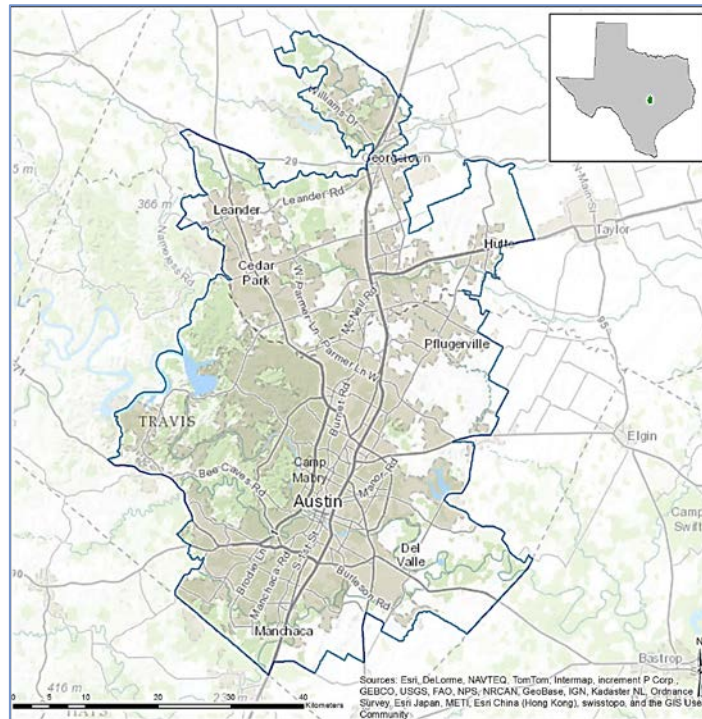# Austin, TX and surrounding area

Towns and cities rely on clean air, clean water, green space, and other natural amenities for economic sustainability and quality of life, yet their benefits are not always fully understood or considered in local decisions. EPA and its partners are producing EnviroAtlas to help communities better use environmental assets for public good.

EnviroAtlas includes an online interactive mapping application that anyone can use. The interactive map contains over 200 maps available for the U.S., as well as 100+ fine-scale maps for selected U.S. communities about existing and potential benefits from the local natural environment. The EnviroAtlas community component is based on 1-meter resolution land cover data. Information derived from these data is summarized by census block groups; more spatially explicit map layers are also provided. This fact sheet highlights some of the many community data layers available for the featured area of Austin, Texas.
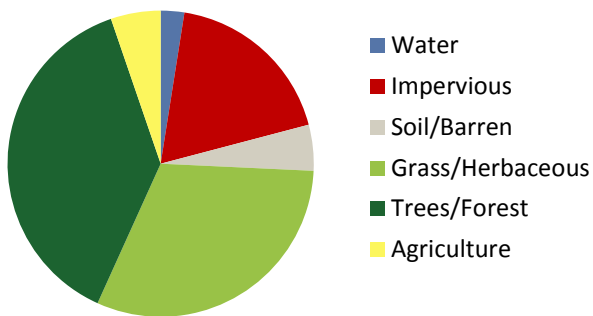
Background

The Austin, Texas area was chosen as an EnviroAtlas community because it offers multiple opportunities to leverage existing research and community engagement activities. It has also received high sustainability and heat vulnerability ratings that can be evaluated from a green infrastructure perspective. The EnviroAtlas boundary for the Austin area was determined using the 2010 Census definition of an Urban Area. In addition to Austin, it includes Georgetown, Round Rock, and Cedar Park, as well as additional towns within Travis and Williamson Counties. The area measures 2,160 square kilometers, and

Sources: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, TomTom, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, and the GIS User Community

encompasses 750 census block groups.

The Austin area is in the Texas Blackland Prairie ecoregion. It has a mild mid-latitude climate with hot summers and mild winters. The region was once vegetated with extensive tallgrass prairies but has mostly been converted into agriculture with some urban development. The leading industries in the area are technology and defense. Dell, Freescale Semiconductor, and IBM are among largest employers in the area. The demographics of the Austin community area indicate that the potential exists for income and other disparities in the distribution of environmental assets. EnviroAtlas includes demographic maps that can

Percent Land Cover in Community Area

- Water
- Impervious
- Soil/Barren
- Grass/Herbaceous
- Trees/Forest
- Agriculture

Austin Area Demographics 2010 Census	
Total population	1,334,516
Under 13 years old	18.98%
Over 70 years of age	4.90%
Other than white/non-Hispanic	46.33%
Below twice the U.S. poverty level	28.05%

help screen for potential health and well-being disparities resulting from disproportionate distribution of "green infrastructure."

Ecosystem Services Overview

In EnviroAtlas, the benefits humans receive from nature are grouped into seven categories that demonstrate the interconnectedness of these ecosystem services:
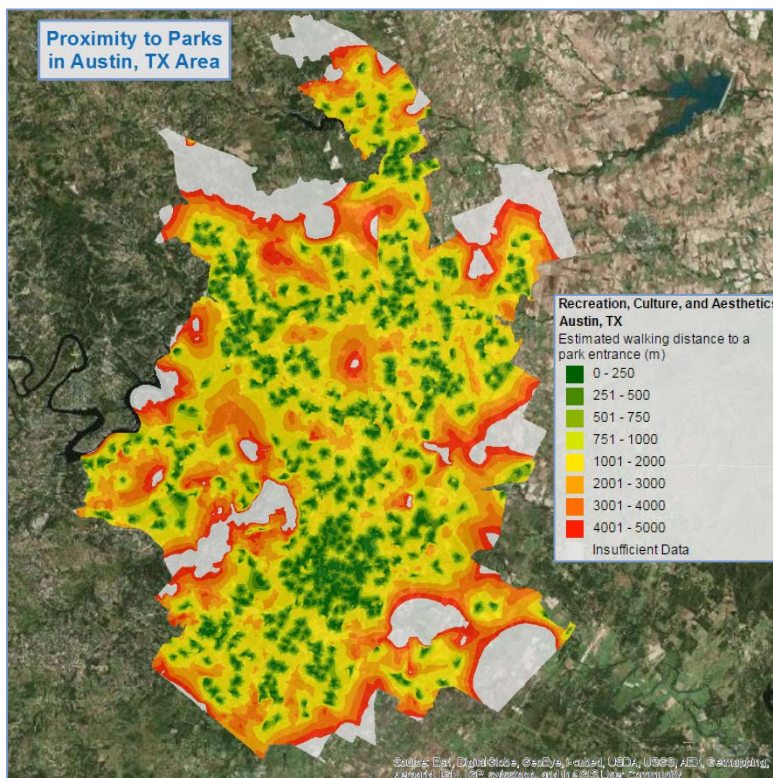
- Clean air
- Clean and plentiful water
- Natural hazard mitigation
- Climate stabilization
- Recreation, culture, and aesthetics
- Biodiversity conservation
- Food, fuel, and materials (data available only for communities with farm land)

Examples of some of the data included in EnviroAtlas are detailed below:

Access to Parks

Parks provide access to green space, encourage physical activity, and improve the livability and aesthetics of urban areas. Those who live closer to parks may be more likely to receive multiple benefits associated with this proximity.

- An estimated 12 percent of the Austin area is located within easy walking distance (500 meters) of a park entrance (dark and medium green areas in figure at right).
- An estimated 15 percent of the Austin area does not have a park entrance within 5 kilometers (grey areas in figure at right).

Proximity to Parks in Austin, TX Area

Recreation, Culture, and Aesthetics
Austin, TX
Estimated walking distance to a park entrance (m)

- 0 - 250
- 251 - 500
- 501 - 750
- 751 - 1000
- 1001 - 2000
- 2001 - 3000
- 3001 - 4000
- 4001 - 5000
- Insufficient Data

Stream and Lake Buffers

Natural land cover adjacent to streams and rivers, sometimes called the riparian area or zone, helps protect water quality and supply for drinking, recreation, and aquatic habitat. The EnviroAtlas community component analyzes stream and lake buffers in widths of 15 and 50 meters.

- An estimated 13 percent of Austin's land area is within 50 meters of a stream or lake.
- 87 percent of Austin's 50 meter stream and lake buffers are vegetated.
- 8 percent of Austin's 50 meter stream and lake buffers are impervious.

EnviroAtlas Tools and Features

- Learn more about and download EnviroAtlas data: https://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas/enviroatlas-data
- Search our data layers and access their fact sheets: https://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas/enviroatlas-dynamic-data-matrix
- Explore data for the Austin community area in our interactive mapping application: https://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas/enviroatlas-interactive-map
- Use our Eco-Health Relationship Browser to explore ecosystems, the services they provide, and their benefits to human health and well-being: https://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas/enviroatlas-eco-health-relationship-browser
- Contact us with questions about EnviroAtlas: https://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas/forms/contact-enviroatlas

EnviroAtlas combines maps, graphs, and other analysis tools, fact sheets, and downloadable data into an easy-to-use, web-based educational and decision-support tool. EnviroAtlas helps users understand the connections between the benefits we derive from ecosystem services and the natural resources that provide them. For more information, please visit www.epa.gov/enviroatlas.