

“Outlier: The Case of Austin’s declining African-American population”

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Key Terms

- “Major City” = 500,000 +
- “Major growth city” = a major city with more than 10% growth in its general population within a ten year period (2000 – 2010)
- Austin’s rate of growth between 2000 – 2010 was 20.4% (third fastest in the nation)

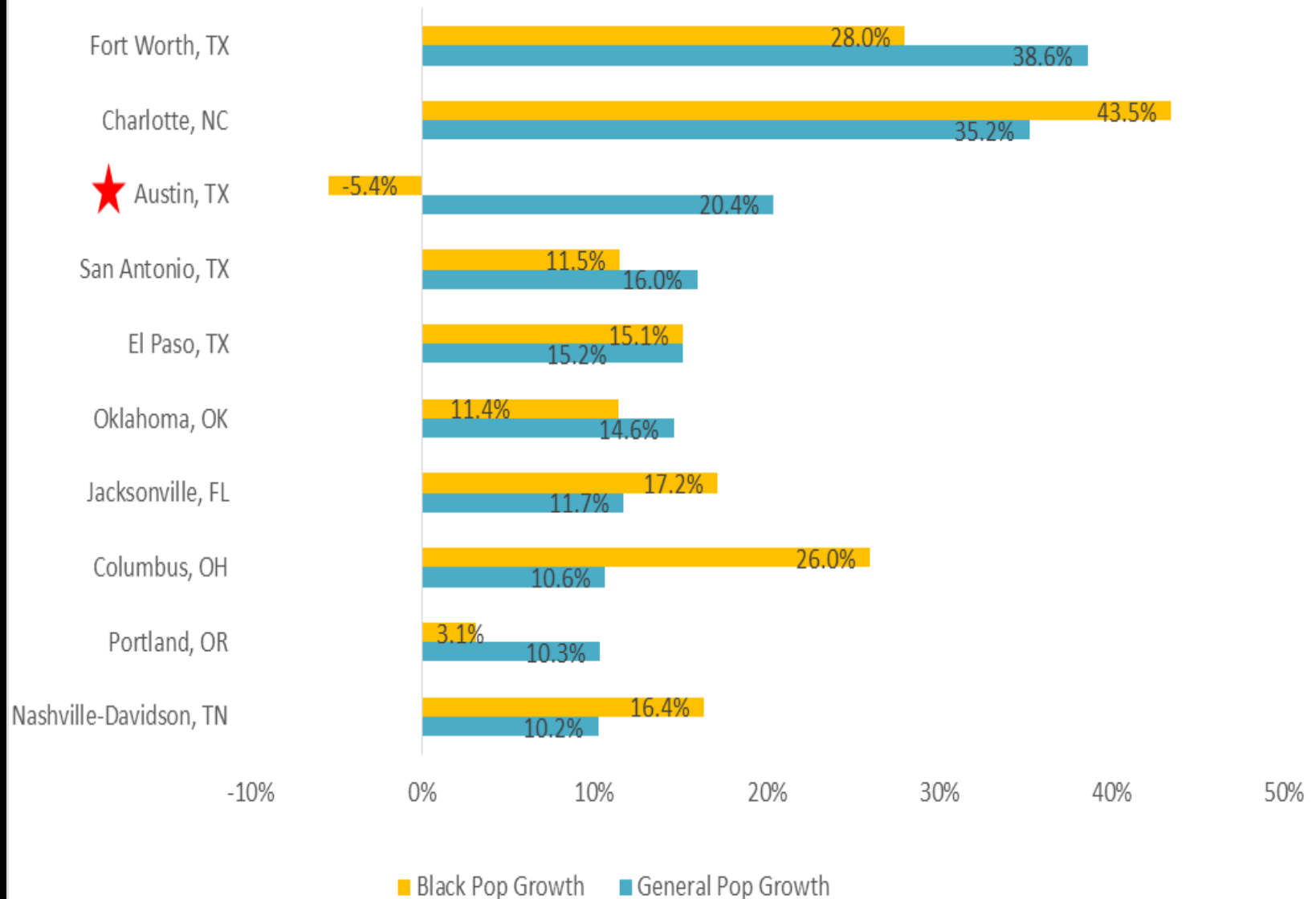
Hypothesis

- Major growth cities with double-digit growth in its general population should also experience growth in its African- American population.
- African-American growth may not necessarily “keep pace” with general population growth in these cities. But there should be at least some positive growth in African Americans across all major growth cities.

What did we discover?

- Every major growth city in the nation saw simultaneous growth in its African-American population save for one: Austin.
- In fact, no city with more than 8.5% growth experienced any loss in its African-American population.
- Again, Austin's growth = 20.4 %

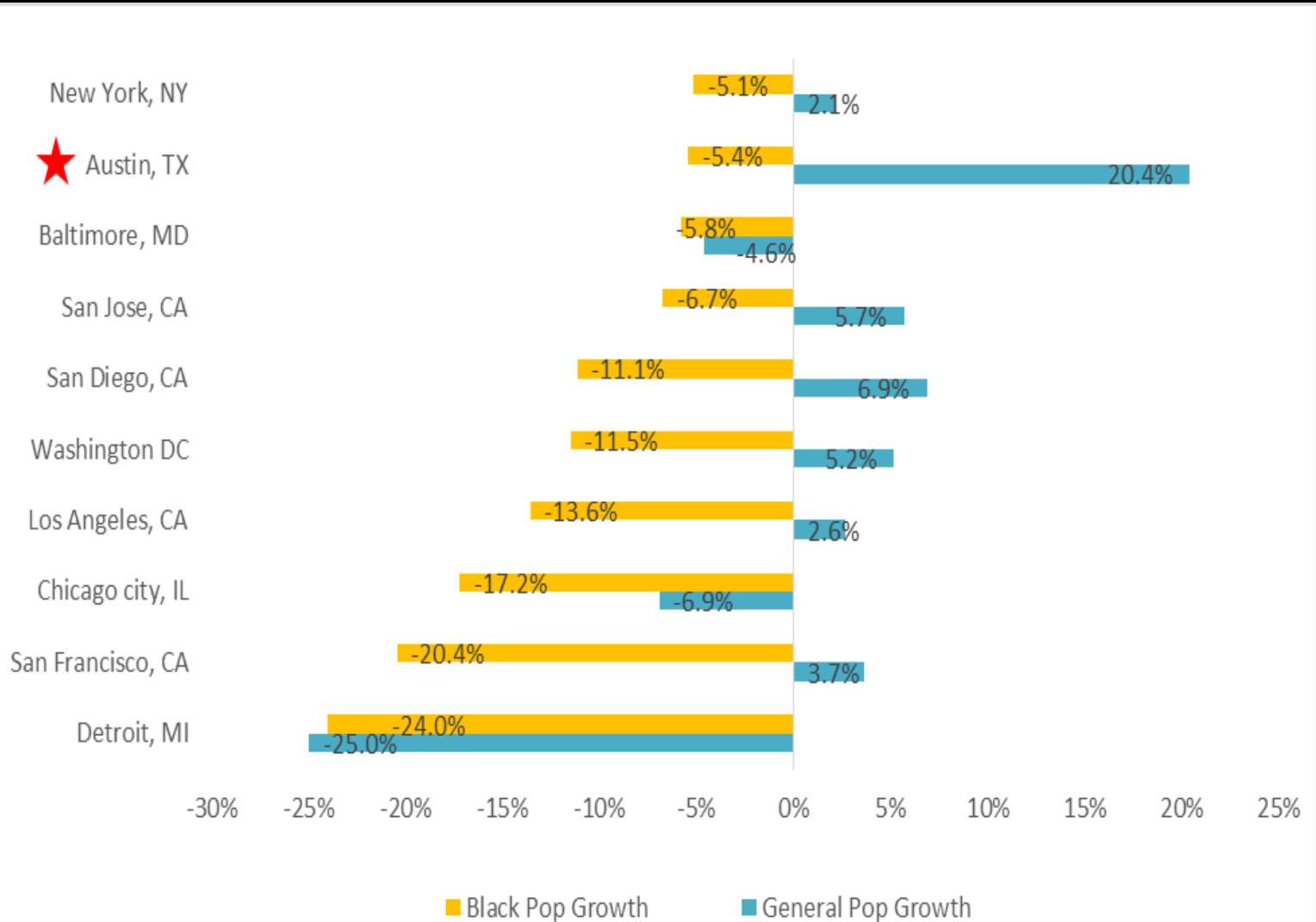
Austin Compared to other Major Growth Cities 2000- 2010

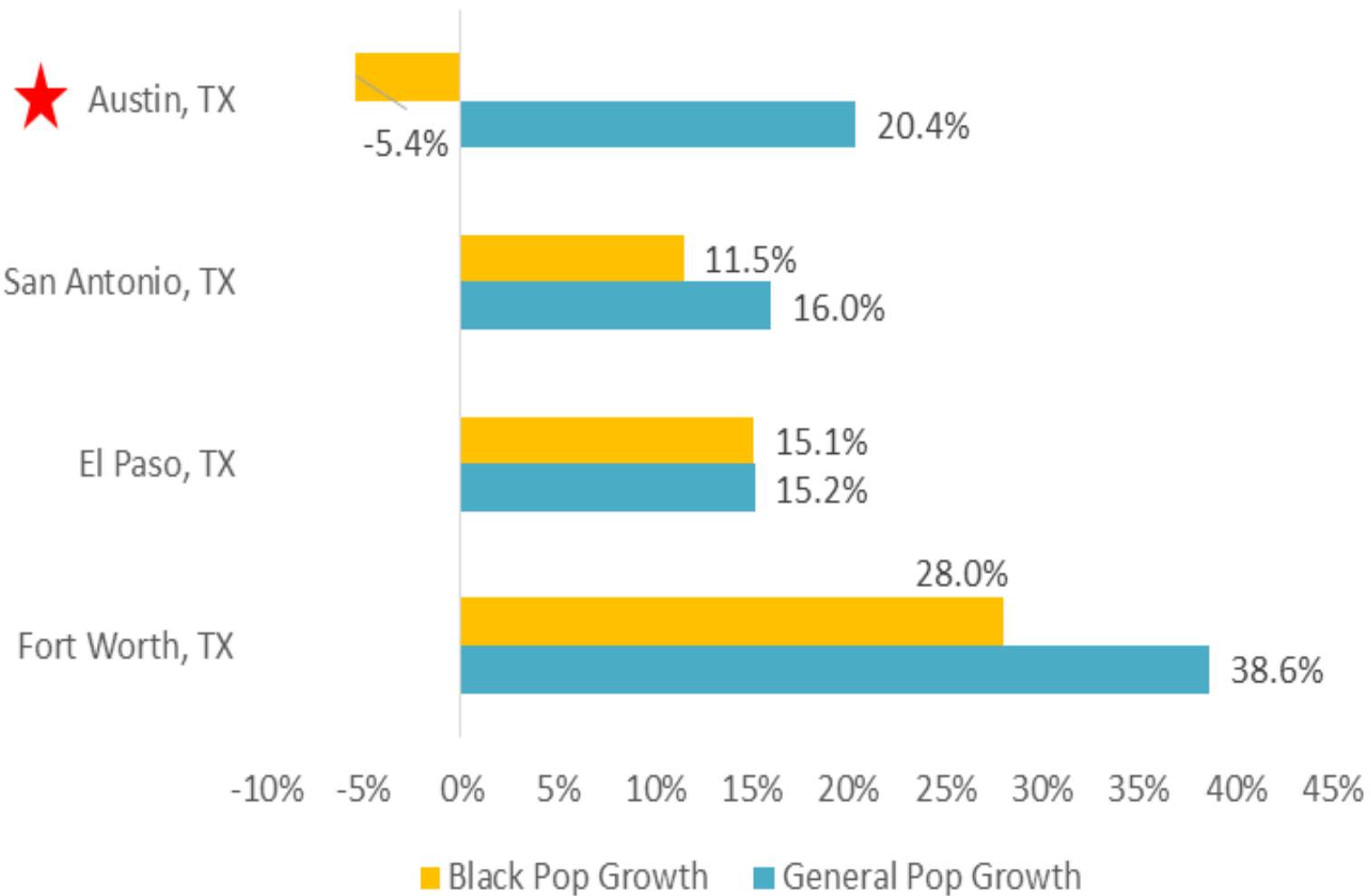


An important distinction

- - 5.4 % decline represents an absolute loss in African Americans in Austin between 2000 – 2010. (from 64,259 in 2000 to 60,760 in 2010,)
- This is not just a loss in the city's percentage of African Americans (dropping from 15% to less than 10%) but an actual loss in total numbers of African Americans.
- This makes Austin as statistical outlier.

Austin compared to other cities with AA population losses





What was the economic background of those who left Austin?

- African-American population losses occurred in census tracts that were on average poorer than those that did not experience such losses.

- Between 2000 and 2010, the average poverty rate increase for tracts that experienced African-American population losses was actually *less* than it was for those that did not experience such losses.
- One explanation is that poorer African Americans were the ones being primarily driven out of these census tracts; they were “taking their poverty with them.”

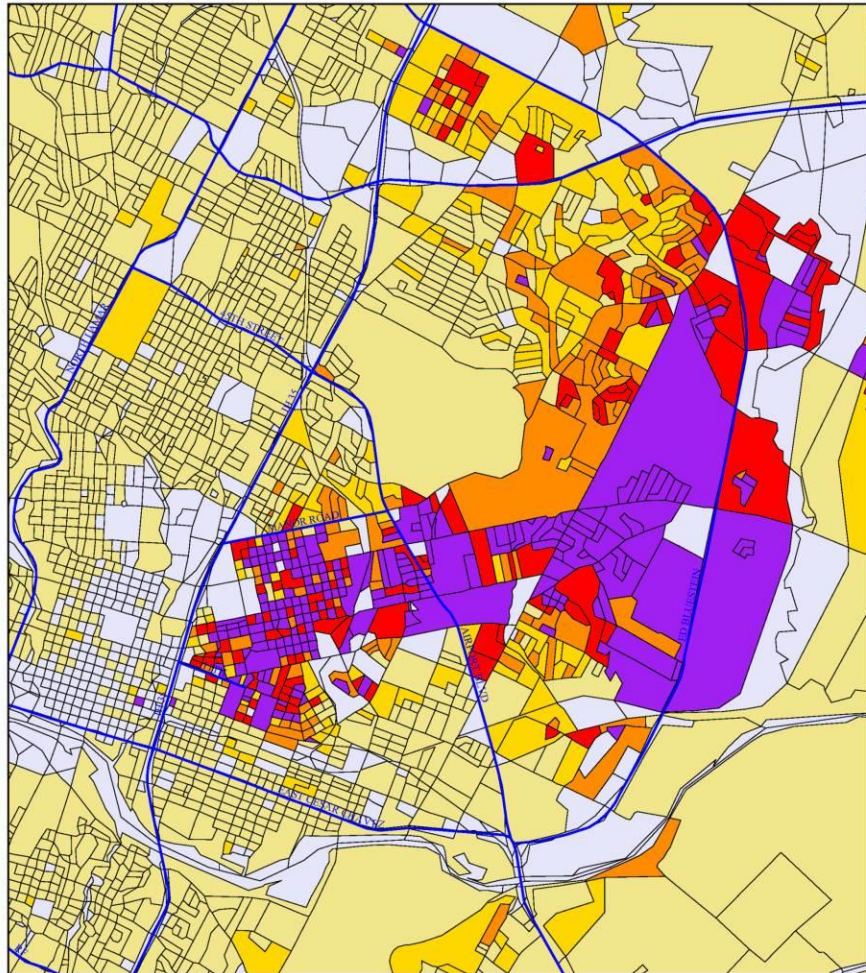
- Between 2000 and 2010, the property value increases in tracts that experienced African-American population losses were considerably higher than in those that did not experience such losses.
- The average increase in property values for tracts with African- American population losses was \$61,286; for those without African-American population losses it was \$36,889. In other words, property values soared after African Americans moved out.

- Between 2000 and 2010, the homeownership rates were relatively stronger in tracts that experienced African-American population losses when compared to homeownership rates in those that did not experience such losses.
- One infers from this that between 2000 and 2010, the number of renters decreased in census tracts that lost African Americans. African-American renters moved out of Austin, and were replaced by middle class homeowners.

Changing African-American Landscape in East Austin

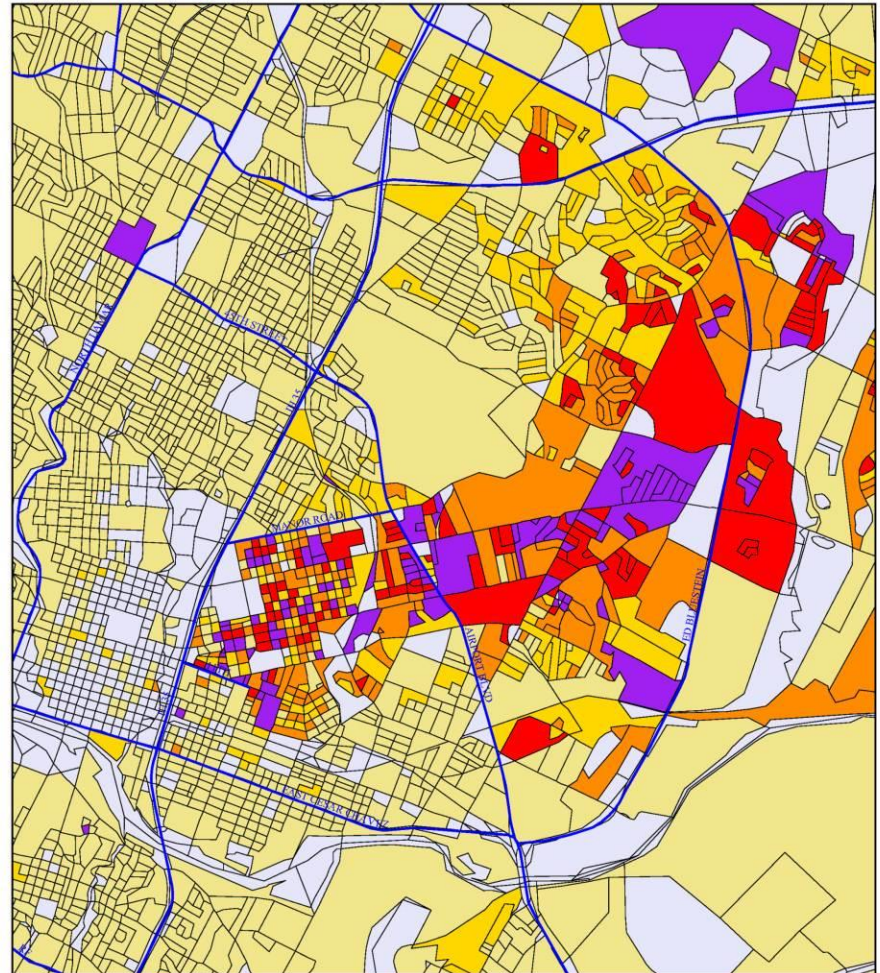
African-American Population Concentrations, 1990 and 2000.

Austin, Texas. 1990 Census and Census 2000 Data.



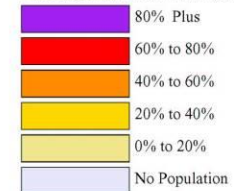
1990 Population

Percent African-American



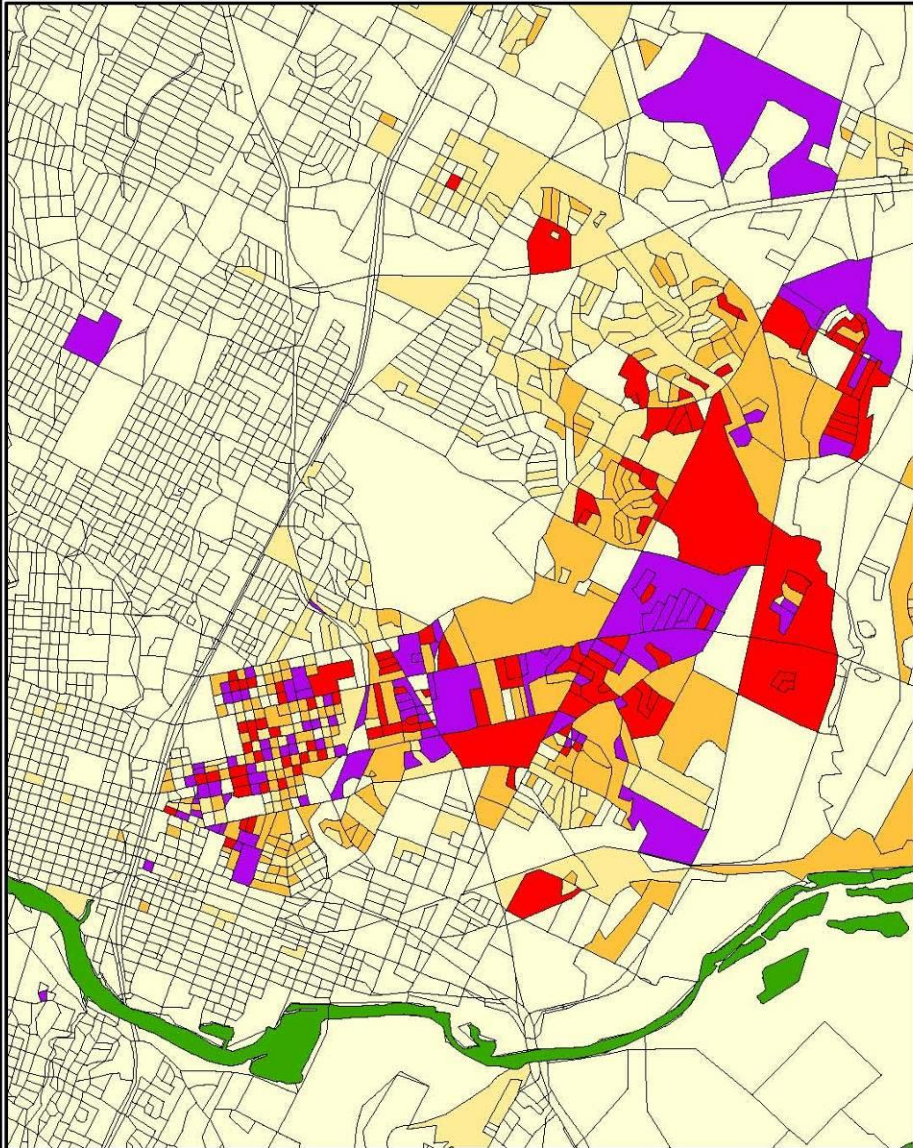
2000 Population

Percent African-American



Changing African American Landscape--Eastern Core

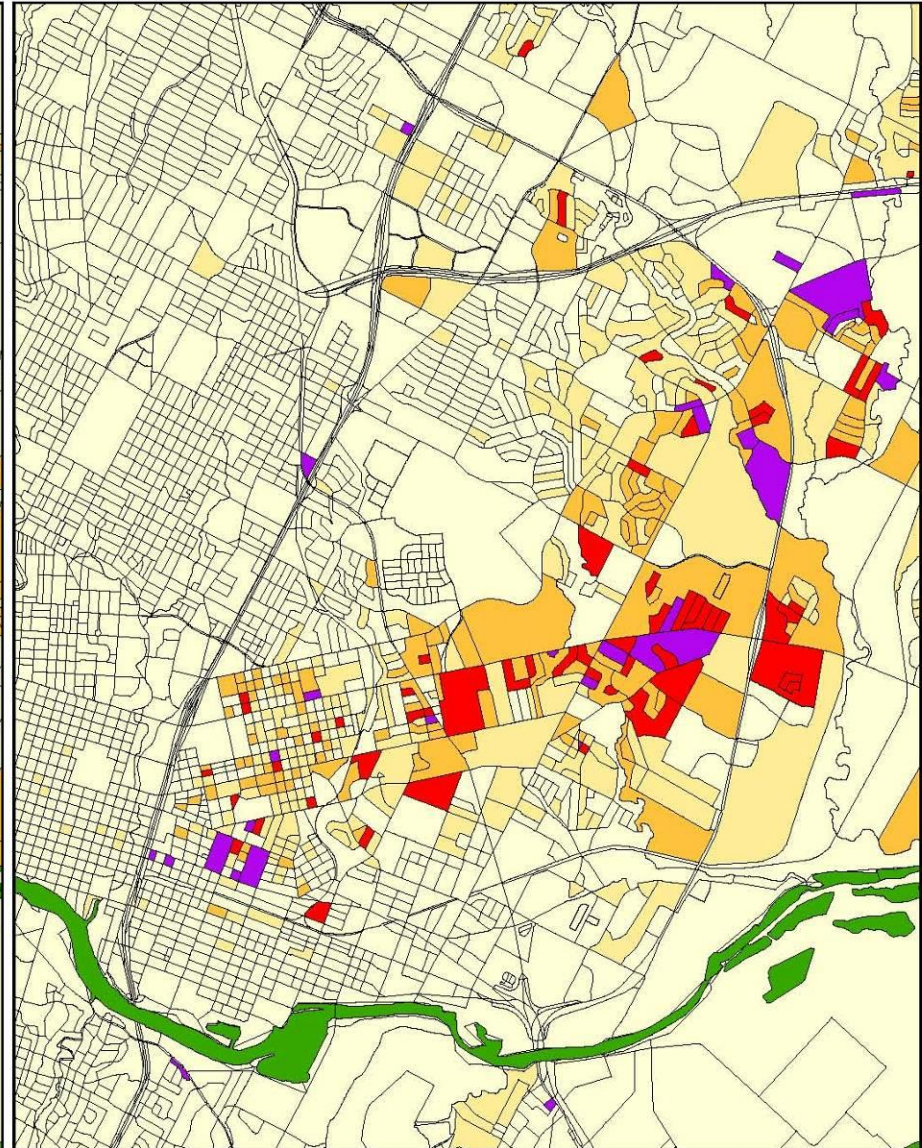
African American Population Concentrations, 2000 and 2010



Census 2000 Data
Census Blocks

Percentage of the
Total Population
that is
African American

Less than 20%
20% to 40%
40% to 60%
60% to 80%
80% Plus



Census 2010 Data
Census Blocks

Percentage of the
Total Population
that is
African American

Less than 20%
20% to 40%
40% to 60%
60% to 80%
80% Plus

Master Plan of 1928

- In 1928 – after two years of discussions amongst city leaders about how to impose residential segregation officially – the city council enacted its first comprehensive “City Plan” that aimed to establish East Austin as a “negro district” while at the same time greatly improving the quality of residential life in other parts of the city through expansion of city services and parks.
- To encourage self-relocation, the city placed the only African American schools in the segregated district.