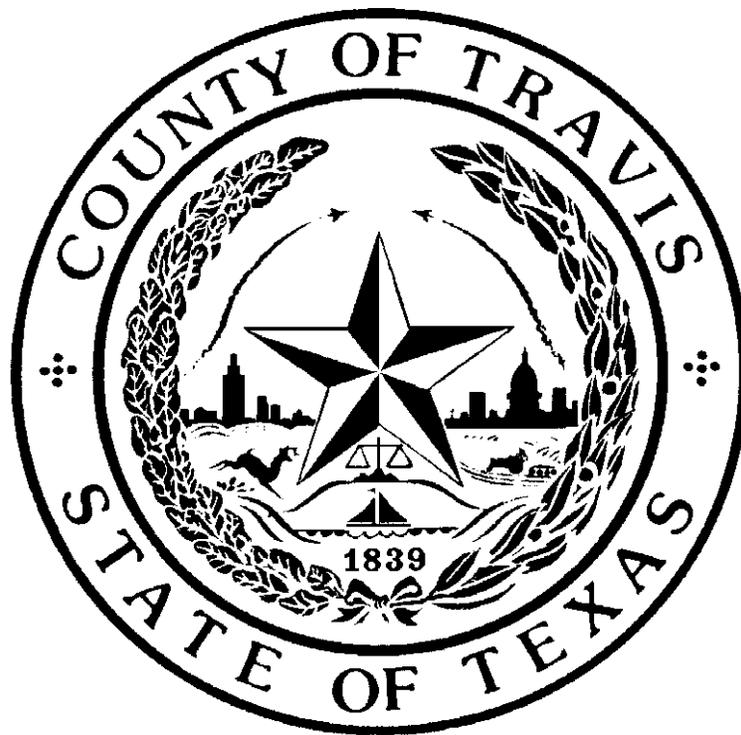


**TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS**  
**CAPITAL FACILITIES**  
**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Executive Summary**



**VERSION 1.1**

Approved January 15, 2002

## **Executive Summary Travis County Capital Facilities Strategic Plan**

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### **INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

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The Capital Facilities Strategic Plan is designed to establish a framework around which the Commissioners Court can review overall capital facility needs and provide policy direction for the planning of future facilities. It is a planning tool and not a static document. The needs and potential projects are very conceptual in nature, and are not intended to represent fully programmed projects. The document is intended to establish the basic planning parameters and the platform for further planning for specific projects selected for development. The Strategic Plan focuses on a long-range planning horizon through 2020. Therefore, detailed interim steps necessary for executing the plan (such as schedules and budgets) are not included.

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### **BACKGROUND**

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County services are driven in large part by the particular needs of the county population. The population of Travis County has grown by about 3% annually over the last five years and the number of County employees has increased by roughly the same percentage. This confirms what many believe to be intuitively obvious – that population growth is a driver for predicting future growth in County government. However, it is also intuitively obvious that a very reliable factor to use for predicting future growth is the historical growth trend of County government. In recent years there has been a relatively close relationship between the growth in population and the growth in employees.

As County government continues to grow, there will be an increased need for facilities to house county services. Assuming the County intends to discontinue leasing space downtown in order to save taxpayer resources, it is projected that by 2020 the Commissioners Court will need to provide an additional 575,600 square feet of office space in and around the Austin Central Business District. (Approximately 250,700 square feet will be needed to support the courts system, and another 324,900 square feet will be needed to support general government services). The Commissioners Court will also need to plan for the expansion of functions currently located outside the downtown campus as well as satellite services in the various precincts.

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## GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS OF FACILITIES

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### The Downtown Campus

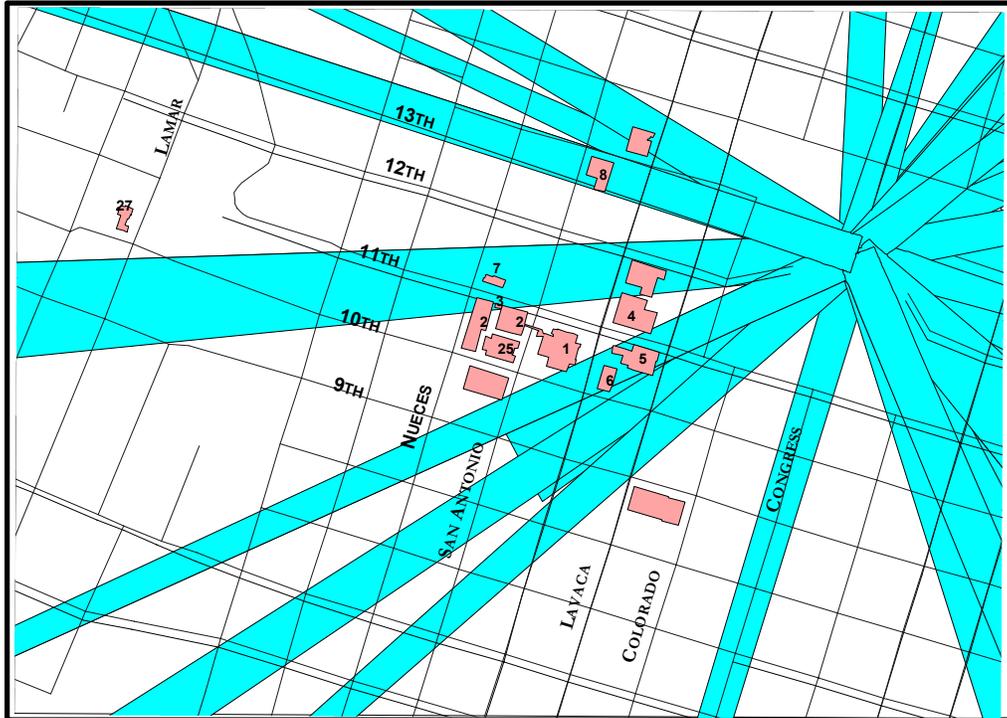
The Downtown Campus is defined as a 12 square block area surrounding the Historic Courthouse. Travis County owns 629,000 square feet of office space in this area, and leases another 82,800 square feet in two buildings. This area has developed over the years as an attractive location for attorneys to have offices due to the proximity to the County and Federal Courthouses.

### Travis County Downtown Campus



The future development opportunities of this area are severely impacted by the capitol view corridor ordinance. This state statute restricts the height of buildings constructed in a particular view corridor in order to ensure that the view of the Capitol is not blocked. Some of the most attractive sites for future construction (such as the city block across from the Courthouse) are restricted to between one and five stories. In addition, the Downtown Campus contains the most expensive land owned by Travis County and has the most limited parking available for users of the facilities.

## Map of Downtown Campus with Capital View Overlay



### Other Austin Non-Campus Facilities

The County owns 152,000 square feet of space in a variety of other Austin locations that are outside the Downtown Campus. Most of these are either Health and Human Service facilities (such as Palm Square and facilities on Post Road, East Cesar Chavez and Smith Road) or justice and public safety-related facilities (an office building on Pleasant Valley Road, the Forensic Center, or the Starflight Maintenance Hangar). These sites are generally outside the capitol view corridor and many have opportunities for future development.

### Satellite and Precinct Based Facilities

A wide variety of satellite and precinct-based facilities are located throughout the County and house the Justices of the Peace, the Constables, the field offices for Community Supervision and Corrections (CSCD) as well as the County Road and Bridge Offices. Additionally, the community policing centers for the Sheriff's Office are in satellite facilities, as well as the rural Community Centers

and Health Clinics. This Strategic Plan also suggests that the Commissioners Court may wish to locate customer service centers/desks for the Tax Assessor Collector in each of the satellite and/or precinct offices in the future. 181,000 square feet of space is contained in these facilities in 8 locations. Many of these sites have sufficient space for facility expansion, at least in the near term. There are a number that have already had future redevelopment or relocation discussed with the Commissioners Court.

### **Existing Owned Facilities**

The Strategic Plan provides a general description of [27 facilities](#) that are categorized according to whether they are general government facilities (8), court-related facilities (8), satellite facilities (8), or correctional facilities (3).

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## **SPACE PLANNING PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES**

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The Strategic Plan identifies critical principles to guide the development of any projects undertaken to implement the strategic directions outlined in the document. The “Principles of Strategic Planning” address: collaboration, maximizing existing owned real estate, parking, expansion space, operational planning, owning versus leasing, quality standards, space allocation standards and public scrutiny. In addition, there are “Guidelines for Executing the Strategic Plan” that should be used in the development of architectural programs for future County building programs. These guidelines address: geographic location and relationships, massing or location within a building, allocation of space, quality of space, and transportation and parking. Formal adoption of these principles by the Commissioners Court will be an important step in the review and approval of this Strategic Plan.

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## **PLANNING THE DOWNTOWN CAMPUS**

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Looking ahead to 2020, the need for additional space will be difficult to meet in the downtown region due to:

- The increased cost of land downtown;
- The relatively few parcels available to acquire near the existing campus;
- The capitol view corridor statutes that limit future development on existing County-owned land downtown; and
- An existing shortage of parking spaces for users of the facilities.

Given the above circumstances, the Commissioners Court has endorsed the concept of developing two County campuses. One downtown campus will support the courts and have the Historic Courthouse as its anchor. The second

campus will house the County’s general government functions and be located within a 10-minute drive from the Courthouse. By reusing the downtown campus for court related functions, the Commissioner Court can minimize the amount of construction needed to support this part of the County system. It can also avoid adding operational costs for the transportation of inmates and persons in custody. The existing office buildings can be reused for the attorneys and other offices that support the courts. The Commissioners Court can focus any additional construction needed downtown on the specialized space needed for courtrooms. It can further develop office space for general government functions in an area that does not carry the added construction costs associated with development in the City’s dense urban core.

The Strategic Plan identifies the court-related services that would remain downtown and presents an overview of tenant locations in the downtown campus, assuming certain growth patterns over the next 20 years. FTE growth is projected at 3% a year, and square footage requirements are based on commonly used space planning standards. The number of civil, criminal and probate courts is projected to increase from 28 courts to 36 courts by 2020.

<b>REUSE OF EXISTING SPACE DOWNTOWN</b>				
	<b>Current FTE</b>	<b>Current Sq. Ft.</b>	<b>Projected FTE by 2020</b>	<b>Projected Sq. Ft. by 2020</b>
<b>Courthouse</b>				<sup>1</sup> <b>158,100</b>
Probate Court	9	2,000	15	<sup>3</sup> 17,200
Justice of the Peace 5	10.5	2,600	18.4	6,400
District Attorney	181	<sup>4</sup> 52,200	317	75,400
Constable 5	50	4,000	87	12,700
Mail Room / Print Shop	NA	NA	NA	1,200
Circulation		14,600		33,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>208.5</b>	<b>75,400</b>	<b>364.4</b>	<b>146,800</b>
<b>CJC (with Annex)</b>				<b>302,900</b>
Central Booking	Non office staff	25,000		25,000
Travis County Sheriff's Office		1,600		2,900
CSCD Intake		1,000		2,000
District Clerk (Criminal)	23.5	6,400	41	11,400
Grand Jury		1,200		1,400
District Attorney	181	35,900	317	0

TRAVIS COUNTY CAPITAL FACILITIES STRATEGIC PLAN VERSION 1.1

Criminal Courts	<sup>5</sup> 70	60,200	<sup>5</sup> 123	<sup>5</sup> 104,000
Information Telecommunication Services	21	11,300	30	<sup>6</sup> 11,300
Pretrial Services	37	8,200	65	15,500
Travis County Sheriff's Office		41,600		31,300
Law Library		Included w/ Criminal Courts		5,000
Classification Housing		35,400		35,400
Mail Room / Print Shop		0		1,200
Circulation, Lobby and Public Toilets		75,000		75,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>302,900</b>		<b>308,100</b>
<b>TCAB</b>				<b>109,800</b>
Domestic Relations	52.5	<sup>2</sup> 14,400	76	18,400
County Attorney	139	38,400	244	57,900
Copy Center	NA	NA	NA	1,200
Circulation	NA	12,600	NA	23,200
<b>Total</b>		<b>63,000</b>		<b>100,700</b>
<b>EOB</b>				<b>55,200</b>
CSCD	69	22,700	121	28,700
CES Intake	27	<sup>2</sup> 5,200	47	11,200
Copy Center	NA	NA	NA	1,200
Circulation		8,400		12,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>36,300</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>53,400</b>

Note <sup>1</sup>: The existing space for the courthouse assumes that the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> floors are captured for useable office space. These floors are known as the “old jail” space of the Courthouse and are currently used as storage space.

Note <sup>2</sup>: This figure represents space currently leased by Travis County.

Note <sup>3</sup>: The space allocation for the Probate Court includes 3 court sets.

Note <sup>4</sup>: The current square footage shown for the DA includes the space occupied at the CJC and lease space at 205 W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street.

Note <sup>5</sup>: This figure includes FTE and square footage allocations for the Drug Court program that reports to the Criminal Courts.

Note <sup>6</sup>: This allocation figure assumes that the growth in FTE indicated will be accommodated in existing expansion space and through shift operations.

Existing downtown buildings will not accommodate the projected growth in the Courts system. This means that the city block on Guadalupe across from the Courthouse will need to be redeveloped. This site currently houses the University Savings Building (now housing the Sheriff and Tax Assessor-Collector) and the Holt building (now housing the mailroom and print shop). Due to the capitol view corridor restrictions, no more than a five-story building may be constructed above grade at this location, containing approximately 176,000 square feet of space. However, projections show a need for 250,700 square feet by 2020. This means that consideration will need to be given to either building below grade or building on a County-owned parking lot on 10<sup>th</sup> street and Guadalupe, south of the Holt building. Physically connecting the historic courthouse with a new development across the street would allow for a more efficient campus for the court system.

<b>NEW SPACE DOWNTOWN (Developed on the USB/Holt Site)</b>				
<b>Tenant</b>	<b>Current FTE</b>	<b>Current Sq. Ft.</b>	<b>Projected FTE by 2020</b>	<b>Projected Sq. Ft. by 2020</b>
Civil Courts				101,100
IVD Masters Court	Not County Staff	17,600	Not County Staff	22,500
County Clerk	78	18,700	136	35,000
District Clerk (Civil)	50	13,900	88	29,300
Law Library	NA			5,000
Circulation, Public Lobby and Toilets				57,800
<b>Total</b>				<b>250,700</b>

Note <sup>1</sup>: This space is currently leased by Travis County to support the IVD Master Court.

**PLANNING THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT CAMPUS**

The Strategic Plan identifies general government departments that would be located in this new campus. Projections are made of the growth of these departments through 2020. 324,900 square feet of space are projected to be needed, along with sufficient parking to accommodate 980 employees and customer and clients visiting the site. 15 to 20 acres should be large enough to accommodate this development in low to mid-rise buildings with surface parking.

<b>Makeup of General Government Campus</b>				
<b>Tenant</b>	<b>Current FTE</b>	<b>Current Sq. Ft.</b>	<b>Projected FTE by 2020</b>	<b>Projected Sq. Ft. by 2020</b>
Commissioners' Offices	21	5,100	<sup>4</sup> 21	6,500
Commissioners Courtroom & Conf. rm.		2200		3,000
County Treasurer	5	2,300	7	2,300
Records Management	43.5	8,000	63	15,100
Information	54		78	18,700
Telecommunication Services		<sup>1</sup> 14,700		
Purchasing	27	7,000	39	9,300
Auditor	58	<sup>2</sup> 13,000	84	20,100
Planning & Budget	13	2,300	<sup>4</sup> 13	3,100
Executive Manager Admin. Ops.	3	1,500	<sup>4</sup> 3	1,500
Facilities Management	27	<sup>1</sup> 8,200	39	9,300
Human Resource Management	22	8,200	32	7,600
Transportation & Natural Resources	118	<sup>1</sup> 29,000	206	49,100
Justice & Public Safety	23.5	<sup>1</sup> 7,508	36.5	8,700
Health, Human & Veteran's Services	96	38,400	168	40,000
Tax Assessor	105.5	19,300	185	44,000
County Clerk Elections	6	<sup>1</sup> 6,800	10.5	6,800
Records Management Print Shop/ Mail Room	Included in RM numbers above	4,800	Included in RM numbers above	4,800
Circulation, Lobby and Public Toilets		<sup>3</sup> 53,492		75,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>600.5</b>	<b>231,800</b>	<b>980.5</b>	<b>324,900</b>

Note <sup>1</sup>: Represents area in leased space as of the date of this report. ITS leased space is approximately 11,200 sq. ft. TNR leased space is approximately 4,500 sq. ft. EMS,

a part of Justice & Public Safety, is currently in approximately 4,508 sq. ft. of leased space.

Note <sup>2</sup>: Assumes the FY '01 expansion of the Auditor to accommodate GASB 34 staff

Note <sup>3</sup>: Circulation, Lobby and Public toilet areas have been estimated at 30% of the assigned space.

Note <sup>4</sup>: Assumes no growth.

### **Criteria for Locating a General Government Campus**

This document also outlines the following criteria to use as a baseline for identifying potential sites for the proposed General Government Campus.

- Located within a 10-minute drive from the Travis County Courthouse. Drive time should reflect traffic patterns between 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.
- The site should be located at least 5 minutes from the Courthouse in order to avoid the traffic congestion west of I H-35 and east of MOPAC.
- Located along a major transportation corridor. Major transportation corridors are defined as I H-35, MOPAC, HWY 290 East, 183 or HWY 71.
- Located on or very near a Capital Metro route. A bus stop should be located no more than 3 blocks from the site.
- Located on or very near the Greater Austin Area Telecommunications Network (GAATN) route. Information regarding the routing patterns for GAATN can be requested from Information Telecommunication Services.
- Located within an urban watershed
- Located within a City of Austin desired development zone
- No portion of the property should be in a floodplain, floodway critical water zone area or transition critical water zone area.

### **Description of the surrounding area**

- The immediately adjacent properties should be compatible with general office or public (government) use. The following zoning designations are preferred:

GO - General Office

LO - Limited Office

CS - Commercial Services

LR Neighborhood Commercial

NO - Neighborhood Office

IP - Industrial Park

- The surrounding area should be compatible with a general office or public (government) use. The following zoning designations are preferred for the surrounding area:

GO - General Office

LO - Limited Office

CS - Commercial Services

LR Neighborhood Commercial

NO - Neighborhood Office

IP - Industrial Park

LI - Limited Industrial

R&D Research and Development

- The site should accommodate an appropriate buffer area or green space to allow for separation from adjacent properties and/or expansion space beyond the 20-year projections.

### **Configuration of the site**

- The site should be sufficient in size to support at least 325,000 square feet of building space plus parking for at least 1,100 vehicles and landscaping as required by city ordinance.
- The site should accommodate some level of park and ride service for Capital Metro and/or parking for shuttle service to the Downtown Campus. Area for access to the park and ride and shelter for those waiting should be accommodated in the calculation of the land area required.

The following information represents the recommended configuration for the site and the assumptions used. Although some variation to this configuration is expected as detailed planning is developed for a specific site, any sites evaluated should be able to meet the following configuration as a minimum buildout.

#### **Buildings:**

- Three buildings at an average of three stories - area of the building footprint is approximately **108,500 square feet**.

#### **Parking:**

- At this level of planning, the parking is configured as an on-grade lot or lots. This will allow the Commissioners Court greater flexibility as they move into detailed programming and design for the selected site.

- Parking requirements have been calculated at the recommendation of the Director of Facilities Management using a 75% utilization factor for employee spaces. This equates to a 10% reduction of the current utilization of employee parking in the downtown campus.
- The total parking need at the site is estimated at **1,100 spaces** - 750 employee spaces and 350 clients spaces.
- The area required to accommodate the parking is based on a factor of 300 square feet per parking space. This includes both the parking slot for the vehicle and the circulation or drive patterns for the parking lot. The total square footage requirement for parking is estimated as **330,000 square feet**.

**Land Area:**

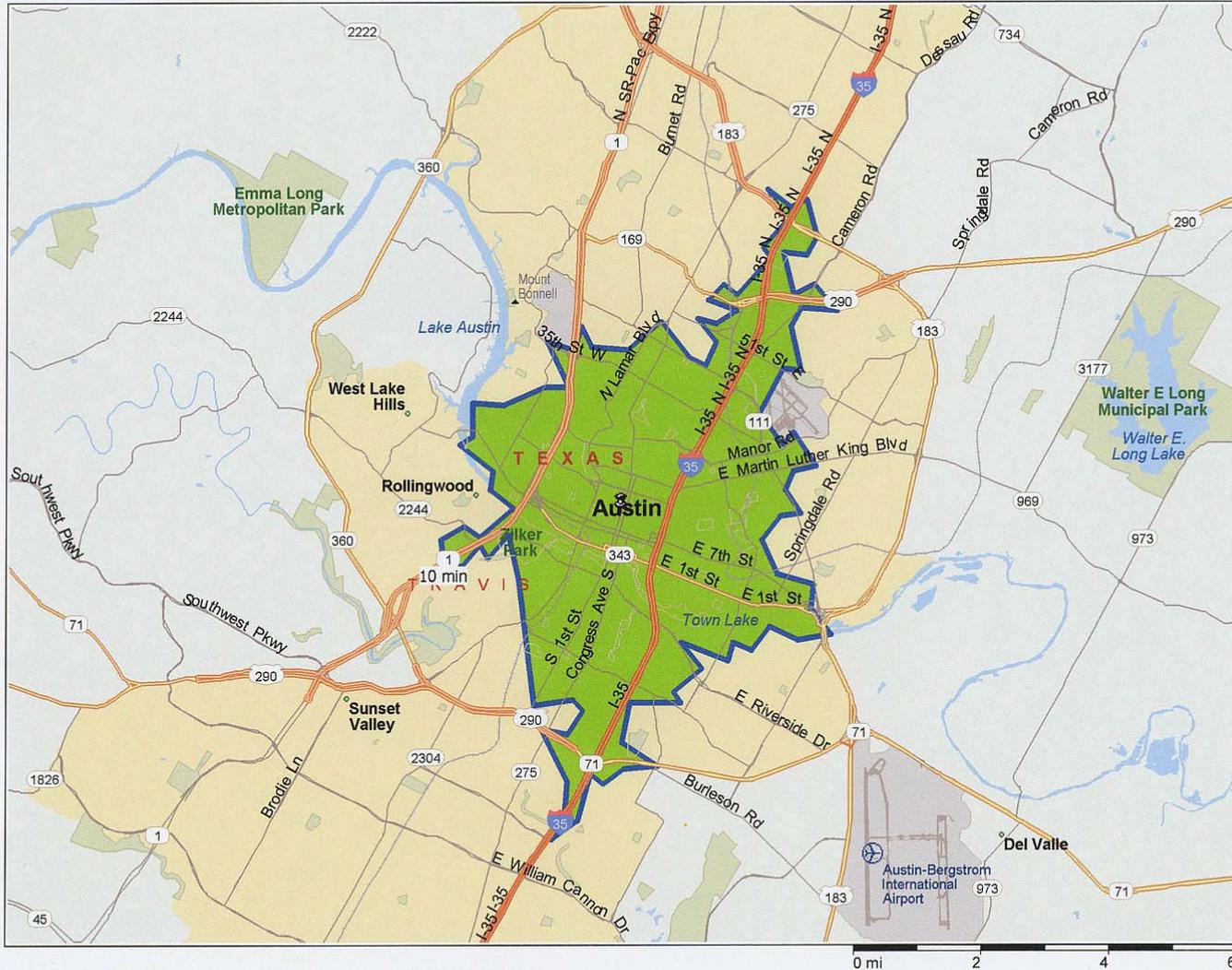
- The land area is calculated at a ratio of 80% impervious cover to 20% open space. This should allow the Commissioners Court to comply with all City of Austin ordinances for water quality and landscaping.
- The total land required to support the building and parking requirements above is **12.6 acres** at a minimum.

**Option to provide parking for jurors and jury impanelment at the General Government Campus:**

- An additional **2.6 acres** would be needed, if the Commissioners Court elected to provide juror parking at the general government campus instead of developing additional parking in the downtown campus.
- The additional land would accommodate approximately 300 more parking spaces. This number of spaces was derived assuming the courts maintain a schedule of rotating jury weeks so that no more than 50% of the courts are in a jury trial during a given week. This figure also assumes that the courts and the District Clerk are successful in achieving an approximately 75% utilization rate for an on-line jury impanelment process.

In keeping with the configuration outlined above, the Commissioners Court should consider 12.6 acres as the minimum site size it will consider. For planning purposes a target range for site selection should be 15 to 20 acres of land to allow future Commissioners Court's flexibility in the configuration and density of development over the 20 year time horizon.

Ten Minute Drive Zone from Travis County Courthouse



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Robert Mueller Airport was vacated in spring, 1999 with the opening of the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. This site may be a good location for a Travis County General Government campus. The City of Austin has undertaken an extensive master planning effort for the reuse of this land. The Commissioners Court has formally expressed their interest in acquiring land at this site in the form of a March 29, 2000 letter from the County Judge to the Mayor. The Mayor has assigned City staff to investigate this opportunity with the County Real Estate Manager. Currently, the discussions are focused on the acquisition of 15 acres in the first development phase as described in the City of Austin Robert Mueller Master Plan. The portion of the old airport targeted as a potential site for a new county campus is in the northwest corner of the airport, near I-35 and 51<sup>st</sup> Street. This is just over 4 miles from the existing downtown campus and is within a 10-minute drive during normal business hours. In the event the Robert Mueller site is unavailable or is deemed undesirable after further investigation, other sites will need to be explored.

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**OTHER AUSTIN NON-CAMPUS FACILITIES**

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The County facility located at 2001 Post Road (near the Gardner-Betts Juvenile Justice Center) is not developed as densely as it could be in the future. Furthermore, the Strategic Plan proposes that administrative units of Health and Human Services now located at the Palm Square site be relocated to the general government campus. This means that two sites for providing emergency assistance services to clients in the proximity of Palm Square and the Post Road facility will not be required.

It is reasonable to expect that Travis County will redevelop the Post Road site sometime beyond the 2020-planning horizon, given the current development in the area. In addition, the county is currently leasing 12,000 square feet of space in this facility to Legal Aid, and this space could be recaptured at a future date for County operated services. Furthermore, the Constable 4 and Justice of the Peace 4 will be moving out of the Post Road site by 2003 since the Commissioners Court has approved the development of a new office building for these two offices along with Community Supervision and Corrections functions. This means that the Post Road site will have space available in it and can be designated primarily as a Health and Human Services facility, which would include Services for the Deaf (since it is so close to the School for the Deaf). However, the building should also continue to house the Juvenile

Public Defender, since it is so close to the Gardner-Betts Juvenile Justice Center.

These space assignments will allow the Palm Square building to be either sold or perhaps traded for land to support a general government campus. Until that occurs, however, the Palm Square site could be used to house the classrooms needed by Counseling and Educational Services. This would allow the County to discontinue using leased or donated classroom space and return the building to its original purposes (it was built in 1930 as a school).

The county's warehouse facilities at 5021 Cesar Chavez and 1600 Smith Road are in need of redevelopment. The site on Cesar Chavez is ideal to meet the needs of Health and Human Services. Redevelopment of this site to include Agricultural Extension offices now located at the Smith Road site will consolidate the two HHS functions and appropriately accommodate the Ag Extension staff (which needs expansion space). Redevelopment of the Cesar Chavez site will allow the vehicle maintenance and sign shop at Smith Road to expand.

The Forensic Center located near Brackenridge Hospital does not offer expansion opportunities once the space in the building is used to its maximum potential. Should additional space be required beyond the time horizon of this Strategic Plan, then the County will have to acquire additional land. Property around the Forensic Center should be targeted for acquisition should it become available in the future.

The Starflight Hangar and facility were purchased with future expansion needs in mind. There are 6.5 acres of County-owned land adjacent to the hangar that has been identified as a potential future home of the Purchasing Office Fixed Asset Management Warehouse, Records Management Records Center, Elections Operations for the County Clerk's Office or other County functions that match the geographic area for service delivery requirements. [Facilities Map](#).

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## SATELLITE AND PRECINCT FACILITIES

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Satellite facilities support Road and Bridge Offices, Rural Community Centers and Health Clinics, and Sheriff's Office Command Centers. The Precinct facilities support the Justice of the Peace and Constable offices in each precinct along with Community Supervision and Corrections field offices. The Strategic

Plan provides an overview of some of the key planning strategies for these various facilities, including:

1. The dedication of the Johnny Morris Road site solely as a Northeast Satellite Road and Bridge Office once the Sheriff's Office moves to a new City of Austin Combined Communications Center. Once the Northeast Satellite facility is dedicated strictly for the needs of the Road and Bridge Office, it should meet the County's needs beyond the 20-year planning horizon of this Strategic Plan.
2. Developing a land use plan for the James T. Collier Center that now supports the community policing functions of the Sheriff's Office for eastern Travis County. Such a land use plan would consider the long term use of this 47 acre site, including moving the Sheriff's Training Academy from the Del Valle Corrections complex, a firing range and a driving course.
3. Consideration of moving the South Rural Community Center and Clinic away from the Del Valle Correctional Complex to another site to be determined.
4. Redevelopment of the Southeast Satellite Road and Bridge Office to move buildings away from the flood plain and reconfiguration of the septic systems at the facility.
5. Acquisition of a Sheriff's West Command Center in close proximity to the Northwest Satellite Road and Bridge Office. This facility will be acquired in FY '02.
6. Consideration of utilizing the 18 acre Southwest Satellite Road and Bridge Office on Hamilton Pool Road as a location for the Precinct Three Justice of the Peace/ Constable Offices.
7. Moving leased facilities for the Northwest, North, and West Community Centers and Health Clinics into owned facilities.
8. Expanding the Precinct One Office Building (housing the JP and Constable of that precinct) and acquiring additional land adjacent to the existing location.
9. Acquiring the Precinct Two Office building (housing the JP and Constable from that precinct), which is currently being leased.
10. The implementation of Customer Service Centers for the Tax Assessor Collector at each of the Satellite and/or Precinct facilities.
11. Consideration of all in-fill development opportunities at the 129-acre Del Valle Correctional Complex, made in conjunction with a land use plan for the 47-acre James T. Collier Center site. [Facilities Map](#).

For a complete copy of the Travis County Capital Facilities Strategic Plan or for questions and comments contact Belinda Powell at 512-854-9506. □