



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Austin Travis County Food Policy Board

Recommendation Number: 20230710-13 Supporting Food Access in Travis County

WHEREAS,

The current population of Travis County is 1.3 million people, of whom over 11% live below the poverty line with a rate of 15% for children. [Families in poverty](#) are becoming concentrated near the I-35 corridor and in Eastern Travis County, where poverty rates are higher.

WHEREAS,

[Food insecurity in Travis County](#) affects 14.4% of the total population, including 15.2% of children and one in three college students. Food insecurity means they cannot ensure access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members. Of those who are food insecure, 52% are above the SNAP threshold of 165% of the federal poverty level and 48% are below the SNAP threshold of 165% of the federal poverty level.

WHEREAS,

The cost of living has increased 28% between January 2015 and January 2023, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Inflation Calculator (CPI). The high cost of living in Austin and Travis County has a direct impact on food access. As an example, some families must choose between basic needs (e.g. housing vs. food).

WHEREAS,

The [annual food budget shortfall](#) for Travis County is \$102,168,000 which represents the total additional dollar amount that food insecure individuals would need to purchase just enough food to meet their food security needs.

WHEREAS,

The FY24 Access to Basic Supports food access and hunger prevention budget request is within the range of funding identified during prior Travis County processes and that [the programmatic strategies](#) identified at that time are still relevant.

WHEREAS,

The Travis County Commissioners Court annually invests in social service programs, which encompass access to basic supports (i.e., food, transportation, and legal rights and benefits) to protect vulnerable populations, promote healthy living, and invest in social and economic well-being.

WHEREAS,

The Travis County Commissioners Court is committed to affordability, accessibility, early intervention with respect to family support services, domestic violence, behavioral healthcare, housing stability, early childhood programming, and HIV services – all of which serves individuals and families who may live in poverty and be food insecure.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board recommends that Travis County,

Invest in increasing funding for Access to Basic Supports, including funding to increase food access and to provide food access to prevent hunger and promote wellness, as well as to provide access to public benefits for eligible populations to support basic needs. In FY24, fund this investment by augmenting the current food access funding levels of \$588,521 by an additional \$1 million to total \$1,588,521.

Sources:

2020 Travis County Census Data, U.S. Census Bureau, <https://data.census.gov/all?q=travis+county+texas>

2022 Central Health Demographic Data, Central Health, https://www.centralhealth.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2022_Demographic_Report.pdf

2021 Food Insecurity in Travis County, Texas, Feeding America, <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2021/overall/texas/county/travis>

FY 2022 Community Impact Report Investment and Performance Summary, Travis County Health and Human Services, Research & Planning Division, https://www.traviscountytx.gov/images/health_human_services/Docs/cir-2022/FY22_Community_Impact_Report.pdf

Date of Approval: July 10th 2023

Record of the vote: 7 in favor, none opposed, 0 abstained

For: Lisa Barden, Joi Chevalier, Kacey Hanson, Karen Magid, Andrea Abel, Frances Deviney, Cecilia Hogan,

Abstentions: None

Off Dais: None

Absences: Mark Bethell, Sari Vatske, Adrian Lipscombe, Larry Franklin, Rosamaria Murrillo

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edwin Martinez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

City of Austin, Office of Sustainability, Food Policy Manager/ ATCFPB Staff Liaison