



COMMUNITY PLAN

For

2008-2009

NOVEMBER 2008

Austin County Community Plan

What Is a Community Plan?

This plan is known as the Austin County Criminal Justice Community Plan, the purpose of which is to identify gaps in services regarding criminal justice issues. The Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office (CJD) requires that each county in Texas have a Criminal Justice Community Plan.

The document that is represented here reflects the efforts of many in Austin County that are concerned with assuring that any gaps in services that are identified are closed in a way that will both solve the problem and provide as great a benefit to the community as possible. It is with grateful acknowledgement that the names of those involved in the process of developing this plan are listed in the following page(s) under Part II (Community Planning Group).

This document will continue to be a work in progress. New criminal justice goals are identified, the Planning Group changes as a result of individual and agency circumstances, and requirements concerning the makeup of the Plan are subject to change from year to year. Thus, Austin County is interested in keeping up with these changes, and including such in updates that will be posted from time to time.

You are invited to join in this ongoing effort if you have not been involved in its development. Any questions you may have can be addressed to either Melissa Weiss, Community Plan Coordinator for Austin County, or to the Criminal Justice Program of the Houston-Galveston Area Council. Contact information is provided within this document.

The Austin County Commissioners Court supports the concept of community planning by providing staff support and resources for development and implementation of the Austin County Community Plan. Additionally, the Commissioners Court supports grant applications from county departments as well as community organizations that address gaps in services identified in the Community Plan.

Areas Represented

Incorporated Communities:

Bellville	Sealy	Wallis	Industry
San Felipe	Brazos Country		

Unincorporated Communities:

Cat Spring	New Ulm	Kenney	Bleiberville
Nelsonville	Frydek	Burleigh	Raccoon Bend
Shelby	Cochran	Millheim	Buckhorn
Peters	New Wehdem	Welcome	Oak Hill

School Districts:

Bellville ISD	Sealy ISD
Brazos ISD	

Brief description and history of Austin County:

Austin County is located in East Central Texas. The County's estimated population is 25,800. Bellville is the county seat and other municipalities included are Sealy, Wallis, Brazos Country, Industry and San Felipe. Total area in square miles is 663. Austin County is rural in nature but is networked by two main thoroughfares, those being Interstate 10 and State Highway 36.

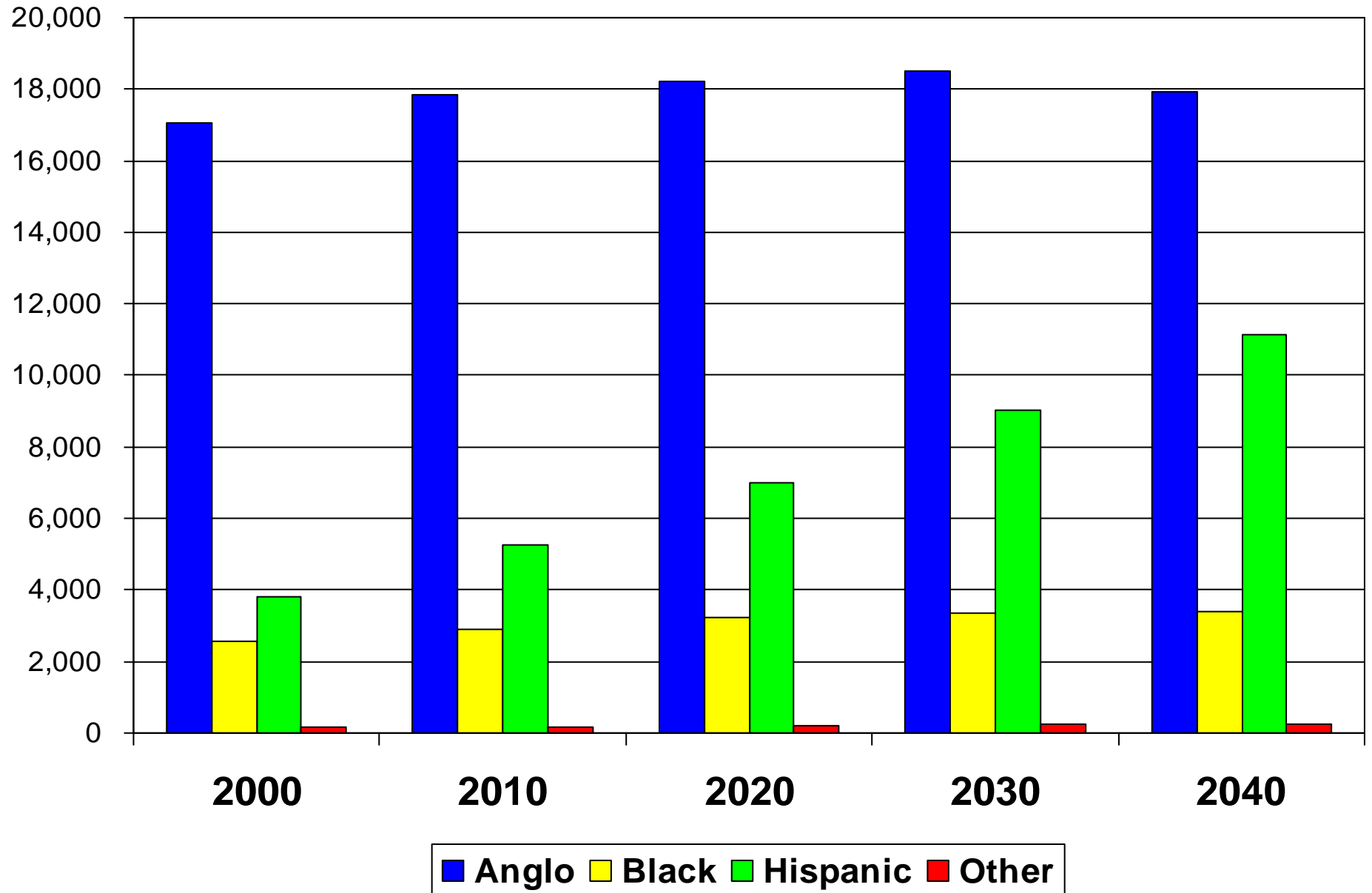
The manufacturing, trade, service, and local government sectors fuel the county's employment. Primary employers located in Austin County are Wal-Mart Distribution Center, Wal-Mart Super Center, BAE Systems plc, Acme Brick Co., Western International Gas, Weyerhaeuser Co., U.S. Steel - Bellville, Tesco Industries Inc., Systems Painters Inc., and the school districts of Bellville, Sealy and Brazos.

Countywide, the population continues to increase proportionately. The race/ethnicity of Austin County's population is changing with a significant increase in the Hispanic population (see attached).

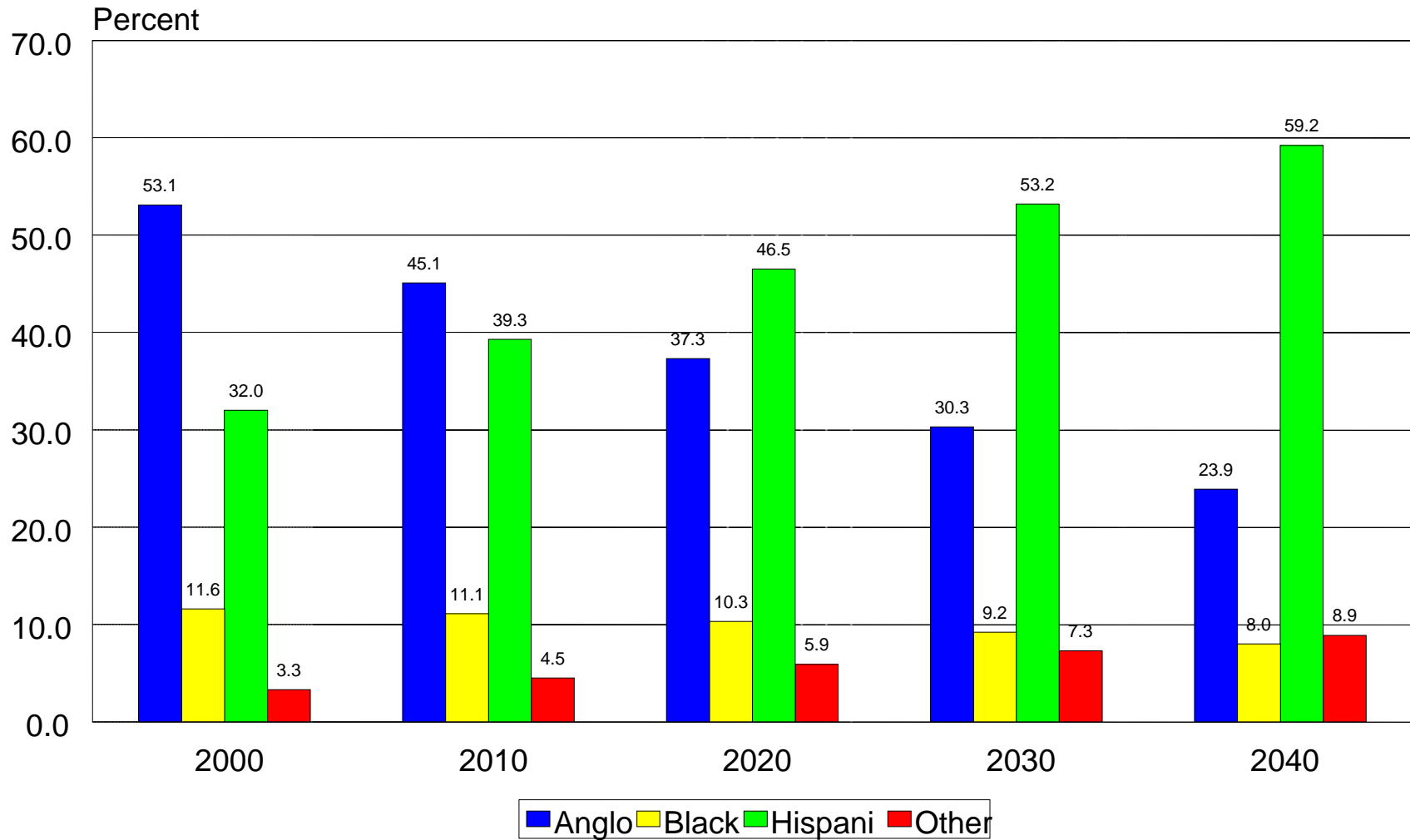
Austin County is the home of Stephen F. Austin State Park and is named for Stephen Fuller Austin, also known as the “Father of Texas”. Austin County was selected by Stephen F. Austin in 1823 as the central site for his colony, the first Anglo-American settlement in Texas and is one of the oldest counties in Texas, organized in 1837 during the Republic of Texas. San Felipe was the County Seat of Austin County until 1848 when it was moved to Bellville. The first Capital of Texas was located in Austin County in the town of San Felipe and was the site for the first postal system. The first organized police force, which became the Texas Rangers, had its beginnings in San Felipe’s committees of public safety for protection against Indians.

In 2005, the Texas Legislature designated San Felipe, Austin County as the Colonial Capitol of Texas. There is continued research and effort to revitalize the Texas historical roots of San Felipe, Austin County, Texas.

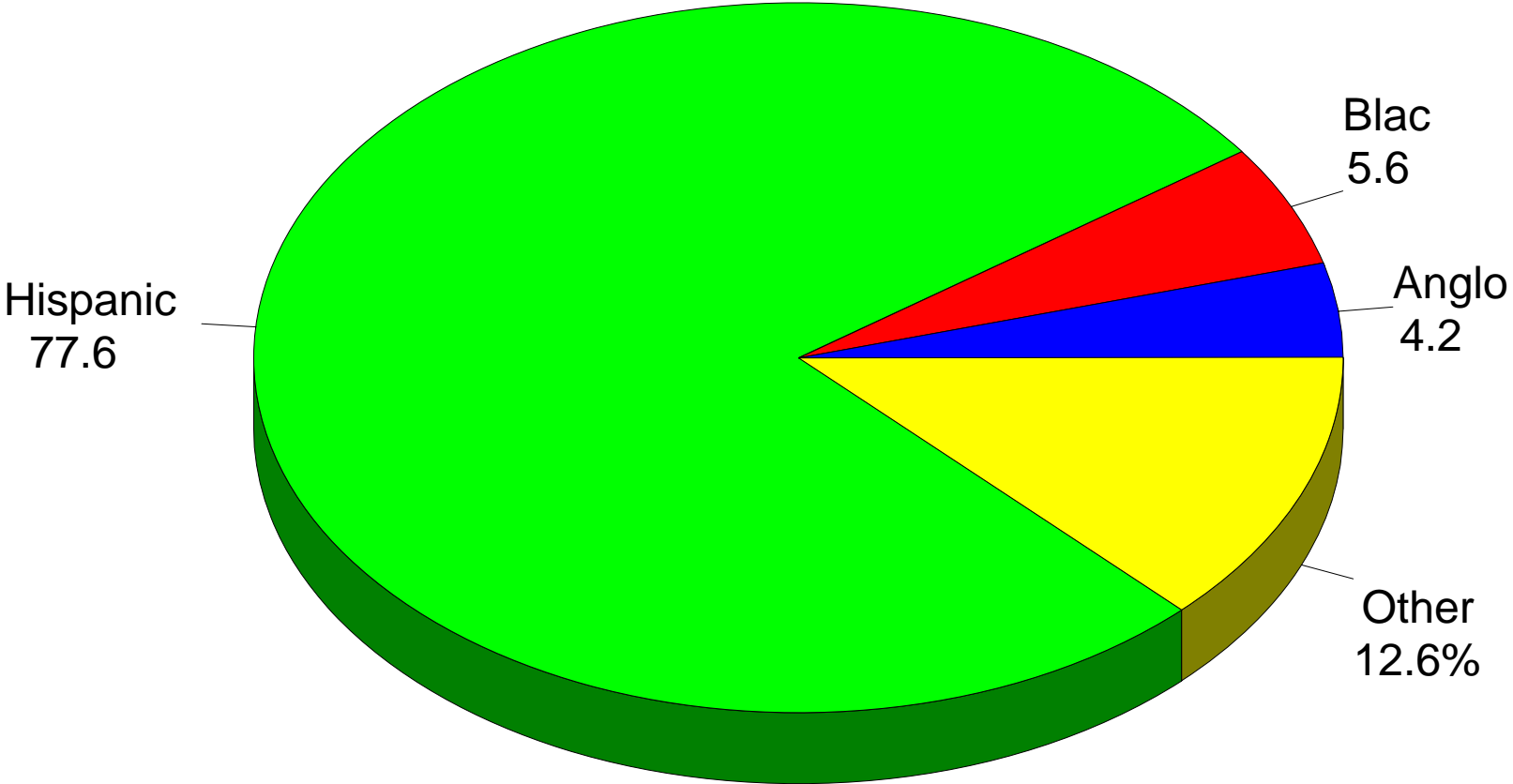
Population Change Austin County 2000-2040



Texas Projected Population Race/Ethnicity 2000-2040



Projected Change in Ethnicity 2000-2040



Community Planning Group

Community Plan Coordinator for Austin County: **Melissa Weiss / Chief / Austin County Juvenile Probation.**

COMPOSITION (Some members may serve in multiple capacities/categories.)

Criminal Justice:

Melissa Weiss Austin County Juvenile Probation

Non-Profit Organizations:

David LaVassaur	Boys & Girls Club, Bellville
Daniel Peevy	Youth & Family Services
Carmen Plata, Shelter Director	Focusing Families
Vastene Olier	Colorado Valley Transit
Jan Allen	Lone Star Legal Aid
J.D. Young	Faith Mission

Law Enforcement:

Chief Deputy Richard Holloman	Austin County Sheriff's Department
Lieutenant Al Cordeiro	Austin County Sheriff's Department
Deputy Barbara Reinhardt	Austin County Sheriff's Department
Chief John Tollett	Sealy Police Department
Captain Roger "Snuffy" Garrett	Sealy Police Department
Chief Raul Martinez	Sealy ISD Police Department
Lt. Jason Smalley	Bellville Police Department
Chief Carl Cearly	Wallis Police Department

Education:

John Conley, Superintendent	Bellville ISD
Ross Aschenbeck, Operations	Bellville ISD
Jack Ellis, Superintendent	Brazos ISD
Pam Morris, Superintendent	Sealy ISD
Linda Reichle, Asst. Superintend.	Sealy ISD
Rhonda Mieth, Special Education	Sealy ISD

State Agencies:

Donna Smith	Adult Protective Service
Rachel Bentke	Texana Center

County Government:

Carolyn Bilski	County Judge
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Identification of Community Problems

General Public Safety Needs and Issues

Significant problems identified continue to be experienced by youth, adults and families in the areas of substance abuse, domestic violence and mental illness. Child abuse and neglect figures continue in increasing numbers and the problem is compounded by the decrease in number of foster care homes. There is a continued need for local victim assistance programs and after-school and summer programs and activities for youth. For 2008, the Victim’s Liaison Officer will be partially funded by grant funds. Transportation continues to be an issue faced by the agencies involved. Lack of transportation impedes those in need of services. However, Colorado Valley Transit has begun a regular route for public transportation needs and should be of tremendous assistance to the community.

Limited resources and lack of funds experienced at the local level demonstrate the need to increase funding and for the continued emphasis in providing solutions for all of the problems identified for effective change to occur.

In each of the areas below, problems are identified that support the existence and severity of the problems as they are found in Austin County. Many needs have been given consideration with solutions presented. Following is a discussion of the problems and the needs to be addressed.

Juvenile Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Lack of sufficient Drug and Alcohol Prevention, Intervention, and Counseling Services	# of juveniles in need of substance abuse services: 18 # of adolescents referred to Youth and Family Service for substance abuse services in Austin County: 20
The Austin County Juvenile Probation Department will be working with families, school districts, non-profit service providers, and local law enforcement to mitigate substance abuse treatment.	

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Lack of adolescent counseling services for non-substance abuse issues.	# of adolescent referrals to Youth and Family Service in Austin County for counseling services: 174
Adolescent counseling services will be provided with referrals from families, school districts, and law enforcement agencies, including juvenile probation.	

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Need for juvenile detention/holding facilities for juvenile offenders;	# of juveniles referred to Austin County Juvenile Probation: 161 # of juveniles referred to Austin County Juvenile Probation for Misdemeanors: 72 # of juveniles referred to Austin County Juvenile Probation for Felony Offenses: 13 # of juveniles adjudicated to Probation: 19
Austin County Juvenile Probation will coordinate services to provide transportation to out-of-county detention because of the lack of “in-county” facilities.	

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Lack of emergency shelters	# of juveniles placed on Deferred Prosecution: 37 # of juveniles referred to Austin County Juvenile Probation for CINS behavior: 76
Austin County will seek emergency shelter services for adolescents and/or their families.	

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Need for aftercare services for juveniles released from residential placement	# of juveniles placed in residential placements for treatment services: 10
Juvenile Probation will coordinate with licensed professional counselors and non-profit agencies to provide services for juveniles returning home in Austin County.	

Community Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Expansion for community-wide transportation services	# of trips providing community transportation services in Austin County: 7,268
Austin County will seek to expand area-wide transportation services for its citizens.	

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Lack of sufficient Drug and Alcohol treatment programs for Adults	# of adults referred to Youth and Family Service in Austin County: 52
Austin County will continue to coordinate with Youth and Family Service.	

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Lack of adequate counseling services for families	# of families referred to Focusing Families in the Austin County area: 27
Coordination for family counseling services will continue in Austin County with non-profit agencies.	

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Need for organized after school, evening, and summer programs for youth	# of youth participated in Boys and Girls Club, Bellville: 391
Austin County will continue to provide and seek to expand organized community-wide activities for its youth. The City of Sealy is currently working with the YMCA for a youth program.	

Victim Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Need for a Victim's Assistance Coordinator for Victims of Domestic Violence in Austin County	# of Victims referred to Austin County Sheriff's Department 2
Austin County Sheriff's Department has employed a victims' liaison officer/coordinator.	

School Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Need for additional I.S.D./School Resource Officers for Sealy ISD	# of student infractions requiring officer involvement in Sealy I.S.D.: 349 # of contacts made to parents and students regarding Truancy Tickets and Court action citations in Sealy I.S.D.: 258
Truancy, behavioral infractions in addition to criminal offenses will continue to be targeted by Sealy I.S.D. Police Officers including illegal gang activity.	

Law Enforcement Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Transportation of mental health clients, juvenile detainees, and adult prisoners to appropriate facilities	3+ manpower hours by law enforcement agencies are usually involved in screening and transportation of mental health clients; Juveniles and adults' appearances for court hearings; appointments, and facility transports are required.
Transportation needs to be provided by law enforcement personnel when in custody transports are required and a transport officer would adequately meet the need.	

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Need for affordable Regional Law Enforcement Training	Austin County law enforcement personnel includes members of the sheriff's dept., including jailers and communications; 4 police depts.; one I.S.D. dept., and 4 constables
Regional law enforcement training will enable local law enforcement personnel to attain mandatory hours accredited by TCLEOSE.	

Mental Health Issues (listed in order of priority, greatest need first)

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Lack of mental health services for the adult mentally ill and mentally challenged with disabilities in Austin County	# of adults referred to Texana in Austin County: 72
Austin County will strive to coordinate with Texana for local mental health services.	

<i>Identified Problem</i>	<i>Data Collection</i>
Need for augmented mental health services for youth mental illnesses and/or mentally challenged with a disability in Austin County.	# of adolescents referred to Texana in Austin County: 30

Resources Available

Included below are resources identified by the Austin County Community Planning Group that are available to provide services as it relates to the issues noted.

Criminal Justice:

Austin County Juvenile Probation

Austin County Community Supervision and Corrections Department

Austin County Criminal District Attorney

Austin County Justice of the Peace Courts

Juvenile Courts

County and District Courts

Municipal Courts

Law Enforcement:

Austin County Sheriff's Department

Bellville Police Department

Sealy Police Department

Wallis Police Department

San Felipe Police Department

Sealy I.S.D. Police Department

Social / Mental / Health State Agencies:

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (CPS)

Texas Health and Human Services (DHS)

Texana Center

Texas Department of State Health Services

Prevention / Intervention/Assistance:

Youth and Family Services

Boys and Girls Club, Bellville

RAP (Raising Academic Performance)

Community Resource Coordination Group (CRCG)

United Way

Family Ties

Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)

Austin County Outreach

Combined Community Assistance

YMCA, Sealy

Lone Star Legal Aid

The Work Source

Faith Mission, Brenham

Meals on Wheels

Protective Day Care Centers

Texas Agricultural Extension Agency

Family Service Center

Focusing Families

Salvation Army

Youth Advisory Commission (YAC)

Local Agencies/Entities:

Bellville I.S.D.

Sealy I.S.D.

Brazos I.S.D.

Ministerial Alliance

Bellville General Hospital

County Governments

Municipal Governments

Churches

Businesses/Industry

The East Side Foundation

Others:

Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC)

Long-Range Plan Development, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Austin County Community Planning Group works in conjunction with other planning groups in the county to ensure a regular exchange of ideas. Individuals active in the planning process generally serve on many of these committees and share mutual concerns and ideas.

The Austin County Community Planning Group strives to meet periodically to review the plan and make necessary additions and deletions. At least one formal meeting of the entire group is held each fall, but agency and community representatives typically submit suggestions and changes via telephone and e-mail throughout the year to the Community Planning Coordinator.

Drafts and annual updates of the Community Plan are circulated by e-mail with requests for comments, changes, etc. Wherever possible, e-mail is used to reduce the need for meetings, printing, postage, and etc.

It is the intent of the Community Planning Group to improve outcomes for Austin County families struggling with problems described in the plan's focus areas. Efforts are being made by many Austin County agencies and organizations to address problems with local funds as well as grant funds from multiple state and federal sources. To the extent that these funds are available, the Community Planning Group will continue to urge agencies to provide programming that addresses the outlined focus areas.

Contact Information

Austin County Community Planning Coordinator

Melissa Weiss, One East Main, Bellville, 979-865-5911, weiss@austincounty.com

Austin County Community Planning Liaison from Houston-Galveston Area Council

Jim Mahood, 3555 Timmons, Houston, 832-681-2511, james.mahood@h-gac.com

This Plan is available on-line at www.austincounty.com