

# Home Composting Rebate Program

A horizontal bar composed of three segments in different shades of green: a dark green segment on the left, a medium green segment in the middle, and a light green segment on the right.

Presentation for ZWAC

by:

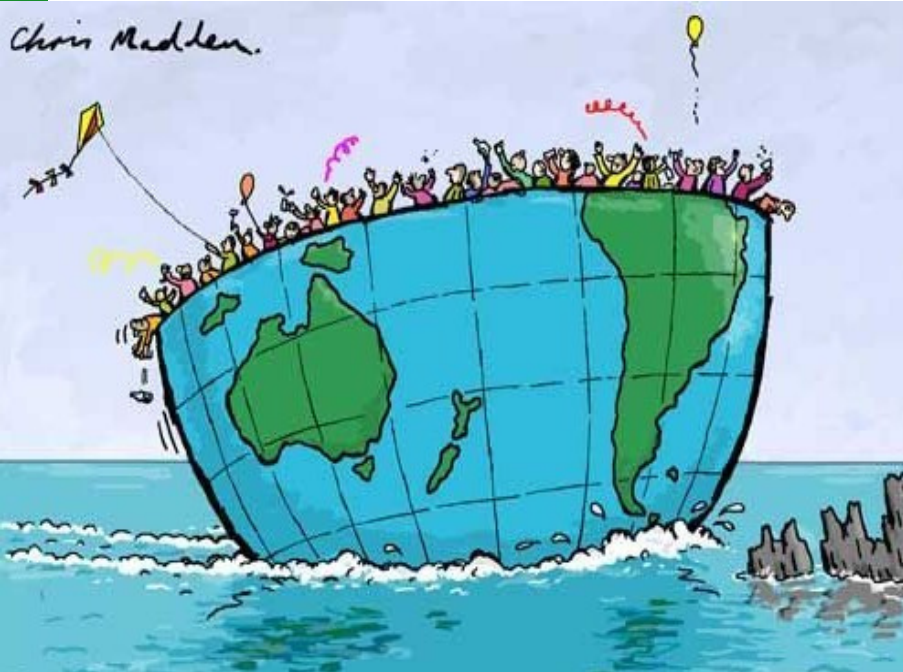
Daniela Ochoa Gonzalez

November 2012

A vertical bar on the left side of the slide, composed of a green upper section and a yellow lower section.

# **Why**

**is this report relevant  
to the Zero Waste  
Advisory Commission?**



Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan

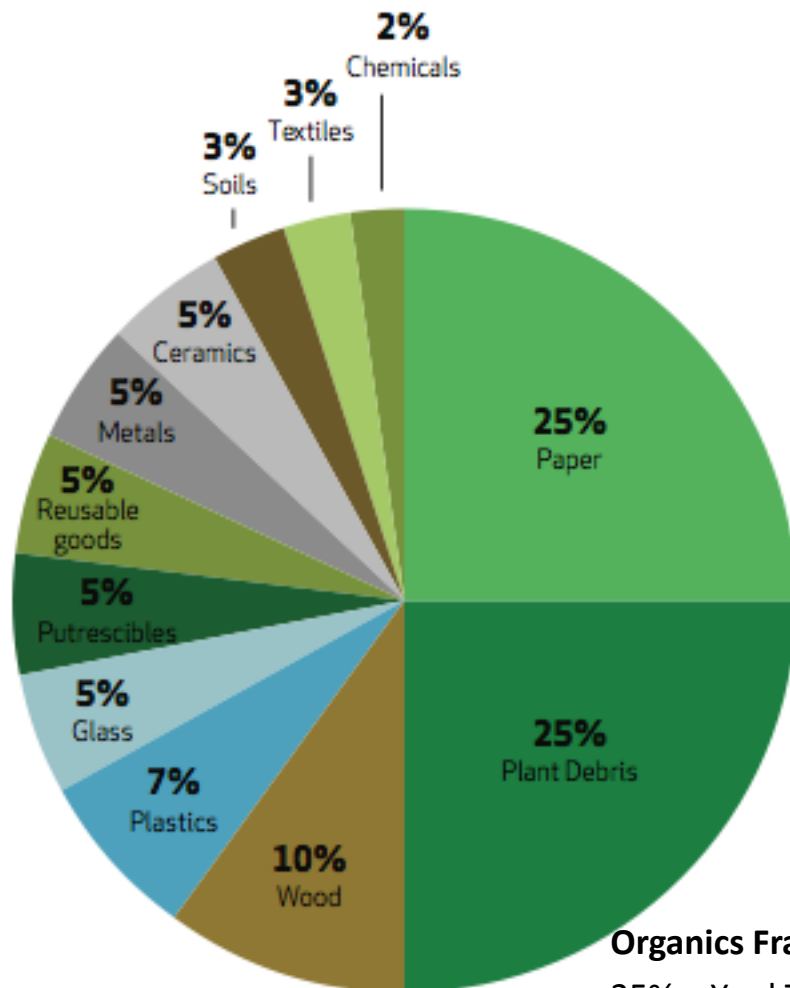


Austin's Zero Waste Strategic Plan  
ARR Master Plan



## Percentage of Recyclables in Discards

Total tons generated: 1,445,300



### Organics Fraction: (58-65%)

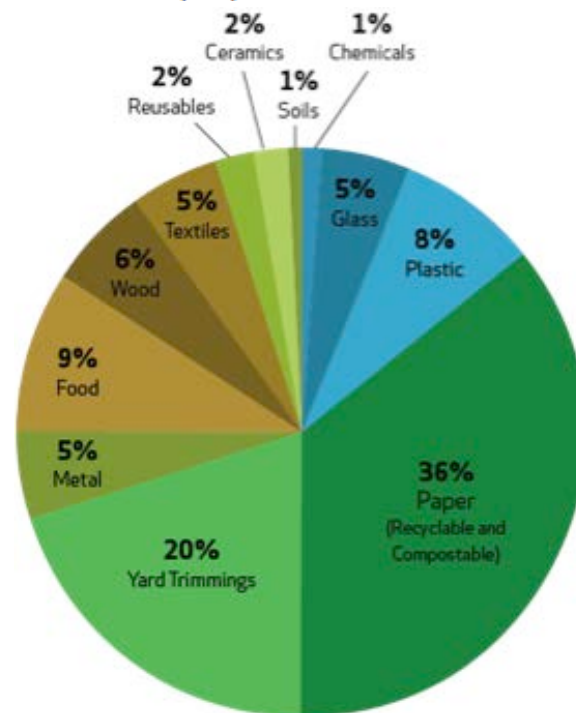
25% = Yard Trimmings

25% = Paper

5% = Food Waste

3-10% = Untreated Wood

controlled by City: 360,500



### Organics Fraction: (50%)

20% = Yard Trimmings

18% = Food-Soiled Paper

9% = Food Waste

3% = Untreated Wood

## Austin MSA Population History: 1900 to 2010

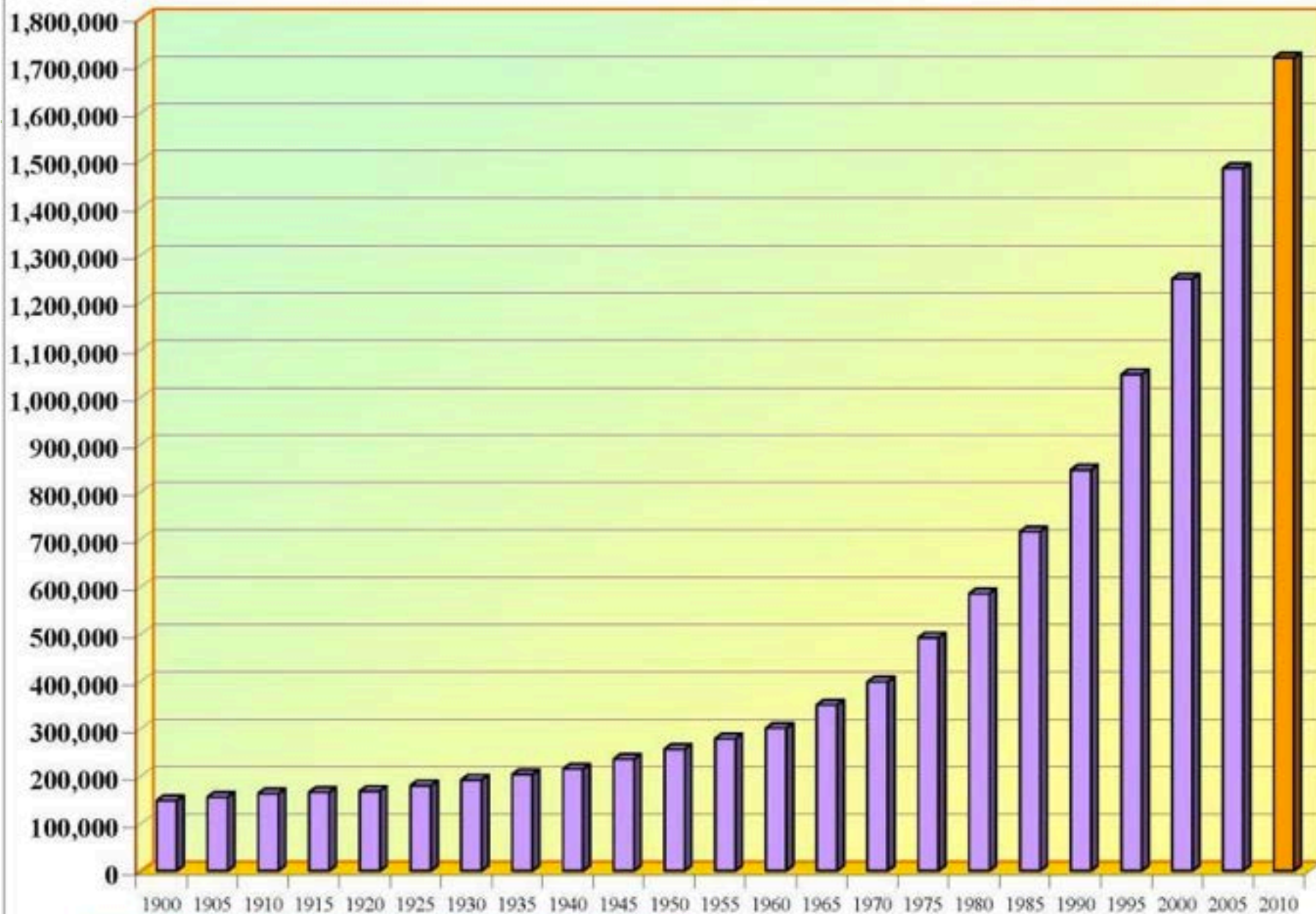


Image: Robinson, 2011. Department of Planning. City of Austin.



# R= Small & Strategic piece of the ZW puzzle

## EPA Food Waste Hierarchy

**Consumer Education**

**Reuse - Food Rescue**

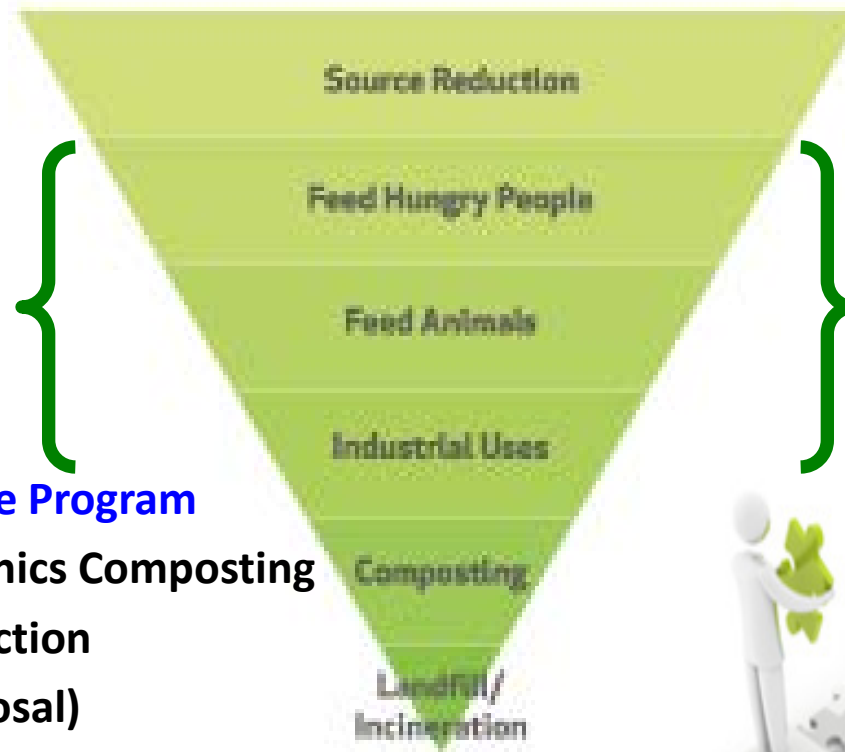
**Home Composting/ Rebate Program**

**Community Gardens Organics Composting**

**Centralized Organics Collection**

**Anaerobic Digestion (disposal)**

**Landfill (least desirable disposal)**



**Residential  
Yard  
Trimmings  
+  
Food Scraps  
Collection**

**Universal  
Recycling &  
Composting  
Ordinance**

**Education  
and  
Awareness**

**Home Composting  
Rebate Program**

"The main barrier  
to increased adoption  
of composting systems  
in the single family segments  
it's education and awareness"

Austin Resource Recovery Master Plan





# **What**

**is the Home composting  
program?**

# Basic Home Composting Rebate

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1. Downsize to a 32-gallon or 21  garbage cart
2. Take a **free** composting class
3.  Purchase a composting system

By taking these steps ARR costumers are eligible for a **75%** rebate off the purchase of a composting bin, up to **\$75**

# **What**

**has been the outcome of the  
Home Composting Program so  
far in terms of**

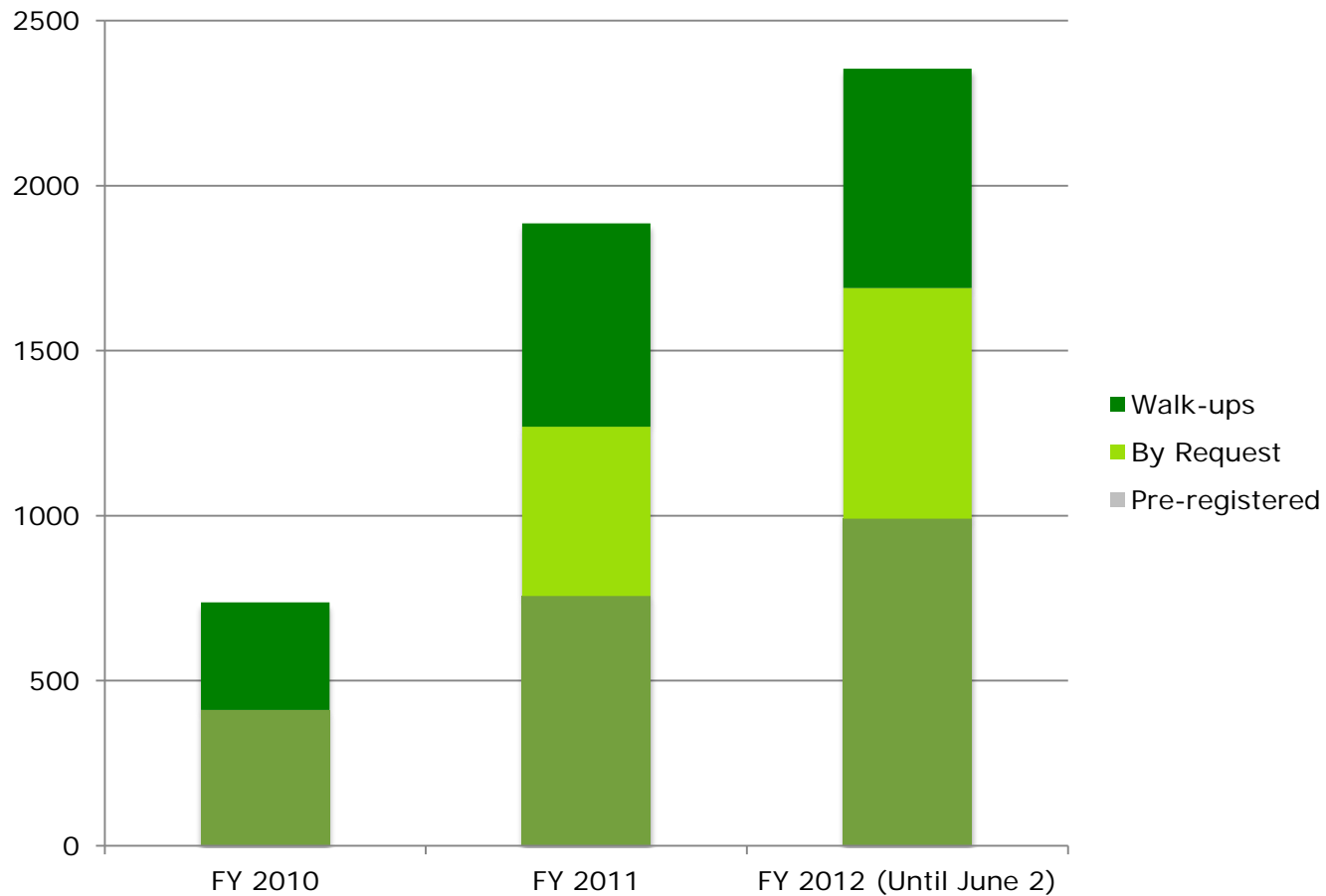
**classes?**

# Results of the Home Composting Program

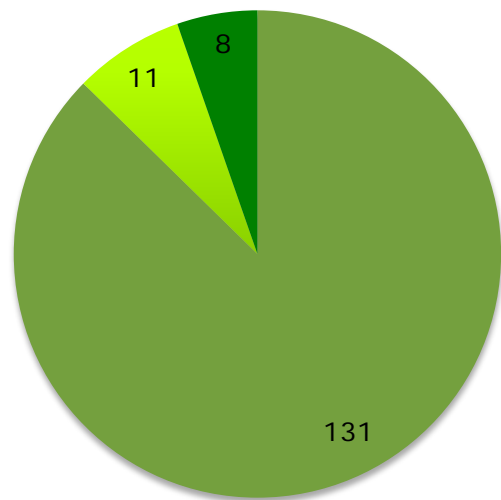
|        |                 | Class No.  | Attendees   | Preregistered | Walk-ups    | By Request  | Did not attended |
|--------|-----------------|------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| Part 1 | FY 2010         | 13         | 737         | 427           | 310         | 0           | 443              |
|        | FY 2011         | 55         | 1885        | 729           | 392         | 740         | 261              |
|        | FY 2012         | 73         | 2292        | 991           | 337         | 964         | 629              |
|        | <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>141</b> | <b>4914</b> | <b>2147</b>   | <b>1039</b> | <b>1704</b> | <b>1333</b>      |
|        | Ann Sullivan    | 1          | 23          | 23            | 0           | 0           | 0                |
|        | Daniela Ochoa   | 97         | 2976        | 1167          | 298         | 1513        | 670              |
|        | Jason Sanders   | 36         | 1694        | 884           | 712         | 72          | 644              |
|        | Jeff Paine      | 5          | 143         | 73            | 29          | 41          | 19               |
|        | Nat Gardener    | 1          | 58          | 0             | 0           | 58          | 0                |
|        | Sylba Loren     | 1          | 20          | 0             | 0           | 20          | 0                |
| Part 2 | Regular Classes | 86         | 3224        | 37            | 2159        | 1065        | 1222             |
|        |                 |            |             |               | (33.0%)     | 0           | (34.8%)          |
| Part 3 | English         | 131        | 4568        | 35            | 1967        | 985         | 1156             |
|        | Bilingual       | 11         | 280         | 25            | 109         | 37          | 72               |
|        | Spanish         | 8          | 130         | 16            | 83          | 9           | 93               |

# Home Composting Program Classes

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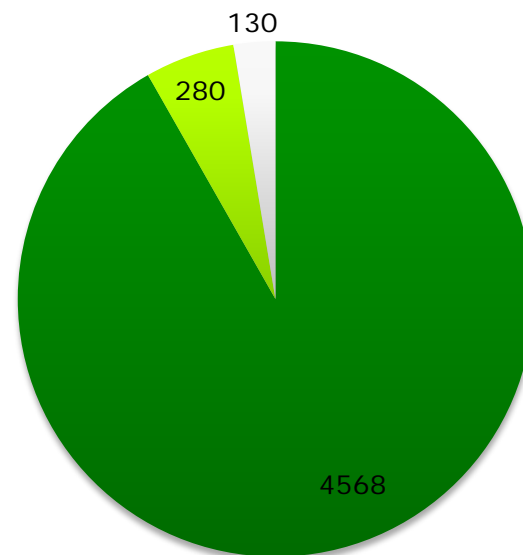


# Home Composting Classes by Language



No. of classes:

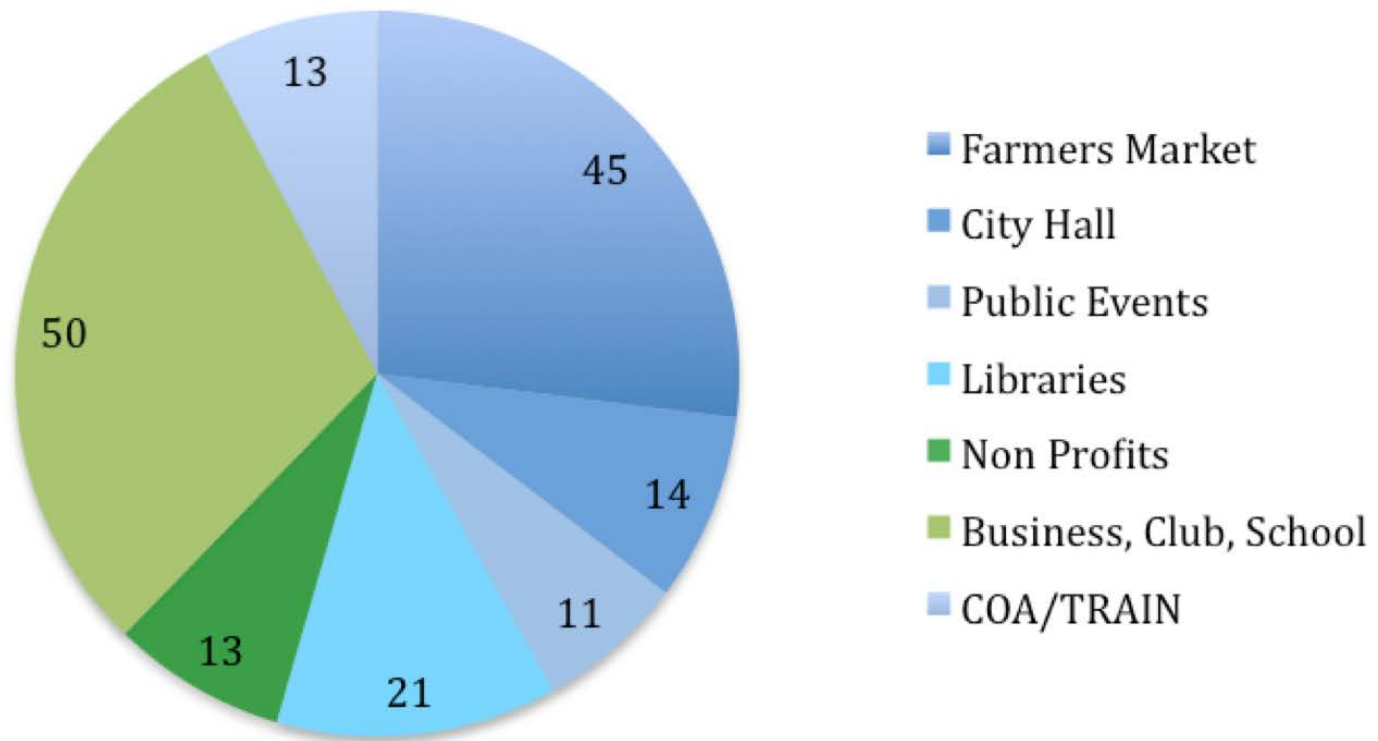
- English
- Bilingual
- Spanish



No. of attendees

- English
- Bilingual
- Spanish

# Total Composting Classes by Class Category



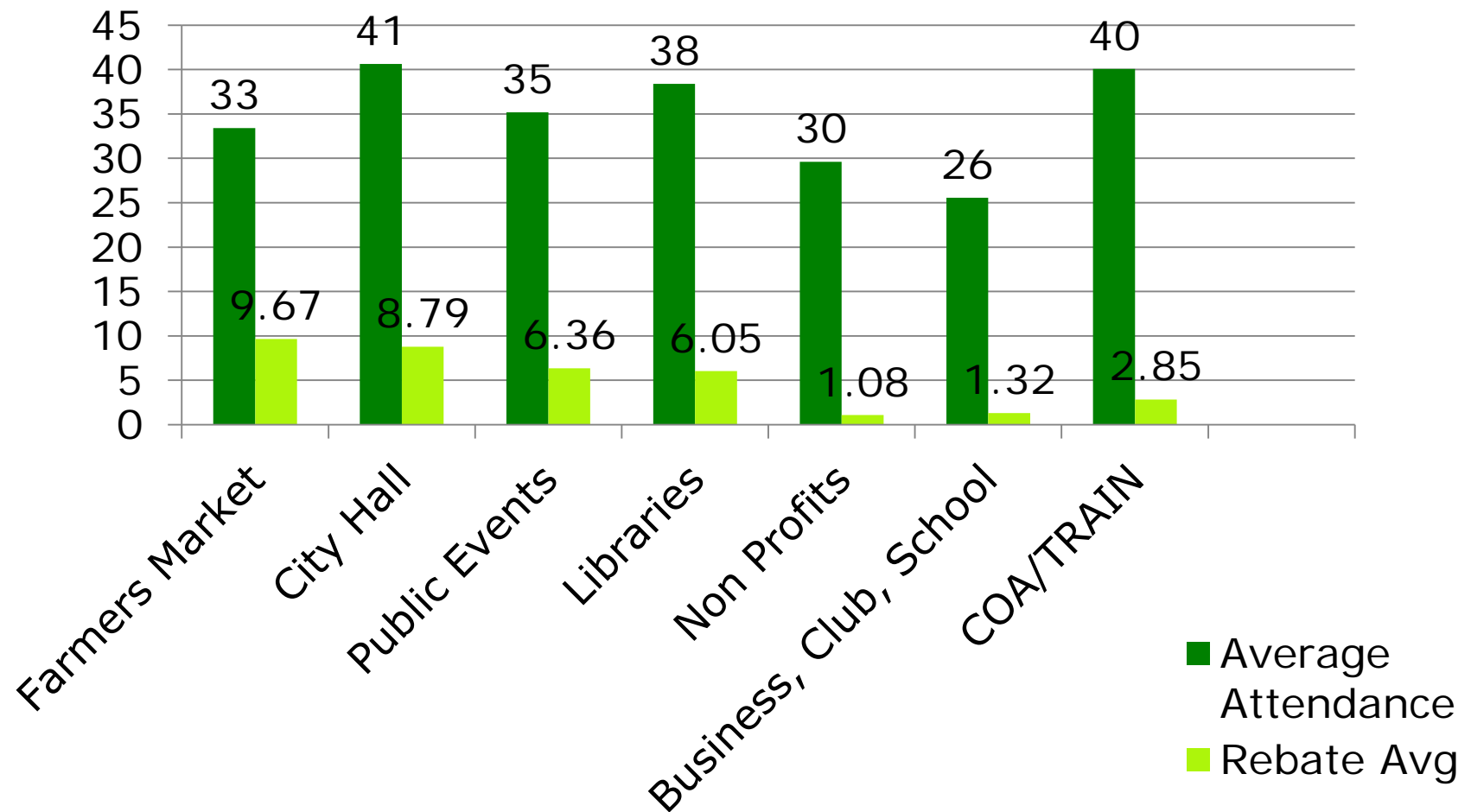
# **What**

**has been the outcome of the  
Home Composting Program so  
far in terms of**

**rebates?**

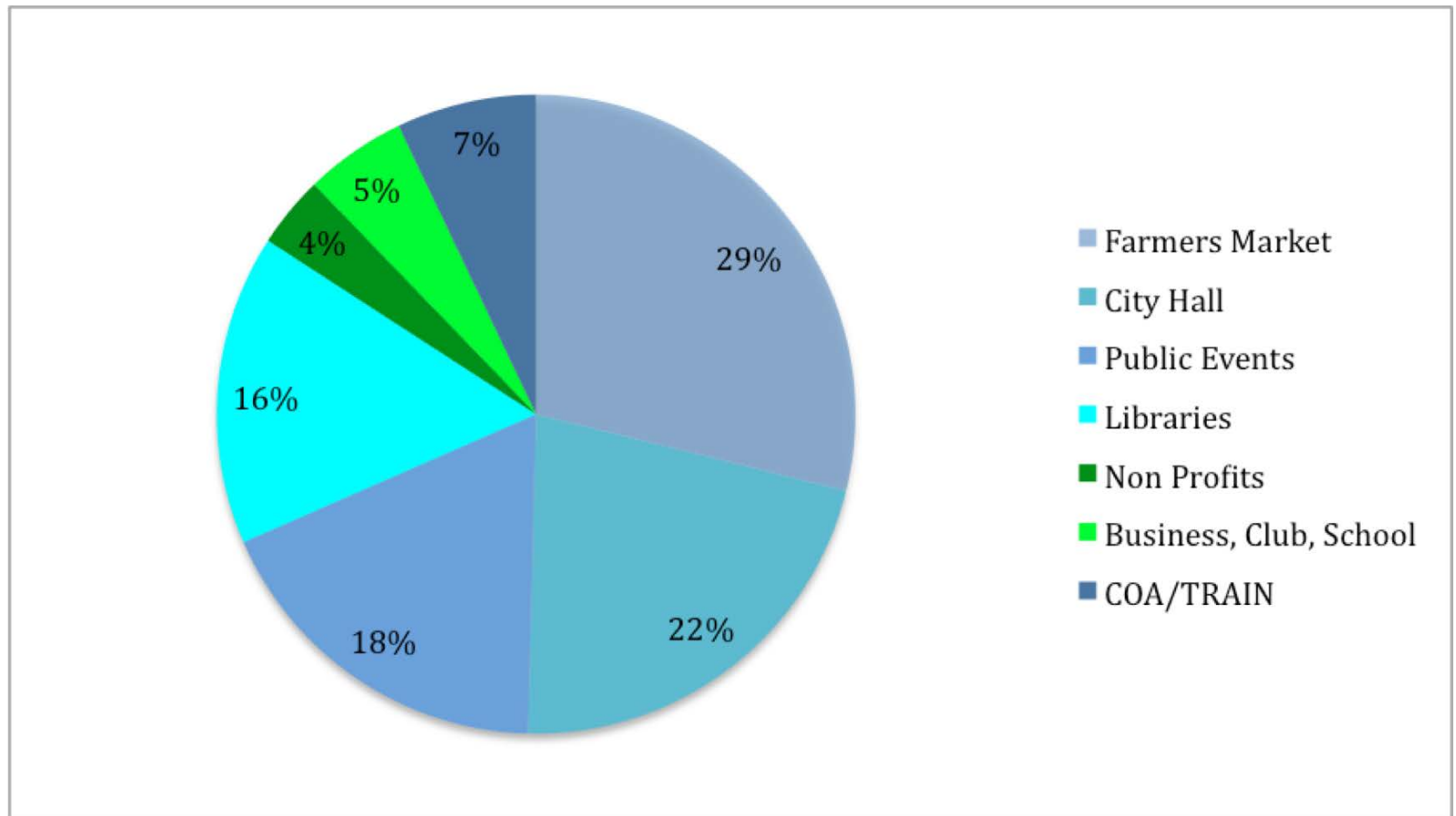


## Average **Attendance** per class and Average number or **Rebates** per class category

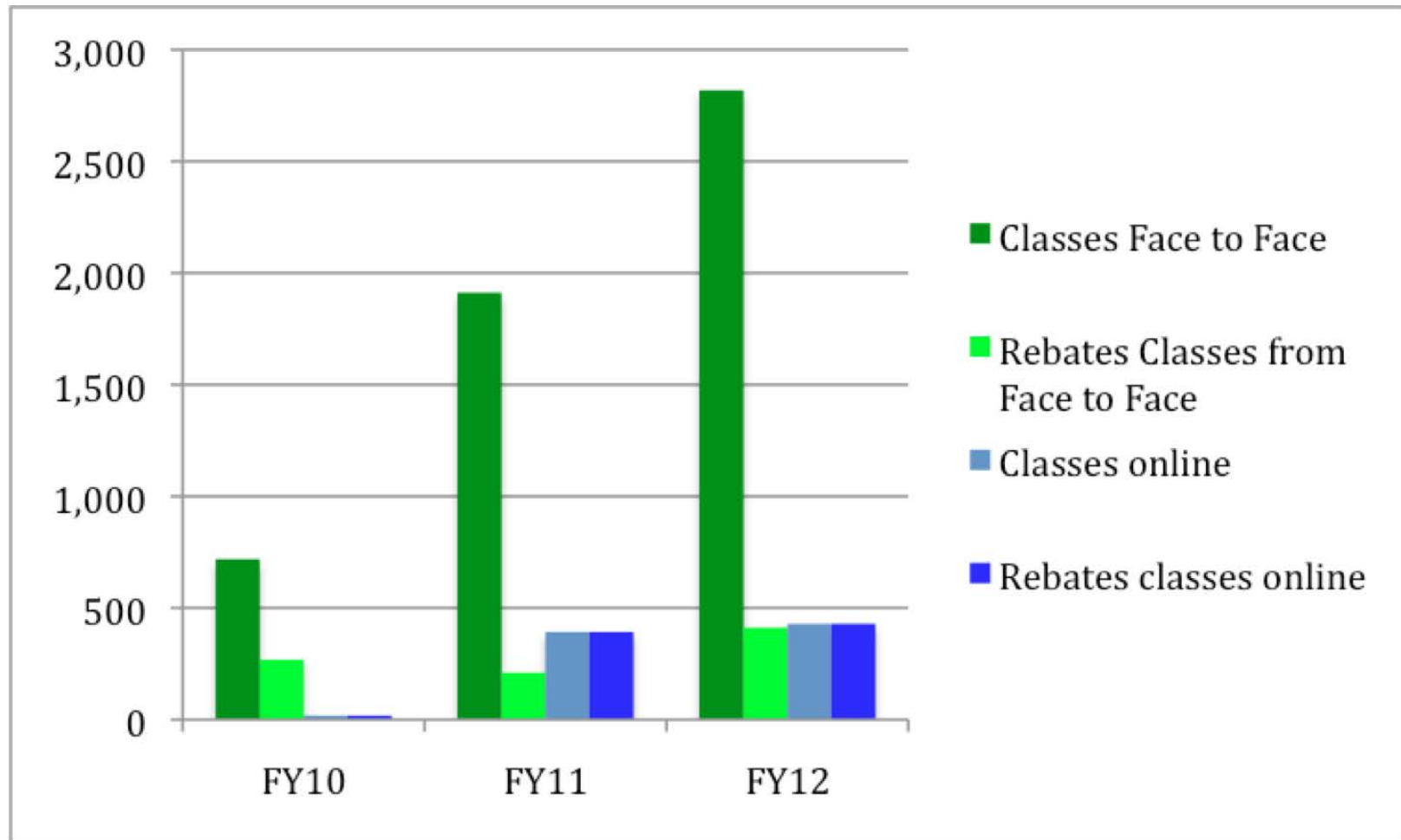


## Percentage of Rebates per Class Category

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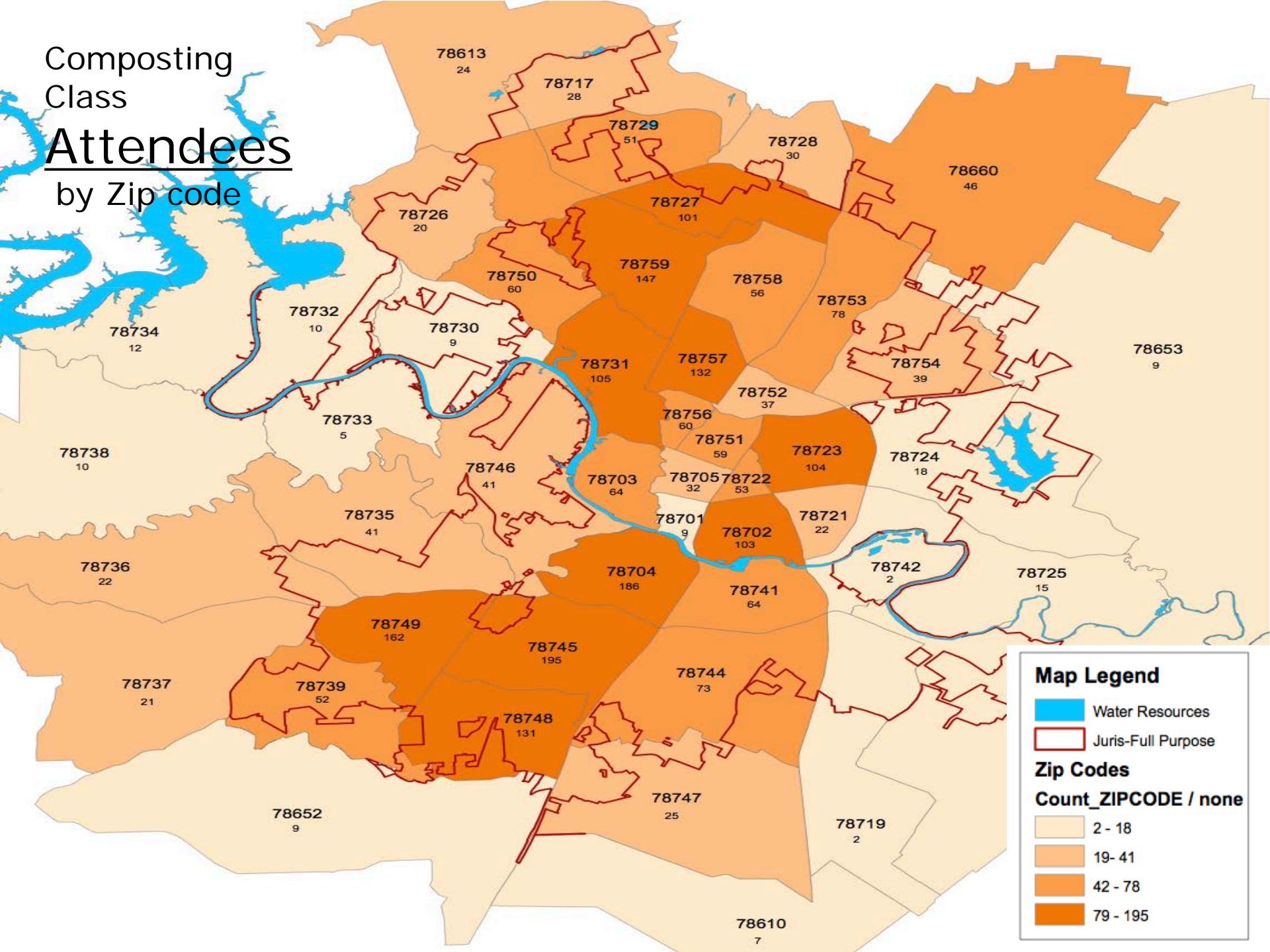


## Rebates Provided at Classes Face To Face vs. Classes online



**Where  
in Austin is the Impact of  
this program?**

Composting  
Class  
Attendees  
by Zip code



Map Legend

- Water Resources
- Juris-Full Purpose

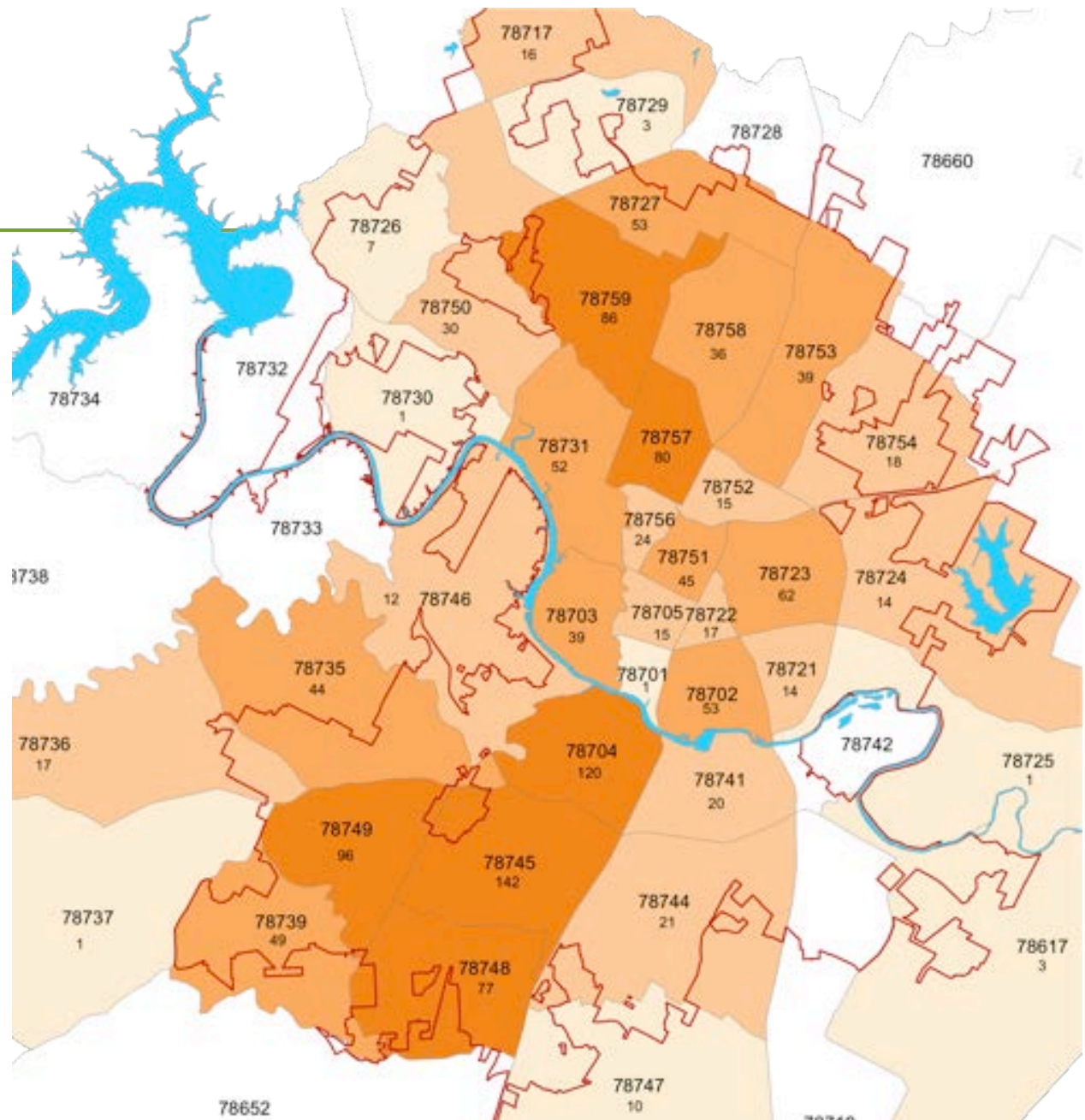
Zip Codes

Count\_ZIPCODE / none

- 2 - 18
- 19 - 41
- 42 - 78
- 79 - 195

# Composting Class Rebates

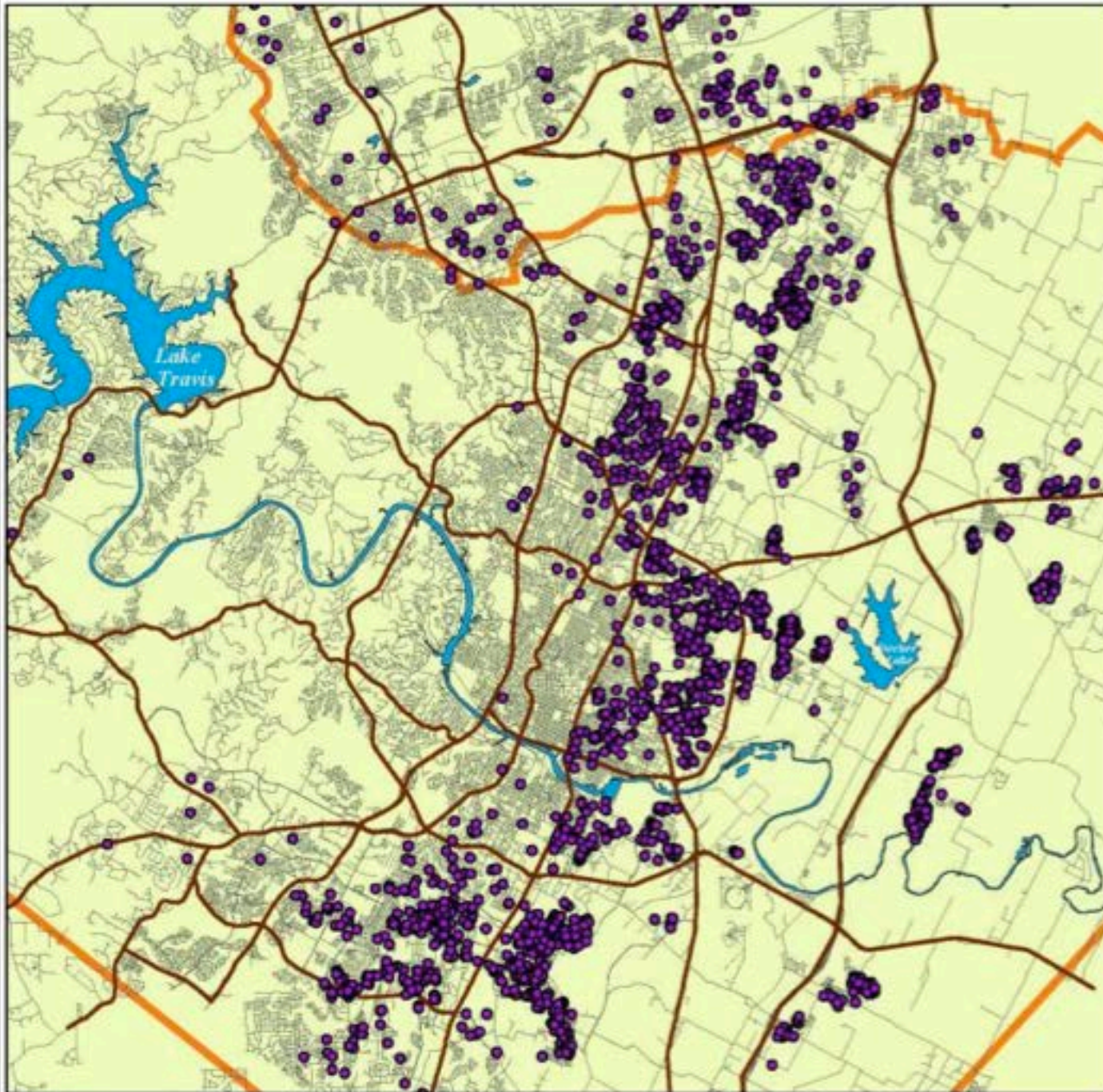
by Zip code





# Section 8 Rental Housing Units 2012

n = 3,168



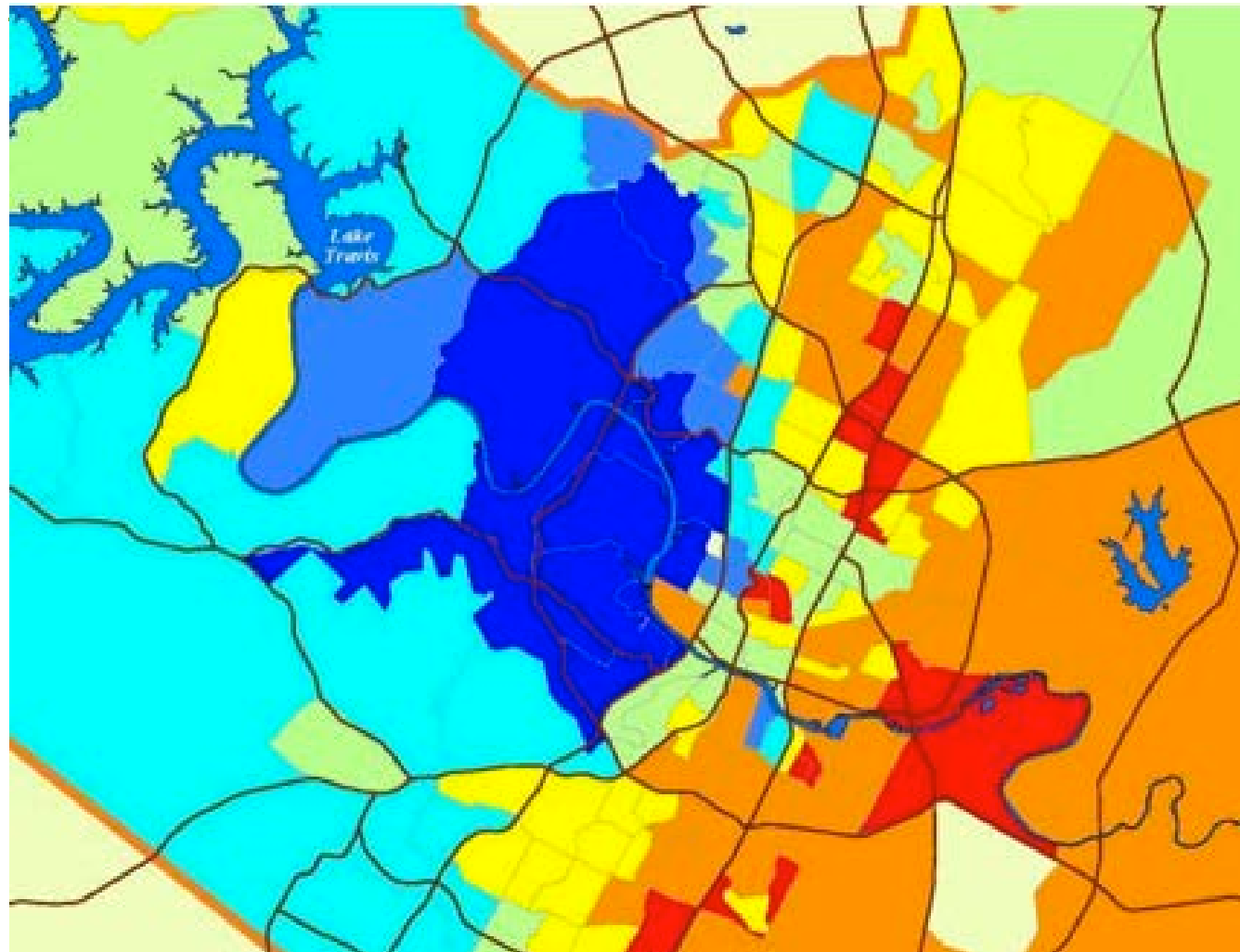
**Austin, Texas**

# Median Family Income

Image: Robinson, 2011. Department of Planning. City of Austin.

American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate  
Data: 2005--2009  
US Census Bureau

## Travis County



### Median Family Income





## Median Family Income by Ethnicity, City of Austin, 2009

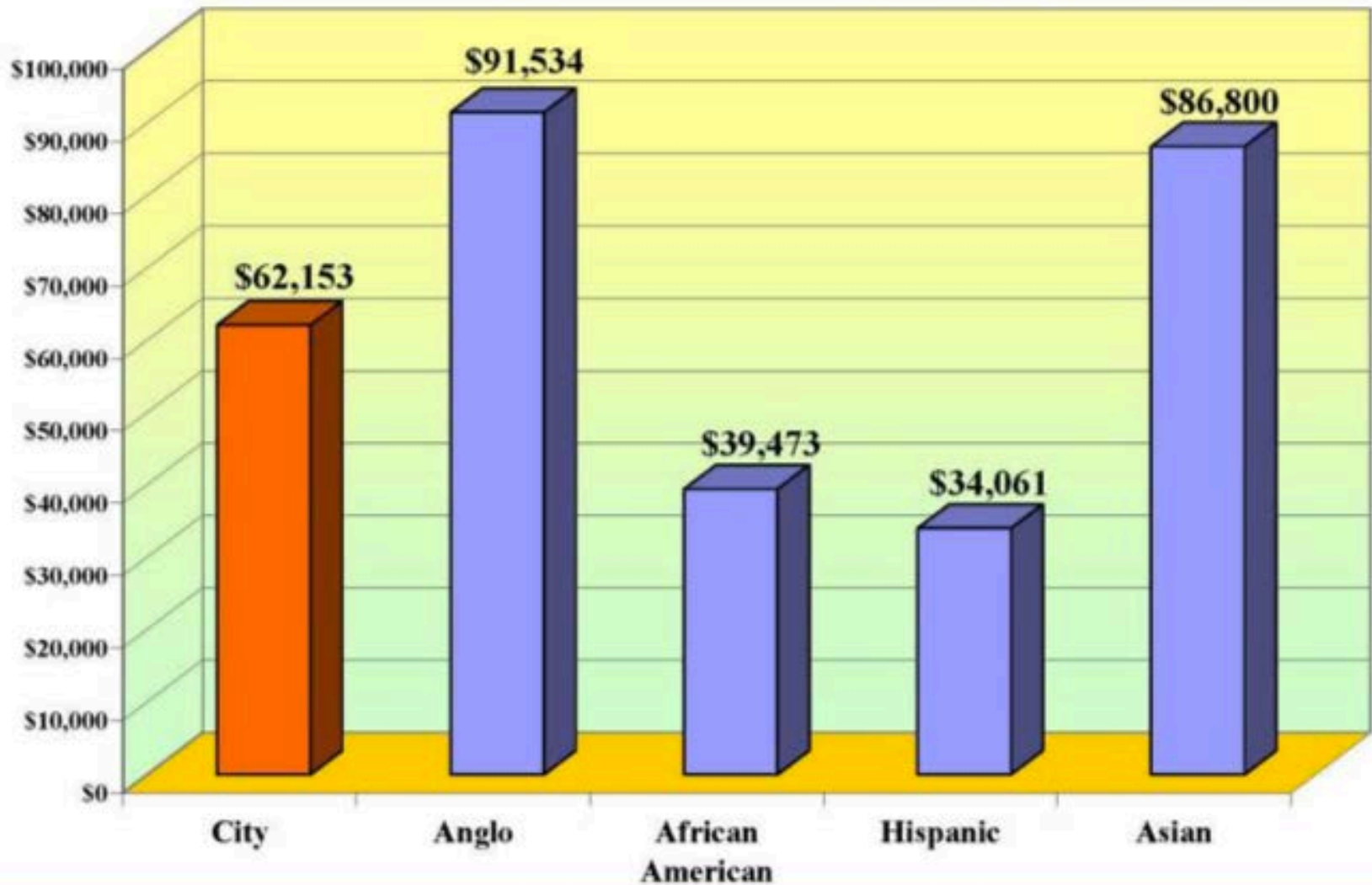
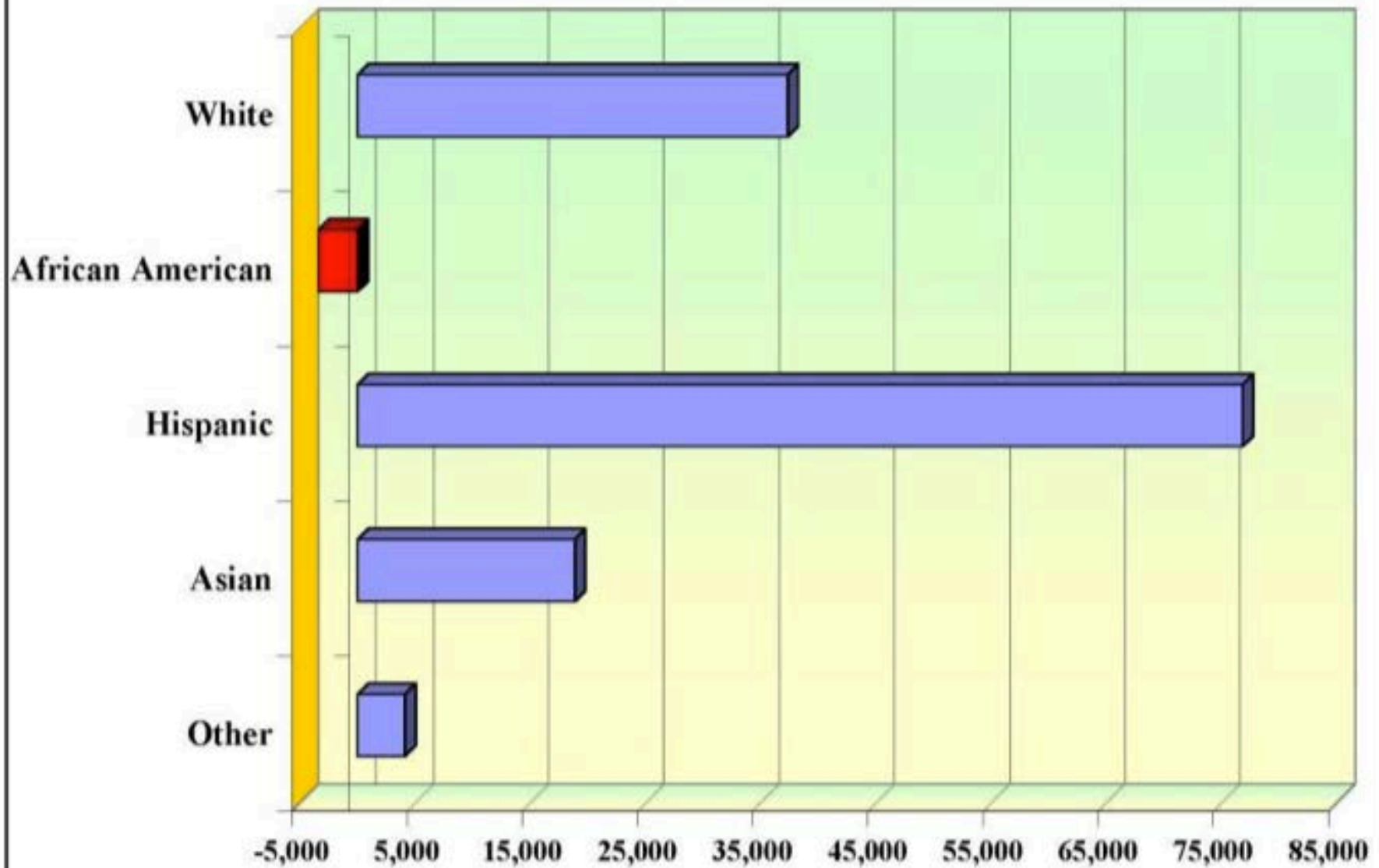


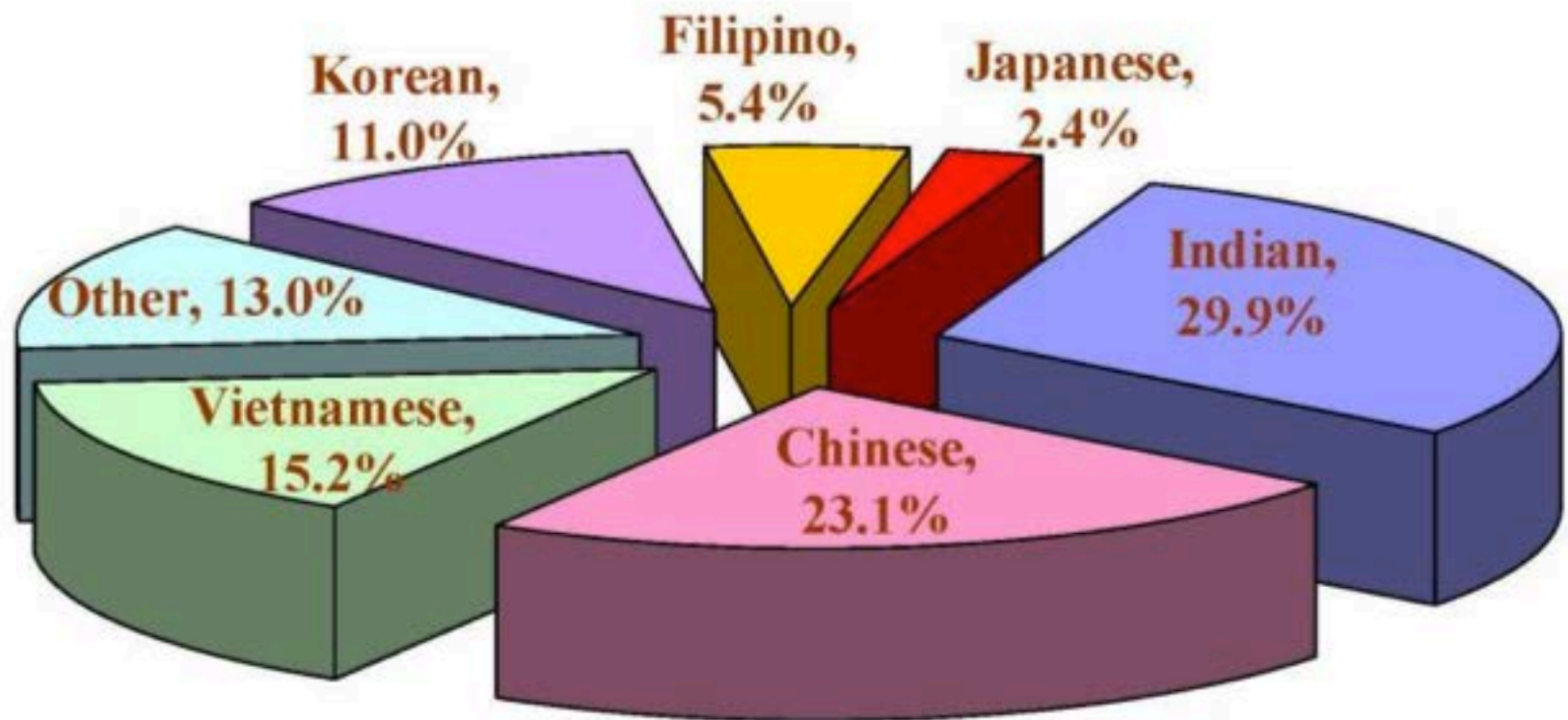
Image: Robinson, 2011. Department of Planning. City of Austin.

## City of Austin, Total Population Growth by Racial and Ethnic Group, 2000 to 2010



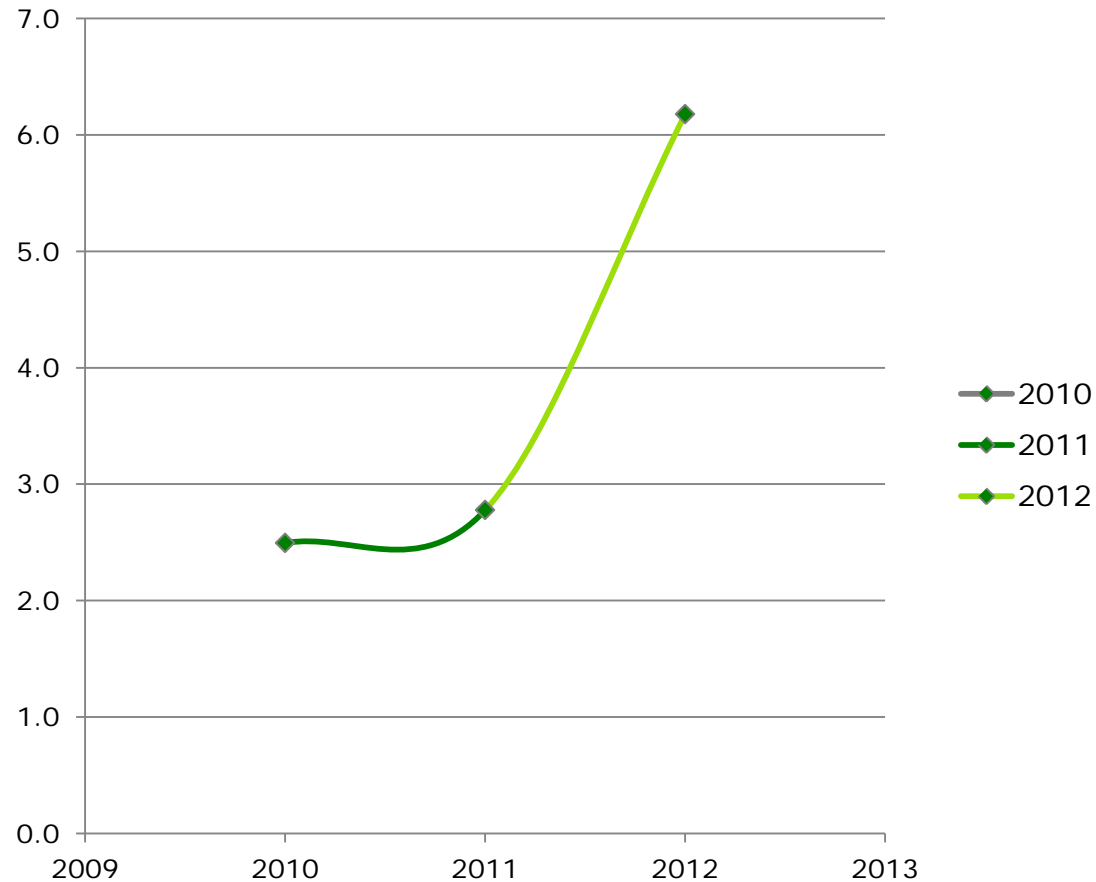
# Breakout of Asians in Austin, Census 2010

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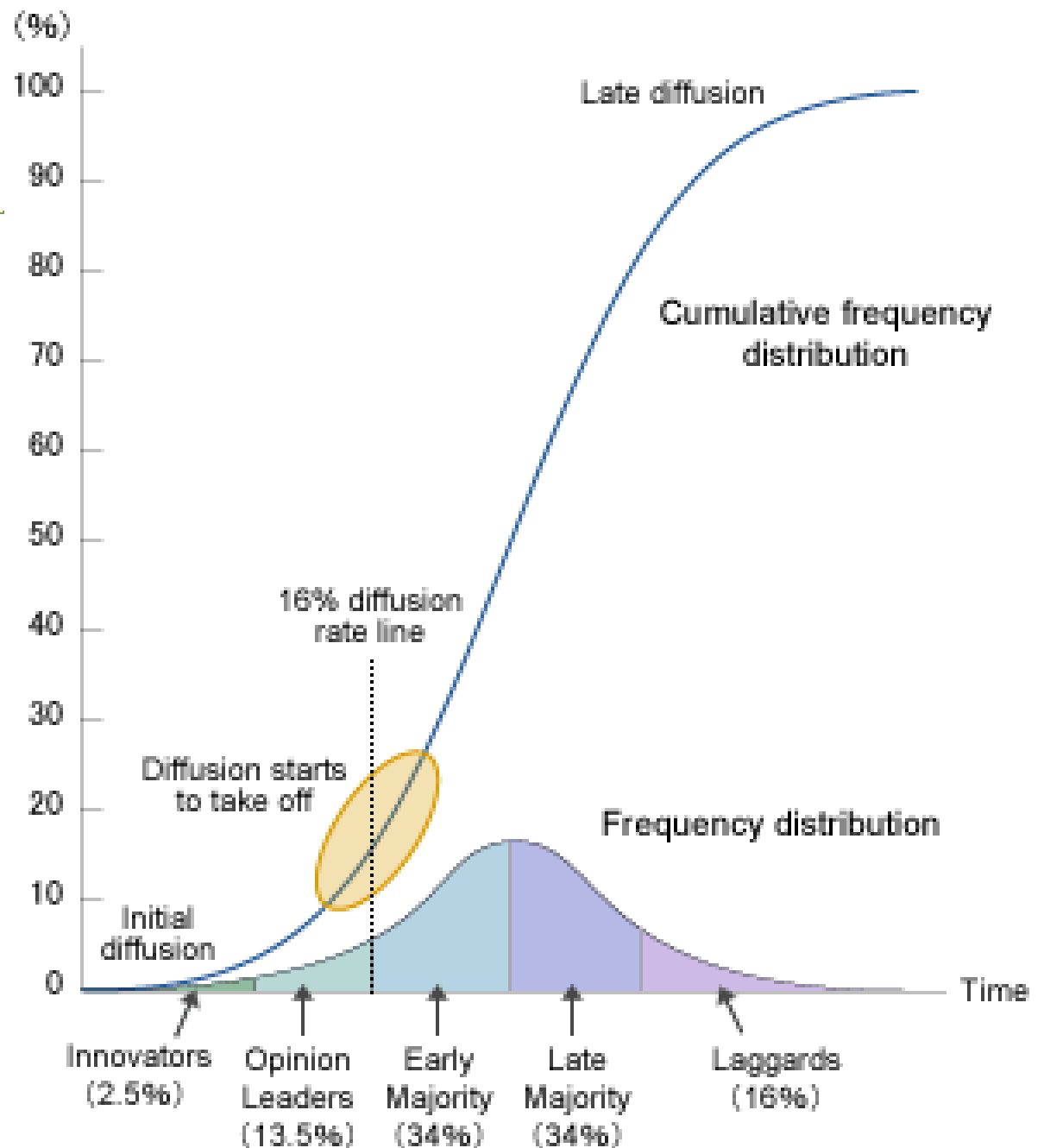


## Number of class attendees needed per rebate application

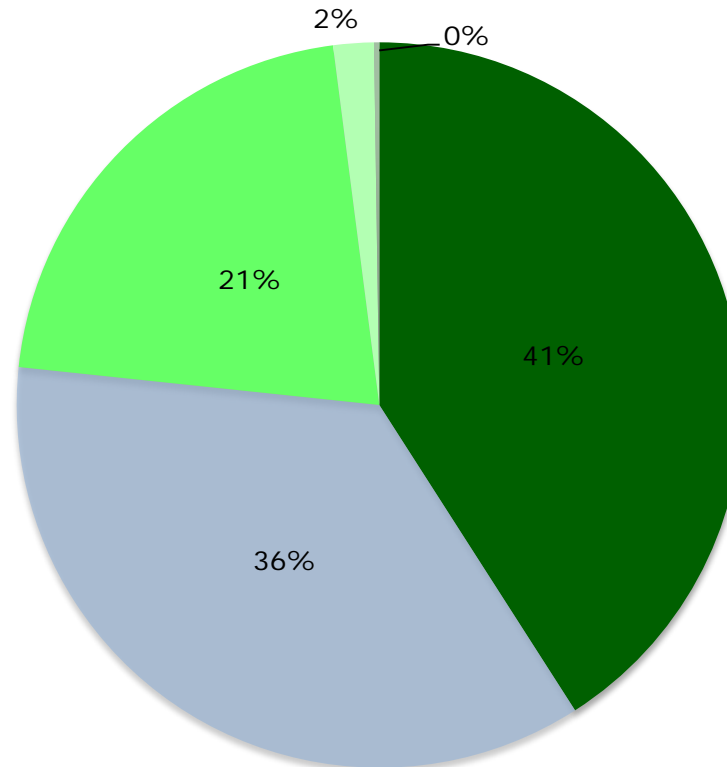
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## Innovation Theory



|                  | # of Rebates | Days to process |
|------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| FY 2010          | 277          | 42              |
| FY 2011          | 694          | 51              |
| FY 2012          | 374          | 45              |
| Total or Average | 1345         | 46              |



**How long it takes people to apply?**

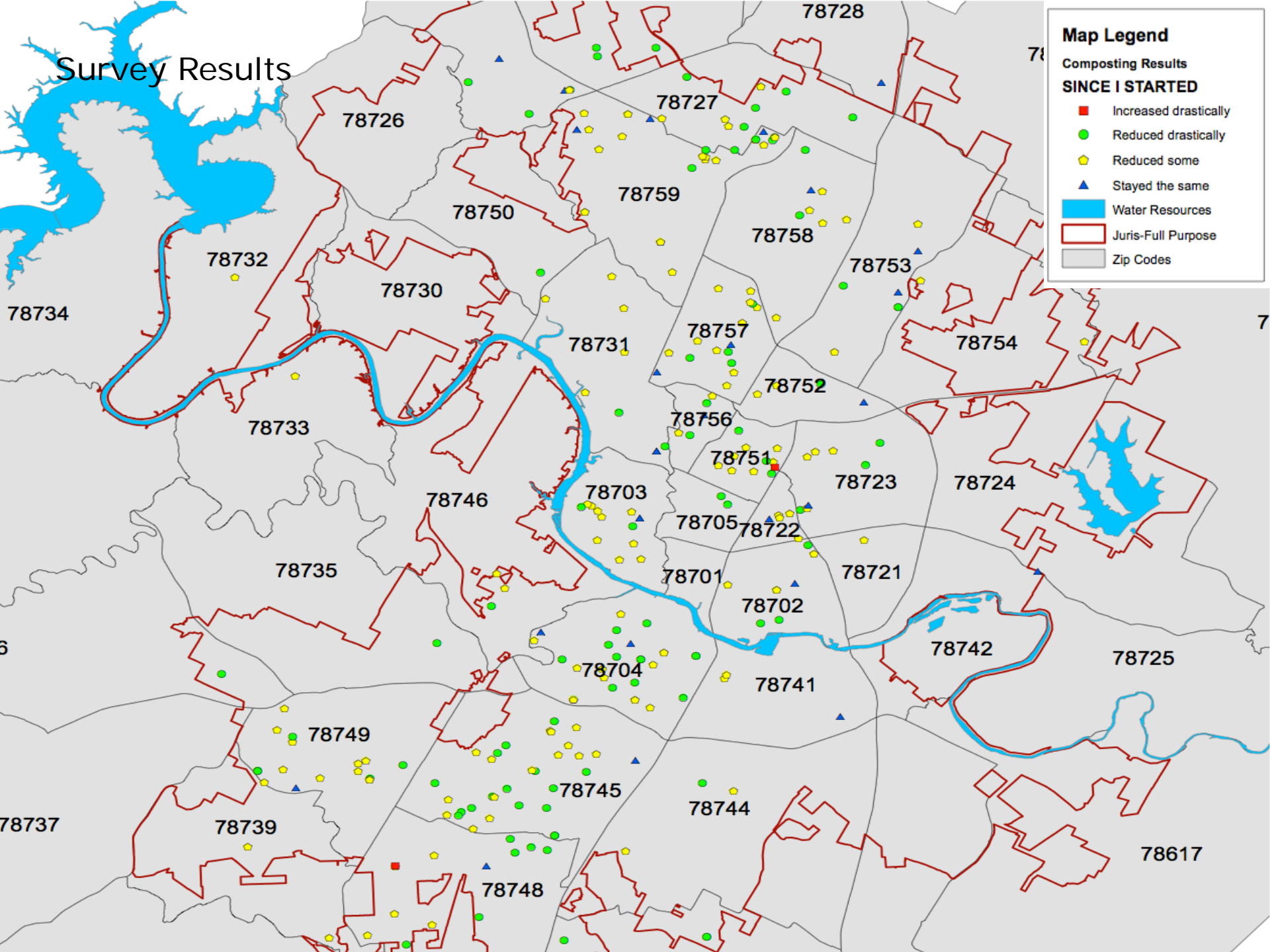
- 1 week or less
- 1 week to a month
- 1 month to 6 months
- 6 months to 1 year
- 1 year+

Survey responses show a 88% of the participants reduce some or even drastically the amount of trash their home produces:

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| Table 8. Responses from Survey  |           |                     |      |              |      |                 |      |                |     |                       |     |
|---|-----------|---------------------|------|--------------|------|-----------------|------|----------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|
| Since I started composting, the amount of trash my household generates has: | Responses | Reduced drastically |      | Reduced some |      | Stayed the same |      | Increased Some |     | Increased drastically |     |
|   |           | Responses           | %    | Responses    | %    | Responses       | %    | Responses      | %   | Responses             | %   |
|   | 304       | 111                 | 37 % | 156          | 51 % | 35              | 12 % | 0              | 0 % | 2                     | 1 % |

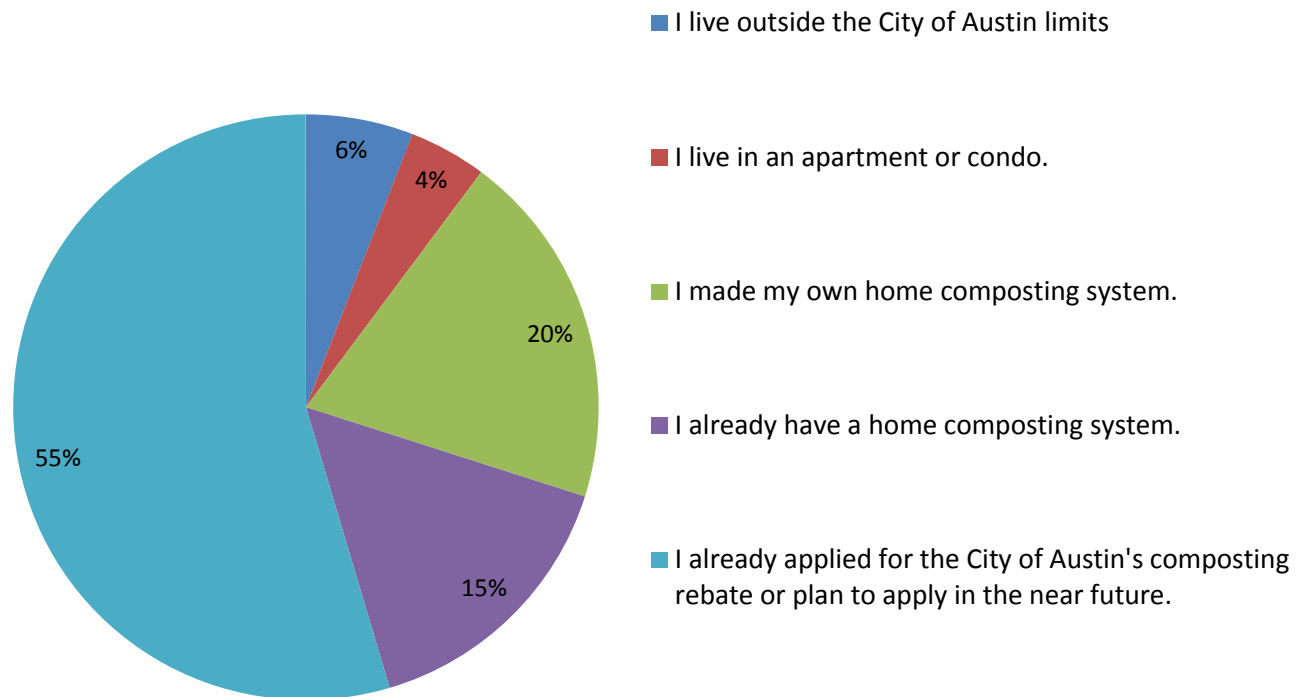
# Survey Results





## If you have not applied for the City of Austin's composting rebate, why not?

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**Table 7. Responses from Home Composting Survey**

| 304 Responses   | Yes       |         | No        |         |
|---|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|
|   | Responses | Percent | Responses | Percent |
| I compost at home.  | 279       | 92%     | 25        | 8%      |
| I plan to take advantage of the City of Austin's composting rebate. | 200       | 66%     | 104       | 34%     |
| I am a City of Austin curbside garbage/recycling customer.          | 275       | 90%     | 29        | 10%     |

**Table 10. Circle of control of the Home Composting Rebate**

| 304 Responses   |     | I compost at home. |         |           |         |
|---|-----|--------------------|---------|-----------|---------|
|   |     | Yes                |         | No        |         |
|   |     | Responses          | Percent | Responses | Percent |
| I plan to take advantage of the City of Austin's composting rebate. | Yes | 185                | 61%     | 15        | 5%      |
|   | No  | 94                 | 31%     | 10        | 3%      |



# **Recommendations and Suggestions for Actions**

# **1. Continue and Expand Composting Education:**

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## **□ Strategic locations:**

(Libraries, Recreation Centers, PTA meetings, Bazaar's, Nurseries)

- To balance the distribution of rebates
- To target new audiences (subtitles)

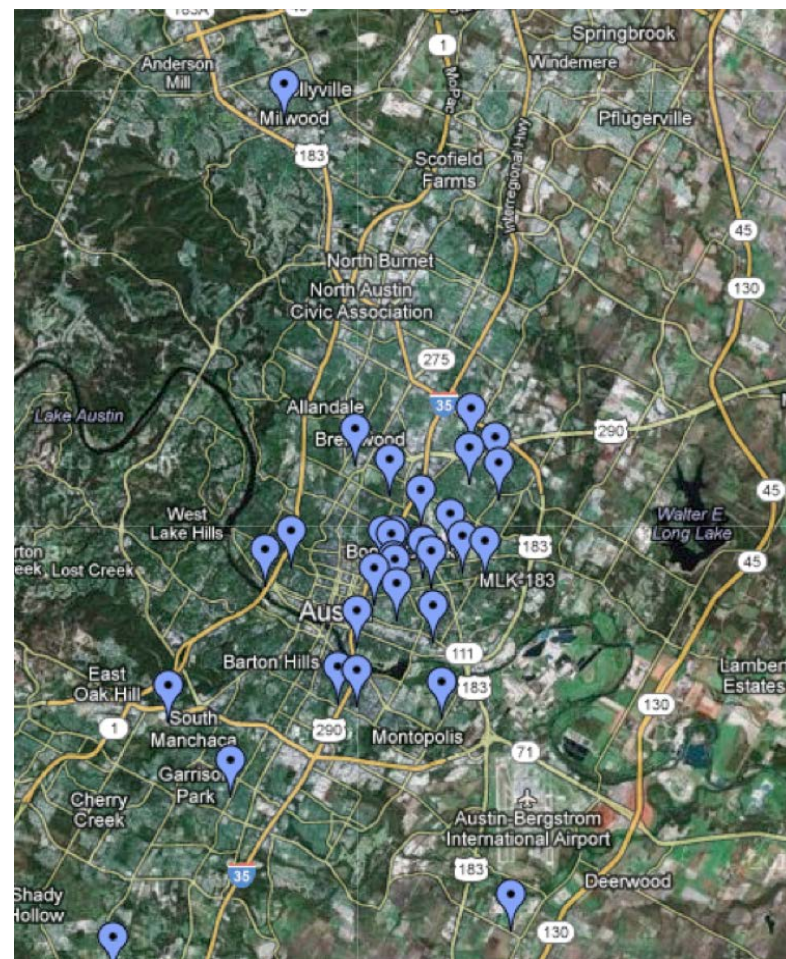
## **□ Strategic resources:**

(DVD's, Channel 6, School Districts and other organizations newsletters)

- To reduce cost, to maximize responses
- To target new audiences

## 2. Strategic Partnerships

- ❑ Community Gardens
- ❑ Libraries
- ❑ Recreation Services
- ❑ City Council Chamber
- ❑ Other City Departments
- ❑ NFP as SFC, KAB



### 3. Add a Voucher Program

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*"Not having to spend the money of a composter upfront and then wait for more than two months it's would make the deal for me"*

Austinite at 5 de Mayo Festival



## 4. Reconsider successful metrics for this program beyond rebate applicants.

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## **5. Master Composter and Junior Composter Certification Program**

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They can provide a core base of volunteers to expand the program.

**6. Maintain the cart size reduction as a requirement for a full rebate.**

**7. Consider alternative ways to finance a partial or full rebate for multi-families.**



## 8. Consider providing of facilitating advance composting classes and/or panels

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Available online to motivate current residents that compost to continue diverting this valuable material the right way as:

- ❑ Compost teas
- ❑ Vermicompost
- ❑ Home food scraps vs. Commercial food waste
- ❑ Applying compost to your backyard
- ❑ Microbiology of compost
- ❑ Relation of soil and water with compost

# Thank you!

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