



PODER

People Organized in Defense of Earth and Her Resources

Drainage Fees, Capital Improvements and Equity in the City of Austin

Report

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Flooding on Quicksilver Street in Dove Springs



Inez Garza lost her life in the October 2015 Flood





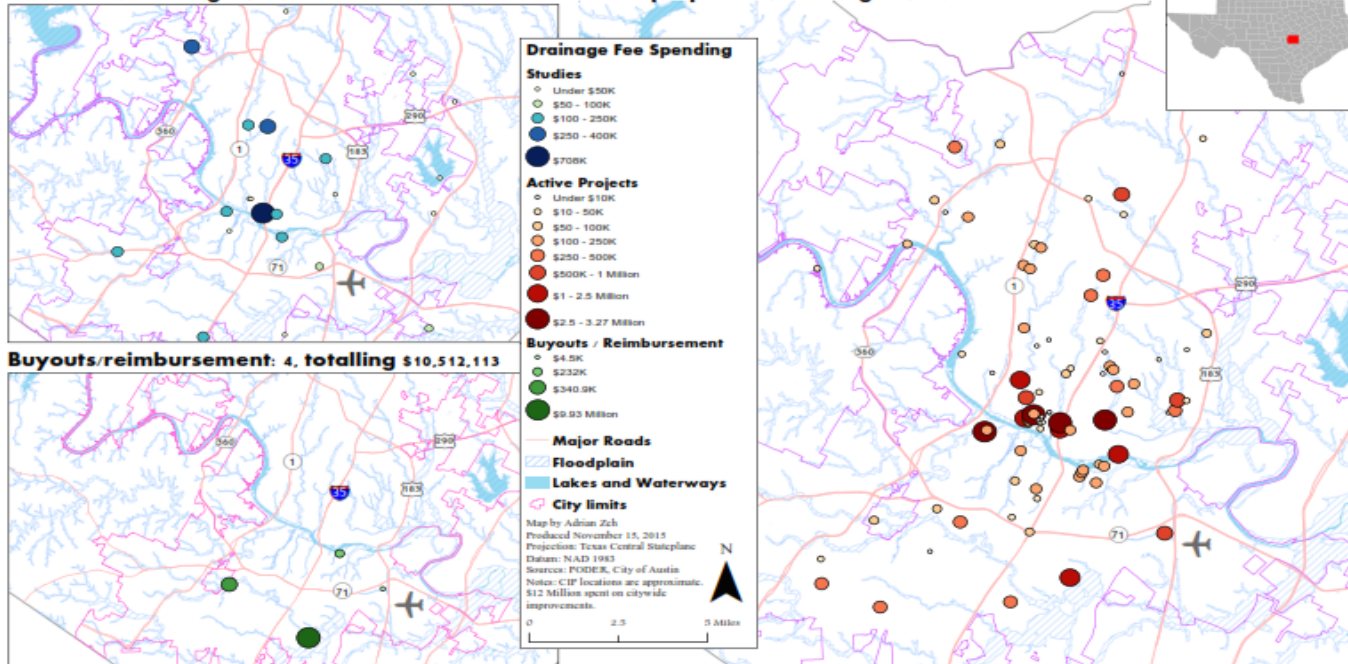
Flooding on Vargas Road
In the Montopolis
Community

Capital Improvements Funded by Drainage Fees

Capital Improvements Funded by Drainage Fees: \$55,190,854.67

Studies: 23, totalling \$2,877,361.60

Active projects: 92, totalling \$30,233,480.07

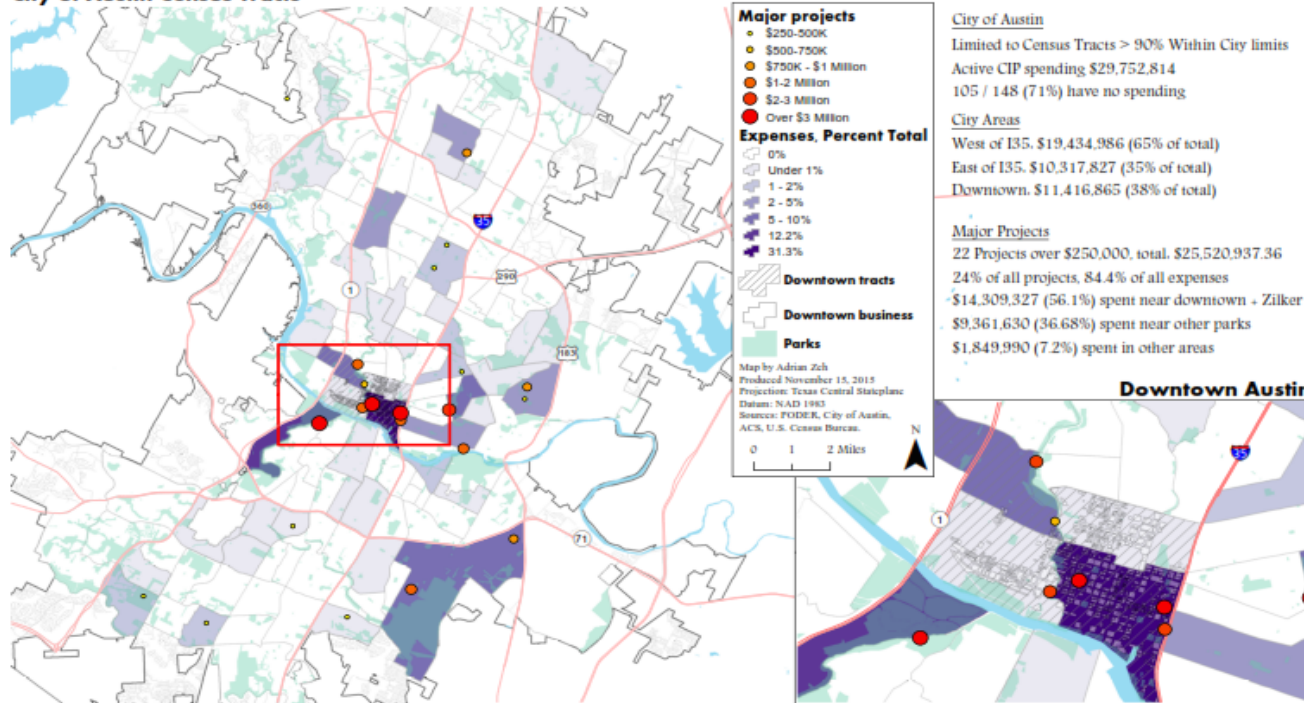


Buyouts/reimbursement: 4, totalling \$10,512,113

- Data based on open records request to WPD
- **Active projects: \$30.2 Million (55%)**
- Floodplain studies: mostly West of I-35, \$2.8 million total
- Buyouts: mostly in South (Onion Creek), \$10.5 Million total (18%)
 - Excludes “system-wide” improvements like software upgrades, aerial mapping (\$12 Million)

Spending as a Percent of Total Expenditures

Spending as a Percent of Total Expenditures City of Austin Census Tracts

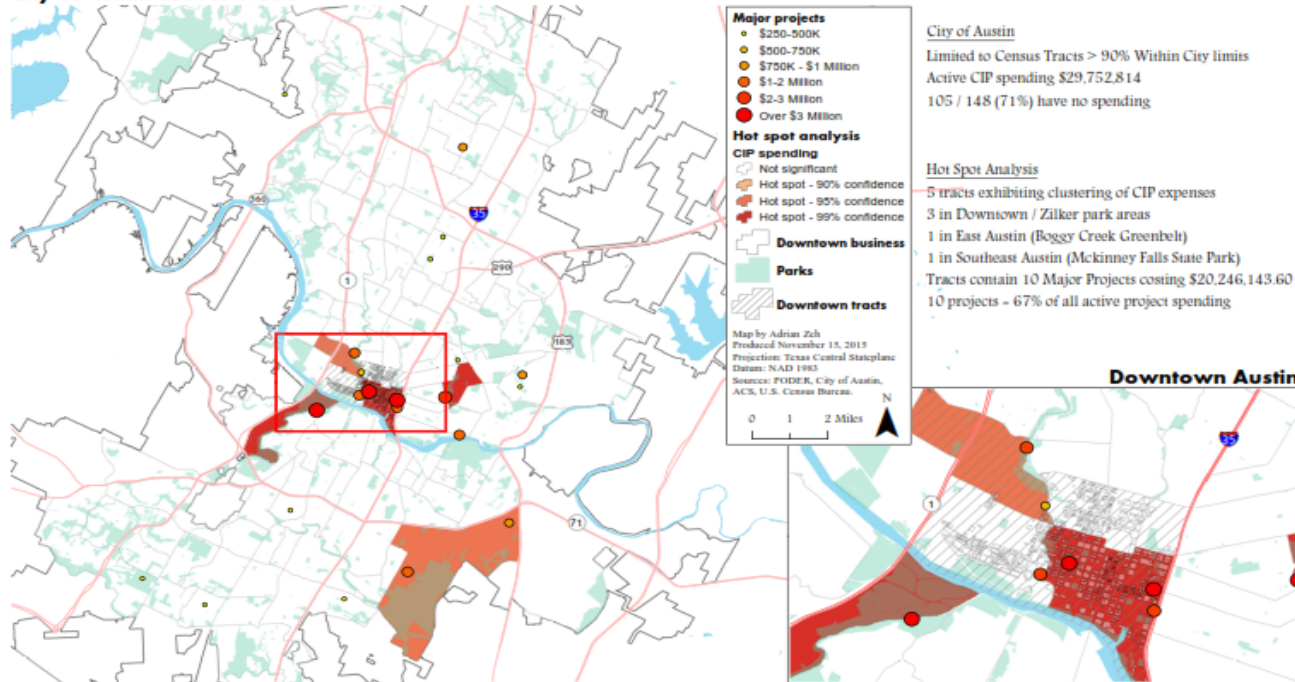


- Spending by city areas:
 - West** of I-35: \$19,434,986 (**65%**)
 - East** of I-35: \$10,317,827 (**35%**)
 - Downtown**: \$11,416,865 (**38%**)
- 22 active projects costing over \$250,000 account for 85 % of spending
- One downtown tract in particular receives **31 %** of all active CIP spending
- 71%** of tracts receive no spending

Hot Spot Analysis: CIP spending by tract

Hot Spot Analysis: CIP spending by tract

City of Austin Census Tracts



- Hotspot analysis confirms clustering of spending in five tracts:
 - **2 of the 4 downtown tracts**
 - **1 in West Austin (Zilker Park)**
 - **1 in East Austin (Boggy Creek Greenbelt)**
 - **1 in SE Austin (McKinney Falls State Park)**
- There seems to be a clear bias toward spending drainage fee funds in the **downtown business area**
- Outside of downtown, most money seems to be spent in **parks**

Recommendations: Assessing Need

- WPD currently assesses the need for projects by assigning “problem scores” based on **creek flooding, local flooding, erosion control** and **water quality**
- Additional factors should be considered:
- **Cost:** are few, high problem score and high cost projects more important than doing many smaller projects?
- **Age and condition of infrastructure**, including roads, sidewalks, and drain inlets



Recommendations: Drainage fees

- A mix of pervious and impervious cover is crucial to minimizing flooding
 - Parcels are currently billed on the **amount** and **percent** of **impervious cover**
- Billing should also reflect the **percent of impervious cover of nearby parcels**
- Alternatively, **impervious cover** could be **billed as a cost** to the drainage system, and **pervious cover credited as a benefit**
 - Similar to residents with solar panels selling excess electricity back to the power utility

How the charge is calculated

Impervious Cover (sq. ft.)

x Monthly Base Rate

x Adjustment Factor

= Monthly Drainage Charge

Thank you for Supporting Equity of Drainage Fees,
and Capital Improvement projects.