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KARS Repeater Committee

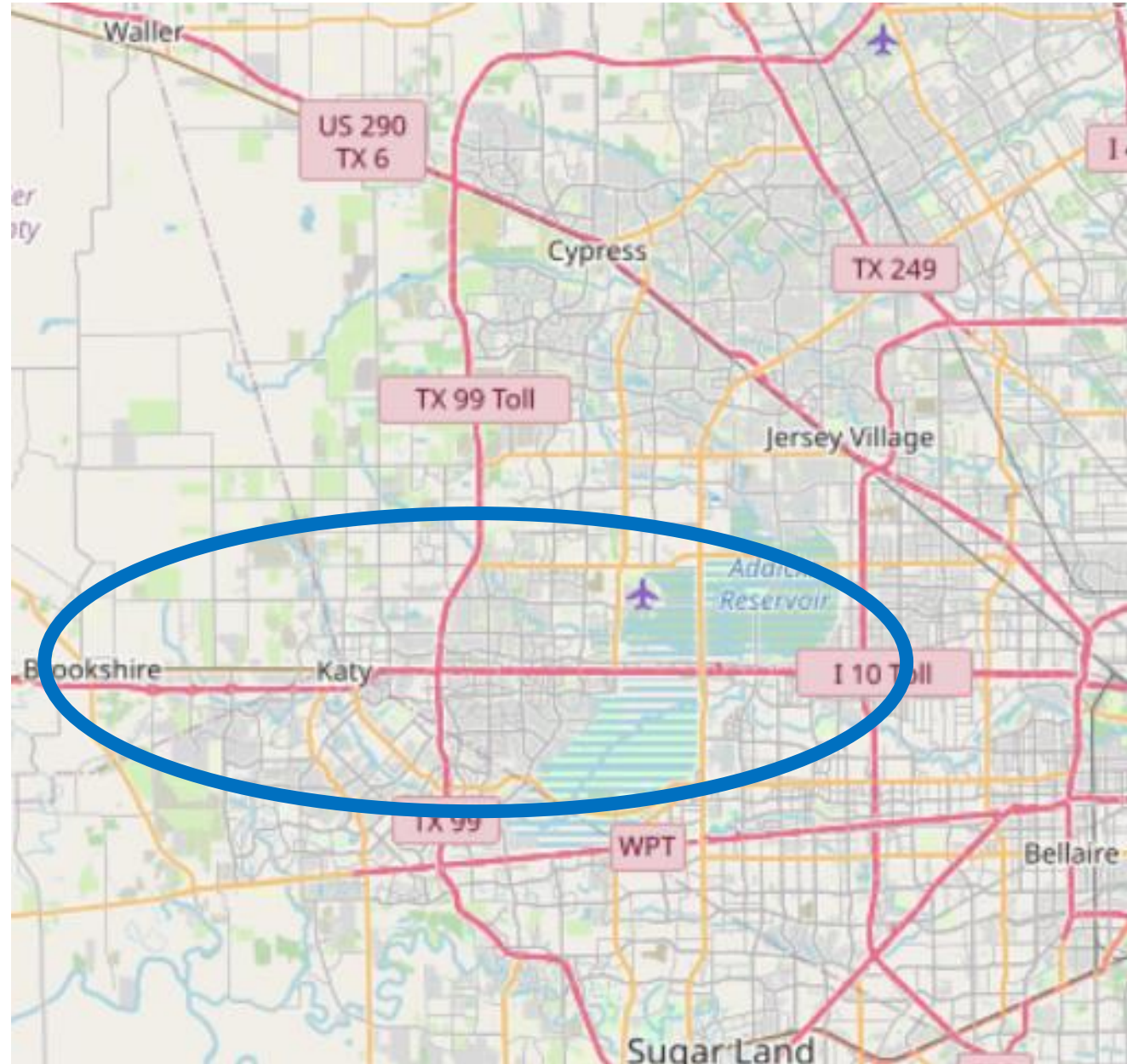
Updated Report & Recommendation

November 6, 2023



Project Overview

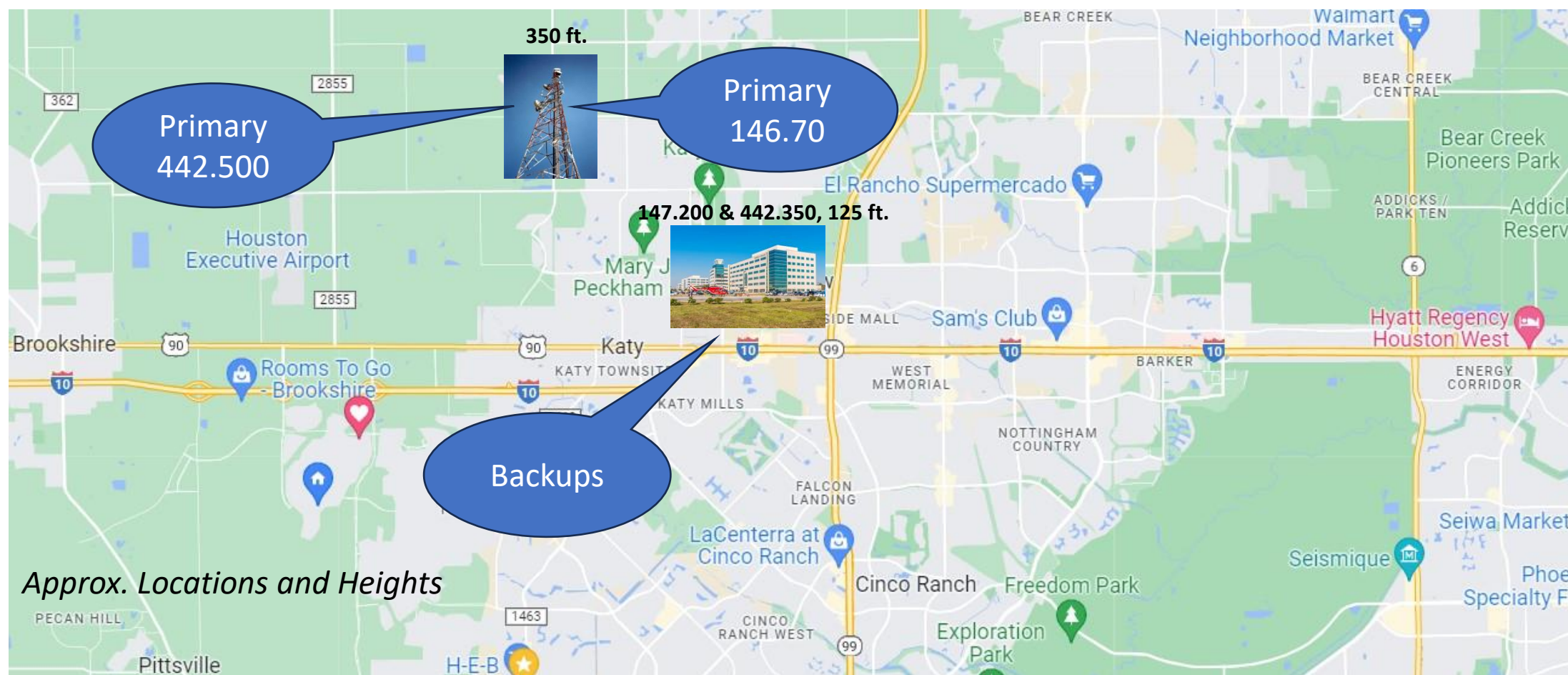
- Research To Enhance Amateur Radio Repeater Coverage *and* Activity Along I-10 Corridor from West Houston to Brookshire
- Committee Includes K5LK (Bill Kemp) and KB5IIZ (Bill Brown)
- Conducted Online Survey and Visited with Several Area Amateurs and Repeater Trustees



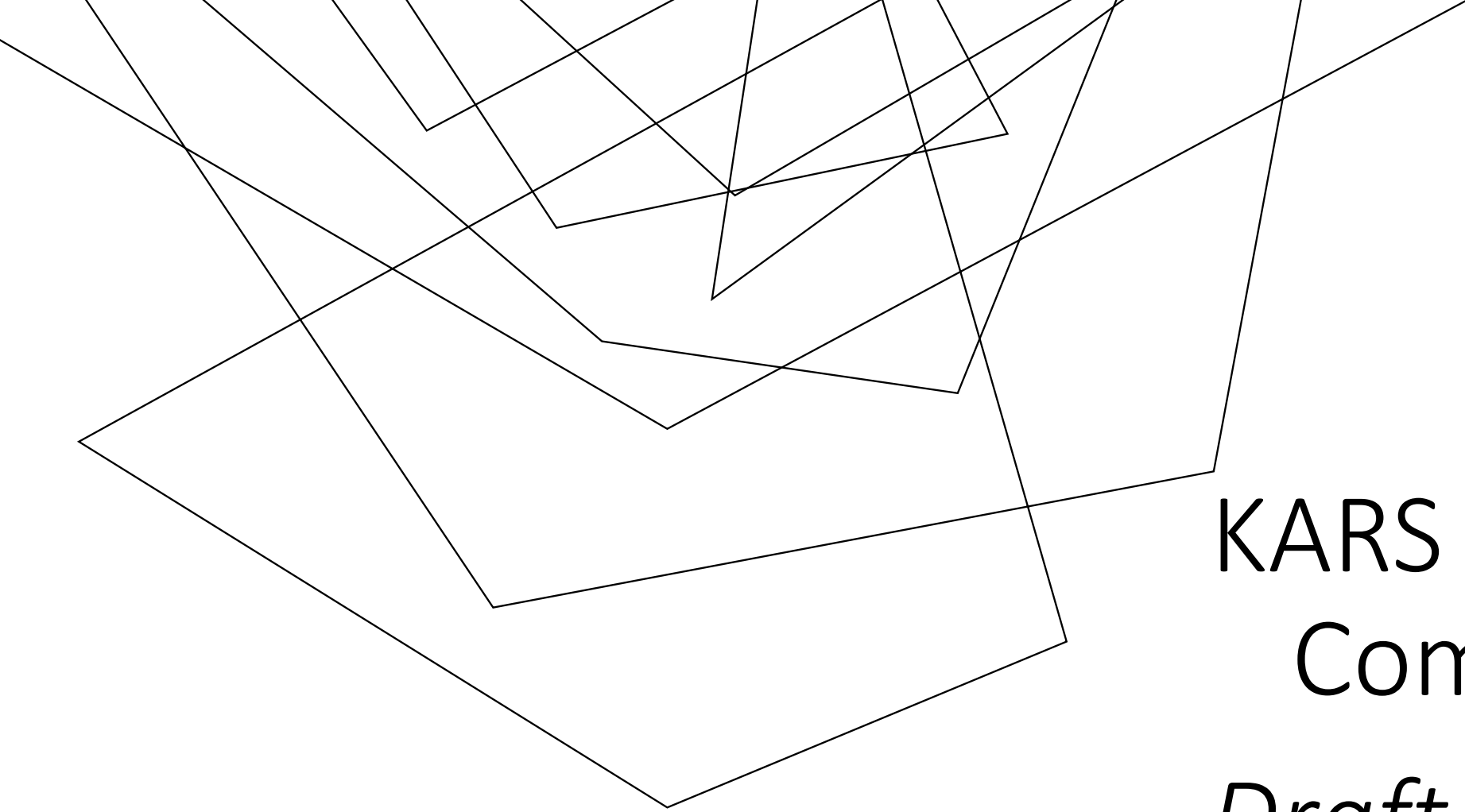
November Update

1. 442.5 “Test” Repeater Operational at AT&T Tower on Katy-Hockley Rd. Good West I-10 Coverage. Currently under *verbal* agreement with AT&T and KB5IIZ (Bill)
 - Plans to add 146.70 Repeater, link with AllStar, add remote base, etc.
2. Effective December 2023 - Make KARS Repeater Committee Permanent – 3 to 5 Members reporting to KARS BOD.
 - Update KARS by-laws As Needed to Reflect Changes
3. TBD Organization Execute Agreement with AT&T on Tower Usage
4. Effective TBD 2024 - Move KARS Nets and Other Activities to 442.5 and 146.70 Repeater
 - 147.200 and 442.350 Become KARS Backup Repeaters

Proposed Linked Repeater Network



Previous Report and Recommendation

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KARS Repeater Committee

Draft Report & Recommendations

August 1, 2023

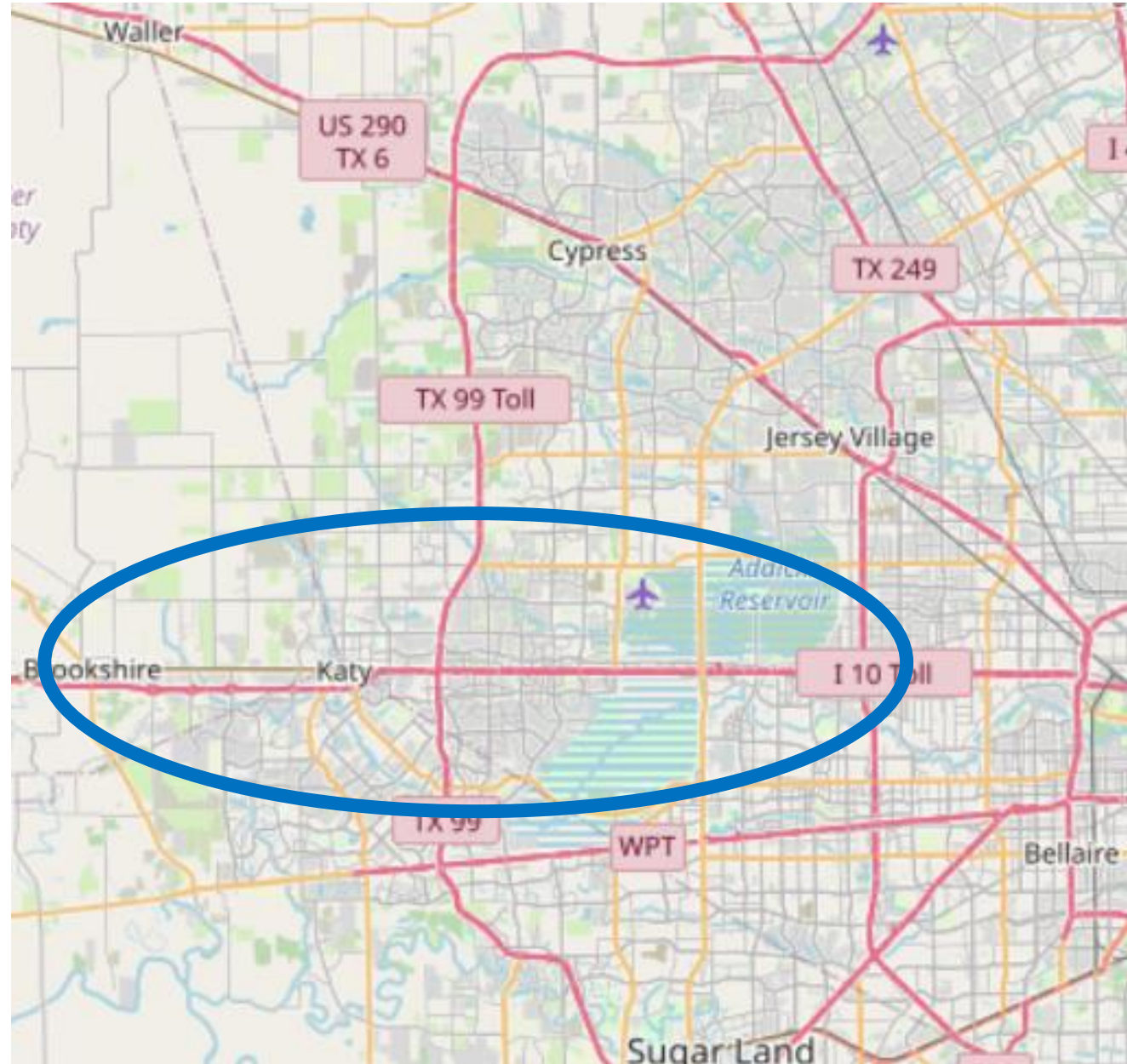


Outline

- Project Overview
- Initial Findings
- KARS Survey Results
- Additional Discussions
- Preliminary Findings & Recommendations

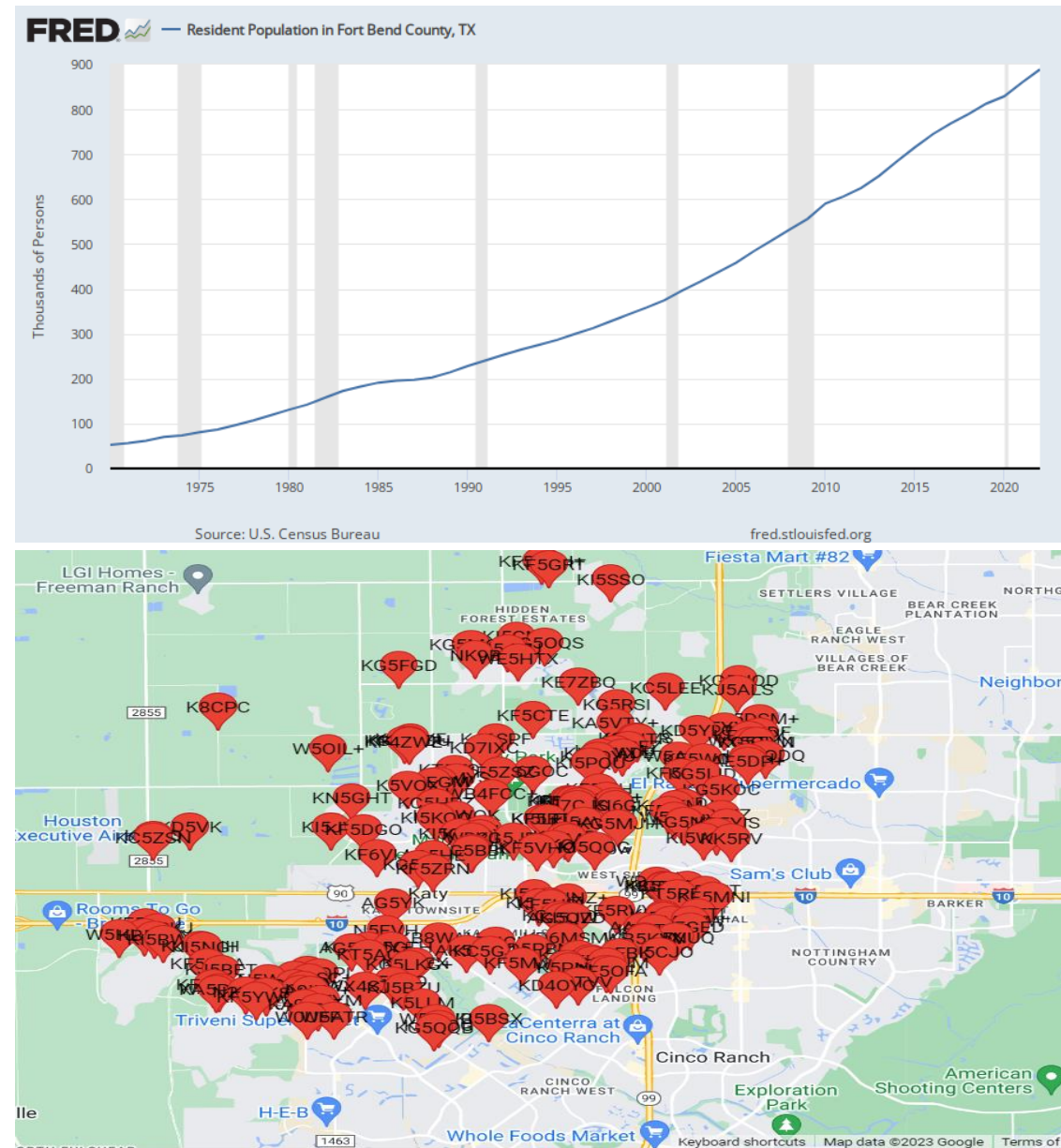
Project Overview

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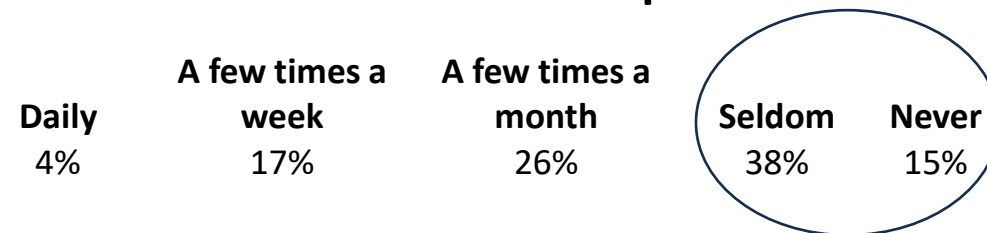
Initial Findings

- Fort Bend County One of the Fastest Growing in US
- Amateur Radio Population Should Grow Proportionally or Hopefully Faster
- Essential to Enhance West I-10 Corridor Repeater Coverage and Activity
- Survey of Area Amateurs Confirms Repeater Coverage and Activity Enhancements Are Needed

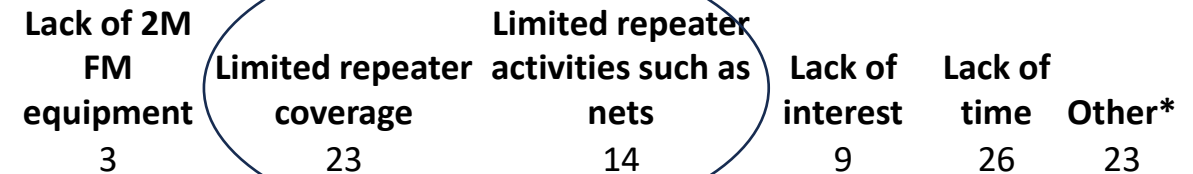


Committee Survey Results – 78 Reponses*

(1) How often on average do you use the KARS 147.200 MHz amateur repeater?



(2) What is keeping you from becoming more active on the KARS 147.200 repeater?



* Question #2 Other Comments

- Activity does not always have to be nets, I just haven't heard many people talking on it that often. Wish more people were active on it.
- Other options in my area
- Not a busy repeater. I get more info from KG5EEO
- Since I am retired I do not find myself in the car often, unless my wife is with me, and that's not a good combination.
- Lack of overall traf
- low of activity
- I live in Katy Area but rarely hear anyone on the repeater. I usually monitor BVARC 196.46
- Never heard of kars.
- I'm a new ham, still getting acquainted

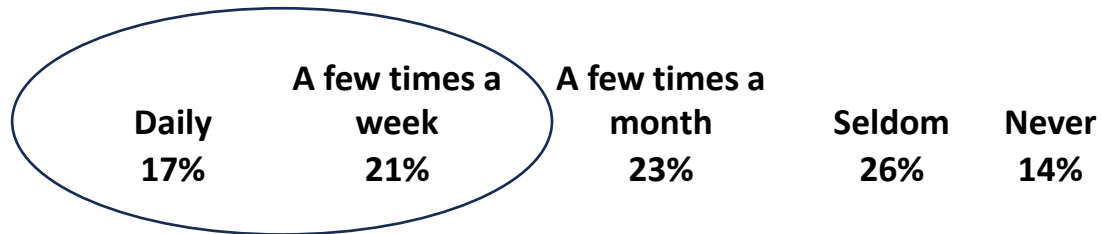
- I'm currently focused on non-ham activities or other club activities.
- When I flip over there I never hear anyone on, even after throwing out my call.
- I don't often hear traffic on the repeater
- I spend most of my time on a DMR repeater
- 2 meter /440Mhz radio is located in house, external antenna not yet connected.
- Not hearing any activity on repeater when I call CQ
- General lack of activity
- I am more focused on HF bands.
- I would also say limited traffic - it's pretty quiet most of the time (I monitor quite a bit!)
- Out of town - I use it regularly when coming to Houston.
- Limited informal activity (rag chew)

**Highlighted responses indicate opportunities for enhancing coverage and activity*

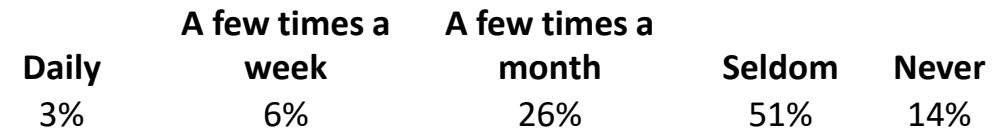
**Responses include KARS and area hams*

Committee Survey Results – 78 Responses*

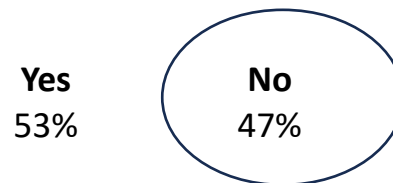
(3) How often do you travel with a 2 meter rig East of Eldridge Rd?



(4) How often do you travel with a 2 meter rig West of Brookshire?



(5) Are you aware that KARS has a UHF repeater, 442.350 MHz?



Committee Survey Results – 78 Responses

(6) Please feel free to provide any additional comments.

- Other than the weekly VHF net and the simplex net, my family and I rarely hear any traffic on the VHF net.
- The repeater trustee for the 442.350 repeater is WD8RZA.
- Since I have retired, most of my repeater usage (90%) is for 2 2M nets: Houston Local Traffic Net (HLTN) and the District 14 SW Unit ARES net. The repeaters selected for those nets are based on the coverage area relative to the group we serve. With a slightly larger footprint, the KARS repeater may be possible to use on the rotating list of repeaters for the D14SW ARES net, since most of the participants are western Harris and Fort Bend counties. We would need to check it out and see - - I have a list of all the regular participants for the past 1+ years. But I suspect the the scope of checkins for the HLTN is broader than would be reasonable to KARS to cover alone.
- Coverage yo the north would be nice also
- Not a KARS member and don't travel the 10 corridor to SA anymore. And I would have found coverage toward SA very useful had it been available and I actually made myself get a license back then. I will have a VHF/UHF unit soon. And will certainly make use of the repeater as I live on the Hwy6 corridor.
- If there was more traffic and nets I would be using the repeater. I live in the Katy Area.
- I do work east of Eldridge at Shell Woodcreek, so coverage beyond Eldridge may be of interest when I eventually get a mobile rig in the truck.
- I expect I'll use the repeater more often in the future.
- The signal from the 147.200 repeater is full scale @ S9 into Pecan Grove.
- I live in Richmond
- I often put my call out on the repeater but usually no one responds. I rarely hear anyone using the repeater except for the weekly net.
- HOA restricts antennas however, I got one up. Now the issue is to get the coax down into the interior wall from the attic, but it's too hot to work there now.
- If I am in my car I can hit the repeater. At home all I have is an HT (5W) and cannot get enough signal to connect.
- "I do not care for the short squelch trail. Why noy set-up a 440 net?"

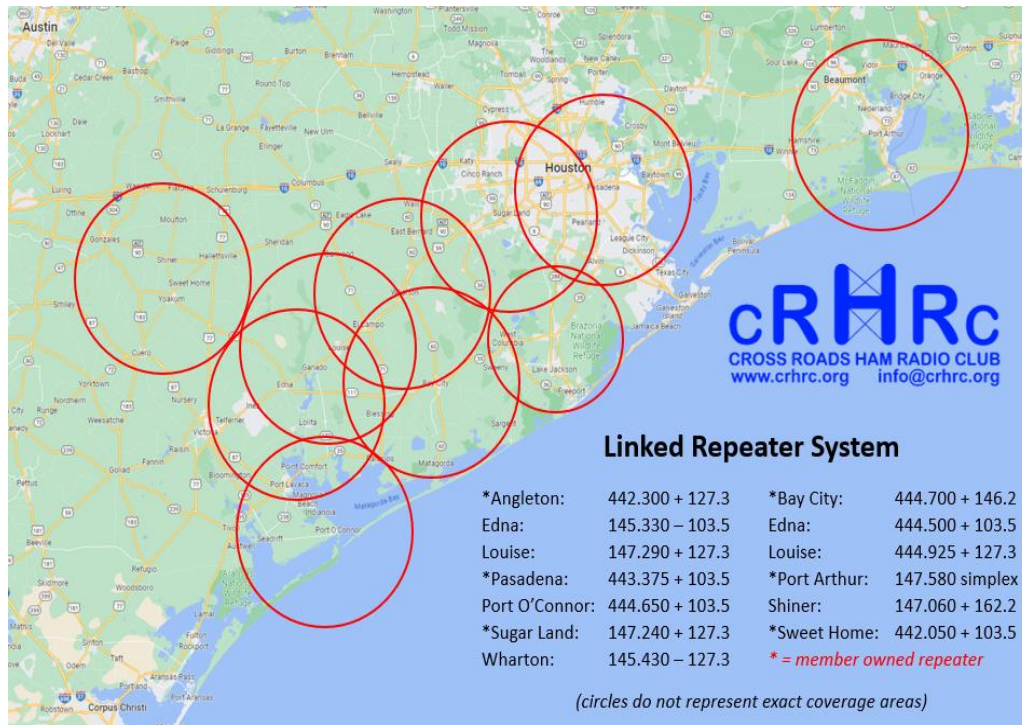
Committee Survey Results – 78 Responses

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- "I agree that we should have a repeater farther West, not necessarily east, possibly that would reach Sealy. Most of the growth is in that direction and it would/could be an attraction to get added members to the club. In saying that, I would not like too many repeaters connected, then it can then become a nuisance. Sealy, Simonton/ Brooksire or Pittsville could be a good location for an additional repeater or two. Echo and allstar links would be nice, but not required. Not being repeater literate, I would suggest that they would be connected using RF and not the internet to remove the problems with internet outages/failures."
- dmr repeater?
- No longer have a mobile rig in my truck. Being retired I don't spend as much time in daily travel as before. Spent most of my time on hf.
- I'm very active on HF, haven't been on the repeater in years.
- Any interest in expanding coverage north and northeast to include Conroe or Tomball? I travel frequently to Tomball and sometimes as far NE as Cleveland and points east of there. Thank you.
- I think that being able to set up a repeater farther West of 99hwy. would be a great way to bring in more Ham operators into the club. In addition, when more people learn that Hams are in contact with other hams in their areas and learn about the advantages of having Hams for emergency and community assistance there will be a call for assistance. Also when fundraisers travel West along I-10 area, or in a Northwesterly direction, it will enlarge radio coverage. There may be a situation where when people out West might know others that may turn out to be a great resource for our club in one way or another ?
- "Only been new at this since May still trying to put it all together. Thanks"
- I travel daily in the immediate Katy area with a vhf/uhf mobile in the truck as well as a scanner and almost always monitor the 147.200, 442.325, 145.190 and 146.940 repeaters which are the best repeaters for me to reach.
- I'm in Grand Mission, and the current 2m KARS repeater can be spotty in my mobile here. I'm usually on the 94 machine instead. Would like to see this one up higher...
- would love the repeater to bring back Echolink functionality and some Digital capability

Additional Discussions

- Crossroads Ham Radio Club – W5LCR Linked System



- W5BSA (Joe), 145.19 Repeater Trustee at bp Bldg., & Memorial Emergency Amateur Radio Assoc. (M.E.R.A.) Project Manager
- Several KARS Members and Amateurs in Ft. Bend, Harris and Waller County

Preliminary Findings & Recommendations

1. Grow Current Activity on KARS repeaters with Additional Nets, etc.
2. Improve West I-10 Amateur Repeater Coverage and Activities to Serve a Growing Population, KARS Members, Amateur Radio Community, Local Emergency Services
3. W5BSA is Interested in Joining a “West I-10 Linked Repeater Network” Utilizing bp Repeater Site Which Has Excellent West I-10 Coverage
4. Crossroads Club Interesting in Linking to a West I-10 Repeater Network
5. Potential Repeater Sites Exist Along I-10. Opportunity to Enhance Community and Local Emergency Management Relations - Develop Contacts for Discussions on Repeater Sites
6. Opportunity to Improve 147.2 and 442.35 Repeater Coverage. Currently Reluctance in Contacting MH Hospital for Repeater Site Visit and Analysis.
7. Form A New 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization To Oversee A “I-10 West Amateur Radio Network”. Organization Would Include Permanent Directors and One Director Each from KARS and MERA.

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KARS Repeater Committee

Draft Report & Recommendations

August 1, 2023



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Updated Report & Recommendation

November 6, 2023

