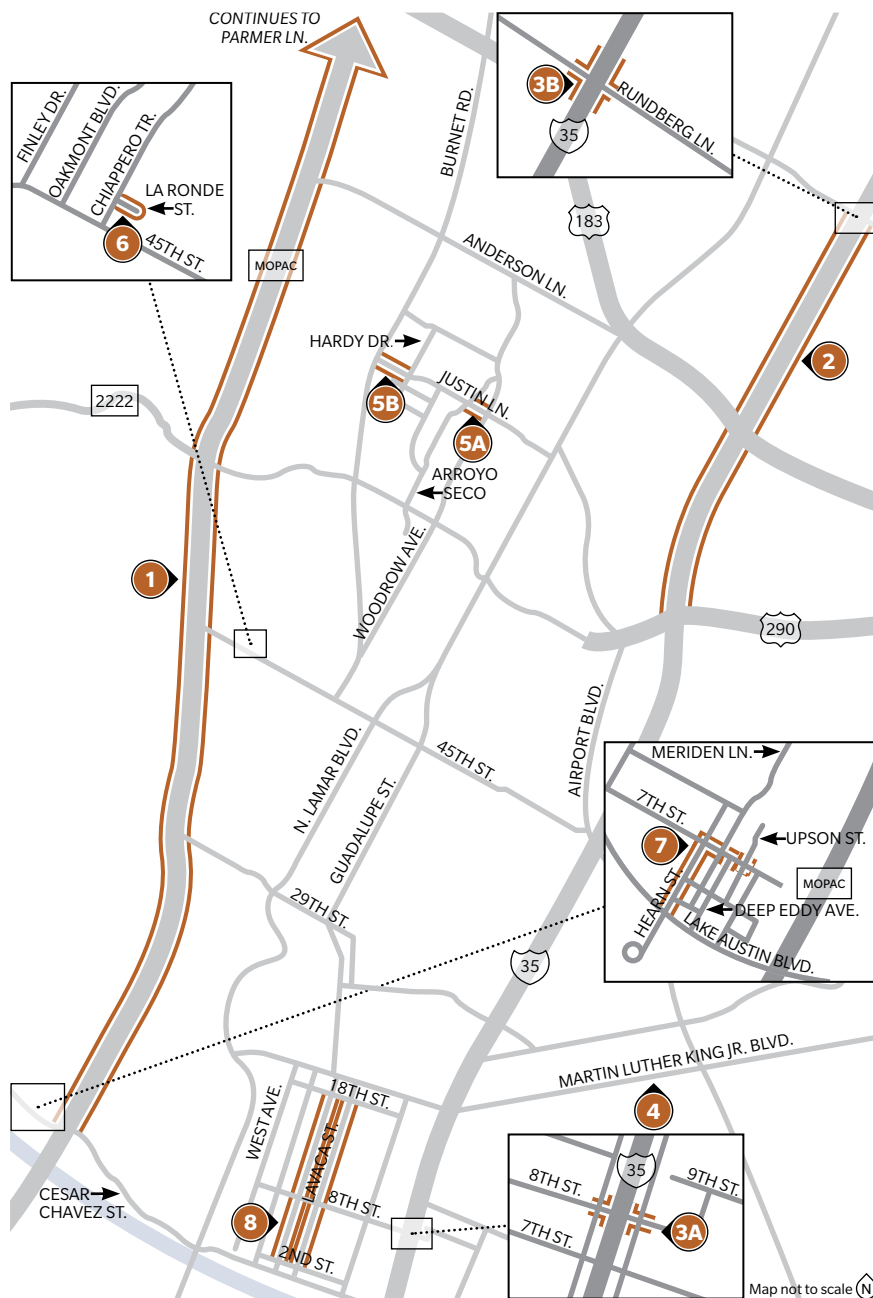
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### 1 MoPac toll lane opening

The remainder of the northbound MoPac express toll lane opened to traffic Oct. 7. The minimum toll rate for each section—Cesar Chavez Street to RM 2222 and RM 2222 to Parmer Lane—is \$0.25. The southbound lane is slated to open this fall. After settling a

dispute with contractor CH2M, the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority will pay CH2M \$21.5 million for issues that CH2M alleged caused delays to the project.

**Timeline:** October 2013-fall 2017

**Cost:** \$232.9 million

**Funding sources:** various

### 2 Improvements on I-35

In August, the Texas Department of Transportation awarded a \$124 million contract to J.D. Abrams for improvements to I-35 from Rundberg Lane to Hwy. 290. The project includes adding three flyover, or direct connector, ramps between I-35 and US 183; improving existing flyovers; reconstructing the main lanes and frontage roads; and improving shoulders, ramps, and bicycle and pedestrian paths.

**Timeline:** early 2018-mid-2021

**Cost:** \$124 million

**Funding source:** TxDOT

### 3 Safety improvement initiative

As part of a safety improvement initiative, Central Austin will receive new signal equipment at **A** I-35 frontage road and Eighth Street downtown. New street illumination is also planned for **B** I-35 frontage roads at Rundberg Lane. Austin Traffic Signal Construction will finish this work, along with similar improvements in five other counties.

**Timeline:** TBD

**Cost:** \$1.1 million

**Funding sources:** TxDOT

### 4 Capital Metro expands pilot program

Capital Metro, the city of Austin's transit agency, expanded its free ride-hailing pilot program, Pickup, on Oct. 2. This expansion extends the program's operating hours as well as adds the MLK train station to its service zone. The service now operates from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. on weekdays and from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturdays.

**Timeline:** June 2017-May 2018

**Cost:** various

**Funding source:** Capital Metro

### 5 Justin Lane street reconstruction

In early October the city's contractor set up traffic controls from **A** Arroyo Seco to Woodrow Avenue and completed installation of a storm sewer in the area. Traffic controls from **B** Hardy Drive to Burnet Road are also in place while water line, driveway and sidewalk construction is underway on the north side of Justin.

**Timeline:** October 2016-December 2017

**Cost:** \$5.3 million

**Funding sources:** 2000 Proposition 1 Transportation Mobility Improvements (street improvement bond), 2012 Proposition 1 transportation and mobility (street and bridge bond), AWU Commercial Paper

### 6 Southeast Allandale water and wastewater improvements

The city's contractor resumed work in early September replacing water and wastewater lines on 45th Street. In late September the contractor was working on La Ronde Street. Work continues to near substantial completion.

**Timeline:** April 2016-spring 2018

**Cost:** \$3.82 million

**Funding source:** Austin Water

### 7 Hearn Street and West Seventh Street water line improvements

Twelve-inch water lines are being designed and constructed on Hearn Street from Lake Austin Boulevard to West Seventh Street and on West Seventh from Hearn to Meriden Lane as well as at the intersections of West Seventh and Deep Eddy Avenue and West Seventh and Upson Street. The project has reached 90 percent completion. Service connections will be completed after additional water testing.

**Timeline:** February-fall

**Cost:** \$290,000

**Funding source:** Austin Water

### 8 Guadalupe Street/Lavaca Street bus lane repairs

The Austin Public Works Department repaired the bus lanes on Guadalupe and Lavaca streets from Second to 18th streets. This is the first phase of a greater effort to address the failing bus lanes in the Guadalupe corridor. The first phase was completed in August. The next phase of repairs will begin at 29th Street and end at Lamar Boulevard in 2018.

**Timeline:** July-November

**Cost:** \$150,000-\$200,000

**Funding source:** transportation user fees

All information on this page was updated as of 10/13/17. News or questions about these or other local transportation projects? Email us at [ctanews@communityimpact.com](mailto:ctanews@communityimpact.com).



central texas

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# Opening of MoPac express lanes prompts review of how toll rates are determined

BY AMY DENNEY

When toll rates exceeded \$8 for a brief period in the first week the full northbound MoPac express lane was open, the toll agency operating the lane decided to review how those rates are set to avoid rate spikes.

Mike Heiligenstein, executive director of the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, said he thought toll rates would taper off after \$5 and discourage drivers from entering the express lane.

"It's clear that there's enough demand that we're revising our approach and trying to understand more about that demand and how prevalent that is," he said.

The Mobility Authority is overseeing the MoPac Improvement Project that added one express toll lane in each direction on MoPac between Parmer Lane and Cesar Chavez Street. The entire northbound lane opened Oct. 7, and the southbound lane was slated to open either Oct. 28 or Nov. 4. The date was set after *Community Impact Newspaper's* Oct. 24 press date.

The toll rate is set using an algorithm as well as traffic speeds and volumes gathered by cameras and sensors. However, in the first few weeks of operating the new lanes, staffers are also monitoring the rate and making adjustments as needed to keep the express lanes flowing at 45 mph.

Heiligenstein said increased demand, especially from vehicles entering the northbound express lane from south of Lady Bird Lake and from Cesar Chavez, is causing some issues with the toll rate spiking.

"We would rather see a gradual

increase in price," he said. "One day we shot up to \$7.80 because we saw what was happening on the traffic coming from across the river and getting into that curve around The Domain."

That curve near Duval Road has caused noticeable backups in the northbound express lane.

"I think it's going to take a month for this to settle out in terms of usage and user behavior," Heiligenstein said.

More than 85,600 transactions were recorded in the first week, exceeding Mobility Authority expectations.

Traffic was smooth on the first weekday rush hour Oct. 9 in the new northbound toll lane, but that Monday was a national holiday.

"We expected a slow start and people to try it out of curiosity," said Tracie Brown, the agency's director of operations. "It has exceeded our expectations."

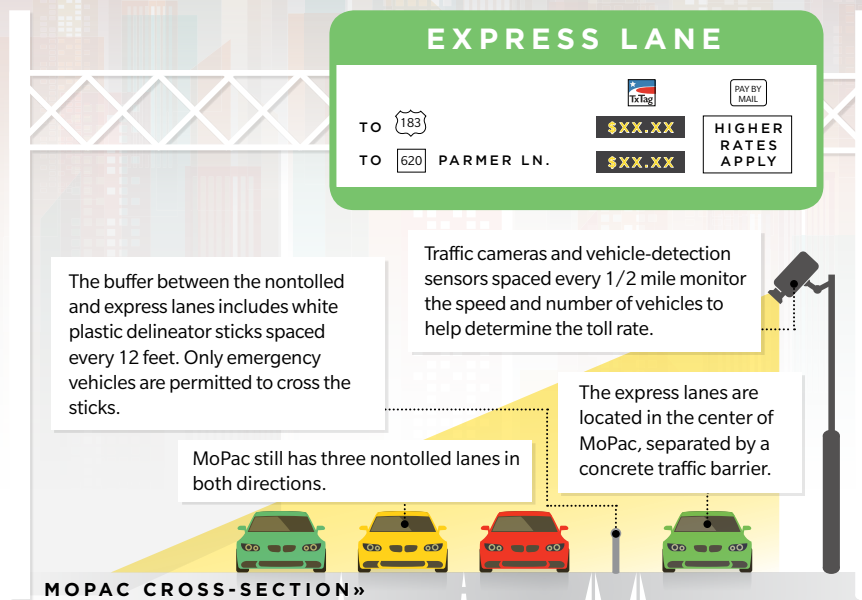
But the following weekdays brought reports of congestion in the express lane and high toll rates. On Oct. 10 resident Michael Holland called MoPac a "massive failure" around 5:15 p.m.

"As far as I can tell the toll lane is fine," he said. "It's the same design that I've used in Dallas, Houston and Los Angeles, where people know how to merge and don't do sudden stops for no reason. However, people were finding a reason to come to a repeated dead stop in the toll lane."

Before the full northbound lane opened, a typical afternoon rush hour from 4-7 p.m. calculated 1,200 transactions in the northern section north of RM 2222 that opened in October 2016. Oct. 10 recorded 3,877 transactions in

## HOW IT WORKS

The new express lane is variably priced, meaning the price to use it goes up as traffic increases in an effort to keep traffic flowing at 45 mph. The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority sets the toll rate using an algorithm, traffic cameras and sensors that determine traffic volumes and speeds in all lanes of traffic.



## ACCESSING THE EXPRESS LANE

Drivers wanting to access the MoPac express lane have several options to enter and exit between Parmer Lane and Cesar Chavez Street. The toll gantries scan the license plate and any TxTag of each vehicle in the express lane.

### NORTHBOUND NUMBERS

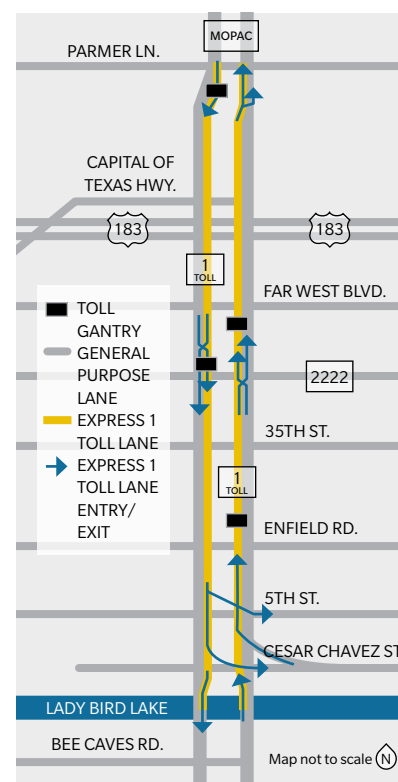
**85,609** transactions in first week

Average **14,462** weekday transactions during first week

Peak toll rate of **\$8.38**  
Oct. 12 for 3 minutes

Average rate of **\$3.29**  
Oct. 12 for 4-7PM

that section from 4-7 p.m., with an average toll rate of \$0.77 compared to \$0.57 in the southern section south of RM 2222. Oct. 12 saw the highest toll rates, with averages of \$3.29 from 4-7 p.m. in the northern section, peaking at \$6.28, and \$1.53 in the southern section, peaking at \$2.25.



SOURCE: CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL MOBILITY AUTHORITY/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

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# Health insurance marketplace opens Nov. 1

## As rates increase, Texans have fewer options, time to choose plans

BY **TESS CAGLE**

As open enrollment approaches, Austin residents in the individual health marketplace will have fewer health insurance options and less time to enroll this year.

Open enrollment—the time of year when individuals can make changes to their current health insurance plan or enroll for the first time—begins Nov. 1 and ends Dec. 15.

With many changes coming to the marketplace this year—including health insurance options, prices and length of time to enroll—health care professionals such as Dr. Norman Chenven—founding CEO of Austin Regional Clinic—suggest patients take the time to compare their options before enrollment begins.

“The cost of health care has been a real challenge for everyone,” Chenven said. “We see health plans and employers trying different mechanisms to manage the cost, but that has resulted in some complex situations. It’s hard

[for people] to make good decisions when you’re sick and need help.”

With a 45-day window, Texans have about half the time to pick a new health insurance plan than they did last year, when open enrollment lasted three months.

In addition to having less time, individuals in Central Texas have fewer options from which to choose this year, said Stacey Aikman, director of administrative operations and marketing for Vista360health, an Austin-based health insurance company.

The Texas Department of Insurance will not have a complete list of 2018 carriers until the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services finalizes its list of approved plans, the department said. But residents can expect plans from at least Vista360health, Blue Cross Blue Shield Association of Texas and Sendero Health Plans Inc.

Other providers in Central Texas have submitted requests for 2018 rate hikes, according to [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

## 5 RESOURCES

for open enrollment, **Nov. 1-Dec. 15**

These health care resources can help residents find the right plan for themselves or their families. Resources span from national sources provided by the federal government to local sources, such as the Enroll ATX coalition.



### 1. HEALTHCARE.GOV

The Affordable Care Act’s official website includes a complete list of health care providers with plans in the government-run marketplace. The website asks users about their family size and income to create a personalized list of approved health care plans. [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov)



### 2. TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

Similar to the federal website, the Texas Department of Insurance also provides a list of health care providers. The department, however, lists plans both in the government-run market and in the open market. [www.texashealthoptions.com](http://www.texashealthoptions.com)



### 3. DIAL 211

Travis County’s health district, Central Health, launched Enroll ATX, a coalition in Austin with the goal to help Central Texans with open enrollment. Residents can dial 211 to schedule an appointment to review their insurance options and select a plan. [www.getenrolledatx.com](http://www.getenrolledatx.com)



### 4. KINDHEALTH

The website consolidates health plan information to help shoppers get the information they need without going to multiple company websites. Similar to the TDI, KindHealth shows results for providers both in and outside the health care marketplace. [www.kindhealth.co](http://www.kindhealth.co)



### 5. FOUNDATION COMMUNITIES

The Austin-based nonprofit works with families to enroll and receive health insurance benefits. The program is free, and residents can call 512-496-3786 to schedule an appointment. [www.foundcom.org](http://www.foundcom.org)

SOURCE: BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

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# Austin nears city manager selection after a yearlong search

BY CHRISTOPHER NEELY

The final week of October marked a major step forward in Austin's quest to find a new city manager, as City Council began interviewing candidates recommended by its hired search firm.

It has been over a year since former City Manager Marc Ott moved to Washington, D.C., for a new job after eight years as Austin's top executive. Although officials anticipated the process of finding a new city manager would take six months, city leaders now say they are confident Austin will operate under a permanent city manager by the start of 2018.

This follows a long process that began with an unexpected two-month delay in hiring a search firm after disagreements on the council dais. Along the way the city decided to keep the process confidential from the public, formed a citizen-led task force to weigh in on the candidate's profile and relied on a third-party firm to bring forth qualified candidates.

Soon after Ott announced his tenure would end, the city brought on Austin

Chief Financial Officer Elaine Hart as an interim replacement. Since her term as City Hall's top executive began in September 2016, Hart has overseen an entire management cycle, which has included fulfilling several council directives and passing the fiscal year 2017-18 budget.

Austin Mayor Steve Adler said although instability at the city manager position could have a negative impact, Hart's performance in the role has helped maintain the city's path forward. However, Adler said he looks forward to hiring a permanent city manager.

"[A permanent city manager] will provide long-term, stable leadership," Adler said, "especially as far as personnel and policy recommendations go."

The city has delayed several executive hires until a permanent city manager is in place. This has resulted in a long list of vacancies, highlighted by the chief of police, which has been

filled in the interim by Assistant Chief Brian Manley since former Chief Art Acevedo took over as Houston's chief in November.

"It is vital that the city manager and the police chief have a strong relationship," Hart said. "I believe it is in the best interest of the city to leave the hiring of a police chief to our next city manager."

Although Hart initially said she did not want to be considered for the permanent role, her reputation as a capable leader has grown within City Hall. Earlier in October the city

employees union—American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees—sent a letter to Adler endorsing Hart as the pick for permanent city manager.

"Despite the vacancy, the city's workforce has continued to thrive under the leadership of Ms. Hart," wrote Carol Guthrie, business manager of AFSCME Local 1624. "We believe this is, in large part, due to the

**"[A PERMANENT CITY MANAGER] WILL PROVIDE LONG-TERM, STABLE LEADERSHIP."**

—STEVE ADLER, AUSTIN MAYOR

INTERIM CITY  
MANAGER



Elaine Hart

FORMER CITY  
MANAGER



Marc Ott

fact that Ms. Hart is an established member of the Austin community as well as a trusted and familiar presence at City Hall. For the sake of continuity and stability, which this workforce and community desperately need, we urge you to consider Ms. Hart for the permanent position of city manager."

Since the process will remain under wraps, no one at the city would confirm or deny whether Hart was being considered for the position. According to an official timeline released by search firm Russell Reynolds & Associates, City Council will conduct candidate interviews through mid-November with a final selection expected by the end of the month. The council will vote on the hire by mid-December.

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## Economic prosperity commissioner: Incentives a 'big part' of city's bid for Amazon headquarters

**AUSTIN** With cities across the country competing for a chance to attract Amazon.com Inc., Austin's Economic Prosperity Commission on Oct. 18 recommended the city use everything in its arsenal to lasso in the tech giant's second headquarters, or HQ2.

The lengthy recommendation came in the wake of news that the Austin Chamber of Commerce officially submitted a bid to have the "Live Music Capital of the World" host Amazon's HQ2.

The commission—made up of representatives from trade and business associations and chambers of commerce—advises City Council on matters related to construction and job creation. The commission passed the recommendation 6-0 with four members absent. The recommendation will be sent to City Council for approval.

Commissioner Holt Lackey, the recommendation's primary author, spoke confidently about Austin's



Amazon's second North American headquarters will hold 50,000 employees.

chances to secure the project. He said from his perspective, much of what Amazon prefers in the prospective city sounds like Austin.

However, with dozens of U.S. cities submitting bids, Lackey said Austin would need to put everything on the table.

"Economic incentives are a big part of the bid," Lackey said. "We need to express a willingness to use all economic development tools we have in the toolbox."

## Voters to choose on county's \$185M bond

**TRAVIS COUNTY** Voters will head to the polls Nov. 7 to weigh the need for Travis County improvement projects in a nearly \$185 million bond package.

That total does not include \$94.9 million in appropriations for locally funded county projects that do not require voter approval. The combined allocation of \$279.9 million would fund specific projects to help the county's transportation, park and roadway safety issues—such as school routes, evacuation roads and low-water crossings—as well as project management costs, which account for roughly 10 percent of the total.

County Judge Sarah Eckhardt said Travis County tries to bring bonds before voters on a regular basis—as opposed to large bonds spaced out timewise—to smooth out the tax burden for the taxpayer.

The bond will be funded over five years, and taxpayers will see the bond reflected in their bills beginning in fiscal year 2018-19.

### NUMBER TO KNOW

**16,237** The number of housing units in Austin financed by affordable housing tax credits or bonds—twice the statewide units per capita average.

### CITY & COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS

**TRAVIS COUNTY** Commissioners adopted a \$1.05 billion budget Sept. 26 along with a property tax rate of \$0.369 per \$100 of taxable home value. Although the tax rate is a decrease of \$0.015 from the current rate of \$0.38, which is 3.42 percent above the effective tax rate, the average homeowner will see an increase in his or her tax bill of about \$31.68 annually or \$2.64 per month due to increase in the value of the average homestead.

**AUSTIN** Red River Cultural District clubs will continue to keep later hours after Austin City Council voted Oct. 19 to extend by another six months a pilot program testing sound-mitigation techniques. The program allows outdoor music venues in the Red River Cultural District to extend the outdoor live music curfew from 11 p.m. to midnight on Thursdays and from midnight to 1 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

## Central Health takes action to improve transparency amid legal challenge

**TRAVIS COUNTY** In an effort to increase transparency, Central Health and Dell Medical School collaborated on a community report analyzing the impact of their partnership on the community-at-large.

The collaboration followed mounting concerns calling for greater transparency and a lawsuit filed Oct. 18 by three county residents against Central Health claiming misuse of public funds. Fred Lewis, an attorney assisting on the case, said the key issue is Central Health is spending taxpayer money on items unrelated to the district's mission, which is providing health care to the poor.

Lewis said he found that The University of Texas Dell Medical School received \$105 million from Central Health,

and \$3 million went toward health care. Expenditures funding services in Bastrop County and donations to the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce were also found, Lewis said.

"We are confident Central Health's investment in Dell Medical School at The University of Texas is legal and appropriate," Central Health stated in a news release regarding its allocation of tax dollars to Dell Medical School.

According to the release, Central Health saw a 6 percent increase in the number of people served in the county from 2015 to 2016, with a total of 143,642 Travis County residents with low income served in 2016.

### MEETINGS

**Austin City Council,**  
Meets Nov. 2 and 9  
301 W. Second St., Austin  
[www.austintexas.gov/department/city-council](http://www.austintexas.gov/department/city-council)

**Travis County Commissioners Court,**  
Meets Tuesdays at 9 a.m.  
700 Lavaca St., Austin  
[www.traviscountytx.gov/commissioners-court](http://www.traviscountytx.gov/commissioners-court)

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# HOW AN AUSTIN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ENDED UP BEFORE THE U.S. SUPREME COURT

DESIGNED BY MIRANDA BAKER

1965



The  
**Voting Rights  
Act (VRA)**  
is passed,  
outlawing racial  
gerrymandering.

1992



Travis County  
is **split**  
between two  
U.S. House  
districts for  
the first time.

2010



The census is conducted.  
Texas gains **four new  
U.S. House seats**  
due to population growth.  
District 35 is created.

2011

CONTINUED FROM 1

Democrat. The other four—Michael McCaul, District 10; Bill Flores, District 17; Lamar Smith, District 21; and Roger Williams, District 25—are Republicans.

Doggett represents less than a quarter of Austin residents—187,033 people—but his district contains the second-largest portion of the city, according to a 2012 Texas Legislative Council analysis.

“Austin and Travis County were cut up like a pizza with a jagged knife,” Doggett said of the districts today.

## U.S. HOUSE DISTRICT 35

Doggett represents District 35, a long, skinny district stretching from Austin to San Antonio mostly east of I-35.

It was created after the 2010 census, when Texas gained four seats in the U.S. House due to population growth.

In Texas the state Legislature draws the district maps for the U.S. House as well as for the state House and Senate.

A federal court found that the maps drawn by the Legislature in 2011, which included U.S. House District 35, intentionally discriminated against minority voters and ordered interim maps be used until new, fairer maps could be drawn.

Two years later the Texas Legislature adopted the interim maps permanently.

In August the federal court ruled the

interim maps maintained the racial gerrymandering of the previous maps and ordered the Legislature to redraw two U.S. House districts, including Doggett’s, so as not to violate voters’ rights.

The three-judge panel ruled District 35 was drawn to maximize the number of Hispanic or Latino voters in order to minimize their influence in surrounding districts, a form of minority voter dilution called packing.

Although 35.1 percent of Austin residents are Hispanic or Latino, 61 percent of District 35 residents are.

In response to this ruling, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton released a statement: “We look forward to asking the Supreme Court to decide whether Texans had discriminatory intent when relying on the [federal] court.”

The state appealed, arguing it should not be penalized for maps drawn by a federal court. The U.S. Supreme Court accepted the case and will rule by summer.

The justices will determine if Central Austinites’ rights have been violated by these maps and how residents will be represented in years to come.

## RACIAL VS. PARTISAN GERRYMANDERING

“Austin is one of the most, if not the most, politically gerrymandered cities in the country,” said Lisa Goodgame, board president of progressive activist

group Indivisible Austin.

Gerrymandered districts do not fairly represent their constituents, according to Michael Li, senior counsel for the Democracy Program at New York University Law School’s Brennan Center for Justice.

Racial gerrymandering is outlawed by the Voting Rights Act, but partisan gerrymandering is harder to adjudicate.

“For centuries now, one of the benefits of winning elections in census years is that you then have more say in how districts are drawn ... until the next census,” Texas GOP Chairman James Dickey said.

Recently, however, Americans across party lines have agreed that partisan gerrymandering is problematic.

A 2017 poll commissioned by the Campaign Legal Center and conducted by a bipartisan team of pollsters found that 71 percent of Americans favor the “Supreme Court setting new, clear rules for determining when partisan gerrymandering violates the Constitution.”

There is no precedent outlawing this practice, as is the case with racial gerrymandering.

“Everyone actually agrees that partisan gerrymandering is constitutionally problematic,” University of Texas School of Law professor Joseph Fishkin said. “But the dispute has been whether courts do anything about it—or should treat it as an issue.”

In practice, partisan gerrymandering and racial gerrymandering are quite similar, Fishkin said.

“While big data,” which allows legislators to know everything from a person’s Google searches to the strength of her political ideology, “can be a really important tool, in a state like Texas you can use a much simpler tool like race,” Li said.

## POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

If the U.S. Supreme Court upholds the lower court’s ruling, the Texas Legislature will have to redraw the U.S. House district maps.

This likely will not happen before the November 2018 elections, so new maps would not take effect until 2020, at which point the census will be underway.

State Rep. Eddie Rodriguez, D-Austin, whose district runs from Rainey Street through southeast Travis County, serves on the Legislature’s Redistricting Committee, which has not met since 2013.

“Essentially, we’ve gone through an entire decade with unconstitutional maps that are intentionally discriminatory—to use the words of a federal court—and there’ve been no repercussions for the Republicans that drew them, and there’s been no relief for the minorities that have had to live under these maps,” he said.

State Rep. Cindy Burkett, R-Sunnyvale, is chair of the committee. Her office did not



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The Texas Legislature draws **new district maps**; the **state is sued** for racial gerrymandering.

2013



A federal court draws **temporary maps**, which the Texas Legislature **implements permanently**.



The U.S. Supreme Court **overturns a key provision of the VRA**, allowing Texas to change voting laws without federal approval.

2017



A federal court rules the 2013 maps were racially gerrymandered. Texas appeals to the **U.S. Supreme Court**, which will issue a ruling by summer 2018.

SOURCES: TEXAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, SUPREME COURT REPORTER, U.S. DISTRICT COURT FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS /COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

respond to requests for comment.

Alternately, the Supreme Court could overturn the lower court's ruling and allow the 2013 maps to stand until the Legislature redistricts in 2021.

"Judicial overreach is always a problem," Dickey said. "[Redistricting] is an inherently political process, and it makes sense that the people's elected representatives control that as a political process."

#### REDISTRICTING AUSTIN

In 2013 the city of Austin commissioned, with voter approval, an independent group of residents to redraw the city's districts.

The Austin Independent Citizens Redistricting Committee unanimously adopted a final district map for a 10-member City Council in 2014.

"They did an enormously fair, thoughtful job of seeing to it we have good districts," said Peck Young, director of Austin Community College's Center for Public Policy and Political Studies. Young served as a consultant for the commission.

Due to this redistricting process, the council went from an at-large system that over-represented neighborhoods with higher voter turnout, "like richer, whiter areas," Young said, to more fairly representing all residents.

Four of the 10 council members represent majority-minority districts.

"It's a process that should be done all over the country," Young said.

Such change is unlikely at the state level, however, because shifting control of the redistricting process requires a constitutional amendment, which requires majority approval from both the Texas House and Senate.

"It can be hard for politicians to give up that power," Li said.

Doggett thinks it is unlikely the Texas Legislature will make this change.

"So many people sit there who benefited from the system of being able to select their constituents instead of their constituents selecting them," he said.

#### SLICING THE AUSTIN PIE

The average population of a U.S. House district is 710,767, according to the Census Bureau. The population of Austin was 790,390 at the 2010 census.

Yet no more than a quarter of the city is contained within one district.

Flores', whose district changed significantly when the 2013 maps were implemented, said redistricting is "really just part of the process of being a representative."

Though his constituents changed, Flores feels they remain fairly represented. "They feel like they have two members of Congress" because he remains accessible to them, he said.

*Community Impact Newspaper* reached out to all five U.S. House representatives in Travis County.

For Doggett, however, redistricting makes his job harder. "When people ask me where I live, I usually say I-35, and that's what it feels like ... because in an effort to provide accessible service to a district that was drawn to minimize accessibility and to create as many obstacles to it as possible, I try to get on most of my trips home to both San Antonio and Austin and spots in between in order to hear from people and to meet their needs," Doggett said.

When District 35 was created in 2011, Doggett ran for re-election in an entirely new district. When the district is redrawn, whether by Supreme Court mandate or because of the next census, he will have to adapt again.

And he's not the only one.

"What we would prefer is to stop the guesswork," Travis County GOP spokesperson Andy Hogue said. "We never know when the hammer is going to come down from a federal judge."

Or, in this case, from the Supreme Court. Because of its unprecedented nature, Li said, "it's hard to say how the court will rule."



Find updates about the federal case at [communityimpact.com](http://communityimpact.com).

## WHO REPRESENTS TRAVIS COUNTY?

The county is divided among five U.S. House districts.



Lloyd Doggett  
(D-District 35)



Bill Flores  
(R-District 17)



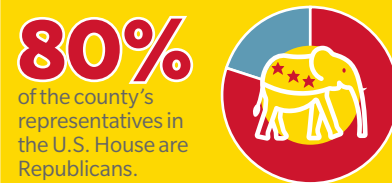
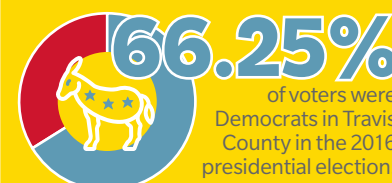
Michael McCaul  
(R-District 10)



Lamar Smith  
(R-District 21)



Roger Williams  
(R-District 25)



SOURCES: U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, TEXAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, TRAVIS COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

“THE

# SOUNDTRACK

OF

# MY LIFE”

KMFA 89.5

- CLARK L. BUDA



## EDUCATION

# AISD bond geared toward modernization

Some groups allege regional inequity and favoritism west of I-35

BY OLIVIA LUECKEMEYER

This November, voters living within Austin ISD will be asked to approve a \$1.05 billion bond aimed at transforming the district's facilities into 21st-century learning spaces.

The bond includes 32 line items ranging from minor renovations to the construction of new schools. Although the bond's bottom line is the largest in AISD history, the district's financial officers have said no property tax increase will be incurred by taxpayers.

On June 26 all nine trustees expressed their support for the bond package unanimously. The final list had been amended several times and in the end included a \$61 million line item for the construction of a new middle school in the northeast—an expense that had been identified as a critical need by the area's constituents as well as trustee Edmund “Ted” Gordon.

“What we have in front of us is a bond package that will impact every corner of the district positively and will touch nearly every one of our 84,000 students,” trustee Yasmin Wagner said the night of the vote.

Still, some AISD community members allege the bond is inequitable to areas where minorities and low-income families reside. Groups from the east side of Austin, such as the political action committee Save East Austin Schools, have been particularly vocal.

“The bond, if passed with the current facilities master plan, would

continue Austin ISD's and the city of Austin's long history of institutional racism. We call on Austinites to participate in creating more equitable and integrated solutions,” said Monica Sanchez, co-founder of SEAS.

## BOND ITEMS

Although some groups claim the bond package favors more affluent areas west of I-35, Superintendent Paul Cruz has maintained schools across the district will be impacted by the bond.

“We have students who are economically disadvantaged throughout our entire city, and that is reflected in our campuses,” he said. “East and west does not define poverty for us.”

Bond items were prioritized based on a “worst first” criteria, according to the district. Overall the bond is designed to modernize or construct 16 new campus facilities, some of which will be replacement schools. Capital improvement projects to update existing facilities are also included as well as improvements to technology and transportation.

## TAX IMPACT

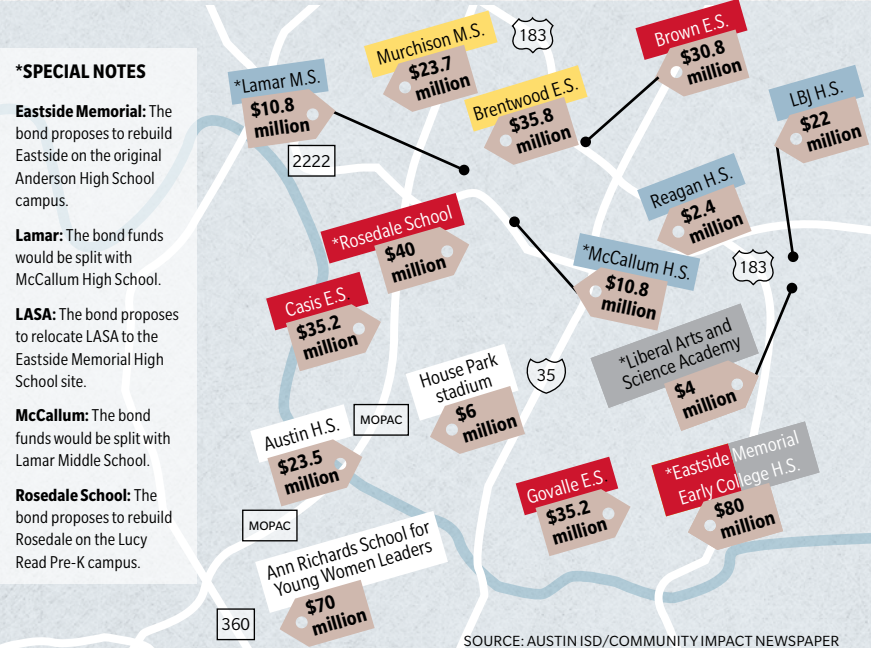
Although the district has promised no property tax rate increase will be incurred as a result of the bond, some citizens have questioned the accuracy of those claims.

“When articulating the tax rate, there is no impact; there is the impact of growth, which you will experience whether the bond is approved or not,”

## A BILLION DOLLAR SPREAD

The \$1.05 billion Austin ISD bond includes projects ranging from minor renovations to construction of new schools. Critics of the bond say the majority of the projects are concentrated in more affluent areas west of I-35. The map below illustrates where bond projects are located and how much money is allocated for each.

**New build** **Career launch/academic reinvention** **Modernization** **Relocation** **Renovation**



## MORE BOND COSTS

Certain items in the bond are allocated toward facilities districtwide or toward future schools without a known location. Here's a breakdown of those costs:

- \$196.1 million—critical facility deficiencies districtwide
- \$61 million—new northeast middle school
- \$60 million—northwest elementary schools relief project
- \$55.5 million—technology repairs/replacements and new equipment
- \$36.2 million—new southwest

elementary school

- \$30 million—bond issuance costs, legal fees, facility master plan updates
- \$25 million—Eastside vertical team modernization project
- \$25 million—LBJ vertical team modernization project
- \$21.4 million—transportation expenses, including new school buses
- \$19 million—updated fire alarms, security system upgrades
- \$7.5 million—police equipment upgrades
- \$5 million—furniture costs
- \$2.2 million—theater rigging repairs in fine arts facilities
- \$1.5 million—campus and co-curriculum master planning

AISD's Chief Financial Officer Nicole Conley Johnson said.

Trustee Ann Teich reinforced this claim by placing the onus of property tax rate increases on Austin's economy.

Volunteer

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## LOCAL INITIATIVES

### TRAVIS COUNTY BOND PROPOSALS

**These two bond proposals from Travis County focus on making improvements to roadways, drainage, sidewalks, parks and other infrastructure needs. Read the ballot language below.**

#### PROPOSITION A

The issuance of \$93,445,000 of Road Bonds for the purpose of the construction, maintenance and operation of macadamized, graveled or paved roads and turnpikes, or in aid thereof, including acquiring land and rights-of-way therefor, road drainage, bike lanes, sidewalks and shared use paths, and replacement and improvement of road bridges and culverts, and the levying of the tax in payment thereof

#### PROPOSITION B

The issuance of \$91,495,000 of Bonds for the purposes of constructing and improving County parks and the acquisition of land and interests in land in connection therewith, including the acquisition of open space park land, and acquiring conservation easements on land for any authorized purposes, including, without limitation, to retain or protect natural, scenic, or open-space values of real property or assure its availability for agricultural, recreational, or open-space use, protect natural resources, maintain or enhance air or water quality, or conserve water quantity or quality, and the levying of the tax in payment thereof

### AUSTIN ISD BOND PROPOSAL

**The school district's measure proposes upgrades to bring 21st-century learning spaces to students.**

#### PROPOSITION A

The issuance of \$1,050,984,000 school building bonds for the construction, acquisition, rehabilitation, renovation, expansion, improvement, modernization and equipment of school buildings in the district, including (i) technology systems and equipment, (ii) safety and security systems and equipment, (iii) improvements to address overcrowding and safety concerns, (iv) improvements for students with special needs, and (v) reinvention programs for twenty-first century learning; the purchase of the necessary sites for school buildings; and the purchase of new school buses, and the levy, pledge, assessment and collection of ad valorem taxes on all taxable property in the district, sufficient, without limit as to rate or amount, to pay the principal of and interest on the bonds and the costs of credit agreements executed in connection with the bonds.

Neither the early voting nor the Election Day polling locations list is comprehensive. Travis County voters are allowed to vote at any polling location in Travis County, not just the ones within their precinct. Visit [www.traviscountyclerk.org](http://www.traviscountyclerk.org) for a complete list of polling locations.

#### ★ EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS

**Austin Area Urban League**  
8011-A Cameron Road

**Carver Branch Library**  
1161 Angelina St.

**Fiesta Central—Delwood Shopping Center**  
3909 N. I-35

**Gardner Betts Annex**  
2501 S. Congress Ave. at Long Bow Lane

**Old Quarry Library**  
7051 Village Center

**Travis County Government Center**  
5501 Airport Blvd.

**Travis County Granger Building**  
314 W. 11th St.

**The University of Texas Flawn Academic Center**  
2400 Inner Campus Drive

#### ★ POLLING LOCATIONS

**Austin ISD Baker Professional Development Center**  
3908 Avenue B

**Ben Hur Shrine Temple**  
7811 Rockwood Lane

**Blanton Elementary School**  
5408 Westminster Drive

**Brentwood Bible Church**  
6301 Woodrow Ave.

**Brookdale North Austin**  
5310 Duval Road

**Bryker Woods Elementary School**  
3309 Kerbey Lane

**Burnet Middle School**  
8401 Hathaway Drive

**Carver Branch Library**  
1161 Angelina St.

**Congregation Beth Israel**  
3901 Shoal Creek Blvd.

**Doss Elementary School**  
7005 Northledge Drive

**Fiesta Central—Delwood Shopping Center**  
3909 N. I-35

**Fulmore Middle School**  
201 E. Mary St.

**Galindo Elementary School**  
3800 S. Second St.

**Gullett Elementary School**  
6310 Treadwell Blvd.

**HHSC Winters Building**  
701 W. 51st St.

**Highland Park Baptist Church**  
5206 Balcones Drive

**Highland Park Elementary School**  
4900 Fairview Drive

**Howson Library**  
2500 Exposition Blvd.

**Lamar Senior Activity Center**  
2874 Shoal Crest Ave.

**McCallum High School**  
5600 Sunshine Drive

**Memorial United Methodist Church**  
6100 Berkman Drive

**Messiah Lutheran Church**  
5701 Cameron Road

**Murchison Middle School**  
3700 N. Hills Drive

**North Village Library**  
2505 Steck Ave.

**O. Henry Middle School**  
2610 W. 10th St.

**Old Quarry Library**  
7051 Village Court

**Red River Church**  
4425 Red River St.

**Rosedale School**  
2117 W. 49th St.

**Travis County Government Center**  
5501 Airport Blvd.

**Travis County Granger Building**  
314 W. 11th St.

**UT Flawn Academic Center**  
2400 Inner Campus Drive

**Zilker Elementary School**  
1900 Bluebonnet Lane

SOURCE: TRAVIS COUNTY/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

#### ★ VOTER ID REQUIRED

**According to the Texas Secretary of State's office, voters can use one of the following forms of photo identification when voting:**

- Texas driver's license issued by the Texas Department of Public Safety
- Texas Election Identification Certificate issued by DPS
- Texas personal ID card issued by DPS
- Texas concealed handgun license issued by DPS
- U.S. military ID card containing the cardholder's

photograph

- U.S. citizenship certificate containing the cardholder's photograph
- U.S. passport

**If a voter does not possess one of these documents, the voter should fill out a declaration at a polling location and bring one of the following documents to prove the voter's identity:**

- Valid voter registration certificate

- Certified birth certificate
- Copy of original bank statement
- Copy of original government check or paycheck
- Copy of current utility bill
- Copy of an original government-issued document showing your name and address

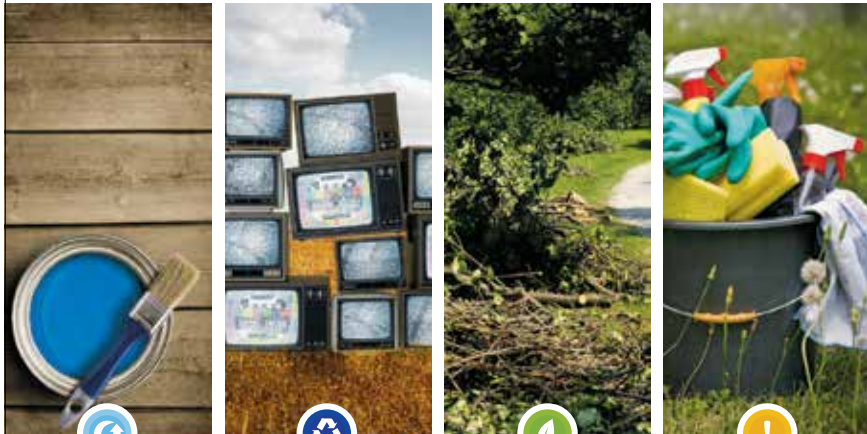
Voters without accepted photo IDs or supporting documents may be able to cast provisional ballots. Find more information online at [www.votetexas.gov](http://www.votetexas.gov).



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## INSIDE INFO

COMPILED BY ZAC EZZONE

## STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Texas voters can vote for or against seven amendments to the state's constitution Nov. 7.

SOURCES: TEXAS SECRETARY OF STATE OFFICE'S WEBSITE, HOUSE RESEARCH ORGANIZATION / COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

## PROPOSITION 1

## House Joint Resolution 21

**The ballot reads:** "The constitutional amendment authorizing the Legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of part of the market value of the residence homestead of a partially disabled veteran or the surviving spouse of a partially disabled veteran if the residence homestead was donated to the disabled veteran by a charitable organization for less than the market value of the residence homestead and harmonizing certain related provisions of the Texas Constitution."

**What it means:** This amendment would provide property tax exemptions on homes that were donated to partially disabled veterans—or their surviving spouses—for less than their market values. Currently the Texas Constitution already authorizes property tax exemptions for homes that were donated to partially disabled veterans at no cost to the recipients.

## PROPOSITION 2

## Senate Joint Resolution 60

**The ballot reads:** "The constitutional amendment to establish a lower amount for expenses that can be charged to a borrower and removing certain financing expense limitations for a home equity loan, establishing certain authorized lenders to make a home equity loan, changing

certain options for the refinancing of home equity loans, changing the threshold for an advance of a home equity line of credit, and allowing home equity loans on agricultural homesteads."

**What it means:** This amendment would lower the cap on fees charged to borrowers when establishing a home equity loan from 3 percent to 2 percent of the principal of the loan. It would also allow home equity loans to be refinanced as non-home equity loans and would expand the list of entities that may administer home equity loans to include savings banks, credit unions, subsidiaries of banks, and savings and loan associations.

## PROPOSITION 3

## SJR 34

**The ballot reads:** "The constitutional amendment limiting the service of certain officeholders appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate after the expiration of the person's term of office."

**What it means:** Currently, according to the Texas Constitution, unsalaried officials on state boards and commissions must continue to perform their offices' duties after their terms have expired until successors are ready. This amendment would relieve officials of their positions at the end of the next regular legislative session if a replacement is not prepared beforehand.

## PROPOSITION 4

## SJR 6

**The ballot reads:** "The constitutional amendment authorizing the Legislature to require a court to provide notice to the attorney general of a challenge to the constitutionality of a state statute and authorizing the Legislature to prescribe a waiting period before the court may enter a judgment holding the statute unconstitutional."

**What it means:** This amendment would require courts to notify the attorney general of any constitutional challenges to state laws. It also establishes a 45-day period after notifying the attorney general, during which the court cannot judge the contested statute as unconstitutional.

## PROPOSITION 5

## HJR 100

**The ballot reads:** "The constitutional amendment on professional sports team charitable foundations conducting charitable raffles."

**What it means:** This amendment would expand the number of professional sports team-based foundations able to hold charitable raffles. The list of eligible foundations would now include teams from the Women's National Basketball Association, Minor League Baseball and United Soccer League.

## PROPOSITION 6

## SJR 1

**The ballot reads:** "The constitutional amendment authorizing the Legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation of all or part of the market value of the residence homestead of the surviving spouse of a first responder who is killed or fatally injured in the line of duty."

**What it means:** This amendment would give partial or total property tax exemptions to the surviving spouse of a first responder who was killed in the line of duty. Currently the Texas Constitution provides a property tax exemption for the surviving spouse of a member of the U.S. armed forces who was killed in action but not for law-enforcement officials, firefighters, emergency services personnel or other first responders.

## PROPOSITION 7

## HJR 37

**The ballot reads:** "The constitutional amendment relating to legislative authority to permit credit unions and other financial institutions to award prizes by lot to promote savings."

**What it means:** This amendment would allow credit unions, banks and other financial institutions to conduct promotional activities—such as raffles—to encourage savings.

FOR COMPLETE ELECTION COVERAGE, GO TO [COMMUNITYIMPACT.COM/VOTE](http://COMMUNITYIMPACT.COM/VOTE).

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NOV. 9 | RAMSEY PARK

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# MAKING A BAND

A typical rock band has at least four instrumentalists: a drummer, vocalist, guitarist and bassist. Band Aid School of Music staff emphasize these key attributes for students to become successful band members:



**Drummer:**  
energy,  
sense of time,  
coordination



**Bassist:**  
chill, knowing  
musical scales



**Guitarist:** ear  
for melody,  
familiar with  
fretboard



**Vocalist:**  
courage,  
personality,  
good pitch



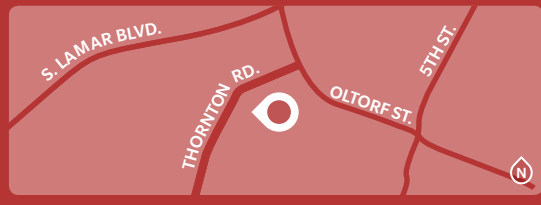
**1:** Band Aid School of Music operates out of three suites on Thornton Road **2:** Administrative coordinator Kelli Tucci teaches a young student during a piano lesson.

## Band Aid School of Music

2309 Thornton Road, stes. E, F and G

512-730-0592 • [www.bandaidsschoolofmusic.com](http://www.bandaidsschoolofmusic.com)

Call ahead to schedule a lesson.



A group of Band Aid School of Music students performs Radiohead's "Creep" during a practice session on Oct. 4.

## Band Aid School of Music

Thornton Road school for aspiring rockers expands

BY JJ VELASQUEZ

**J**ames Mays was an entrepreneur long before opening his first brick-and-mortar rock 'n' roll school in South Central Austin.

As a member of the band Bob Popular in the 1980s, Mays was a small-business owner in college.

Mays began teaching and helping to form bands of youthful rockers in the early 2000s after spending the 1990s working as a professional musician.

"[Teaching music] was just a natural progression. ... I just wanted to spread the love of music to the next several generations," he said.

Formally beginning in 2009 out of its Thornton Road location, Band Aid School of Music later expanded to a second location at Riverbend Church on Loop 360.

Now with more than 250 students, the school is gearing up for more expansion.

Earlier this year, the school tripled in size at its Thornton Road location. Mays said the addition will allow the school to increase its capacity to between 450 and 500 students, nearly double its size. Band Aid will also soon

have 23 employees—music instructors who specialize in a broad range of instruments and styles.

Students learn instruments, such as drums, guitar, harmonica and ukulele as well as voice.

Mays said there are 17 bands taking lessons at Band Aid School of Music with anywhere from three to five youths in each band.

Mays said there is an art to forming bands. Among the band members, there should be a balance in both personalities and musical strengths.

Students are empowered to pick which songs they want to play and, eventually, to craft their own songs.

At the higher levels of the program, Mays said the school tries to create a "conduit" to the music industry—to make a lifetime of music performance as economically viable as possible.

"Our goal is for them do this on their own one day," said Claire Boyd, the school's operations manager. "We want to gradually equip them more and more to understand how it works out in the real world."

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## Salty Sow

East Austin restaurant offers accessible gourmet menu

**H**arold Marmulstein, executive chef of Salty Sow in East Austin, said he grew up in the kitchen.

His father owned a bakery in upstate New York, where Marmulstein worked alongside his three older brothers, and later a luncheonette counter, where Marmulstein was a short-order cook.

"It was fun," he said of cooking. "It wasn't like work."

Marmulstein went on to graduate from the Culinary Institute of America and worked for a series of fine-dining restaurants around the country.

Things changed after 2008, however.

"Fine dining really took a dip after the recession," Marmulstein said. "A lot of chefs, not just myself, went with a more casual approach."

High-quality, accessible dishes are the backbone of the menu at Salty Sow, which opened in 2012.

"I describe it as real food," he said.

The restaurant staff relies on "basic principles of braising and slow cooking" and seasonal ingredients sourced locally whenever possible, he said.

"I think the food's very approachable," Marmulstein said. "You can eat light, or you can eat heavy."

In 2016 the restaurant hosted first lady Michelle Obama while she was visiting Austin.

"We had Secret Service all over the place, and the street [outside] was all lined up, probably 200, 300 people outside just trying to get a glimpse of her," Marmulstein said.

Salty Sow's daily happy hour—every day from 4:30-6:30 p.m. with most appetizers and drinks under \$6—has helped solidify the restaurant as a neighborhood gathering space as well as a destination for out-of-town guests.

"You can come and have a snack, a nice drink and walk home," Marmulstein said.

Like its menu, Salty Sow's layout allows diners to choose their own experience: Sit inside for a more formal dinner, or grab a table under the covered patio and share appetizers from the happy hour menu.

"Each area's different, so you get some funky environments within the restaurant," Marmulstein said. "It's a fun place to eat."



PHOTOS BY EMMA FREER / COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

### THREE DISHES TO TRY

**Charcuterie & Cheese Board (\$18)** "[It's] like a picnic on a plate," Marmulstein said.



### Truffled Deviled Eggs (\$6.50)

The retro appetizer was recently revamped with truffle mushrooms and housemade bacon.

### Triple-Fried Duck Fat Fries (\$8)

Served with a 110-minute egg and a cold bearnaise sauce, these fries are \$5.50 during happy hour.



### Salty Sow

1917 Manor Road,  
Austin

512-391-2337

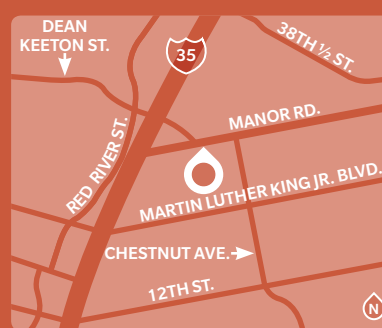
www.saltysow.com

Hours: Sun.-Thu.

4:30-10 p.m.

Fri.-Sat. 4:30-

11 p.m.



Salty Sow General Manager Chadd Borden stands on the patio of the Manor Road restaurant.

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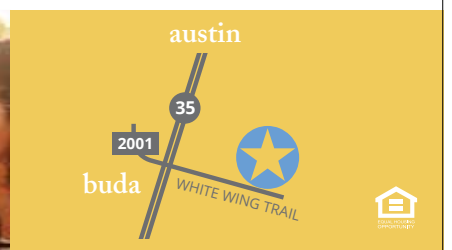
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# Amy's Ice Creams founder embraces 'small business' title

BY JOE LANANE

**W**ant to try Amy's Ice Creams? You'll have to go to one of 15 locations in three cities—even if you're a family friend of Amy Simmons, who founded the Austin-based ice cream shop in 1984.

"My kids would always bring their friends over, and the first thing their friends do is open the freezer door, and there's nothing in there—they're sort of disappointed," Simmons told *Community Impact Newspaper* in late September. "We don't have it in our house; it's something we go out and experience and really value."

Simmons, who started Amy's Ice Creams at age 23, credits her business naivety for turning the small business into a success story.

"I still thought money was kind of evil; it was greedy, and that was not my purpose. My purpose was to do a better job—care for the people, care for the community," she said. "So that was a great advantage to me because you could open your mind to, 'How do you build this?' ... and it made us very unique."


As increased competition continually challenges Austin-area small businesses, Simmons said it is important that local entrepreneurs differentiate their efforts.


"We have to understand if we do something different, we're going to make that experience extremely satisfying," Simmons said. "It might not work for every industry, but for the ice cream business, we're going to thrive."





Amy Simmons, founder and president of Amy's Ice Creams, speaks with *Community Impact Newspaper* CEO John Garrett in late September about how to succeed as a small business as part of the company's ongoing "Coffee With Impact" series.


## GET TO KNOW AMY OF AMY'S ICE CREAMS


From **Ann Arbor, Michigan** 

**Opened Amy's Ice Creams in 1984** 

**1st** female professional **boxer** in Texas 

**Voted Entrepreneur of the Year in 1986** 

Received **MBA** from The University of Texas in **1992** 

Grown to **15 stores** in **3 cities** 

## 3 small-business tips for aspiring entrepreneurs

### 1 DEFINE SUCCESS

"I think we react to society's expectations of us that we don't even question. ... Your definition of success becomes grow your sales, grow your units, and then I'll be really proud when my friends ask—but that might not be the best thing for your organization to do."

### 2 SLOW BEFORE YOU GROW YOUR BUSINESS

"First, make sure you're optimizing your single locations. ... It's really difficult to manage multiple locations. ... If you can think about how you might double your sales in the unit you have now, that's the first thing to do."

### 3 MAXIMIZE RESOURCES ONCE YOU DO GROW BIGGER

"Business is so risky—95 percent of new small businesses fail—so you think about it as legs to stand on. ... If you have two legs to stand on, you're a lot more likely to keep standing when you get one knocked out, so that's a big reason for little growth."

Amy Simmons opened her own business more than 33 years ago, expanding eventually to also establish burger concept Phil's Icehouse and local business alliance Choose Austin First, among other efforts. She offers this advice to entrepreneurs:

## Q&A: Amy Simmons, Amy's Ice Creams

### Why did you start Amy's Ice Creams?

I was only 23, and really I was pushed by momentum. Entrepreneurship is where there's a need that people have in the community, and you're the one to fill it—and you can do it well.

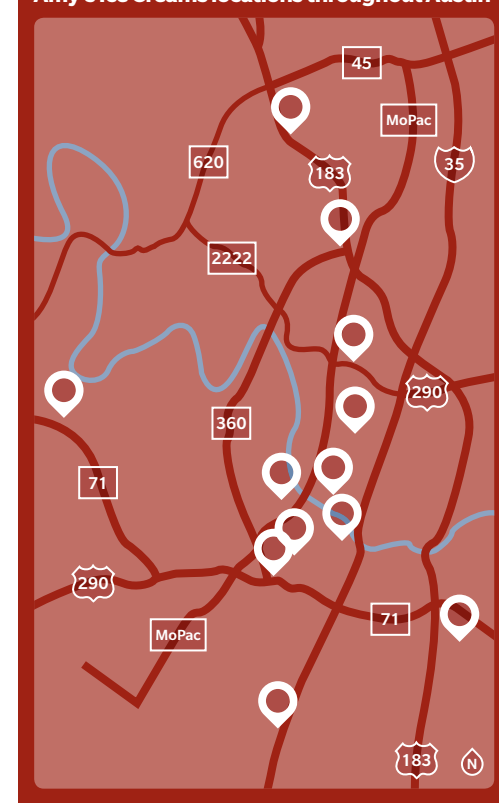
### Did you always plan to name Amy's Ice Creams after yourself?

I didn't want to name it Amy's—it was the last thing. ... Naming it Amy's was just the complete opposite of what I believe in.

### How do you define business goals?

Money is important to all of us, but what's more important is kind of the game—winning feels good, even the small ones.

### Amy's Ice Creams locations throughout Austin



Find out more about Amy Simmons and Amy's Ice Creams by watching the video at [communityimpact.com/amysicecreams](http://communityimpact.com/amysicecreams).

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Community Impact Newspaper launched a philanthropic mission in 2016: **CI Cares** seeks to aid citizens in our communities affected by hunger and poverty in order to give them a chance to thrive. Some of the following organizations serve a similar aim; many provided Hurricane Harvey relief.



Austin Diaper Bank

The Austin Diaper Bank helps offset diaper need across Central Austin by collecting and distributing diapers to local nonprofits. Diaper need is the lack of a sufficient supply of diapers to keep an infant, toddler or senior clean, dry and healthy, according to the National Diaper Bank Network. An estimated 12,000 babies and toddlers are affected by diaper need in Travis County annually, according to the bank's executive director, Holly McDaniel. In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, the Austin Diaper Bank distributed more than 780,000 diapers to those in affected areas.

8711 Burnet Road, Ste. B-34  
512-710-7232  
[www.austindiapers.org](http://www.austindiapers.org)

## Austin Disaster Relief Network

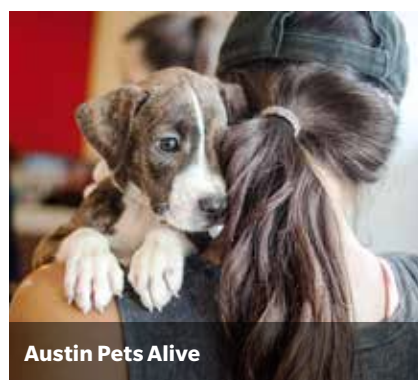
Since 2009, Austin Disaster Relief Network has drawn together more than 175 churches in the Greater Austin area and trained thousands of volunteers to help disaster survivors. After Hurricane Harvey, ADRN's network supplied 107 semitrailers' worth of goods to 28 cities affected by the storm. The ADRN Call Center fielded nearly 20,000 calls. The nonprofit estimates it has assisted nearly 17,000 Harvey survivors.

1122 E. 51st St.  
512-428-6322  
[www.adrn.org](http://www.adrn.org)

## Central Texas Food Bank

For nearly 35 years the Central Texas Food Bank in Austin has helped to alleviate hunger in the community. With the support of food donors across the country, volunteers and donors, the bank provided 31 million meals to Central Texans last year through a variety of programs, including monthly healthy food distribution programs for low-income families and seniors; after-school, weekend and summer food-delivery services for low-income children; and disaster relief services in which food, water and emergency supplies are distributed in the wake of events such as Hurricane Harvey.

6500 Metropolis Drive  
512-282-2111  
[www.centraltexasfoodbank.org](http://www.centraltexasfoodbank.org)



Austin Pets Alive

Since 2008, Austin Pets Alive has operated a no-kill shelter program that includes a neonatal nursery for orphaned and unweaned kittens, a medical triage clinic and a Parvo Puppy ICU for dogs with parvovirus. Typically, APA manages about 200 foster homes for dogs and 200 for cats. In the 10 days following Hurricane Harvey, however, APA rescued more than 2,000 animals, helping to reconnect pets with their owners and overseeing the fostering of 700 dogs as well as more than 700 cats that had been abandoned or surrendered throughout the Austin area.

1156 W. Cesar Chavez St.

## FEATURED NONPROFIT



In 1992, Christine Albert was asked to sing for John Swann, a 40-year-old man dying of a terminal illness. In 2005 she founded **Swan Songs**, a nonprofit that organizes private concerns for individuals at the end of life. Recently the organization organized a concert for nursing home residents evacuated to Austin during Hurricane Harvey. On Oct. 18, Swan Songs hosted its annual Serenade fundraiser, which raised nearly \$250,000 and will help fund the hundreds of concerts, featuring paid musicians, that the nonprofit organizes each year. P.O. Box 41475, Austin. 512-416-7926. [www.swansongs.org](http://www.swansongs.org)

512-961-6519  
[www.austinpetsalive.org](http://www.austinpetsalive.org)

## Integral Care

For 50 years Integral Care has served adults and children in Travis County who are living with mental illness, substance use disorder, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Its services include a 24-hour helpline for those in need of immediate support; ongoing counseling; and housing services that help connect people to shelters, shared housing or affordable apartments. Last year Integral Care's operating budget was \$108 million, and it served more than 24,500 residents. Although not a nonprofit, the public-sector organization operates clinics and urgent care centers around Austin. Clinic locations vary.

512-472-4357  
[www.integralcare.org](http://www.integralcare.org)

## Caritas of Austin

Since 1964 independent nonprofit Caritas of Austin has worked to prevent and end homelessness for people in Greater Austin. An estimated 10,000 people in Austin will access homeless services in Austin each year; most of these are not the "visible homeless" one may see on street corners but families living out of cars, refugees who have not yet settled in a home and others. Caritas, which means "love" or "care" in Latin, works to provide stable housing options, healthy food services, education classes, job placement and career settlement, veterans assistance and refugee resettlement as part of its comprehensive approach to end homelessness locally.

611 Neches St.  
512-479-4610  
[www.caritasofaustin.org](http://www.caritasofaustin.org)

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CONTINUED FROM 1

but Austin has had its share of flooding disasters and due to its geography, remains particularly vulnerable to the destructive forces of Mother Nature. Kimmel said a storm like Harvey could hit Austin in the future.

October marks the two-year anniversary of the 2015 Halloween flood that placed some of South Austin underwater. It was the third of what would become four presidential disaster declarations in four years for Travis County between 2013 and 2016: the 2013 and 2015 Halloween floods, and the 2015 and 2016 Memorial Day floods.

As it continues its unprecedented rate of growth, the city is forced to strengthen its mitigation efforts in order to protect its citizens and most vulnerable areas.

### 'FLASH FLOOD ALLEY'

As North Austin resident Dorsey Twidwell remembers it, 2 1/2 years ago during the Memorial Day flood of 2015, he walked out the back door of his home and—standing on his porch—he felt as though he was sailing on a ship, he said.

"There was water everywhere," Twidwell said.

He recalls the water rising at a rapid rate. The level in his backyard, which sits parallel to Walnut Creek on Cedarbrook Court, peaked at about waist-deep and carried a dangerously forceful current downstream.

According to data from the Flood Safety Education Project, the geography of Texas makes it vulnerable to some of the heaviest rainstorms in the world. Travis County sits in an area of Central Texas nicknamed "Flash Flood Alley"—one of the most flash flood-prone areas in North America, according to Austin's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, flash floods occur when heavy rainfall forces creek and river beds to overflow. Experts at NOAA consider flash floods the most dangerous flood variety because they combine the power of a flood with "incredible speed" and can occur with no warning.

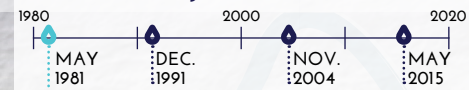
Although Twidwell and his wife, Bunnie, survived with little to no structural damage to their home, structures throughout downtown Austin were left submerged under several feet of water.

For Mark Feist, a resident of the Aldridge Place neighborhood in Central Austin, one of those structures was his backyard garage apartment, which

Many Central Austin residents fall within one of three flood plains—Shoal Creek, Waller Creek or Bouldin Creek—which makes them the most vulnerable to the harmful effects of floods.

## SHOAL CREEK

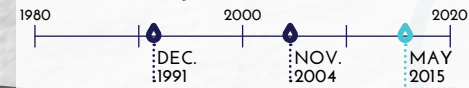
### MAJOR FLOODS



One of the most damaging floods to hit Austin, 13 people were killed, and property damage was estimated at \$35 million.

## WALLER CREEK

### MAJOR FLOODS



The Memorial Day flood followed one of the wettest Mays recorded in Texas. Some along Waller Creek reported 2-3 feet of floodwater.

## BOULDIN CREEKS\*

### MAJOR FLOODS



Following a heavy rain storm, West Bouldin Creek flooded, forcing 26 road closures and nine water rescues by the Austin Fire Dept.

\* Includes East and West Bouldin creeks

he said took in 2-3 feet of water. He said the floodwaters were powerful enough to wash cars down his street.

"It's true flash flooding; it comes with fast-flowing, dangerous water," Feist said. "It doesn't stick around. You can have all this water come and go within 30 minutes."

Feist said his property, which sits atop the underground tunnel that Waller Creek runs through, floods regularly.

Flash floods prompted by heavy rainfall were the major contributors in the four disaster declarations that resulted in loss of life and over \$100 million dollars in damage in Austin.

### 'A VERY DISHEARTENING SITUATION'

Matt Hollon, manager of the Austin Watershed Protection Department's Planning Division, said though the city is naturally prone to flash floods, early



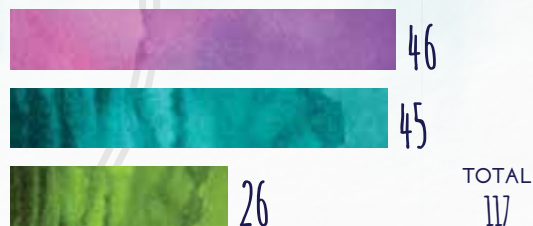
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AUSTIN



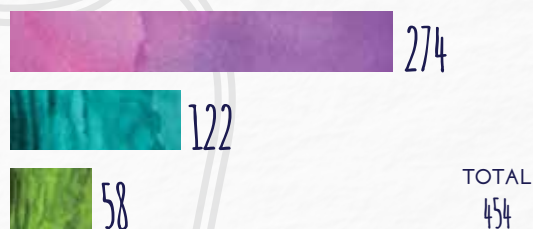
## LOW-WATER CROSSINGS

75 percent of Austin flood fatalities are caused by motorists driving through low-water crossings, or roadways over creeks. Here are the numbers per watershed:



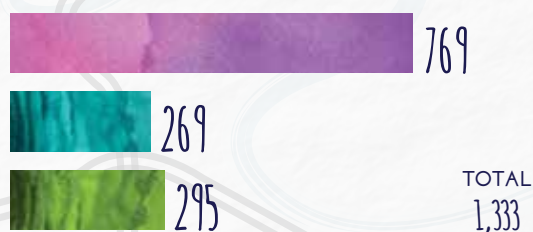
## STRUCTURES WITHIN THE 100-YEAR FLOOD PLAIN

The following number of structures lie within the flood plain and are estimated to flood during 100-year events:



## PROPERTIES WITH FLOODING COMPLAINTS

Austin keeps track of the amount of properties from which they receive flooding complaints:



planning mistakes exacerbated the vulnerability in some areas of the city.

When Austin first received its flood plain maps from the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the late 1970s, Hollon said the technology used to develop the maps was in its early stages, and poor planning decisions were made.

"[The flood plain maps] weren't delineated properly, and development occurred in unsuitable areas," he said. "It was a very disheartening situation."

This led to the development of thousands of properties within the 100-year flood plain, which is an area that FEMA calculates has a 1 percent chance of flooding per year—or a 26 percent chance of flooding over the lifetime of a 30-year mortgage.

According to the 2016 Watershed Protection Master Plan 1,981 structures lie

within the Barton, Bull, East and West Bouldin, Little Walnut, Shoal, Waller and Walnut creeks watersheds' 100-year flood plains, 773 of which the city estimates would be inundated in a 100-year storm.

Development within the flood plains has plateaued since the city's flood plain ordinance went into effect in 1983, Hollon said.

"We're basically seeing no new construction going down in these hazard areas, and you're seeing all these sins of the past corrected," he said.

Among the most dangerous aspects of flash floods are low-water crossings, areas where floodwaters commonly breach the roadway. According to Hollon, 75 percent of Austin's water fatalities were due to low-water crossings. The master plan counts 1,866 low-water crossings in Austin, 189 of which fall within the aforementioned

watersheds.

Efficiency of the city's drainage infrastructure, namely storm drainpipes, also plays an important role in an area's vulnerability to flooding. Poor infrastructure can turn a smaller storm into a 100-year flooding event. Of the 1,100 miles of drainage pipes running through Austin, roughly a quarter were built before modern regulations were put into effect. Nearly all the old, undersized piping lies within the urban core neighborhoods where development is most prolific, Hollon said.

He said much of the old piping cannot handle more capacity. However, replacing old infrastructure is an expensive undertaking—city staff estimates a price tag close to \$1 billion.

District 7 Council Member Leslie Pool sees stormwater and drainage infrastructure as a paramount issue as the city continues to grow.

"We were a sleepy little town," Pool said. "The last 20 years have been this incredible expansion, and it's expensive to keep up with. We just have to keep working at it day by day and not make things worse."

## 'FLOOD AMNESIA'

Following his Memorial Day 2015 experience, Twidwell began going to community meetings, communicating his experience and asking questions. However, he found that the community's momentum around the issue faded as time passed.

"People around here suffer from flood amnesia," Twidwell said. "It's like my uncle used to say, 'The roof only leaks when it rains.'"

Pool said the flood amnesia leaks into policy as well, which can make it difficult to continually prioritize the issue.

"People forget; policies erode; and the significant concerns that people have get dulled over time if the circumstances don't repeat themselves or if it doesn't happen to you," Pool said. "If you have not been affected by flooding you don't have the level of awareness and sensitivity to how destructive and dangerous flooding is."

## PUTTING PROTECTIONS IN PLACE

Twidwell said flood amnesia has not affected him; it has become what he calls "flood passion." He has been working on the city's Bond Election Advisory Task Force, placing an emphasis on funding stormwater and drainage infrastructure.

Previously he served as one of the 22 appointees to the Flood Mitigation Task Force, which in 2016 provided 11 recommendations to City Council on how to

## WHAT IS A 100-YEAR FLOOD PLAIN?

The 100-year flood plain is areas that will flood in the event of a 100-year storm. FEMA classifies a 100-year storm as a storm that has a 1 percent chance of occurring within a 24-hour period in one year. In Austin this is a storm that brings at least 10.2 inches of rain in 24 hours.

better prepare the city for the inevitable.

"It's all about constant vigilance," Twidwell said.

One of those recommendations, according to Hollon, is being proposed by the watershed protection department through CodeNEXT—the ongoing overhaul of the city's land development code—for redevelopment regulations for large multifamily and commercial projects.

Currently the threshold for a new project is it must not contribute more stormwater runoff to the drainage system. Hollon said the new regulations would require those larger projects to provide substantial improvement and go "above and beyond" current regulations.

"We've had this no-harm rule for a long time," Hollon said. "Folks have not been piling on and adding to the problems, but they haven't really started to chip away and reverse the trend and try to improve it."

The rules around flood plain development have also tightened significantly since the 1980s, but the city is still working to rid itself of the unregulated development of the past. Hollon said since 2012 the number of structures within the 100-year flood plain expected to flood has dropped nearly 25 percent, from 2,380 structures to 1,816.

The city has become more vigilant in its public awareness campaigns regarding flash flood warnings and low-water crossing closures. Hollon said the "Save yourself! Turn around—don't drown" campaign has had success in educating people about the dangers of low-water crossings.

But when it comes to the forces of Mother Nature, Pool said there is "very little" society can do. Hollon agrees.

"We're really just trying to make sure we're prepared, and if a Harvey hits, we would do as well as we can," he said. "It's going to take years because all of these projects are expensive. But we've got to start."



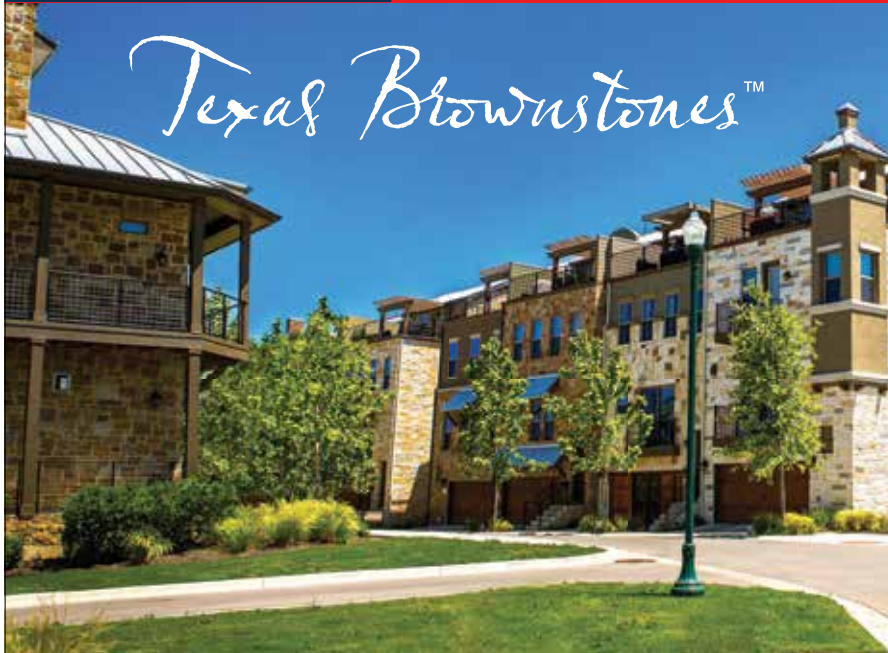
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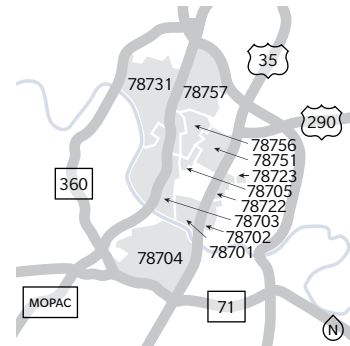
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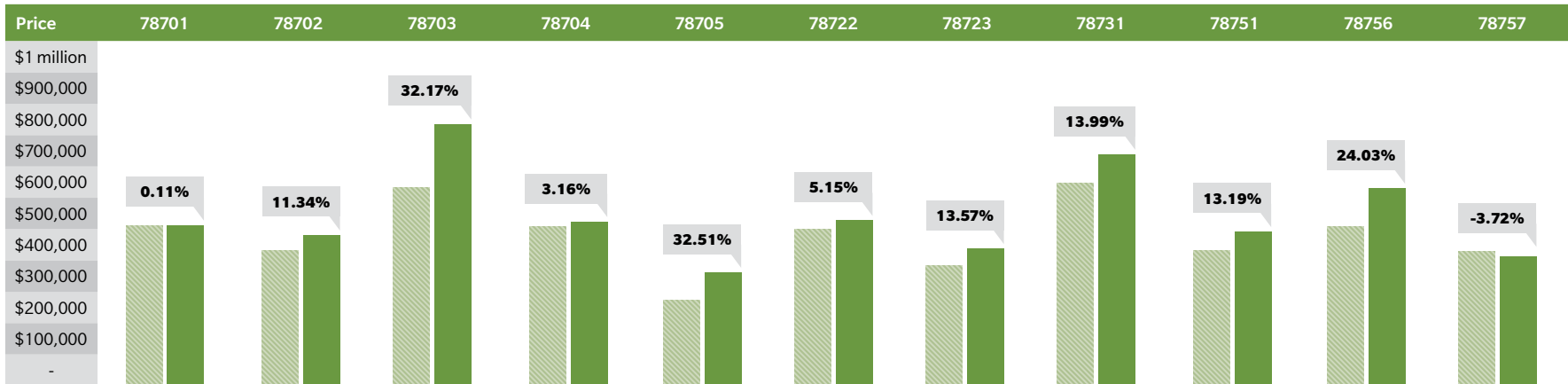
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Price range	Number of homes sold/average days on the market										
	78701	78702	78703	78704	78705	78722	78723	78731	78751	78756	78757
\$149,999 or less	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1/15	—	—	2/12
\$150,000–\$199,999	—	—	—	1/59	2/4	—	1/21	—	—	—	9/30
\$200,000–\$299,999	—	5/24	3/9	9/29	4/53	—	4/7	3/25	1/117	3/14	3/37
\$300,000–\$399,999	3/30	6/28	1/33	9/57	5/47	3/61	8/47	2/14	2/91	1/7	11/16
\$400,000–\$499,999	5/72	10/54	1/11	14/58	2/34	1/78	4/36	4/71	3/64	1/0	14/24
\$500,000–\$599,999	2/156	5/86	3/75	9/43	—	1/2	6/34	—	2/60	1/42	3/76
\$600,000–\$799,999	2/100	7/44	4/31	11/28	1/4	3/43	2/38	12/39	2/56	2/80	4/40
\$800,000–\$999,999	1/306	—	3/41	3/32	1/15	—	—	5/85	—	3/23	—
\$1 million+	1/26	—	8/94	4/53	—	—	—	2/30	—	1/53	—



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Szechuan House.....	42
Texican Cafe .....	42
The Frisco Shop.....	39

### ENTERTAINMENT

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Shoal Creek Nursery .....	42
The Great Outdoors.....	41
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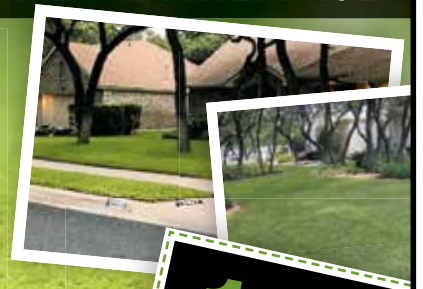
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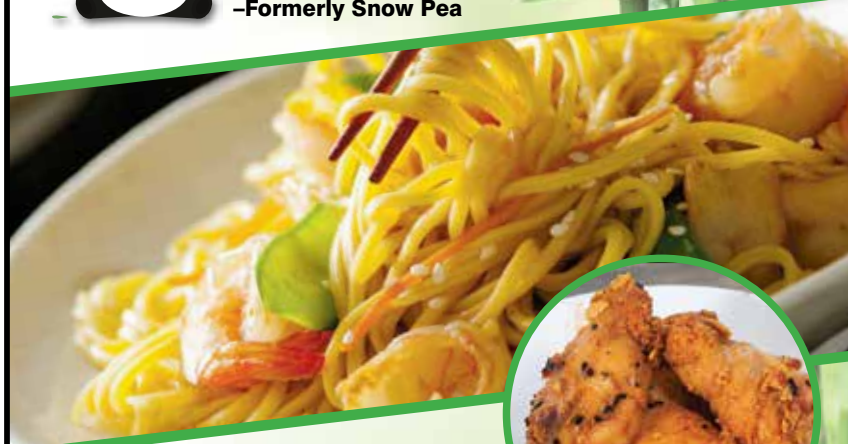
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