

Environmental Justice Teacher Resource

Background Information

Environmental justice is the idea that everyone deserves to live on a clean earth with healthy living environments. Environmental justice is defined by the Environmental Protection Agency as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulation, and policies".

Environmental justice issues include climate change, deforestation, habitat fragmentation, water pollution, urban heat effect, light pollution, park access, clean water access. (See attached Maps)

Having the students look at maps enables them to create their own images for what a clean and healthy earth is, and start to understand that not everyone experiences the same environment. Does everyone have the same access to clean water, nature, and parks?

How can we encourage young children to become the future leaders in the fight for environmental justice? Introduction to activists in the field beyond "reduce, reuse, recycle," "don't litter," and "turn off the lights and water."

Key Definitions:

Environmental justice is the idea that everyone deserves to live on a clean earth with a healthy living environment.

Activist: someone who cares about a topic and works to make it better.

Austin Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights:

In which children of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities have the right to:

- Climb a tree
- Catch a fish
- Picnic in a park
- Ride a bike
- Splash in a creek or river
- Discover plants and wildlife
- Play in the sand and mud
- Gaze at the night sky
- Chase a firefly
- Plant a seed and watch it grow
- Harvest and eat a fruit or vegetable

Environmental Activists and Books for Kids to Read

How can we, as environmental activists, stand up for the Earth? An activist is someone who cares about a topic and works to make it better. Below are some book suggestions for students to read as a group or on their own to talk about environmental justice and some activists for environmental justice.

Book Suggestions:

[The Water Walker by Joanne Robertson](#)

- Josephine Mandamin-
- Quotes:
 - "So the message is, water is very precious, and I will go to any lengths to and direction to carry water to the people."
 - "Why I'm here is because I really feel for the water. And to give the message to people that Water is a human right."
- Bio: An Anishinaabe First Nations grandmother, elder and founding member of the water protectors movement. In 2003, after becoming concerned about the pollution in the lakes and rivers on turtle Island and founded Water Walkers movement walking 17,000 miles around the shorelines of the Great Lakes, carrying a bucket of water to bring awareness to protect water from pollution. During her 77 years, she walked about 25,000 miles around the shorelines of all the Great Lakes, and other waterways of North America.
 - <https://www.waterdocs.ca/news/2019/2/22/she-walked-the-talk-farewell-to-water-warrior-grandmother-josephine-mandamin>
 -



[Young Water Protectors by Aslan Tudor and Kelly Tudor](#)

- Aslan Tudor
 - Bio: Aslan is a citizen of the Lipan Apache Tribe of Texas who still lives in his home land. When he was 8 years old he went with his family to North Dakota to help stop a pipe line at Standing Rock and wrote a book about the water protectors.
 - <https://www.eaglespeaker.com/aslan-tudor>
- Quote: "He [Aslan] wanted to make a resource for younger kids to understand what happened at Standing Rock and why." – Kelly Tudor

[Mari Copeny \("Little Miss Flint"\)](#) in the book [No Voice is Too Small](#) with numerous other activists

- Bio: Mari Copeny is from Flint Michigan and brought awareness to the water crisis in Flint Michigan after writing a letter to President Obama that prompted him to visit the city and survey the water. She continued to work with her community raising money through Flint Kids projects, and other environmental and social justice issues.
- <https://www.maricopeny.com/>



[One Plastic Bag by Miranda Paul](#)

- Isatou Ceesay
- Bio from her website below: Isatou Ceesay: Although forced to drop out of school at a young age, Isatou Ceesay seldom lets anything stop her from learning or taking action. She has worked for the U.S. Peace Corps office in the Gambia, the Swedish organization Future in Our Hands, and as a consultant for development organizations. Her recycling project, which began in 1998 amidst much resistance and taunting, is still thriving today. In 2012, she was awarded a TIAW “Difference Maker” award in Washington, DC. She is humbled by the fact that there is a book about her and hopes it will inspire others to join her cause or be a changemaker in their own communities. She is a founder of WIG—Women’s Initiative Gambia.
- <http://oneplasticbag.com/>



[Wangari’s Trees of Peace by Jeanette Winter](#)

- Wangari Maathai
- Bio: Wangari Maathai was a Kenyan social, environmental, and political activist with a doctorate from the University of Nairobi in 1971 where she continued to teach veterinary anatomy. In 1977 she founded the Green Belt Movement as a grass roots organization to plant trees on farms, schools, and church grounds to improve the environment and quality of life. Though the movement Wangari helped women plant over 20 million trees. She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004.

More Books Suggestions can be found at:

<https://socialjusticebooks.org/booklists/environment/>

For Further Resouces & Lesson Plans on Environmental Justice

Visit EcoRise

<https://www.ecorise.org/product/intro-to-ej/>

AUSTIN CHILDREN'S **OUTDOOR** **BILL** *of* **RIGHTS**

In which every child has the right to:

Climb a tree

Catch a fish

Picnic in a park

Hike a trail

Ride a bike

Splash in a creek or river

Discover plants and wildlife

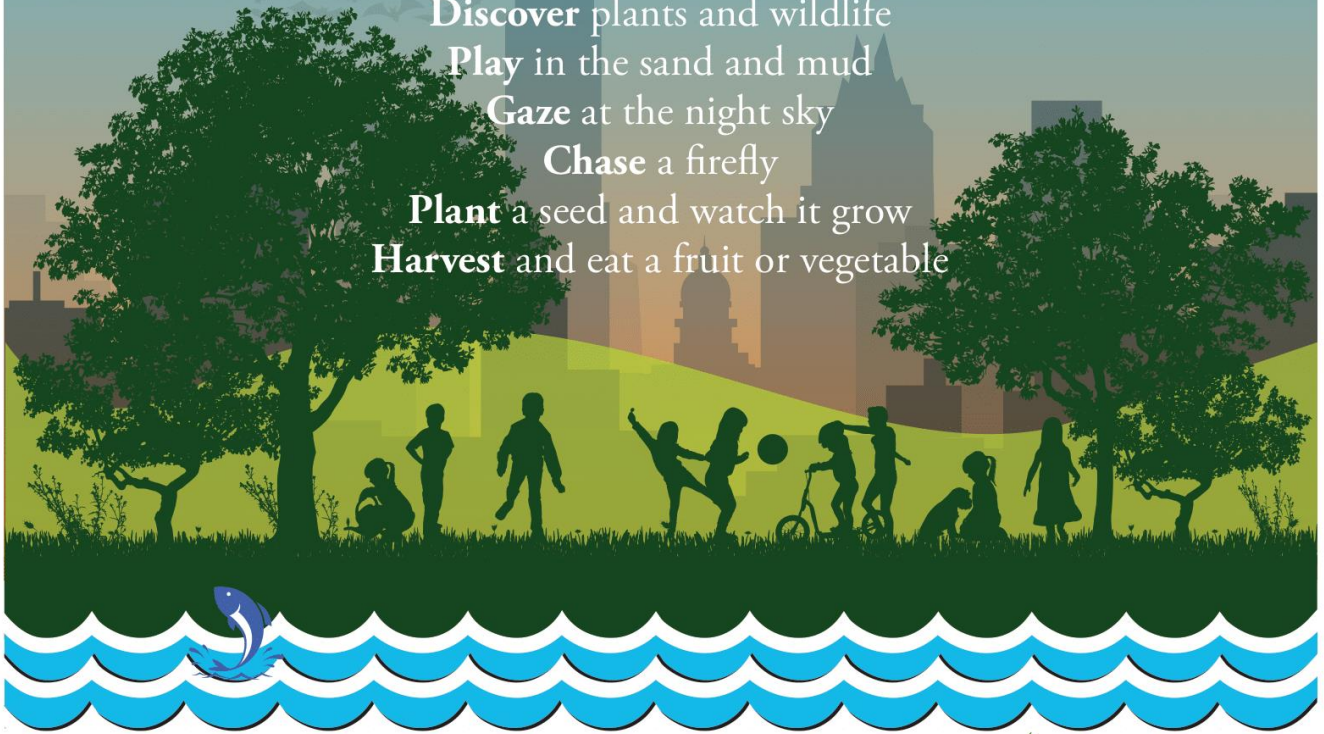
Play in the sand and mud

Gaze at the night sky

Chase a firefly

Plant a seed and watch it grow

Harvest and eat a fruit or vegetable



Understanding that research shows children who learn and play in nature are healthier, happier and perform better in school, we enthusiastically support this Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights.

Learn more at www.austintexas.gov/ccn



Photo Maps- Street Tree Canopy Density 2006

TreeFolks "NeighborWoods" Program: A Spatial Assessment

Street Tree Canopy Density, 2006

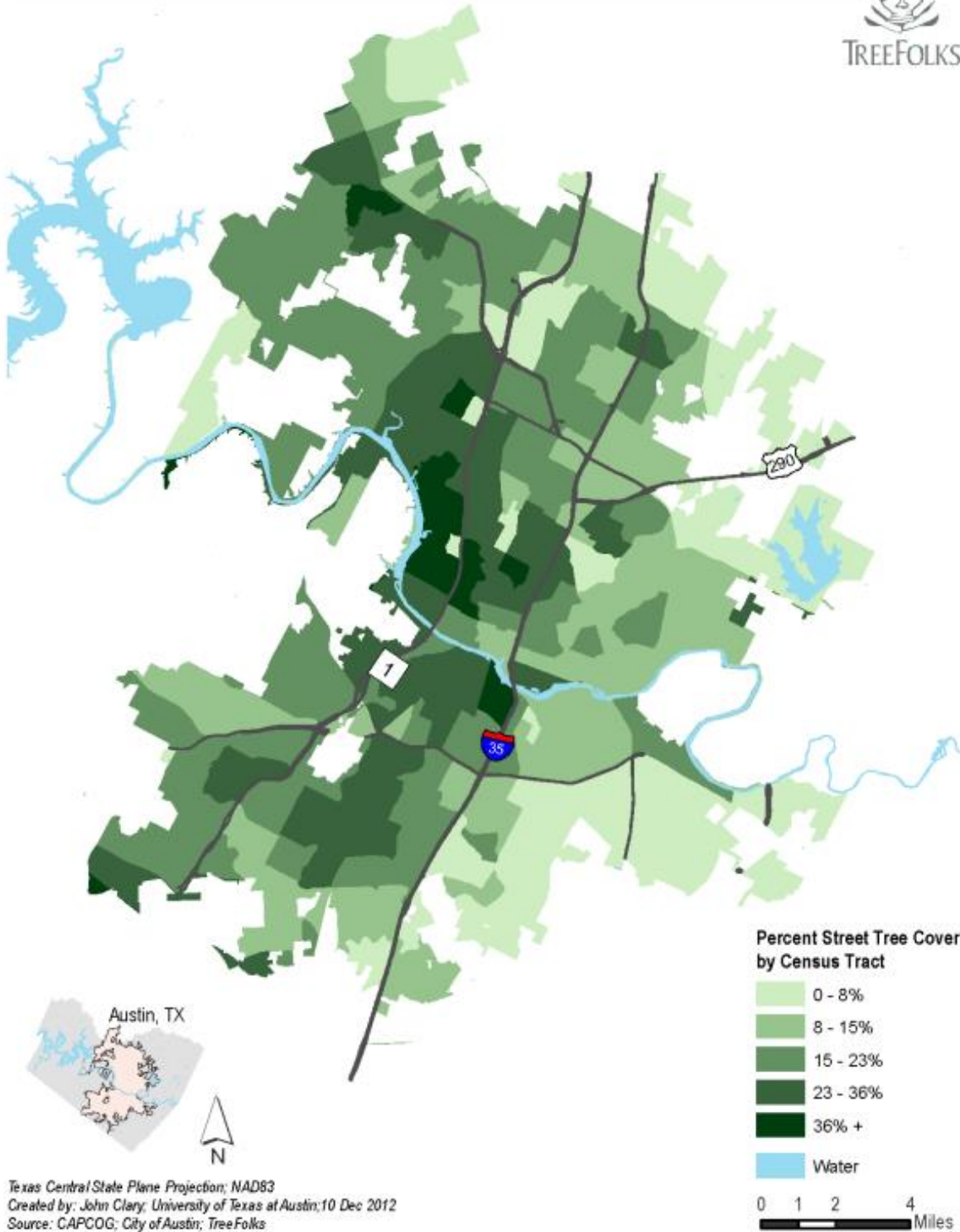
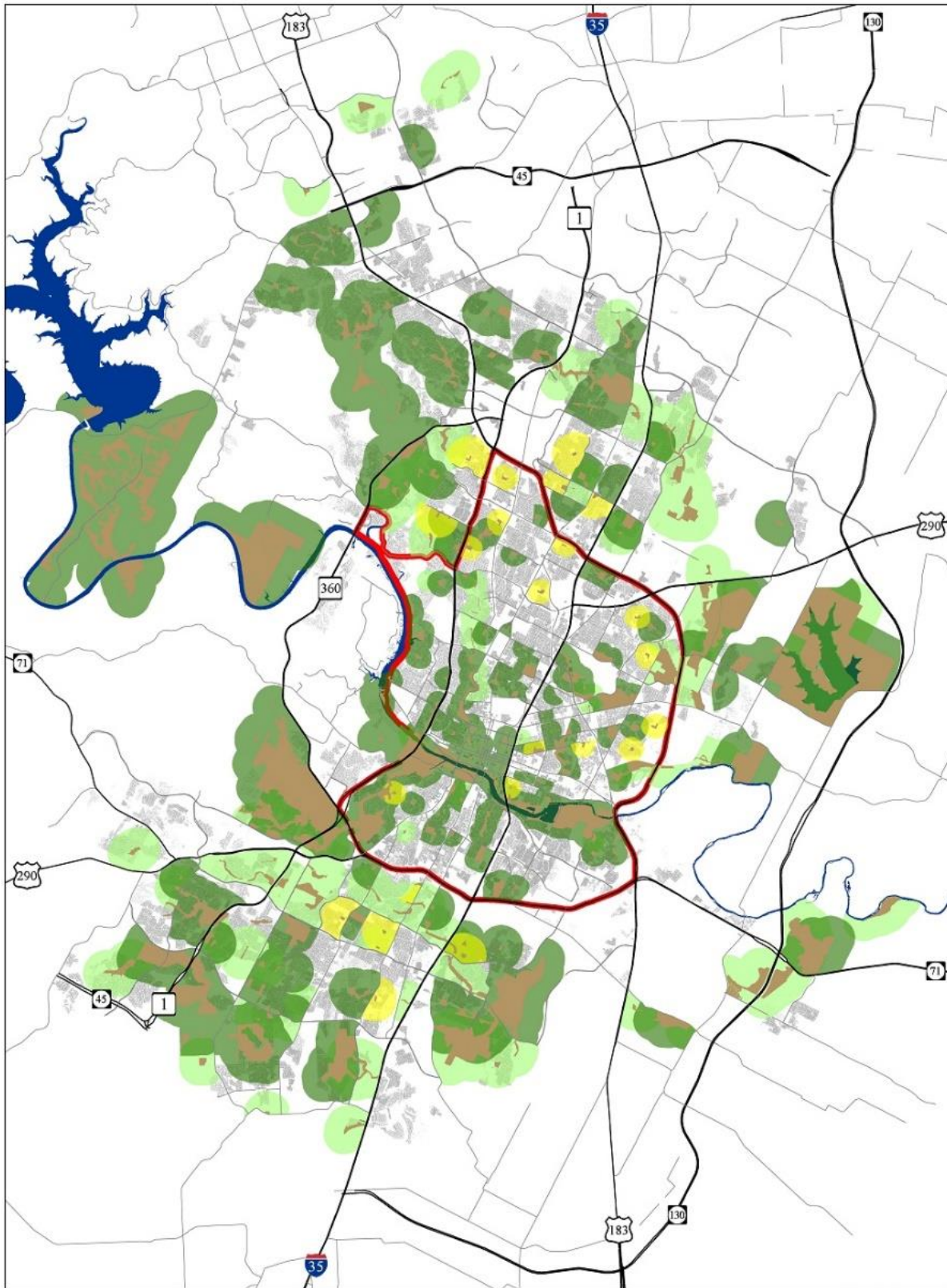


Photo Maps- Austin Parks, 2011



Austin Urban Park Initiative:
Map C

23 May 2011 AH
This map has been produced by the Parks and Recreation Department for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.



- Legend**
-  Parkland Properties
 -  Developed Parkland Buffers
 -  Inner Core
 -  PARD/AISD School Park Buffers
 -  Undeveloped Parkland Buffers
 -  1 Dot = 1 Person



Photo Maps- Heat Vulnerability Map

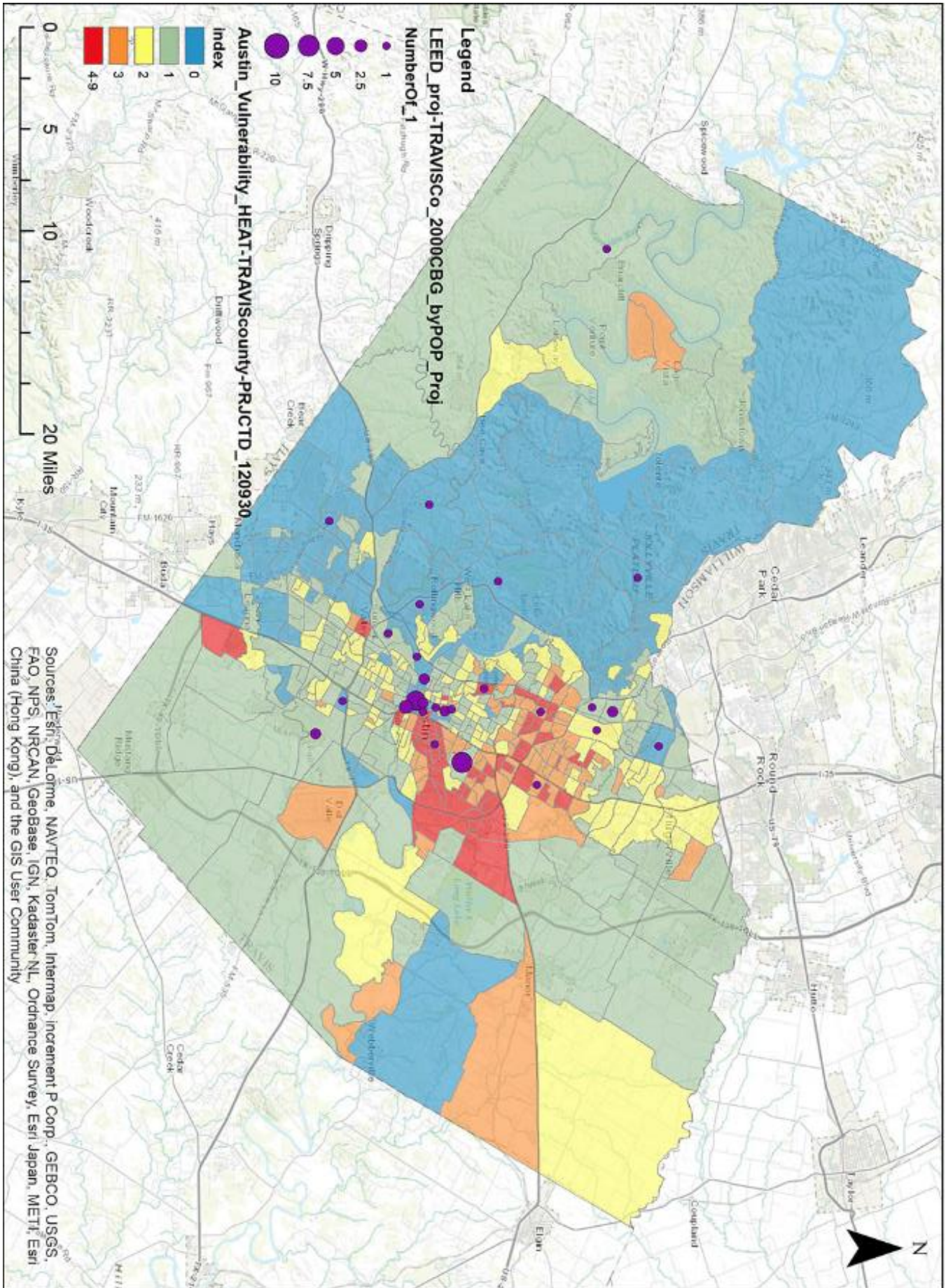
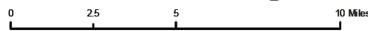
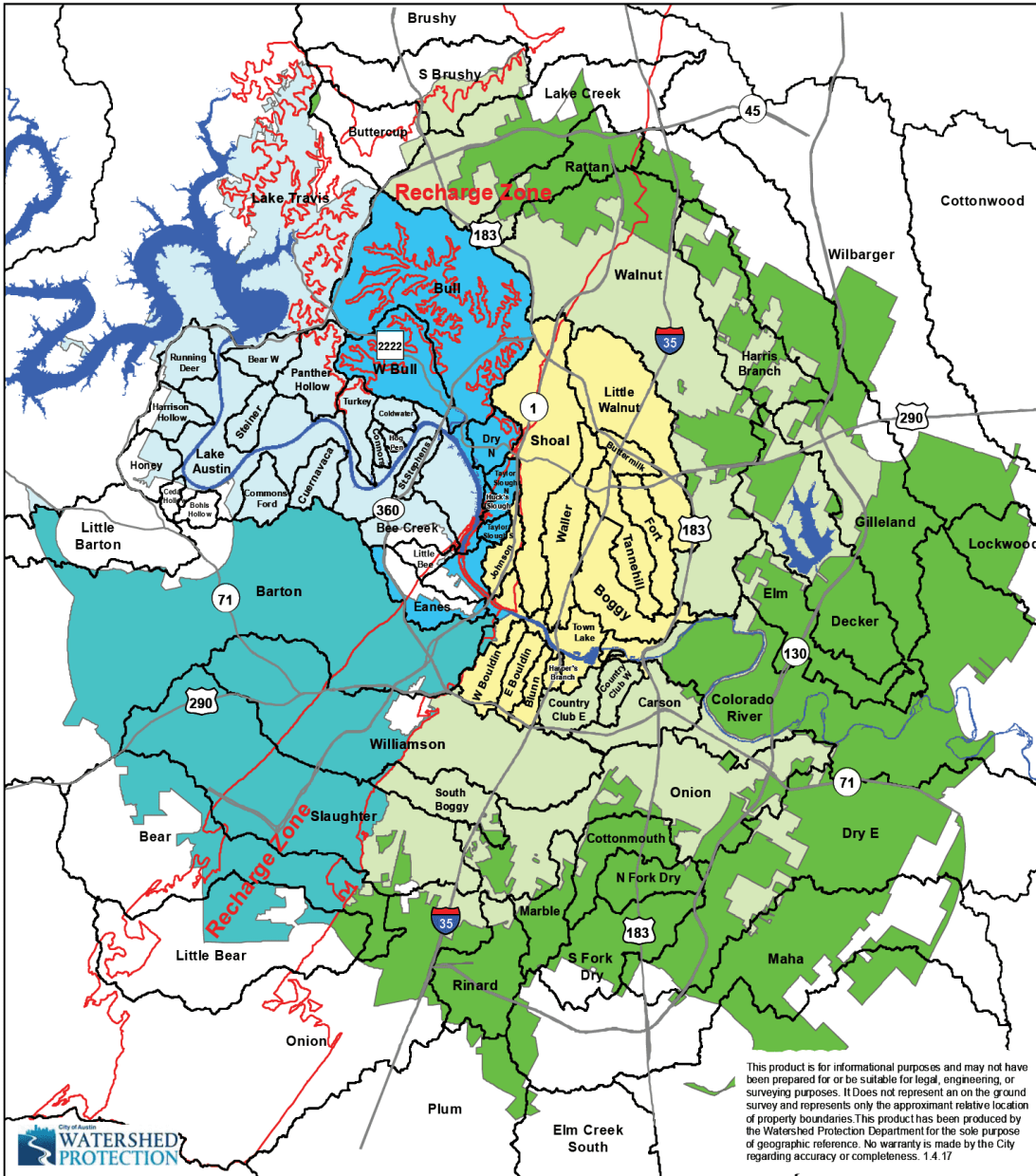


Photo Maps- Watershed Regulation Areas



CITY OF AUSTIN

WATERSHED REGULATION AREAS



Have questions? Give us a call at
(512) 669-5560 to discuss
your next project.

- Desired Development Zone**
 - Urban
 - Suburban (Inside City Limits)
 - Suburban (Outside City Limits)
- Drinking Water Protection Zone**
 - Water Supply Rural
 - Water Supply Suburban
 - Barton Springs Zone
- Other Features**
 - Roads
 - Watersheds
 - Lakes & Rivers
 - Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone



SAVING DARK SKIES

For astronomers and amateur stargazers, skyglow—brightness in the night sky around large cities created by light pollution—has made natural dark skies harder to find across the country. International Dark-Sky Association works with communities to use smarter lighting practices and certifies dark-sky places across the world that set good examples for others.



Texas is located at the country's light pollution divide. Light pollution is more abundant east of the I-35 corridor, while darker skies can be found west in the Texas Hill Country and toward New Mexico.

Overall, the eastern part of the United States has higher levels of light pollution than the western part of the country due to its higher population density. There are currently 69 certified dark-sky places in the country.

TEXAS DARK SKY PLACES

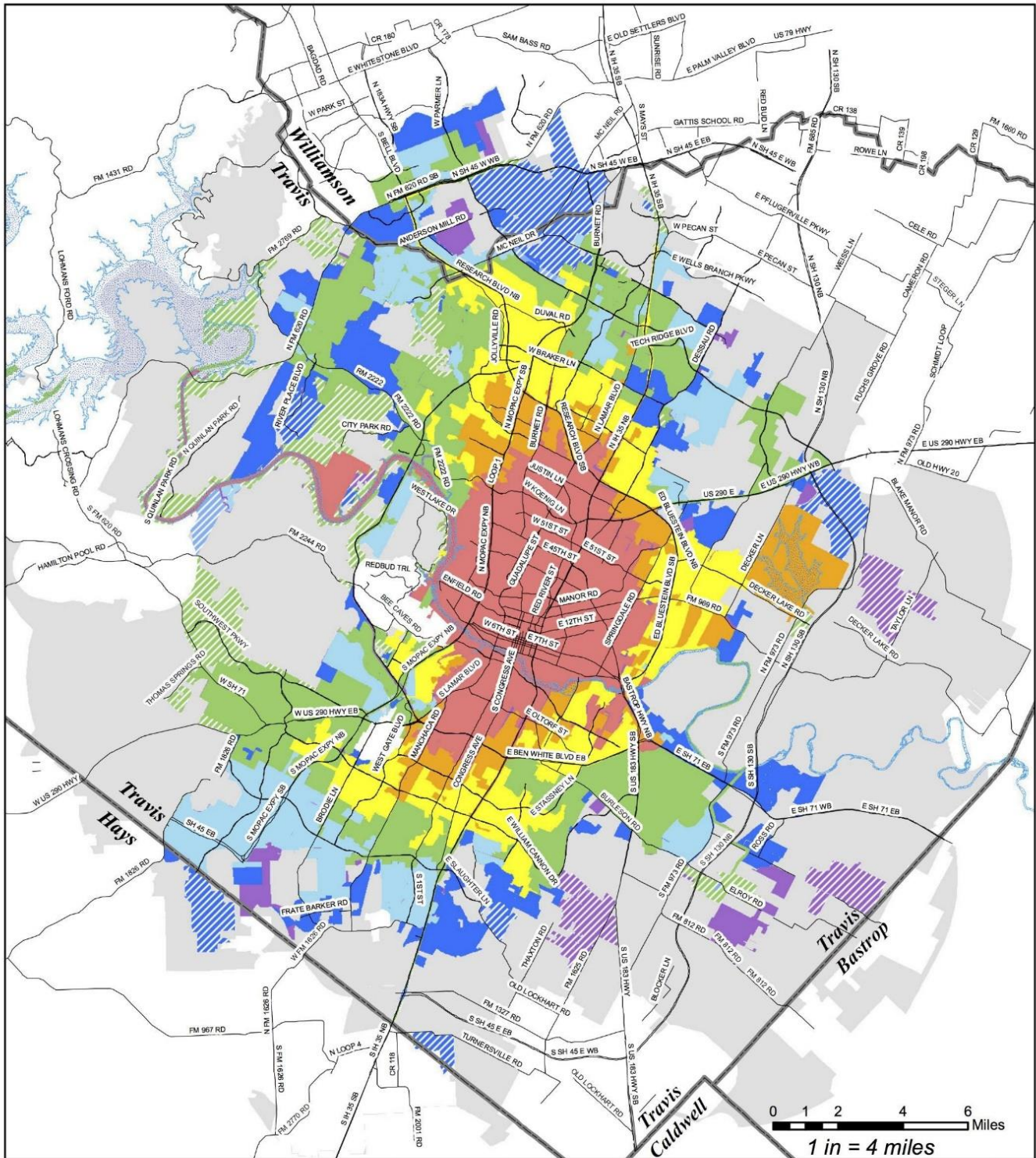
- 1 Big Bend National Park
- 2 Big Bend Ranch State Park
- 3 City of Dripping Springs
- 4 City of Horseshoe Bay
- 5 Copper Breaks State Park
- 6 Enchanted Rock State Natural Area
- 7 Lost Creek neighborhood
- 8 River Hills neighborhood
- 9 Sierra la Rana neighborhood
- 10 South Llano River State Park
- 11 UBarU Camp and Retreat Center
- 12 Wimberley Valley



There are six certified dark-sky places in Central Texas and other cities, such as Fredericksburg, are working to get certified in the future.

CONTINUED FROM 1

Photo Maps- Austin Annexations by Decade 1960-2012



Austin Full and Limited Purpose City Limits: Annexations by Decade 1960-2012

DISCLAIMER: This map shows the first time territory came into the City's planning jurisdiction. Properties that have been disannexed and remain outside the City's planning jurisdiction are excluded. For information about a specific property or annexation, please contact the Planning and Development Review Department.

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries. This product has been produced by the Planning and Development Review for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.

Legend

- City Limits in 1959
- Annexations 1960-1969
- Annexations 1970-1979
- Annexations 1980-1989
- Annexations 1990-1999
- Annexations 2000-2009
- Annexations 2010-2012
- Current Limited Purpose
- Current ETJ
- County Boundary
- Lake



City of Austin PDRD
J. Chuter
July 26, 2013

Photo Maps- Temperature and Tree Canopy Relationship in Austin

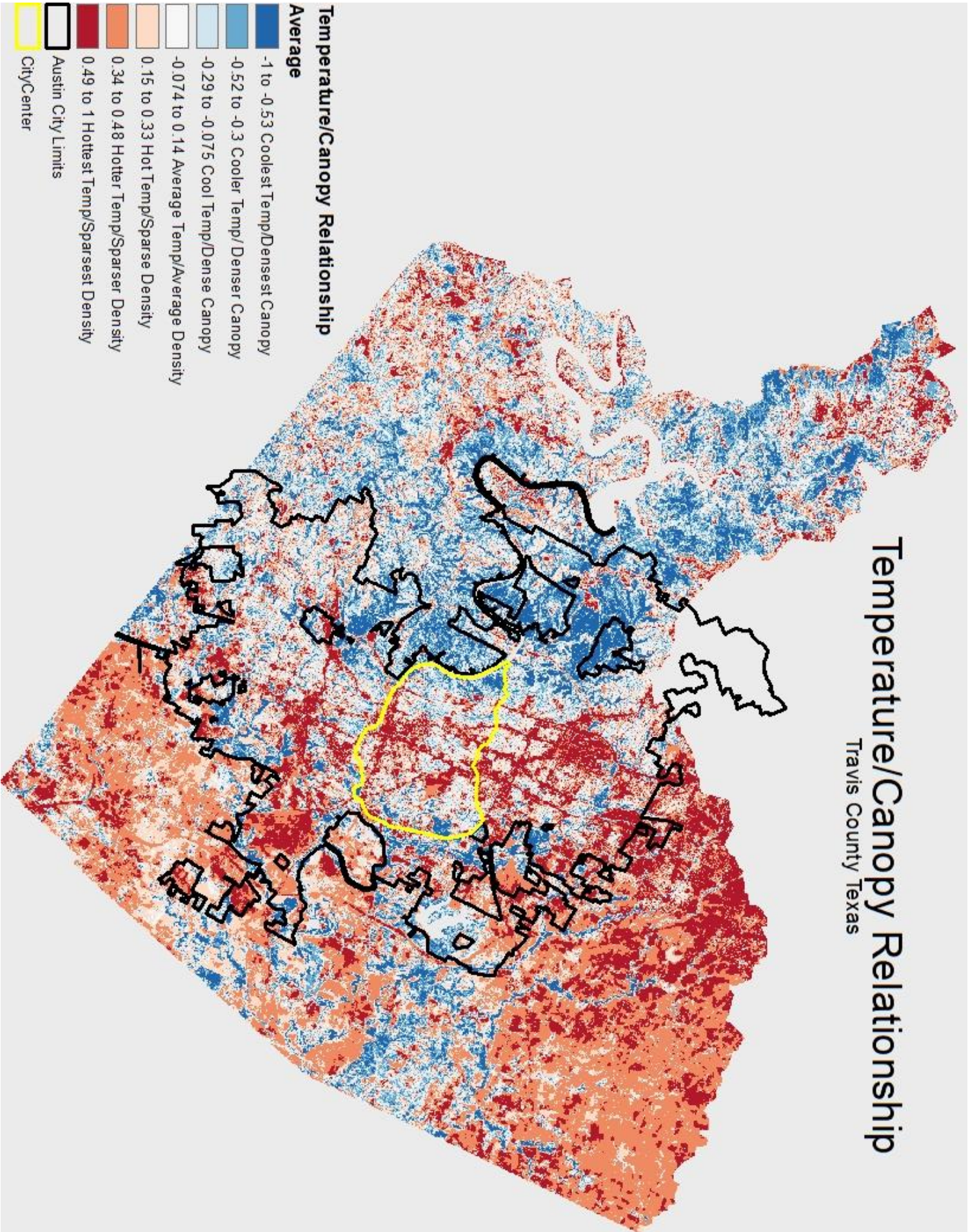
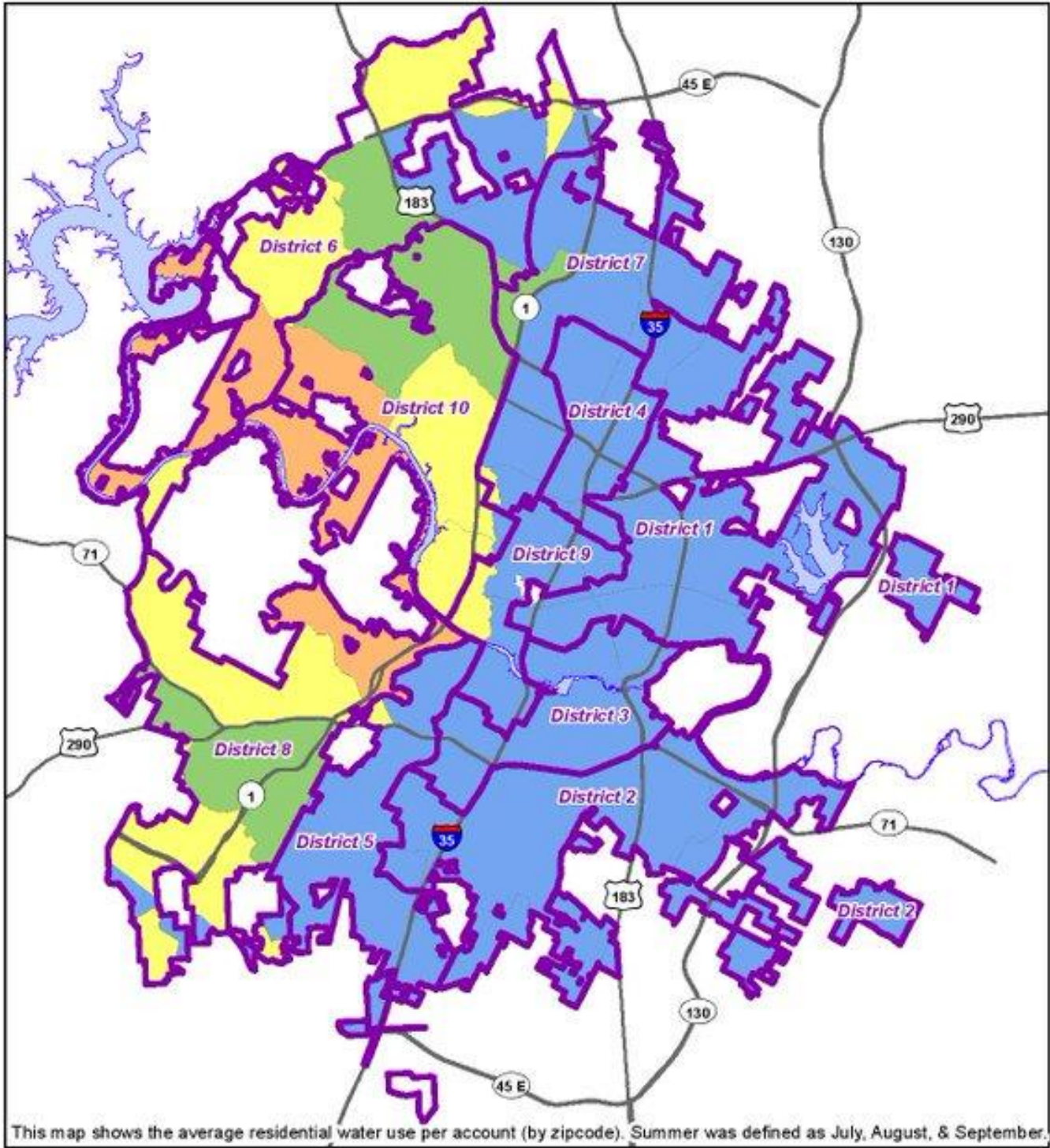


Photo Maps- Average Austin Water Usage in Summer 2015



- Less than 8,400 gallons used on average
- 8,400 to 12,000 gallons used on average
- 12,000 to 16,000 gallons used on average
- 16,000 to 23,000 gallons used on average
- More than 23,000 gallons used on average
(No color indicates no customers.)

City Council District Boundary



City of Austin
Austin Water Utility
March 2016



Average Water Usage Summer 2015

Produced by GIS Services [5895]

This map has been produced by the City of Austin for its needs and purposes and is not warranted for any other use. No warranty is made by the City regarding its accuracy or completeness.