

Fellow Austin-ites,

Although the redistricting was likely intended to represent and share more of the accountability/responsibility of Austin, the mis-matching of neighborhoods specifically Zilker, Downtown and South Austin is divisive. It appears this has been intentional as a tactic to separate and conquer where the mass of the population lives, works and plays.

I too, am a supporter of business and capitalism as we all face the continued and inevitable urban sprawl. It is however being overdeveloped and crushing those who are already here at the cost of beckoning 117-170 more people moving to Austin EVERYDAY without the required infrastructure in place. We are already experiencing a water shortage (the obvious example of no water at Lake Travis thanks in part to the LCRA); cannot lay down enough concrete fast enough for the traffic congestion (expanding the Metro Rail N/S/E/W is the ONLY answer for Austin), while continuing to over tax the Middle Class Property Owner out of their homes to support Builders, Developers and Affordable Housing.

Increases in taxes, fees and requests for more Bonds brings on the speeches that resort to: *at the expense of "the children's education"*. Education/Schools already receive the largest chunk of taxes collected and the benefit of Lottery funding. Oddly, the more money we pour into the education/school fund is resulting in lower attendance and poorer scores; throwing money at a problem rarely solves it. Lastly the tax *give-aways* to Developers and Businesses, again on the backs of the shrinking middle class, is nothing short of Robbery. At tax payer expense, we build on prime locations only to rent the property to fill the coffers. These tax incentives are not hand ups, they are hand outs and yet the chatter is always about the increased tax revenue collected and jobs created. Businesses will come without such graft, and we provide a good source of reliable workers (represented by the "*upper-middle and lower*" Middle Class).

We all understand why people want to come here; the same reason(s) we are here. There is no argument that Austin has and will continue to shift and grow. Austin is NOT: a Smart Growth City in its development and stewardship. Austin needs to be Pro-Active and plan ahead. Leading from behind is costly on all levels; irresponsible and careless.

Should the selling off of Austin SNAFU continue, the worker-bee Middle Class will feel forced to leave, more schools will close as the number of attendees move with their families and the propped-up businesses will lose their workforce. In case y'all have forgotten, people are everything.

Grateful to be in Austin,

Linda Yost  
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