DESIGNATED GEOGRAPHIC AREAS REPRESENTING LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS OF TRAVIS COUNTY

Community Development Commission

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Background

- Austin Public Health receives Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds which support the work of its six Neighborhood Centers and 3 outreach locations.
- The CSBG service area is Travis County.
- The Community Development Commission (CDC) serves as the required CSBG Advisory Board.
- CSBG requires that the Board include representatives from three sectors: public, private and low-income areas.

Background (cont.)

- CSBG requires a Needs Assessment every three years.
- Austin Public Health reviews the designated geographic areas representing the low-income populations of Travis County during the Needs Assessment process.
- Based on the Needs Assessment, staff offers recommendations for any updates to the designated low-income areas to the Community Development Commission for consideration and action.

Needs Assessment

- The suburbanization of poverty in the city and county continues to be evident.
- The highest concentrations of poverty in Austin (excluding UT) are found in north Austin (Rundberg & St. John), far east and northeast Austin (Colony Park), and southeast Austin (Montopolis and Dove Springs).
- The Del Valle area of Travis County also has a high concentration of poverty, but is currently not represented on the Community Development Commission.

Considerations

- Per recent TDHCA guidance, total membership of the Commission would ideally be no more than 15 members.
- One third of the members must represent the public sector.
- At least one third of the members must represent the low income populations of Travis County.
- The remainder should represent the private sector.
- Currently, 8 members represent the low income populations of Travis County, but all of these designated geographic areas fall within the City limits of Austin.
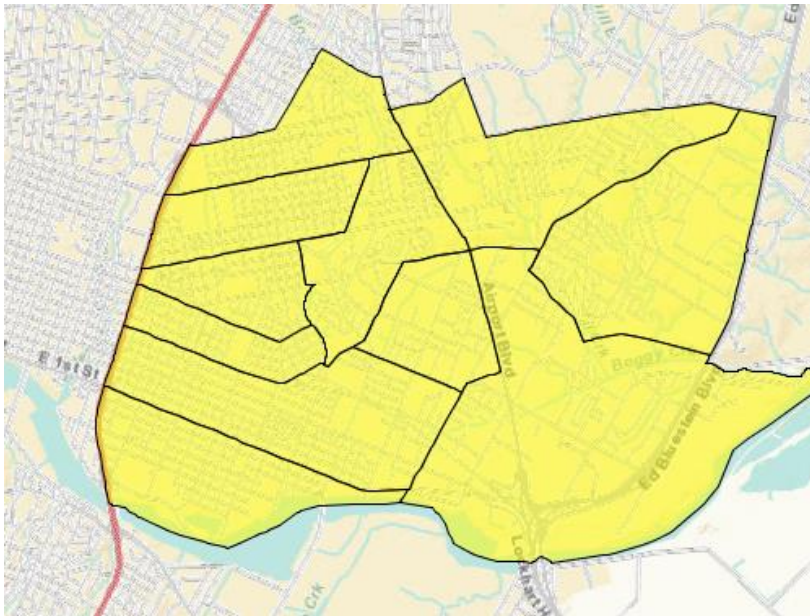
TDHCA Guidance

- At least one member of the Community Development Commission should be selected to represent low income populations in Travis County outside the City limits of Austin.

- TDHCA suggested that one member of the Community Development Commission could serve as an "At-Large" representative for Travis County low income populations outside the City limits of Austin.

East Austin Data – American Community Survey

- Data has continued to show a decline in the poverty rates in the area from as high as 42% in 2010 to 35% in 2013 data.
- 2016 data shows the overall poverty rate in the area is now at roughly 19%.
- 2016 data shows the poverty rate of Travis County at roughly 15%.
- The East Austin area currently represents a smaller population (approximately 9,000 people) compared to populations of other designated geographic areas.

Options to Consider

- In 2015, staff recommended combining the East Austin and Rosewood-Blackland areas to form a single designated geographic area.
- This area is similar to Historic Preservation District A.
- Boundaries of this combined area would then be:
  - North Boundary: Airport, Manor, MLK Blvd.
  - South Boundary: Lady Bird Lake
  - East Boundary: U.S. Hwy 183
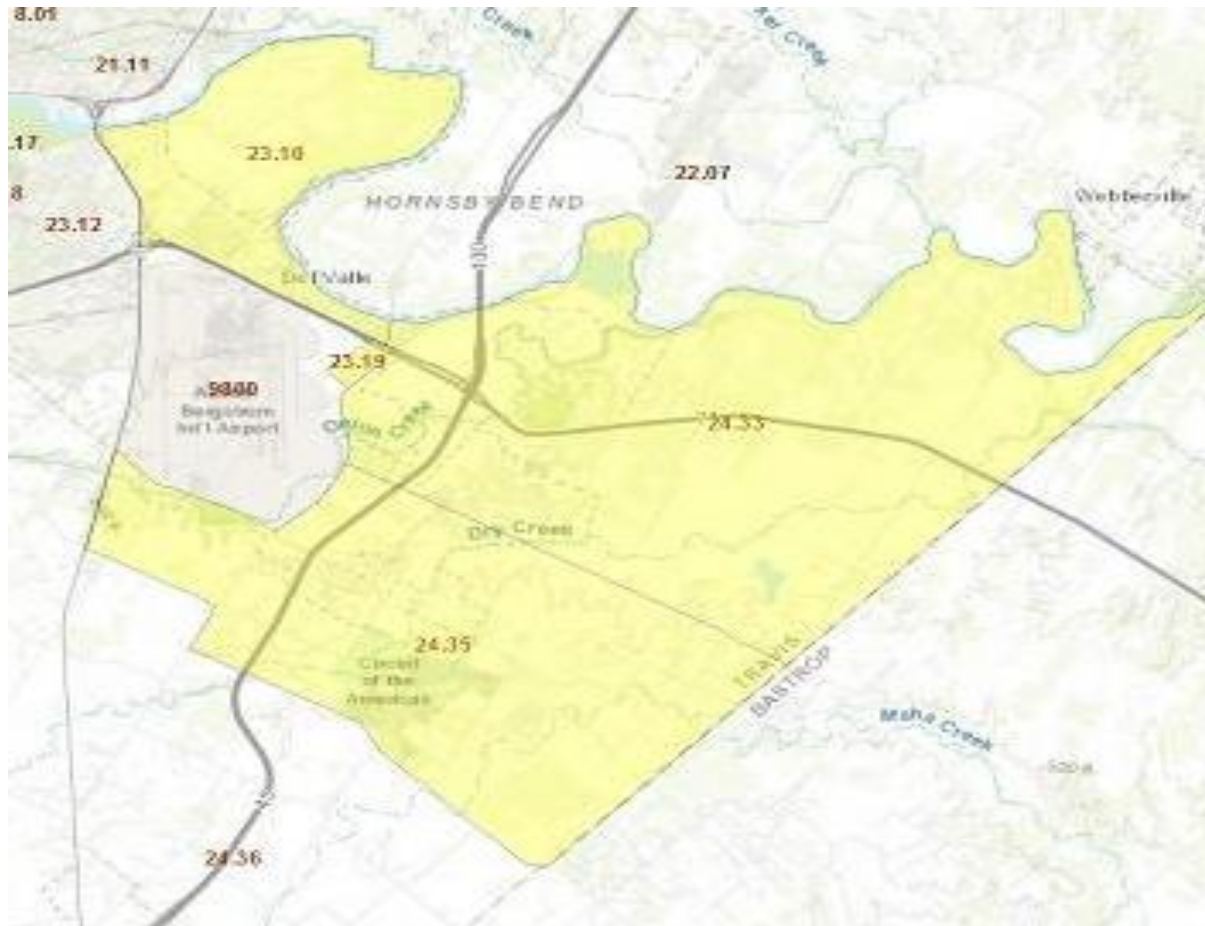 - West Boundary: Interstate Highway 35

Options to Consider

- Staff previously presented a recommendation to combine the East Austin and Montopolis designated geographic areas for representation on the Community Development Commission.

- Several concerns were expressed about pursuing this option by members of the Commission and area stakeholders.

Representation of Low Income Populations outside of Austin City Limits

- Staff initially recommended addition of a designated geographic area to represent Del Valle.
- Based on 2016 poverty data, Del Valle and surrounding areas have the highest concentrations of people living in poverty outside the City limits.
- Another option to consider would be adding an "At-Large" representative for Travis County who would represent low-income populations outside the Austin city limits.
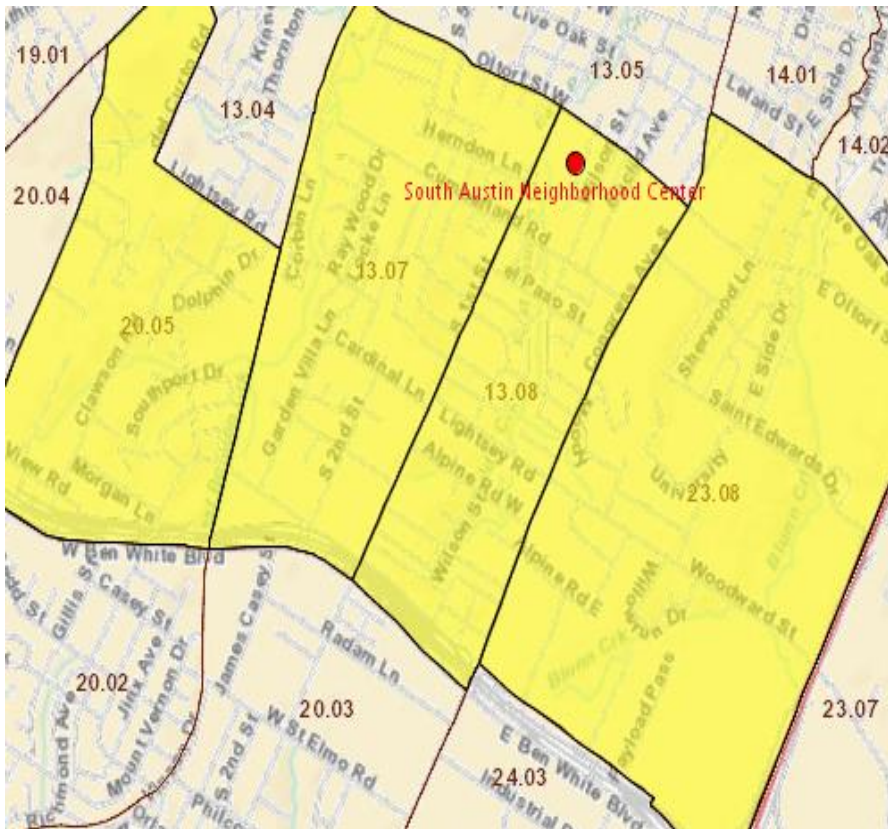
Del Valle Area

Options to consider

- Another possibility would be to create a combined Montopolis/Del Valle designated geographic area.
- Possible boundaries would be:
  - North – Lady Bird Lake/Colorado River
  - South –FM 812
  - East – Travis County Line
  - West – Interstate Highway 35

South Austin Data – American Community Survey

- In 2015, staff recommended a change to the boundaries of the designated geographic area for South Austin. The CDC approved the recommendation but the change was not made by City Council.

- In 2018, the demographic shifts continue to point to a need for this change.

- Current boundaries are:
  - North – Lady Bird Lake
  - South –E. Ben White Blvd.
  - East – South IH 35
  - West – South Lamar Blvd.

Preliminary Recommendations

- Based on 2016 data, the highlighted census tracts have a poverty rate equal to or higher than that of Travis County as a whole.

- Boundaries to consider:
  - ➤ North – Oltorf
  - ➤ South –Stassney
  - ➤ East – South IH 35
  - ➤ West – Manchaca

Timeline and Next Steps for the CDC

- All current CDC member terms end on February 28, 2019.
- Any changes recommended by the CDC to designated geographic areas must still move forward to City Council for final consideration and approval.
- CDC recommendations regarding changes to the designated geographic areas should be made no later than the December CDC meeting in order for the Council to take timely action to make any changes.

Timeline and Next Steps (cont.)

- Staff will initiate the evaluation of organizations responsible for holding the nomination/election meetings in the current designated geographic areas.

- Organizations in areas with no recommended changes to current boundaries will be reviewed first and results shared with the CDC.

- Any changes to designated geographic areas may also lead to changes in the organizations responsible for holding the nomination/election meetings and would need to be approved by the CDC and City Council.

Questions?