

# Resources and Opportunities for Participation in Redistricting Available to Members of the Public

The Brookings Institution

**Toward Public Participation in Redistricting**

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# FORMS OF PUBLIC ACCESS

- Public outreach hearings by legislative committees
- Redistricting websites maintained by career staff
  - Information
  - Download data
  - View and print plans
- Ability to draw plans for consideration on the state's redistricting system

# PUBLIC OUTREACH HEARINGS

Public outreach hearings were held statewide by the Senate and House Redistricting Committees during the 2010 interim

- Senate
  - 6 hearings to receive public testimony
  - 1 invited testimony on legal issues / data
- House
  - 14 hearings to receive public testimony
  - 2 invited testimony on census & legal issues / data

# PUBLIC OUTREACH HEARINGS

- Are publicized and recorded
- Allow the legislature to begin to gather the information needed to perform its role in drawing redistricting plans
- Are considered as part of the record of the extent to which such public participation, especially by minority group members, in fact took place

# Texas Legislative Council

## REDISTRICTING WEBSITES

- Redistricting Website (*information/news for the legislature and the public*)
- Redistricting FTP site (*data downloads*)
- DistrictViewer (*for plans and district detail*)
- Who Represents Me? (*member information*)

# Texas Redistricting Website

The screenshot shows the Texas Redistricting Website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a star logo and the text "TEXAS REDISTRICTING". To the right of the logo are links for "Glossary", "FAQs", "Site Index", and "Contact". Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for "Home", "Current Districts", "Legal Requirements", "Redistricting Process", "Redistricting History", and "Current Cycle".

On the left side, there are three main menu categories:

- Legislative Resources**: Senate Committee on Redistricting, House Committee on Redistricting.
- Redistricting Materials**: Publications, Maps and Reports, Cost and Request Information, Data.
- Applications & Tools**: DistrictViewer, Who Represents Me?, Redistricting FTP Server.
- Web Resources**: Texas State Data Center, U.S. Census Bureau (with sub-links for Census 2010 and American FactFinder), Texas Secretary of State: Elections, U.S. Dept. of Justice: Voting Section, NCSL: Redistricting.

The main content area is titled "2010-2011 Dates of Interest" and "ANNOUNCEMENTS". It features an RSS icon and a list of public hearings:

- ★ The Senate Select Committee on Redistricting will hold a [public hearing](#) at 12:00 noon on **Monday, October 4th**, in Amarillo.
- ★ The Senate Select Committee on Redistricting will hold a [public hearing](#) at 9:00 a.m. on **Tuesday, October 5th**, in Midland.
- ★ The House Committee on Redistricting and the House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence, Subcommittees of Beaumont Redistricting, will hold a [joint public hearing](#) at 11:00 a.m. on **Monday, October 18th**, in Beaumont.
- ★ The House Committee on Redistricting and the House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence, Subcommittees of Marshall Redistricting, will hold a [joint public hearing](#) at 11:00 a.m. on **Wednesday, October 20th**, in Marshall.
- ★ The House Committee on Redistricting and the House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence, Subcommittees of Abilene Redistricting, will hold a [joint public hearing](#) at 12:00 noon on **Wednesday, October 27th**, in Abilene.

On the right side, there is a "News" section with several news items:

- Sept. 14, 2010** - The Texas Legislative Council published a slide show on [Texas 2011 Redistricting](#).
- Sept. 1, 2010** - The Senate Select Committee on Redistricting met to hear invited testimony on [state demographics](#), council [preparations](#) for 2011 redistricting, and current [legal](#) issues.
- July 2010** - For the 2011 redistricting cycle, the plans used to elect officeholders in 2010 are designated as PLAN S100 (senate), PLAN H100 (house), PLAN C100 (congressional), and PLAN E100 (State Board of Education). Subsequent plans that are made public in each category will be numbered sequentially beginning with 101.
- June 2, 2010** - The House Committee on Redistricting and the House Committee on Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence met jointly to consider recent legal, technological, and demographic developments, including a [presentation](#) from the Office of the State Demographer, relating to upcoming redistricting.
- Feb. 10, 2010** - The House Committee on Redistricting met to consider matters relating to the upcoming 2010 Census, [more...](#)

At the bottom of the page, there is a "News archive" link. The footer of the page repeats the navigation links: "Home", "Current Districts", "Legal Requirements", "Redistricting Process", "Redistricting History", and "Current Cycle".

# Texas Redistricting Website

Designed to provide easy distribution of redistricting information and news to members of the legislature and the general public

- current news and announcements
- anticipated timeline (current cycle)
- description of legal requirements and process
- history of last three redistricting cycles
- publications
- links to Committees, Census Bureau, DOJ, and NCSL

# Announcements and News

- Dates for legislative or judicial hearings on redistricting in Texas
- Deadlines imposed by a legislative or judicial body on the submission of redistricting plans for the body's consideration
- Notice that a specific redistricting plan has been adopted by a legislative or judicial body
- Court filings on particular redistricting litigation
- Actions by a state or federal agency that directly affect redistricting in Texas, such as availability of census data or a preclearance decision by the U.S. Dept. of Justice

# Timeline

- April 1, 2010** Census Day
- Summer-Fall 2010** Regional outreach hearings in selected cities
- Dec. 31, 2010** Deadline for delivery of state total population data
- January 11, 2011** 82nd Legislature convenes
- February 15, 2011** Earliest likely delivery of detailed census population data
- April 1, 2011** Deadline for delivery of detailed census population data
- May 12, 2011** Last day to pass house bills under current rules (rules may change)
- May 30, 2011** 82nd Legislature adjourns; deadline for enactment of state senate or house plan
- May 31-Aug. 27, 2011** Legislative Redistricting Board convenes if legislature fails to adopt a senate or house plan
- Summer/Fall 2011** Special session on Congressional and SBOE plans could be called, if necessary
- October 26, 2011** Last day LRB may adopt a plan
- Fall 2011** All plans drawn by the legislature, the LRB, or a state district court must obtain preclearance under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act
- June-Dec. 2011** Possible court challenges to redistricting plans
- January 2, 2012** Filing deadline for 2012 elections

# Process and Requirements

- The redistricting process in Texas
  - public hearings, bills, Legislative Redistricting Board, VRA submission, judicial review (the courts), and elections under the new districts (notification and new precincts)
- Legal requirements, including federal and specific state requirements
- Glossary

# Redistricting Publications

- Population Change in Texas Since 2000
- Guide to 2011 Redistricting
- Data for 2011 Redistricting in Texas
- State and Federal Law Governing Redistricting in Texas

# Additional Information

- Current Districts
  - maps
  - population and election reports
- Historical process: covers 1980s, 1990,s and 2000s and provides an indication of how much this process varies every decade

# Links to Texas Redistricting FTP Site

Databases and shapefiles available free to public

- election returns, turnout, and registered voters by precinct for every election from 2002 to 2010
- GIS shapefiles and .csv block equivalency files of the current plans, census geography, and voting precincts
- Shapefiles and basic population and election reports for every proposed plan that is made public by the legislative process during redistricting

Gigabytes of this data are downloaded every month

# Benefits of Websites

In addition to providing the legislature and the public *with information*, providing data on the websites

- Can relieve staff from answering requests for copies of the data
- Is convenient for the public and for lawyers, media, interested parties, etc.
- Makes data available 24/7
- Allows data to be accessed quickly and viewed and printed locally as soon as it is posted

# DistrictViewer

## *District Viewing Application*

An interactive plan viewing system used to look at and compare current district plans and proposed redistricting plans that have been made public.

Available to the legislature and the public.

Features:

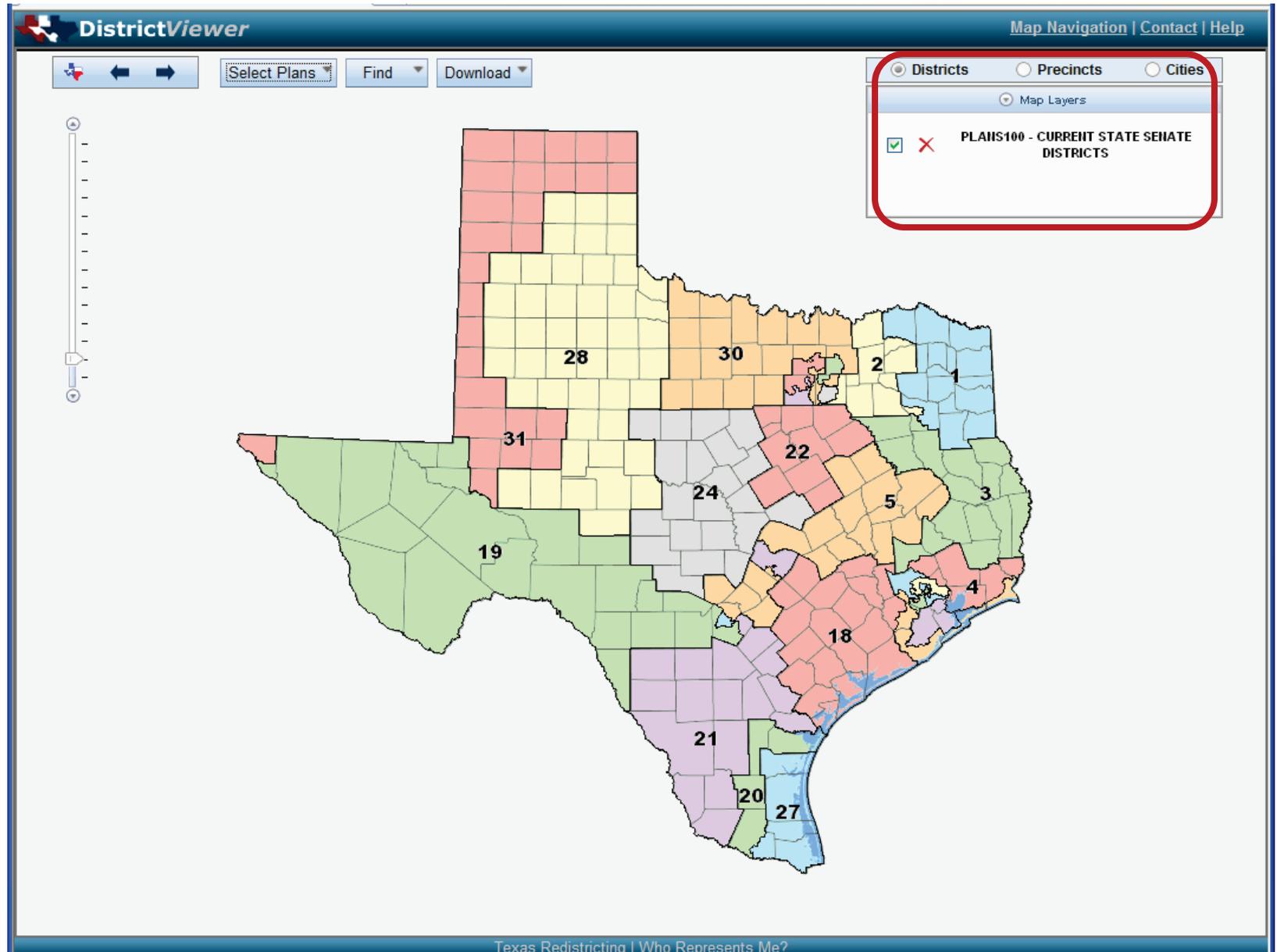
- Overlay and compare two plans
- Find an address, city, or county
- Access plan maps and reports 24/7

# DistrictViewer

## Select Base Plan

The screenshot displays the DistrictViewer web application interface. At the top, the title "DistrictViewer" is visible on the left, and navigation links "Map Navigation | Contact | Help" are on the right. Below the title bar, there is a toolbar with a "Select Plans" dropdown menu, a "Find" dropdown, and a "Download" dropdown. The "Select Plans" menu is open, showing three options: "Base Plan", "Overlay Plan", and "Clear Plans". To the right of the toolbar, there are three radio buttons labeled "Districts", "Precincts", and "Cities", with "Districts" selected. Below these is a "Map Layers" button. On the left side of the map area, there is a vertical zoom slider. The main map area shows a map of Texas with a grid of districts. A blue shaded area is visible in the southeastern part of the state, representing a selected district or plan. At the bottom of the page, the text "Texas Redistricting | Who Represents Me?" is displayed.

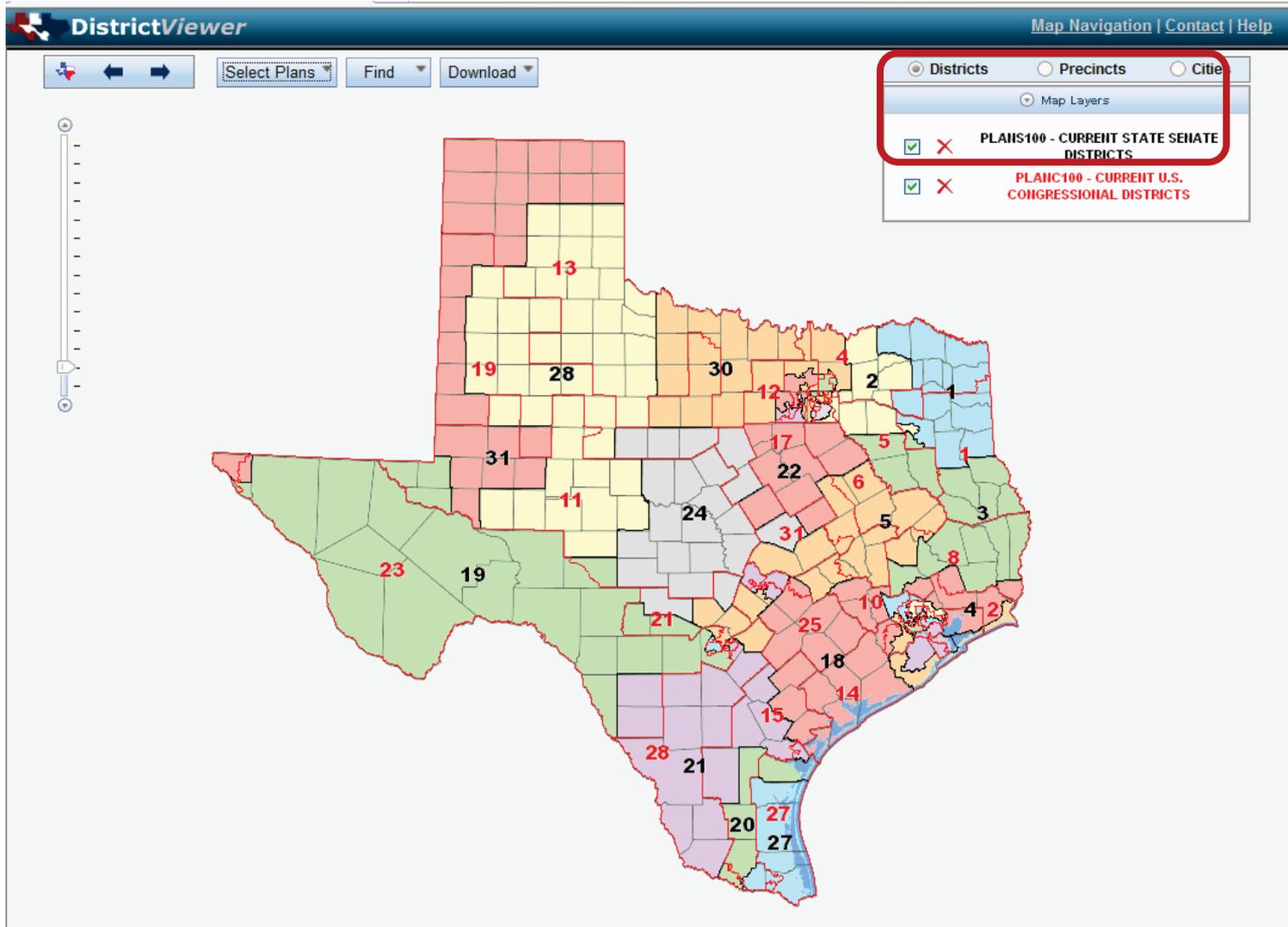
# Senate Plan



# Two Plans Can Be Compared

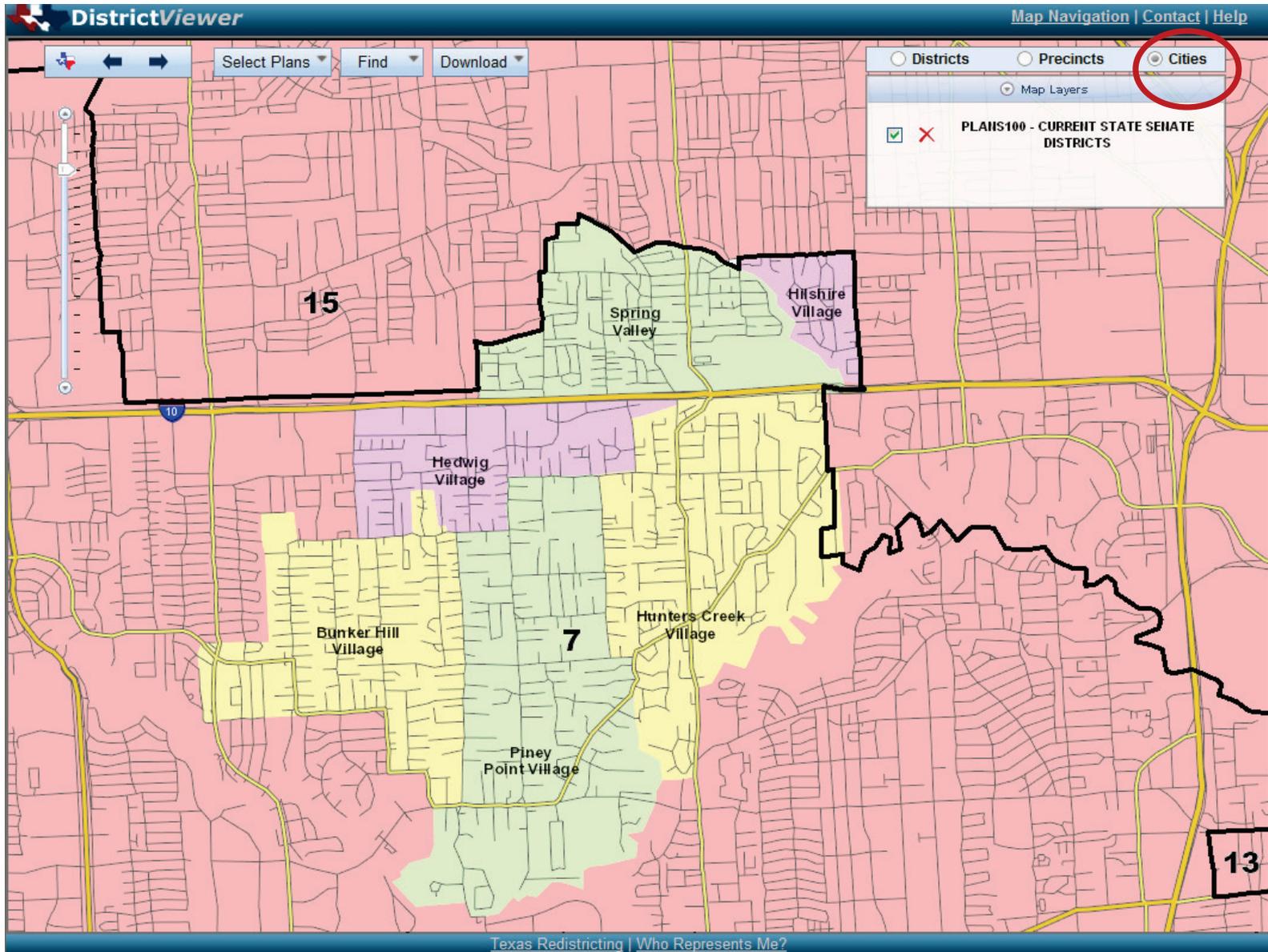
## Base Plan in Color

### with Overlay Plan in Red Lines



# Zoom in for more detail

## Show cities with plans



# Find an Address - with Streets

The screenshot displays the DistrictViewer interface. At the top left, the logo "DistrictViewer" is visible. To its right are navigation links: "Map Navigation | Contact | Help". Below the logo is a search bar with a dropdown menu set to "Find". A red box highlights this menu, which lists "District", "Precinct", "County", "City", and "Address". To the right of the search bar is a "Download" button. In the top right corner, there are radio buttons for "Districts", "Precincts", and "Cities", and a "Map Layers" section. A pop-up window titled "PLAHS100 - CURRENT STATE SENATE DISTRICTS" is open, showing a map of the current state senate districts. The main map shows a grid of streets in Austin, Texas, with a red box highlighting a specific address: "1200 N. Congress Avenue", "Austin", "78701". Below the address is a link that says "Who Represents Me?". The map also shows district numbers "14" and "25".

# Links to Who Represents Me?

Displays the districts and members for that address with links to their web pages

# Additional Features

- Download a statewide map or a shapefile
- Download population and election reports
- Now available as a mobile app  
<http://gis1.tlc.state.tx.us/dvrmobile.html>

# RedAppl

## *District Drawing Application*

- Available to legislators in their Capitol and district offices
- Available to the public by appointment in council offices
- Training provided
- Plans may be imported and exported in the standard formats to and from other applications

# Other States

- Florida is developing a free, public web-based application
- Minnesota has a very informative website
- Some vendors have web applications for sale

Note that many states do not have a single, nonpartisan support agency. In some, the house and senate have separate support, and in others, the Democrats and Republicans have separate support. Also, a number of states have a commission system. In addition, Texas is a Voting Rights Act Section 5 state, so we need to have election data by precinct. The majority of the states who are not subject to Section 5 may have different needs.