

This profile summarizes the characteristics of the watersheds in District 5; provides an overview of flooding, erosion, and water quality problems; and discusses past, current, and upcoming solutions.

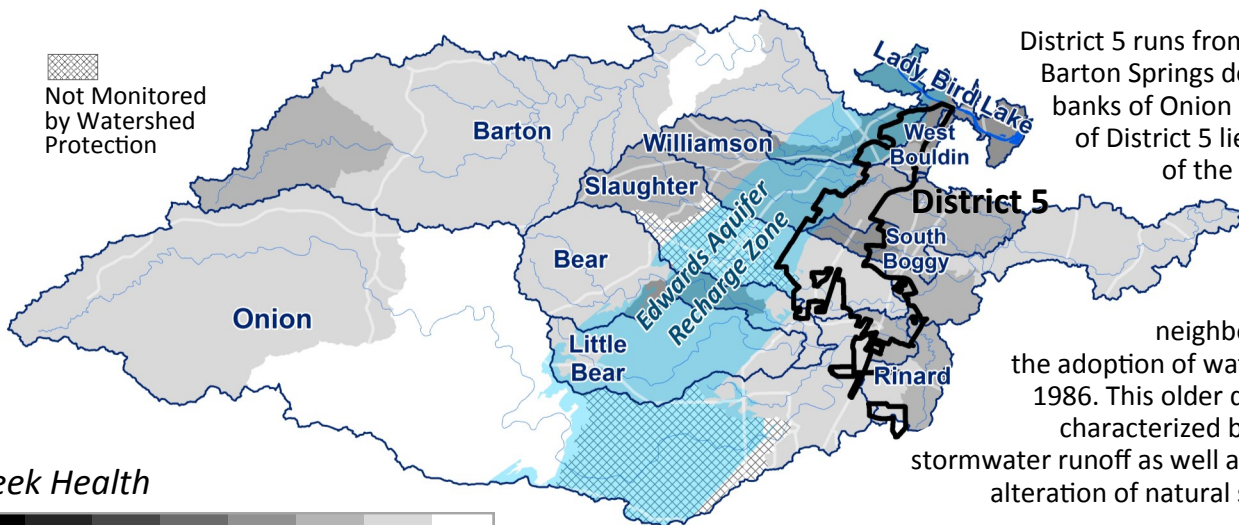
# Watershed Protection District 5 Profile

January 1, 2015

Photo: Swimmers at Barton Springs Pool

Watersheds

Not Monitored by Watershed Protection



District 5 runs from the sparkling waters of Barton Springs down to the cypress-lined banks of Onion Creek. Western portions of District 5 lie over the recharge zone of the Edwards Aquifer. Single-family homes are the predominant land use in this district, with the majority of the neighborhoods built out before the adoption of water quality regulations in 1986. This older development is generally characterized by uncontrolled, polluted stormwater runoff as well as the encroachment and alteration of natural streams and floodplains.

The neighborhoods along Williamson Creek between West Gate Blvd. and South Congress Ave. as well as the Pinehurst area along Onion Creek are the second and third highest priorities in the City respectively for flood mitigation. These areas are downstream of significant drainage areas to the west. High priority flooded structures and roadways are shown in red on the map to the left.

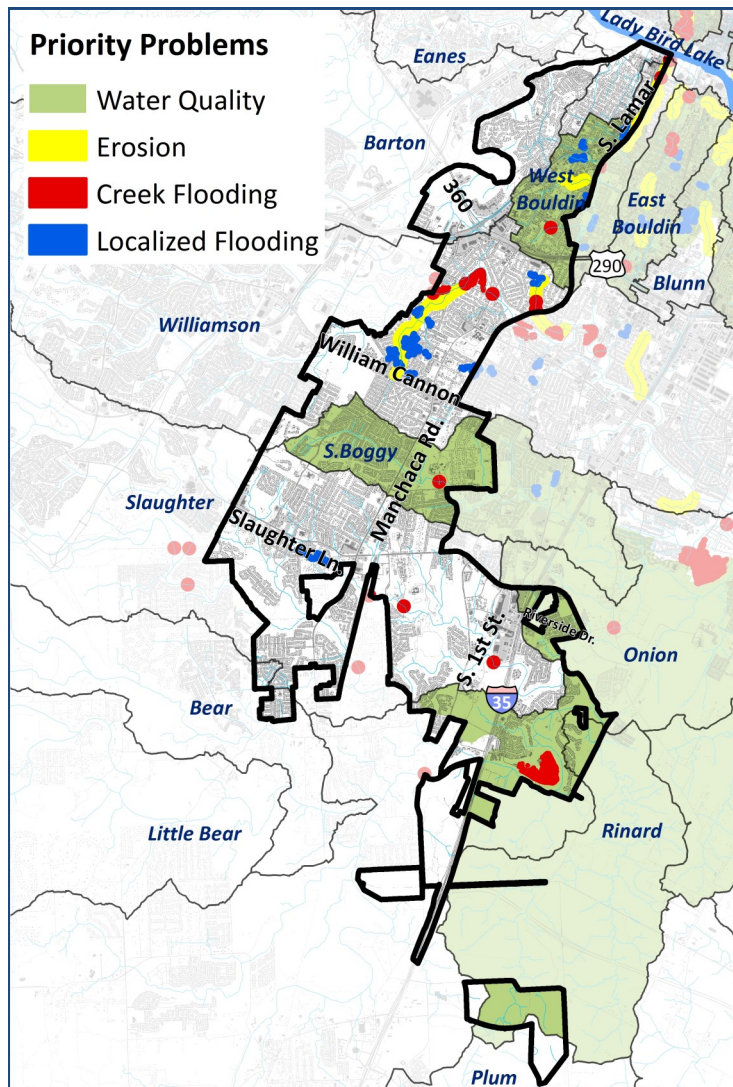
Local flooding of buildings, streets, and yards occurs when rainfall events overwhelm undersized, substandard drainage systems, such as storm drain pipes and small open channels. District 5 has the highest number of drainage complaints of all the districts. Major clusters of drainage complaints are shown in blue on the map to the left.

Creek Health



## Priority Problems

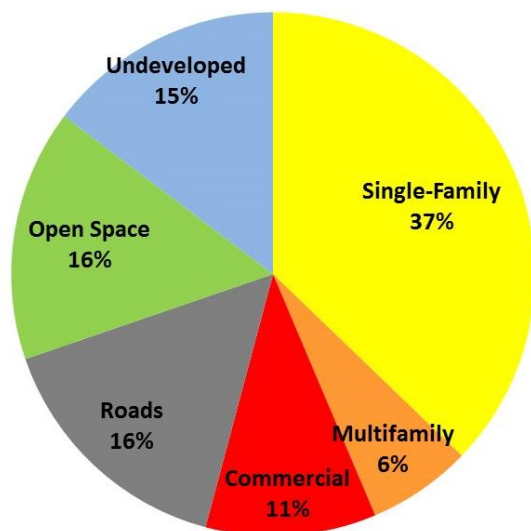
- Water Quality
- Erosion
- Creek Flooding
- Localized Flooding



32% Impervious Cover

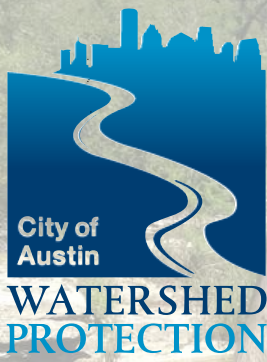
34% Tree Canopy Cover

Land Use





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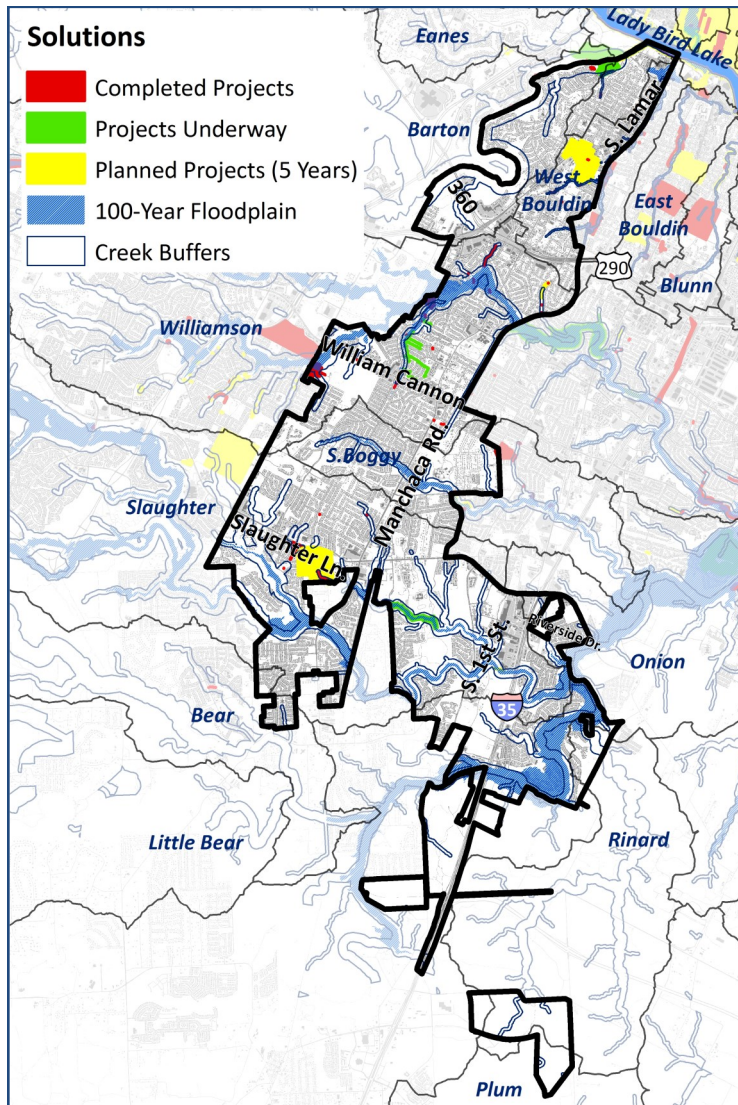
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*Photo: Onion Creek running through Old San Antonio Park*

The Watershed Protection Department addresses drainage and environmental problems using a three-tiered approach of capital improvement projects, programs, and regulations. Examples of these strategies in District 5 include:

- **Capital Improvement Projects:** Since a significant amount of development occurred in District 5 before watershed regulations were in place, capital solutions are a key tool. Watershed Protection has completed the construction of multiple regional water quality ponds, improvements to storm drain systems, restoration of the Pack Saddle Pass tributary of Williamson Creek, repairs to the bypass culvert at Barton Springs Pool, and the buyout of 25 houses located within the 25-year floodplain in the Bayton Loop area of Williamson Creek. Projects are planned for the next five years as well, including additional enhancement projects at Barton Springs Pool, increasing safety at a low water crossing at Old San Antonio Road, multiple stream and shoreline restoration projects, and storm drain improvements in the West Bouldin and Slaughter watersheds. In 2012, Watershed Protection initiated an assessment of the existing drainage system in the West Bouldin watershed.
- **Programs:** Given the high percentage of single-family neighborhoods in this district, the Grow Green program is an important resource. Grow Green is an education program that promotes sustainable landscaping practices. It addresses water quality and conservation, recycling, and an Integrated Pest Management philosophy, which encourages the least-toxic way to address pest issues. Grow Green offers numerous publications — such as the [Native and Adapted Landscape Plants Guide](#) — to help citizens design, install, and maintain an earth-wise landscape.



- **Regulations:** Due to the considerable build-out of the watersheds in this district, regulations will mostly apply to redevelopment projects, which are required to build water quality ponds and protect against additional erosion and flooding. Encroachment of buildings and parking areas is prohibited in the 25-year floodplain and significantly restricted in the 100-year floodplain. The majority of the undeveloped land is located along the IH35 corridor in the southern portion of the district. The recently adopted Watershed Protection Ordinance will provide key protections in this area for the meandering streams and broad floodplains.

More information on projects, programs, and regulations can be found at [austintexas.gov/watershed](http://austintexas.gov/watershed)



*Photo of volunteers planting seedlings at the Bayton Loop floodplain buyout area in the Cherry Creek neighborhood. Watershed Protection is currently working with the surrounding community, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Neighborhood Partnering Program to facilitate the installation of a community garden.*