Geographic Representation on the Austin City Council: The 8-4-1 Model

The 8-4-1 model is based on the city council configuration in Memphis. It is a geographic representation system with 8 single-member geographic districts and 2 two-member districts, each overlaying 4 of the single-member districts.

Under the 8-4-1 City Council Election Model:

> 8 Council members (seats 1-8) are elected from single-member districts with populations of about 100,000
> 4 Council members (seats A1, A2, B1, and B2) are elected from two-member districts with populations of about 400,000
> 1 Council member, the Mayor, is elected at-large, for a total of
> 13 Council members

Districts 1-8 will each elect one council representative. District A (including districts 1-4 in East Austin) will elect two representatives, in seats A1 and A2. District B (including districts 5-8 in West Austin) will elect two representatives, in seats B1 and B2. Twelve of the 13 council members would be elected from geographic districts. Only the mayor would be elected by the entire city.

How the district boundaries are drawn is very important. They were drawn to ensure that neighborhoods and current population demographics were recognized and finally respected. With four majority minority districts, African American and Hispanic representation in the two District A seats is highly likely.

District 1 will have the largest population of African Americans (well over the 20% that currently assures African American representation in Travis County Precinct 1). Higher voter registration and voting patterns make this district an opportunity district for African Americans.

A majority of the populations in Districts 2 and 4 are Hispanic, and District 3 (49% Hispanic) has a long history of electing Hispanic representatives to county and school board offices.

Besides increasing minority representation and maintaining an at-large perspective in Districts A and B, the boundaries as drawn in this proposal increase representation of sectors of the community that have not felt represented. District 7 could conceivably have a UT student as a council member. The southern and eastern communities will finally have a voice they choose.

Every voter can vote for four council members: one council member from the voter's local district, two members from District A or B, and the mayor.

We believe this is the most representative and progressive proposal and the one that Austin should adopt.

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City of Austin Single Member District Proposal
8 District Scenario
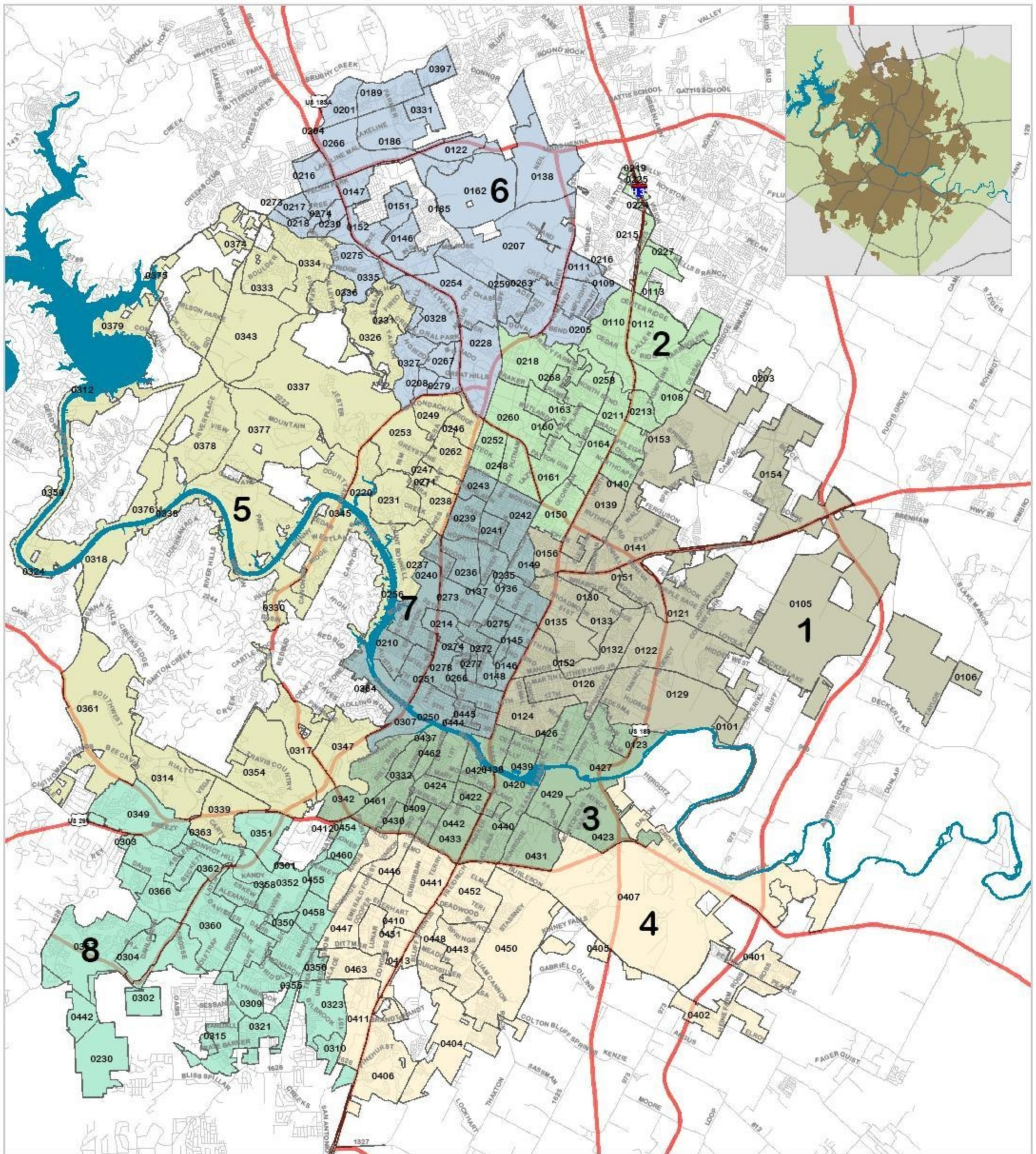
Demographic percentages, Districts 5-8

	Hispanic	White	Black	Asian
District 5	11%	76%	2%	10%
District 6	18%	61%	6%	12%
District 7	13%	72%	3%	9%
District 8	26%	62%	4%	6%
Total	17%	68%	3%	9%

Demographic percentages, Districts 1-4

	Hispanic	White	Black	Asian
District 1	47%	24%	24%	3%
District 2	51%	30%	10%	6%
District 3	49%	40%	7%	3%
District 4	63%	27%	7%	1%
Total	52%	31%	12%	3%

Two-Member Districts
8-4-1 City Council Election Proposal

A

B
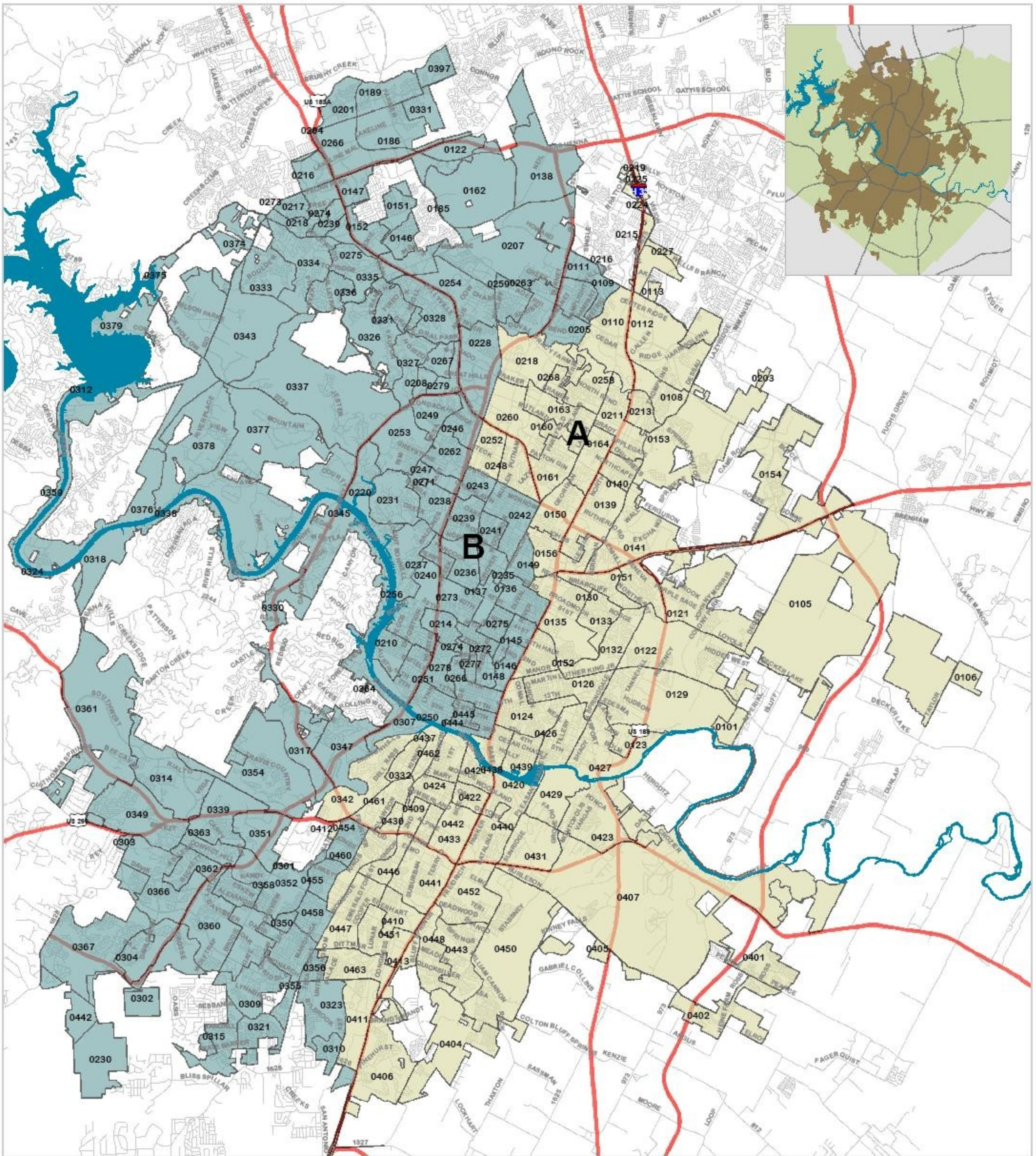
Voting Tabulation Districts 2010

2 Member Districts

A   B

Lake Travis & Colorado River

Highways

Streets

0   1.25   2.5   5   7.5   10
Miles

Author: Laura Glass, July 25, 2011
Source: City of Austin
Projection: NAD 1983 State Plane Texas Central FIPS 4203 ft

N
W   E
S

District	VTD	Total Population	Hispanic	White	African American	Asian	All Other	Total Voting Age Population (VAP)	Hispanic VAP	White VAP	Black VAP	Asian VAP	All Other VAP	All Registered Voters	Spanish Surname Registered Voters (SSRV)
8	0301	56	12	37	2	3	1	55	12	37	2	3	1	48	4
8	0302	1,433	227	943	50	172	39	951	132	659	41	102	17	1,028	114
8	0303	194	78	111	2	0	4	147	53	92	1	0	2	151	13
8	0304	3,520	332	2,711	50	327	100	2,316	213	1,806	37	226	34	2,508	157
8	0309	7,336	2,586	3,931	371	256	195	5,498	1,684	3,242	259	202	111	4,027	816
8	0310	2,654	904	1,438	100	163	49	2,034	619	1,193	78	116	29	1,568	322
8	0315	2,385	517	1,604	41	179	45	1,605	306	1,128	32	120	19	1,618	206
8	0321	5,105	2,170	2,291	252	285	109	3,648	1,378	1,840	184	199	49	2,903	859
8	0323	4,281	1,611	2,134	248	180	109	3,275	1,084	1,791	179	146	76	2,392	617
8	0349	6,934	1,324	4,912	101	410	188	5,233	877	3,882	80	300	94	4,870	476
8	0350	6,336	1,844	3,815	270	211	196	5,199	1,350	3,317	221	185	126	4,324	831
8	0351	4,560	981	2,530	110	805	134	3,849	769	2,270	90	630	90	2,645	374
8	0352	6,396	1,843	4,022	244	139	149	5,372	1,397	3,549	196	119	111	4,792	902
8	0355	5,731	1,858	3,235	322	162	154	4,481	1,264	2,744	231	141	101	3,906	769
8	0356	1,618	703	781	62	43	29	1,252	459	691	46	34	22	1,062	296
8	0358	4,035	1,218	2,462	178	72	105	3,169	835	2,067	143	61	63	2,903	584
8	0360	5,842	1,350	3,750	195	394	153	4,404	929	2,920	152	310	93	4,020	682
8	0362	3,913	646	2,911	92	178	86	2,942	435	2,256	75	128	48	2,899	335
8	0363	1,918	275	1,507	36	73	27	1,509	207	1,203	24	59	16	1,594	139
8	0366	7,242	1,085	5,048	145	787	179	5,017	682	3,620	98	528	89	4,773	482
8	0367	9,771	1,335	6,943	160	1,082	253	6,341	778	4,654	112	704	93	5,886	565
8	0454	3,225	1,001	2,028	81	65	50	2,610	667	1,802	66	42	33	2,144	263
8	0455	3,258	951	1,981	154	56	116	2,668	672	1,767	105	54	70	2,396	454
8	0458	3,852	1,161	2,268	241	98	84	3,137	819	1,999	180	79	60	2,740	543
8	H224	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	H228	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	H230	12	1	10	0	0	0	9	1	8	0	0	0	9	1
8	H442	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	101,607	26,013	63,403	3,507	6,140	2,554	76,721	17,622	50,537	2,632	4,488	1,447	67,206	10,804

Population: 2024 over ideal (2%)
Ideal: 99,583

8-4-1 City Council Geographic Election Plan, Data Summary

Ideal district size: 99,583 (796,668 / 8); Maximum deviation: 3.6% under and 4.7% over = 8.3%
Ideal superdistrict size: 398,334 (796,668 / 2); Maximum deviation: 1.6% under and 1.6% over = 3.2%

8 Single-member District Demographics

District	Population	Deviation	Hispanic	White	African American	Asian	All Other	Super-district	White %
1	98189	−1.4%	46193	24251	23036	2837	1876		
2	98888	−0.07%	50323	29925	10258	6370	2005		
3	104230	4.7%	51046	41297	7083	2722	2083		
4	103412	3.8%	64671	28206	7310	1458	1767	404719	31%
5	96025	−3.6%	10141	72705	1650	9277	2248		
6	97451	−2.1%	17086	59838	5752	12063	2704		
7	96866	−2.7%	12969	70097	2435	8879	2487		
8	101607	2%	26013	63403	3507	6140	2554	391949	68%
Total	796668		278442	389722	61031	49746	17724		

	Voting Age Population (VAP)		Hispanic VAP	Anglo VAP	Black VAP	Asian VAP	All Other VAP	Reg. Voters	Spanish Surname Reg. Voters
1	72245		29397	21806	17563	2279	1209	48499	8206
2	73729		33154	26658	7471	5125	1318	42471	7713
3	83956		36287	37978	5612	2474	1606	62426	17141
4	74484		41670	25157	5257	1225	1180	46459	16340
5	74628		7218	58065	1312	6709	1328	71804	3897
6	77313		12193	50175	4373	8906	1654	60958	5963
7	86863		11342	62737	2250	8503	2031	75722	6253
8	76721		17622	50537	2632	4488	1447	67206	10804
Total	619939		188883	333113	46470	39709	11773	475545	76317

Two-member District Demographics

District	Population	Hispanic	White	African American	Asian	All Other	White %	± Ideal	Deviation
A	404719	212233	123679	47687	13387	7731	31%	6385	1.6%
B	391949	66206	266043	13344	36359	9993	68%	6385	−1.6%

	VAP	Hispanic VAP	Anglo VAP	Black VAP	Asian VAP	All Other VAP	Reg. Voters	Spanish Surname Reg. Voters
A	304414	140508	111599	35903	11103	5313	199855	49400
B	315525	48375	221514	10567	28606	6460	275690	26917

Demographic percentages

District	% Hispanic	% White	% African American	% Asian	% Other
A	52	31	12	3	2
1	47	25	24	3	2
2	51	30	10	6	2
3	49	40	7	3	2
4	63	27	7	1	2
B	17	68	3	9	3
5	11	76	2	10	2
6	18	61	6	12	3
7	13	72	3	9	3
8	26	62	4	6	3