Digital Inclusion

City of Austin

District 2

Relevancy & Advocacy Report

Digital Inclusion

City of Austin

Table of Contents

Digital Inclusion
City of Austin

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

Digital Inclusion
City of Austin

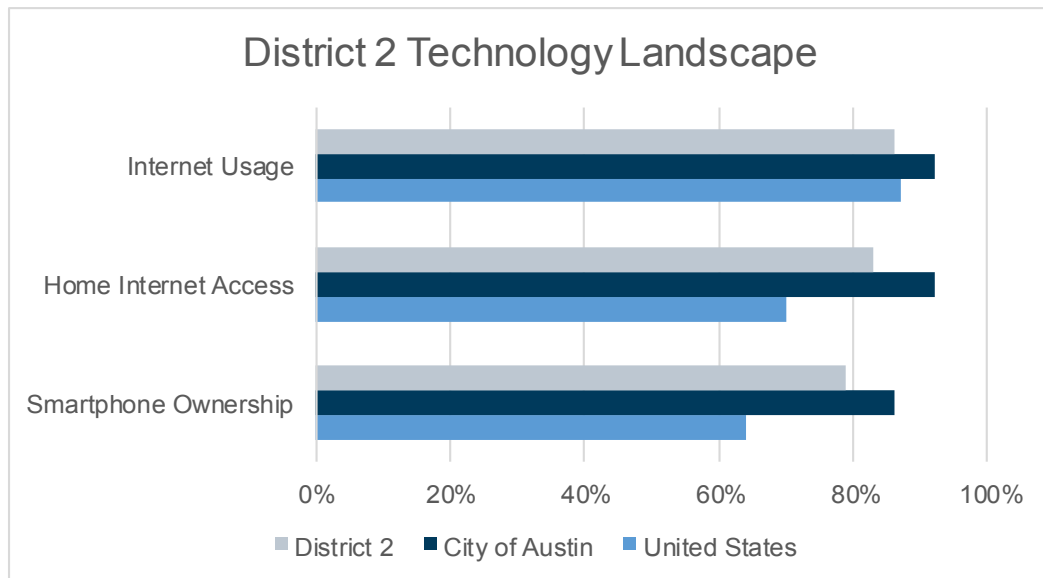## Digital Inclusion in Austin's District 2

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.

District 2 families attending an Esquina de Tecnología (Technology Corner) at Mendez Middle School in District 2 hosted by Skillpoint Alliance.

District 2 Technology Landscape

Internet Usage
Home Internet Access
Smartphone Ownership

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

☐ District 2 ■ City of Austin ■ United States

District 2 Overview

District 2 is home to some of Austin's most unique neighborhoods and represents much of historic South Austin. District 2 includes to two libraries, two recreation centers, a golf course, and numerous community organizations like River City Foundation. 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 District 2 is one of Austin's least connected districts, and falls behind citywide averages for technology usage and access. While several organizations are already working in this district to give residents more access to technology and training, more work must be done to ensure all District 2 residents can participate in our digital society.
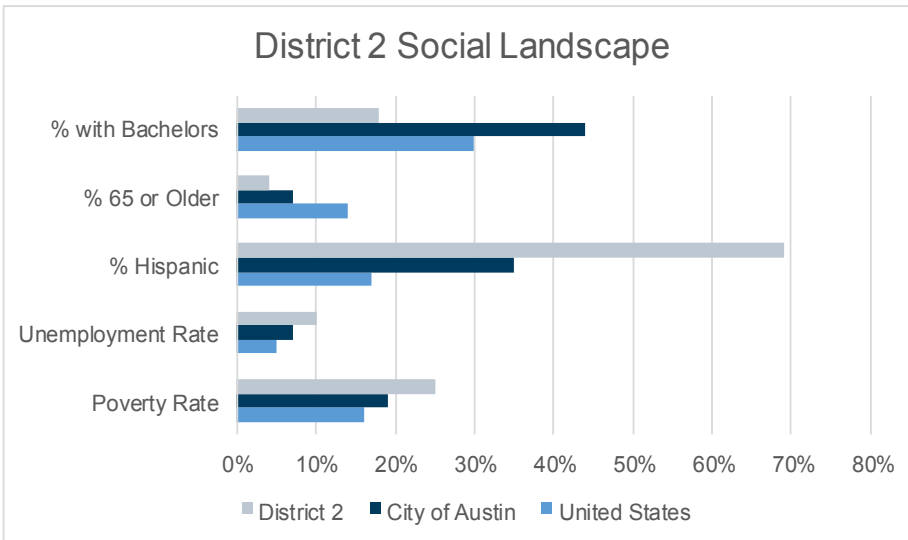
austintexas.gov/digitalinclusion

4

Digital Inclusion
City of Austin

District 2 Barriers to Using the Internet and Social Landscape

District 2 Social Landscape

Legend: District 2, City of Austin, United States

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

X-axis: 0% to 80%

Median Income

District 2, City of Austin, United States

X-axis: $0 to $60,000

Barriers to Using the Internet

District 2 in Rank Order

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

Internet Usage Trends
In a City of Austin / UT survey conducted in 2014, 14 percent of District 2 residents said they did not use the Internet, higher than the citywide average of 8 percent non-Internet users. District 2 also falls behind in home Internet access, with 83 percent having home Internet in District 2 compared to 92 percent citywide. 79 percent of District 2 residents own smartphones compared to 86 percent citywide.
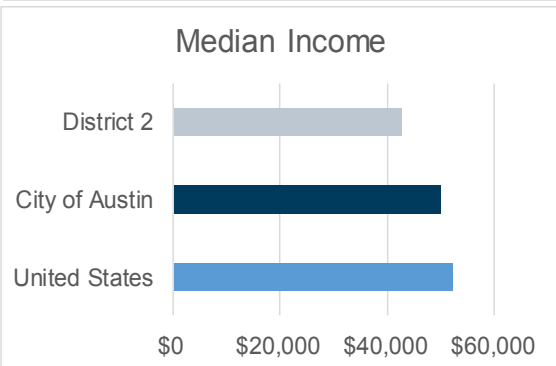
Barriers to Using the Internet
Internet non-users in District 2 face some major challenges in accessing and using technology. Security and privacy concerns was the top-rated barrier to Internet usage, and two-thirds of resident non-users also reported expense as a barrier. Having someone to use the Internet for them was also a highly ranked challenge, suggesting that there may be a reliance on younger household members to use the Internet in District 2, with less effort put into getting everyone in the home online. Many digital inclusion programs working in this district leverage strong intergenerational household ties to break down these barriers.

Social Landscape
Certain social factors may contribute to the challenges that prevent 14 percent of District 2 residents from using the Internet. Less than one in five District 2 residents has a Bachelor's Degree or higher, which is significantly lower than the citywide average of 44 percent and the national average of 30 percent. One in ten District 2 residents are unemployed, and 25 percent live in poverty. Many programs in Austin are dedicated to teaching 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.

austintexas.gov/digitalinclusion

Digital Inclusion
City of Austin

Digital Inclusion Partners & Resources in District 2

River City Youth Foundation (RCYF) is one of the most well-known organizations providing support to families in Dove Springs. One of RCYF's most innovation programs is TechComunidad where both children and their parents have access to bilingual computer training opportunities.

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 2. The City has a long history of supporting front-line programs that help residents overcome technological barriers. River City Youth Foundation is an anchor institution in District 2's historic Dove Springs neighborhood and provides diverse community support to residents including technology training. 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 further understand neighborhoods' unique needs and to connect with residents with technology resources in their communities.

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 2 will be home to four Community Connection sites including two public libraries, the River City Youth Foundation facility, and a public health facility.

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 2 residents through increased digital skills that contribute to improved education, job preparedness, health resources, social connections and more.

austintexas.gov/digitalinclusion

District 2 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 2'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 2 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	
River City Youth Foundation *5209 S. Pleasant Valley Rd.*	A cornerstone of Dove Springs, River City Youth Foundation provides youth and parents with computer literacy classes and computer access.
Mendez Middle School *5106 Village Square*	Skillpoint Alliance offers a 10-week Empower Computer Literacy class for adults at Mendez Middle School. The class focuses on professional development skills, such as Microsoft Office, Internet, Email, and Outlook.
Workforce Solutions South Center/ Goodwill Resource Center *6505 Burleson Rd.*	An integral resource for South Austin, this facility provides residents with public access computers and one-on-one job training. Workforce Solutions and Goodwill also offer "Computer and Internet 101 Classes" through the Literacy Coalition.
Southeast Library Branch *5803 Nuckols Crossing Rd.*	An Austin Public Library Branch with a public access computer lab.

District 2 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 2's selected facilities include two libraries, a health care facility, and a non-profit organization.

Community Connections Sites	
Austin Travis County Integral Care *5015 S. IH 35*	Google Fiber will support self-serve healthcare kiosks, enhancements to the telemedicine program, and facilitates patient information sharing among providers.
River City Youth Foundation *5209 S. Pleasant Valley Rd.*	The River City Youth Foundation will use Google Fiber to support its Tech-Comunidad program and to increase the amount of citizens they can serve.
Austin Public Libraries (Southeast, Pleasant Hill)	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.

District 2 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 2. Each of these are important to engage with in order to develop a grassroots campaign. These community leaders are our connections to the communities.

Planning Contact Teams & Neighborhood Associations and Organizations			
Southeast Combined Neighborhood Plan Contact Team	Go!Austin/Vamos!Austin (GAVA)-78745	Los Jardines Homeowners Association	Salem Walk Association of Neighbors
Lexington Parke Neighborhood Association	Onion Creek Plantation Neighborhood Watch Group	Far South Austin Community Assn.	Shadow Bend Neighborhood Association
Elroy Neighborhood Association	Paisano Mobile Home Park Neighborhood Assn	South Boggy Creek Environmental Association	Thaxton Place Owners Association
Far Southeast Improvement Association	Bluff Springs Valley Neighborhood Association	South Boggy Creek Neighborhood Association	McKinney Park East Homeowners Association
Berdoll Farms/Meadows	GO! Austin/VAMOS! Austin - Dove Springs	Armadillo Park Neighborhood Association	Beaconridge West Neighborhood
Friends of the Emma Barrientos MACC	Dove Springs Proud	Southwood Neighborhood Assn.	Peaceful Hill Preservation League
Southeast Corner Alliance of Neigh (SCAN)	Indian Hills - Langford Elementary Neighborhood Assn.	Woodhue Community Neighborhood Watch	Friends of Williams Elementary
Dove Springs Neighborhood Association	Indian Hills Neighborhood Watch	South Austin Neighbor Awareness Project	Friends of Armadillo Park
Los Arboles Homeowner's Association	Village at Pleasant Valley Homeowner's Association	Greenwood Hills-Colonial Park Neigh. Assn.	Parkridge Gardens HOA
Kensington Park Homeowners Assn.	Silverstone Neighborhood Assn	Odom Elementary School Park Team	Park Ridge Owners Association Inc.
Onion Creek Park Neighborhood Alliance	Del Valle Community Coalition	Circle S. Ridge Neighborhood Association	

austintexas.gov/digitalinclusion

Internet Users by Council District

austintexas.gov/digitalinclusion

Digital Inclusion
City of Austin
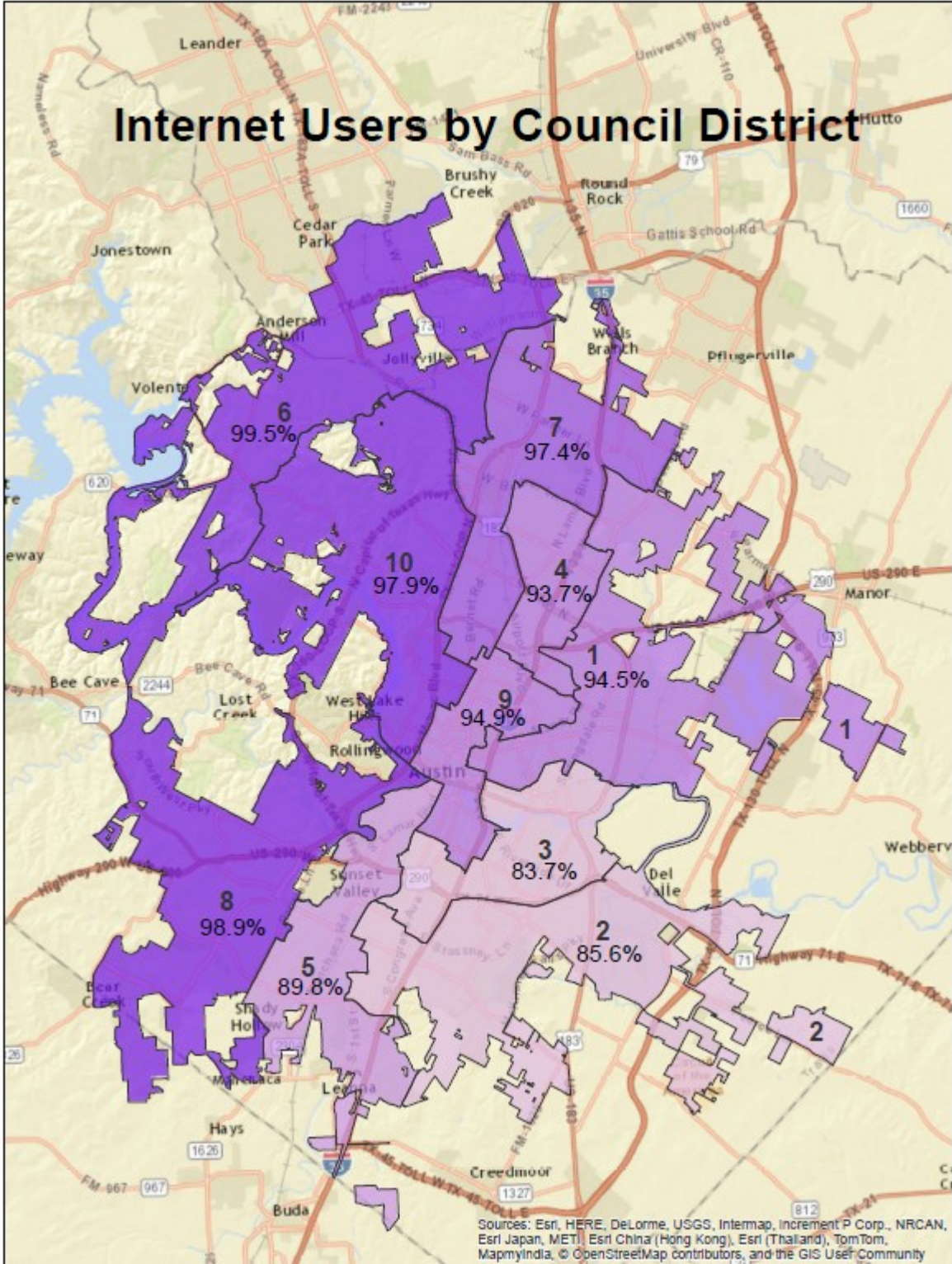
Digital Inclusion in Austin's District 2

Acknowledgements & Data Sources

Staff from the City of Austin's Digital Inclusion Program compiled this report on District 2 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.

austintexas.gov/digitalinclusion