



## Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

**Meeting Date:** 12/04/2012, 9:00AM, Voting Session

**Prepared By/Phone Number:** Criminal Court Management, Criminal Justice and Public Safety, Planning and Budget Office

**Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head:** District Judge Julie Kocurek; Roger Jefferies, County Executive for Criminal Justice Planning; Leslie Browder, County Executive Planning and Budget

**Commissioners Court Sponsor:** Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

### AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Consider and take appropriate action on request from Travis County District and County Judges to support the creation of two additional criminal courts in the upcoming 83<sup>rd</sup> legislative session, including:

- A. A report on projected need for additional criminal courts
- B. A report on the fiscal impact of additional criminal courts

### BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

The Criminal Courts District and County Court at Law Judges request the support of the Commissioners Court for the creation of two new general jurisdiction courts in the upcoming legislative session. At the Commissioners Court meeting on October 23, 2012, several questions arose related to this request, and the Judges plan to respond to those questions, which focused in two areas:

1. The projected 10-year forecast for the addition of new courts
2. The fiscal impact of two additional criminal courts, and the specifically with regards to the potential of revenue caps

Roger Jefferies, County Executive over Justice and Public Safety, will present the department's 10-year forecast for the addition of new courts. Leslie Browder, Planning and Budget County Executive, and Leroy Nellis, Budget Director in transition, will address the fiscal impact of adding new courts. Deece Eckstein, Intergovernmental Relations Coordinator, will discuss the outlook for the upcoming legislative session, including the issue of potential caps on local property tax revenue. Presiding Judge Julie Kocurek will be available to answer any questions concerning the justification for new courts, as well as address the willingness of the Criminal Court Judges to delay implementation of the new courts based on funding or space issues should any significant concerns materialize as planning for the new courts progresses.

Included in the back up to this agenda item is a letter signed by all of the Criminal Court Judges indicating their support of an implementation delay, should that become an issue in the future. Also included is a report on the projected need for additional

criminal courts over the next ten years prepared by Criminal Justice and Public Safety planning staff, and a memorandum from the Planning and Budget Office that summarizes the results of their fiscal and funding analysis. The Judges and staff will be prepared to present a Powerpoint presentation at the meeting on December 4, 2012, which will summarize the results of the back-up materials posted with this agenda item.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

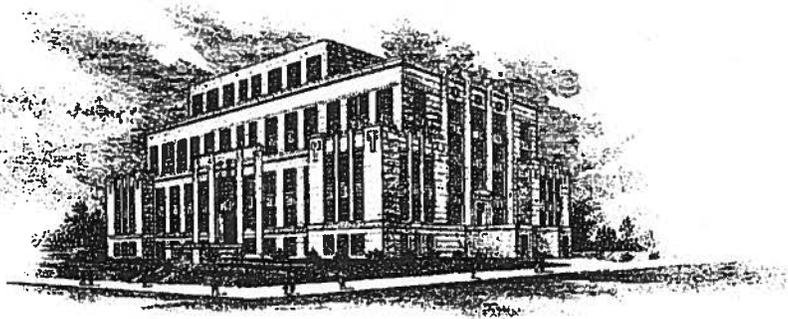
Authorize the Intergovernmental Affairs Coordinator to reflect the support of the Commissioners Court in the County's legislative plan for the upcoming session that would include seeking authority for the creation of two additional criminal courts in 2015.

**FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

See attached fiscal and funding analysis.

**REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:**

Planning and Budget Office  
County Judge's Office



November 8, 2012

To: County Judge Sam Biscoe  
Ron Davis, Commissioner Precinct 1  
Sarah Eckhardt, Commissioner Precinct 2  
Karen Huber, Commissioner Precinct 3  
Margaret Gomez, Precinct 4

RE: Criminal Court Judges' Request for Travis County's Legislative Support for New Courts-Agenda Item November 20, 2012

Dear Judge and Commissioners,

On October 11, 2012, the Criminal Court Judges discussed with you our need for new courts in the near future based on caseload and population projections. We appreciate your willingness to hear our proposal for two new general jurisdiction courts effective January 2015.

Following the work session, on October 23, 2012, we requested that the Court add the creation of two new criminal courts to the upcoming legislative agenda (Item #29). During the discussion, several matters were

raised that we would like to address. Two issues appeared to be of concern:

First, whether there will be space available in the Criminal Justice Center for the two new courts in 2015.

Second, whether Travis County will have the funds available to fund these.

The Judges discussed this at length. While we believe new courts are necessary for the effective administration of justice in Travis County and in an ideal situation be operational by January 2015, *the Judges unanimously agree and understand that the implementation of these two new courts are completely dependent on available space AND upon your decision to approve funding. We understand that both of these conditions must be fulfilled before these courts can be operational. As a reminder, the last two courts that were created in Travis County were not implemented immediately after their legislative creation date for various reasons; at least one of which included space constraints.*

The reasons that we came forward at this time were to allow sufficient time for adequate space planning and to ensure the Court was educated as to the costs involved. We are fully committed to working with the Commissioners Court and all other critical departments during the planning and implementation phases of these new courts.

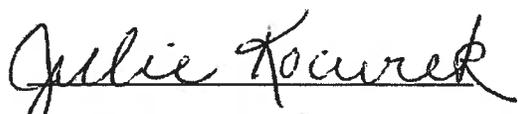
Concerning the other questions raised on October 23, the County Auditor and the Planning and Budget Offices are planning to discuss potential revenue caps and a county-wide 5-year projection during a follow-up voting session on November 20, 2012. Also on that date,

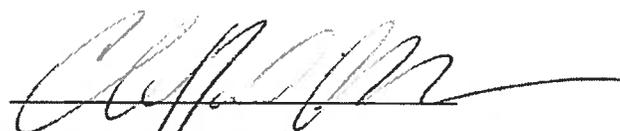
Criminal Justice Planning and the Judges will provide information on a 10-year projection plan for the Criminal Courts.

Finally, since the courts and the services they provide are a constitutionally mandated function, we feel strongly that we must inform you that we believe these new courts are necessary to ensure that justice is administered fairly and timely in Travis County. We look forward to meeting with you again on November 20, 2012.

Thank you for your consideration and attention regarding this important matter.

Respectfully Submitted on this 8<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2012

  
Julie Kocurek, Presiding Judge  
Judge, 390<sup>th</sup> District Court

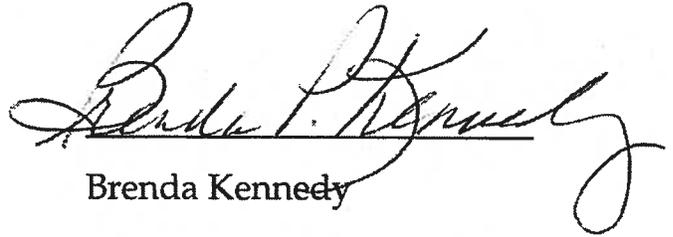
  
Clifford Brown  
Judge, 147<sup>th</sup> District Court

  
Mike Lynch  
Judge, 167<sup>th</sup> District Court

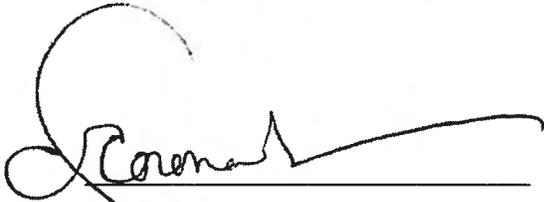
  
Karen Sage  
Judge, 299<sup>th</sup> District Court



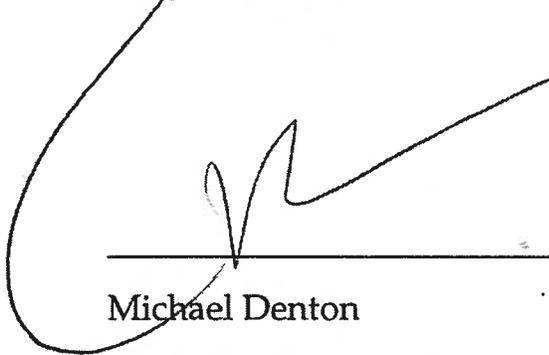
David Crain  
Judge, 331<sup>st</sup> District Court



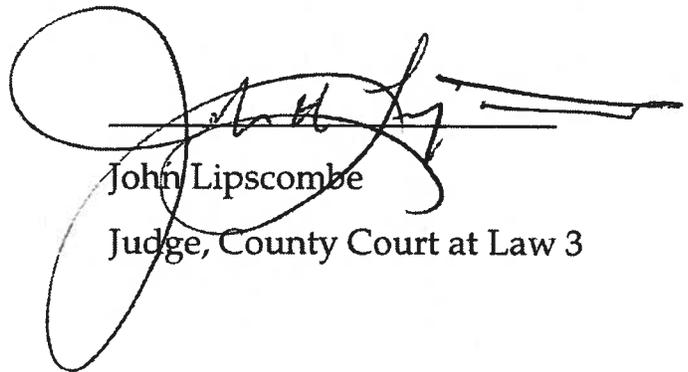
Brenda Kennedy  
Judge, 403<sup>rd</sup> District Court



Jim Coronado  
Judge, 427<sup>th</sup> District Court



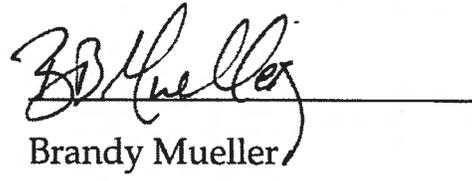
Michael Denton  
Local Administrative Judge  
Judge, County Court at Law 4



John Lipscombe  
Judge, County Court at Law 3



Nancy Hohengarten  
Judge, County Court at Law 5



Brandy Mueller  
Judge, County Court at Law 6



Elisabeth Earle

Judge, County Court at Law 7



Carlos Barrera

Judge, County Court at Law 8

# Analysis and Findings - Travis County Criminal Courts

10-Year Plan for Adding both District and Criminal Courts

**Travis County Justice and Public Safety**

Roger Jefferies, County Executive

PO Box 1748 Austin, Texas 78767

(512)854-4415

11/29/2012

**Analysis and Report:**

Tonya Mills, Planning Manager

## Overview

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In October 2012, Justice and Public Safety produced a report which compiled data from the Office of Court Administration reports to demonstrate Travis County's experience with respect to the County Courts at Law filings. This was done so that a predictive model could be established for County Court at Law filings in order to determine future court volumes.

Data from the report, *Travis County Criminal Courts Statistics – Historical Perspective and Total Filing Projections through 2026* was used in the analysis and findings of this report.

The Office of Court Administration (OCA) conducted a time study for jurisdictions within Texas to determine the total number of judicial hours available for hearing cases and then to establish weighted case measures to account for the time required to handle felony cases. These time measures were then applied to the cases filed in FY2011 to determine the number of district courts needed to adequately address case volume.

The OCA methodology demonstrates current needs but does not address future needs or the continuation of court deficits in coming years. This report highlighted analysis which blends the weighted case study conducted by the OCA with the population centered projection model reported by JPS in 2012.

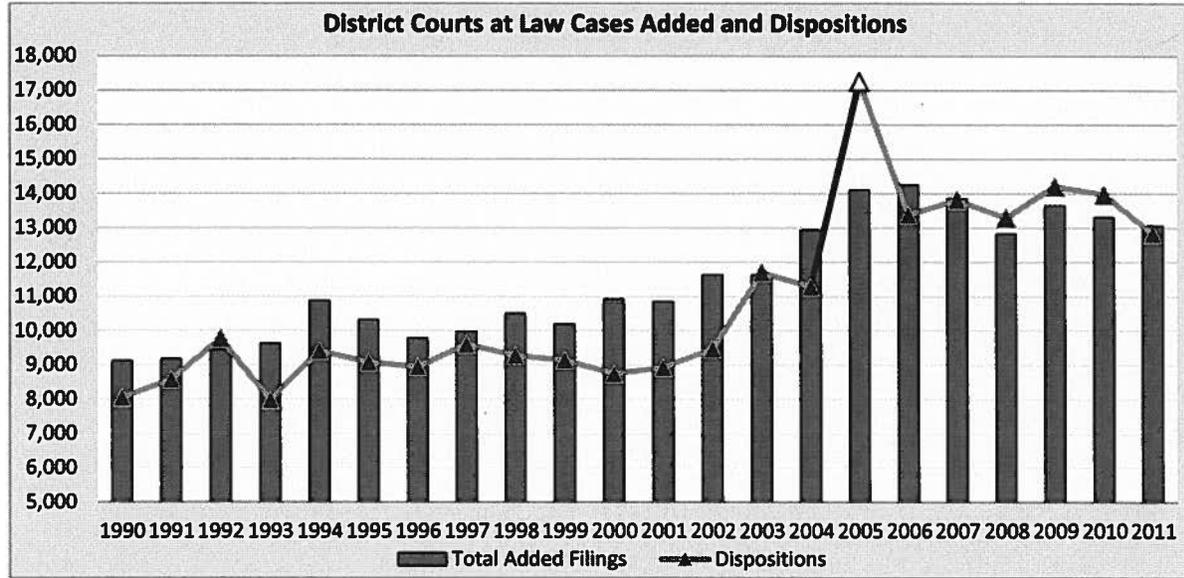
Additionally, this report looks at the impact of court efficiencies on the Travis County Average Daily Jail Population (ADP).

## Two Decades of District and County Courts at Law Growth

Between 1990 and 2011 the number of cases added to the District Courts at Law has grown by 34% to 13,057. During this same time, the dispositions have grown at a slightly higher rate of 51% to 12,832.

Chart 1 below demonstrates this growth annually.

Chart 1 - District Courts Cases Added and Dispositions



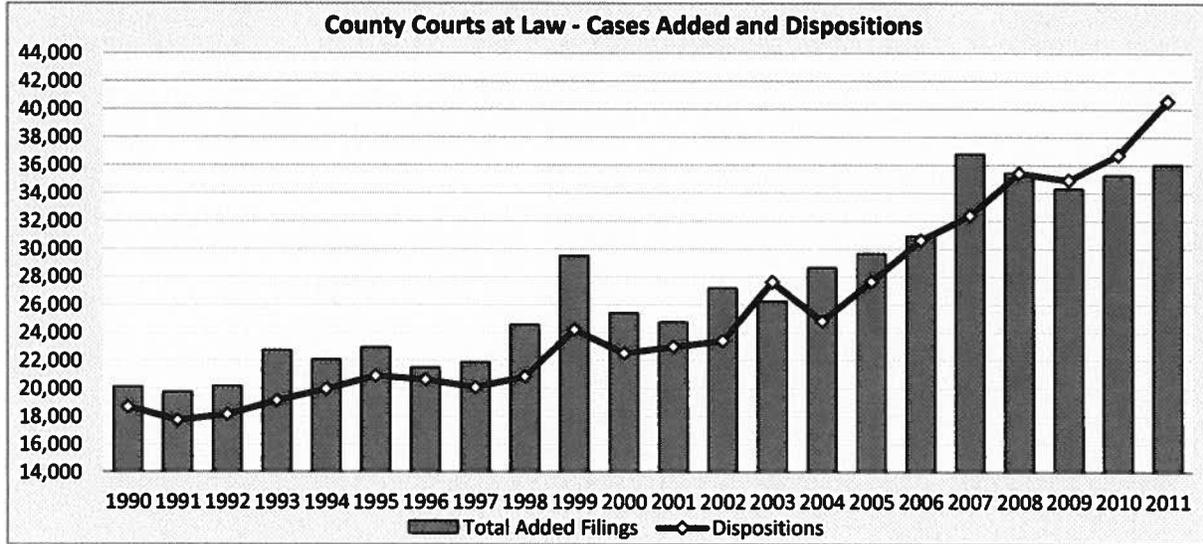
\*The 2005 disposition data is unreliable. During this time there were issues with FACTS and duplicate dispositions. It was addressed in 2005 and does not impact dispositions in other years.

Court efficiencies are considered to be capitalized on when the net change of dispositions over cases filed each year is a positive number, as seen between 2008 and 2010.

County Courts at Law have also experience considerable growth over the last two decade. Between 1990 and 2011 the number of cases added to the County Courts at Law has grown by 59% to 35,997. During this same time, the dispositions have grown at a much higher rate of 94% to 40,561.

Chart 2 below demonstrates this growth annually.

Chart 2 - County Courts Cases Added and Dispositions



Since 2005, County Courts have experienced cases filings at all-time highs and since 2008 the number of cases disposed has exceed the number of cases added. Maintaining this high clearance rate has helped to decrease and stabilize the jail population.

The next section covers in greater detail the impact that both the District and County Courts at Law have had on the ADP, chart 3 on page 4 illustrates this impact.

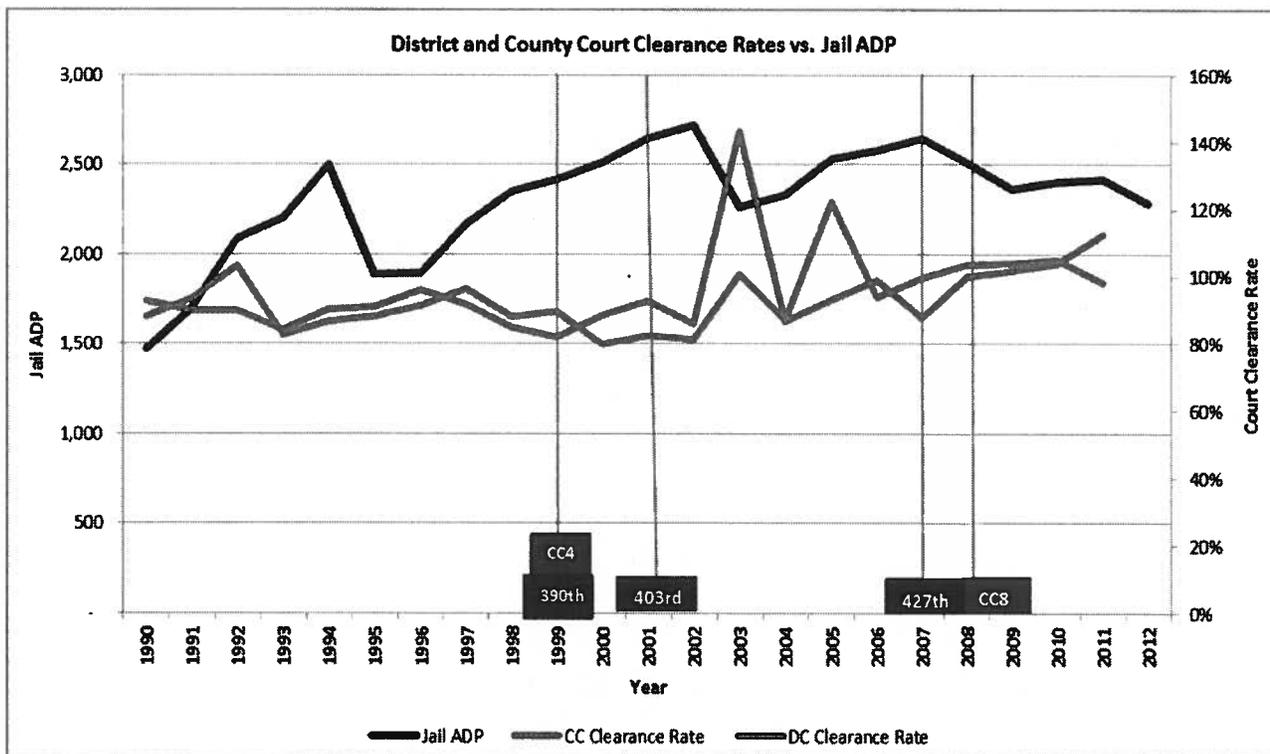
## Court Efficiencies and the ADP

The Travis County Jail population has been uncharacteristically stable across the last five years. Those planning for and/or evaluating initiatives designed to have an impact on the ADP have noted “Travis County is doing something right.” Some programs have been able to quantify small measurable impacts, but no single program can hang their hat on the 16% (-432) reduction in the average daily jail population 2002 and 2012. It has been the belief of Justice and Public Safety that changes within the courts have had a significant impact of the reduction and stabilization of the jail population.

There have been some changes within the courts which were believed to have an impact. These efficiencies include:

- A decrease in the time to first setting for all misdemeanor cases, including jail reduction docket
- A decrease in the number of days to case resolution for the expedited felony “magistrates docket”, and
- The addition of new district and county courts at law

The chart below demonstrates the jail ADP, along with the annual net difference between the number of cases disposed and the number of cases added each year for both District and County Courts at Law. Circled are the years in which efficient court operations, demonstrated by an increase in the rate of dispositions, had a positive impact on the jail population (reductions or sustained stability).



During the first significant reduction and stabilization period, the increased disposition rate of both District and County Courts between 1994 and 1996 helped to reduce and then stabilize the jail ADP. Following from 1997 through 2002, as the gap between cases filed and cases disposed grew so did the ADP. In 2003, coming off of the highest ADP year on record, combined initiatives and multiple additional dockets created a substantial increase in dispositions over cases filed which contributed to a

large drop in the ADP. This continued until 2007 when the 427<sup>th</sup> District Court was added and in 2008 when County Court 8 was added. In addition to these new courts overall filings remained stable, allowing distribution of workload and increases in the number of dispositions from year to year, but also in the clearance rates.

Since 2007, following the addition of the two new courts, the district courts have disposed of 1,425 more cases than were added through new filings and the county courts have had a net of 2,205 disposed cases vs. new filings creating a clearance rate near or above 100%. During the same time frame, the jail population has dropped by an average of 230 inmates daily. In 2002, when the ADP was at its peak of 2,720, both the district and county courts had a clearance rate of less than 90% (81% and 86% respectively). The jail population is down by 432 people since 2002 peak.

JPS has concluded, based on analysis and findings to date, that adding courts to both the district and county systems as demands on those systems grow will help to manage the jail population. The following section consider projected volumes in both district and county courts and the intervals at which courts might be added over the next ten years in order to meet systemic growth demands.

## Travis County Criminal Courts – Filing Projections and Additional Courts

As discussed earlier, projections of case filings were done to establish the volume of future case volumes in both the Criminal District and County Courts at Law. This section will outline projections and suggested intervals for the addition of courts at each level in order to achieve sustained reductions and stability in the average daily jail population.

### District Criminal Courts

Table 1 below looks at population centered case filing projections over the next twelve years. The baseline year is 2011, when the OCA conducted a weighted caseload study to determine the number of district courts needed. The recommended level of District Criminal Courts was 13, currently Travis County has eight. This leaves a need or deficit of five district courts as of 2011.

The methodology used for projecting future case filings for district courts was the same used in the county court filing projections outlined in the report, *Travis County Criminal Courts Statistics – Historical Perspective and Total Filing Projections through 2026*. There is also a strong correlation between the overall Travis County population and new district courts case filings. Regression analysis was conducted using population projections from the Texas State Data Center to project future case filings for the district courts. The projected case filings were then used with the case weights from the OCA analysis to determine the district courts necessary to manage the workload projected.

In Table 1, years in which it is suggested that courts are added are highlighted in gray.

**Table 1-District Court Case Projections and Additional Court Intervals**

Year	Travis County Population	New District Court Filings	Total Cases Added in Dist. Courts	Felony Group A (cases)	Felony Group B (cases)	Case Weights A (minutes)	Case Weights B (minutes)	Total Workload Minutes Required for Case Volume	District Judicial Year	TC District Judges Needed	Current # of District Judges	District Court Deficit (Needs)
2011	1,063,130	10,043	13,057	3,263	9,794	609,918	381,966	988,884	77,400	13	8	(5)
2012	1,098,629	10,968	14,516	3,629	10,887	675,000	424,597	1,099,597	77,400	14	8	(6)
2013	1,125,095	11,247	14,801	3,700	11,101	688,250	432,931	1,121,181	77,400	14	8	(6)
2014	1,151,817	11,529	15,089	3,772	11,317	701,627	441,346	1,142,973	77,400	15	8	(7)
2015	1,178,607	11,811	15,377	3,844	11,533	715,038	449,782	1,164,820	77,400	15	9	(6)
2016	1,205,424	12,094	15,666	3,916	11,749	728,463	458,227	1,186,690	77,400	15	9	(6)
2017	1,232,509	12,380	15,957	3,989	11,968	742,022	466,756	1,208,778	77,400	16	11	(5)
2018	1,259,805	12,668	16,251	4,063	12,188	755,687	475,351	1,231,038	77,400	16	11	(5)
2019	1,287,396	12,959	16,548	4,137	12,411	769,499	484,040	1,253,539	77,400	16	11	(5)
2020	1,315,256	13,252	16,848	4,212	12,636	783,446	492,813	1,276,259	77,400	16	11	(5)
2021	1,343,621	13,552	17,154	4,288	12,865	797,646	501,745	1,299,391	77,400	17	12	(5)
2022	1,372,201	13,853	17,461	4,365	13,096	811,953	510,745	1,322,698	77,400	17	12	(5)
2023	1,401,546	14,162	17,777	4,444	13,333	826,643	519,985	1,346,629	77,400	17	12	(5)

The earliest opportunity for a new district court to go online is 2015. In 2014, because of continued County growth and projected case volume, using the OCA’s methodology, the district court deficit will

grow to seven. When the suggested court goes online in 2015, the deficit will reduce to six. The variable used to determine the interval in adding district courts was the baseline 2011 deficit of five courts. We concluded, based on historical trends demonstrated in the previous section that when the volume of case filings exceed what is reasonable for the existing courts to manage, the gap between new case filings and dispositions grows, in turn increasing the time to disposition which has a negative impact on jail stays and the ADP.

***Criminal County Courts***

Table 2 also uses population centered case filing projections over the next twelve years to establish the need for and intervals at which Criminal County Courts at Law should be added. The baseline year is 2011. It is recommended that county courts be added when the average filing per court is between 6,000 and 7,000 annually. This should allow each court to maintain the high rate of dispositions realized now which have had a favorable impact on jail population.

In the table, years in which it is suggested that courts are added are highlighted in gray.

**Table 2-County Court Case Projections and Additional Court Intervals**

Year	Travis County Population	New County Court Filings	Total Cases Added in County Courts	Ave filing per court	Dispositions	Net Cases Disposed vs. Added	# of County Courts Needed	Current # of County Courts	County Court Deficit (Need)
2011	1,063,130	34,166	35,997	6,000	40,561	4,564	7	6	(1)
<b>2012</b>	1,098,629	35,930	38,086	6,348	38,919	834	7	6	(1)
<b>2013</b>	1,125,095	36,947	39,164	6,527	40,130	966	7	6	(1)
<b>2014</b>	1,151,817	37,974	40,252	6,709	41,353	1,101	7	6	(1)
<b>2015</b>	1,178,607	39,003	41,344	5,906	42,579	1,235	7	7	0
<b>2016</b>	1,205,424	40,034	42,436	6,062	43,806	1,370	7	7	0
<b>2017</b>	1,232,509	41,075	43,539	6,220	45,045	1,506	7	7	0
<b>2018</b>	1,259,805	42,124	44,651	6,379	46,294	1,643	8	7	(1)
<b>2019</b>	1,287,396	43,184	45,775	6,539	47,556	1,781	8	7	(1)
<b>2020</b>	1,315,256	44,254	46,910	6,701	48,831	1,921	8	7	(1)
<b>2021</b>	1,343,621	45,344	48,065	6,008	50,129	2,064	8	8	0
<b>2022</b>	1,372,201	46,443	49,229	6,154	51,437	2,207	8	8	0
<b>2023</b>	1,401,546	47,570	50,425	6,303	52,779	2,355	8	8	0

It is illustrated in Chart 3 on page two, that following the addition of the general jurisdiction court (CC8), the county courts have sustained clearance rates at or above 100%, this during a period with the highest volumes of case filings over the last two decades.

Because of the significant volume of misdemeanor arrests each year, small changes in the length of stay of misdemeanants in jail can cause rapid increases in the average daily jail population. Maintaining a balance here is as important as the already high jail bed day consuming felons.

## Summary

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Aside from the impact that the addition of courts would have from a public service/timely justice perspective or overall better court management and best practices as identified by the OCA, there is a symbiotic relationship between the courts and the jail population.

As the data discussed in this analysis suggests, increased court efficiencies can have a reduction impact on the jail population. After the 427<sup>th</sup> District Court (2007) and County Court 8 (2008) came on line, in effect distributing the workload and increasing court processing and case clearance, the jail population decreased and has remained stable, well below projections. For perspective on how minor impacts to the courts can influence the jail's average daily population, an increase in case processing times of one day for individuals whose highest charge was a felony in FY2011 would have added 46 people to the jail ADP. Because misdemeanants are booked in much higher volume than felons, an increase of a half of a day in case processing times across FY2011 would have increased the ADP of misdemeanants by 39. These increases would in effect be the equivalent of two "posts" in the jail.

It should be noted that JPS's conclusion on the addition of courts between 2015 and 2023 is consistent with the levels indicated in the Broaddus and Associates Downtown Master Plan. Based on the data available today, including the OCA methodology, JPS's suggest increases over the next 10 years calls for 2 fewer courts than the previously published Downtown Master Plan.



TRAVIS COUNTY, TEXAS

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Members of Commissioners Court

**FROM:** Leslie Browder, County Executive, Planning and Budget *LB*  
Jessica Rio, Budget Director *JR*  
Leroy W. Nellis, Budget Director (in succession) *LWN*

**DATE:** November 29, 2012

**RE:** Financial Analysis related to Expansion of Criminal Courts  
Possible Effects of Future Caps on Local Property Tax Revenue

**Background**

At the Commissioners Court meeting on October 23, 2012, the District and County Judges presiding over the County's criminal courts requested that the Commissioners Court consider expressing their support for the creation of a new Criminal District Court and Criminal County Court in the upcoming 83<sup>rd</sup> legislative session. This request sparked discussion about the potential impact of caps on local property tax revenue that might materialize during the upcoming legislative session. There was concern that if revenue caps were ultimately passed, the County's ability to provide funding for needed services, including the creation of two new criminal courts, may be affected. The Planning and Budget Office was asked to provide the Commissioners Court with a five-year outlook of General Fund revenue and expenditures so that the Commissioners will be better informed when planning for future growth of County Services, as well as approving funds for the operation of a new District and County Court. Planning and Budget staff present at the meeting indicated a "macro-level" analysis of incremental revenue and operating expenditures would be completed and brought back to the Court.

As part of our analysis, we had additional discussions with a number of people involved in planning for the creation of the new criminal courts. Judge Kocurek, speaking on behalf of all of the Criminal Judges has indicated that all of the Judges agree that the creation of the courts is dependent on available space and the Commissioners Court's vote to fund these courts in 2015 as part of the budget process. Deece Eckstein, Intergovernmental Relations Coordinator, will assist the Commissioners Court and the Judges with drafting the appropriate language and monitoring progress during the legislative session.

**Fiscal and Funding Analysis**

Whenever significant new programs are contemplated, it is prudent to assess the estimated impact of the additional expenditures and anticipated revenue over a future period, typically three to five years. **This financial analysis is not intended to precisely predict future revenue and expenditures or budgets.** Rather, this analysis is designed to project a sense of where

current trends and service levels could take us in the future, and incorporates a defined set of assumptions.

Our analysis included consultation with the Travis Central Appraisal District (TCAD) to help the County Auditor complete their revenue estimates. Projections of the taxable value of new construction that was used to develop the revenue estimates is shown in the table below and does not include new value associated with properties that are subject to incentive agreements. At this early stage, TCAD could only provide very preliminary estimates for us, and has indicated that these estimates are very conservative.

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Estimated New Construction Taxable Value</b>
2014	\$2.5 billion
2015	\$3.5 billion
2016	\$3.5 billion
2017	\$3.0 billion
2018	\$3.0 billion

Summarized in the table on the next page are the results of our fiscal and funding analysis regarding the estimated impact of adding new criminal courts estimated to occur in 2015 for purposes of the projections below. Several key points should be considered when reviewing the bottom-line results of this analysis.

- In 2013, the Commissioners Court was able to fund a number of critical departmental requests for the additional resources needed to maintain service delivery, as well as targeted expansions of several programs, after several years of constrained spending due to an economic downturn.
- The focus in the 2014 budget will likely be on maintaining core services and healthy reserve levels, with very limited opportunities for new programs or enhancements.
- This analysis does not reflect costs associated with the operations and maintenance of a new civil courthouse pending selection of a delivery method.
- As noted previously, the revenue increases estimated below are very preliminary, and incremental operational spending is not intended to precisely predict future budgets.
- The incremental expenditure estimates reflect the impact of potential cost drivers, such as trending related to the cost of health insurance and other benefits, and cost of living adjustments in salaries and wages that may be approved by the Commissioners Court.
- Funding for “maintenance of current effort” to provide for the additional resources that will be needed from time to time to supplement existing programs and services in response to the demands of our residents.

**As we always do, any preliminary budget that is presented to the Commissioners Court in the future will be fiscally sound and balanced, and we will live within the means available to us.**

**Five-Year Fiscal and Funding Analysis**

**Note: Estimates below depict ongoing INCREASES above prior year.**

<b>Incremental General Fund Dollars (\$\$ in millions)</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
Revenue	19.0	28.0	29.0	28.0	29.0
Operating Expenditures	(15.7)	(18.9)	(20.5)	(21.2)	(21.0)
Plus: Costs of New Criminal Courts	-0-	(4.9)	-0-	-0-	-0-
Total Operating Expenditures	(15.7)	(23.8)	(20.5)	(21.2)	(21.0)
Unallocated Reserve Requirements	(2.0)	(3.1)	(3.2)	(3.1)	(3.1)
Surplus/(Deficit)	1.3	1.1	5.3	3.7	4.9

It is important to note that the revenue estimates assume modest growth in the tax rate consistent with past policy direction of the Commissioners Court. The estimates were prepared in accordance with truth-in-taxation requirements and represent a 3% increase over the estimated effective tax rates. Obviously, if the Commissioners Court Members direct the Planning and Budget Office to prepare a preliminary budget based on a tax rate that closer to the effective tax rate, the Planning and Budget Office will work to balance the budget within those parameters.

**Analysis of Caps on Local Property Tax Revenue**

The potential for caps on local property tax revenue has been surfacing during recent years. The various bills proposed in either the Senate or the House have run the gamut of requiring cities and counties to seek voter approval for any increase above the effective tax rate, to redefining the rollback rate to allow no more than a 3% or 5% increase above the effective maintenance and operations tax rate. The 5% limitation seems to surface most frequently, although there have been discussions recently of linking any future increases to the Consumer Price Index or similar index. Using the same assumptions applied in the calculation of the preceding revenue estimates at 3% above the effective tax rate, substituting an increase of 5% above the effective rate, an average of \$9 million in additional revenue would be generated each year.

Deece Eckstein will be monitoring any developments in the upcoming session, which will include working closely with the Council of Urban Counties. Travis County has responsibly managed its tax rate over time, and the County Auditor’s Office and the Planning and Budget Office will be prepared to participate in any testimony that would be helpful to communicate our funding and tax policies.

After reviewing the additional revenue that could be generated under a possible 5% revenue cap and then comparing against projected ongoing operating expenditures of approximately \$5 million per year for the two new criminal district courts, as well as routine increases in costs like salaries, health insurance and retirement, we have concluded that Travis County will be able to fund the ongoing expenses of two new courts even if a 5% revenue cap was passed. Potential caps below the 5% level would become more problematic for Travis County and other local governments to fund ongoing services for their constituents. Obviously, revenue caps are not desirable for local governments, and any efforts to introduce legislation imposing caps are not to be taken lightly.

We hope you find these comments useful in making these very important decisions.