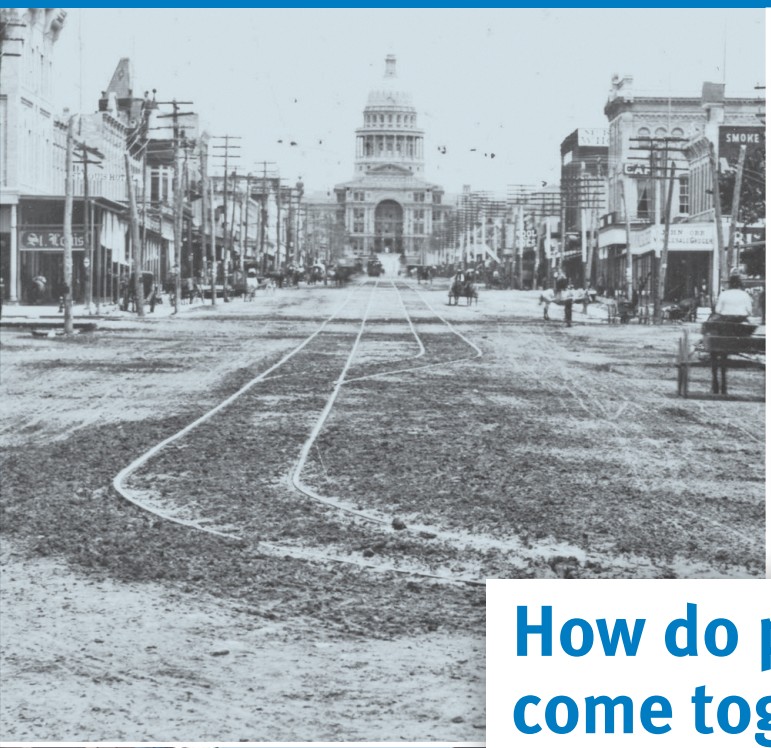
Spot On Social Studies

Two COMMUNITIES Over Time

by Tom Cardigan





How do people come together to turn a city into a community?



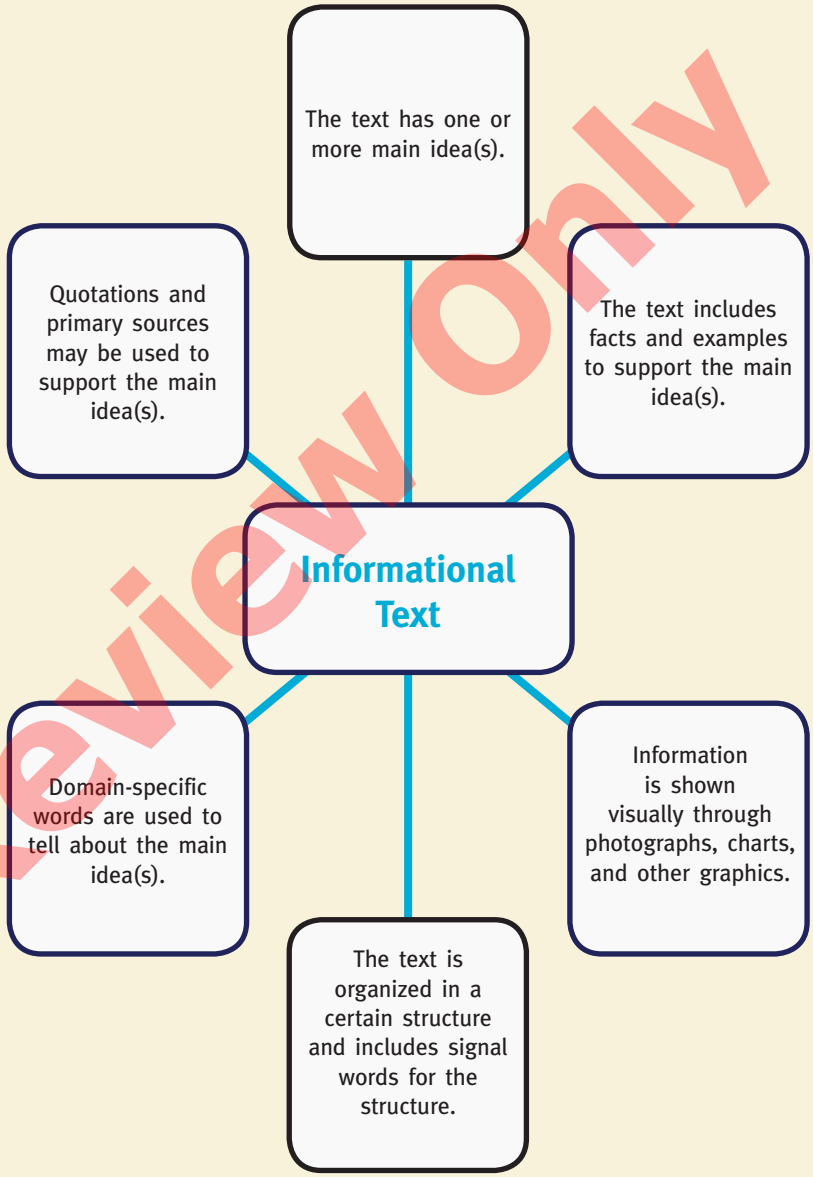


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Austin, Texas



Cape Canaveral, Florida

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Two American Communities

Around the world, communities come in many shapes and sizes. But they all have one thing in common. People in communities work together to make things better for everyone.

Austin, Texas, and Cape Canaveral, Florida, are very different. Still, each community started small and grew to become an exciting place to live.

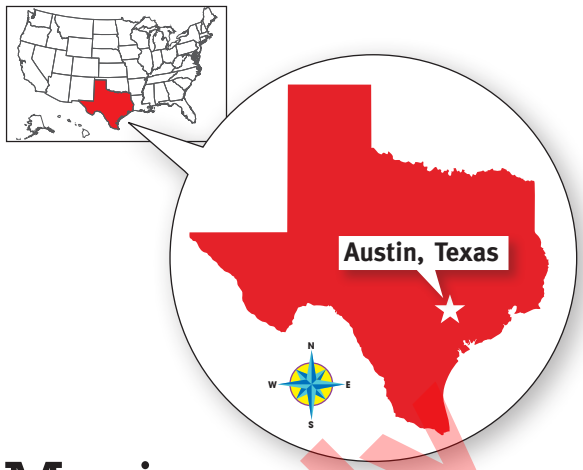
To build a community, people need a place that meets their needs for food, water, and shelter. To stay strong, the community must plan for difficult events, such as floods or storms. As a community grows, government helps its citizens meet their needs. Because the world is always changing, a community needs new ideas to grow and change, too.



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CHAPTER 1

Austin, Texas



From Stone Age to Live Music

Today Austin is the capital of Texas. The city is world-famous for its music. But people have lived there for more than 10,000 years. In a time called the Stone Age, people lived not far from the present-day city.

A natural spring brought fresh water to the land in this area. Native Americans camped there. They gathered food and hunted along creeks.

In 1730, people from Spain came to live in the same place. A settlement began near what would later be called Barton Springs. (In those days, the Spanish ruled a part of Mexico we now know as Texas.)



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▲ **Families enjoy swimming at Barton Springs near where people lived 10,000 years ago.**

Freedom and Growth

In the 1830s, Texans fought Mexico in the Texas **Revolution**. When they won their freedom, they called their new nation the Republic of Texas.

In 1839, the Republic's leaders chose the small town of Waterloo as their capital. The town had started near the spring water. They soon renamed the town Austin, honoring Stephen F. Austin. He was a leader of the Texas Revolution. When Texas became part of the United States in 1845, the city of Austin stayed the state capital. This was excellent news for the community and for Texas.

Stephen F. Austin, Father of Texas

Though he was often called "The Father of Texas," Stephen F. Austin was born in Virginia. In the 1820s, he came to the Texas area, then ruled by Mexico. He dreamed of starting a colony there. When Texas colonists had problems with Mexico, Austin tried to solve them peacefully. When the war with Mexico broke out in 1835, Austin supported the fight. He led Texan troops in a battle at San Antonio.



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◀ Austin, Texas, in 1873



▲ downtown Austin in the 1880s

People Arrive in Austin

The town of Austin began to do very well. The nearby Colorado River made it easy to bring in people and supplies. As a state capital, the city became home to government offices. New people and businesses sprang up quickly.

By the 1870s, people were arriving from all over the world. This gave the city a new look and feel. People came from Germany, Sweden, and Ireland. A Mexican-American neighborhood grew near Shoal Creek.

As the small town grew into a large city, its government had lots of work to do. Governments help people meet their needs for many things, such as education and transportation. And now there were more people with more needs to meet.

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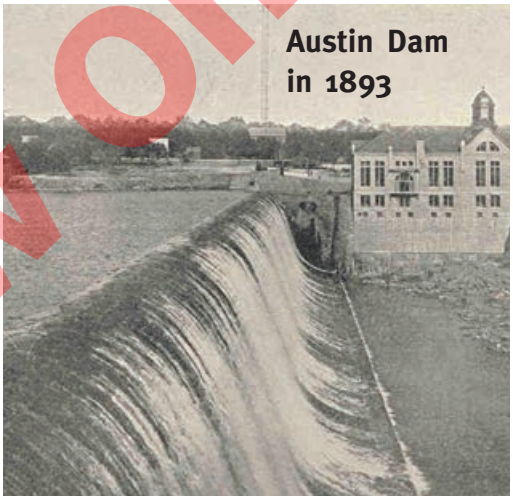
Meeting the People's Needs

Austin's government met the city's transportation needs by making streets and roads. They met educational needs by starting the Austin public school system. In 1888, the city finished a beautiful state capitol building as well as the University of Texas. But an important need for a city is electric power.

To meet this need, Austin built its own dam in 1893, on the Colorado River. The dam's running water made cheap electricity, bringing new businesses to the area. Soon the city added electric streetlights.



University of Texas in 1925



Austin Dam in 1893



the Texas Capitol in Austin today

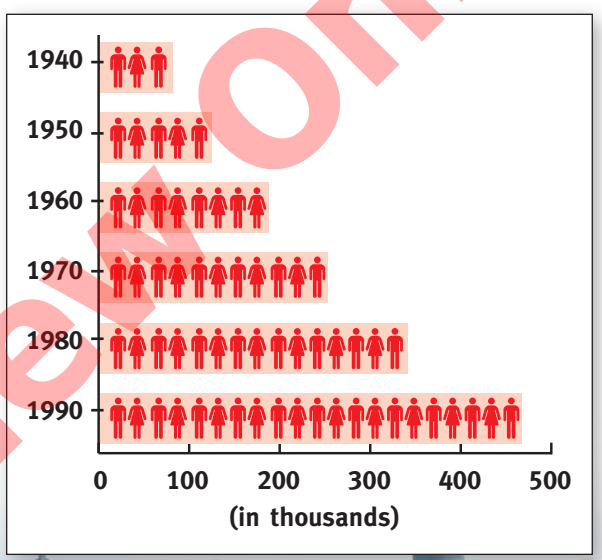
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Then in 1900, a time of heavy rain flooded the city. Austin's dam collapsed. Austin survived the flood, but the citizens still needed electricity. Over the years, the federal government loaned Austin the help it needed. Working with the state government, Austin rebuilt its dam in 1940. By working together with communities, government helped Austin stay strong.

The dam's supply of water and electricity helped start Austin's next time of growth. Between 1940 and 1990, the city's population grew quickly. This speedy growth was good for business. But the fast growth also brought problems.

AUSTIN'S POPULATION: 1940 TO 1990

Austin's population grew quickly in 50 years.





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Some of Austin's railroad tracks and buildings were left in ruins.

Saving Austin

In the 1970s and 1980s, crowding drew people away from some downtown areas. Many local businesses closed. Gaps opened where shops and restaurants had been. Large national stores replaced many small businesses. Companies built many of these big stores in **suburbs**, outside the city's downtown area.

Some of Austin's landmark buildings were empty and fell into ruin. But the citizens fought back. They came together to save their downtown area. Over the years, their effort kept many of the city's landmarks from being destroyed.





▲ Schieffer House, an Austin landmark, was falling apart. In 2015, government money saved it.

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