

News in the Heart of South Central Texas

A MEDIA LANDSCAPE STUDY FOR THE SAN ANTONIO REGION

Press Forward 
San Antonio



San Antonio Area Foundation

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Executive Summary

This comprehensive media landscape analysis, commissioned by the San Antonio Area Foundation in San Antonio, Texas, maps and examines the region's local news ecosystem, identifying gaps in community information needs. The study was conducted in three parts:

1. A survey of community members about their use and evaluation of local news
2. An ecosystem mapping of local news providers and a detailed analysis of content published by four major local outlets
3. A survey and needs assessment of local news outlets

The following are key findings from this analysis:

Community information needs:

- The survey identified a **gap in county- and neighborhood-specific news** and information.
- [Media consumption habits](#) align with national patterns, with a shift toward **social media and digital formats** for local news compared to traditional mediums.
- While some respondents praised aspects of local coverage, **many expressed [an overall dissatisfaction](#)** with the scope, depth, and effectiveness of local news outlets.
- [Rural residents](#) surrounding San Antonio **rely more on print newspapers and Facebook groups**, yet find local news lacking in the amount of information available about their communities, especially on issues related to growth.
- [Different demographic groups](#) have distinct **local information needs and habits**, highlighting the importance of meeting communities where they are, particularly those historically underrepresented and underserved by traditional local news media.

Major gaps and assets in San Antonio local news:

- The study [identified 39 local news outlets](#) producing original local news content in the eight-county metro area, including 13 outlets covering specific

geographic areas outside of San Antonio and four outlets focusing on communities of color.

- However, the majority of analyzed news content was **not local**; out of local content, most was focused on Bexar County and/or San Antonio.
- Compared to what the community wants, there is **an overabundance of crime coverage**, while topics such as education, environment/climate, development, and housing are underreported.
- There is a need for **more enterprise and accountability reporting**, greater inclusion of diverse viewpoints, and more stories focusing on underrepresented communities.

News outlet needs assessment:

- News outlets report **financial instability**, and **challenges adjusting to a changing media landscape**.
- Outlets have plans to expand coverage and reach their target audiences more effectively, but they **lack the funding** to do so.
- Local news outlets' most pressing needs include revenue-related staff, more support to grow their audiences, and upgraded tech infrastructure and skills.

Economic and demographic analysis:

- Given the rapid growth in the eight-county region, there is a clear opportunity to offer more substantive coverage of development and its impact on local communities.
-

Community Information Needs

KEY POINT:

A survey of 649 San Antonio area residents found:

- A perceived gap in county- and neighborhood-specific news and information.
- A trend toward social media and digital formats for local news compared to traditional mediums.
- Overall dissatisfaction with the scope, depth, and overall service of local news outlets in meeting audience needs.

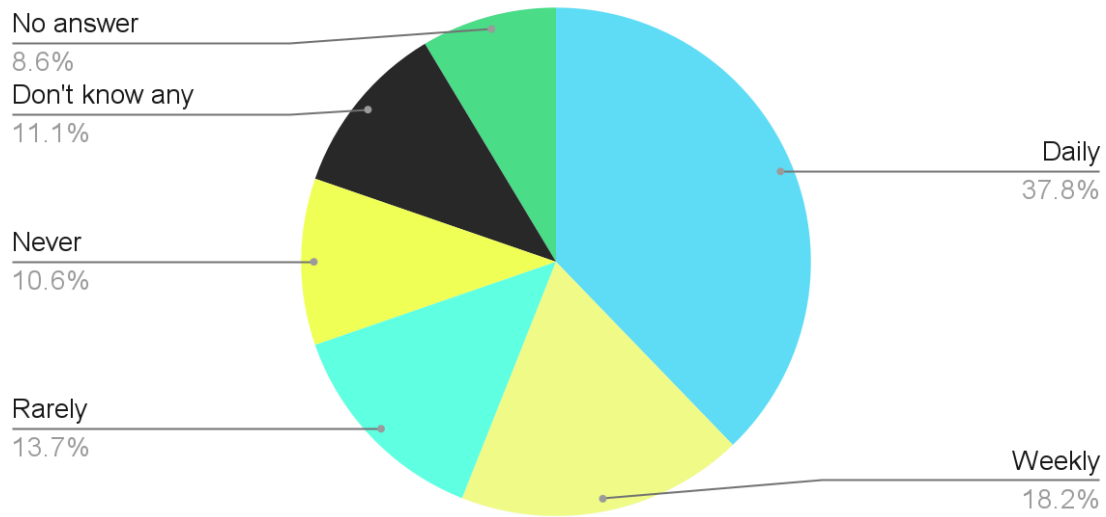
To understand how residents in the metro area feel about their local news coverage and what they would like from local news, we designed a community survey and distributed it widely around the region, including outreach to 225 community organizations and several local news outlets to reach a broad audience. In total, the survey received 649 total responses.

About the Respondents

More than half of respondents live in Bexar County, while the rest are dispersed throughout the other seven counties in the metro area. A small number reported zip codes outside the eight-county region.

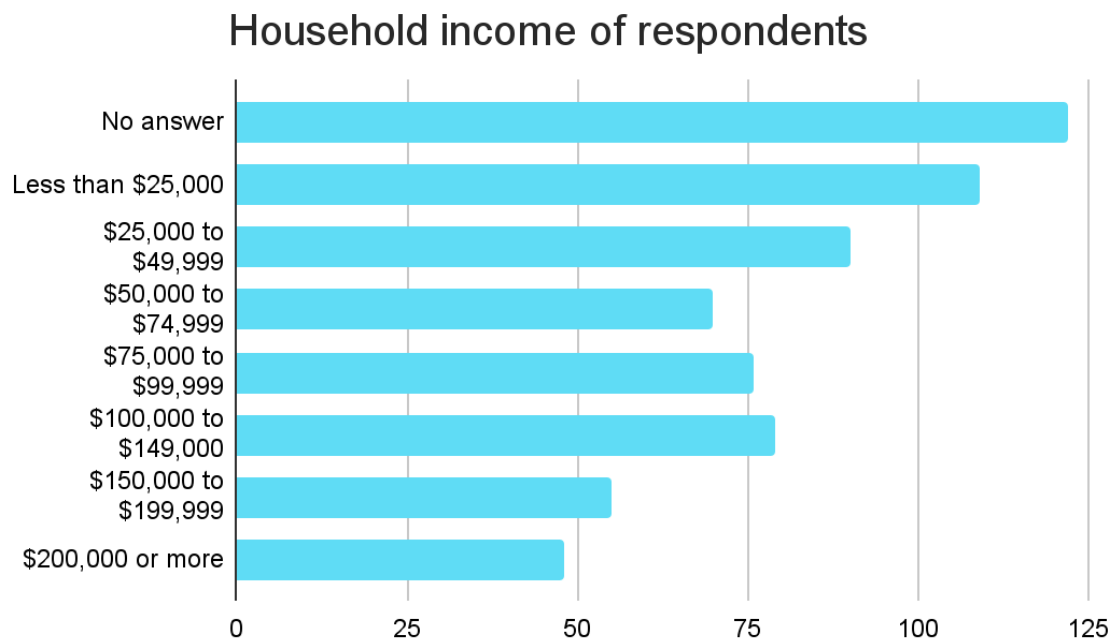
Most respondents are frequent local news consumers, with about 38% consuming some form of local news daily and 18% consuming it weekly. However, close to a quarter, 24%, either rarely or never consume local news. Eleven percent of respondents do not know of any local news sources in their communities.

How often do you consume local news?



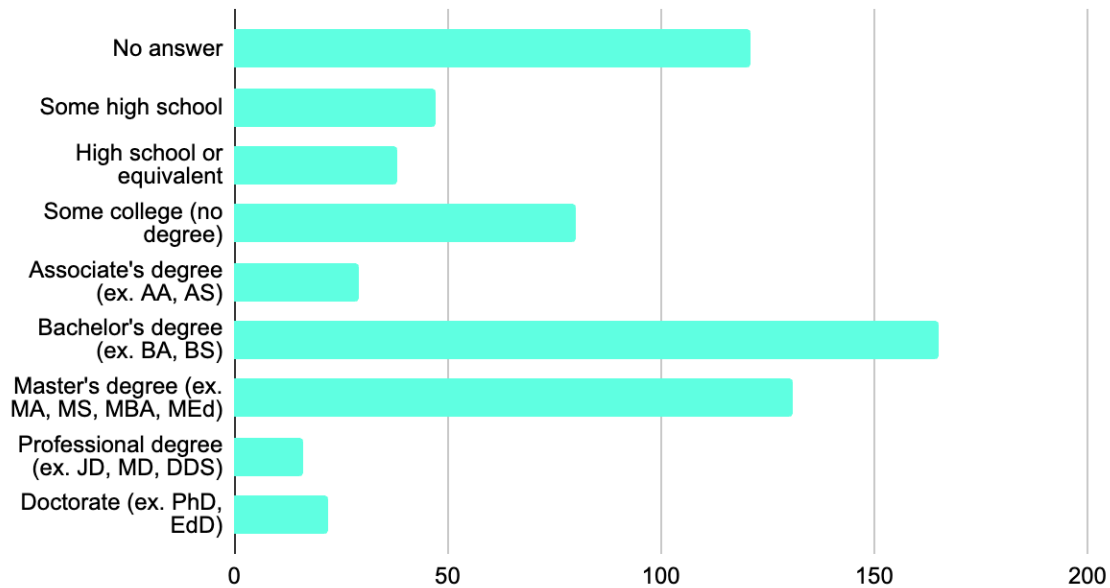
When asked to self-identify with a community, many respondents named specific geographic locations, such as their city, town, county, or neighborhood in San Antonio. Some mentioned a race or ethnicity group, such as Arab, Latino/a/Hispanic, or nationality, like Afghan. Others described themselves based on socioeconomic class, including working and middle class.

Respondents were spread across income levels, with 31% reporting a household income below \$50,000, and 28% above \$100,000. (About 19% of respondents did not answer demographic questions.)



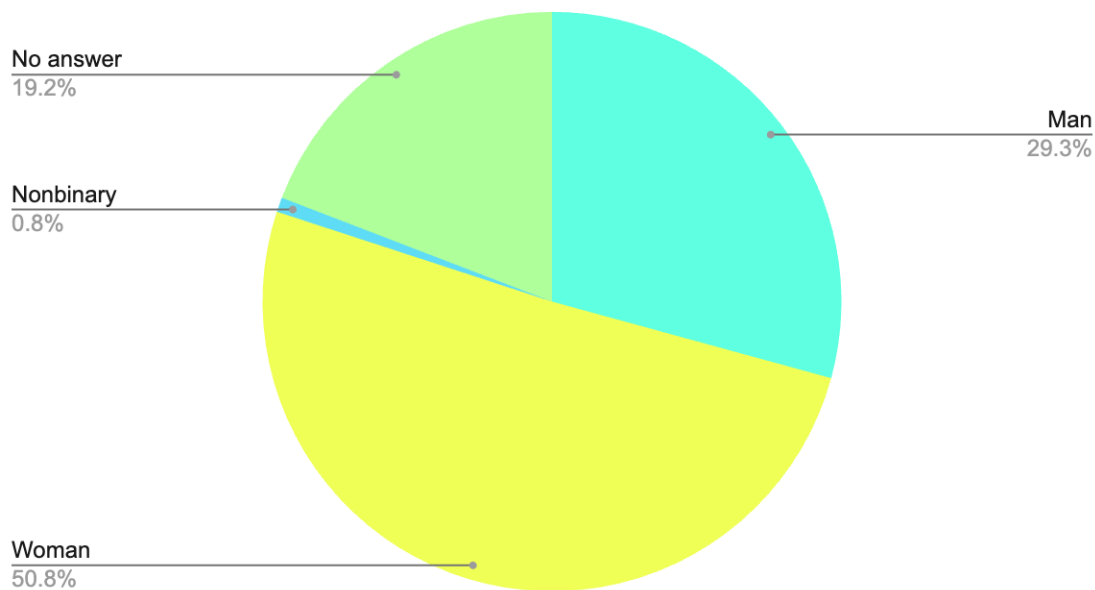
Respondents were generally more educated than the general population, with about 52% reporting a college degree or higher. However, all education levels were represented, including 6% reporting a high school degree or equivalent, 7% with some high school education, 12% with some college, and 5% with an associate's degree.

Education level of respondents

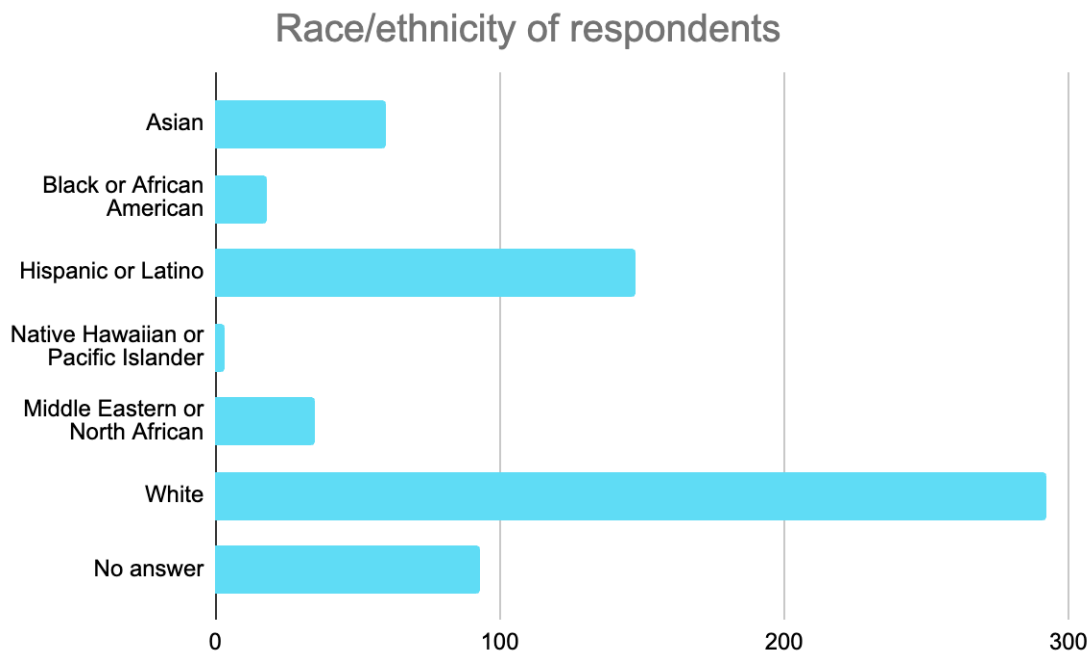


Half of respondents identified as women, 29% as men, and 0.8% as nonbinary.

Gender of respondents

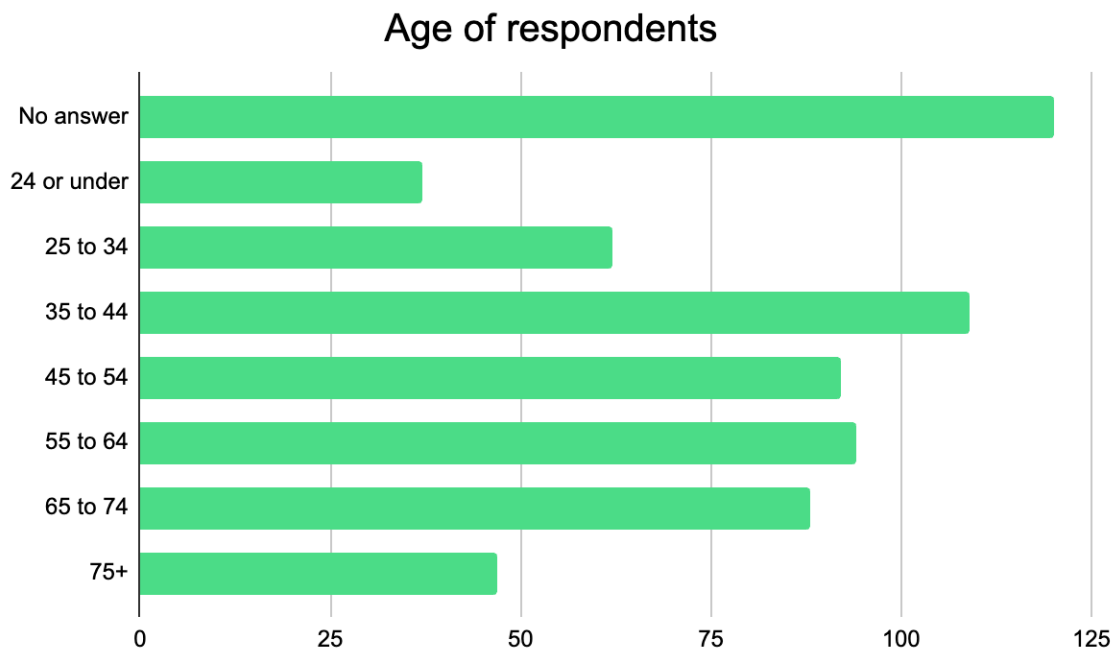


About 44% of respondents identified as white, 23% as Hispanic or Latino/a, 9% as Asian, 5% Middle Eastern or North African, and 3% as Black or African American. Black and Hispanic residents in the metro area were underrepresented in the survey, as 55% of residents in the metro area are Hispanic/Latino/a and 7% are Black or African American.



Most respondents answered the survey questions in English without the help of an interpreter or visual aid. About 7% answered in Arabic and 3% in Spanish; 7% answered the survey with assistance for the visually impaired.

More than half of respondents are 35 years old or older, and 15% are 18 to 34. The median age of residents in the metro area is 36.



Local News Diets

KEY POINT:

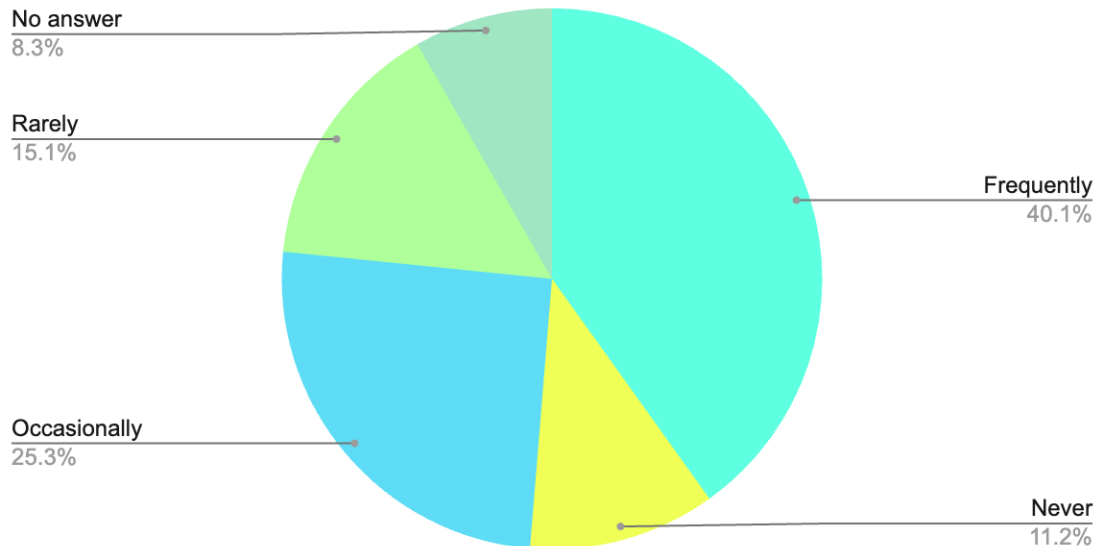
Respondents shared a strong preference for digital platforms over traditional mediums when consuming local news.

- The most frequently used platform for local news and information is Facebook, with 59% of respondents getting at least some local news there.

To understand how San Antonio area residents currently engage with local news—and how they would prefer to—we examined their news consumption habits to identify potential gaps in local news offerings.

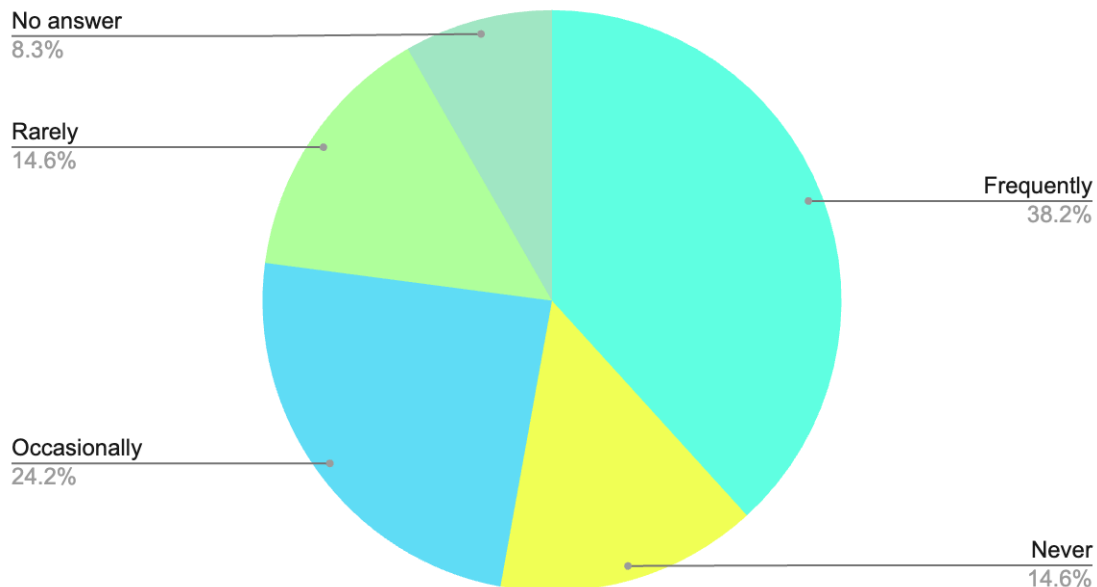
The most popular medium for local news is online newspapers or websites, with 40% of respondents frequently accessing news that way.

How often do you get local news from an online newspaper or website?



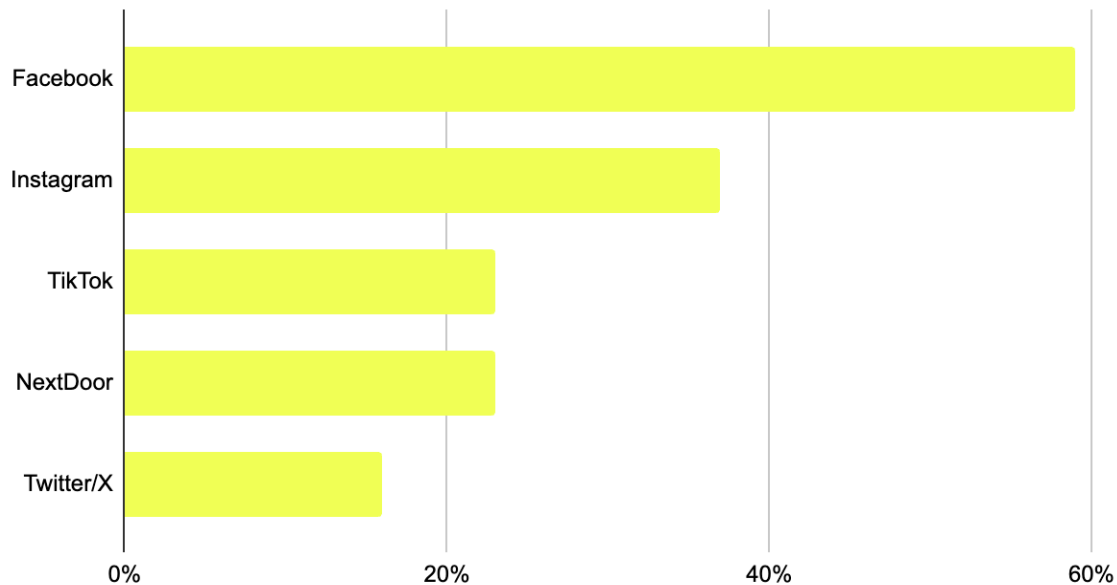
The second most popular source is social media, with 38% frequently getting their local news there.

How often do you get local news from social media?



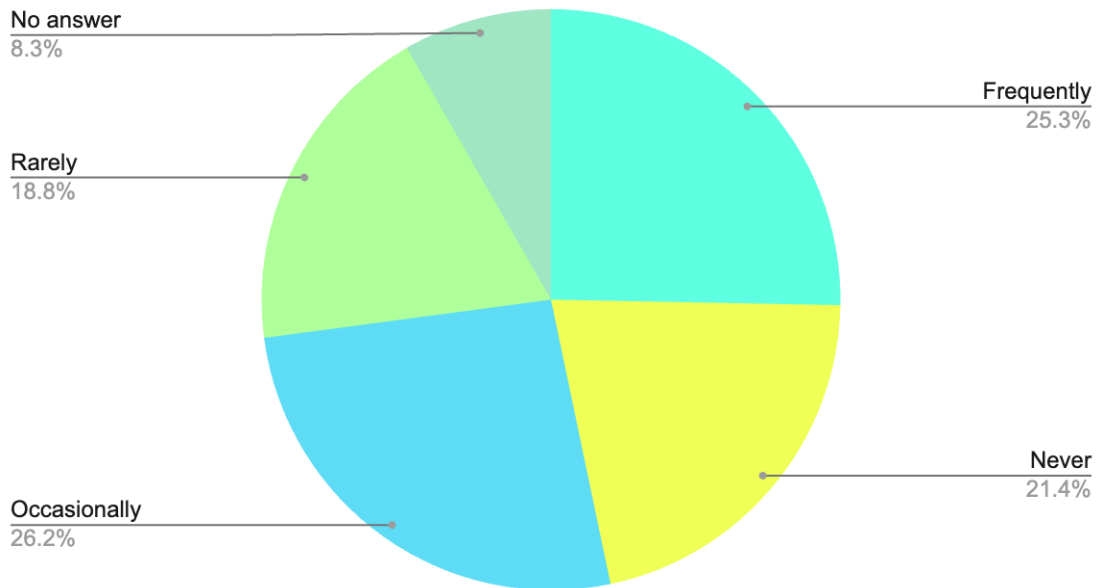
Among social media platforms, Facebook is the most popular source for local news, used by 59% of respondents. Other platforms include Instagram (37%), TikTok and Nextdoor, (23% each), and Twitter/X (16%). Write-in responses mentioned LinkedIn, BlueSky, YouTube, Reddit, and Threads.

Which social media platforms do you get local news from?



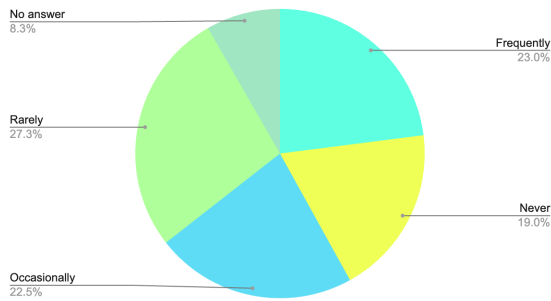
Newsletters are another popular medium, with 25% of respondents frequently consuming local news via email.

How often do you get local news from email newsletters?

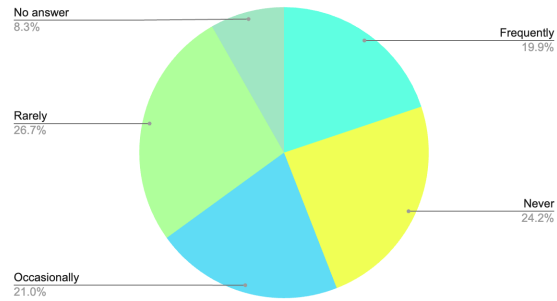


Other platforms, ranked by frequency of use, include broadcast TV (23%), FM radio (20%), print newspapers (17%), and text messages (13%). The least-used mediums are podcasts (8%), and AM radio, (7%).

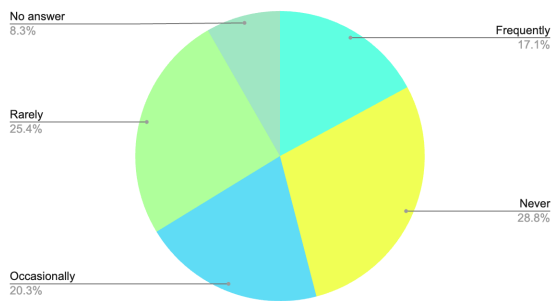
How often do you get local news from TV?



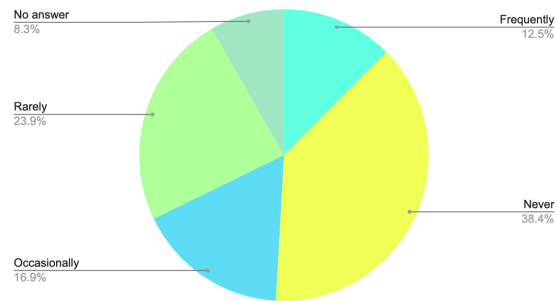
How often do you get local news from FM radio?



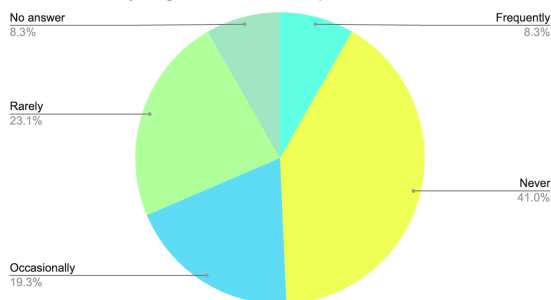
How often do you get local news from print newspapers?



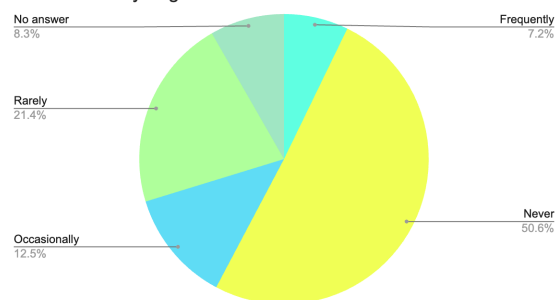
How often do you get local news via text message?



How often do you get local news on podcasts?



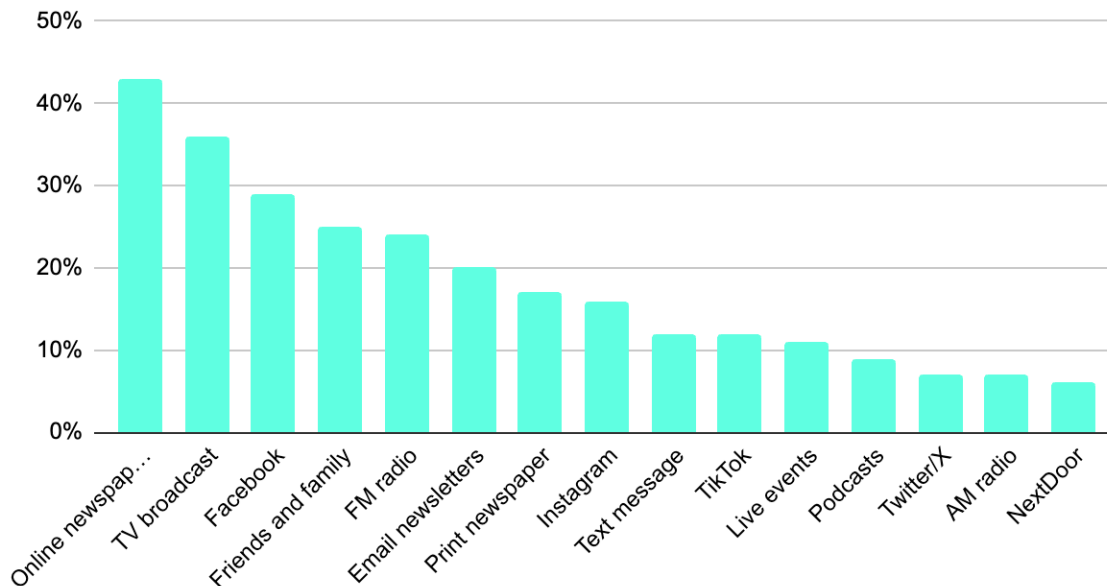
How often do you get local news on AM radio?



We also asked respondents where they would prefer to get their local news. For the most part, people are using their preferred platforms, with a few notable exceptions:

- More people would prefer to get their local news from TV or FM radio than are currently using these platforms.
- Fewer people prefer getting local news from Facebook than those who currently use the platform. **While 59% rely on Facebook for local news, fewer than 30% say it is their preferred platform.**

Where would you prefer to get local news?



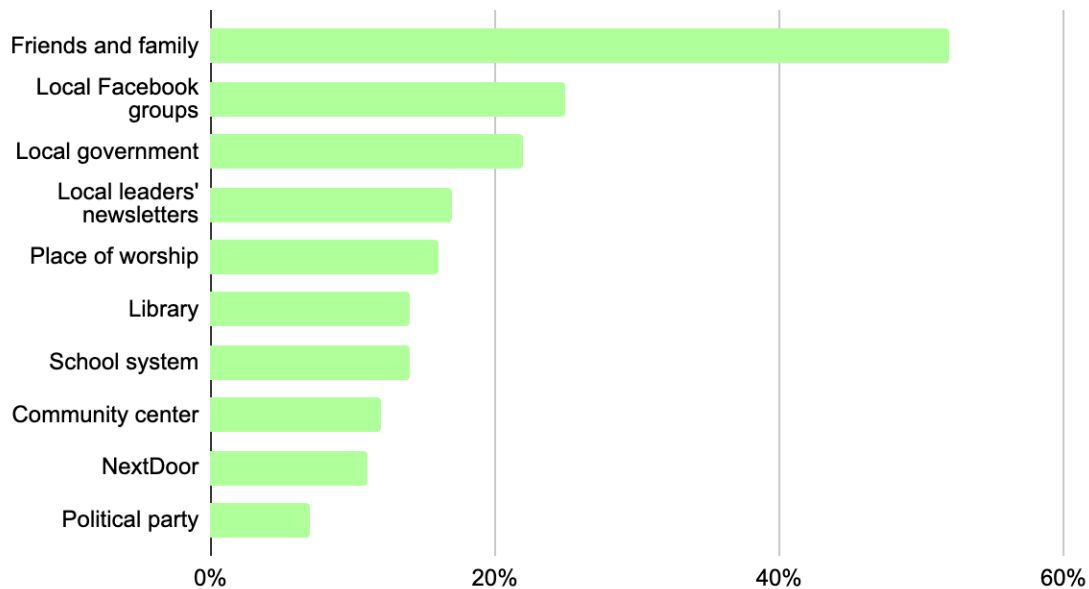
Those who do *not* consume local news regularly mentioned several reasons:

- **11%** believe that important news will find them.
- **6%** do not trust the news.
- **5%** are simply not interested.
- **4%** are taking a break from all news.
- Others shared they could not find local news available to them in their area or mentioned concerns with the quality of coverage. As one respondent explained: "The news proudly continues the outdated practice of 'if it bleeds, it leads.' I'm so tired of this old, worn-out platform."

As local news outlets are not the only source of information in a community, we identified other sources people in the San Antonio metro area turn to for local information. The most common sources outside of traditional news are:

- Friends and family
- Local Facebook groups
- Local government

How often do you get local information from these sources?



Some respondents also mentioned local community nonprofit organizations as an alternative source of information.

User Needs & Information Gaps

KEY POINT:

General knowledge needs:

- San Antonio local news fell short in every information need.
- Local news did not fulfill any of their general knowledge needs.

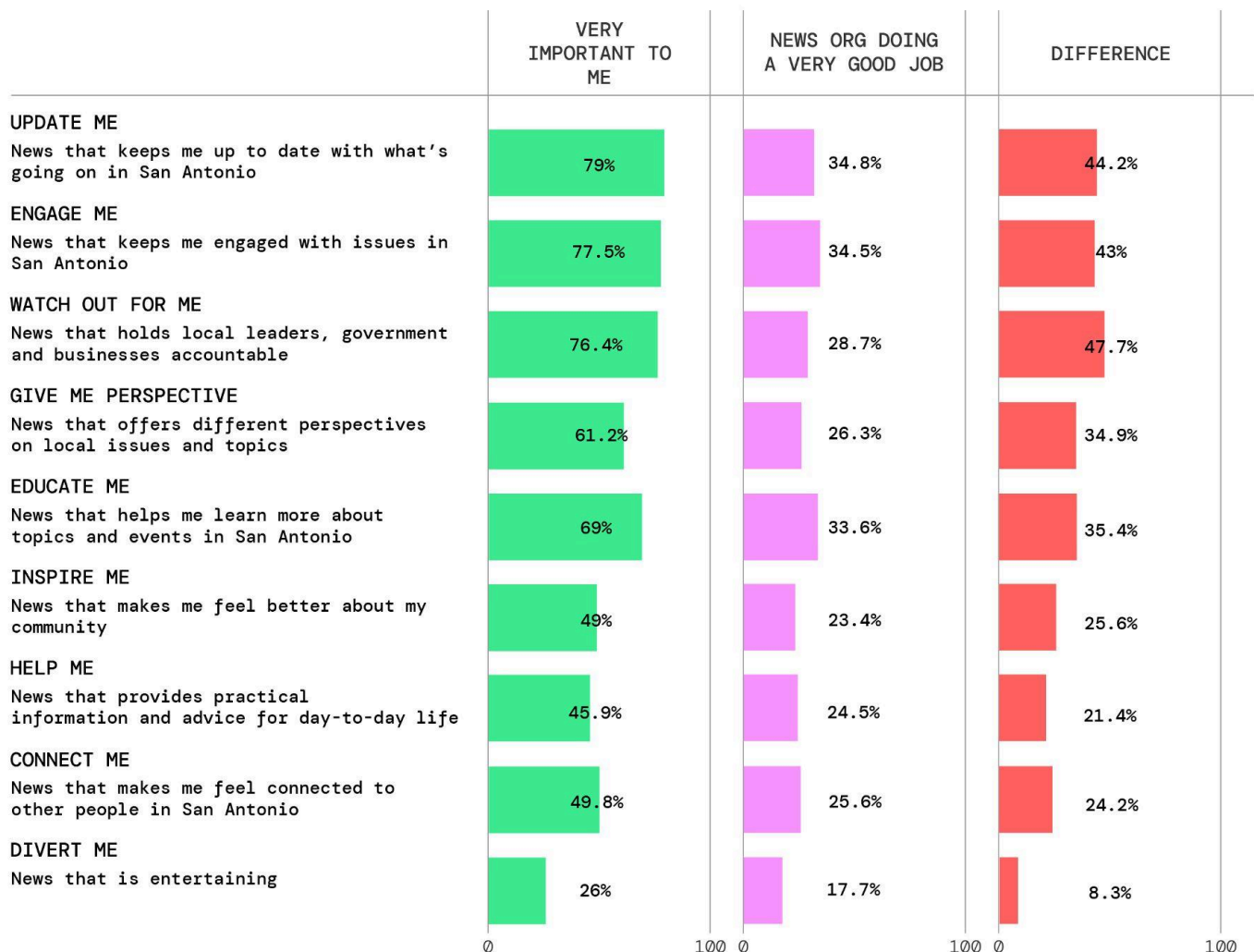
Inspired by [an international survey on news audience user needs](#), we asked San Antonio area residents to evaluate how well their local news fulfills eight key

information needs. These needs are grouped into four general categories: knowledge, understanding, feeling, and doing.

The three most important information needs expressed by respondents were:

- “Update me” — Keeping people informed about what’s happening.
- “Engage me” — Connecting people to local issues.
- “Watch out for me” — Holding leaders and powerholders accountable.

San Antonio-area local news fell short across every information need, with the largest gaps in these same three areas: “update me,” “engage me,” and “watch out for me.”



A content analysis of four prominent San Antonio news outlets backed up these audience concerns:

- **Accountability coverage was limited**, reinforcing the perception that local news is not adequately holding power to account.
- **A reliance on official sources** and the small proportion of stories featuring two or more sources left audiences wanting more diverse perspectives and viewpoints.
- **Many important topics were underrepresented**, contributing to a sense of disengagement from local issues.
- **A lack of county- and neighborhood-specific coverage** may have fueled audience concerns that local news is not adequately connecting them to others in the community.

In a healthy news ecosystem, different outlets fulfill a community's range of information needs. However, in San Antonio, significant gaps remain.

To assess how individual news stories fulfill these user needs, we reviewed San Antonio local news stories about immigration from early 2025, selecting a diverse collection of news stories through an advanced Google search.



The bulk of news stories about immigration fell within the “Update me” category, providing information on executive orders and how they have been carried out in the area, including [“Multi-agency operation targeted immigrants in several Texas cities”](#) by The Texas Tribune and [“Federal agents have started conducting raids in San Antonio. ICE official says only criminals are being targeted”](#) from the San Antonio Report. The San Antonio Express–News article [“ICE used armored vehicle, tear gas to arrest nonviolent immigrant”](#) informed, as well as provided accountability under the “Watch out for me” user need.

Less common, the article [“Your Immigration Guide I Can mixed-status families avoid deportation?”](#) by Univision would be considered “Help me” for its provision of practical, service-oriented information related to immigration. This was one of the only local news stories that framed immigration toward an immigrant audience, highlighting the [importance of news outlets that serve immigrant groups and help them navigate life in a new place](#).

While local news does provide essential updates, San Antonio residents continue to seek deeper engagement, stronger accountability reporting, and more service-oriented journalism that reflects the full diversity of their communities.

Topical Information Needs

KEY POINT:

Identified opportunities to fill topical information needs:

- Increased coverage on housing, education, growth and development — topics that were scarce in the content analysis.
- News stories that focus on community engagement and highlight people working together.

Information needs can also be analyzed through [critical information needs](#) for people to live their daily lives, such as education, economic opportunity, and public health. We asked San Antonio area respondents about their topical information

needs using categories that newsrooms commonly use to structure content. (Responses were collected starting in Fall 2024 through the end of the year, so these preferences could change depending on current events.)

The topics most important to respondents were:

1. Weather
2. Politics and government
3. Arts, culture, entertainment, and local events
4. Health care

The topics of least interest were:

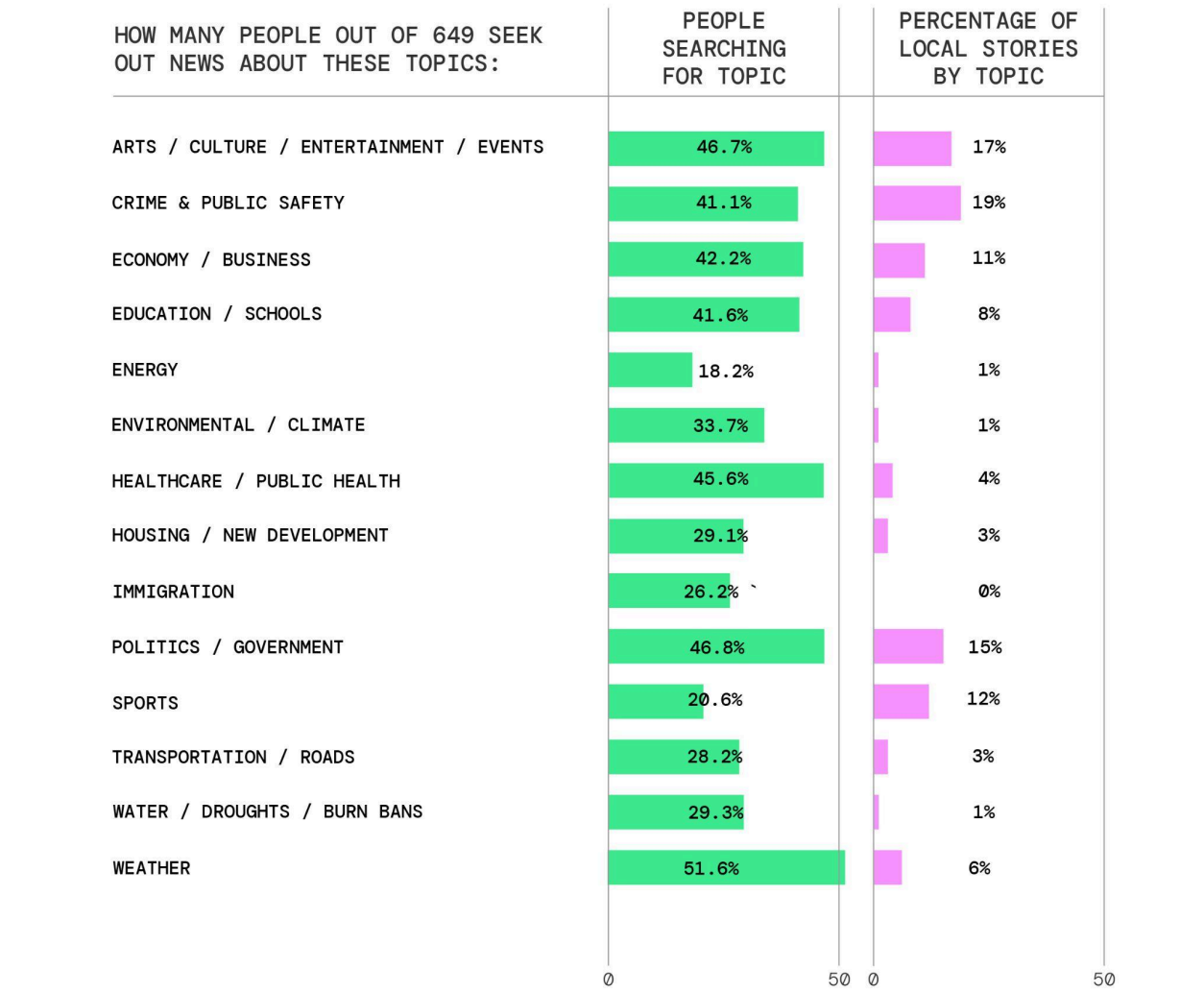
1. Energy
2. Sports
3. Immigration

For comparison, the top four areas of local coverage in the [content analysis](#) were:

1. Crime
2. Arts, culture, and entertainment
3. Politics and government
4. Sports

Only **politics and government** and **arts and entertainment** appeared on both lists, indicating a misalignment between existing coverage and audience interests.

More than a third of respondents regularly seek out local news about **the economy and business, education and schools, and the environment**, but these topics were underrepresented in the content analysis. These differences could indicate a gap between audience desires and offerings of area local news.



To get an even more detailed idea of local news and information needs, we asked respondents to describe in their own words the issue that worries them the most and the issue they are the most excited about.

The most worrisome issues fell into these categories:

- **Crime and safety** (14%) — Concerns include gun violence, human trafficking, and pedestrian safety.
- **Housing, poverty, and homelessness** (12%) — Includes concerns about crime related to these issues as well as available resources.
- **Environment, climate, and water needs** (7%) — Includes concerns about water availability, loss of green space, and overdevelopment.

- **Education** (6%) — Includes concerns about funding and school safety.
- **Government, politics, and power** (5%) — Includes concerns about holding powerholders accountable, a loss of local government control, and dissatisfaction with local and national leaders.

Other concerns included **immigration** (both the care of immigrants and issues related to immigration), **jobs and the economy**, and **health care access and affordability**, (particularly for seniors, disabled individuals, and women).

Interestingly, **immigration was among the least-sought-after news topics, but showed up as a major issue of concern for respondents**. This could signal a disconnect between what participants worry about and what they believe local news can effectively cover.

We also asked respondents to share the issues in their communities that most excited them.

The most exciting issues fell into these categories:

- **Community and social engagement** (19%) — Includes local events, activism, and people working together for the betterment of the community.
- **Growth and development** (9%) — Includes rural and downtown development, with an emphasis on controlled, responsible planning.
- **Education** (5%) — Includes K-12 public education, universities, and school choice.
- **Environment and sustainability** (5%) — Includes protecting the environment, preserving parks and natural areas, and green energy initiatives.
- **Arts, culture, and entertainment** (5%) — Includes music, arts, and other cultural events.

Other areas of excitement included **infrastructure improvements, new elected leaders**, and **solutions to community issues** such as homelessness, affordable housing, and health care access.

When comparing community concerns and interests with coverage gaps, several opportunities emerge:

- **Expand coverage of housing, homelessness, education, and growth and development** — key issues that both worry and excite San Antonians.
- **Increase coverage dedicated to community connection** — highlighting community members and organizations working toward solutions.

By addressing these gaps, local news can better serve its audience and foster a stronger connection with the community.

Perceptions of San Antonio Area Local News

We gave San Antonio residents the opportunity to share their perceptions about local news in their own words, allowing for more nuanced insights beyond multiple choice answers and the opportunity to identify nontraditional news sources. While we used an array of channels to distribute the community survey, three local newsrooms – Texas Public Radio, the San Antonio Report, and the San Antonio Express-News – also voluntarily distributed the survey to their readers, so some level of bias may be reflected in the results.

In their own words, respondents shared where they regularly go for local news. The top five sources were:

1. Texas Public Radio
2. San Antonio Express-News
3. San Antonio Report
4. KSAT 12
5. KENS 5

The top news outlets that cover specific geographic or demographic communities were:

1. New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung (Comal)
2. Community Impact (Comal and northern Bexar suburbs)
3. Seguin Gazette (Guadalupe)
4. KWED/Seguin Today (Guadalupe)

5. KGNB (Comal)
6. Bandera Prophet (Bandera)
7. KLMO (Tejano station)
8. Bandera Bulletin (Bandera)
9. Univision (Spanish)
10. KNBT (Comal)
11. La Prensa (Spanish/bilingual)
12. My Canyon Lake (Comal)

The five local news sources that respondents *trusted* most were the same but in a slightly different order:

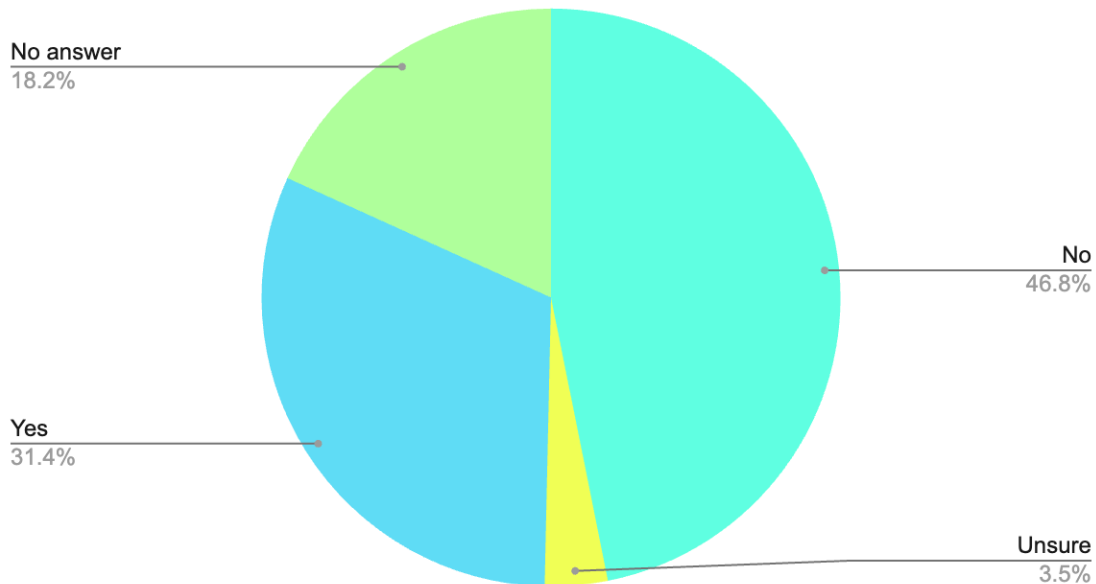
1. Texas Public Radio
2. KSAT 12
3. San Antonio Express–News
4. San Antonio Report
5. KENS 5

However, **a notable 10% of respondents stated they do not trust any local news outlets** — the same proportion as the second most trusted news source. While this skepticism does not appear to be unique to San Antonio local news, it signals broader national trends in [declining trust in news media](#).

Perceptions on paying for local news

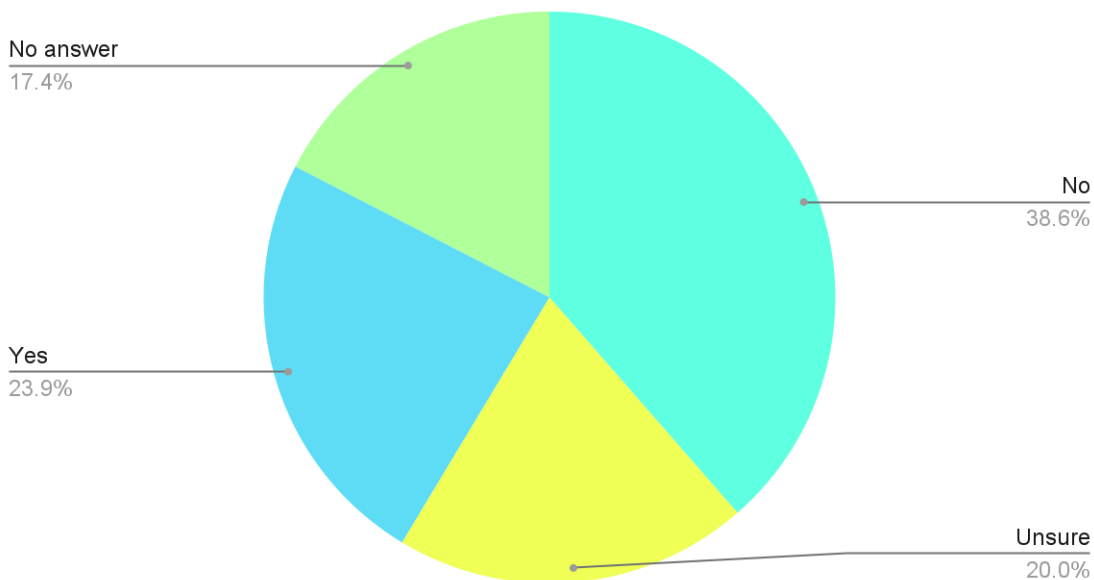
More respondents (47%) **do not** currently pay for local news subscriptions, than those who do (31%).

Do you pay for access to local news through a subscription?



When asked whether local news consumers **should** pay for access, responses were mixed. About 39% of respondents said people who consume local news should not help pay for it, compared to about 24% who said they should help pay. Another 20% were unsure.

Should people who consume local news help pay for it?



Write-in responses provided deeper insight into paying for local news. Some respondents were concerned about requiring payment for local news, as that would mean many people would not be able to access it:

"People should help pay for local news, but some local news should be available to everyone even if they don't/can't pay for it. Certain general news should be free to all. I guess I want all citizens to be informed, perhaps with a local newsletter mentioning the main news."

Others specifically cited frustrations with paywalls:

"I rarely follow San Antonio Express-News because it seems every time I try to read an article, I have to pay to access it, which feels in opposition to what news should be: publicly accessible no matter your income."

Another respondent acknowledged changing news consumption habits as people are used to free online content:

"Since it has also fallen out of most people's routine to pay for news, they may not like the idea, but I do think it's important."

Satisfaction with San Antonio Area Local News

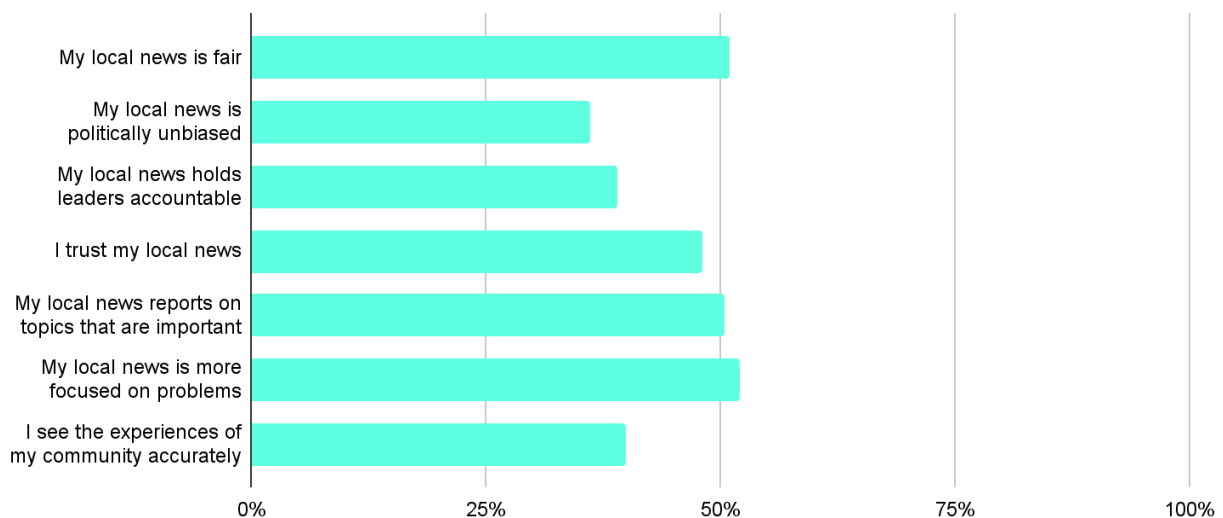
KEY POINT:

Respondents' satisfaction with local news is mixed:

- Less than half trust San Antonio local news.
- Most see local news as politically biased and say coverage does not accurately reflect their experiences.
- Yet, most also think San Antonio local news is fair and reports on topics important to them.

These responses differ from a [2019 study by Pew Research](#), which found that residents of the San Antonio–New Braunfels metro area felt more connected to their local news media and had generally positive views about local news media's performance. Our survey indicates a shift: only a slight majority think local news coverage is fair and covers important topics, fewer see it as politically unbiased and representative of their community's experiences. Additionally, more than half say local news is more focused on problems rather than solutions.

Evaluations of local news



Local News Gaps Identified by Community

KEY POINT:

Information gaps identified in the survey:

- Accountability coverage
- Hyper-local coverage
- In-depth coverage providing context
- Coverage on systemic problems

To dig deeper into evaluations of local news coverage, we asked respondents to identify gaps they observed in local news and to share an example of a news story that they thought “got it right,” as well as one they felt missed the mark.

Their responses to these questions yielded rich insights into what San Antonio area news consumers and residents identify as gaps in coverage.

Only about 18% had seen a local news story in the past month that had inaccurately or incorrectly covered an important issue. The most cited reasons for disapproving of specific local news stories were **a lack of accountability reporting** on government and businesses, **misrepresenting or ignoring major issues**, or **not providing enough context** or doing enough reporting.

Examples of issues needing accountability coverage:

- Portion of fires caused by fireworks
- How elected representatives vote
- School district land purchases

Examples of major issues misrepresented or ignored:

- Voter experience and turnout
- The experience of immigrants
- Overstatement on crime and focus on individual incidents rather than solutions

Examples of missing context or reporting, directly from respondents:

- "A general lack of depth beyond accidents, shootings, etc."
- "Inadequate discussion of the impacts of San Antonio's Proposition 3 ballot measure"
- "I am completely confused about our Southern border and if there is really a problem there or not."

Nearly a quarter of respondents could recall a story in the past month that had covered an issue of local importance well.

Top topics of stories covered well:

1. Community and local events
2. Economic issues
3. Elections and politics
4. Crime and safety

Respondents appreciated news stories **that presented multiple perspectives**, such as a San Antonio Express-News layout that offered two opinion pieces on a debate about Southwest Airlines and the airport. They also liked coverage **highlighting local solutions and featured regular people**, especially if stories focused on positive impacts of people who are making a difference.

They similarly liked **investigative stories that simplified complex topics** such as a KSAT report on San Antonio ISD's superintendent spending. They valued **coverage that was presented in ways that cater to different audiences**, including in different languages and formats with an emphasis on visual storytelling.

KEY POINT:

In summary, responses identified the following gaps and needs in local news coverage:

- **Unbiased, fact-based news** that provides a **variety of perspectives** without sensationalizing events.
- **In-depth reporting** on issues and politics and **investigative stories** on systemic issues such as development, water resources, and local policies.
- **A lack of local coverage** for smaller, rural areas, as well as San Antonio, rather than the neighboring metro areas of Austin and Houston.
- Uplifting hyper-local stories that **emphasize inspiring community achievements**, or **suggest solutions to major problems**.

Differences among groups

To better understand if and how responses differed by ethnicity, language, age, or county, we analyzed survey answers to determine unique challenges in reaching different audience segments. The following sections outline these differences and provide a deeper understanding of each group's information needs.

Hispanic/Latino

People who identify as Hispanic or Latino make up [64% of residents in San Antonio](#), and [55% in the entire metro area](#). The 23% of respondents who identify as Hispanic or Latino differed significantly from other respondents in how they get their local news and information, as well as in their preferences for some topics of coverage.

Although not a fully representative sample of the Hispanic population, their answers yielded some important distinctions.

As a group, they could be considered higher than average consumers of local news with a varied diet that leaned toward digital options, including social media, but still included traditional mediums like local TV news. Their expectations for local news were high — seeking representation, community engagement, and holding local power accountable.

Evaluation of news:

Hispanic respondents were:

- Significantly more likely to strongly agree with the statement: “San Antonio local news coverage is more focused on problems than solutions.”

Method of receiving information

Hispanic respondents were:

- Significantly more likely to consume local news weekly, and less likely to rarely consume any local news.
- Significantly less likely to frequently get their local news from a print newspaper.
- Significantly more likely to get local news via text messages, podcasts, or social media, including Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, and TikTok, which follows [national trends](#) for this demographic.
- Significantly more likely to prefer getting their local news from TV, a website or online newspaper, Facebook groups, Instagram, TikTok, and friends or family.
- Significantly more likely to get news from their place of worship, the school system, or friends and family.

- Significantly less likely to currently be paying for local news and to say people who access local news should not have to pay for it.

A larger proportion of Hispanic respondents were in the 35–44 age range. Hispanic respondents were also more likely to be women, have a high school or associate's degree, or some college.

Coverage areas of interest

Hispanic respondents are significantly more likely to seek out news about:

- Arts, culture, entertainment, and events
- Crime and public safety
- Education and schools
- Health care and public health
- Immigration
- Politics and government
- Transportation and roads
- Weather

The following section goes into more depth of the write-in answers from Hispanic respondents.

Community-focused and engaging

Through write-in answers, Hispanic respondents described a desire for local news that paid attention to everyday issues. There's "not enough coverage over how our city parks are secure and safe," explained one respondent. There were also calls for more coverage on local schools, community services, local events, and achievements. Furthermore, there were calls for local news outlets to foster interactive community dialogue: "I want to see a trusted source that encourages critical thinking and engagement from the audience, not just to provide a guided narrative."

Representation

Many respondents in this group pointed out the need for coverage that is more inclusive. One respondent explained this as the need for “news that talks about [the] Mexican American community since we are the majority of the population. I think all people of color stories are generally invisible.” They asked for narratives that avoid stereotypes and give voice to experiences of long-time local residents. Similarly, a number of Hispanic respondents said local news emphasizes crime and “fake news” narratives that create a negative view of the community and wanted more positive, solutions-based stories for more balance. “Most [local news stories] deal with the problems and leave me feeling hopeless.”

Digital accessibility

Hispanic respondents tended toward free digital news sources, reflecting concerns that high costs limit the public’s ability to stay informed about local issues. “I recognize the need for the media to make money, but it also constricts access to information,” explained one respondent.

Fact-based, unbiased accountability

Similarly to other respondents, this group prefers local news that provides in-depth, nonopinionated reporting that holds local leaders accountable. One respondent said, “Local news is too shallow, which conveys a lack of analysis around ‘policy direction’ decisions.” Respondents further noticed a lack of original reporting and a need for local news outlets to spend “more time and resources to be able to verify data coming from press releases. I read too many articles that are clearly pulled from releases without a second verification.”

Asian

Approximately 9% of survey respondents identified as Asian. Although they had higher evaluations of local news, they tended to consume less of it and showed less demand for local coverage, suggesting a need to reach out and better engage this audience.

In general, they had higher hopes for local news. This group was more likely to say it is important that local news:

- Keeps them engaged with issues
- Offers different perspectives on local issues and topics

- Inspires them to feel better about their community
- Entertains them
- Makes them feel more connected to other people
- Provides practical information for day-to-day life

They were also more likely to trust their local news coverage and say local news coverage is fair, politically unbiased, reports on topics important to them, and accurately represents their community. The one negative outlook they tended toward more than other groups was that local news coverage is more focused on problems rather than solutions.

Yet, despite their positive assessments, Asian respondents consume less local news overall and appear to want less local information than other groups. They were less likely to consume local news daily and more likely to rarely or never consume any local news. They also were more likely to not know about local news sources in the area.

They were more likely to get local news and information from the following sources outside of local news outlets:

- Libraries
- Community centers

They were less likely to get local news and information from local government sources and elected leaders' newsletters.

Asian respondents were less likely to want local news and information about most topics, including:

- Arts, culture, entertainment, and events
- Crime and public safety
- Economy and business
- Education and schools
- Environment and climate
- Health care and public health
- Housing and new development
- Immigration
- Politics and government

- Transportation and roads
- Water, droughts, and burn bans
- Weather

The way they consume local news also differed in a few significant ways from other respondents. Asian respondents were more likely to get local news from:

- Facebook
- TikTok

They were less likely to get local news from:

- Local TV
- Local radio
- Print newspapers
- Online newspapers
- Social media in general
- Email newsletters

Middle Eastern & North African

About 5% of survey respondents identified as Middle Eastern or North African (MENA). MENA respondents generally had similar attitudes toward local news as other groups, except in a few ways that suggested unmet needs from information provided by local news media.

They were more likely to feel strongly that the experiences of their community are not accurately represented in local news.

According to their answers, MENA respondents also appear to consume less local news than others. They were less likely to consume local news daily and more likely to rarely consume any local news. Not surprisingly, they were also less likely to pay for local news and believe people should pay for it.

They were more likely to get local news from:

- Twitter/X
- Instagram
- TikTok

- Nextdoor
- Local Facebook groups

They were less likely to get local news from:

- Online newspapers

MENA respondents were more likely than other respondents to want local information about:

- Economy and business
- Education and schools
- Health care and public health

Black or African American respondents

Due to the small proportion of respondents identifying as Black or African American (18 in total), we were unable to delve as deeply into this group. However, we qualitatively analyzed their write-in responses to glean takeaways into their local news assessments.

Respondents in this group stated preferences for local news in their community to be unbiased, investigative, transparent, and positive in terms of portraying some ethnic groups in a more positive light. Although multiple respondents mentioned each of these traits, one comment explored several of these sentiments:

“News about legislation being considered on the state and local levels that provides an unbiased discussion of the pros and cons and allows me to reach my own conclusions. I’m tired of all news outlets that want to preach an opinion or try to make the news. I’d also like to see more news on the positive impact people, churches and organizations are making. Nowadays the news is so negative and drugs, shootings and similar stories just place certain ethnic groups in a negative light and feed the negativity other groups often harbor about those ethnic groups. Let’s try to bring people together and foster open communication – less name calling.”

This group is worried about crime, food insecurity, community health, injustice and the negative impact to the community of the Trump administration. They’re excited

about arts and culture, more housing, justice, parks and nature access, and arts and culture.

Translations

We also separated the write-in answers of respondents who answered the survey in Arabic and Spanish translations, as well as surveys taken by the visually impaired to understand these distinct groups better.

Arabic

This subgroup of 44 respondents showed a clear concern about violence and safety, as multiple responses in this subgroup mentioned security, crime, public safety, and more specifically, “armed threats to schools” and various forms of kidnapping as issues they were most worried about. Respondents in this group were also interested in education- and school-related coverage, as well as coverage on racism and international affairs as part of local coverage, including the Middle East. They wanted local news to be covered from multiple perspectives and have “more credibility.” Finally, some respondents expressed a desire for more connection with the community, suggesting they’d like local news to help them engage with community issues.

Very few in this group listed specific local news outlets as their most consumed or trusted source for news, and instead gravitated toward social media, including Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram, and international news channels such as Al Arabiya, a state-run station from Saudi Arabia.

Spanish

Spanish-speaking respondents also tended toward crime and safety as major concerns, as well as school- and education-related topics. Several respondents mentioned immigration as a topic they wanted covered more by local news, specifically that they’d like local news to dispel fears and myths about immigrants and the problems caused by immigration. Several respondents noted a lack of representation and did not like, as one respondent described, “generalizations that all immigrants are bad people.” Another theme from this subgroup was a desire for

community solidarity and aid, with comments such as “helping needy people” and “staying together” as important community issues.

Finally, there was an interest in accessibility, for local news that can be viewed on any device. Those who took the survey in Spanish listed Facebook as their most common and most trusted source of local news. Other sources included text messages, websites, Google, Instagram, and Twitter/X.

As only 18 people took the survey in Spanish, specific data on this population is limited from the survey alone. However, [a 2024 Pew survey](#) found that 54% of Hispanic adults in the United States get their news in English, 21% in Spanish, and 23% in both languages. These numbers differ depending on whether they were born in the United States. A vast majority, 81%, of Hispanic Americans born in the United States get their news in English, compared to only 26% of immigrants who are Hispanic. Furthermore, the longer they have been in the country, the more likely they are to consume news in English.

Visually impaired

This group of 42 was interested in crime, violence, and public safety coverage, as well as homelessness- and transportation-related coverage, focusing on public transportation and challenges in daily travel. They were also interested in coverage about issues related to vulnerable communities, such as the special needs and disabled communities, with an interest in community aid and events that both support these groups and are specifically *for* these groups. Calls for local news to be more involved and to “speak for the community” suggest the desire for a more active role played by local news media in serving underrepresented groups.

Television and radio news dominated within this group, including KENS 5, KSAT 12, Texas Public Radio, 550 AM, and WOAI4.

Age groups

Respondent answers also varied among age groups. Younger respondents tended toward higher evaluations of local news than older respondents but were less likely to pay for local news or consume traditional mediums.

News consumption

Respondents under age 35 were less likely to consume local news regularly. They were more likely to know about local news sources but not consume them.

What they want from news:

Respondents under age 35 were:

- Significantly more likely to want news that entertains them, with 41% of people under 35 saying it was very important for news to entertain them, compared to 23% of those over 35.
- Significantly more likely to want news that makes them feel connected to other people in the community.

Evaluations of news:

Respondents under 35 had better evaluations of San Antonio news than those over 35. Younger respondents were:

- Significantly more likely to say that San Antonio area news does a *good job* of keeping them engaged in the community
- Significantly more likely to say that San Antonio area news does a *very good job* entertaining them, helping them learn about topics and events, inspiring them to feel better about their community, connecting them to the community, providing practical information, and offering different perspectives on local issues.

Younger respondents were also more likely to trust San Antonio local news and think local news is fair.

Even so, those under 35 were less likely to currently pay for local news, and were less likely to say people should pay for local news, compared to those over 35.

Method of Receiving Information

There were also a few differences in how respondents get their news.

Those under 35 were:

- Significantly more likely to get news from Facebook or the school system.
- Significantly more likely to prefer Facebook, Twitter/X and TikTok for local news.

Those over 35 were:

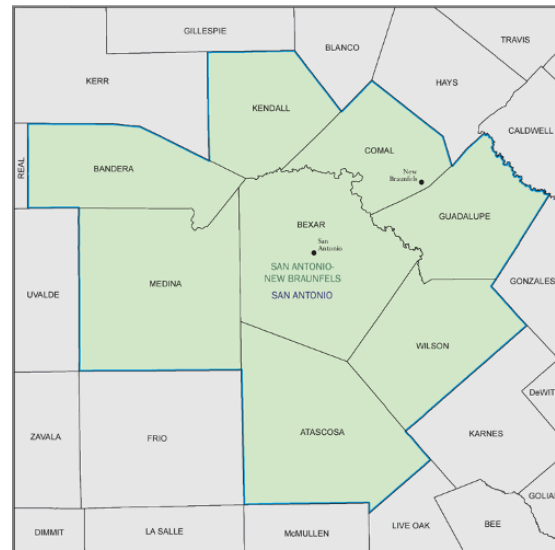
- Significantly more likely to get news from online newspapers and from local government sources.
- Significantly more likely to prefer print or online newspapers.

Outlying counties

We first separated responses from people who live in the surrounding seven counties outside of Bexar County, where San Antonio is located. Their preferences for receiving local information reflected the availability of community-specific content in the metro area and the unique contexts of living in rapidly developing areas.

Method of receiving information

For the most part, respondents from surrounding counties had similar preferences for how to receive news as those in Bexar County, except in the following ways, which suggest that print newspapers and local Facebook groups are important providers of information for the more rural and suburban counties.



Respondents from surrounding counties are:

- Significantly less likely to turn to broadcast TV news or Instagram for news about their community.
- Significantly more likely to prefer print newspapers and Facebook groups to get local information.

When it comes to information sources outside of news, they're more likely to get information from:

- Their place of worship
- Community centers
- Local Facebook groups

And less likely to get information from:

- Local representatives' newsletters

Coverage areas of interest

Respondents from surrounding counties are also significantly more likely to seek out news about:

- Crime
- Environment and climate
- Water, droughts, and burn bans

The following section goes into more depth of the write-in answers from respondents who live in one of the seven surrounding counties.

Development

In write-in answers, respondents from outside Bexar County who reside in one of the seven surrounding counties praised news stories that dug into development issues, such as a proposed wastewater treatment. They tended to want more coverage on growth, and on any transportation-, water-, and power-related issues affected by growth and development. One respondent emphasized this, saying they wanted "platforms to address the influx of people who have moved to this area from out of state or region. There is SIGNIFICANT population growth in this area."

A resident of Comal County said, “The unincorporated areas of Comal County need to be seen and heard. Many issues such as road repair, water availability, high-density housing projects, tourist season issues, etc. are ignored.”

Accountability

This group also praised accountability coverage in general and in specific instances. One respondent said, “San Antonio News 4 covered Seguin bullying and poor administration well, but the local paper does not.” Another respondent praised the New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung for staying on a story about county leaders changing the recycling program.

Yet, there was evidence in these answers that they are not receiving enough accountability coverage, or other types of coverage about their communities. One respondent said, “We could easily hear more about a big train wreck in Nebraska than we might about mismanagement in a local school district.” Another said they wanted local news to “represent the surrounding areas a bit more.”

Community

They wanted more stories on community events and their community in general. Along these lines, they expressed a desire for positive news that shared “good things happening in our community” and “grassroots efforts.” Another said, “Let’s try to bring people together and foster open communication.”

Solutions

Furthermore, they want local news that focuses on actions and solutions. One respondent said they wanted news coverage that showed “honesty regarding the sustainability of programs and services in our area,” and “action surrounding what is being done about crime, drug addiction, education, the economy, and the homeless issue.” Another explained: “It’s all crime and new restaurants. We need to hear about solutions that are making an impact — good, quality, accessible education, good government, solutions to problems.”

Balance and facts

Conversely, respondents from the surrounding counties disliked stories that were not balanced or misrepresented immigration and the economy during the election.

They wanted fact-based, unbiased coverage, similar to the rest of the respondents, with specific comments suggesting they would prefer not having biased news about the new president. More general comments from residents from surrounding counties cited development issues such as a quarry or water availability, politics or the election, and transgender rights as stories they felt were covered poorly but did not elaborate.

Topics of Coverage:

KEY POINT:

Those over 35 were more likely to want coverage on:

- Arts, culture, entertainment, and events
- Environment and climate
- Politics and government
- Transportation and roads
- Water, droughts, and burn bans

In write-in answers, respondents under 35 tended to want more news stories that represent a broader diversity of racial groups and other communities, including immigrants, as well as news that supports local artists and arts organizations.

This group also tended to want more positive news stories that highlight opportunities and achievements in the community and local schools. Along with other groups, younger audiences were likewise bothered by biased or misleading headlines and wanted more thorough reporting with an emphasis on fact-checking.

Finally, this age group wanted more free news access and easier ways to access local news and events.

News Availability Assessment

KEY POINT:

An accounting of news outlets providing original local news content to the eight-county metro area identified:

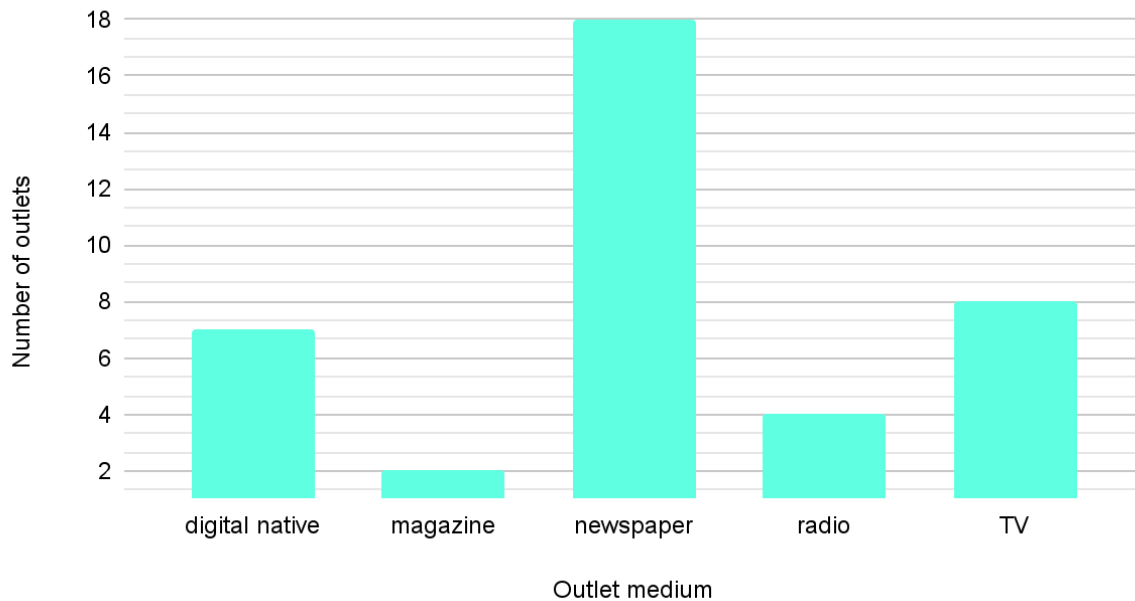
- 39 local outlets in the metro area
- 15 outlets covering specific geographic areas outside of San Antonio
- 4 outlets focusing on specific racial/ethnic communities

Local news outlets

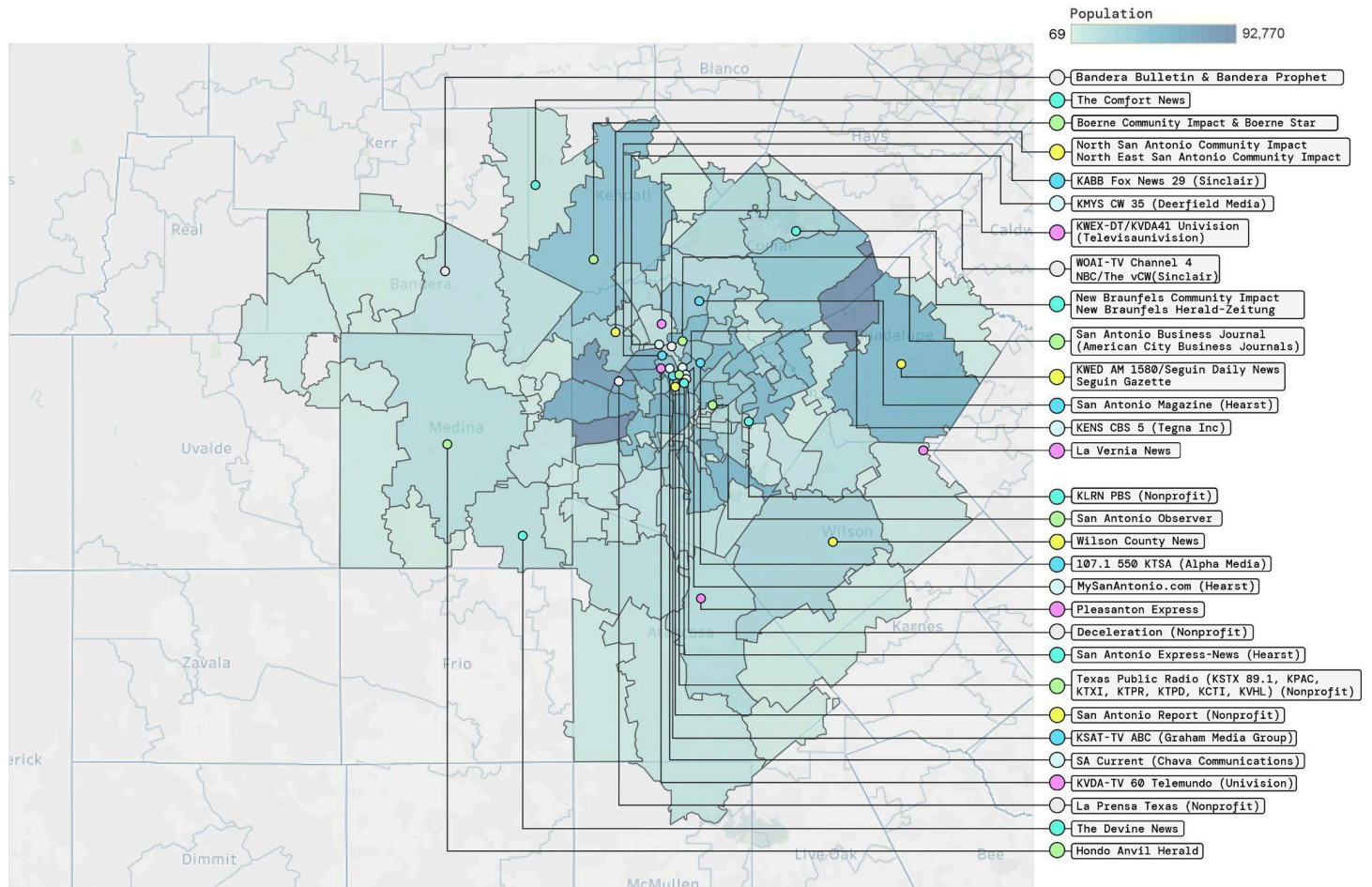
Our analysis found original news coverage produced in the eight-county San Antonio metro area by 39 entities. These include a range of different types of outlets, including newspapers, magazines, broadcast radio and television, and digital native news websites. Included in this analysis are three Spanish-language outlets in various mediums and one Black press newspaper. It is important to note that the term *medium* refers to the originating medium of the publication; all of these outlets have websites.

In recent years, [at least 10 newspapers in the metro area](#) have closed, with half of those in Bexar County and the other half in the seven surrounding counties. Furthermore, since 2009, the San Antonio Express-News has experienced severe cuts in the number of editorial staff due to layoffs and buyouts. The area's metro daily newspaper, which [typically produces the bulk of local news in a community, lost 75 positions](#), or a third of its newsroom, in 2009, with [another 14 lost in 2018, 11 in 2020](#) (although 10 new positions were added in 2021), and [four more in 2023](#).

Outlets that cover the San Antonio metro area, by medium

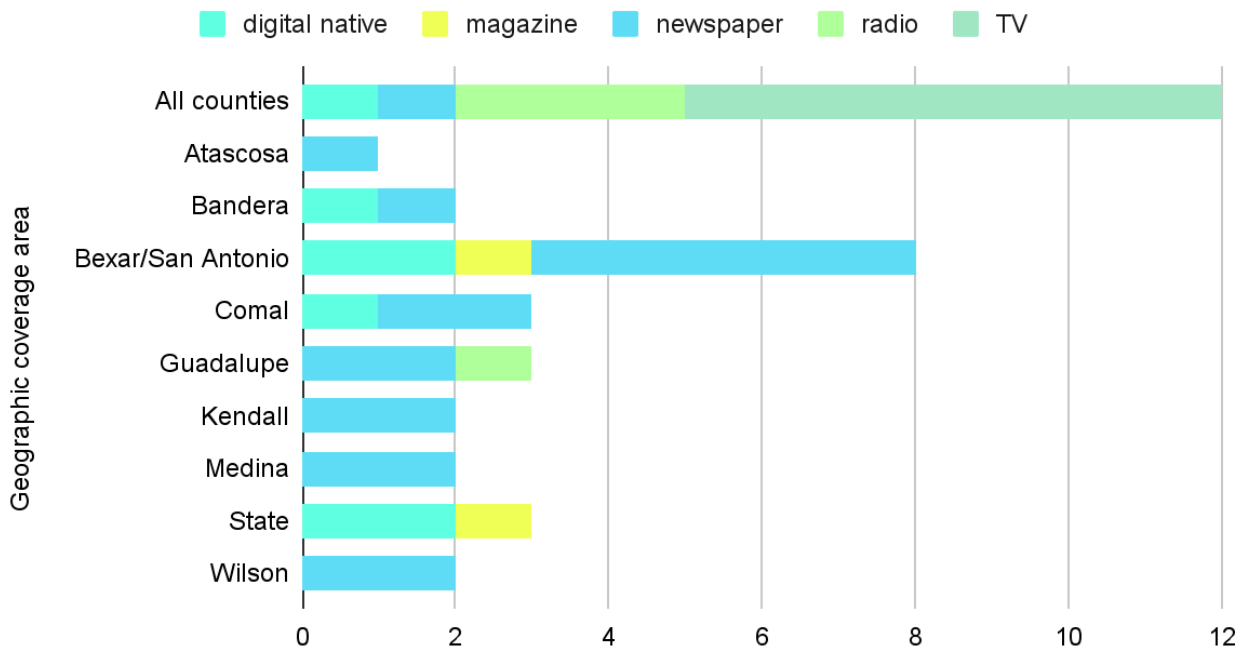


Most of the news organizations based in the San Antonio area aim to cover all eight counties in the metro area. The local TV stations based in San Antonio reach several additional counties south and west of the metro area that make up its [Designated Market Area \(DMA\)](#), so they count these additional counties within their coverage areas.



A smaller number of news organizations focus their coverage on specific counties, with most outlets covering the population centers of Bexar County and San Antonio. Three news outlets focus on state coverage, one of which is based in San Antonio.

Outlets by geographic coverage focus and medium

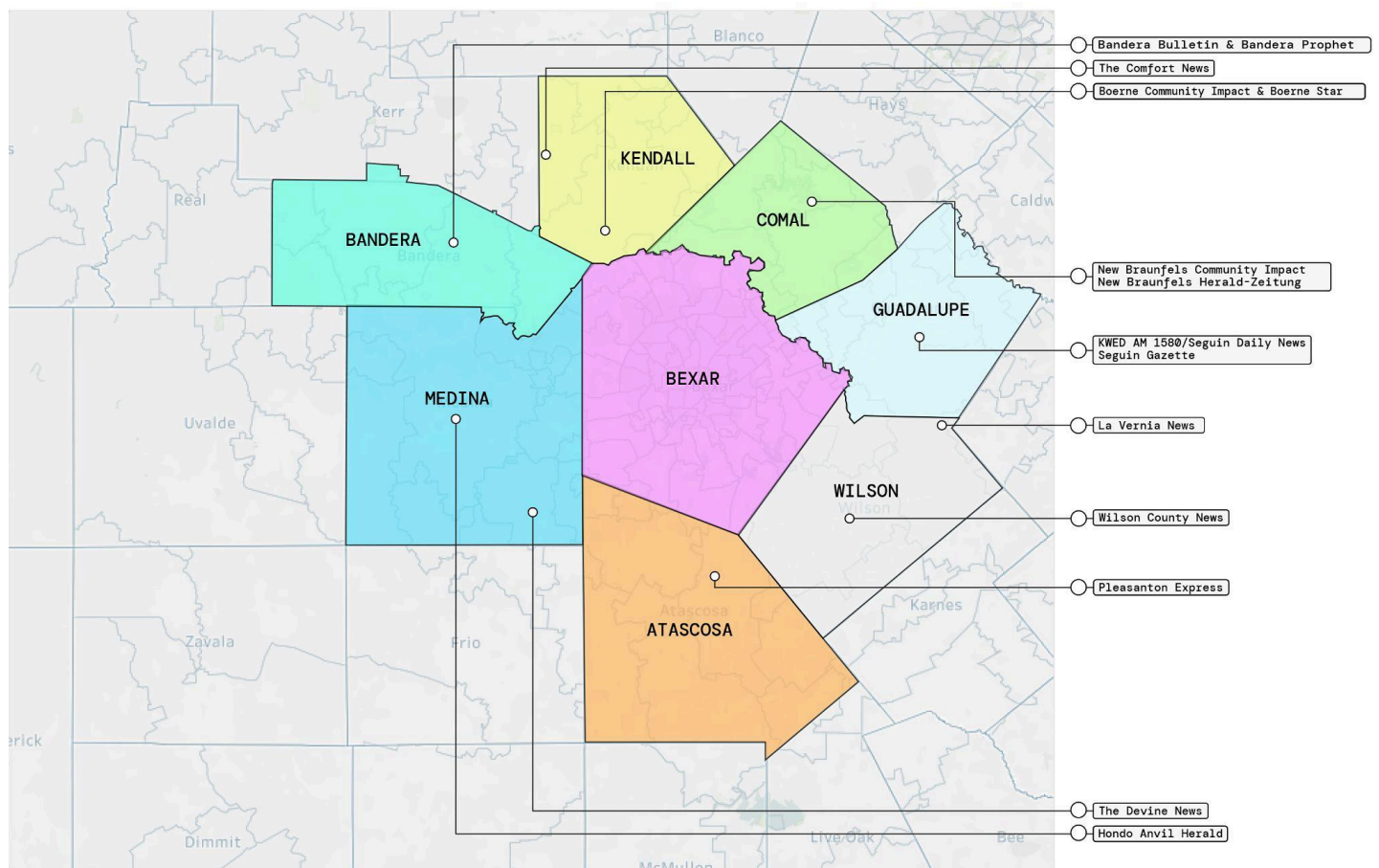


News Outlets Dedicated to Seven Counties Surrounding San Antonio

Outlet	Geographic focus
Pleasanton Express	Atascosa
Bandera Bulletin	Bandera
Bandera Prophet	Bandera
Community Impact New Braunfels	Comal
My Canyon Lake	Comal
New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung	Comal
Seguin Gazette	Guadalupe
Seguin Today/KWED Radio AM 1580	Guadalupe
The Comfort News	Guadalupe
Boerne Star	Kendall
Community Impact Boerne-Fair Oaks	Kendall

Ranch	
Hondo Anvil Herald	Medina
The Devine News	Medina
La Vernia News	Wilson
Wilson County News	Wilson

Although it would appear that, by volume, all counties have adequate coverage, the regional outlets are based in San Antonio, which means that it is possible that the bulk of their coverage also focuses on San Antonio, with more sporadic coverage on the surrounding counties. The content of news coverage in the area, including the geographic focus, will be explored in more detail in [the following sections](#).



The majority of news organizations in the San Antonio area originated as newspapers and continue to have a print edition.

Newspaper Outlets

Outlet	Geographic focus
San Antonio Express-News	All counties
Pleasanton Express	Atascosa
Bandera Bulletin	Bandera
Community Impact North/Northeast SA	Bexar/San Antonio
La Prensa Texas	Bexar/San Antonio
SA Current	Bexar/San Antonio
San Antonio Business Journal	Bexar/San Antonio
San Antonio Observer	Bexar/San Antonio
Community Impact New Braunfels	Comal
New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung	Comal
Seguin Gazette	Guadalupe
The Comfort News	Guadalupe
Boerne Star	Kendall
Community Impact Boerne-Fair Oaks Ranch	Kendall
Hondo Anvil Herald	Medina
The Devine News	Medina
La Vernia News	Wilson
Wilson County News	Wilson

Broadcast TV news stations based in San Antonio include the CBS affiliate (KENS) owned by TEGNA, the ABC affiliate (KSAT) owned by Graham Media and the ABC affiliate (WOAI), owned by Sinclair, which also owns the KABB Fox News affiliate. There are also two Spanish-language stations, KVDA Telemundo and KWEX/KVDA Univision. A PBS station, KLRN, is also based in San Antonio.

Broadcast TV Outlets

Outlet	Geographic focus
KABB Fox News 29	All counties
KENS CBS 5	All counties
KLRN PBS	All counties
KMYS CW 35 – Kerrville	All counties
KSAT-TV ABC	All counties
KVDA-TV 60 Telemundo	All counties
KWEX-DT/KVDA41 Univision	All counties
WOAI-TV Channel 4 NBC/The CW	All counties

Seven news websites that are considered “digital natives” cover San Antonio news, including one state-based news organization, The Texas Tribune; three San Antonio-based news organizations that cover local news; and one based in the city that has a statewide focus on climate issues.

Digital Native News Outlets

Outlet	Geographic focus
MySanAntonio.com	All counties
Bandera Prophet	Bandera
Axios San Antonio	Bexar/San Antonio
San Antonio Report	Bexar/San Antonio
My Canyon Lake	Comal
Deceleration	State
Texas Tribune	State

Additionally, four radio stations provide local news about San Antonio, including the nonprofit Texas Public Radio, another FM station and two AM stations. Two

magazines also provide coverage of the area—one based on San Antonio, and another based elsewhere that covers the entire state.

Broadcast Radio Outlets

Outlet	Geographic focus
107.1 550 KTSA	All counties
1200 WOAI AM	All counties
Texas Public Radio KSTX 89.1, KPAC, KTXI, KTPR, KTPD, KCTI, KVHL	All counties
Seguin Today/KWED Radio AM 1580	Guadalupe

Magazines

Outlet	Geographic focus
San Antonio Magazine	Bexar/San Antonio
Texas Monthly	State

Of the news organizations based in the San Antonio metro area, most focus on general local news coverage. The two magazines produce local news that mostly concerns arts, culture, and/or entertainment. Three news outlets in the area produce news for a Spanish-speaking audience: Univision, Telemundo, and La Prensa. One outlet, the San Antonio Observer, produces news geared toward Black audiences; another outlet specializes in business news; and another, Deceleration, focuses on climate news.

Scope of Coverage

In this section, we take a closer look at the most prolific producers of local news in the eight-county San Antonio metro area to understand the topics they cover and the general depth of their coverage to identify gaps as identified by the community. We compare the coverage they're offering with what residents want.

We next selected four of these outlets on which to conduct a comprehensive content analysis of the breadth and depth of coverage based on common news evaluations. Among the questions we sought to answer are: *How thorough is their coverage? What issues are not being covered well or at all? Which communities/residents are not being served or accurately represented? and What types of reporting are missing?*

We chose the following four outlets, based on their primary medium and prevalence in the community. Each was among the most trusted and consumed local news outlets by survey respondents.

1. KSAT-TV is the [highest-rated local broadcast news station](#) in the San Antonio area. What's more, a full third (33%) of residents in the San Antonio-New Braunfels area chose the ABC affiliate as their main source for local news in a [2019 Pew Research survey](#). Nearly half of residents (47%) in the Pew survey said they get their local news from TV, more than among U.S. adults overall (38%).

The station has about 826,000 followers on Facebook, a daily top-rated lifestyle program, and [recently won a journalism award](#) for innovation and enterprise. Among its local news offerings is [a monthly segment](#) focusing on San Antonio neighborhoods. About 17% of respondents to our survey reported turning to KSAT for local news.

2. The San Antonio Report is a nonprofit digital-native news website, which [started in 2012 as a blog](#). It's now a member-supported outlet with [more than 2,000 supporters](#). About 17% of San Antonio-area respondents in the 2019 Pew survey preferred news websites or apps, and the same proportion of

respondents to our survey reported seeking out news from the San Antonio Report.

The [outlet reports](#) having more than 3 million unique visitors, more than 27,000 newsletter subscribers, and regularly holding events in the community, including listening sessions with audiences.

3. San Antonio Express-News, the daily metro newspaper in the area, is owned by Hearst, and reportedly reaches [more than 800,000 people a week](#). The newspaper has experienced declines in staff in recent years due to [layoffs](#) and most recently, [early retirement buyouts](#).

According to the 2019 Pew survey, fewer people in the San Antonio area get their local news from newspapers (about 10%), compared to nationwide (17%). Approximately 17% of our survey respondents reported turning to the Express-News for local news.

4. Texas Public Radio, an NPR-member station and nonprofit media outlet, [operates seven radio stations](#) and broadcasts local, state, and national news through KSTX in San Antonio, which reaches all eight counties in the metro area.

KSTX has [the largest number of listeners](#) for news radio in the city, with more than 126,000 people on average tuning in each morning. Among our survey respondents, 18% reported seeking out news from Texas Public Radio, the largest proportion of any news outlet mentioned.

Homepage analysis

KEY POINT :

The percentage of local stories promoted on homepages varied widely by outlet, ranging from 20% to 100%.

- KSAT and San Antonio Report featured the most local news stories, with an average of 80% to 100% local stories displayed at the top of the homepage.
- Texas Public Radio displayed an average of 20% local stories.
- San Antonio Express-News had the most variation, with anywhere from 33% to 100% local stories promoted, depending on the day.

The first part of this analysis consists of a content-analysis conducted on the four home pages on varying days of the week between January and October 2024. We reviewed content for the quantity of local articles compared to non-local, and the topic of local articles on the home page.

We wanted to understand the type of news content prominently placed and accessible to San Antonio-area news audiences. The homepage of a website displays the coverage output that newsrooms place premium value on. Stories placed “above the scroll” of the homepage are more likely to gain audience attention than others placed elsewhere on the site.

Anywhere between 20% and 100% of the articles promoted on the outlets’ homepages were produced by the local outlet, rather than a wire story with state or national content.

KSAT-TV

The majority of stories placed prominently on KSAT.com were local, with state and national stories never reaching more than 20%. On most days during the analysis, all prominently positioned stories were local, with most focused on the central San Antonio area, rather than surrounding counties or towns.

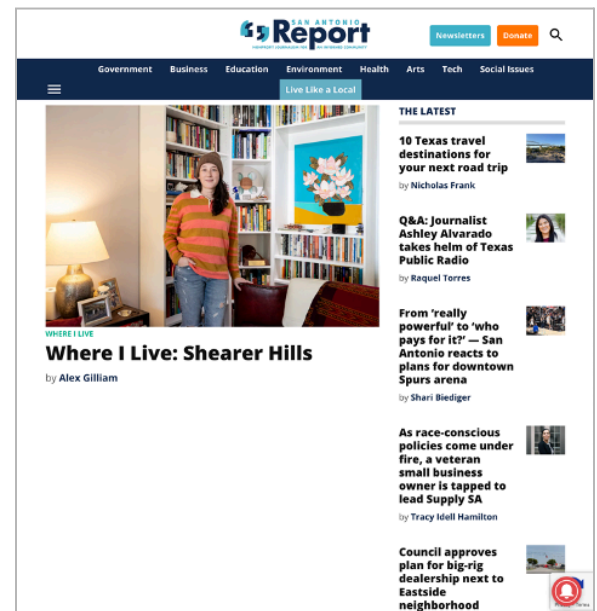
Stories displayed prominently on one of the days of analysis, Friday, Nov. 22, 2024, featured [one public safety story](#) about a fatal hit-and-run, [a weather story](#), and [a sports story](#). Notably, audiences must scroll past several prominently placed ads on the homepage, as shown. On this day, two additional public safety stories and two state and national sports stories appeared below the ads.



San Antonio Report

The San Antonio Report homepage featured *all* local stories during the analysis period, with the stories tending to focus on San Antonio and immediate suburbs rather than the surrounding counties, unless stories were oriented toward visitors traveling to those counties.

Prominently displayed stories on Friday, Nov. 22, 2024, included [a local business story](#); [two local politics or government stories](#); three local feature stories, including a Q&A with [a local media leader](#); [a travel story](#); and [a neighborhood profile](#).



Prominent stories covered a wide variety of topics, including social services, development, transportation, housing, and individual profiles of neighborhoods and regular people, rather than leaders and other official voices. One story featured prominently was in Spanish and shared how to obtain free school supplies; all other

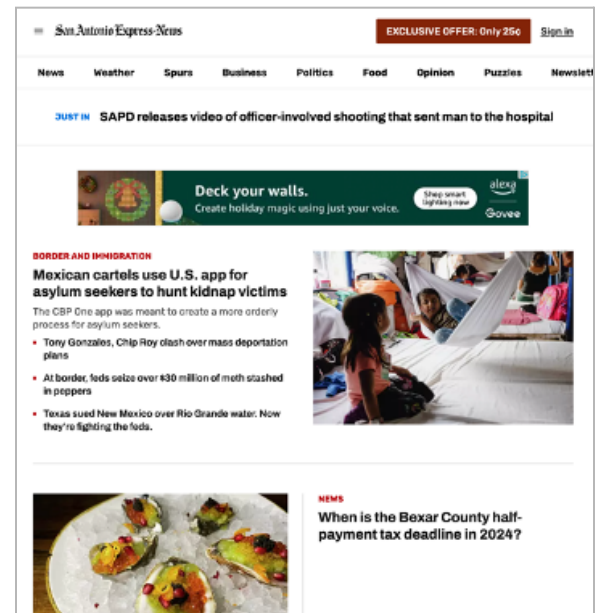
content on the homepage during the time of analysis was in English. Stories featured on the homepage reflected an emphasis on enterprise reporting, rather than centered on events announced in press releases or police reports.

San Antonio Express-News

The proportion of local news stories featured prominently on the homepage of the San Antonio Express-News varied more, from anywhere between 33% to 100% of profiled stories focused on local news during the analysis period, with most days featuring local stories for at least half the page.

On Friday, Nov. 22, 2024, there were four state and national immigration stories as well as [a local story explaining Bexar County tax deadlines](#).

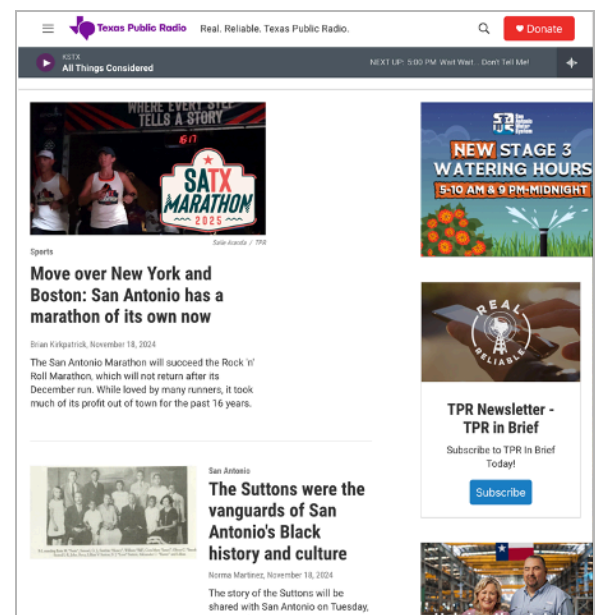
Topics highlighted on the homepage varied greatly. Stories about restaurants in the area dominated at times, as did public safety stories, mostly about crimes and court cases. Other local stories featured prominently on the home page included weather, housing, water, education, and business. Rarely did stories about surrounding counties feature prominently outside of travel-focused stories.



Texas Public Radio

Out of the four outlets, Texas Public Radio featured the lowest proportion of local news stories on its homepage, with approximately 20% of stories on average during the analysis period focusing on the San Antonio area. The other stories focused on state or national issues, including politics, science, and weather.

However, the station has a separate San Antonio page that features a roundup of prominent headlines, as well as local stories about topics such



as education, business, and politics. Stories on Friday, Nov. 22, 2024, focused on San Antonio, with two lifestyle stories: one about [a local family in history](#) and another about [the city gaining a marathon](#).

Content analysis

KEY POINT:

The content analysis identified the following gaps:

- Locally produced and focused news coverage
- County-specific coverage for all eight counties
- Enterprise and accountability reporting
- Multiple viewpoints in stories
- Focus on underrepresented groups

Digging deeper into the content of these four outlets, we conducted a thorough analysis on a sample of 574 news stories published on the web or during local broadcasts in 2024. This analysis consisted of the topic of each story, the community covered, whether the article was locally reported and included independent reporting, and the general depth of the reporting.

For the newspaper and digital outlet's story analysis, we [constructed two weeks of coverage](#) using randomly selected days of the week throughout 2024 to account for the cyclical nature of news. We used a different sampling approach for broadcast outlets based on the availability of transcripts and analyzed 10 days' worth of stories during an evening television broadcasts and a daily radio news broadcast in September 2024.

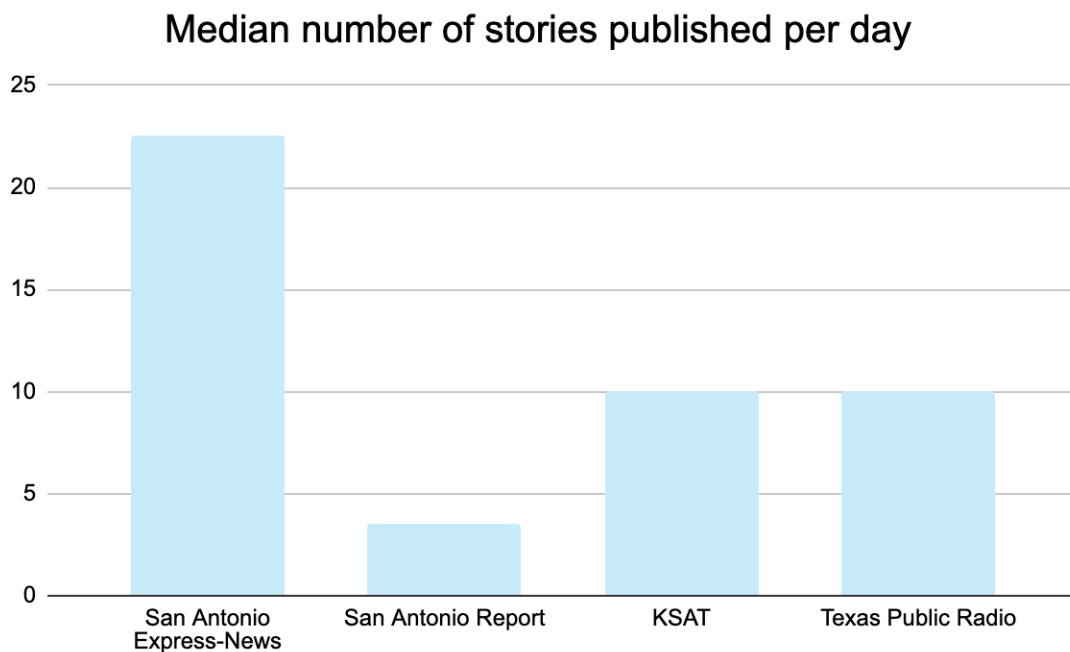
Quantity of news stories

KEY POINT:

The legacy metro newspaper produced the most content during the analysis period.

- Just over half of the outlet's stories were actually local, however.

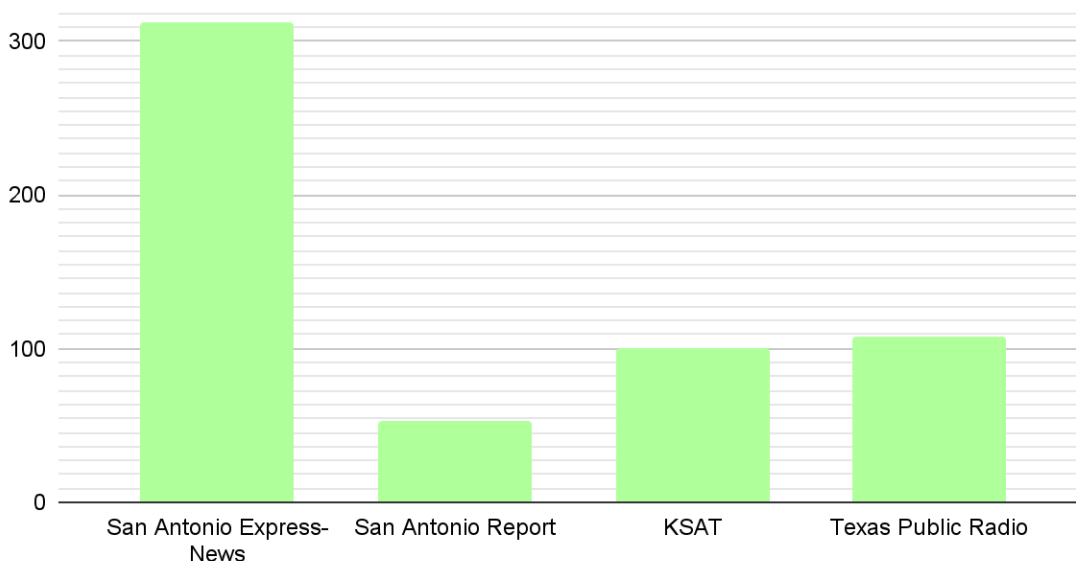
Differences in the quantity of stories among outlets reflected the varied sampling methods, but despite these variations, the San Antonio Express-News published more news coverage on average than other outlets in the community, replicating [previous research](#) that found legacy newspapers outperformed broadcast and digital native outlets by quantity of local coverage.



For the text-based publications in which stories were gathered on the same days, the San Antonio Express-News published significantly more stories than the San Antonio Report, publishing a median of 22.5 stories per day, while the San Antonio

Report published an average of just 3.5 stories per day. For broadcast, KSAT and Texas Public Radio each aired a median of 10 stories during their daily broadcasts.

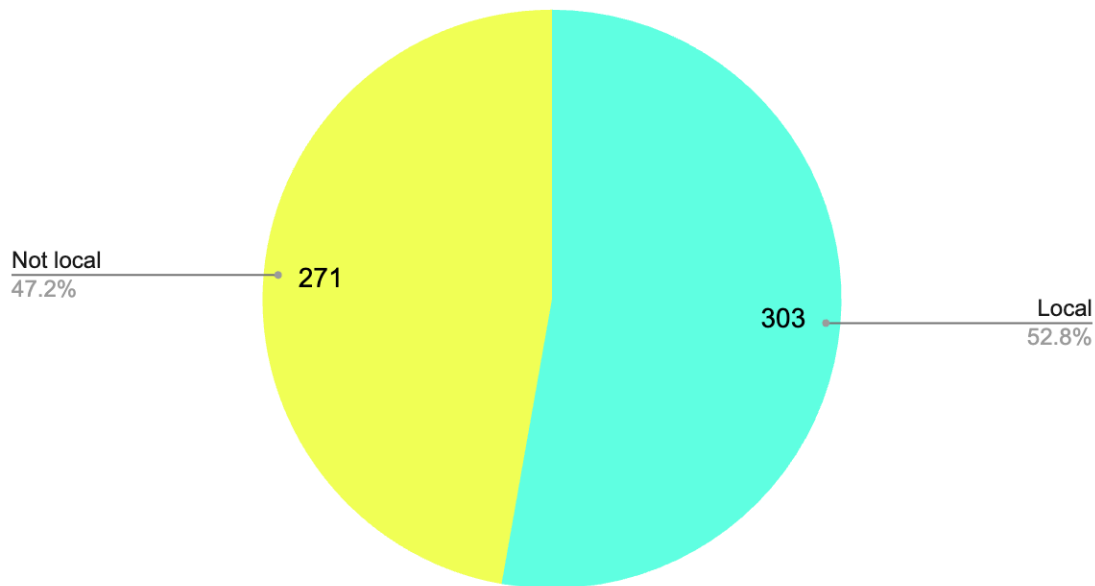
Number of stories published during analysis period



Local news stories

Yet not all of the stories included in the analysis were local to the San Antonio metro area. Out of all stories analyzed, a little more than half, about 53%, were considered local, meaning they were produced by the outlet and focused on the San Antonio metro area.

Proportion of local stories

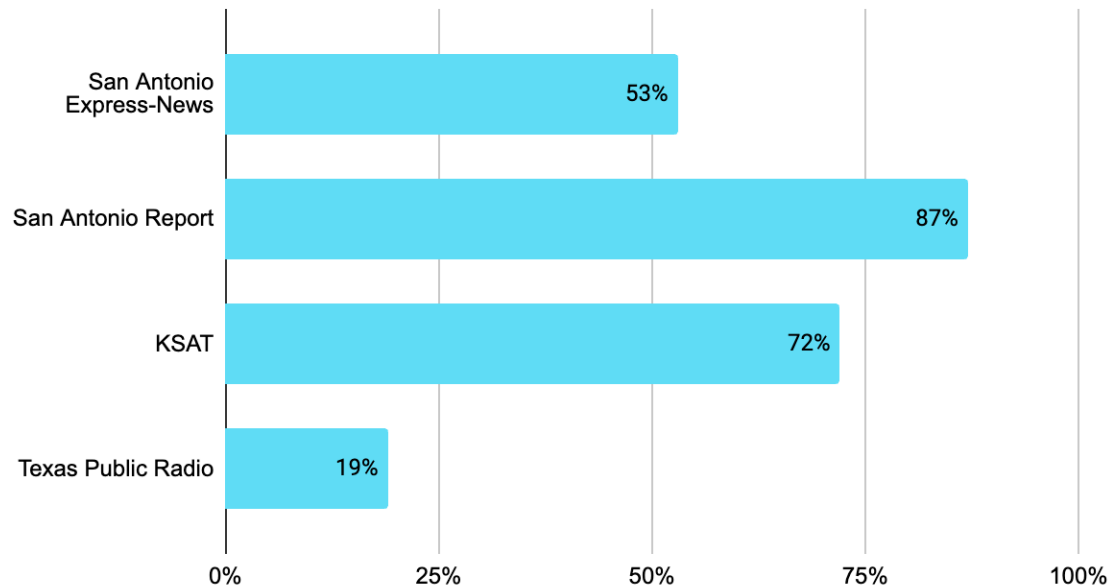


Among outlets, there was variation in the proportion of locally produced and focused stories. The San Antonio Report, which had the lowest production in quantity overall, had the highest proportion of local stories, at 88%. Texas Public Radio coverage was just 19% local, the lowest proportion of all outlets. The station's broadcast frequently published content about other areas in Texas, especially locations in areas surrounding, but outside the eight-county metro area.

Importantly, this analysis reviewed outlets in their native medium (radio broadcasts, in the case of Texas Public Radio), which means there may have been more local stories on the outlets' websites than were included in the analysis.

The San Antonio Express-News had the second lowest proportion of local stories, with frequent content produced by other newspapers within the Hearst network, including stories with a national or state focus, as well as those focused on local entities outside of the region, such as Houston.

Proportion of local stories, by outlet



Considering that audiences turn to local news specifically for information about their communities, this analysis identified a gap in locally produced and focused news coverage.

Geographic focus of stories

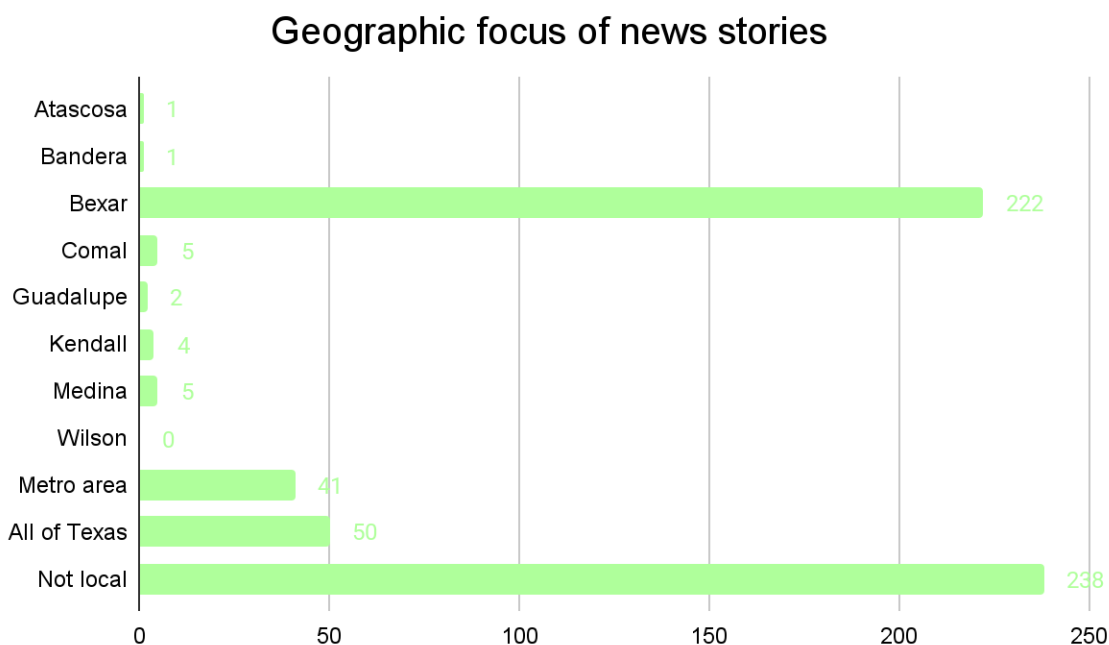
KEY POINT:

The majority of coverage produced by the four local news outlets was not local.

- Most local news was focused on Bexar County and/or San Antonio.
- None of the county-specific coverage matched the proportion of the population, including for Bexar County.

Most of the news stories that were local to the metro area focused on Bexar County and/or San Antonio. The majority of articles comprised the “not local” category, including national news and stories about locations within Texas that were not in the immediate metro area, such as nearby Travis or Hays counties, or farther afield Houston, which showed up often in sports coverage. In the community needs survey, many respondents noticed an overabundance of news from their local outlets about Houston, Dallas, and Austin rather than their specific community in the San Antonio area.

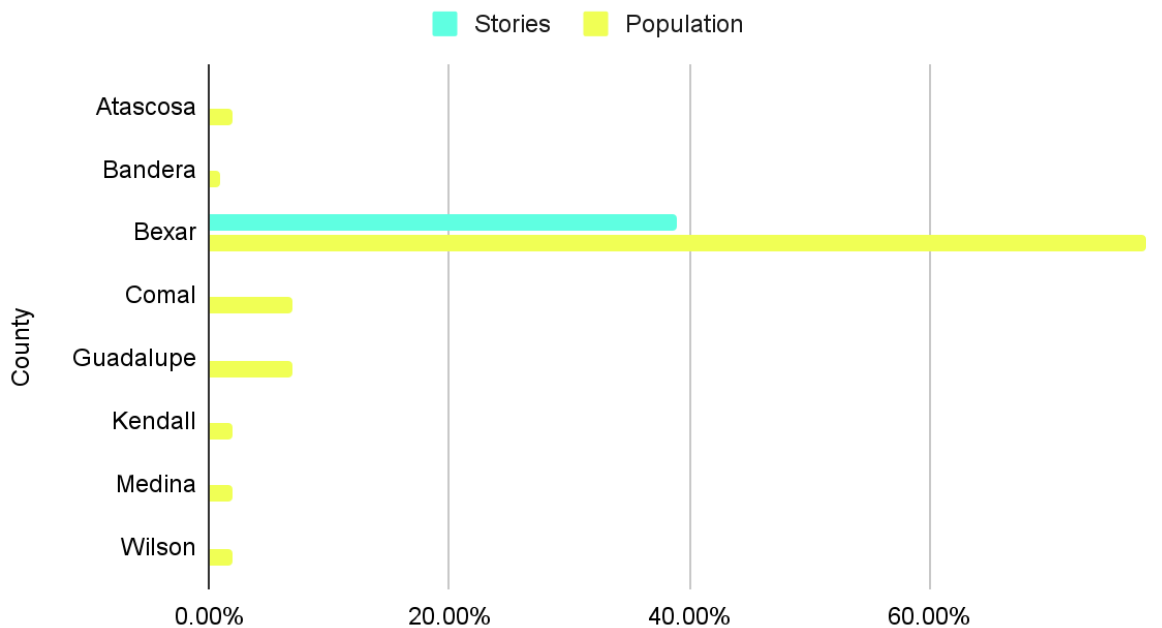
All other counties in the metro area were mentioned in less than 1% of stories in the analysis, and Wilson County was not mentioned at all. None of the county-specific coverage matched the proportion of the population.



Although it might seem like Bexar County is overrepresented in metrowide coverage, the proportion of stories about the most populous county is also low considering that its proportion of the population is nearly double that. **This breakdown suggests a gap in local news produced by metrowide outlets for every county, including Bexar.**

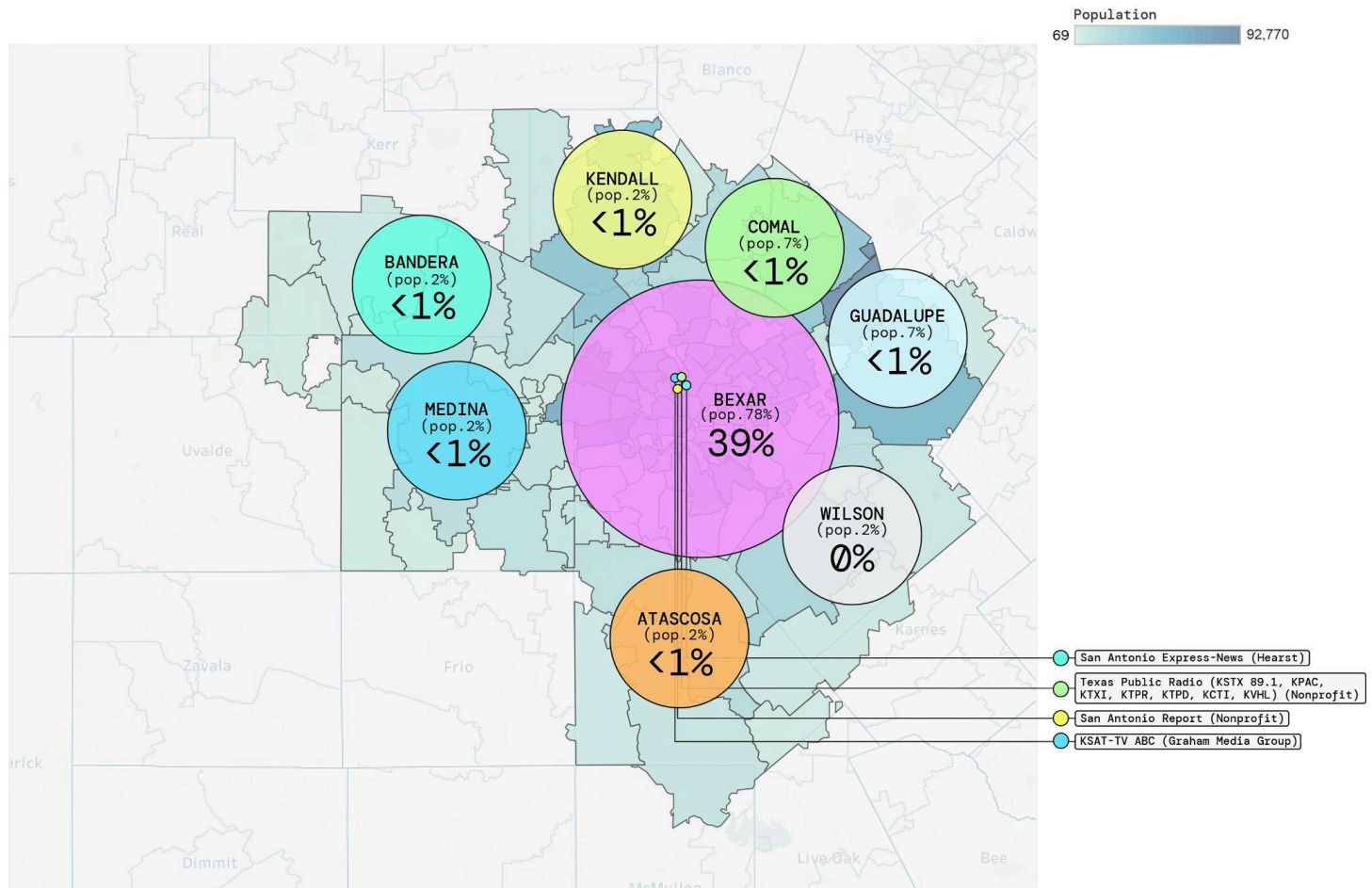
The following graph shows the proportion of population for each county and the proportion of total stories published by the area's four top news outlets during the analysis periods. As the bulk of coverage focused on areas outside of the metro region, every county was undercovered, proportionately.

Proportion of stories per county compared to proportion of population



The map below further illustrates the gap between the quantity of coverage counties received from the outlets in the content analysis and the proportion of population of that county relative to the total population of the entire metro area.

Population of Counties Compared to Quantity of Coverage



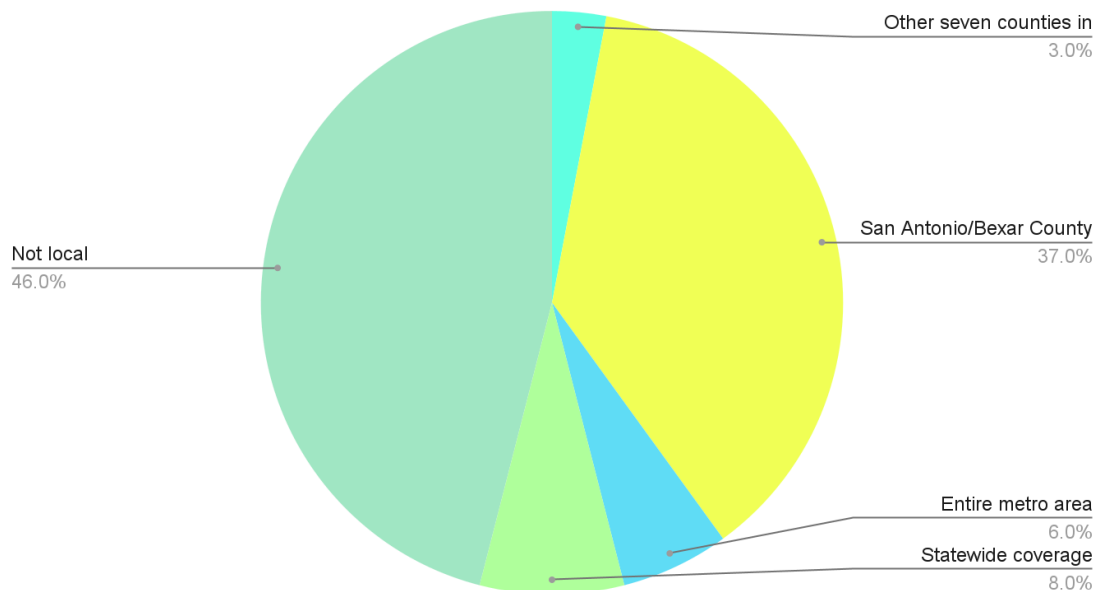
Of course, this analysis looked only at top outlets that cover the entire metro area, and in the case of the broadcast outlets, more than a dozen other counties. All counties do have at least one local news outlet dedicated to the county or a town, such as the digital native Bandera Prophet and community newspaper Bandera Bulletin in Bandera, and the New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung newspaper and My Canyon Lake website in Comal County.

However, due to the lack of county coverage by widely consumed outlets and the relatively smaller reach and capacity of these other news sources, this analysis identified a major gap in coverage that focuses on local issues within counties, including within specific areas of San Antonio. Such coverage is important not only

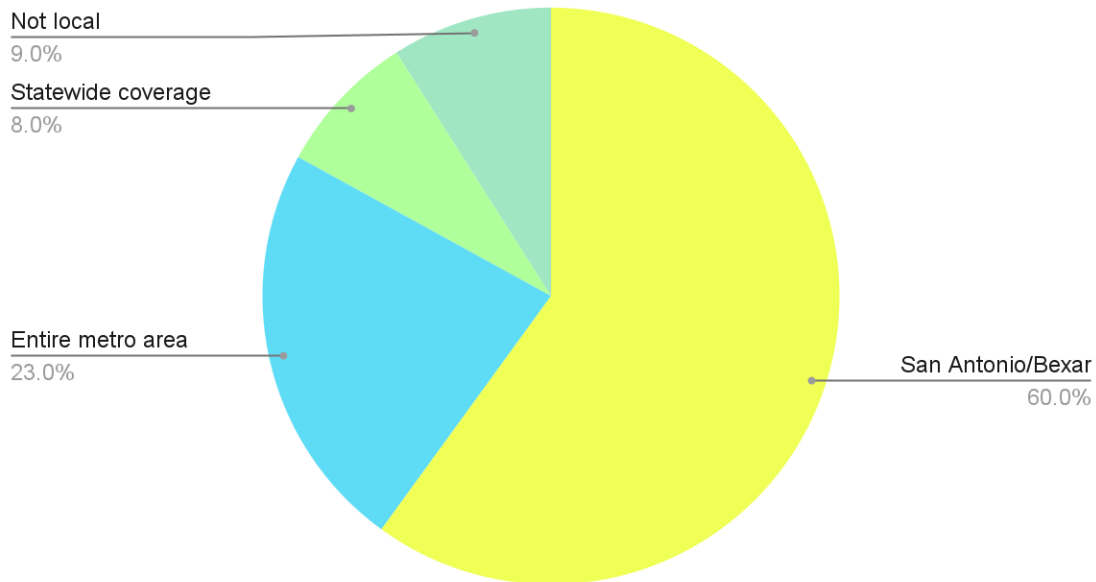
for those who live within those areas, but also for those living in other parts of the region to increase connection across the entire metro area.

KSAT featured the most county-specific coverage with 10% of its coverage mentioning a specific location in the metro region outside of Bexar County and San Antonio, followed by the San Antonio Express-News, which did so in 3% of stories. Texas Public Radio and San Antonio Report did not publish any stories during the analysis that focused on the other counties. However, the Report published the highest proportion of stories about Bexar County and San Antonio, followed closely by KSAT. Stories assigned “not local” could be national news stories, about another state or location that is not local to the San Antonio metro audience.

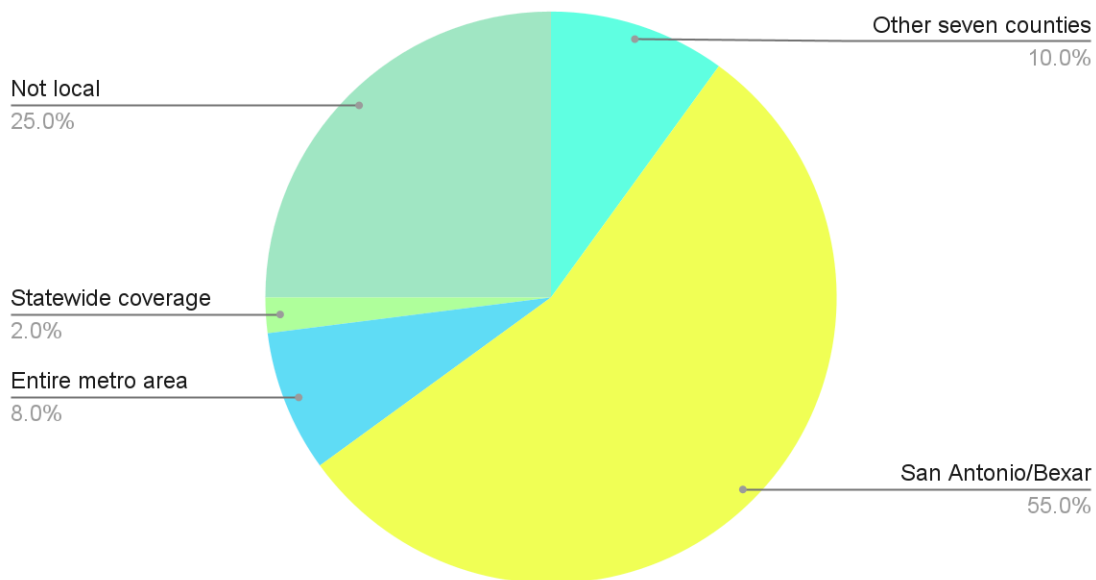
Breakdown of story geographic focus by outlet—San Antonio Express-News



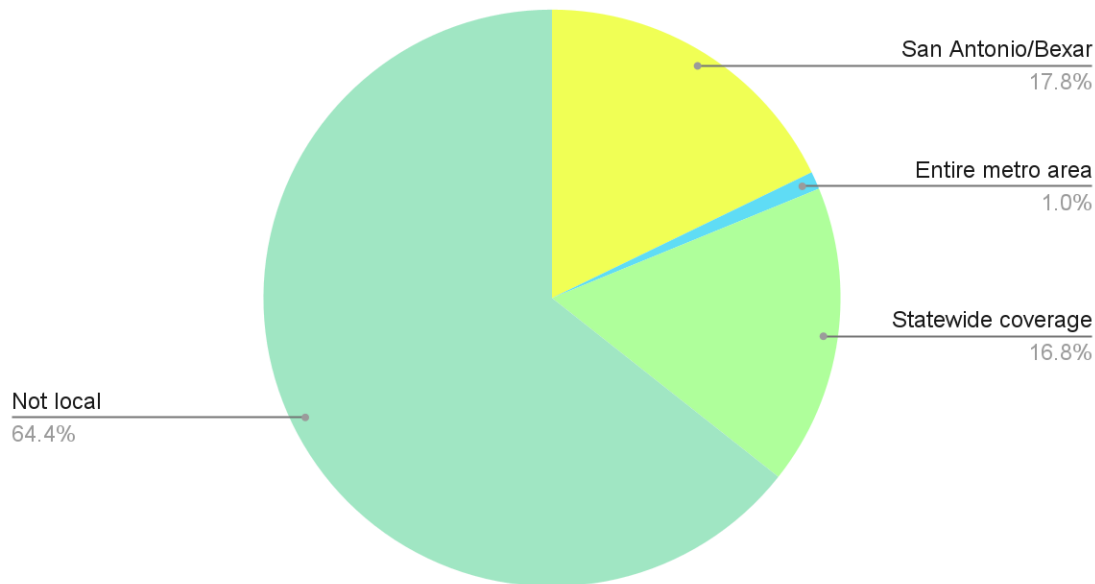
Breakdown of story geographic focus by outlet—San Antonio Report



Breakdown of story geographic focus by outlet—KSAT



Breakdown of story geographic focus by outlet—Texas Public Radio



Topical Focus of Coverage

KEY POINT:

- Most common topic of local stories: Crime and public safety
- Topical coverage gaps: Education, environment/climate, development, housing

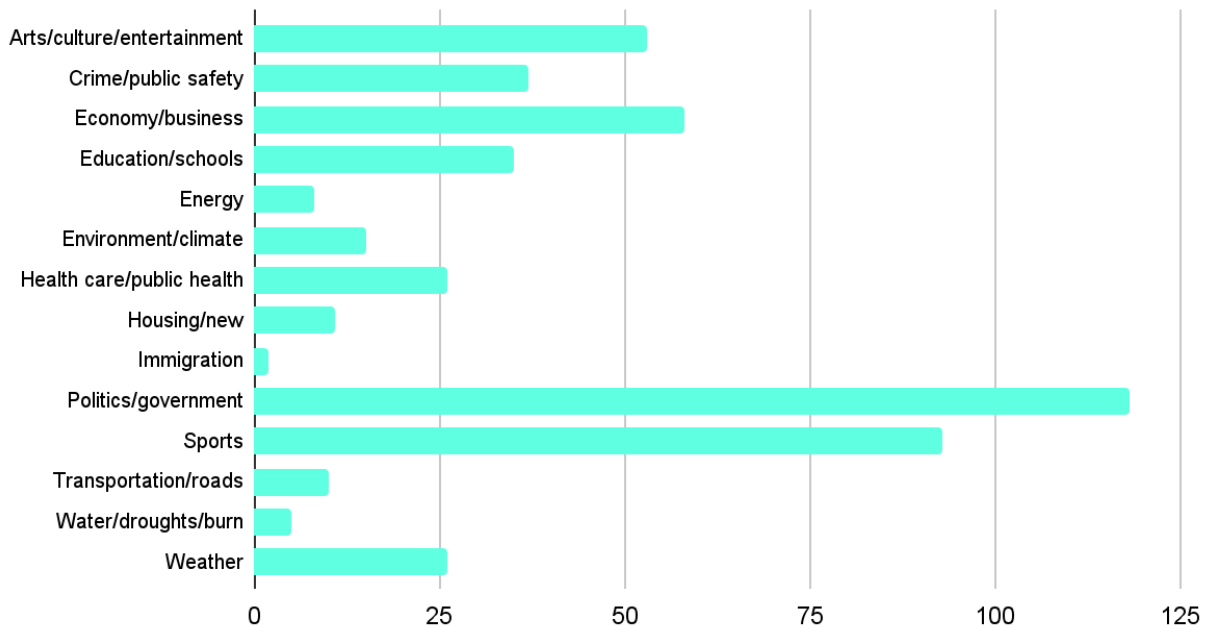
To gain a clearer understanding of the content of coverage, we then analyzed stories for general topic¹.

We first measured all stories in aggregate, regardless if they were local. The largest proportions of coverage in total were devoted to politics and government stories, making up about 21% of stories, followed by sports, the topic of 16% of stories. Stories about the economy and business, and those focused on entertainment,

¹ Transcripts of news broadcasts were not able to be analyzed as thoroughly as text stories, which often provide more clues about reporting practices in attribution and background information. The report narrative makes clear when only text stories were analyzed.

including arts and cultural events, made up 10% and 9% of the coverage, respectively.

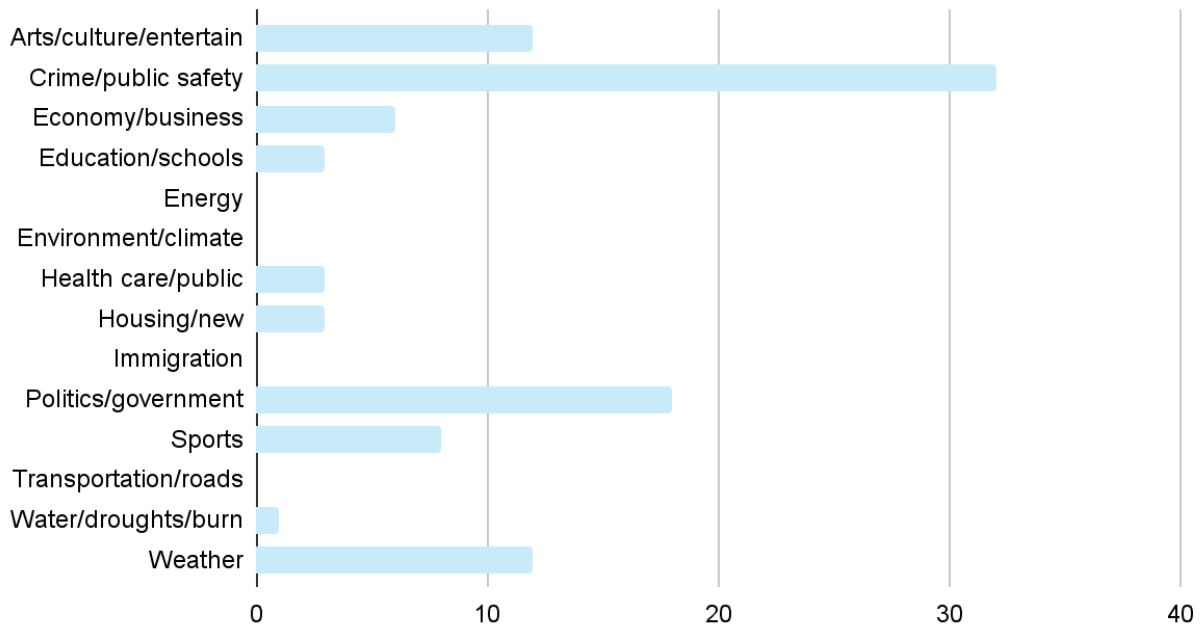
Topic of all stories, local and nonlocal



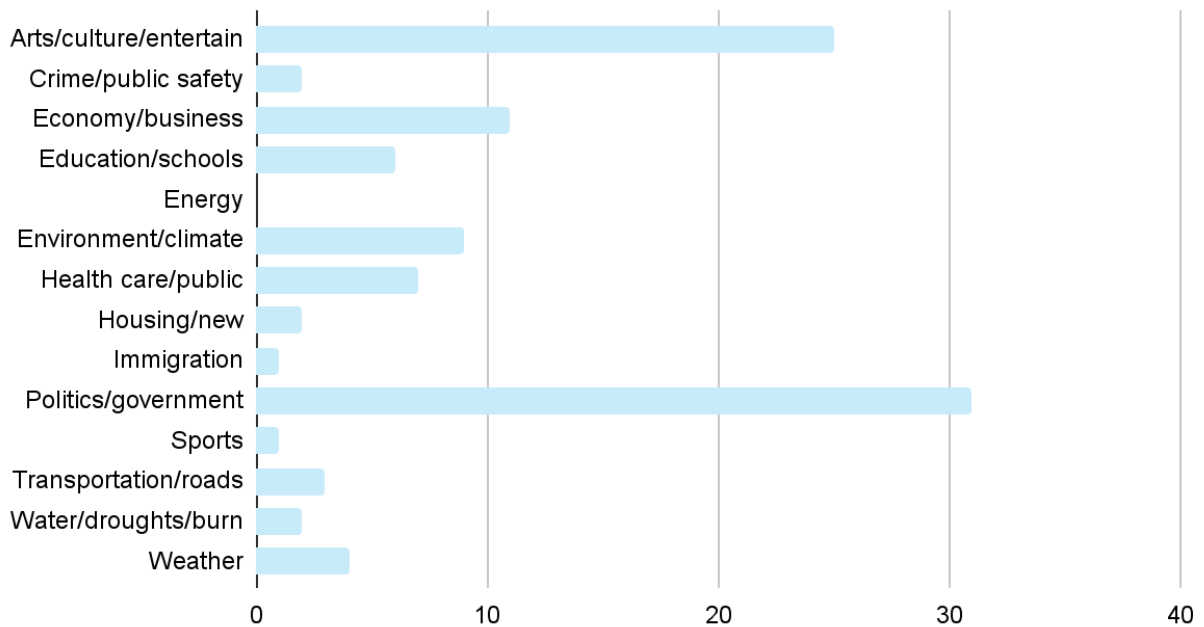
Topics tended to vary by outlet. Politics and government comprised the largest proportion of coverage at both Texas Public Radio and the San Antonio Report, (approximately 30%). Sports was the focus of more than a quarter of stories in the San Antonio Express-News, the largest proportion by topic for that outlet. KSAT's most-covered topic was crime and public safety, encompassing about a third of its

coverage.

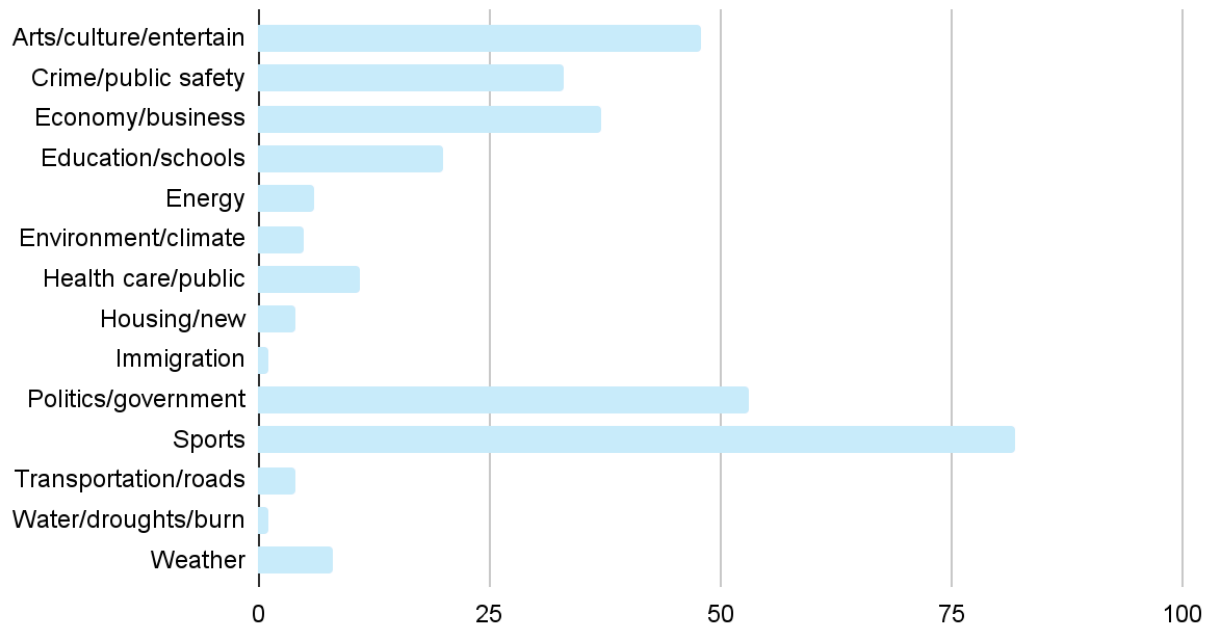
Topic of all stories aired by KSAT



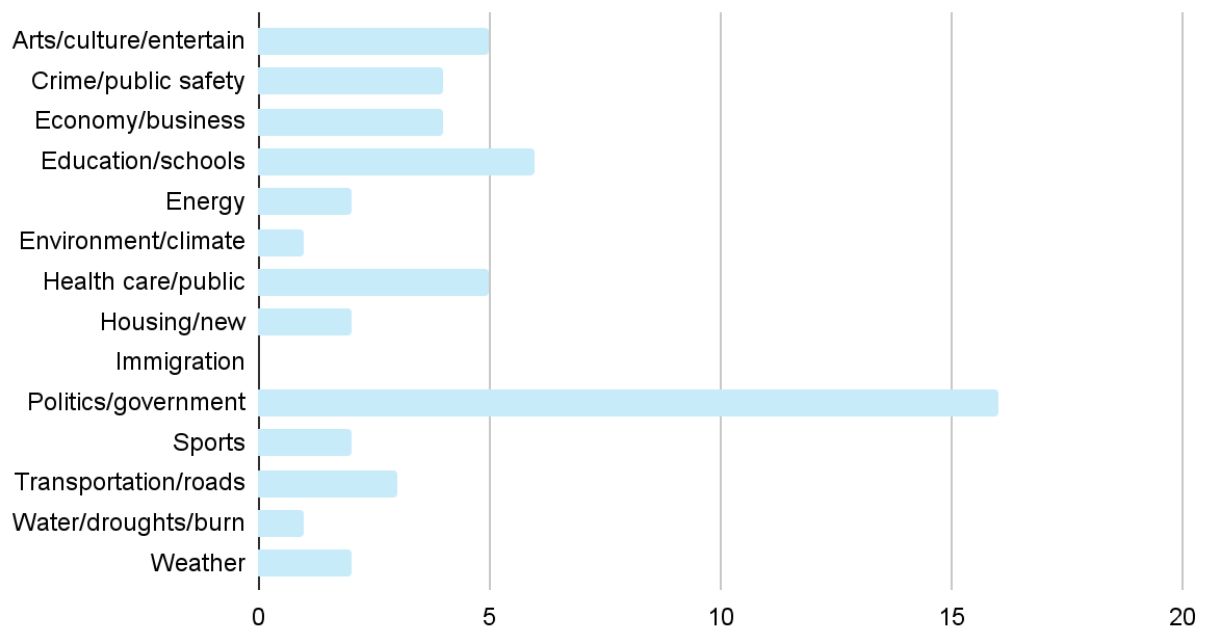
Topic of all stories aired by Texas Public Radio



Topic of all stories published by San Antonio Express-News

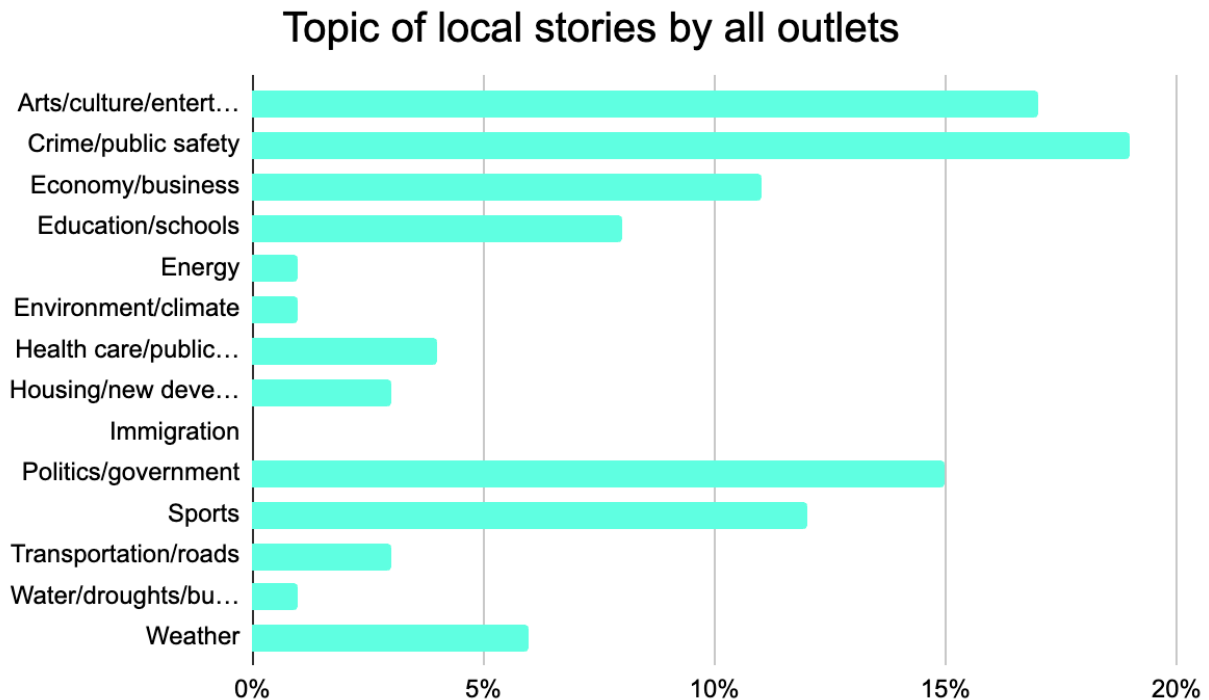


Topic of all stories published by San Antonio Report



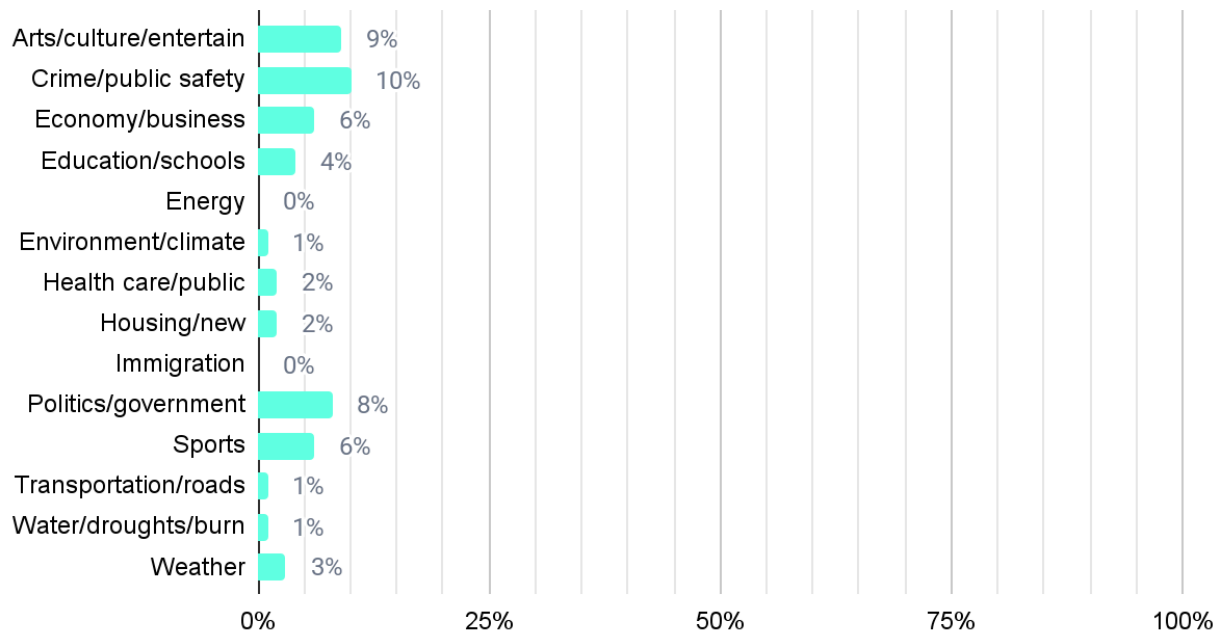
When considering topics within strictly local coverage, crime and public safety coverage made up the largest proportion of stories focused on the San Antonio

metro area, at 19%. The next largest proportions were arts, culture and entertainment (17%), politics and government (15%), and sports (12%).



Drilling down even deeper, compared to all of the coverage during the analysis timeframe, 10% of all coverage focused on local crime; 9% of all coverage focused on local arts, culture and entertainment; and another 8% focused on local government. These findings show that despite the quantity of coverage produced by these local outlets, only a small percentage focuses on local issues of importance to the community, according to the information needs survey.

Proportion of all coverage focused on local topics



A research project commissioned by the FCC identified [eight critical information needs](#) at the local level: emergencies and risks, health and welfare, education, transportation, economic opportunities, the environment, civic information, and political information. While this list is not exhaustive, our analysis identified several gaps in coverage, particularly in transportation, the environment, education, and economic opportunity.

Quality and depth of stories

KEY POINT:

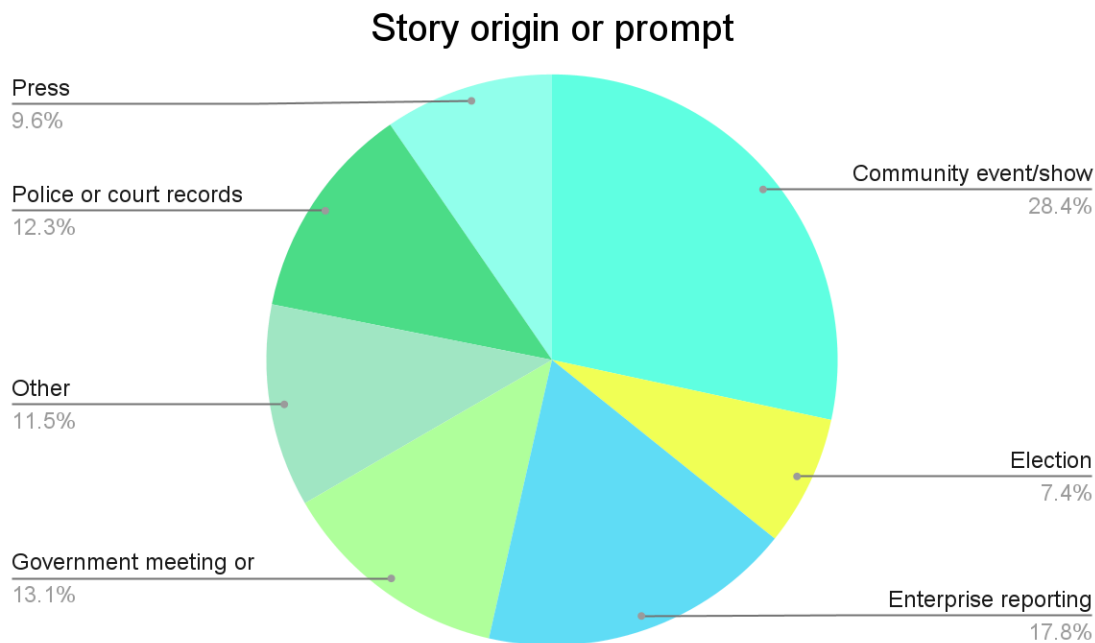
Needs identified:

- Enterprise and accountability reporting
- Multiple viewpoints in stories
- Focus on underrepresented groups

The quantity and topics of coverage do not fully capture a community's local news landscape. To gain a more complete picture of local news in the San Antonio area, we analyzed coverage from the San Antonio Report and San Antonio Express-News, focusing on key elements that can indicate depth and quality.

First, we considered how a story originates. Coverage driven by enterprise or original reporting is generally more useful and informative than stories sparked by press releases or other official sources pushing information to news media.

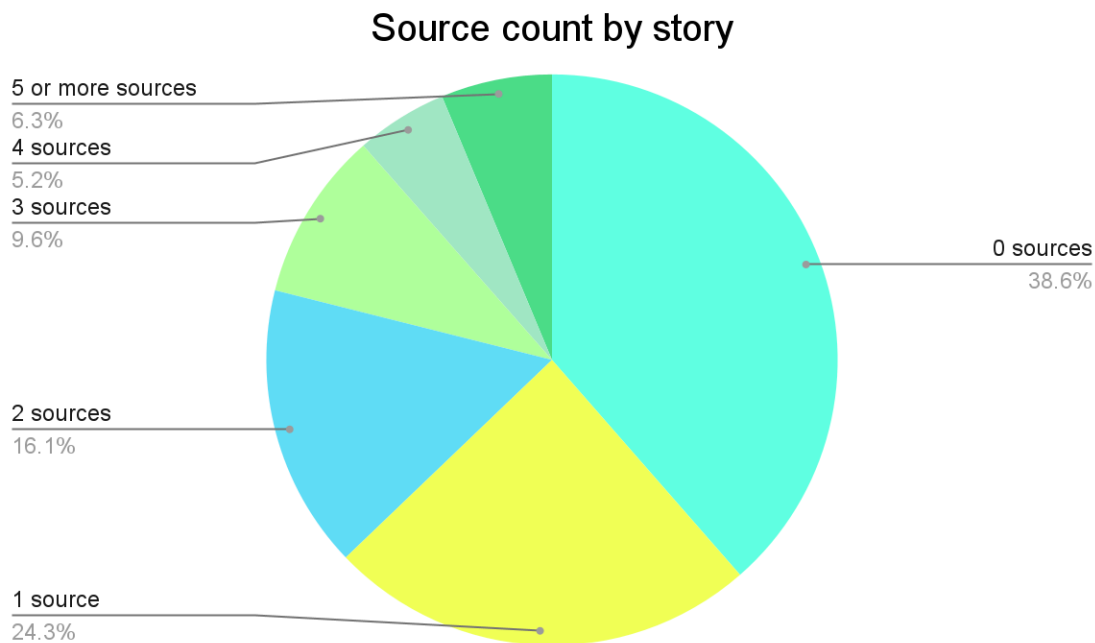
In this analysis, stories were more often driven by events, such as games or elections, rather than original enterprise reporting, which accounted for just 18% of coverage. The largest proportion of stories (28%) stemmed from community events, primarily sports coverage, followed by some arts and cultural events.



Enterprise reporting covered a range of topics, with the largest share focused on the economy and business (22%). Politics and government, arts and culture, and health care, each accounted for approximately 12% of enterprise stories.

Most enterprise stories were locally focused, with about 80% produced by local outlets covering the San Antonio metro area.

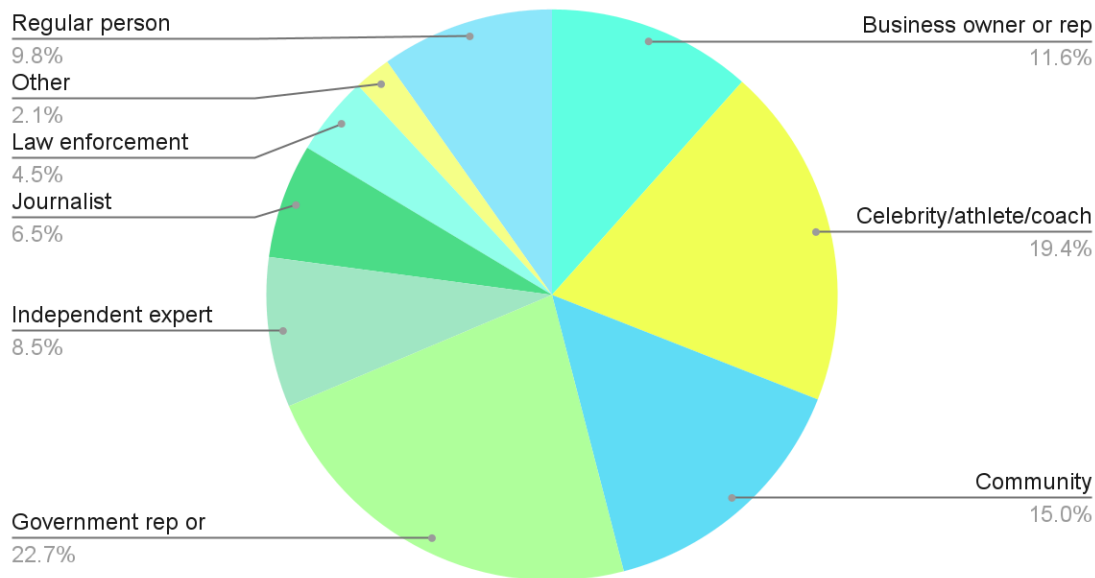
To assess the depth of reporting, we also examined the presence of interviews with sources. Multiple sources included in a story provides a broader range of perspectives and can suggest more resources and effort were spent on a story. However, nearly 40% of stories analyzed contained no human sources, relying instead on documents such as police reports or press releases. In 24% of stories, only one source was quoted, while 16% included two sources. Another 21% of stories included three or more sources.



Some topics were more likely to feature no or just one source, such as arts and culture and crime coverage. About 83% of stories in these areas included at most one source. In contrast, more than 57% of education stories and 44% of sports stories included two or more sources.

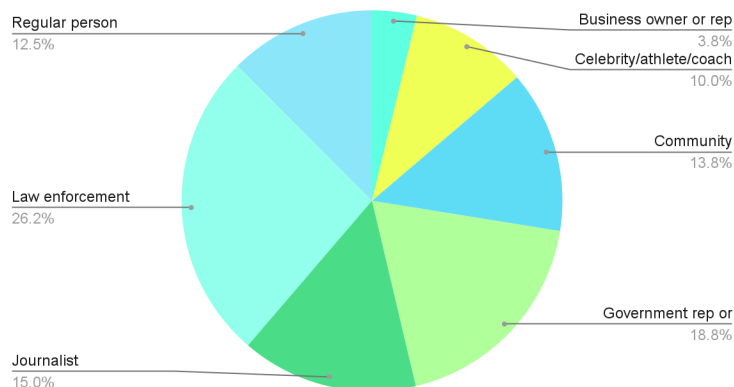
Including a variety of voices in news stories can signal story quality. The largest proportion of sources were governmental, including representatives, elected officials, staff members, and candidates, followed by celebrities, athletes, and coaches. Law enforcement sources were less common, as most crime stories did not involve interviews. Regular people, as well as community leaders, advocates, or activists, who often represent different facets of the public, together made up a slightly larger proportion than governmental sources.

Type of sources included in all stories

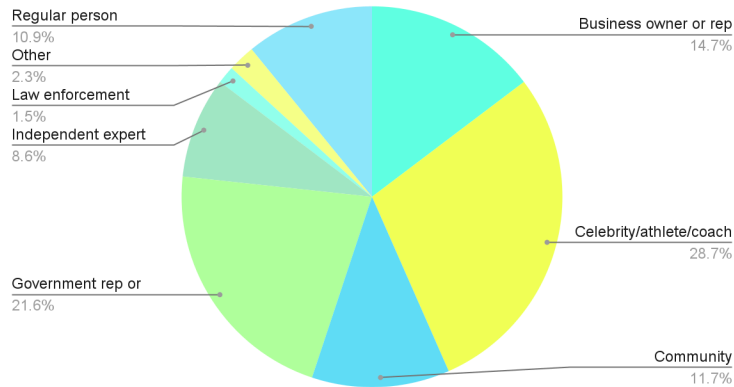


Overall, the most prevalent source types for each outlet reflected their largest coverage areas. The San Antonio Express-News's most interviewed sources were celebrities, athletes, or coaches, who made up about a quarter of sources, reflecting the paper's emphasis on sports coverage. Government representatives, leaders, or candidates made up about a third of sources included in the San Antonio Report's stories, while law enforcement made up more than a quarter of KSAT's sources. Texas Public Radio's largest source group consisted of journalists, who made up a third of their sources, reflecting the common practice of journalists explaining their own news stories on air.

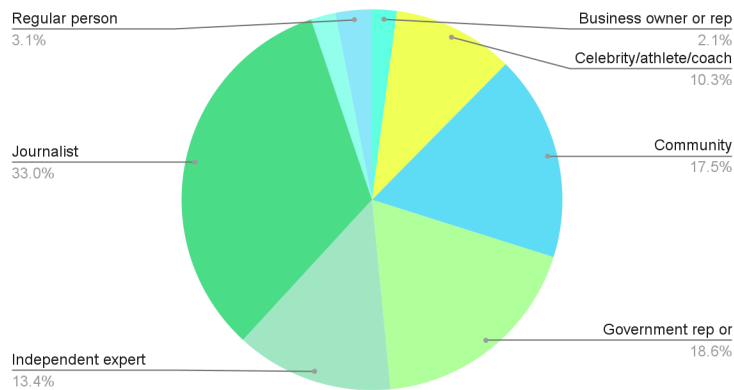
Type of sources in KSAT stories



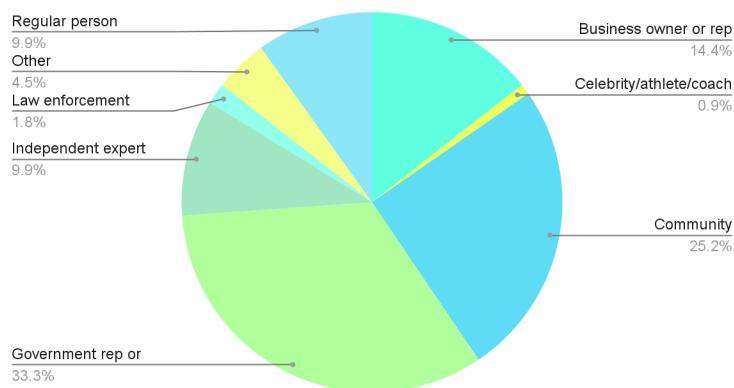
Type of sources in San Antonio Express-News stories



Type of sources in Texas Public Radio stories



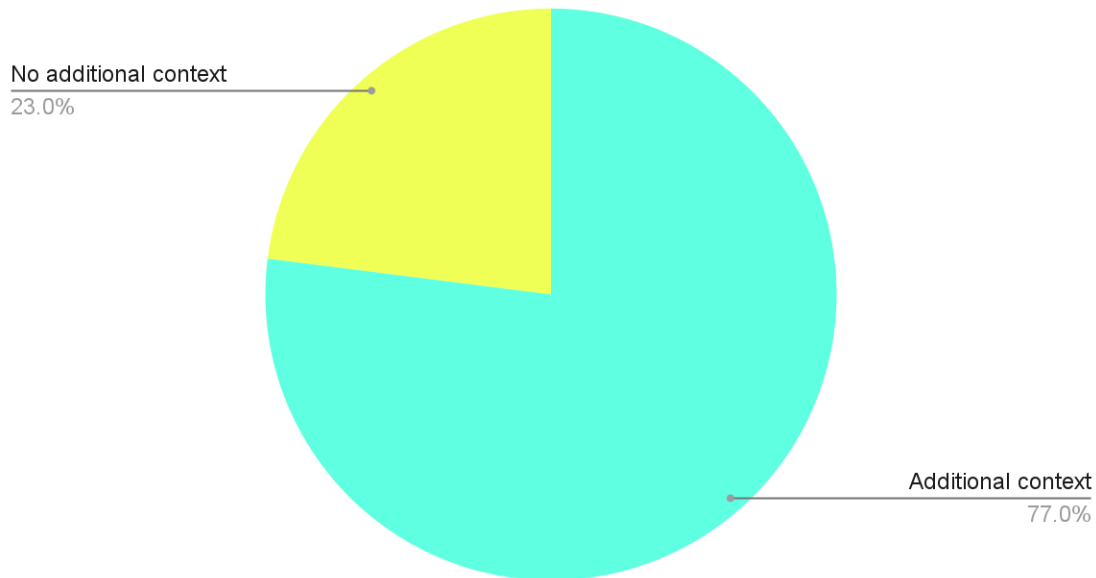
Type of sources in San Antonio Report stories



While human sources are crucial, they are not the only way to add depth to news stories. We also analyzed whether stories included additional context to help audiences better understand daily events. This could include historical background of local initiatives or links to related documents, or previous news stories. We found

that more than three-quarters of news stories provided this kind of additional depth, with a majority of all story topics receiving this treatment.

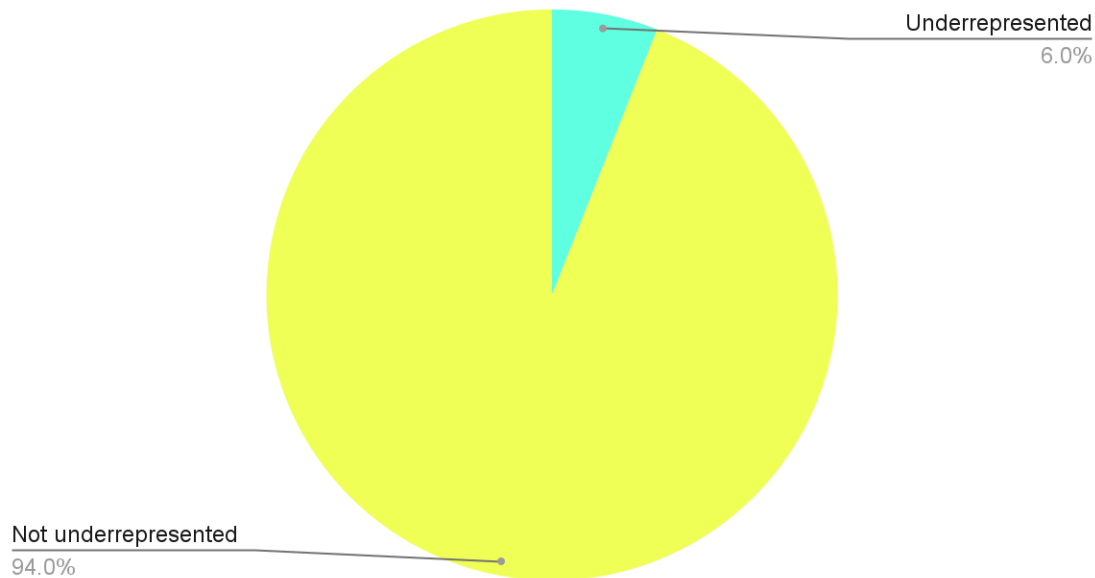
Stories that included historic or other type of context



We further analyzed news stories for hints that San Antonio local outlets were fulfilling roles in the community that are often seen as beneficial, such as connecting diverse audiences and providing accountability to local power structures.

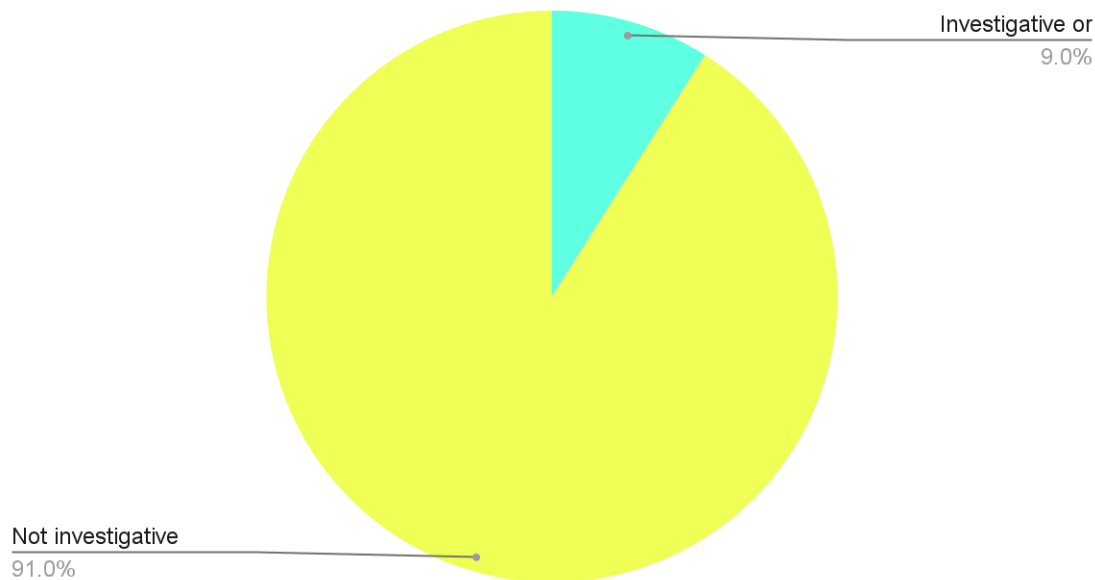
First, we evaluated whether news stories focused on communities that have been historically underserved by local news, such as immigrants, lower socio-economic groups, or minoritized racial groups. We found that just 6% of stories focused on underserved communities.

Stories that focused on underrepresented groups



Second, we determined if stories attempted to hold power to account through investigative or data reporting, whether through larger projects or daily reporting. These accountability signals were present in about 9% of stories.

Stories that held power accountable



Although these measures are not as precise as counting sources, our analysis suggests that the accountability and community connection roles expected of local news outlets were not strongly represented.

Summary of Content Analysis

No single news source can produce all the critical content needed in a community, and a variety of local news outlets are necessary for a healthy local news ecosystem. However, this analysis identified some significant gaps in local news coverage.

Most notably, every county in the San Antonio metro area received less coverage than expected based on population, including San Antonio itself. The counties and cities outside the metro area, in particular, received very little news coverage focused on issues specific to those areas. Topically, coverage was dominated by crime, sports, and politics, leaving several important topics underrepresented.

The reliance of the daily metro newspaper—the outlet that produced the most news overall—on content from outside the San Antonio metro area contributed to a general lack of locally produced and focused news. The outlets that produced a higher proportion of local news simply did not publish enough to fill these gaps. The digital-native outlet, the San Antonio Report, published longer and more-in depth articles, most of which were local, but published an average of just one story a day. The local TV station analyzed, KSAT, focused heavily on crime coverage, while Texas Public Radio produced little local coverage overall during the assessed time frame.

Without comprehensive local news coverage that addresses a broad range of topics critical to addressing issues or problems in the community, residents miss out on understanding the full scope of these issues, reducing the likelihood that problems will be solved in their best interest.

News Outlet Needs Assessment

To identify challenges and needs of news outlets in the eight-county San Antonio metro area, we surveyed 35 outlets² about their funding sources, resource and technology needs, and coverage plans. Twelve outlets responded, and we conducted follow-up interviews with three. To protect newsrooms' sensitive and proprietary information, quotes and data have been anonymized in this public version of the report.

While not fully representative of all local news outlets in the region, the answers provide key insight into the challenges these outlets face and what they need to better serve their communities' information needs.

Key Findings

- **Their finances are not stable.** Most are reliant on either large-scale philanthropy or print advertising for the bulk of their revenue. Few report financial stability, and two are uncertain if they will survive the next five years.
- **They are not reaching their target audiences.** Despite regular publishing and offering content in multiple formats, none of the outlets are reaching the number of people they'd like to.
- **They are unable to cover the geographic areas they'd like to reach.** Many outlets lack the resources to cover all the areas they'd like. Metrowide outlets struggle with the number of counties they are tasked with covering. As one nonprofit newsroom put it: "It's a much larger job than two people are capable of." Even outlets dedicated to just one county struggle, as they tend to have even smaller staffs, with one person wearing multiple hats.
- **Most have plans to provide more coverage to the area**—but they need more resources to carry them out.

² Although we found 39 individual publications that provide local news, some of those have shared ownership.

Their most pressing needs fall within the following categories:

- **Revenue-focused staff:** Achieving sustainability requires diverse revenue streams to avoid reliance on philanthropy or advertising. Several outlets expressed the need to hire staff dedicated to expanding and diversifying revenue.

One of the larger newsrooms in Bexar county cited a “growing resistance to paying for digital news.” Meanwhile, a community newspaper in a rapidly growing outlying county is trying to reach an audience with high poverty levels and would, therefore, like to figure out “how to provide free news access to those that need it most while keeping revenue flowing.”

- **Audience growth support:** Outlets reported battling audience apathy, declining interest in news, and a fractured media landscape. As information and media consumption habits have drastically changed over the past two decades, traditional print and broadcast media struggle with retaining and growing audiences through legacy mediums and digital platforms.

Print outlets, in particular, face dual challenges: adapting to digital while managing the logistics and expenses of print delivery.

- **Tech infrastructure and skills:** As outlets increasingly reach audiences digitally, they require updated technological tools and training.

One of the larger media outlets explained this need in depth: “The organization lacks a robust and functioning tech stack, including the tools to conduct meaningful surveys and SMS engagement.” A county newsroom explained the need for “affordable tools for investigative reporting, better news media industry support, education and training on technology changes.” A publisher representing a small community newspaper in Kendall county said they would like to expand staff to be able to reach audiences through social media.

Key Takeaways, Recommendations and Investment Opportunities

After comprehensively analyzing the interplay between community information needs and news outlets' capacity to fulfill them, we have crystallized our findings into actionable intelligence. This section outlines pivotal takeaways, strategic investment opportunities poised for significant impact, recommended interventions, and robust metrics for evaluating investment performance. These evidence-based insights provide a framework for targeted support that addresses critical information gaps while strengthening the journalism ecosystem's long-term sustainability.

1. Urgent Need Amid Rapid Growth

The San Antonio metro area's 19% population growth (with some counties growing by 60%) has created significant information gaps that, if left unaddressed, will hamper inclusive economic development and civic engagement. This rapid growth presents both urgency and opportunity for strategic investment in the information ecosystem.

2. Clear Gaps in Information Supply

Content analysis reveals a fundamental gap in local news production: less than 53% of stories from major outlets focus on local issues, with critical topics like education, environment, housing, and accountability reporting severely underrepresented. This isn't just a content gap but a structural problem requiring targeted intervention.

3. High-Impact Investment Opportunities

We've identified several high-functioning news organizations that could serve as anchor institutions for collaborative initiatives with measurable impact. These organizations are positioned to maximize ROI on philanthropic investment.

4. Demographic Disparities Requiring Attention

Hispanic residents (55% of population), along with other underrepresented communities, report significant dissatisfaction with representation in local news. This presents a meaningful opportunity to enhance equity in information access through targeted support for outlets serving these communities.

5. Digital Transformation as a Force Multiplier

Residents strongly prefer digital platforms, yet many local outlets lack the technology infrastructure and expertise to meet these needs, particularly in outlying counties. Investments in digital transformation represent high-leverage opportunities with potential for exponential audience growth and sustainability.

6. Revenue Diversification as Path to Sustainability

Local newsrooms identified revenue-related staffing as their most critical need. Strategic investments in business development positions offer a path to long-term sustainability rather than perpetual dependency on philanthropy.

7. Solutions Journalism as a Differentiated Approach

More than half of survey respondents believe local news focuses too much on problems rather than solutions. Funding initiatives that emphasize constructive, “what’s working” coverage could significantly increase audience engagement and impact.

8. Geographic Information Deserts

Despite having 39 news outlets in the region, our analysis identified severe geographic coverage gaps, particularly in rapidly growing counties outside San Antonio proper. Strategic investment in collaborative reporting networks could efficiently address these information deserts.

9. Community Connection as Impact Multiplier

Residents expressed a strong desire for coverage that connects communities across the region. Investment in initiatives that bridge geographic and demographic

divides could yield outsized social cohesion benefits beyond mere information provision.

10. Measured Outcomes and Accountability

We've established baseline metrics (see below) for local news performance that can be used to measure the impact of philanthropic investment over time. This data-driven approach ensures accountability and continuous improvement in funding strategies.

Potential Action Steps:

1. Convene a funder collaborative focused specifically on information ecosystem investments, leveraging pooled resources for greater impact, i.e. Press Forward San Antonio
2. Establish a two-track investment strategy: immediate support for high-functioning "anchor institutions," while simultaneously building capacity in promising outlets
3. Develop a regional content collaboration addressing critical information gaps around education, environment, and development
4. Fund dedicated revenue positions at key outlets with clear performance metrics tied to sustainability
5. Launch a digital transformation initiative providing both technology infrastructure and training across multiple outlets

Baseline Metrics for Evaluating Investment Impact

A key advantage of this analysis is the establishment of clear baseline metrics that will allow funders to measure the concrete impact of strategic investments in San Antonio's information ecosystem over time. We recommend tracking the following indicators:

Community Information Needs Assessment

- **User Needs Fulfillment Gap:** The analysis identified significant gaps between what residents want and what they receive across eight key information needs (update me, engage me, watch out for me, help me understand, inspire

me, give me perspective, educate me, keep me on track). These gaps provide a powerful baseline for measuring improvement in how well news serves community needs.

- **Topic Interest vs. Coverage Alignment:** Current misalignment between high-interest topics (education, environment, development) and actual coverage (crime, sports, politics) offers a measurable target for content adjustment.
- **Trust and Representation Indicators:** Currently less than half of respondents trust local news, with even lower ratings for accurate community representation.

Content Quality and Reach Metrics

- **Local Focus Percentage:** Only 53% of stories from major outlets currently focus on local issues.
- **Geographic Distribution:** All counties receive less coverage than their population proportion warrants.
- **Diversity of Sources:** Only 21% of stories currently feature three or more sources.
- **Accountability Reporting:** Just 9% of stories contain accountability or investigative elements.
- **Enterprise Reporting:** Only 18% of stories result from enterprise or original reporting.
- **Representation of Underserved Communities:** Only 6% of stories currently focus on historically underserved communities.
- **Solutions Journalism Ratio:** The proportion of problem-focused versus solution-oriented coverage.

Outlet Performance and Sustainability Indicators

- **Audience Reach:** Current audience metrics for key outlets.
- **Revenue Diversification:** Current revenue composition and sustainability self-assessments.
- **Geographic Coverage Capacity:** Number of counties/communities effectively served.
- **Collaborative Output:** Joint reporting projects addressing information gaps.

These metrics provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating the effectiveness of investments in addressing structural problems in San Antonio's information ecosystem. Regular assessment against these baselines will enable data-driven decisions about resource allocation and strategic adjustments, ensuring accountability for both funded organizations and funders themselves.

Appendix A: Economic Indicators & Demographics

About the Media Market

The counties in this report are included within the [Alamo Region of Texas](#), which includes 19 counties total and reaches from south central Texas to the Gulf Coast. The economic region is distinguished by its two largest metropolitan areas, San Antonio–New Braunfels (the focus of this report), and Victoria. The region recorded strong annual gains in both domestic and international migration in the past 10 years, which have mitigated effects of an overall decline in the birth rate. Demographically, the Alamo Region’s white population decreased over the last 10 years, while the Hispanic population increased.

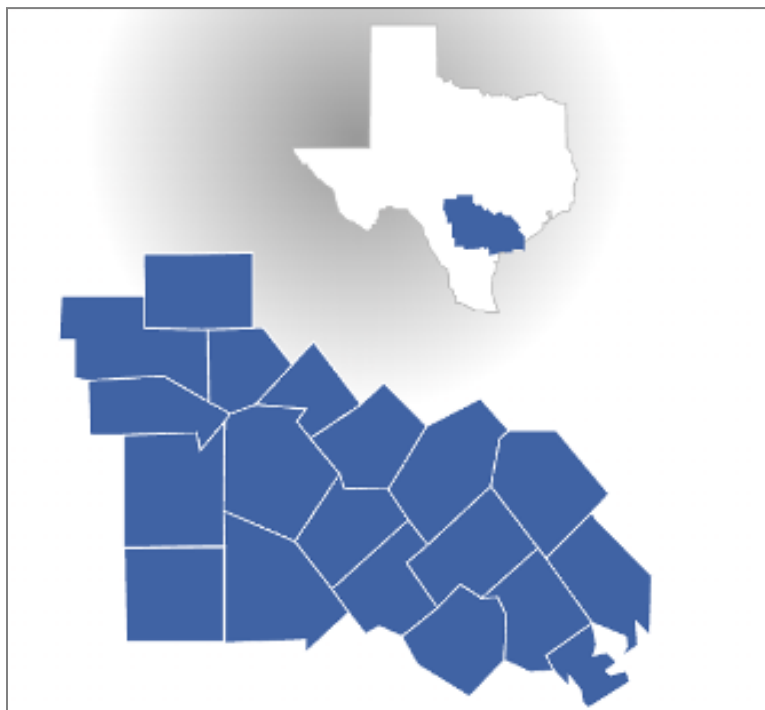


Figure 1. The Alamo Region of Texas

Our analysis focused on eight counties within the Alamo Region, Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Comal, Guadalupe, Kendall, Medina and Wilson. These eight counties comprise the San–Antonio–New Braunfels [core-based statistical area \(CBSA\)](#), designated by the federal government for its core urban area (San Antonio) and

adjacent counties that are considered to have significant economic and social integration based on commuting ties.

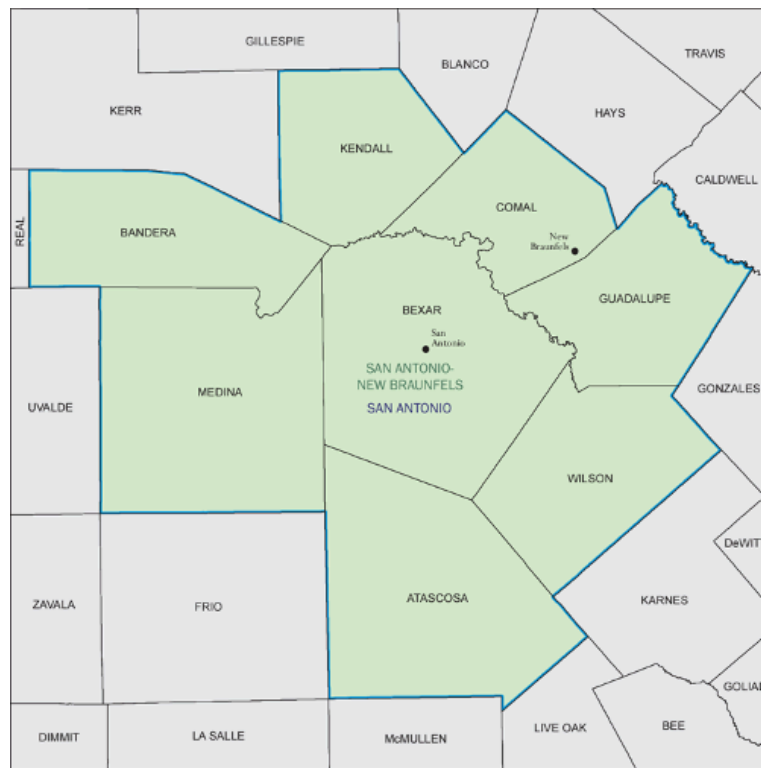


Figure 1. The San Antonio–New Braunfels metro area, as designated by the U.S. government, based on economic and social ties among the eight counties. Source: Census.gov

The San Antonio–New Braunfels metro area is the third largest in Texas and the 25th largest in the United States. The area has an [estimated 930,395 households](#) and includes about [2.66 million people](#). The San Antonio media market is the [31st largest in the country](#).

The metro area grew by nearly 19% between 2012 and 2022, with Bexar County leading the growth in population gains, with about 270,000 newcomers over the 10-year period, and Comal County growing by the highest proportion related to its population, about 60%, over this time.

County	Population (2022)	Change from 2012
Atascosa	50,864	9.5%
Bandera	22,115	7.5%
Bexar	2,059,530	15.1%
Comal	184,642	60.7%
Guadalupe	182,760	30.9%
Kendall	48,973	37.7%
Medina	53,723	14.8%
Wilson	52,735	18.9%

Most of the metro area population is as connected as most urban areas. In the entire area, [95% of households](#) have a computer, and 89% have a broadband internet subscription. Yet the more rural counties have the lowest proportions of broadband subscription access. For example, in Atascosa and Medina, about 15% of households do not have access to high-speed internet. These differences within the metro area are important when considering [access to high-speed internet is necessary](#) for people to connect to digital-based news if there is no print option available.

County	Computers	Broadband
Atascosa	92.3%	84.5%
Bandera	94.7%	87.9%
Bexar	95.4%	88.5%
Comal	97%	94.1%
Guadalupe	95.8%	91.1%
Kendall	97.9%	92.4%
Medina	90.6%	85.1%
Wilson	95.3%	86.2%

The largest ethnicity/racial group in the entire San Antonio–New Braunfels metro area is Hispanic (55%), followed by white (32%), Black (7%), AAPI (3%), multi-racial (2%), and less than 1% Indigenous. Here, too, the counties in the metro area differ.

Counties with the largest proportion of the population identifying as Hispanic/Latino population are Atascosa (66%), Bexar (about 60%), and Medina (52%). The counties with the largest proportion of white residents are Bandera (about 74%), Kendall (about 70%), and Comal (about 64%). Bexar and Guadalupe counties have the largest proportion of Black residents, just over 9% for both counties. Bexar County has the largest proportion of those identifying with the Asian American/Pacific Islander groups, with 4%.

County	AAPI	Black	Hispanic	Indigenous	White	2+ races
Atascosa	1 %	1.8%	66%	1.6%	31%	1.5%
Bandera	.8%	1.7%	21.6%	1.6%	74.2%	1.8%
Bexar	4%	9.4%	59.8%	1.3%	26.6%	2.8%
Comal	2%	3.5%	28.8%	.9%	64.4%	2.4%
Guadalupe	2.6%	9.2%	39.5%	1.1%	47.7%	3.2%
Kendall	2%	1.8%	24.8%	.8%	69.8%	2.3%
Medina	1.1%	4.2%	52.1%	1.2%	42.2%	1.8%
Wilson	1%	2.4%	40.7%	1.1%	55%	1.7%

About [12% of residents](#) in the San Antonio–New Braunfels metro area were born outside the United States. Most of those residents (72%) were born in Latin America. The next largest immigrant group in the area include 18% of foreign-born residents who came from Asia, 5% from Europe, 3% from Africa, and 1% from Canada. Bexar County is home to the largest proportion (and number) of immigrants.

A [larger number of residents](#) speak a language other than English at home, with about 31% of residents speaking Spanish at home, 2% speaking Asian or Pacific Islander languages, and 1% speaking other [Indo-European languages](#). Atascosa and Bexar counties both have the largest proportion of the population speaking another language at home. Bandera, Kendall and Comal counties have the smallest proportion of non-English speakers.

County	Language other than English	Foreign-born residents
Atascosa	40.2%	7.8%
Bandera	13.5%	5.5%
Bexar	38%	13.1%
Comal	16.2%	6.2%
Guadalupe	21.7%	6.9%
Kendall	14.4%	7.4%
Medina	25.4%	5.8%
Wilson	21.7%	4.3%

Overall, the rich diversity of the area and the differences among the counties call for accounting for this diversity in local news coverage in efforts to reach everyone in the community. Research has shown that traditional media, [as well as digital native nonprofit startups](#), have not done enough to effectively cover historically marginalized groups, including [people living in poverty](#), [immigrants](#), and [people of color](#). Ethnic media have [faced the same and more business challenges](#) as traditional community media outlets.

Income and Job Growth

The Gross Domestic Product of the San Antonio–New Braunfels metro area increased by 43% in 10 years, to about \$163 billion in 2022. More than 400 headquarters and major operations for global companies are [located in the metro area](#), as well as four major military installations, through Joint Base San Antonio, employing directly and indirectly 211,000 people. The [unemployment rate in the metro area](#) is 3.8%, just slightly below the national rate of 4.1%.

The [largest industries by employment](#) in the area are health care and social assistance, retail trade, educational services, construction, and accommodation and food services. The [top occupations in the area](#) are office and administrative support, management, sales, healthcare technical, and business and finance. Large employers in the area include H-E-B, Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Tyson Foods, Clear Channel Communications and USAA.

Employment growth in the San Antonio–New Braunfels metro area [surpasses the rest of the country](#), seeing 24% growth between 2012 and 2022, compared to 14% in the United States. The average median household income for the area is \$70,910, but this varies among counties, from the lowest of about \$67,000 in Atascosa and Bexar to the highest of more than \$104,000 in Kendall County. In the entire metro area, about 14% of people live below the poverty line, but this also varies by county, with about 16% of people over age 5 living in poverty in Atascosa and Bexar. Comal and Kendall having the lowest poverty rates in the area, around 7%.

County	Median income	Living in poverty
Atascosa	\$67,442	16.2%
Bandera	\$70,962	11.7%
Bexar	\$67,275	15.6%
Comal	\$93,744	7.1%
Guadalupe	\$88,111	9.5%
Kendall	\$104,196	7%
Medina	\$73,060	11.8%
Wilson	\$89,708	10.5%

The San Antonio–New Braunfels metro area is [home to several colleges and universities](#), including the Alamo Community College District, which enrolled more than 70,000 students in 2023, and the University of Texas at San Antonio, with about 35,000 students. Education levels vary among counties, however. Atascosa has the lowest level of education attainment, and Kendall and Comal counties have the highest.

County	High school	Bachelor's or higher
Atascosa	80.6%	14.5%
Bandera	92%	27.3%
Bexar	85.9%	30.4%
Comal	93.6%	40.5%

Guadalupe	89.1%	29.5%
Kendall	92.5%	48.5%
Medina	86%	22.2%
Wilson	90.8%	25.4%

Voting Records and Local Government

Within the eight counties are [more than 60 municipalities](#), [nearly 40 school districts](#) and 26 colleges and universities. In the most recent presidential election, most of the counties saw higher voter turnout in the presidential election than the rest of the state, which was about 56%. To get a better idea of how many people in the area vote in elections outside of the presidential race, about [44% of voters](#) in Bexar County participated in the 2022 midterm elections, slightly lower than the [46% turnout nationwide](#).

A large majority of each county voted for the Republican presidential candidate in 2024, with the exception of Bexar County, which includes the population center of San Antonio, where slightly more than half of voters chose the Democratic candidate. Bandera County had the largest proportion of Republican voters in the area, followed closely by Kendall and Wilson.

County	Voter turnout November 2024	Republican share 2024	Democratic share 2024
Atascosa	57.3%	71.3%	27.9%
Bandera	71.4%	80.5%	18.6%
Bexar	58.2%	44.6%	54.3%
Comal	71.8%	72.3%	26.7%
Guadalupe	65%	64.3%	34.7%
Kendall	75.2%	77.4%	21.7%
Medina	63.8%	69.3%	27.6%
Wilson	69.7%	76.7%	22.9%

Source: [AP Elections 2024](#) and [Texas Tribune](#)

County-Level Data

Atascosa County

Located south of San Antonio, the largest three municipalities in Atascosa County are Pleasanton, with 11,195 residents, followed by Jourdanton, the county seat, which is home to 4,094 people, and Poteet, home to 2,795 people. [Long isolated from San Antonio](#) due to poor roads before railroads and interstate highways were built, the county's history is steeped in ranching and farming, with immigrants from Mexico, Germany and England forming its population throughout the 1800s.

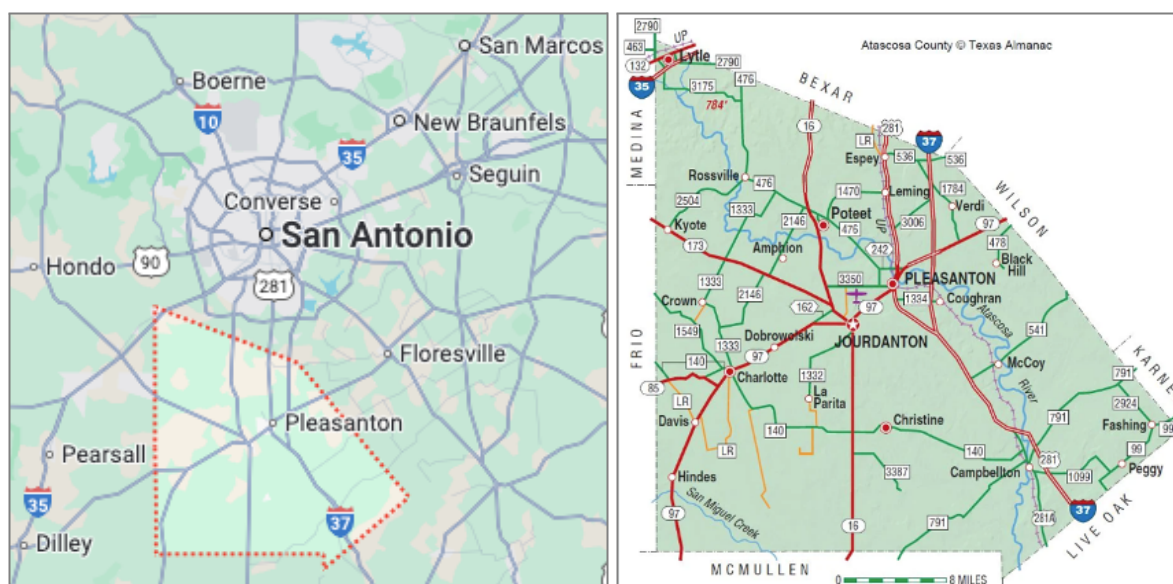


Figure 1. Atascosa County

Located about 20 miles away from San Antonio, the relatively low cost of land, as well as a large supply of undeveloped land, [makes the county prime for development](#). The population has increased in the past 10 years by about 10% and [doubled since 1980](#), but has one of the lowest rates of population growth out of the eight counties.

The largest industry in the county is oil and gas, with employers such as Eagle Ford Shale, Conoco and Marathon Oil, with the [top 11 highest sales taxpayers](#) in the county being energy-related. Other industries include retail and trade, with H-E-B and Walmart [cited as major employers](#), education, including four school districts,

health care, including Methodist Hospital, government and public services, construction and manufacturing, hospitality and tourism, and agricultural and mining businesses.

Atascosa County has unique challenges, however, with the highest proportion of people living in poverty out of all eight counties, as well as the lowest proportion of high school and college-educated residents. Fewer people proportionately also have broadband access compared to the other counties. Close to half (40%) speak a language other than English in their homes, the highest proportion compared to the other counties in the San Antonio metro area.

Demographic	Atascosa
Population	50,864
Pop change from 2012	9.5%
Median income	\$67,442
Living in poverty	16.2%
High school graduates	80.6%
College grads or higher	14.5%
Computer at home	92.3%
Broadband subscription	84.5%
AAPL population	1 %
Black	1.8%
Hispanic	66%
Indigenous	1.6%
White	31%
2+ races	1.5%
Language other than English	40.2%
Foreign-born	7.8%
Voter turnout 2024	57.3%
Republican share 2024	71.3%
Democratic share 2024	27.9%

Bandera County

Located northwest of San Antonio in the Texas Hill Country, Bandera County is home to the smallest population out of the eight counties in the San Antonio metro area. The area [was known for cattle ranching](#), then an important source of wool, with Spanish, Polish and German immigrants settling in the county.

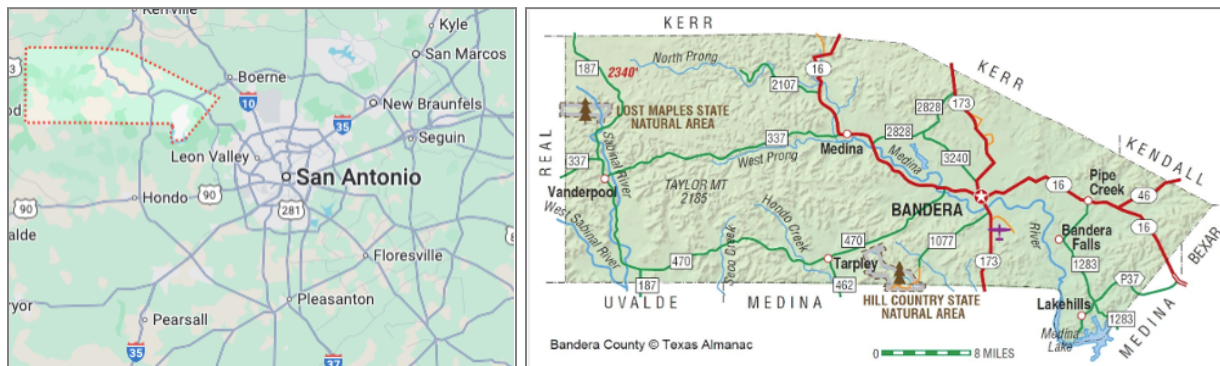


Figure 1. Bandera County

Now dubbed the [“Cowboy Capital of the World,”](#) the county is home to two popular state natural areas and other tourist attractions, including Bandera, a town of about 800 known for its dude ranches and dance halls. Today, Bandera’s largest town is Lake Hills, with 6,089 people, followed by Medina, with 4,520 residents.

Bandera County grew the least proportionately out of the eight counties. The [employment rate is just over 50%](#), and the median age of residents in the county is 53, compared to 36, the median age of Texas. Residents tend to travel about 40 minutes to work, with 20% in education or health care, 15% in construction, 14% in professional jobs and 13% in retail.

Compared to the rest of the counties, Bandera has the largest proportion of white residents and the smallest proportion of all other groups. Also smaller in Bandera are the proportions of people living in poverty, those born in another country and those who speak a language other than English at home. Although proportionately more people in the county graduated high school than most others in the area, the proportion of college graduates or higher is lower than in other counties.

Demographic	Bandera
Population	22,115
Pop change from 2012	7.5%
Median income	\$67,442
Living in poverty	11.7%
High school graduates	92%
College grads or higher	27.3%
Computer at home	94.7%
Broadband subscription	87.9%
AAPI population	.8%
Black	1.7%
Hispanic	21.6%
Indigenous	1.6%
White	74.2%
2+ races	1.8%
Language other than English	13.5%
Foreign-born	5.5%
Voter turnout 2024	71.4%
Republican share 2024	80.5%
Democratic share 2024	16.6%

Bexar County

Located in south central Texas, Bexar County, as the home to the city of San Antonio, is the population center of the metro area, with more than 2 million people. The county was an [important location for Spanish missions in the 1700s](#), and later welcomed a sizeable population of German immigrants. The county developed an economy centered on tourism, military installations, higher education, medical facilities, and most recently, a high-tech industrial park. After San Antonio, the next largest cities in the county are Timberwood Park, with nearly 38,000 people, Converse, with about 31,000, and Universal City, with about 20,000 people.

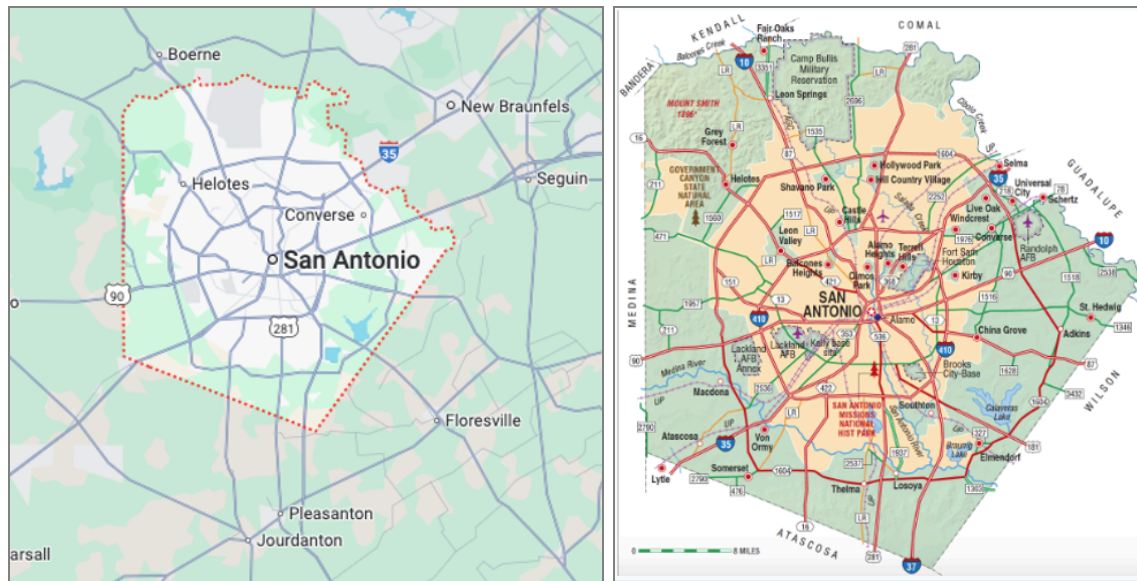


Figure 1. Bexar County

The [largest employers in the metro area](#) are in Bexar County; the largest is Joint Base San Antonio, with 80,000 employees, H-E-B, a regional grocery store company that employs 20,000 in the county, USAA, an insurance company, employing 18,300, the City of San Antonio 13,000, the San Antonio Independent School District employing 11,000, and Methodist Healthcare System, employing 9,600.

Immigrants make up [a large part of the county's workforce](#), with people born in another country making up 30% of business owners, 35% of construction workers, 23% of manufacturing workers, and 19% of STEM workers. The county is the most racially diverse, with the lowest proportion of white people (about 27%), and the largest populations of people identifying as Black (9.4%) and AAPI (4%). The majority of people in the county (about 60%) identify as Hispanic.

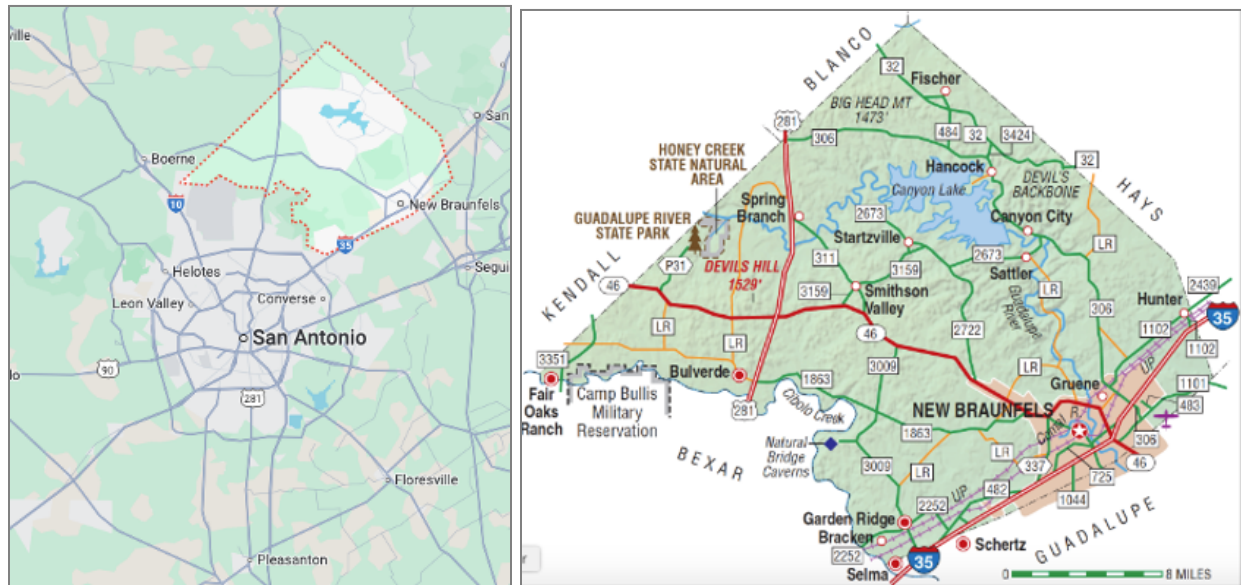
Nearly 40% of residents speak another language at home, mostly Spanish, comprising the largest proportion and population of Spanish-speakers in the area, and the [largest out of the major metropolitan areas](#) in the state. [Other languages spoken at home](#) include Arabic, Vietnamese, Pashto, Korean, Tagalog, Chinese and Gujarati. Although small in proportion, these groups outnumber many of the towns in surrounding counties. [There are about 7,700 people who speak Tagalog](#) as the primary language at home, 7,500 who speak Arabic, 6,700 who speak Chinese, 6,300 Vietnamese, 6,300 German, [6,000 who speak Pashto](#), 3,500 French, 3,300 Hindi, 3,300 Korean, and 2,700 Persian.

Immigrants make up 13% of the county's residents, [with most \(65%\) coming from Mexico](#), with the next largest group (4.4%) from India, 2.4% from the Philippines, 1.6% from Afghanistan and 1.6% from El Salvador. Notedly, this county differs from the rest of the metro area as the only one to vote majority-Democratic in the 2024 presidential election. It also had the lowest voter turnout by proportion.

Demographic	Bexar
Population	2,059,530
Pop change from 2012	15.1%
Median income	\$67,275
Living in poverty	15.6%
High school graduates	85.9%
College grads or higher	30.4%
Computer at home	95.4%
Broadband subscription	88.5%
AAPI population	4%
Black	9.4%
Hispanic	59.8%
Indigenous	1.3%
White	26.6%
2+ races	2.8%
Language other than English	38%
Foreign-born	13.1%
Voter turnout 2024	58.2%
Republican share 2024	44.6%
Democratic share 2024	54.3%

Comal County

Located north of San Antonio, [Comal County sits](#) where the Blackland Prairie meets the Balcones Escarpment, giving it a mix of prairie and Hill Country terrain, [along with popular tourist attractions](#), the Guadalupe River, Canyon Lake and numerous creeks and springs. The Spanish tended to not settle in the area, leaving it open for indigenous groups and German settlers to build a farming and ranching economy, and later Mexican immigrants.



then Canyon Lake, with about 22,000 residents, followed by Spring Branch with 18,500 people and Bulverde, with about 15,000.

Comal County has a relatively higher proportion of high school and college graduates than the other counties in the area, and more proportionately have computers and broadband subscriptions at home. The median income is on the higher end, with fewer proportionately living in poverty than in other counties in the metro area. The county is majority white (about 64%) and about 30% of residents identify as Hispanic.

Demographic	Comal
Population	184,642
Pop change from 2012	60.7%
Median income	\$93,744
Living in poverty	7.1%
High school graduates	93.6%
College grads or higher	40.5%
Computer at home	97%
Broadband subscription	94.1%
AAPL population	2%
Black	3.5%
Hispanic	28.8%
Indigenous	.9%
White	64.4%
2+ races	2.4%
Language other than English	16.2%
Foreign-born	6.2%
Voter turnout 2024	71.8%
Republican share 2024	72.3%
Democratic share 2024	26.7%

Guadalupe County

People [have lived in Guadalupe County](#), located just northeast of San Antonio, for several thousands of years. The town of Seguin was [founded in 1838 by a group of former Texas Rangers](#), and the safety provided to settlers by the presence of law enforcement developed the town as the center of the area's social and economic life. Later, immigrants from Mexico and various places in Europe joined them. Manufacturing, oil, farming and ranching have been major industries in the county since its founding.

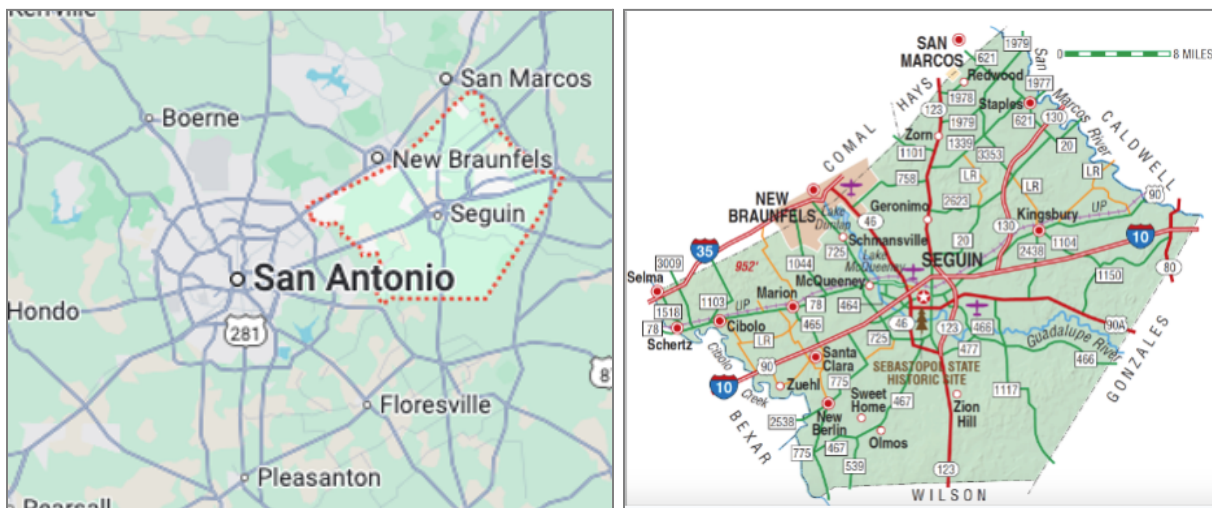


Figure 1. Guadalupe County

Today, [the largest industries employing residents](#) are education and health care, retail trade and [manufacturing, which makes up 13%](#) of total employment in the county, with employers like Tyson Foods and Commercial Metals Company. The county has recently [seen new home construction grow](#), contributing to an increase in population.

The largest cities in the county are Schertz, located just outside of San Antonio with about 43,000 people, followed by the county seat, Seguin, with about 38,000 people and Cibolo, just beyond Schertz outside of San Antonio, with about 37,500 people. Seguin is [one of the fastest-growing cities in the country](#), which has spurred more retail development.

Guadalupe County has the third highest population in the metro area, with a relatively high median income and lower poverty rate relatively. Just under half the

county is white, with about 40% Hispanic and more than 9% Black, the second-highest proportionate population among the counties in the metro area.

Demographic	Guadalupe
Population	182,760
Pop change from 2012	30.9%
Median income	\$88,111
Living in poverty	9.5%
High school graduates	89.1%
College grads or higher	29.5%
Computer at home	95.8%
Broadband subscription	91.1%
AAPL population	2.6%
Black	9.2%
Hispanic	39.5%
Indigenous	1.1%
White	47.7%
2+ races	3.2%
Language other than English	21.7%
Foreign-born	6.9%
Voter turnout 2024	65%
Republican share 2024	64.3%
Democratic share 2024	34.7%

Kendall County

Located in the Hill Country north of San Antonio, Kendall County's towns [were founded by Germans in the 1800s](#), and English and Irish immigrants following later. Similar to other counties in the area, farming and ranching were the main traditional industries in Kendall County, especially sheep ranching.

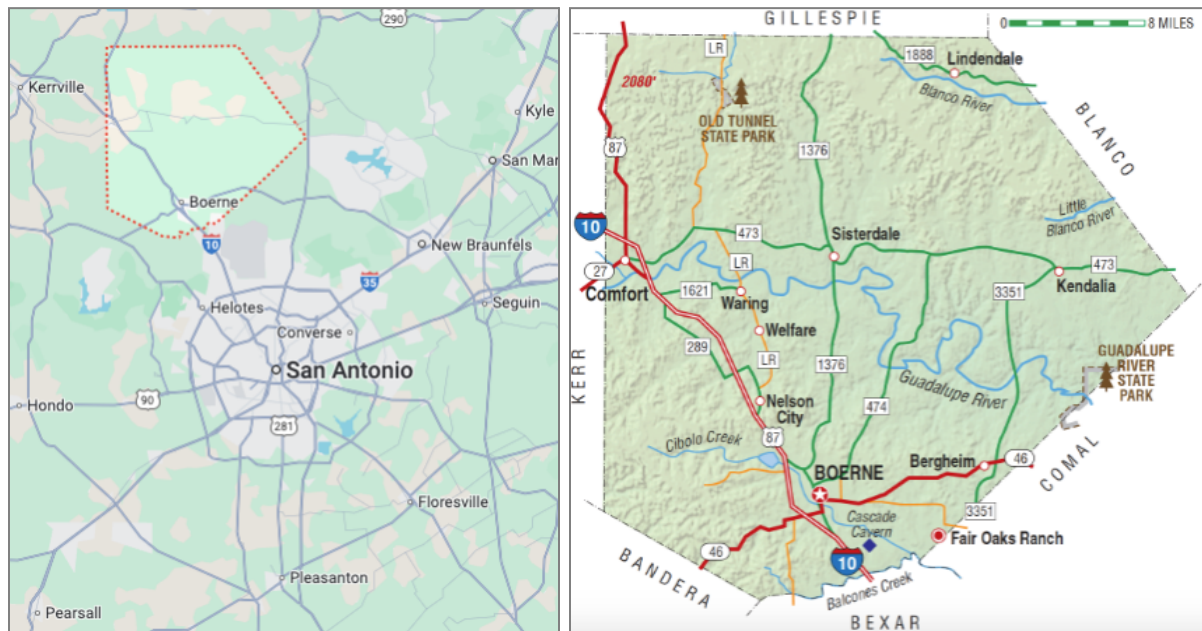


Figure 1. Kendall County

Today, the county is home to a large tourism industry, based around the Guadalupe River, the town of Boerne and a burgeoning winery/distillery/brewery industry. The [county is seeking to expand](#) the the agri-tech, advanced manufacturing and pharmaceuticals industries, among others.

The [largest employer in the county](#) is Boerne Independent School District, with 1,655 employees. The next largest is H-E-B, with 506 employees, Kendall County with 324, the City of Boerne with 265 and Walmart Super Center with 231.

The largest town in Kendall County is Boerne, with about 23,000 residents, with the next largest town, Comfort, home to about 3,000 people. The southern part of the county, which abuts Bexar County and northwest San Antonio, has several residential subdivisions in unincorporated areas, many of them with luxury homes.

Kendall County has the largest median income of the other counties in the metro area and the lowest poverty rate. The majority of people who live in the county (about 70%) are white, compared to a quarter Hispanic and fewer than 2% black. The county also has one of the lowest proportions of non-English speaking residents.

Demographic	Kendall
Population	48,973
Pop change from 2012	37.7%
Median income	\$104,196
Living in poverty	7%
High school graduates	92.5%
College grads or higher	48.5%
Computer at home	95.8%
Broadband subscription	91.1%
AAPI population	2%
Black	1.8%
Hispanic	24.8%
Indigenous	.8%
White	69.8%
2+ races	2.3%
Language other than English	14.4%
Foreign-born	7.4%
Voter turnout 2024	75.2%
Republican share 2024	77.4%
Democratic share 2024	21.7%

Medina County

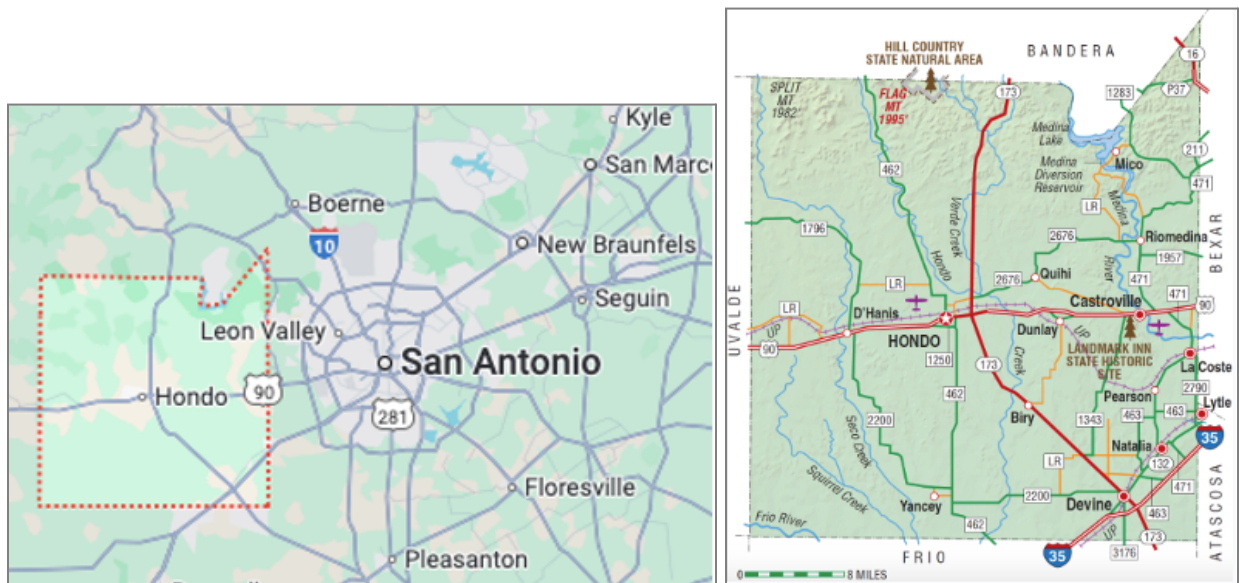


Figure 1. Medina County

Today, the county has continued its farming and ranching traditions, [along with tourism](#) related to the rivers, creeks and watering holes, as well as hunting. Recently, the farmland has started to change rapidly, as land is developed. The county has recently attracted multiple data centers after Microsoft built a massive location, with companies taking advantage of relatively inexpensive land and tax incentives.

The [largest employers in the county](#) are government agencies, including Hondo Independent School District, retail such as Super Wal-Mart, construction, followed by hotels and restaurants. The top growing industries are construction, retail and government. The largest town is Hondo, the county seat, home to nearly 9,000 people. Devine follows with more than 4,500 people, followed by Castroville with about 3,200.

Many residents in the county commute to San Antonio to work. More than half the county is Hispanic, and a quarter speak another language at home, mostly Spanish, putting the county in the third position among the others in the area for both of these attributes.

Demographic	Medina
Population	53,723
Pop change from 2012	14.8%
Median income	\$73,060
Living in poverty	11.8%
High school graduates	86%
College grads or higher	22.2%
Computer at home	90.6%
Broadband subscription	85.1%
AAPI population	1.1%
Black	4.2%
Hispanic	52.1%
Indigenous	1.2%
White	42.2%
2+ races	1.8%
Language other than English	25.4%
Foreign-born	5.8%
Voter turnout 2024	63.8%
Republican share 2024	69.3%
Democratic share 2024	27.6%

Wilson County

Wilson County is located just southeast of San Antonio and is [part of the upper coastal plain](#) of South Texas, which makes for prime farmland. In the 1700s, Spanish explorers traveled through the area, which was inhabited by indigenous groups, with permanent settlements in the 1800s by Spanish, German and Polish immigrants. Ranching, then later farming, manufacturing and oil have emerged as important industries in the county.



Figure 1. Wilson County

The largest industries in the county are [service- and energy-related](#), with a [particular type of shale in part of the county](#) that produces more oil and natural gas than others. [Retail, education and health care](#) employ the most people in the county, but the oil and gas industry pays the highest average salary. The county is [actively seeking more business growth](#) in the areas of manufacturing, oil and gas, clean technologies and retail, among others.

The largest town in Wilson is Floresville, with a population of about 8,600 people, followed by Poth, with about 2,000 people, and La Vernia and Stockdale, which each have about 1,500 people.

The median income is relatively higher than in many of the other counties in the area, with a lower relative poverty rate. More than half the county is white, about 41% Hispanic, and more than 20% speak another language at home, mostly Spanish.

Demographic	Wilson
Population	52,735
Pop change from 2012	18.9%
Median income	\$89,708
Living in poverty	10.5%
High school graduates	90.8%
College grads or higher	25.4%
Computer at home	95.3%
Broadband subscription	86.2%
AAPI population	1%
Black	2.4%
Hispanic	40.7%
Indigenous	1.1%
White	55%
2+ races	1.7%
Language other than English	21.7%
Foreign-born	4.3%
Voter turnout 2024	69.7%
Republican share 2024	76.7%
Democratic share 2024	22.9%

Appendix B: Methodology

The community information needs gap analysis explored in this report used multiple methods and datasets to gain insights into the local news and information landscape and community information needs in the eight-county San Antonio metro area, using data collected from community members (audience), local news outlets, local news coverage, and publicly available sources. The findings illustrate gaps in community information needs and identify potential opportunities for addressing both the information needs of the community and local news providers.

This study included several stages of data collection and analysis, detailed below.

Community Needs Assessment

To understand what San Antonio area residents think of their local news, we conducted a survey on information needs, behaviors and preferences.

With the help of our local partners, we sent links to a survey about individual local news and information preferences and perceptions on local news media to 225 local civic organizations and news outlets to distribute to their member lists. The survey included multiple-choice and write-in questions about why respondents turn to local news (or not), what they're hoping to get out of coverage, and what they like and dislike about current local news offerings. In total, 649 people completed the survey.

We also took several steps to ensure the voices of underrepresented groups were included in the survey:

- We sought data on community growth in our service area from the Office of Immigrant Affairs in San Antonio, leading us to translate the survey into five additional languages for growing communities: Arabic, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese and Pashto.

- Disability is often left out of the conversation around news production and dissemination. The San Antonio Area Foundation held an event with visually-impaired groups to understand how they accessed news and information and what barriers the community encounters. Volunteers helped fill out the survey for visually-impaired individuals.
- The Foundation held additional events in rural and underrepresented communities, hosting them on weekends and outside of business hours to make participation convenient for residents. For example, one event, for refugee populations in the metro area, took place at a popular Ali Baba supermarket. Such events were staffed with community representatives who had direct connections to underserved groups and who could serve as translators.
- While our survey was voluntary, individuals in underrepresented communities were compensated for their time and often provided meals. Paper copies of the survey were always available at events.

News Availability Assessment

To understand the local news and information needs and gaps in coverage, we conducted a thorough analysis of the media landscape in the eight-county San Antonio metro area to identify current information availability.

Local news outlets

The News Revenue Hub completed an extensive search to identify and map all news outlets that include the eight-county metro area in their coverage, as well as additional sources of information outside of traditional journalism outlets. This process included advanced Google searches for news about the metro area, surveys of community members, and consultation of local news membership organizations and mapping projects, including the [Institute for Nonprofit News](#), [LION Publishers](#), and [the State of Local News Project](#).

Content analysis

We conducted a homepage analysis and content analysis of 574 news stories published by four news outlets in the San Antonio area that represent newspaper,

broadcast TV, radio and digital native news outlets, and were among the most frequented and trusted local news outlets identified in a community survey.

For the web-based samples, we constructed two weeks of coverage by gathering all news articles published by the outlets on 14 randomly selected dates from January through September 2024, a method that accounts for the cyclical nature of news coverage. For the broadcast samples, we used transcripts of one weekday broadcast for two consecutive weeks in September 2024. Stories were coded for coverage topic, geographic location and several established markers for depth of news coverage, including the number and type of sources, the use of episodic or thematic framing, and the incorporation of additional contextual information, accountability reporting, or a focus on underrepresented groups. The four news outlets receiving this in-depth treatment include the San Antonio-Express news, the regional legacy newspaper, the San Antonio Report, a digital-native website, KSAT, the local ABC affiliate, and Texas Public Radio, a radio station that broadcasts a daily news program to the area.

News outlet needs assessment

We conducted a thorough needs assessment of news outlets through surveys and interviews in which representatives were asked for information in the following key areas to understand their organizations better: their actual and intended audiences, methods of engagement with the community, news products and content, financial health, strategic plans, and operational resilience. In total, we sent this survey to 35 news outlets, and 12 outlets responded. We next conducted three interviews with news outlet representatives to delve deeper into their survey answers to better understand their needs.

Following data collection, we assessed the challenges that the outlets described in serving their community's information needs, as well as the news outlets' most pressing needs and long-term plans. We then identified support opportunities to help them achieve long-term sustainability to reach their intended audience and fill gaps within the local news system.