Digital Inclusion

City of Austin

District 9

Relevancy & Advocacy Report

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Statement of Purpose: Serving the Community

The 2014 Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan lays out the City Council's resolution calling for a roadmap that addresses access and adoption of digital technology within Austin. The foundation of the Austin Digital Inclusion Strategy is an evolving set of Taking Action: Initiatives centered on objectives that can help overcome identified challenges.   The Digital Inclusion Strategy is based upon the outcomes of the Austin Digital Assessment, a residential technology usage study conducted every three years, that evaluates and assesses residents' access to technology resources and literacy and training programs.

The Austin Digital Inclusion Strategy highlights five broad initiatives that together will realize Austin's vision for digital inclusion. Three of these are foundational strategies that enable Austin's residents and relevant sectors to be digitally-connected and engaged. Two growth strategies build on this foundation of technological strength to ensure coordinated service delivery. Together, these five initiatives provide the path to ensure every Austin resident has an opportunity to be fully engaged in digital society.

Connect: The City and its partners in digital inclusion should embrace technological innovation to help connect residents to programs and services.

Engage: The City and its partners recognize ongoing community engagement is essential to emphasize the importance of having everyone connected.

Include: The City and its partners endeavor to enhance the ability of digital inclusion program providers to serve local residents, and explore new ways of advancing digital inclusion directly to residents.

Integrate: The City should work with its partners to integrate the Digital Inclusion Strategy with community planning initiatives across all sectors.

Coordinate: To coordinate these efforts and increase the scale of digital inclusion initiatives, the City and its partners should raise additional funds and plan for efficient implementation of important programs and services.

The Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan's 25 initiatives will drive many specific benefits for Austin, city residents, and engaged sectors. These benefits fall into six goal areas, which are displayed throughout the Plan to indicate progress on the digital inclusion indicators.

Goals	2014 Baseline Indicators
To Understand and Increase Usage of Digital and Communications Technology	8% of adults do not use the Internet on any device
To Address Potential Barriers to Digital Inclusion	Relevancy is a barrier to non-users; 40% are not interested in using the Internet
To Understand the Need for Digital Literacy Training	42% of non-users would need someone to help them to get online
To Understand the Need for Access via Reliable & Affordable Devices	Nearly all adults own cell phones, and 83% own smart phones
To Understand the Need for Language & Disability Accommodations	1 in 4 non-users feel they do not speak English well enough to use the Internet
To Develop Relevancy & Advocacy Campaigns Within Specific Communities & Populations	Internet non-users primarily live in Southeast Austin

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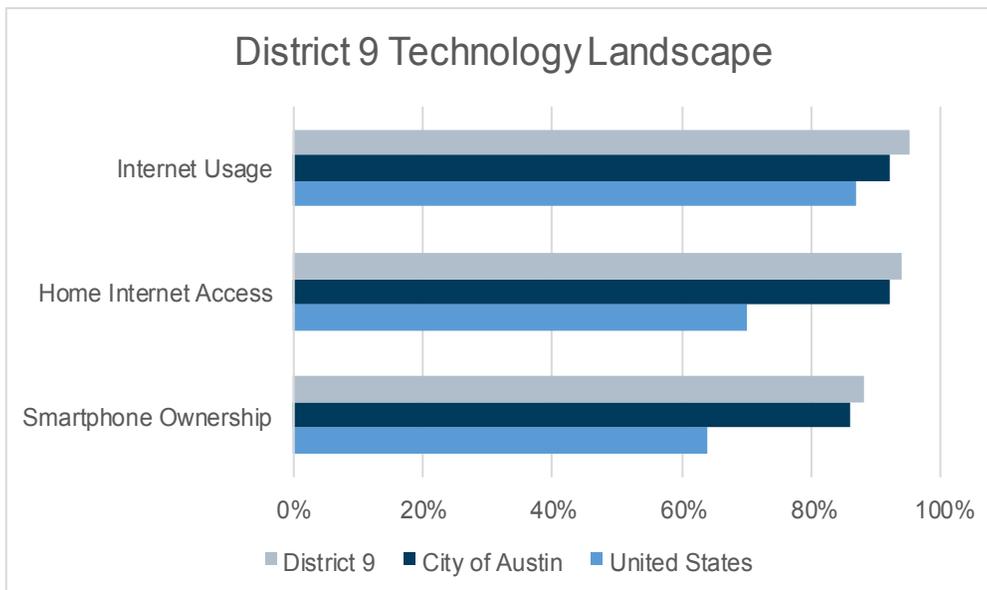## Digital Inclusion in Austin's District 9

Austin residents demonstrate every day what amazing and creative possibilities can come from creating and using digital and communications technology. But 55,000 adult residents living in our city today are disconnected from this increasingly connected world, with most living in underserved communities.

Vision for Digital Inclusion

The City of Austin's vision is for every resident to have access to the knowledge and resources needed to participate in our emerging digital society. We need affordable and available devices for all residents. And it is critical that all Austinites understand technology and its relevancy to their daily lives, whether for helping with their kids' homework, looking for jobs, getting access to health information, or accessing online government information.

Skillpoint Alliance's Empower Computer Proficiency Program is a 10-week training course for adults. Skillpoint Alliance's downtown computer lab is located in District 9.

District 9 Technology Landscape

(Bar chart showing percentages for Internet Usage, Home Internet Access, and Smartphone Ownership, comparing District 9, City of Austin, and United States. Scale from 0% to 100%.)

Legend: District 9 | City of Austin | United States

District 9 Overview

District 9 is home to many different types of neighborhoods, from friendly residential communities, to college student-oriented neighborhoods, to the hustle and bustle of downtown Austin. It includes numerous libraries, public schools, arts organizations, workforce development programs, government facilities and more. Austin benefits from having greater access to and knowledge of technology, and it exceeds the national average in Internet usage, home Internet access, and smartphone ownership. But not all District 9 residents are engaged in our digital society. With diverse populations in District 9 from all backgrounds, education and income levels, unique challenges and opportunities exist in ensuring all District 9 residents have opportunities to build their digital skills.
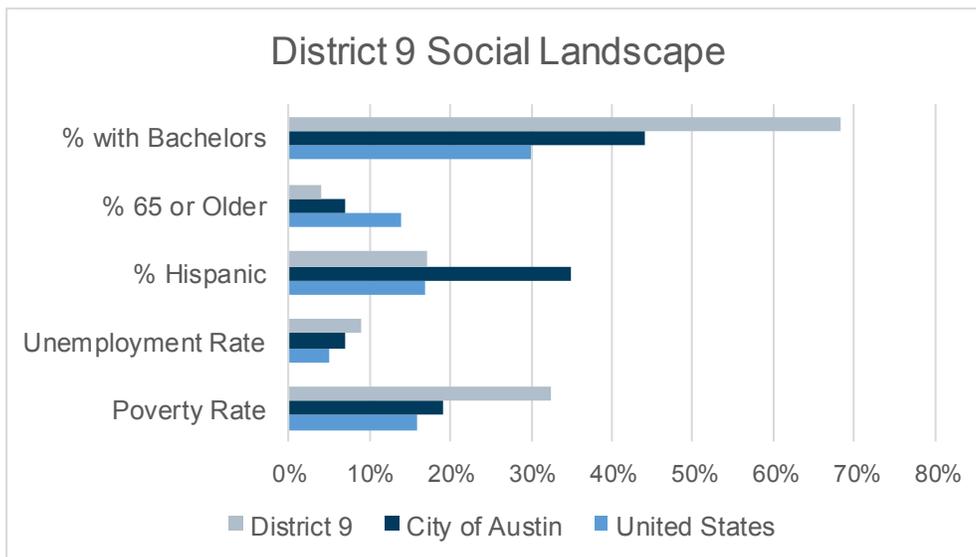
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District 9 Barriers to Using the Internet and Social Landscape

District 9 Social Landscape

Legend: District 9 | City of Austin | United States

Categories (top to bottom):
- % with Bachelors
- % 65 or Older
- % Hispanic
- Unemployment Rate
- Poverty Rate

X-axis: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

Median Income

- District 9
- City of Austin
- United States

X-axis: $0 $40,000 $80,000

Barriers to Using the Internet

District 9 in Rank Order

#1	Privacy & security concerns
#2	Not interested in using the Internet
#3	Using the Internet is too difficult
#4	Someone else uses the Internet for them
#5	Do not speak English well enough
#6	No one to teach them
#7	Too expensive
#7	Not enough time

Internet Usage Trends

In a City of Austin / UT survey conducted in 2014, 5 percent of District 4 residents said they did not use the Internet, less than the citywide average of 8 percent non-users. District also has higher home Internet access, with 94 percent reporting home access in District 9 compared to 92 percent across the city. 88 percent of District 9 residents own smartphones compared to 86 percent citywide.
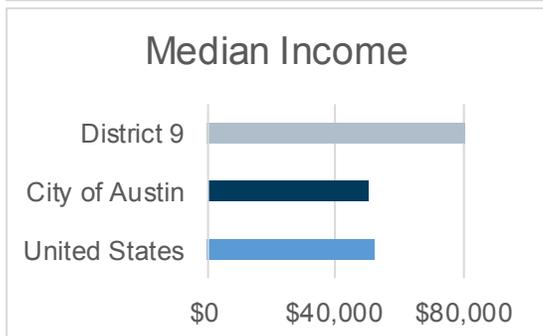
Barriers to Using the Internet

Although most District 9 residents have access to technology, those who do not face major challenges in participating in our digital society. Privacy and security concerns was the top-rated reason for not using the Internet among non-users. A lack of interest in using technology and the perception that using the Internet is too difficult were also top barriers. Internet non-users in District 9 might benefit from a communications campaign the focuses on the benefits of using the Internet and emphasizing online consumer safety.

Social Landscape

Certain social factors may contribute to disparities in technology usage and access in District 9. With the University of Texas and its surrounding neighborhoods located in District 9, it is not surpising that educational attainment is very high, with three in four District 9 residents having a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to the citywide average of 44 percent. At the same time, both poverty and unemployment outpace city averages. With so many diverse communities in District 9, some populations are being left behind. Many programs in Austin teach residents how to use technology and the Internet to improve their quality of life through financial management, educational resources, finding low-cost transportation options, and more.

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Digital Inclusion Partners & Resources in District 9

Residents receive computer training at an Austin Free-Net computer lab in the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless in downtown District 9.

Digital Inclusion Community Partners

Austin is fortunate to have a robust system of nonprofit, community and City organizations committed to digital inclusion, many of which support District 9. The City has a long history of supporting front-line programs that help residents overcome technological barriers. Austin Free-Net is a City-funded nonprofit that provides free training throughout the city, including at the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless in District 9. All of Austin Public Libraries have computers available for public use, and some libraries offer free one-on-one training. The City's Digital Inclusion Community Engagement Strategy involves working with neighborhood and community associations to connect with residents with technology resources.

Competitive Broadband Marketplace

Austin also benefits from a competitive broadband market represented by four Internet providers: AT&T, Google Fiber, Grande Communications and Time Warner Cable. All four providers contribute to ensuring Austin residents, businesses and organizations have access to reliable and affordable Internet. Google Fiber partnered with the City of Austin for the Community Connections Program to award 100 nonprofit and public facilities a free gigabit-speed Internet connection to spark social innovation. District 9 will be home to 31 Community Connection sites including libraries, public schools, homeless and family centers, economic development facilities, arts organizations and more.

Representatives from Texas Time Warner Cable, Google Fiber, Grande Communications and AT&T speaking at Austin's Broadband Providers Forum about how they connect Austin.

Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan

The City of Austin's Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan calls on the City to leverage these community assets to promote digital inclusion in Austin. We can empower District 9 residents through increased digital skills that contribute to improved education, job preparedness, health resources, social connections and more.

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District 9 Community Assets

Public Access Computer Labs and Computer Training Facilities

Public Access was identified as a fundamental **principle of digital inclusion** in the International City/County Management Association's *Building Digital Communities: A Framework for Action* (2011). *Public Access* and other principles have been integrated into the City of Austin's Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan as guiding elements around which the City and its partners should dedicate programmatic time, resources, strategic development and more. Ensuring that all residents have access to safe and reliable spaces for digital access is a top priority for Austin's digital inclusion strategy.

The public access computer labs and computer training facilities below represent some of District 9's most highly utilized facilities for digital inclusion programming. But this list is not complete, and there is great need for more facilities in District 9 and across the city. It is the hope of the City of Austin Digital Inclusion program that these relevancy and advocacy reports will result in the recruitment and development of additional public computer labs.

Public Access Computer Labs and Computer Training Facilities	
ARCH (Austin Resource Center for the Homeless) 500 E. 7th St.	An Austin Free-Net and Front Steps location, providing 12 computers and one-on-one free training for ARCH clients.
Devry University 1211 East Oltorf St.	Skillpoint Alliance offers a 10-week Empower Computer Literacy class for adults at Devry University. The class focuses on professional development skills, such as Microsoft Office, Internet, Email, and Outlook.
The Henry Flores Learning Center at Meadowbrook 1201 West Live Oak St.	Skillpoint Alliance offers a 10-week Empower Computer Literacy class for adults at The Henry Flores Learning Center at Meadowbrook. The class focuses on professional development skills, such as Microsoft Office, Internet, Email, and Outlook.
Manos de Cristo 4911 Harmon Ave.	A computer literacy program with both English and Spanish instructors, which provides 8 week computer classes at 3 different levels. The course is $20 for the 8 weeks, but there are scholarships available.
Faulk Central Library 800 Guadalupe St.	The main branch of Austin Public Library offers residents 92 public access computers, job search and computer walk in training for one hour twice a week, and many other computer classes from beginner to advance.
Twin Oaks Library 1800 S. 5th St.	An Austin Public Library Branch with a public access computer lab.
Austin History Center 811 Guadalupe St.	An Austin Public Library branch with a historical focus, but it also has 3 public access computers.

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District 9 Community Assets

Community Connections Sites

Availability was identified as a fundamental **principle of digital inclusion** in the International City/County Management Association's *Building Digital Communities: A Framework for Action* (2011). *Availability* and other principles have been integrated into the City of Austin's Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan as guiding elements around which the City and its partners should dedicate programmatic time, resources, strategic development and more. *Availability* of affordable, high-speed Internet and devices is an essential component of digital inclusion. *Availability* needs to become more ubiquitous both in individual households and in multi-user environments that can empower local communities to stay connected.

Google Fiber partnered with the City of Austin for the Community Connections program. Community Connections awarded a free gigabit-speed Internet connection for ten years to 100 nonprofit and public facilities in fiberhoods that qualify for Google Fiber service. District 9 is the council district with the most community connections having a total of 31 unique locations. This gives district 9 an opportunity to connect.

Community Connections Sites	
Austin Children's Museum *1830 Simond Ave.*	The Austin Children's Museum will use Google Fiber to incorporate digital elements in their exhibits, introduce more online resources to programs such as smART camp, and to collaborate with other museums.
Austin Film Society *1901 E. 51st St.*	Google Fiber will enable the Austin Film Society to connect its artists with international mentors, give students access to educational resources, and provide Fiber to its tenants.
Austin Theater Alliance *713, 719 Congress Ave.*	The Austin Theater Alliance will use Google Fiber to incorporate digital elements into their events, host events for other organizations, and to stream these events live.
Ballet Austin *501 W. 3rd St.*	Google Fiber will enable Ballet Austin to share their performances and educational programs via live streaming.
KLRU *2504 Whitis Ave. Building B.*	KLRU will use Google Fiber to more effectively distribute video content, experiment with new technology, and to build content focused communities.
Long Center for Performing Arts *701 West Riverside Drive*	The Long Center for Performing Arts utilizes Google Fiber to create a convenient mobile box office, offer free Wi-Fi across the campus, and accommodate more productions and conventions.
Mexi-Arte Museum *419 Congress Ave.*	The Mexic-Arte Museum will use Google Fiber to expand the digital elements in their exhibits, activate iPads, support the creation of a bilingual website, and to enhance their Screen It! Advanced program for teens.

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District 9 Community Assets

Continued: Community Connections Sites	
Texas Folklife *1317 South Congress Ave.*	Google Fiber supports the creation of the Texas Folklife Resource Center, interactive digital storytelling workshops, and live streaming of performances.
American Institute of Architects *801 W. 12th St.*	The American Institute of Architects will utilize Google Fiber to expand their training in digital design, host more events like TEDx, and to add digital elements to their exhibits.
Entrepreneurs Foundation *701 Brazos St. Floors 1,5,16*	The Entrepreneurs Foundation will use Google Fiber to provide internet at events they host, like hack-a-thons, facilitate remote teaching via video conferencing, and allow startups to test their high bandwidth applications.
Skillpoint Alliance *201 E. 2nd St.*	Google Fiber will support Skillpoint Alliance's empower computer lab, App Jams program, FIRST Robotics events, and online volunteer training program.
Southwest Education Development Corporation *4700 Mueller Blvd.*	The Southwest Educational Development Corporation will use Google Fiber to live stream their events and provide a faster delivery of their online content such as Afterschool Training Toolkit videos.
Austin Convention Center *500 E. Cesar Chavez*	This organization will apply Google Fiber to upgrade their service to the people and organizations that use its facility.
Capital Metro *510 Old Manor Rd.*	Capital Metro will utilize Google Fiber in their distribution of travel information such as real time vehicle location serves that allow for more accurate estimated time of arrival data.
City of Austin: City Hall *301 W. 2nd St.*	TBD
City of Austin: One Texas Center *505 Barton Springs Rd.*	Google Fiber supports the Business Solutions Center's computer lab for entrepreneurs and speeds up operations for staff.

District 9 Community Assets

Continued: Community Connections Sites	
Austin High School/ William B. Travis High School *1715 W. Cesar Chavez St./ 1211 E. Oltorf St.*	The Austin Independent School District uses Google Fiber to improve student, staff, and parent access to their online resources such as grades, college readiness programs, learning resources, and professional development opportunities through the many devices that AISD provides. At Travis High School, Google Fiber will also support their Vertical Team Program, Any Given Child, and the Texas Literacy Initiative.
Austin Public Library *(History Library, Faulk Central, New Central)*	The Austin Public Libraries will use Google Fiber to better accommodate bandwidth usage needs in their public access computer labs, meeting rooms, and the programs that select branches offer.
AGE of Central Texas *3701 Cedar St.*	Google Fiber will support the AGE computer classes and will provide Wi-Fi access to their non-profit tenants.
Austin Children's Shelter *4800 Manor Rd.*	Google Fiber will enable the Austin Children's Shelter to better connect its clients with family and community support systems, give them access to training opportunities, and share the connection with its partner organizations on their campus.
Front Steps *500 E. 7th St.*	Google Fiber will enhance Front Steps' services such as their GED program, online classroom, and computer lab for the homeless.
Pecan St., Inc. *3924 Berkman Dr.*	Pecan Street Inc. will utilize Google Fiber in their Pike Powers Laboratory and Center for Commercialization in which testing and development of new technology occurs.
Out Youth Austin *909 E. 491/2 St.*	Google Fiber will support Out Youth Austin's David Bohnett Cyber Center and increases accessibility for deaf youth through their video remote interpreting programs.
Texas Educational Broadcasting Co-Operative, Inc. *3823 Airport Blvd. Suite B.*	The Texas Educational Broadcasting Co-Operative Inc. will use Google Fiber to deliver live and prerecorded programs, enable collaboration between volunteers, remote broadcast their programs, and to receive community submitted audio.
Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid *4920 N IH-35*	The Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid will use their Google Fiber connection to increase internal efficiency, allowing them to serve more clients, and to enable digital collaboration between attorneys and clients.
YWCA Greater Austin *2015 S. Interstate 35*	The YWCA uses Google Fiber to increase technology accessibility to the counselors, youth services, and training programs.

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District 9 Community Assets

Neighborhood Organizations and Associations & Planning Contact Teams

Relevance was identified as a fundamental **principle of digital inclusion** in the International City/County Management Association's *Building Digital Communities: A Framework for Action* (2011). *Relevancy* and other principles have been integrated into the City of Austin's Digital Inclusion Strategic Plan as guiding elements around which the City and its partners should dedicate programmatic time, resources, strategic development and more. *Relevancy* is an ongoing challenge for those residents who do perceive Internet access to be an unnecessary or unaffordable luxury, as opposed to a critical utility to meet daily living needs in our increasingly digital world. Neighborhood-based groups are tuned into their residents' needs and can be great assets in communicating the importance of digital literacy.

Below are the neighborhood and planning organizations located in Council District 9. Each of these are important to engage with in order to develop a grassroots campaign. These community leaders are our connections to the communities.

Neighborhood Associations and Organizations & Planning Contact Teams			
Old West Austin Neigh Plan Contact Team	Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Planning Team	Greater SRCC Ngbrhd Planning Team	Upper Boggy Creek Neighborhood Planning Team
Hyde Park Neighborhood Plan Contact Team	Rainey Neighbors Association Inc.	6ixth Street Austin Association	Historic Austin Neighborhood Association
Shoal Creek Conservancy	Downtown Austin Alliance	The Real Estate Council of Austin Inc.	Judges' Hill Neighborhood Association
West Downtown Alliance Inc.	Downtown Austin Neighborhood Assn. (DANA)	Old Austin Neighborhood Association	Friends of Rainey Street Historic District
Judges Hill Community Circle	Lower Waller Creek	Old Pecan Street Assn.	Rainey Business Coalition
Waller District Staff Liaison	Austin City Lofts Neighborhood Association	Old Enfield Homeowners Assn.	Clarksville Community Development Corp
Old West Austin Neighborhood Assn.	South Congress Merchants Association	Bouldin Creek Neighborhood Association	South First IBIZ District
Meadowbrook Neighborhood Association	CANPAC (Central Austin Neigh Plan Area Committee)	Heritage Neighborhood Association	Eastwoods Neighborhood Association
City of Austin Downtown Commission	North University Neighborhood Assn.	Original West University Neigh Assoc. (The)	Shoal Crest Neighborhood Assn.
North University Neighborhood Association NPT	Caswell Heights Neighborhood Association	My Guadalupe	Friends of Sparky Park
Guadalupe IBIZ District	Schieffer/Willowbrook	Delwood II Neighborhood Organization	Wilshire Wood-Delwood I Neigh. Assn.

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Continued: Neighborhood Associations and Organizations & Planning Contact Teams			
Cherrywood Neighborhood Assn.	Friends & Lovers of Willowbrook Reach	Concordia Neighborhood Association	The University of Texas at Austin
Mueller Neighborhood Association	Mueller Property Owners Association	Mueller Master Community Inc	Hyde Park Neighborhood Assn.
North Loop IBIZ District	Friends of Hyde Park	Northfield Neighborhood Assn.	Central Austin Community Development Corporation
Waterfront Planning Advisory Board (In multiple districts)			

Internet Users by Council District

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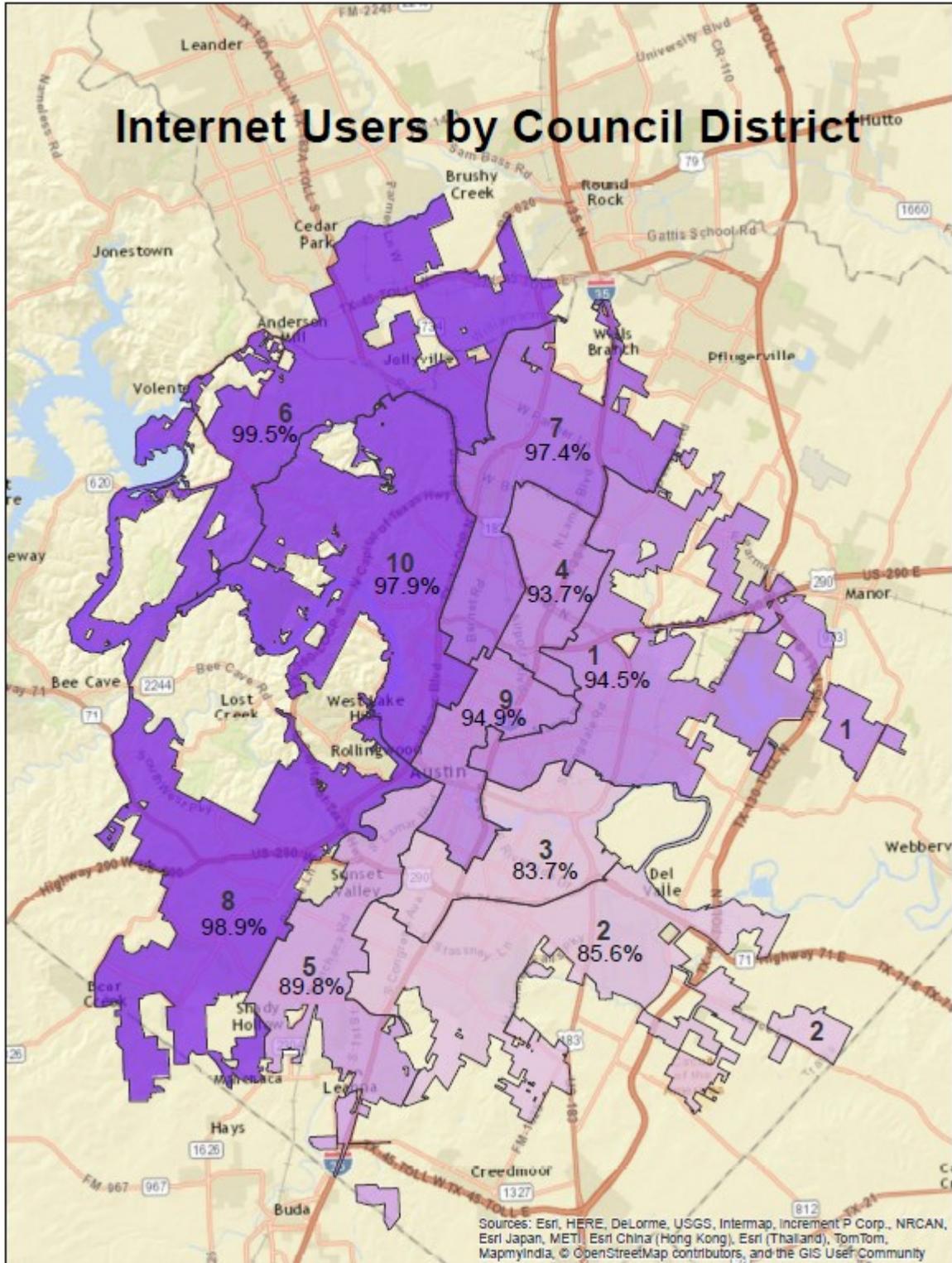
Acknowledgements & Data Sources

Staff from the City of Austin's Digital Inclusion Program compiled this report on District 4 technology usage, challenges and assets. The City thanks its Digital Inclusion partners in this district and across the city that provide front-line serve delivery to residents in need. Please contact the Digital Inclusion program for more information or to learn about partnership opportunities at digital.inclusion@austintexas.gov or (512) 974-3510.

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