



# Travis County

## **Section I:**

Introduction

2006-2010 Consolidated Plan,  
Amended August 2007



## ***Executive Summary***

As an Urban Entitlement County, Travis County must comply with the Consolidated Plan requirements in order to receive funding for these formula-based programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Designated as the lead agency by the Travis County Commissioners Court, the Health and Human Services & Veterans Service Department (HHS/VS) prepares and submits this Consolidated Plan to HUD. HHS/VS oversees the public notification process, approval of projects, and the administration of these grants.

In keeping with its vision and mission, Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service works within the community to optimize self-sufficiency for families and individuals and to promote the full development of individuals, families, and neighborhoods. The Department plays a strategic role within a holistic continuum of care by providing planning, funding and services and by connecting its efforts with others in the community.

Travis County's Consolidated Plan spanning fiscal years 2006 through 2010 is the County's blueprint for addressing the community's most critical housing and community development needs in the unincorporated areas of Travis County. Consistent with research and public comments, Travis County's priorities are to assist low- and moderate-income persons in obtaining affordable housing, improving the safety and livability of neighborhoods and increasing access to quality public and private facilities and services.

The Plan allocates a total of more than \$4 million in federal resources, which will assist an estimated 900 Travis County households with affordable housing, decent living conditions and public services.

The citizens of Travis County were instrumental in developing this plan, which is a result of nine months of activity by Travis County staff. County staff drew on authoritative sources to provide a quantitative analysis of community needs; conducted five public hearings at which more than 40 people testified; held multiple consultation meetings with service providers from housing, elderly services, youth services, and fair housing agencies, as well as Housing Authorities and other government agencies. Upon presentation of the draft Consolidated Plan, additional comment was received at two public hearings and considered in the final preparation of the plan.

After final submission, HUD discovered an error in the amount initially allocated to Travis County. Subsequently, Travis County's allocation was reduced from \$2,449,337 to \$838,659. Due to the scope of the reduction, the substantial amendment process was initiated. To expedite the amendment, HUD allowed Travis County to be temporarily out of compliance with its Citizen Participation Plan (CPP). HUD allowed for a 15- day public comment period to occur rather than the 30-day comment period specified in the CPP. A public hearing was held on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006, to receive public input on a substantial amendment to the Plan.

At the time of the November 2006 amendment, Travis County chose only to address the Action Plan for program year 2006, and to re-evaluate the strategic direction later. In August of 2007, Travis County

addressed the strategic direction as it relates to the reduced allocation. The amendment to the strategic direction results from the information gathered through the citizen engagement process in 2006 and 2007, and the original needs assessment data gathered in 2006. The substantial changes related to the changes to the strategic direction to the Consolidated Plan are located in Section IV and Appendices A & B. While the amendment to the strategic direction is not required to go through a public comment period, the scope of the change is substantial enough to warrant Travis County's interest in eliciting public comment.

Concurrent with the changes to the strategic direction, staff assessed the progress of each project and made recommendations to the Travis County Commissioners Court to substantially amend the Year One (PY06) Action Plan. The substantial amendment process was instituted due to the deletion of the Youth and Family Assessment Center Flex Fund Expansion, a public service project. The services to 30 youth will still be provided, but through the Travis County General Fund. In addition, timelines for projects were updated and more detailed information was provided for the Substandard Road Street Improvement project located in Apache Shores and the Land Acquisition Project with Habitat for Humanity. The changes related to the substantial amendment to the PY06 Action Plan are located in Section V and Appendix B.

During the week of June 4, 2007, Travis County published a Public Notice announcing and summarizing the proposed amendment to the strategic direction, the substantial amendment to the PY06 Action Plan and the draft of the PY07 Action Plan. The notice appeared in several area newspapers that target the unincorporated areas of Travis County. The 30-day public comment period commenced June 20, 2007 and ended July 19, 2007.

## ***Purpose and Overview***

Federal law requires that housing and community development grant funds primarily benefit low- and moderate- income persons in accordance with the following HUD goals:

### **Provide a suitable living environment**

This includes improving the safety and livability of neighborhoods; increasing access to quality facilities and services; reducing the isolation of income groups within areas by de-concentrating housing opportunities and revitalizing deteriorating neighborhoods; restoring and preserving natural and physical features of special value for historic, architectural, or aesthetic reasons; and conserving energy resources.

### **Provide decent housing**

Included within this broad goal are the following: assist homeless persons in obtaining affordable housing; retain the affordable housing stock; increase the availability of permanent housing that is affordable to low and moderate-income Americans without discrimination; and increase supportive housing that includes structural features and services to enable persons with special needs to live in dignity.

**Expand economic opportunities**

Within this goal are creating jobs accessible to low- and very low-income persons; providing access to credit for community development that promotes long-term economic and social viability; and empowering low-income persons in federally assisted and public housing to achieve self-sufficiency.

The Consolidated Plan, 2006-2010, presents a coordinated approach for addressing Travis County’s housing and community development needs for the next five years. The plan describes community needs, resources, priorities, and proposed activities to be undertaken with federal grant funds, specifically Community Development Block Grant funds. A new Consolidated Plan is prepared every three to five years. It combines in one report important information about Austin/Travis County demographics and economic activity as well as detailed information on the housing and job needs of its residents. For each succeeding year, the County is required to prepare a one-year Action Plan to notify citizens and HUD of the County’s intended actions during that particular fiscal year. This plan includes citizen and stakeholder input and is due to the HUD Field Office in San Antonio, Texas no later than August 15, annually.

The Action Plan for fiscal year 2006-07 is the County’s strategy for addressing the community’s critical housing and community development needs in the unincorporated areas of Travis County. This plan was developed under the guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and it serves as the application for one formula grant program: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

The Health and Human Services & Veterans Service Department (HHS/VS) is designated by the County as the single point of contact with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and lead agency for the grant administration of the CDBG program. As the single point of contact for HUD, HHS/VS is responsible for developing the 5-Year Consolidated and Annual Action Plans.

Travis County’s priority goals for the five-year time period covered in the Consolidated Plan prioritize the following projects as high priorities:

<b>High Priority Projects</b>
<b><i>Non-Housing Community Development Activities</i></b>
Water/Sewer Improvements
Street/Road Improvements
Sidewalks
Solid Waste Disposal Improvements (Sanitary Sewer)
Flood Drain Improvements
Other: Erosion Abatement

Other: Litter Abatement/Clearance
Other Public Facility Needs
<b><i>Housing Activities</i></b>
<b>RENTAL HOUSING GOALS</b>
Production of new units
<b>OWNER HOUSING GOALS</b>
Production of new units
Homebuyer Assistance
Rehabilitation of existing units
Other: Other ways to promote affordable housing development (Infrastructure)
<b><i>Public Services</i></b>
Senior Services
Youth Services
Employment Training
Other Public Service Needs

At the end of each fiscal year, the County must also prepare a Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) to provide information to HUD and the public to evaluate the County's performance and to determine whether the activities undertaken during the fiscal year helped to meet the County's five-year goals and to address priority needs identified in the Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan. This annual performance report, prepared with public review and comment, must be submitted to HUD annually no later than December 31.

The County wishes to thank the Travis County residents who participated in this process. It is our hope that this Plan will help our families and neighborhoods to work together more effectively and thrive in the years ahead.

***Summary of FY07 Projects***

The 2006-2007 program year marks the first year of Travis County's five-year Consolidated Plan. The following information summarizes the amended Action Plan for FY 2006, the first in the five-year Consolidated Plan for 2006-2010. Each of the programs supports the overall goals and priorities of Travis County's efforts in housing and community development as prioritized in the five-year Consolidated Plan.

Through the citizen participation process, Travis County staff informed the community of the purpose and intent of its CDBG allocation to ensure that citizens have had time to comment on a proposed project located in their neighborhood. Any projects proposed for which specific activities or locations

have not yet been identified will have additional public hearings during Program Year 2006 (PY 06) in order to inform Travis County citizen's of the intended use of funds.

**Proposed Projects for Year One include:**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Community Development</b>		
1. Owner Housing: Production of new units	Land Acquisition – location to be determined at a later date. (Development of affordable housing by Habitat for Humanity.)	\$250,000
2. Street Improvements	Road Improvements to substandard roads in Apache Shores including sections of Pima Trail, Crazyhorse Pass, and Whitebead Trail.	<del>\$300,000</del> <u>\$305,000</u>
3. Water/Sewer Improvements	North Ridge Acres	\$200,000
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<del>\$750,000</del> <u>\$755,000</u>
<b>Public Services</b>		
4. Youth Services	Youth and Family Assessment Center Flex Fund – Internal Travis County HHS/VS Program	\$5,000
5. Public Services, Other	Family Support Services Social Work Services Expansion –Travis County HHS/VS Program	\$83,659
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<del>\$88,659</del> <u>\$83,659</u>
<b>Administration and Planning</b>		
Administration and Planning	Travis County will absorb all costs for administration and planning	\$0
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<u>\$0</u>
<b>Total award:</b>		<b>\$838,659</b>

***Summary of Community Need***

**DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW**

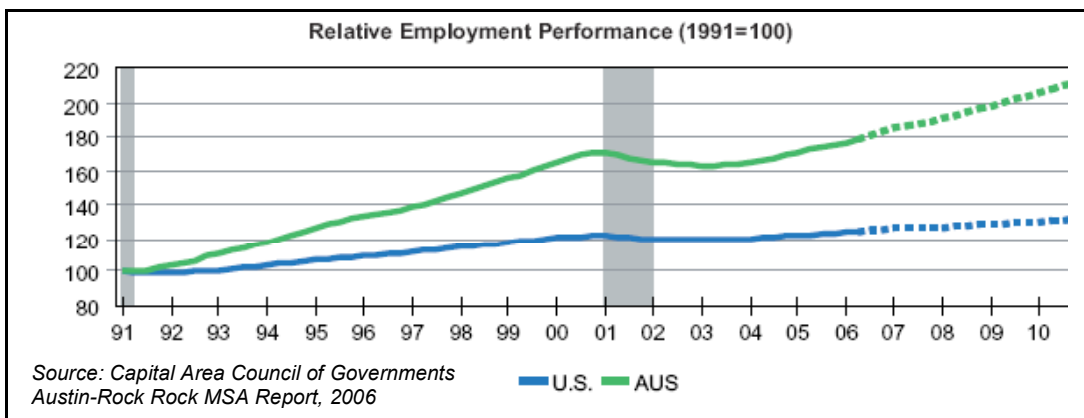
The population of Travis County continues to grow at a fast rate. In 1990, the population had increased 37% over the decade prior, and by 2000, 29.6% over the decade prior. Altogether, there are projected to be more than 730,000 adults age 60 or older in 2040, compared to about 149,000 in 2000.

Travis County's increasing racial and ethnic diversity is characterized by growth in the Hispanic, and to a lesser extent the Asian populations (American Community Survey 2004). In 2004 almost one-third (31.7%) of the total Travis County population identified as Hispanic or Latino, compared to 28.5% in 2000.

Language trends show an overall increase in residents who speak a language other than English at home, those who report speaking English “less than very well,” and students enrolled in bilingual education.

Income and education disparities are also increasing. While high levels of educational attainment remain a great asset for Travis County (as of 2004 more than 50% of residents had an associates degree or higher), the number and percent of residents with less than a 9th grade education has also grown (5.5% in 2000, 7.6% in 2004).

Compared to the overall U.S. employment performance, the Austin Metropolitan Service Area is experiencing positive employment trends, and these trends are projected to continue (see the figure below).



The incidence of poverty among the Hispanic/Latino population in Travis County was higher than other racial/ethnic groups in 2004, with almost one-quarter (21.4%) or 57,151 Hispanic/Latino persons living in poverty.

The Travis County Health and Human Services Department’s annual survey of human services non-profits revealed that **more than half (53%) of respondents had to turn away some of the clients who applied for services in 2005**. In addition, 83% of social service providers reported that they have experienced an increase in the cost of doing business since this time last year.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDS

The housing market in Central Texas is characterized by high occupancy rates for both owner and rental housing units and a lack of affordable rental and owner housing units for lower income residents. The average home price is above affordable levels for low-income families. The table below shows the percent and number of families in Travis County who experience housing problems, including cost burden, overcrowding, and insufficient facilities:

<b>Travis County Households with a Housing Problem by Household Income</b>			
	Total Number of Households	Percent of Households with Any Housing Problems	Number of Households with a Housing Problem
Household Income <=30% MFI	41,486	80.0%	33,189
Household Income >30% to <=50% MFI	35,331	80.2%	28,335
Household Income >50 to <=80% MFI	58,991	48.6%	28,670
Household Income >80% MFI	184,745	12.6%	23,278
Total Households	320,553	35.4%	113,476

Source: CHAS Data Book, 2000

Very low-income (30 percent of median family income (MFI)) and low-income (50 percent MFI) households face housing problems at the highest rate: eighty-percent (80%) or 61,524 low and very-low income households face one or more housing problems compared with 48.6% of moderate income (80 percent MFI) Travis County households and 35.4% of all households.

Cost burden is the housing problem most frequently faced by Travis County households. Of the 113,476 households facing a housing problem, 83% (94,563 households) face a cost burden (pay more than 30% of household income on housing expenses) and 37% face a severe cost burden (pay more than 50% of household income on housing expenses.)

Overall, the total distribution of housing units in Travis County did not change much between 1990 and 2004, with single family homes comprising over half (56%) of the total housing units, multi-family homes accounting for about forty percent (40%) of the total housing units and less than four percent (4%) mobile homes.

In 2004, just over forty percent (40%) of Hispanic or Latino residents in Travis County owned a home, while a greater percentage (63.6%) of White or Caucasian residents owned a home.

The percentage of substandard housing (lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities) is significantly higher in the unincorporated areas of Travis County. Overcrowding is also a significant problem in Travis County, as Black or African American, Asian and Hispanic or Latino populations face overcrowding challenges more than the White or Caucasian population in Travis County. Overcrowding is present in 1 of 4 Hispanic/Latino households in Travis County.

**Community Profile**

Travis County is located in Central Texas, along the IH-35 growth corridor. The Austin-Round Rock, TX MSA includes Travis County and four other counties (Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays and Williamson). Travis County includes most of the City of Austin, as well as some or all of smaller cities including Manor, Pflugerville, Round Rock, Elgin, Lago Vista and others. As a result, Travis County is predominantly urban, with 93% of residents residing in urbanized areas or urban clusters.

## Major Demographic Trends

### Population Growth

Travis County has experienced nearly continuous population growth since 1990, as illustrated in Figure I-1 at right. A significant amount of the observed population growth in the Austin MSA has been due to in-migration, with the exception of the early 2000s, during which time a large domestic out-migration occurred and stagnated the county's overall growth for a short period. Nonetheless, between the years 1990 and 2005, Travis County's net population growth was approximately 54.1%.

**Figure I-1: Travis County Population, 1990-2005**

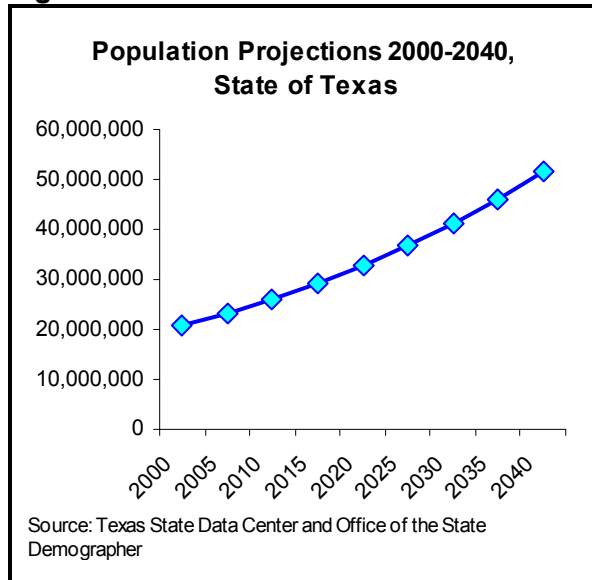
Date	Population	Percent Change	Components of Change				
			Total Population Change	Births	Deaths	International Immigration	Net Domestic Migration
1990	576,407	1.9	11,002	7,580	2,253	-	-
1991	602,113	4.5	25,706	12,945	3,714	2,113	8,040
1992	624,947	3.8	22,834	10,652	3,041	1,863	7,466
1993	649,226	3.9	24,279	10,597	3,338	2,286	8,495
1994	671,759	3.5	22,533	10,865	3,547	2,057	6,995
1995	696,278	3.6	24,519	10,924	3,508	2,558	7,988
1996	717,194	3.0	20,916	11,341	3,662	2,858	3,799
1997	736,587	2.7	19,393	11,875	3,508	3,121	967
1998	761,335	3.4	24,748	12,164	3,683	3,002	5,700
1999	788,500	3.6	27,165	12,181	3,551	3,106	6,120
2000	812,280	3.0	23,780	-	-	-	-
2001	842,547	3.7	30,267	17,851	5,022	10,587	7,153
2002	845,598	0.4	3,051	14,433	3,978	8,443	-15,631
2003	854,029	1.0	8,431	14,282	3,896	8,038	-9,730
2004	868,873	1.7	14,844	14,506	4,000	7,335	-2,709
2005	888,185	2.2	19,312	14,794	4,189	6,660	1,844

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

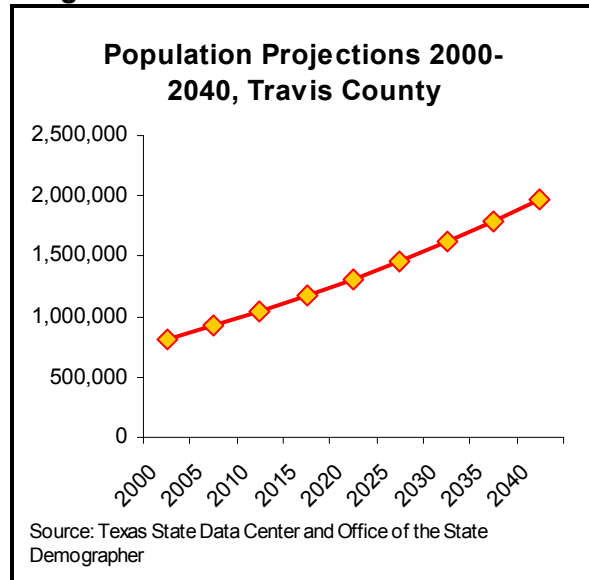
Note: Decade years represent April 1, Census data, not the mid-year estimates.

Projections made by the Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer indicate that similar patterns of population increases will continue in Travis County for the next thirty-five years. These changes mirror trends for the entire state of Texas, as illustrated in Figures I-2 and I-3:

**Figure I-2:**



**Figure I-3:**

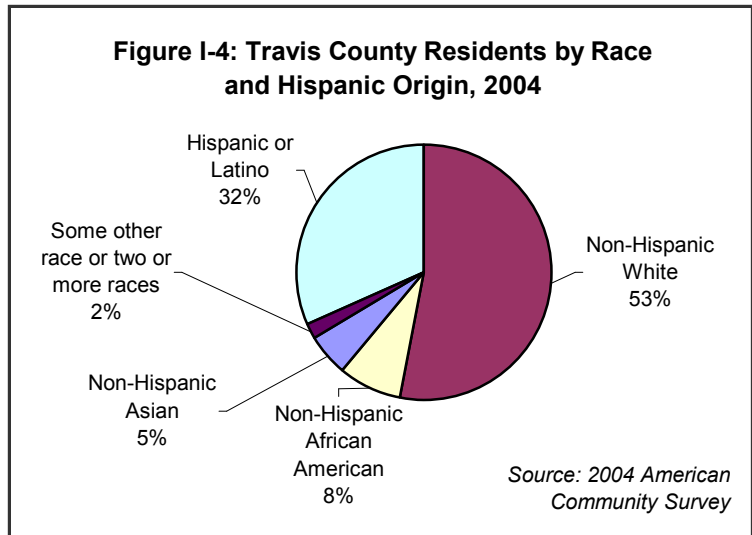


### Demographic Changes by Age, Race, and Ethnicity

The age distribution in Travis County is changing. The fastest growing age groups are ages 45 to 64, ages 65 and older, and children under 18 (American Community Survey, 2004). According to the US Census Bureau, in July 2005, there were 78.2 million people of the “baby boomer” generation, i.e. born between the years 1946 and 1964 (Community Action Network Community Conditions Report, 2006). By 2040, adults age 60 and older will account for 27% of the population of the ten-county region that includes Travis County, up from 11% in 2000. **Altogether, there are projected to be more than 730,000 adults age 60 or older in 2040, compared to about 149,000 in 2000** (Community Action Network Community Conditions Report, 2006).

Travis County’s increasing racial and ethnic diversity is characterized by growth in the Hispanic, and to a lesser extent the Asian, populations (American Community Survey 2004).

**In 2004 almost one-third (31.7%) of the total Travis County population identified as Hispanic or Latino, compared to 28.5% in 2000.** Relative to the total population in Travis County, the Black or African American population has decreased from 8.3% in 2000 to 8.2% in 2004. The Asian population in Travis



County slightly increased in percentage between 2000 and 2004, growing from 4.6% to 5.2% of the total population. It is likely that soon, no single ethnic group will make up more than one-half of the total population. Projections from the Texas State Data Center and the Office of the State Demographer indicate that over the next thirty-five years, Travis County’s demographic shifts will mirror those of Texas in general, as illustrated below:

Figure I-5:

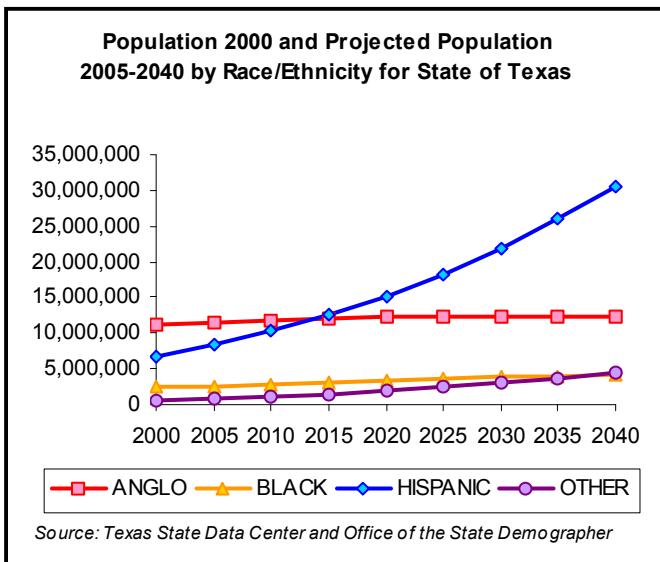
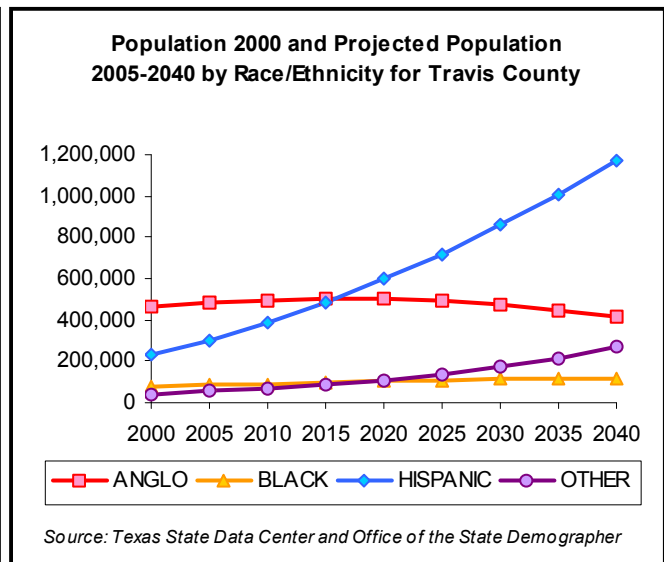


Figure I-6:



These racial/ethnic demographic trends are particularly pronounced among children in Travis County, as evidenced by public school enrollment. In some Travis County school districts, over half of enrolled children are Hispanic, as illustrated in Figure I-7:

**Figure I-7: Austin MSA School District Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity, 2005**

2005 District Enrollment	African American	Asian	Caucasian	Hispanic	Native American
Austin	13.3%	2.8%	28.9%	54.7%	0.2%
Eanes	0.7%	7.6%	85.6%	5.8%	0.3%
Del Valle	14.7%	1.1%	12.9%	71%	0.3%
Lago Vista	1.2%	1.3%	80.7%	15.8%	0.9%
Lake Travis	1.1%	2.2%	82.6%	13.6%	0.5%
Leander	5.4%	3.3%	73%	17.7%	0.6%
Manor	23.2%	1.8%	22%	52.8%	0.2%
Pflugerville	22.1%	8.1%	37.6%	31.8%	0.4%
Round Rock	9.7%	9.1%	58.3%	22.5%	0.4%
Elgin	14.5%	0.5%	38.9%	45.8%	0.3%
Hays	4.1%	0.6%	41.1%	53.9%	0.2%

*(Just for the Kids, www.just4kids.org)*

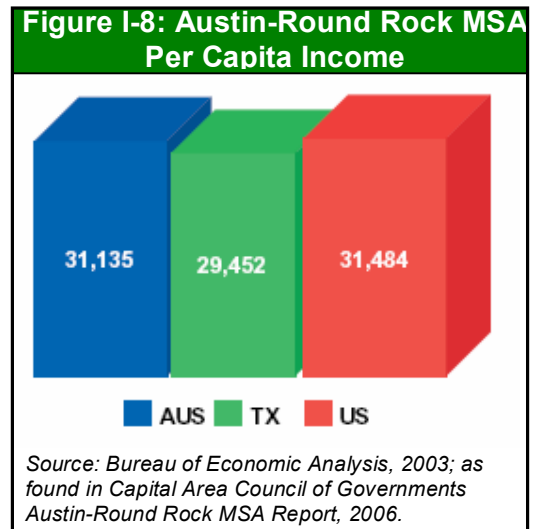
Language trends show an overall increase in residents who speak a language other than English at home, those who report speaking English “less than very well,” and students enrolled in bilingual education.

### Employment, Income and Education

The Austin-Round Rock MSA has a relatively high per capita income compared to the state of Texas (see Figure I-8 at right). However, **income disparities are increasing.** In Travis County, households with high incomes (greater than \$100,000 per year) and low incomes (less than \$25,000 per year) make up a growing proportion of the community, while the proportion of families with middle incomes (\$25,000 to \$99,999) is shrinking. Households with an annual income of less than \$10,000 now make up more than 10% of all households, and are increasing in number.

Educational disparities are also widening. While high levels of educational attainment remain a great asset for Travis County (as of 2004 more than 50% of residents have an Associates degree or higher), **both the number and the percent of residents with less than an 9th grade education have increased,** to 5.5% of residents in 2000, and 7.6% in 2004.

In 2004, married-couple families in Travis County had higher family incomes than female- and male-headed households (with no spouse present). Many of these female- and male-headed households, especially those with children, are at the lowest end of the income scale: 19.8% male-headed



households with children and 15.9% of female-headed households with children had a total family income of less than \$10,000—significantly higher proportions than that of married-couple families with children at the same income level (2.1%).

Figure I-9 below shows in more detail the income distribution for Travis County households.

**Figure I-9: Travis County Family Income Distribution by Household Type, 2004<sup>1</sup>**

Family Income	Married-Couple Family		Male Householder		Female Householder	
	Children	No Children	Children	No Children	Children	No Children
Less than \$10,000	2.1%	2.2%	19.8%	9.8%	15.9%	14.0%
\$10,000 to \$19,999	5.8%	2.5%	18.7%	9.0%	12.5%	11.7%
\$20,000 to \$29,999	5.5%	5.4%	16.4%	13.5%	18.0%	15.7%
\$30,000 to \$49,999	13.4%	19.5%	23.8%	29.1%	28.9%	32.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	18.3%	19.2%	18.7%	21.7%	10.4%	16.0%
\$75,000 and above	55.0%	51.2%	2.6%	17.1%	14.2%	9.8%

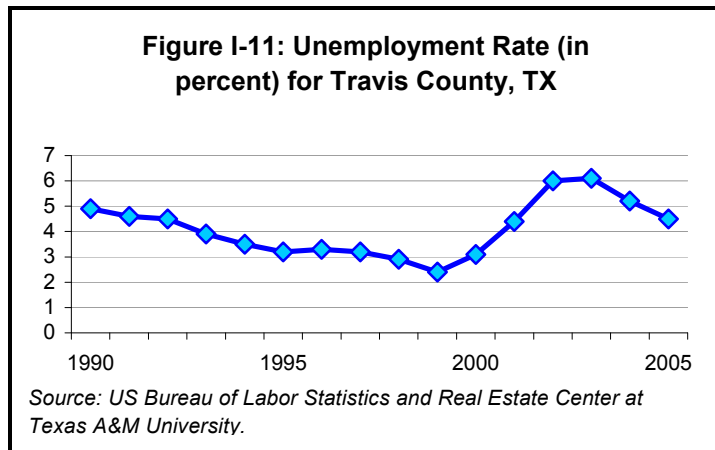
Source: 2004 American Community Survey

Employment in Travis County has showed an overall rising trend since 1990. However, a noticeable trend reversal occurred between the years 2000 and 2004, when employment rates fell and unemployment rose as high as 6.1% (see Figure I-10). From 2004 to 2006, unemployment began to drop again (see Figure I-11). The December 2005 unemployment rate in Travis County was 4.0%, down from 5.2% percent two years prior. (Community Action Network Community Conditions Report, 2006).

**Figure I-10: Travis County, TX Employment**

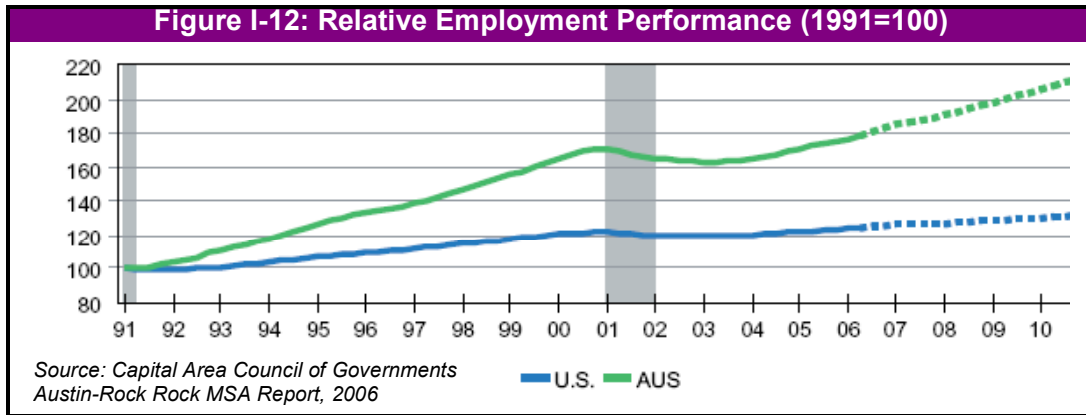
Year	Employment		Unemployment	
	Total	Percent Change From Prior Year	Rate	Unit Change From Prior Year
1990	318,515	-	4.9	-
1991	327,916	3.0	4.6	-0.4
1992	346,158	5.6	4.5	-0.1
1993	365,587	5.6	3.9	-0.6
1994	387,344	6.0	3.5	-0.4
1995	404,213	4.4	3.2	-0.3
1996	414,478	2.5	3.3	0.1
1997	423,030	2.1	3.2	-0.1
1998	436,729	3.2	2.9	-0.4
1999	453,056	3.7	2.4	-0.5
2000	476,543	5.2	3.1	0.7
2001	471,839	-1.0	4.4	1.3
2002	461,909	-2.1	6.0	1.6
2003	460,637	-0.3	6.1	0.1
2004	472,946	2.7	5.2	-0.8
2005	489,264	3.5	4.5	-0.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University



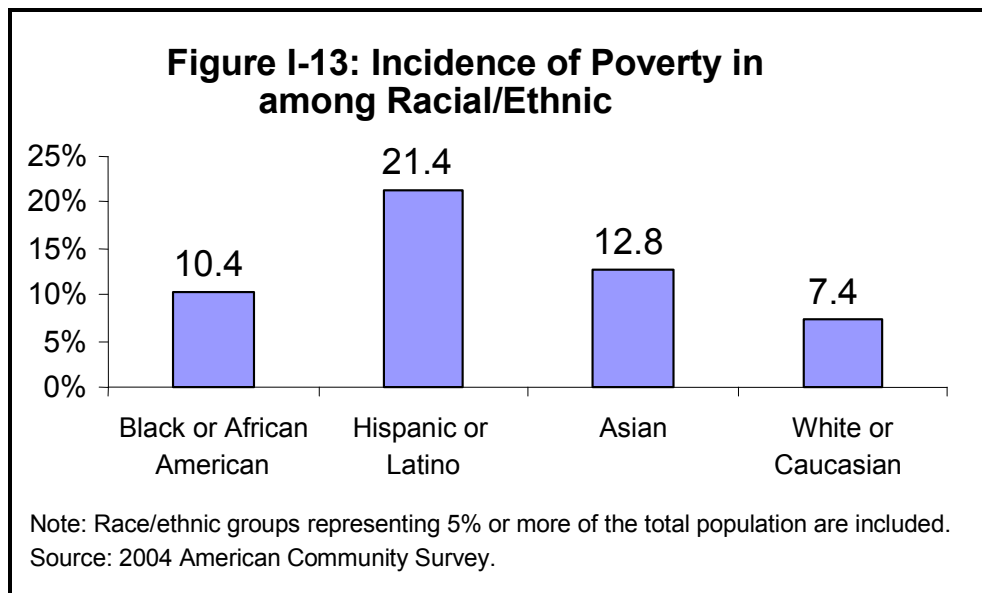
<sup>1</sup> Households Children field reflects Travis County households with children under 18 years currently living in the housing unit. Households No Children field reflects Travis County households without children under 18 years currently living in the housing unit.

Compared to the overall U.S. employment performance, the Austin MSA is experiencing positive employment trends, and these trends are projected to continue (see Figure I-12).



### Poverty and Living Wage In Travis County

In 2004, an estimated 106,765 Travis County residents' annual income fell below the federal poverty level (\$9,310 for an individual and \$18,850 for a family of four). Travis County's poverty rate (12.6%) is slightly lower than the national poverty rate (13.1%). However, when poverty in Travis County is examined among different racial and ethnic groups, **the incidence of poverty is higher for minority racial/ethnic groups, particularly the Hispanic/Latino population.** In 2004, the poverty rate for Hispanic/Latino population in Travis County was higher than all other racial/ethnic groups, with approximately 1 in 5 Hispanic/Latino persons living in poverty (21.4% of the Hispanic/Latino population, or 57,151 persons). Over 10% of African Americans and 12.8% of Asians in Travis County lived in poverty in 2004. These numbers are visually represented in Figure I-13 below:



The 2006 Federal Poverty Guideline is \$20,000 a year for a family of four (US Department of Health and Human Services). The Center for Public Policy Priorities has estimated that in order to afford to live in the Austin/San Marcos MSA, a family of two parents and two children needs a household income of \$44,044 to cover basic expenses, a figure more than double the federal guideline. (Center for Public Policy Priorities, 2001, as found in Community Action Network Poverty Fact Sheet, 2006.)

Of the 193,287 families in Travis County, about 6% of them (11,526 families) made less than \$10,000 in 2004 (Community Action Network Poverty Fact Sheet, 2006).

In the past two years, with falling incomes and increasing prices, our region has become less affordable.

Trends show that the gap between income and the Consumer Price Index for our region is narrowing after years of widening. This suggests an increasing share of a household's income is being consumed by necessary household costs such as rent, groceries, and transportation. Over the past year, income decline leveled off, but the price index increased slightly, thereby decreasing affordability in our region. (Central Texas Sustainability Indicators Project, Annual Report 2004.)

<b>Figure I-14: Estimated Cost of Living in Austin/San Marcos MSA For Two Parents With Two Children</b>	
Housing	\$858
Food	\$418
Child Care	\$569
Medical	\$727
Transportation	\$391
Other Necessities	\$321
Tax Payments & Credits	\$386
Annual	\$44,044
Hourly	\$22
<b>Percent of 2001 Federal Poverty Level</b>	<b>252%</b>
<b>Percent of 2006 Federal Poverty Level</b>	<b>220%</b>

Source: Community Action Network Poverty Fact Sheet, 2006

