

PHO 69 1992

# DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED APR 29 1976

DATE ENTERED JUL 12 1976

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

### 1 NAME

HISTORIC

*nh* **\*\***  
Austin "Moonlight Towers"

AND/OR COMMON

Austin Tower Lighting System

### 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

*most in southern section of city*

CITY, TOWN

Austin

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

10

--- VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

CODE

48

COUNTY

Travis

CODE

453

### 3 CLASSIFICATION

#### CATEGORY

DISTRICT

BUILDING(S)

STRUCTURE(S)

SITE

OBJECT

#### OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC

PRIVATE

BOTH

#### PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS

BEING CONSIDERED

#### STATUS

OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

WORK IN PROGRESS

#### ACCESSIBLE

YES: RESTRICTED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

NO

#### PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCIAL

EDUCATIONAL

ENTERTAINMENT

GOVERNMENT

INDUSTRIAL

MILITARY

MUSEUM

PARK

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

RELIGIOUS

SCIENTIFIC

TRANSPORTATION

OTHER: *Municipal lighting*

### 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Austin

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Austin

--- VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

### 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Travis County Court House

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Austin

STATE

Texas

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Texas State Historical Survey Committee

DATE

1970

--- FEDERAL  STATE --- COUNTY --- LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

Austin

STATE

Texas

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE with exceptions
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Austin "Moonlight Towers" were erected in 1894-1895 by the Fort Wayne Electric Company and served as the City's original means of illumination. Originally, 31 of the towers were put up at various locations throughout Austin. They were built of a triangular cast and wrought iron framework, 150 feet high, mounted on a 15 foot tall iron pedestal anchored in concrete, giving each "Moonlight Tower" a total height of 165 feet. They resemble spindly oil derricks and were so designed to prevent attempts to scale the towers. The structures are incapable of standing by themselves and are steadied by balanced tension steel cables. Within the center of each tower's framework is a small, hand-operated elevator which was used, originally, to lift a workman to the cluster of six carbon arc lamps at the top to change, light, and extinguish the two pieces of carbon which produced the illumination. A ladder on the outside of the structure was also provided for servicing. In the 1920's, these lamps were replaced with incandescent lighting and, in 1936, mercury vapor lamps were installed with an on/off switch at each base and continue, today, to be used. The original lights illuminated an area within a circle of 3,000 feet in diameter and the Fort Wayne Electric Company guaranteed that the light would be strong enough to enable anyone to read a normal watch without squinting and agreed to remove the towers at its own expense if this test failed. (Today the lamps are somewhat weaker, covering a circle of about four square blocks.)

Two towers have been destroyed in traffic accidents, two have been blown down by cyclones, and six have been victims of rust and old age. The locations of the 21 remaining "Moonlight Towers" are as follows:

1. City Park
2. East Side Drive and Leland St.
3. Zilker Park
4. South 1st St. and West Monroe
5. West 4th St. and Nueces St.
6. West 6th St. and West Lynn
7. West 9th St. and Guadalupe
8. West 12th St. and Blanco St.
9. West 12th St. and Rio Grande
10. West 15th St. and San Antonio
11. West 22nd St. and Nueces St.
12. West 41st St. and Speedway
13. West 23rd St. and Red River
14. East 19th St. and Chicon St.
15. East 13th St. and Coleta
16. Leona St. and Pennsylvania Ave.
17. East 11th St. and Trinity
18. East 11th St. and Lydia St.
19. East 6th St. and Medina St.
20. East 2nd St. and Neches St.
21. Canterbury St. and Lynn

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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Fifteen of these 21 structures have received historic recognition from Austin's Historic Landmark Commission and the towers became an official state landmark in April 1970. The other six "Moonlight Towers" have apparently experienced considerable deterioration and two of these are being considered for demolition (East 6th and Medina Streets; West 6th and West Lynn Streets). Original materials were not especially strong and have succumbed fairly easily to certain air pollutants and careless drivers. Once supporting parts are bent or corroded, the stability of the entire structure is questionable. Because no new parts are available, the towers which are beyond repair are carefully dismantled and stored in substations for use in patching towers still operating. The towers are repainted and the leg sections braced every four years, when the lamps must be replaced. The City of Austin has been very cooperative in the maintaining of the "Moonlight Towers;" even to the extent of exploring the possibility of building new towers to replace deteriorated ones. The Zilker Park Tower was built to conform to the original design of the lighting system at a cost of \$10,000. Similar attention was given to the moving of a tower in 1948 to allow for widening of a street. The "Moonlight Tower" at West 23rd Street and Red River was inched along the ground, in an upright position, 43 feet on greased steel tracks using block and tackles attached to the guy wires.

Although the towers are not believed to add, significantly, to the lighting program of Austin, the City believes that their status as visible reminders of Austin's past history warrants a thorough analysis of a plan for their preservation and/or reconstruction which considers both public safety and sentiment. The "Moonlight Towers" are landmarks in Travis County and are irreparable and irreplaceable once they are down.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		URBAN PLANNING

SPECIFIC DATES 1894-May 6, 1895 (built) BUILDER/ARCHITECT Fort Wayne Electric Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Austin "Moonlight Towers" are believed to be the only remaining examples of the tower lighting system which was popular in U.S. cities during the late 19th century. At the time of their installation in Austin, only Detroit, Michigan, still maintained a similar lighting system. Efficiency and economy had pushed other cities to replace the tower lights with conventional street lights. But Austin's citizens have opposed moves to remove their "Moonlight Towers," citing their romantic, sentimental, and advertising value. The City has respected the feelings of the people and has put forth great effort in caring for the 21 remaining towers (Deemed "Moonlight Towers" because of the blue, moonlight-like glow they cast, they were put up high with the theory that they would diffuse a light everywhere, like the moon or sun.) , including the moving of a tower threatened by the widening of a street and the erection, in 1967, of a replica tower in Zilker Park (to replace a fallen one) at a cost of \$10,000. Originally, 31 of the lighting structures were built by the Fort Wayne Electric Company and put into use for the first time on May 6, 1895. They were to provide illumination for the hilly City of Austin at night, aiding citizens in their nocturnal movements about the City and helping police to protect businesses after dark. The towers became an official state landmark in April 1970.

Austin's city officers of the 1890's, led by Mayor A.P. Wooldridge, received the "Moonlight Towers" in exchange for a city-owned narrow-gauge railroad which had been used for transporting building materials to the old Austin Dam site on the Colorado River (an historic engineering failure, the dam broke in 1900). The Fort Wayne Electric Company agreed to light the City of Austin and to install dynamos at the Austin Dam which would power the lamps. The transaction for lighting and dynamos was conducted with \$70,000 in cash and the remaining \$43,500 as trade in value for the railroad,

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setting the original cost of each of the 31 "Moonlight Towers" at approximately \$1,500. Since the day they were first lit the lights have been off for only a few short periods. Threatened with removal on two occasions, the towers have been zealously protected by Austin's citizens. The City has incorporated the old system with the newer, more conventional street lights and has continued to maintain the Tower Lighting System in response to the demands of the citizens.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

City of Austin, Historic Landmark Inventory. Moonlight Towers. (File # C14h-74-028).

Sykora, Marc@lla. "Moonlight Towers Called 'Golden Dream'" (no bibliographic data available, but probably came from Austin American-Statesman, April 1975).

Williamson, Roxanne Kuter. Austin, Texas; an American Architectural History. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1973. xxviii, 161 pages. illus.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. one acre each including tension cables.

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 4	6 2 0 7 4 0	3 3 4 9 3 5 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Locations of individual towers given in item number 7.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE	Joe R. Williams, Project Director Murray R. Arrowsmith, Research Associate; Dan Hardy, Research Asst., THC
ORGANIZATION	History of Engineering Program
STREET & NUMBER	Department of Civil Engineering, Texas Tech University
CITY OR TOWN	Lubbock
DATE	April 5, 1976
TELEPHONE	742-1231
STATE	Texas

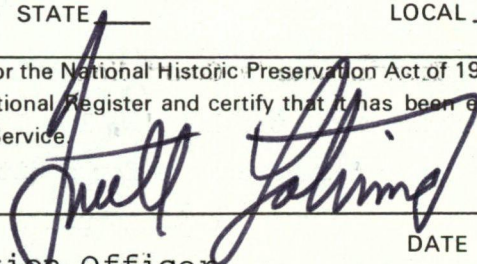
## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 4-27-76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 5/12/76

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 6-29-76

RBR for WJM 7/8/76

Property Austin "Moonlight Towers"

State Texas Working Number 4.29.76.3234

Travis  
Ref # 76002071

**TECHNICAL**

Photos 5  
Maps 4

**CONTROL**

OK *pl*  
5.3.76

unusual, but... (nice)

**HISTORIAN**

Accept  
W.R. Luce  
5/13/76

Very interesting group of "structures"  
non-contiguous

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

Accept  
M. J. Tuttle 5-13-76

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory BMB <sup>photo 5/24</sup> 6/16  
Review Accept End 6/23

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

Accept  
Cole  
6/28/76

**BRANCH CHIEF**

**KEEPER**

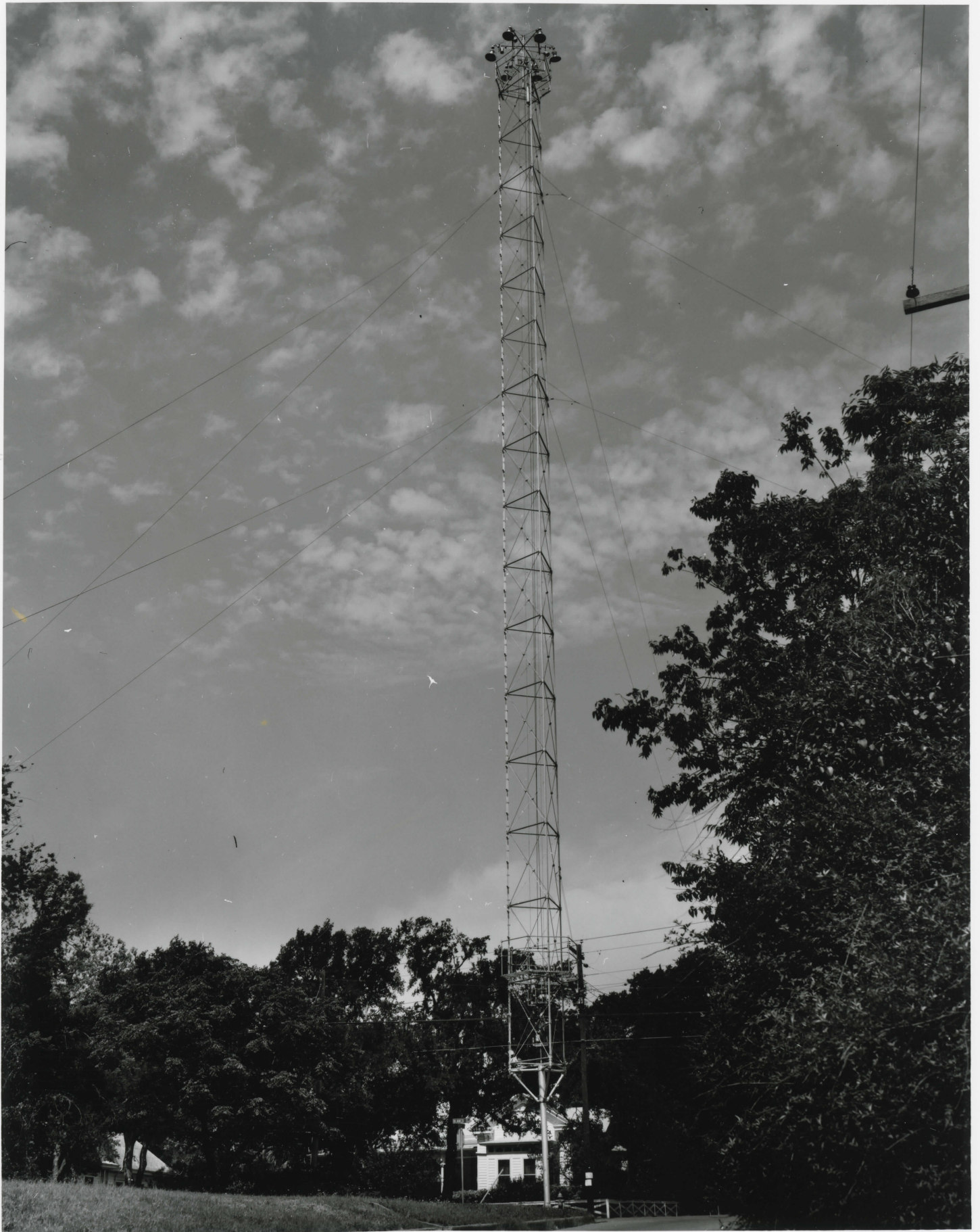
*Hungt*  
6.29-76

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Register Entry 8-3-76

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_  
Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Entered JUL 12 1976

INT:2106-74



*Austin*

Moonlight Towers

Austin, Texas

Travis County

Dan Hardy

April, 1976

Texas Historical Commission

Looking east toward Blanco & West 12

Photo #1

APR 29 1976

JUL 12 1976

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



NPS Number 7-12-76

Title: Austin "Moonlight Towers"  
Travis County, Texas

Loc. Detail of top of "Moonlight  
tower" showing mercury vapor  
lamps

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



NPS Number 7-12-76

Title Austin "Moonlight Towers"  
Travis County, Texas

150. detail, upper part of "M.T."  
showing mercury vapor  
lamps & steel support cables

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Gua

S B

TEX

ONT  
WALK

ONE WAY

NPS Number 7-12-76

Title: Austin "Moonlight Towers"  
Travis County, Texas

Loc. Looking S. to base of  
"M.T."

West 9<sup>th</sup> St. & Guadalupe

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



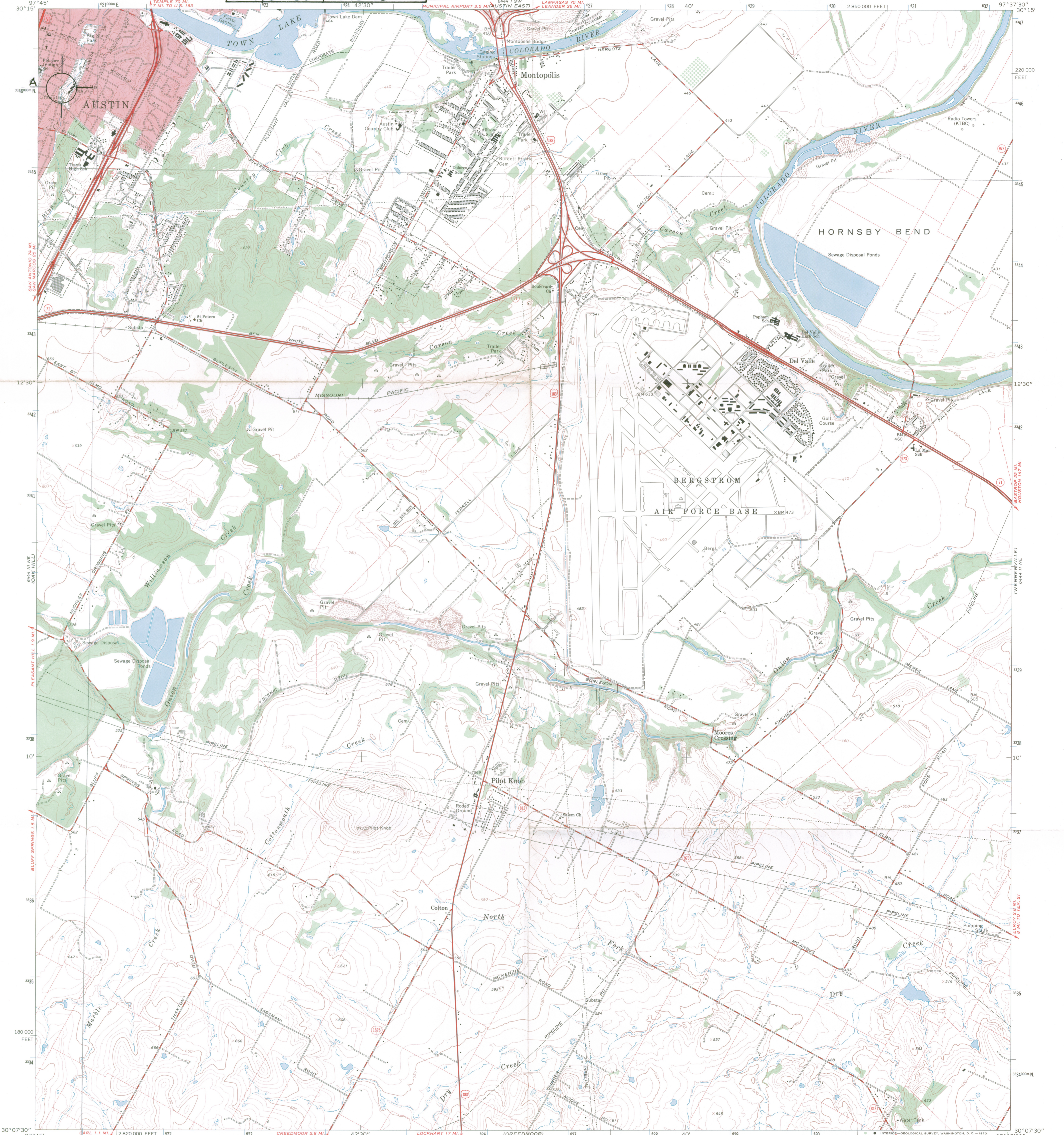
NPS Number 7-12-74

Title: Austin "Moonlight Towers"

Travis County, Texas

Loc. general view of "Moonlight Tower"  
at West 9<sup>th</sup> St. & Guadalupe.

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1954. Field checked 1955. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966

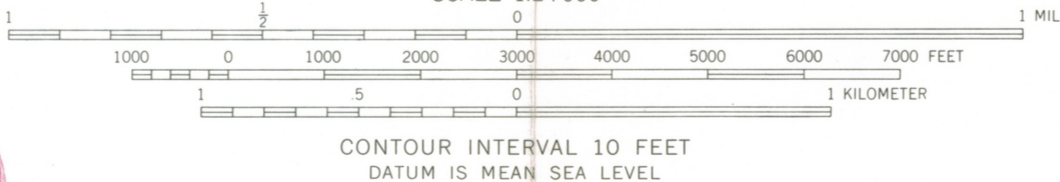
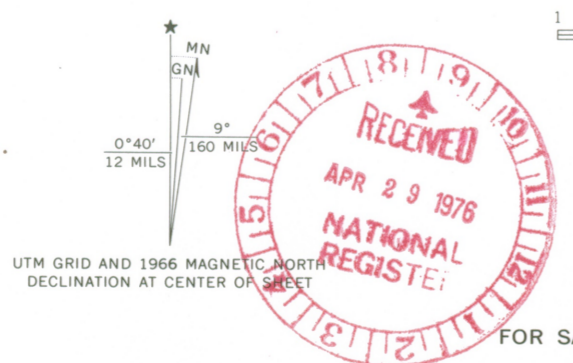
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum

10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, central zone

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U.S. Route
	State Route



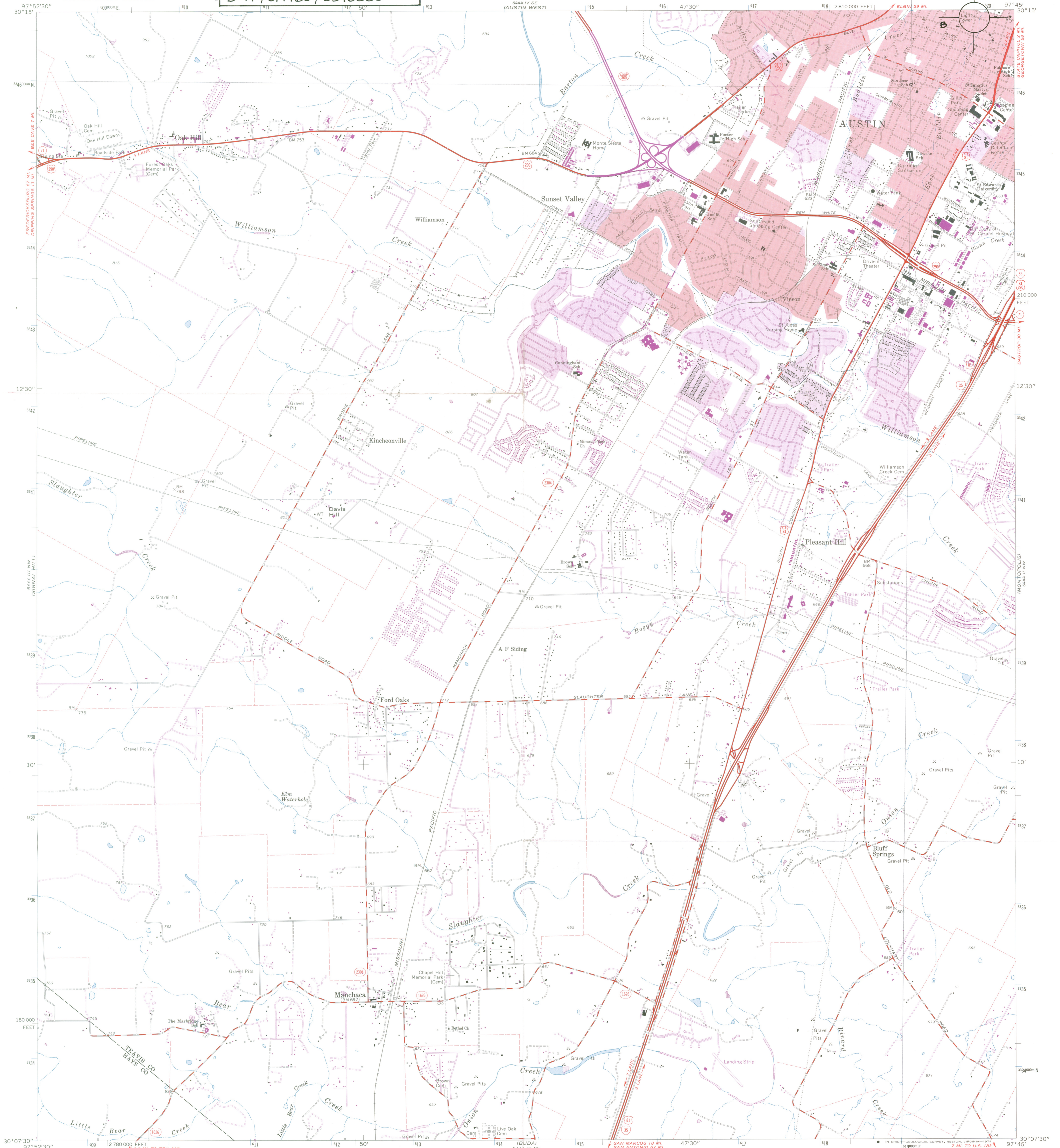
3097-213

MONTOPOLIS, TEX.  
NW/4 MONTOPOLIS 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3007.5—W9737.5/7.5

1966  
AMS 6444 II NW—SERIES V882  
JUL 12 1976

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

21



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

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Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1954. Field checked 1955. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum 10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system, central zone

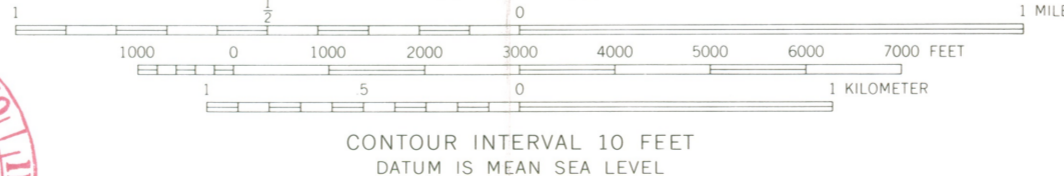
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban area



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

OAK HILL, TEX.  
NE/4 BUDA 15' QUADRANGLE  
N3007.5-W9745/7.5

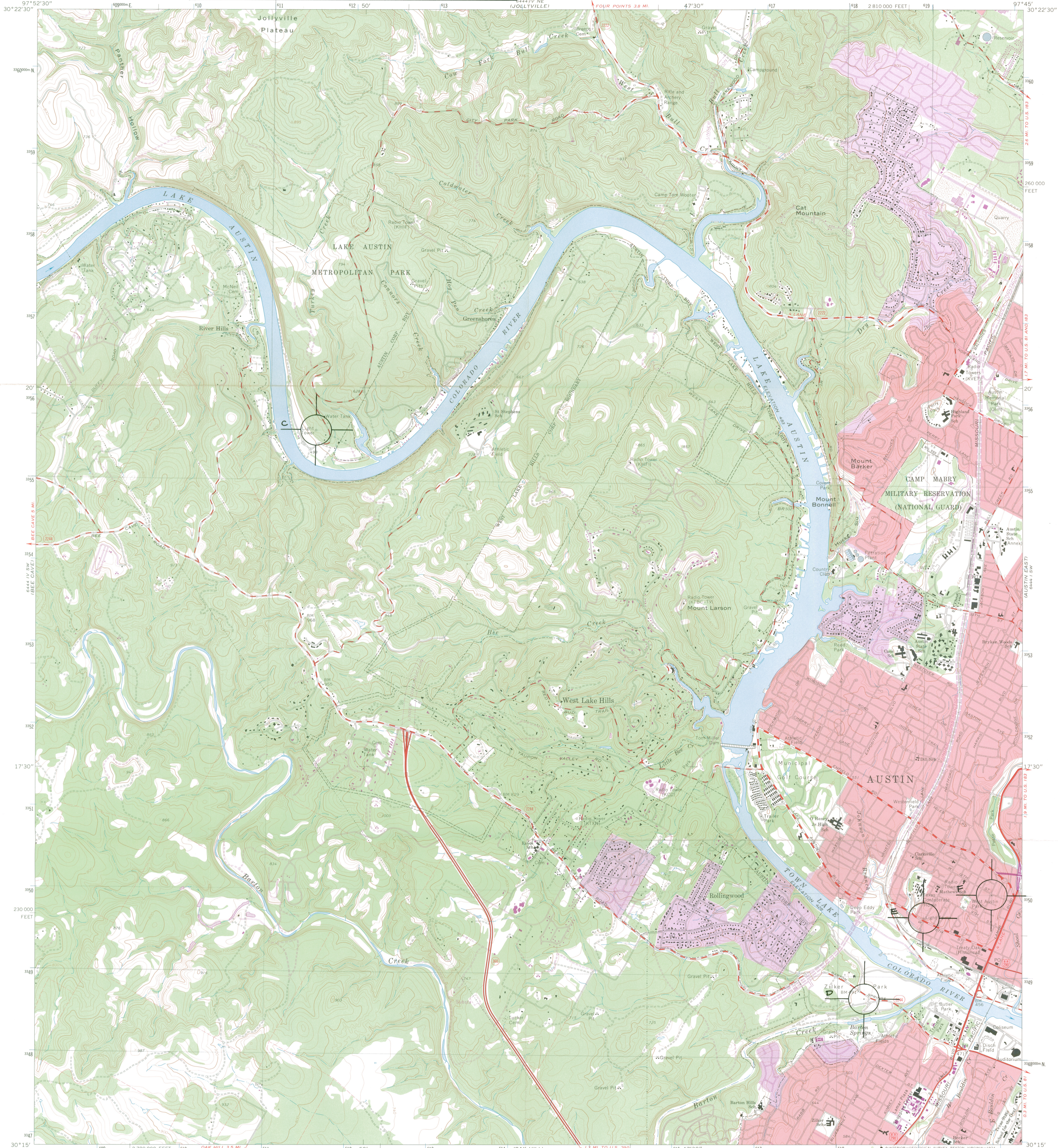
1966  
PHOTOREVISED 1973  
AMS 6444 III NE-SERIES V882

APR 10 1975

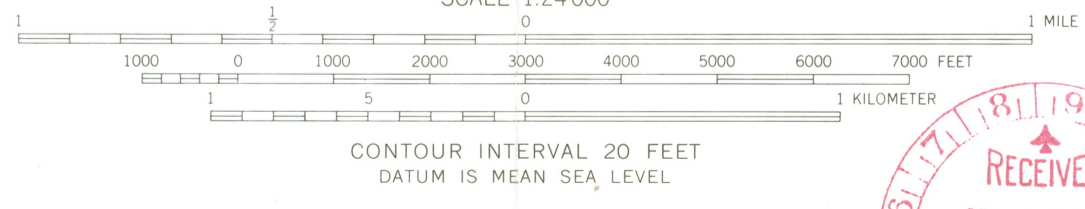
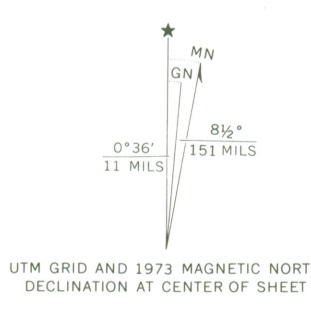
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

3097 -224

JUL 14 1976



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Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1952. Field checked 1954. Revised from  
aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,  
central zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines  
Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1973. This information not field checked  
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

AUSTIN WEST, TEX.  
SE/4 LAKE TRAVIS 19' QUADRANGLE  
N3015—W9745/7.5  
1966  
PHOTOREVISED 1973  
AMS 6444 IV SE—SERIES V882

JUL 12 1976

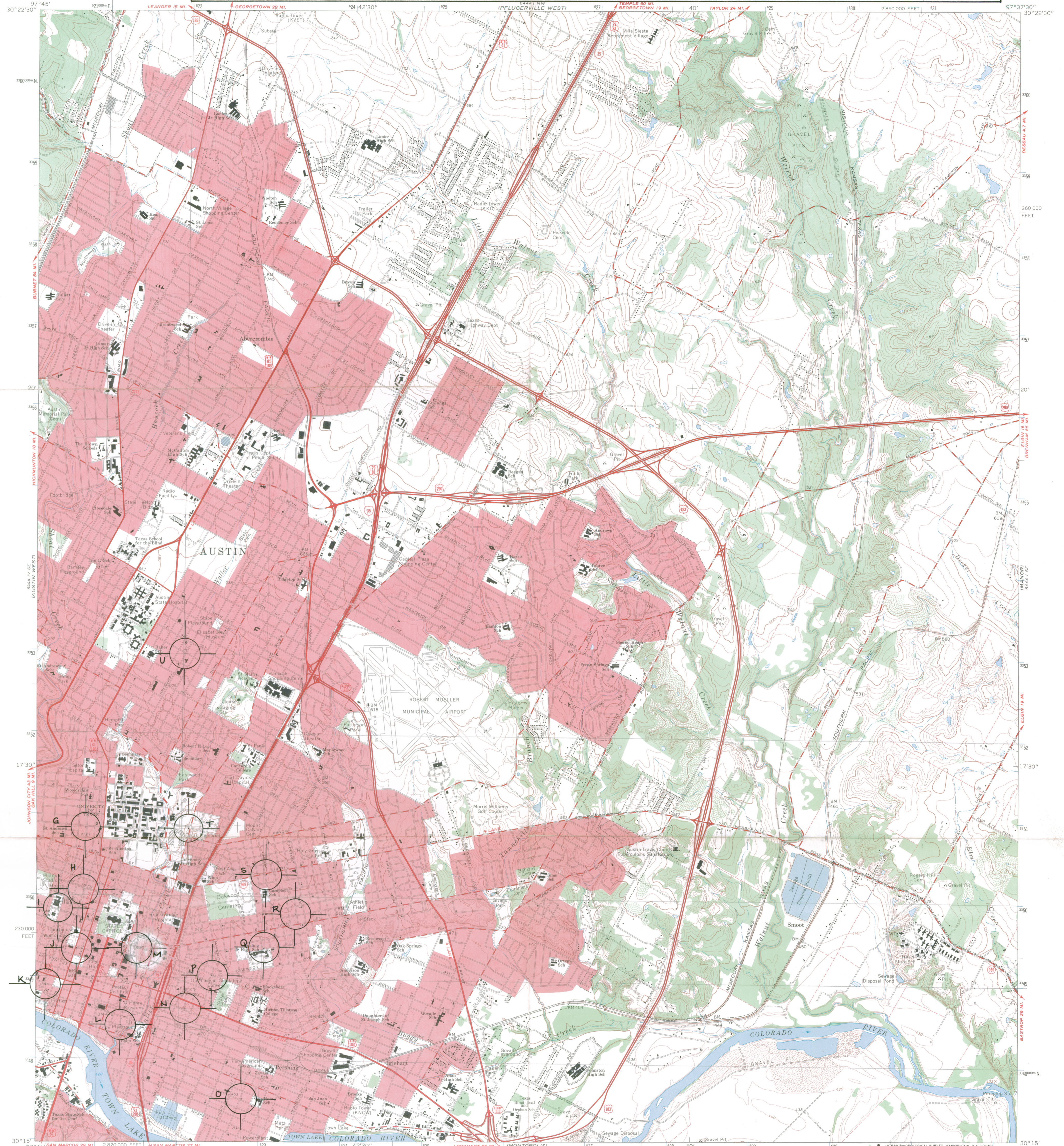
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A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

**AUSTIN MOONLIGHT TOWERS**  
**AUSTIN, TEXAS**  
**UTM REFERENCES**

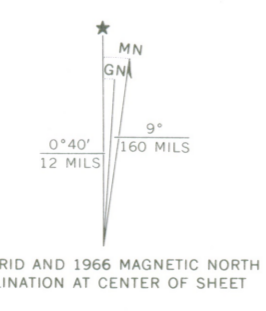
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J 14/620740/3349340	N 14/622080/3348620	R 14/623400/3349800	
G 14/620020/3350840	K 14/620360/3348900	S 14/623040/3350260	

UNITED STATES  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

AUSTIN EAST QUADRANGLE  
 TEXAS—TRAVIS CO.  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
 SW/4 AUSTIN 15' QUADRANGLE



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS and USC&GS  
 Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
 photographs taken 1952. Field checked 1954. Revised from  
 aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966  
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,  
 central zone  
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
 zone 14, shown in blue  
 Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
 Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



SCALE 1:24,000  
 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET  
 0 1 KILOMETER  
 CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

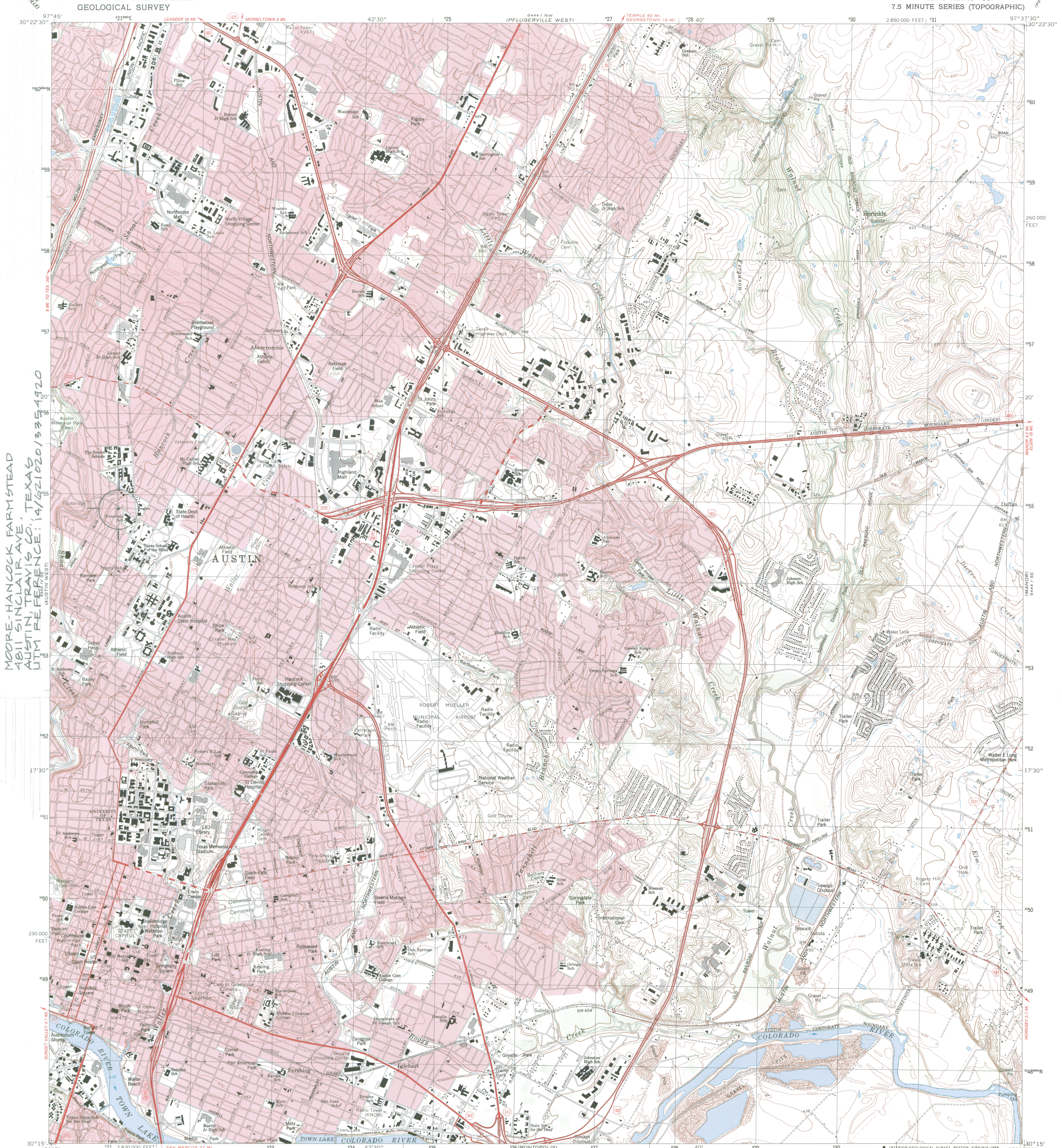


**ROAD CLASSIFICATION**  
 Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
 Medium-duty - - - - - Unimproved dirt - - - - -  
 Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

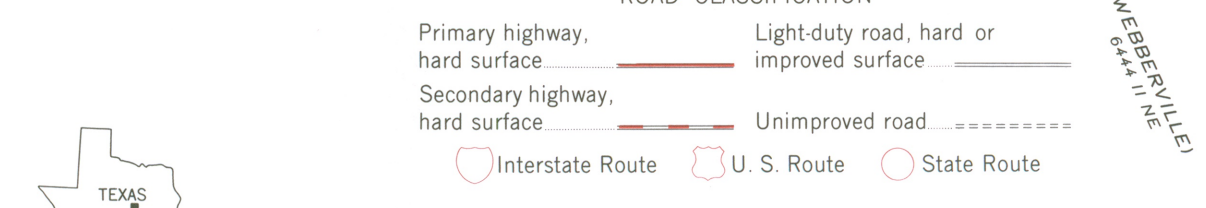
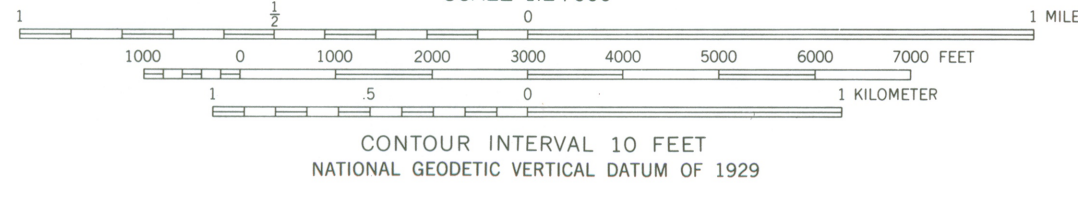
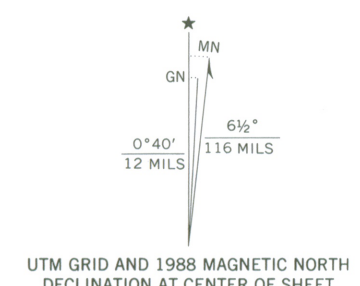
**3097-242**

AUSTIN EAST, TEX.  
 SW/4 AUSTIN 15' QUADRANGLE  
 N3015—W9737.5/7.5  
 JUL 12 1976  
 1966  
 AMS 6444 1 SW—SERIES V882



MOORE-HANCOCK FARMSTEAD  
1811 SINCLAIR AVE,  
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS  
UTM REFERENCE: 14T621020/3354920

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
in cooperation with City of Austin  
Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1952. Field checked 1954. Revised from aerial photographs  
taken 1985. Field checked 1986. Map edited 1988  
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Texas  
coordinate system, central zone (Lambert conformal conic)  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 14  
1927 North American Datum  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983  
move the projection lines 18 meters south and  
28 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



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FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

AUSTIN EAST, TEX.  
30097-C6-TF-024  
1988  
DMA 6444 1 SW-SERIES V882

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      TEXAS

Date Entered      JUL 12 1976

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Trost, Henry C., House	El Paso El Paso County
Kohl, Ernst Martin, Building	Denison Grayson County
Colorado County Courthouse	Columbus Colorado County
Austin "Moonlight Towers"	Austin Travis County
San Antonio Loan and Trust Building	San Antonio Bexar County
Clarksville Historic District	Austin Travis County

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower	State Historic Preservation Officer
Hon. Lloyd M. Bentsen	Mr. Truett Latimer
Hon. Richard C. White	Executive Director
Hon. Ray Roberts	Texas Historical Commission
Hon. J. J. (Jake) Pickle	P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station
Hon. Henry B. Gonzalez	Austin, Texas 78711
Regional Director, Southwest Region	

PR      MMott/row      7/14/76

# NR Data Sheet

DATE: 5-13-76  
Reviewer INITIALS: mjl  
NR  
DOE JUL 12 1976

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: ~~Austin~~ Moonlight Towers  
OTHER NAMES: Austin Tower Lighting System

## LOCATION:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Austin

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 10th

STATE TX

048

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Travis

code

453

OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline)

FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):

NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N. ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST

SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

## FEATURES:

INTERIOR EXTERIOR ENVIRONS  
 Substantially intact-1  Substantially intact-2  Substantially intact-3  
 unknown - 4  unknown - 5  unknown - 6  
 not applicable - 7  not applicable - 8  Not applicable - 9

- Interior, exterior, environs not intact-0

CONDITION -  EXCELLENT  DETERIORATED  UNALTERED  ORIGINAL SITE  
 GOOD  RUINS  ALTERED  MOVED  
 FAIR  UNEXPOSED  Reconstructed  Unknown  
 Unexcavated  Excavated

ACCESS - Yes-restricted  Yes-unrestricted No access Unknown

historic district? YES NO

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO  
IF YES, NAME:

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES NO  
IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE: YES NO Saved? YES NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)

then- light towers (street lamps)

now- light tower

## SIGNIFICANCE:

ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  CONSERVATION  LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  RELIGION  entertainment  
 ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC  ECONOMICS  LAW/Gov't/politics  SCIENCE  health  
 AGRICULTURE  EDUCATION  LITERATURE  recreation  
 ARCHITECTURE  MILITARY  SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN  settlement  
 ART  ENGINEERING  MUSIC  socio/cultural  
 COMMERCE  EXPLORATION  PHILOSOPHY  TRANSPORTATION  Urban & commun  
 COMMUNICATIONS  INDUSTRY  POLITICS/GOVERNMENT  OTHER (SPECIFY)  planning  
 INVENTION

## Claims

"first" YES NO

"oldest" YES NO

"only" YES NO

**ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:**

architect/m.builder:

landscape/garden designer:

interior decorator:

engineer:

artist/artisan:

builder/contractor:

Ft. Wayne Electric Co.

Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

**ETHNIC GROUP:**

**NAMES:**

personal

(label role

&

appropriate date)

events

institutional

**DATES:**

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century):

1894 ~~1894~~ 1895

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS: 1920's-original lights replaced by incandescent lighting,

1936-mercury vapor lights installed with an on/off switch at base

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

**SOURCE:**

(OF NOMINATION)

PRIVATE

STATE

LOCAL GOV'T

MUNICIPAL

COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

**ACREAGE:**

(to nearest tenth of an acre)

1 acre @ per 21 towers

**COMMENTS:** (include architectural information here)

Extant of 31 lighting towers built in Austin; each is basically built of a triangular cast wrought-iron framework, 150' high, mounted on 15' tall iron pedestal anchored in concrete, steadied by balanced tension steel cables, each contains hand operated elevator ~~originally~~ for access to the cluster of 6 carbon arc lamps for changing the carbon ~~which originally~~ produced illumination. The system was modernized - 1920's and 1936. The mercury vapor lamps are still in use today.

**SIGNIFICANCE:** (maximum two sentences)

Reputedly the only remaining examples of the tower lighting system popular in U.S. during late-19th C. Other cities replaced them with modern street lights. Austin's residents have valued them - Direct remainder of Austin's past