



History of Equity Office & PARD Efforts

In 2015:

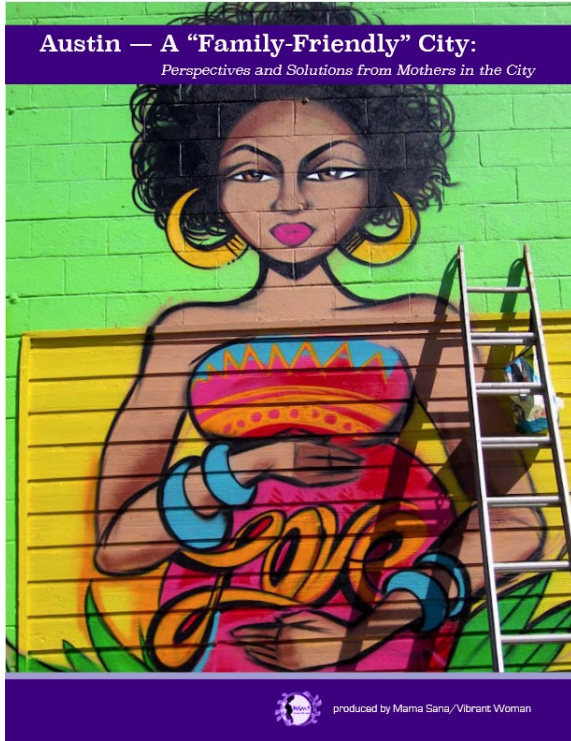
Austin is the best place to live in the nation according to *U.S. News and World Report*

&

One of the most economically segregated cities in the U.S. according to the *Martin Prosperity Institute*



Community Organized for Accountability



And Led To...

- In 2015, Council passed a resolution creating the Equity Office to administer an Equity Tool
- After an extensive search and interview process, Chief Equity Officer Brion Oaks was hired in October 2016

RESOLUTION NO. 20150507-027

WHEREAS, a recent study from the Martin Prosperity Institute determined that Austin is the most economically segregated city in the country, and also that Austin ranked 4th nationally for occupational segregation and 5th nationally for educational segregation; and

WHEREAS, the first Regional Affordability Committee included a presentation from the City Demographer (Presentation) stated that the reduction in the local poverty rate from 20.3 percent in 2012 to 17.8 percent in 2013 was at least partially attributable to the displacement of low-income residents, shown by increases in poverty rates in surrounding counties such as Bastrop, which saw an increase from 10 percent to 22 percent over the same period of time; and

WHEREAS, the Presentation included 2013 data from the American Community Survey produced by the United States Census Bureau that shows that 5.4 % of non-Hispanic white children under the age of 5 in the City of Austin were living at or below the federal poverty threshold, where 51.8% of African-American children and 33.0% of Hispanic children in the same age group are living at or below the federal poverty threshold; and



“Maintaining the Spirit of the Resolution”

- Brion intentionally followed the resolution, engaging the community whose organizing resulted in the Office
- Co-created the Equity Assessment Tool, and defined “equity” for the City of Austin
- Volunteers dedicated over 900 hours in the process



City Equity Definition

Racial equity is the condition when race no longer predicts a person's quality of life outcomes in our community.

The City recognizes that race is the primary determinant of social equity and therefore we begin the journey toward social equity with this definition.

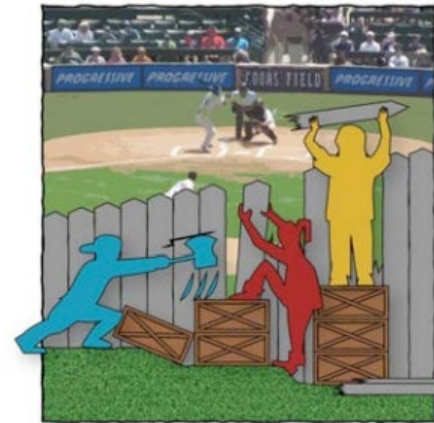
The City of Austin recognizes historical and structural disparities and a need for alleviation of these wrongs by critically transforming its institutions and creating a culture of equity.



EQUALITY



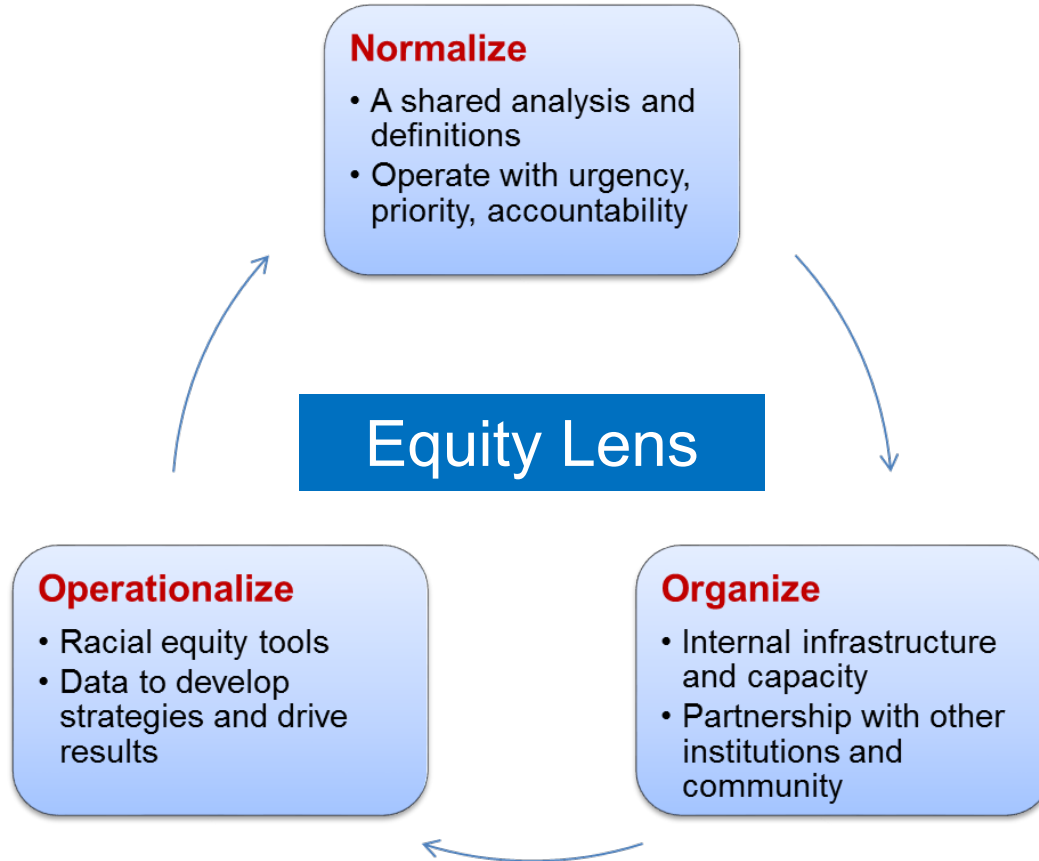
EQUITY



Justice



A Framework for Equity



What do you know about the racial history of Austin?




Indigenous Peoples and Land



Indigenous Peoples and Land

Territories Languages Treaties

Search your address, or toggle switches above to add shapes. Click around! [Think critically about this map](#)

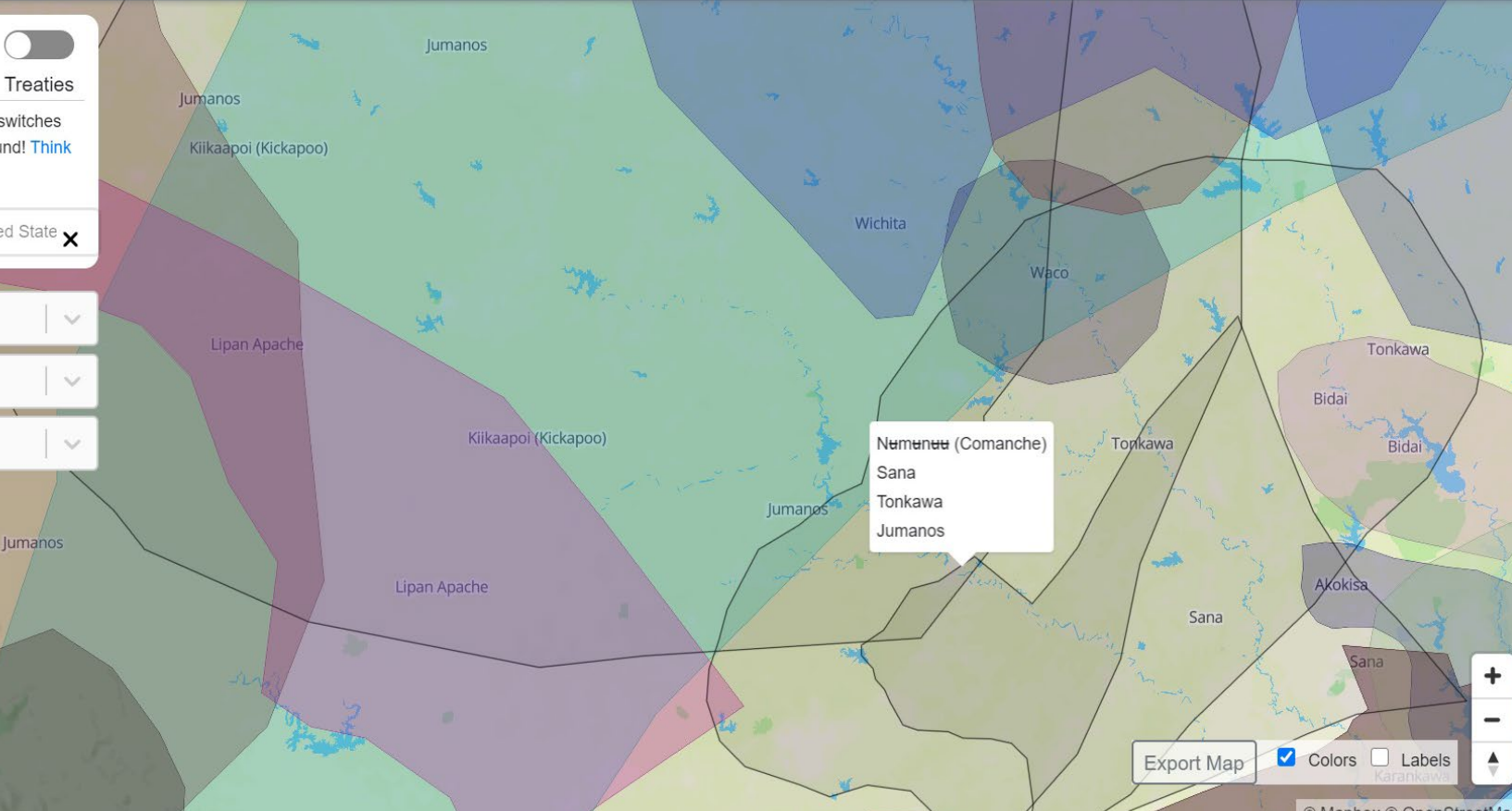



Territories 

Languages 

Treaties 

You are on the land of:
Jumanos 
Tonkawa 
Nemane (Comanche) 



Export Map Colors Labels 

Acknowledging How We Got Here

Inheriting inequality

“As greater Austin booms, the poisonous legacy of segregation continues to cut off the African-American population from economic opportunities and its own cultural anchors, threatening the whole region's potential.”

-An *American-Statesman* three-part series

<http://projects.statesman.com/news/economic-mobility/>



1928 Plan

“There has been considerable talk in Austin, as well as other cities, in regard to the race segregation problem. This problem cannot be solved legally under any zoning law known to us at present. Practically all attempts of such have been unconstitutional.” pg. 66

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tening Waller Creek through this area, a wonderful neighborhood play ground site can be claimed from property which is now very low in value and, in its present condition, is a menace to health of the neighborhood. These two incidents are cited as examples of which it is easily possible to provide the necessary land for the recommended neighborhood play grounds.

The high school located at Twelfth and Rio Grande Streets, we have pointed out heretofore, has a nucleus for a play-field just west of the school grounds. We have already recommended in this report that this play-field be enlarged and developed to provide for a modern play-field. We also recommend that other play-fields be established in various parts of the city. If it is the intention of the school board to provide additional high schools, such play-fields should preferably be located at, or adjacent to, these high schools.

There has been considerable talk in Austin, as well as other cities, in regard to the race segregation problem. This problem cannot be solved legally under any zoning law known to us at present. Practically all attempts of such have been proven unconstitutional.

In our studies in Austin we have found that the negroes are present in small numbers, in practically all sections of the city, excepting the area just east of East Avenue and south of the City Cemetery. This area seems to be all negro population. It is our recommendation that the nearest approach to the solution of the race segregation problem will be the recommendation of this district as



First Ward

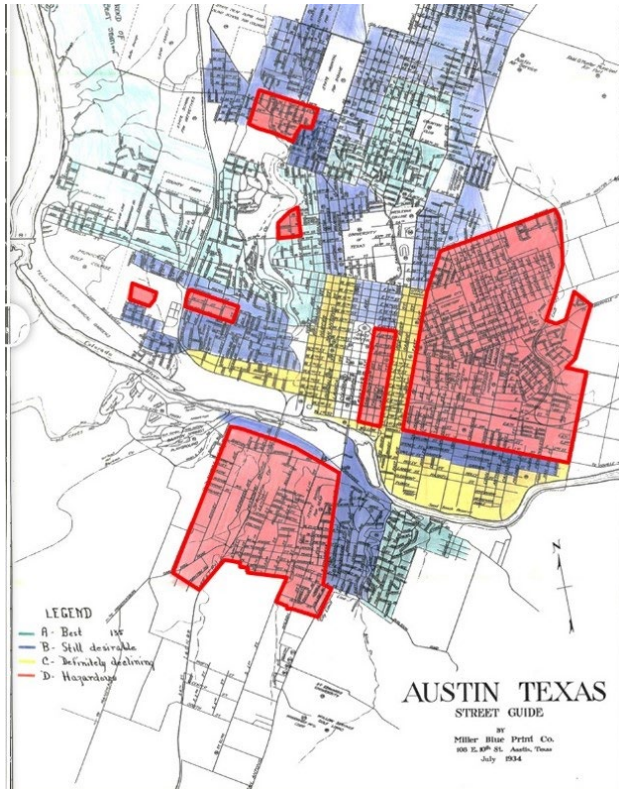
Boundaries of Austin's
First Ward or
"Austin's Mexico"

6th Street to the North
Colorado River to the South
Congress Avenue to the
East
Rio Grande Street to the
West

Many families settled along
Shoal Creek



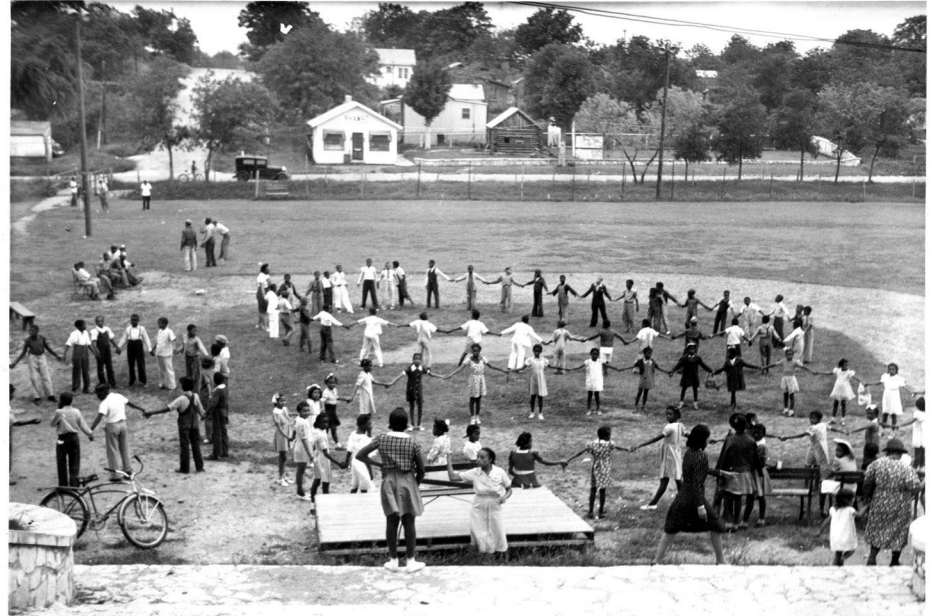
Creating the “Negro District”



A New Deal program was proposed that would reinforce segregationist boundaries in Austin and throughout the country. The program, designed to restore household wealth during the Great Depression, used redlining -- the practice of denying goods or services to racially determined neighborhoods -- to specifically exclude communities of color.

1928 Birth of Parks & Rec System

- Prior to 1928, Black and Mexican people had their own spaces to recreate
- Parks system shaped by institutional racism, segregated these spaces
- 1928, Rosewood Park is acquired, becoming the only public park to serve African-American residents
- 1931, Parque Zaragoza becomes the first and only park to serve Mexicans and Mexican Americans
- 1963 Park integration

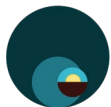


PICA 24201, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

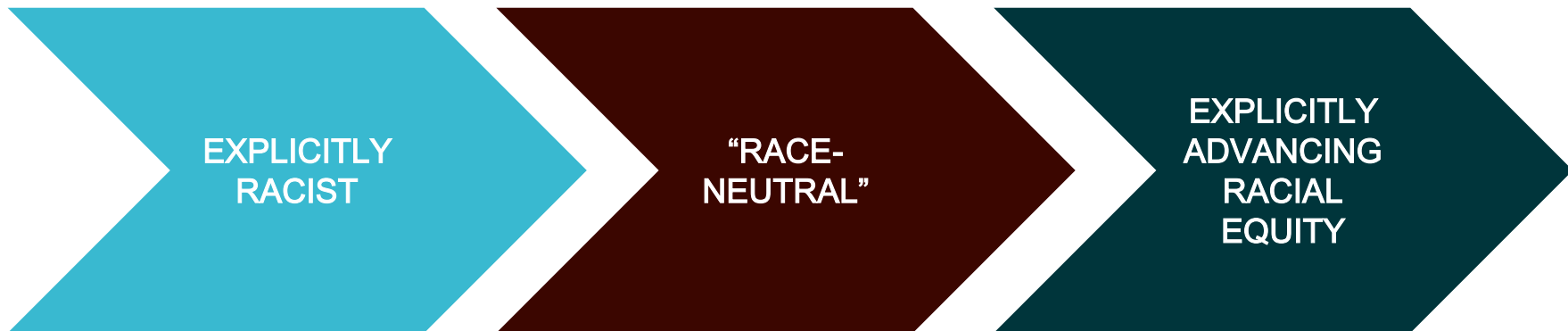
Where are we now?



While most explicitly racist laws and policies have been overturned or replaced, **explicitly racist laws have had a profound effect on today’s racial outcome gaps in wealth, health, lifespan and every other indicator of wellbeing.** “Race-neutral” laws, policies and practices like the GI Bill — to name just one example — replicate and worsen existing gaps between People of Color and White people.



Where do we go from here?



We can create a future in alignment with our values by **explicitly, proactively advancing racial equity** through rigorous, data-driven strategies. The Racial Equity Here commitment is centered around these strategies, **like using a racial equity tool**.



Parks and Recreation Department

NORMALIZE



- Director leadership
- Race explicit
- Learning our history
- Equity vs. Equality
- Leadership development

ORGANIZE



- Racial equity committee
- Language access committee
- Healing spaces
- Cross-Dept Collaboration
- Equity Managers Network

OPERATIONALIZE



- Ranger Cadet Program
- Austin Civilian Conservation Corps
- Swim ATX
- Long Range Plan Implementation



Questions?