

380,000 Population Foreseen for Austin

An Austin with 380,000 people by 1980 is predicted by Don Cummins, local subdivision developer.

Speaking Tuesday at a meeting of the Austin Real Estate Board, Cummins said Austin has all the advantages necessary to grow into a city of 210,000 by next year and 380,000 by 1980.

He gave as signs of Austin's potential growth its development as state headquarters center, its eminence as a recreation center and an increase in its industrial trend.

A good supply of water and power, expansion of the University of Texas, Bergstrom Air Force Base, governmental services and Austin's growing importance as a church center were also mentioned.

Residential construction now averages 2,000 homes a year, said Cummins, and forecasts point to a rate of 3,000 a year by 1965.

The speaker then traced the growth of the city in four sectors — northeast, northwest, southwest and southeast. During the past five years, he said, 3,000 homes averaging \$13,000 in value have been built in the northeast section, representing an investment of \$39 million. He said the northeast section still has room for expansion since several hundred acres were purchased in the area recently by Austin and Midland home builders to provide future homes.

The northwest quadrant of Austin has always been the prime residential area, at least in the

last 30 years. Here the bulk of the homes in the middle and upper prices have been built and this is the preferred section of home buyers who invest \$20,000 or more in homes. The northwest section will continue to develop along the Shoal Creek watershed with three developers buying large acreage in that area and with three realty and development firms owning or controlling 1,700 acres of wooded scenic land available for 3,500 houses in the \$20,000 to \$75,000 class.

Cummins expressed the opinion that Southwest Austin will join the northwest sector in becoming an area of \$20,000 homes. He pointed to the growth of two or three subdivisions where nearly 600 homes ranging from \$10,000 to \$24,000 in value have been built in the last three years, and where prospects pointed to construction of nearly 2,000 homes in all in the next few years in that price bracket.

The southeast area of Austin, once the city's primary home area in the olden days, has been slower in developing because of having to overcome a natural barrier in the Colorado River plus encroachment of industrial establishments. Some success has been attained by several developers, however, in construction and sale of homes in the \$18,000 to \$27,500 range. The area is due to get a boost with the completion of the new low water dam and lake, particularly near Riverside Drive which will be opened to Bergstrom Air Force Base.