



Why Voting Matters



By Teri Castillo

The city of San Antonio, Texas, is holding general elections for mayor and city council on May 3, 2025. Early voting will begin Tuesday, April 22, 2025 through Tuesday, April 29, 2025.

Your local elections matter now more than ever.

With issues like affordable housing, essential infrastructure, and public health looming large, San Antonians need to get involved and cast their ballots, so we can build a local government that works for all of us.

As one of your elected representatives, I want to encourage you to prepare to vote this May by taking the following steps to participate in this upcoming election. **First**, check your voter registration status. *The last day to register to vote is April 3rd.* You should be able to locate registration applications at libraries, government offices, or high schools. You can also alternatively call the *Voter Registration* office at 210.335.8683 and request a voter registration application. You can also find the application online at bexar.org/1702/Register-to-Vote.

Although you can fill it out on your computer, you *must* turn in a printed and signed application. This application must be filled out completely, signed, and mailed or delivered in person to the *Bexar County Voter Registration Office*. If you are mailing your application, it must be postmarked 30 days before an election, so you are eligible to vote. The mailing address is 1103 S. Frio, Ste. 100, San Antonio, TX 78207.

It's no secret that working families in San Antonio are extremely busy. That's why I want to implore you to vote early. Early voting is fast and convenient. You can vote at any election site in Bexar County. So, you can drop into a location near your house or on your commute to and from work. Whatever the case may be, because there are several days allotted for *early voting*, it is more likely that

you won't be stuck in line. If you arrive to a site that has a line—you can always choose a different location or vote on a different early voting date. *Early voting for this election will be held from April 22nd to April 29th.* If you can't make it during the week, there are two dates during the weekend.

Voting is incredibly important. At a time where federal programs are in danger, and the state legislature is intent on defunding public schools, we need our communities to vote for candidates that are committed to combatting austerity for the many and wealth accumulation for the few. The ballot box is an opportunity for all of us to steer San Antonio in the right direction—a direction that meets the needs for everyday people, like you and me.

Local civil rights heroes like Willie Velasquez, Rosie Castro, and organizers from COPS/Metro have shown us that when we engage in the local process—our community wins. When I first ran for office, I committed to always collaborating with our residents to ensure that District 5 would not continue to be left behind—that we receive the investment we deserve. Over the last four years, we have seen that work come to fruition most apparent in the nearly \$100 Million in bond investment in District 5—the most funding for a district in the 2022 bond.

Your vote is your voice. It is fundamental to a healthy democracy. Civil rights advocates fought hard for your ability to advocate for your community. Let's do right by them and our community. **VOTE!**

BIO: *Teri Castillo is a community organizer and a historian of Urban Policy elected to represent San Antonio's District 5 where she resides with her husband and two dogs, Bam Bam and Pebbles. She is among several incumbents on the San Antonio City Council running for reelection.*

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Those running to keep their seats on the council include: Sukh Kaur for District 1, Jalen McKee-Rodriguez for District 2, Phyllis J. Viagran for District 3, Adriana Rocha García for District 4, Teri Castillo for District 5, Marina Alderete Gavito for District 7 and Mark Whyte for District 10. Two incumbents, District 6 Councilwoman*

Melissa Cabello Havrda and District 8 Councilman Manny Pelaez have joined a multitude of candidates in the race for Mayor of San Antonio leaving their council seats open to a field of new candidates. District 10 councilman John Courage's seat will also be open. For a complete rundown of candidates go to: bit.ly/voter-guide-2025