American Community Survey

Travis County, Texas

Analysis of Trends 2002-2005

This update offers analysis of the results from the 2002-2005 American Community Surveys for Travis County. The American Community Survey (ACS) replaces the long form of the 10-year U.S. Census and collects information on an ongoing basis rather than once every ten years. This modification reflects the reality of a fast-paced and rapidly changing society in which decision makers, planners and residents need up to date information in order to understand and act upon current and emerging issues facing their communities. In 2006, the Census Bureau released 2005 ACS data sets in phases from mid-August through mid-November. Surveys are collected from 1/12 of the sample each month. This approach will reflect little impact from relatively isolated time-limited events such as hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005.

While the ACS is the leading resource for annual analysis of demographic changes at the community level, the sample size can limit the utility of some indicators. Secondary sources are used in this analysis to supplement the smaller sample sizes which can be more susceptible to fluctuation. Taken together, these complementary data sets offer a timely and useful picture of how our community is changing over time (www.census.gov).

KEY FINDINGS: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN TRAVIS COUNTY

- Trends in racial and ethnic diversity continue to show rapid growth in Hispanic and, to a lesser extent, Asian populations. The African-American and non-Hispanic White populations remain stable in number, though each represents a declining portion of the total county population.
- The age structure also appears to be shifting. Currently, Travis County has a very low age dependency ratio[1]. Relative to other counties, Travis County has a high percentage of working age residents. However, retired and dependent youth populations are on the rise—potentially creating an economic burden on the working age population.
- Travis County's poverty rate (15.7%) is higher than the national percentage of individuals living below the poverty line (13.3%) but significantly lower than the Texas estimate (17.6%).
- 2004 marked the first year of reporting married couple families in poverty. The addition of this measure allows for a contrast to the data collected related to female head of household families.
- Transportation issues are new to our analysis of the American Community Survey. 2005 ACS data will serve as a baseline for future analysis.

[1] The age dependency ratio: 229th out of 235 ranked counties with 250,000+ residents using 2004 ACS data.This ratio basically compares those of working age (18-65) to those children under 18 and those over 65+ who are often retired (www.census.gov). It is calculated by dividing the total population under 18 and over 64 by the number of residents 18-65, and multiplying by 100.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

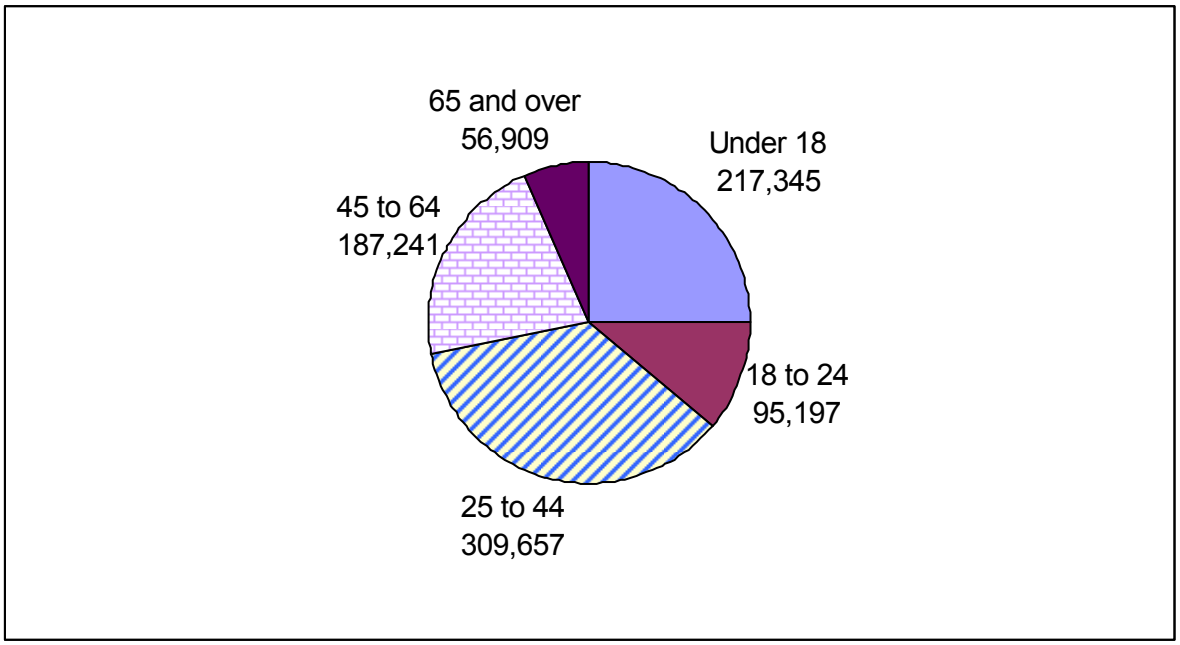
The rate of population growth in Travis County has accelerated slightly over the past four years (see Table 1 below). **The overall increase between 2002 and 2005 was about 4.2%, or an estimated 35,700 additional residents.** This growth rate is slightly smaller than the population growth rate for the entire state of Texas, which increased 5.0% between 2002 and 2005, from 21,215,494 to 22,270,165 total number of residents.

Table 1: Travis County Population Growth 2002-2005

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Total Population	830,649	836,887	848,649	866,349
Growth Rate		***0.8%***	***1.4%***	***2.1%***

Age

Chart 1: Travis County Population by Age (in years), 2005

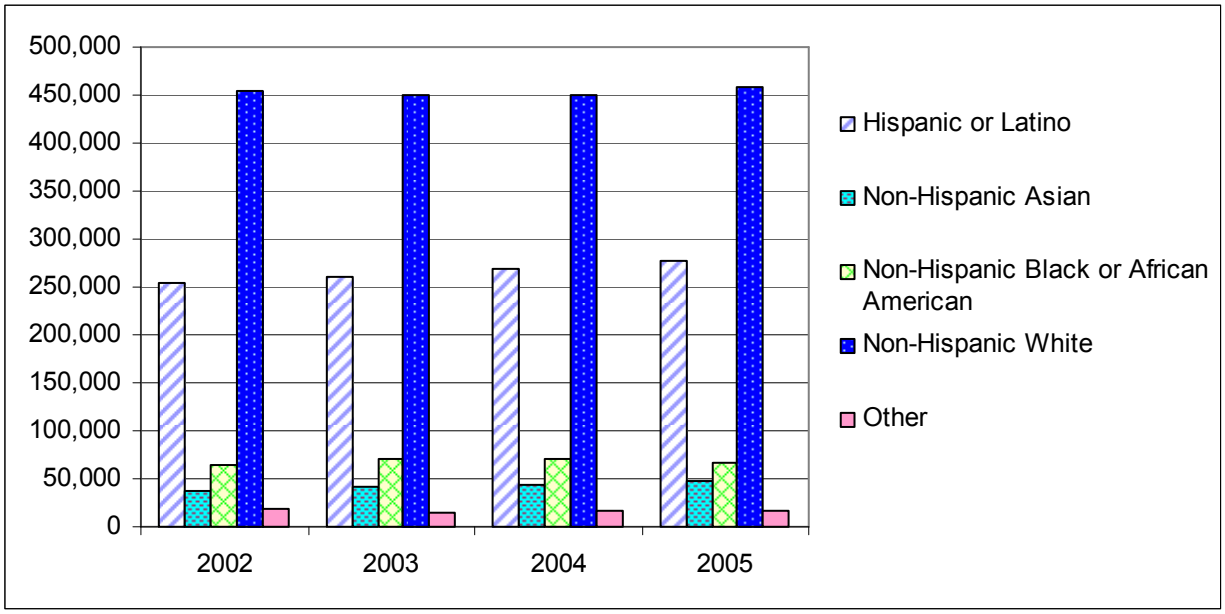


- 2002-2005 trends continue to show a steady increase in the number of children 18 years and under, though they have remained roughly 25% of Travis County's overall population over this period.
- While the number of 18-24 year olds[2] in Travis County declined each year from 2002 to 2004, it rebounded in 2005, up by 8.6 % to 95,197 – returning just short of 2002 levels.
- 45-64 year olds increased by almost 12% from a 2002 population of 167,258 to 187,241 residents in 2005, while the population 66 and older remained relatively unchanged.

[2] Data exclude the population living in college dormitories (as well as institutions and other group quarters) but do include college students living amongst the household population in houses or apartments.

Race and Ethnicity

Chart 2: Travis County Residents by Race and Hispanic Origin



- The **number of Hispanic residents in Travis County continues growing at a faster rate than** other ethnicities. In 2005, 32.1% of the total population (866,649) identified as Hispanic or Latino, compared with 30.6% of the population (830,649) in 2002. If current trends in migration continue, Hispanics will become a majority and Whites will become a minority of the population of the State of Texas by the year 2015[3].
- While the number of residents identifying "White-alone" or African-American as their racial background have both grown slightly in the period from 2002-05 (by 3,776 and 1,635 respectively), these two groups represent smaller percentages of the total population: **"White-alone" has declined from 57.7% to 52.9%**, the Black or African American population has remained relatively flat, slipping only from 7.8% (65,449 residents) in 2002 to 7.7% (67,084) in 2005.[4]
- While remaining a small percentage (5.4%) of the population, the **Asian population in Travis County is growing rapidly:** Asian population increased 25% from 37,313 in 2002 to 46,929 in 2005.

Language

Table 2: Languages of Travis County residents 5 years and older

	2002	2003	2004	2005
Speak language other than English at home	*28.9%*	*31.3%*	*29.6%*	*32.0%*
Speak English less than "very well"	*13.9%*	*15.5%*	*13.6%*	*13.3%*

[3] Steve Murdock, demographer for the state of Texas

[4] Statistics reflect percentages that correspond with the figures in Chart 2 and do not include African Americans or Asians who also identify as being of Hispanic origin or as being of more than one race.

Clear trends are not evident in the four (4) years of survey data currently available. In 2005, 254,095 or 32% of all Travis County residents (5 years and older) reported speaking a language other than English at home and **13.3% or 105,472 residents 5 years and older reported speaking English "less than very well.** (see Table 2).

Texas Education Agency (TEA) data on students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) does, however, show a clear upward trend: both the number and percent of students with limited English proficiency are climbing steadily (see Table 3).

Table 3: Travis County Students - Limited English Proficiency[5]

	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Percent of students in bilingual education	*14.6%*	*16.2%*	*16.9%*	*18.0%*	*19.0%*
Number of students in bilingual Education	48,248	49,492	53,870	57,470	62,439
Total Students	114,249	114,205	117,132	118,568	122,137

Source: Texas Education Agency Academic Excellence Indicator System 2000-2004

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Education

Table 4: Educational Attainment in Travis County (population 25+)

	2002		2005	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 9th grade	39,793	*7.5%*	35,075	*6.3%*
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	41,277	*7.8%*	40,799	*7.4%*
High school graduate (including equivalency)	92,242	*17.8%*	98,932	*17.9%*
Some college, no degree	116,864	*22.1%*	108,342	*19.6%*
Associate degree	23,332	*4.4%*	33,362	*6.0%*
Bachelor's degree	130,814	*24.8%*	152,857	*27.6%*
Graduate or professional degree	82,064	*15.5%*	84,440	*15.2%*
Total 25+ Population	**528,386**		**553,807**	

High levels of educational attainment remain a great asset for the Travis County community**. As of 2005 48.8% (270,659) of residents age 25 or older have an Associates degree or more** up from 44.7% (236,210) in 2002.

- When compared with the 2005 national average of 27.2% and Texas' average of 25.1%, Travis County has a much higher percentage of residents age 25 or older who have completed a Bachelor's degree (42.8% or 237,297 residents, up from 40.3% in 2002).
- In 2005, 13.7% (75,874) of Travis County residents did not have a high school diploma, down from 15.3% (81,070) in 2002.

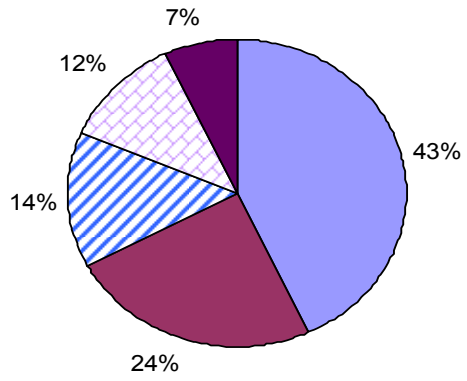
[5] Data is not representative of all children in Travis County. Only students enrolled in Austin, Lago Vista, Lake Travis, Pflugerville, Manor, Eanes and Del Valle Independent School Districts are included in this dataset from the Texas Education Agency.

Employment

- Travis County experienced a **4.1% increase in the workforce** between 2002 and 2005, from 642,729 to 669,394.
- **In 2005, Travis County's unemployment rate was 6.8%,** compared to 7.4% in 2004. Additionally, ACS found the number of unemployed county residents ***is the lowest since 2002*** at 33,198 compared to 41,789 (8.8%) in 2003 and 35,349 (7.4%) in 2004.
- Travis County's unemployment rate in 2005 of 6.8% compared favorably to the state average of 7.6% and the national average of 6.9%.

Note: While reflecting comparable trends, ACS findings on employment do vary from the frequently cited employment data from the US Dept of Labor and Texas Workforce Commission. Differing methodology used by the Census Bureau for ACS finds both a larger workforce and higher unemployment.

Chart 3: Travis County Workforce by Occupation Type, 2005



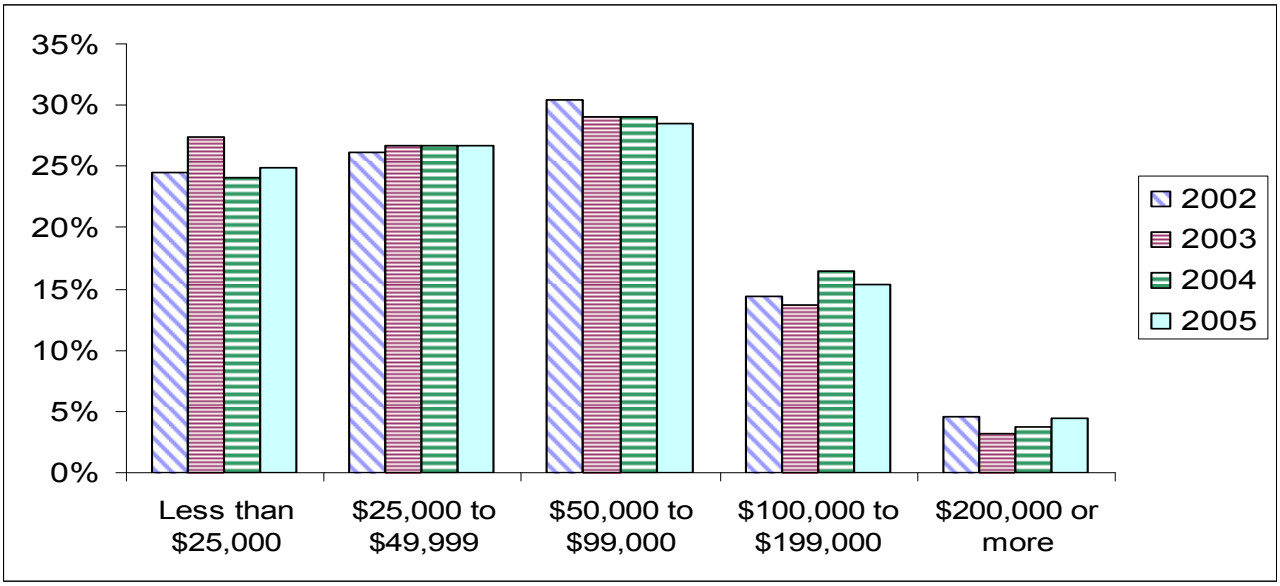
The **largest proportion** (42.9%) of Travis County's workforce in 2005 was in **Management and other Professional Occupations**. 24.2% of the workforce was in Sales and Office Occupations, and 14.2% worked in the Service Industry.

INCOME AND POVERTY

Income

- The estimated **mean (average) household income** for Travis County in 2005 was **$69,079**, up only 0.11% from 2002's estimated mean of $68,998.
- Travis County's 2005 **average household income is 10.4% higher than the national average** of $62,556 and **17.7% higher than Texas' average** of $58,653.
- The **median household income** for Travis County, however, has decreased slightly, from $49,422 in 2002 to **$48,026** in 2005 (see Chart 4 for analysis of income trends in Travis County).
- The average household income in Travis County remains relatively unchanged since 2002 while the cost of living continues to climb; the Consumer Price Index reflected an 8.6% increase from $179.90 in 2002 to $195.30 in 2005.

Chart 4: Distribution of Travis County Households by Income level

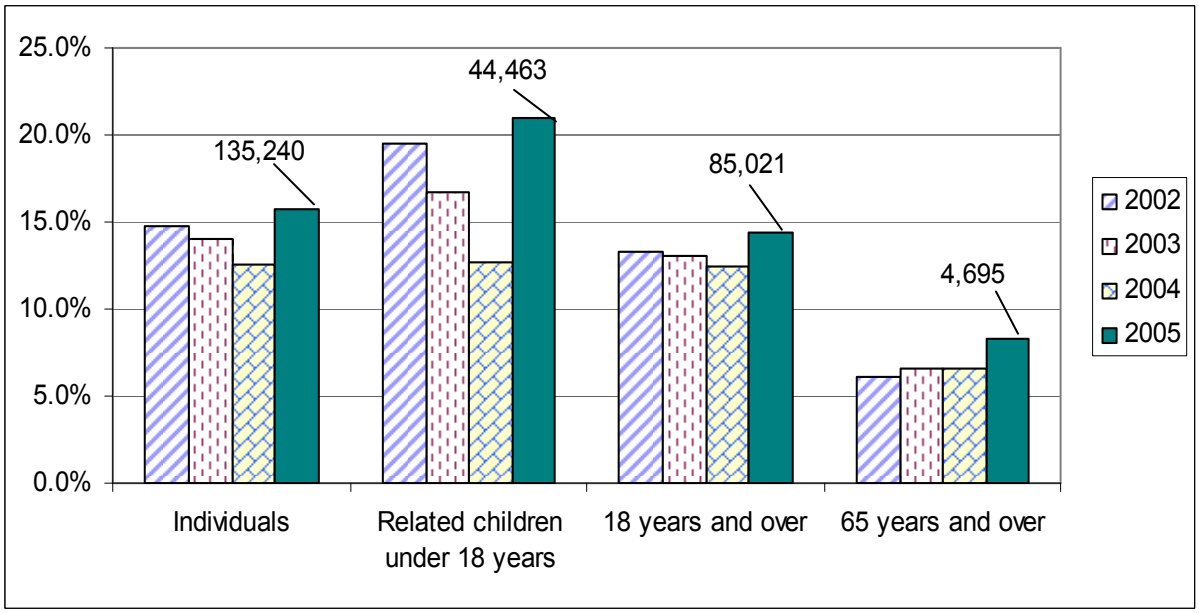


Poverty

In 2005, the **annual income of an estimated 135,240 Travis County residents fell below the poverty level** ($9,570 for an individual and $19,350 for a family of four).

- Travis County's poverty rate (15.7%) is higher than the national percentage of individuals living below the poverty line (13.3%) but significantly lower than the Texas estimate (17.6%).
- Texas moved in rank from 8th highest state in the U.S. in 2004 with number of residents living in poverty to 6th highest poverty rate in the nation in 2005.

Chart 5: Travis County Residents Living in Poverty

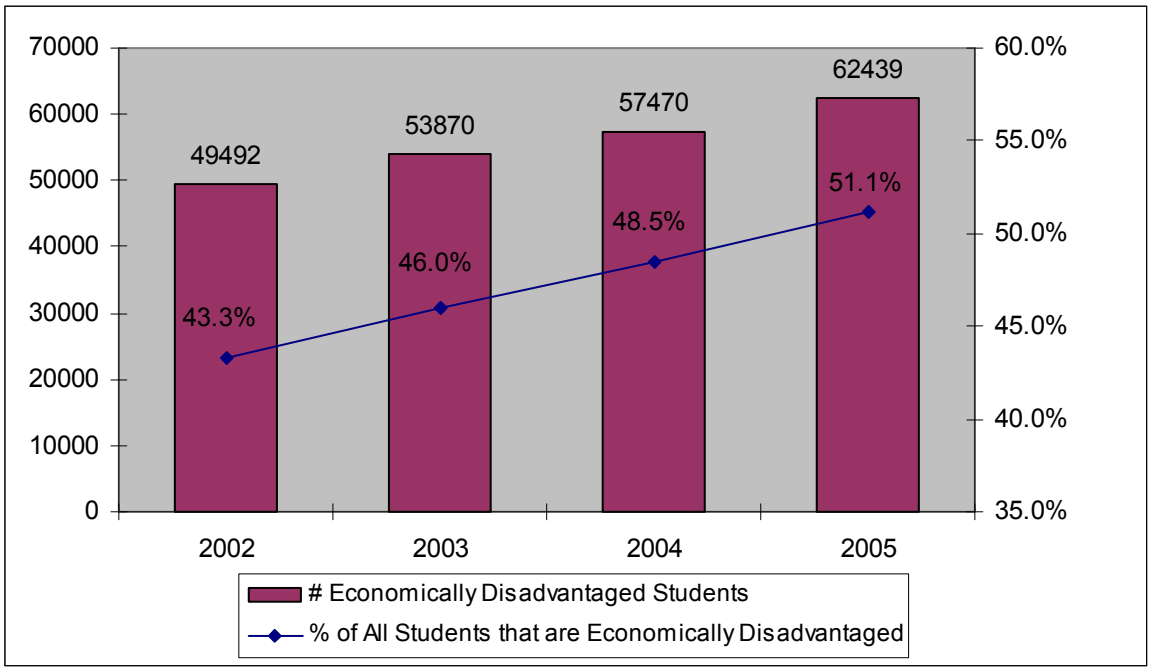


- Of the estimated 211,768 children in Travis County, 44,463 (21.0%) were living at or below the Federal Poverty Line in 2005.

- The percentage of families with children under 18 years of age living in poverty increased 7% over the last four years.

While the number and percent of children in poverty followed a downward trend from 19.5% (39,498) in 2002 to 12.7% (27,594) in 2004, 2005 data reveals a significant increase to 21.0% (44,463 children). While this increase does not follow ACS trends, it is consistent with school data on children eligible for free or reduced lunch programs. During the four-year period of 2002-2005, Texas Education Agency data show a 26% increase in the number of economically disadvantaged students in Travis County.[6]

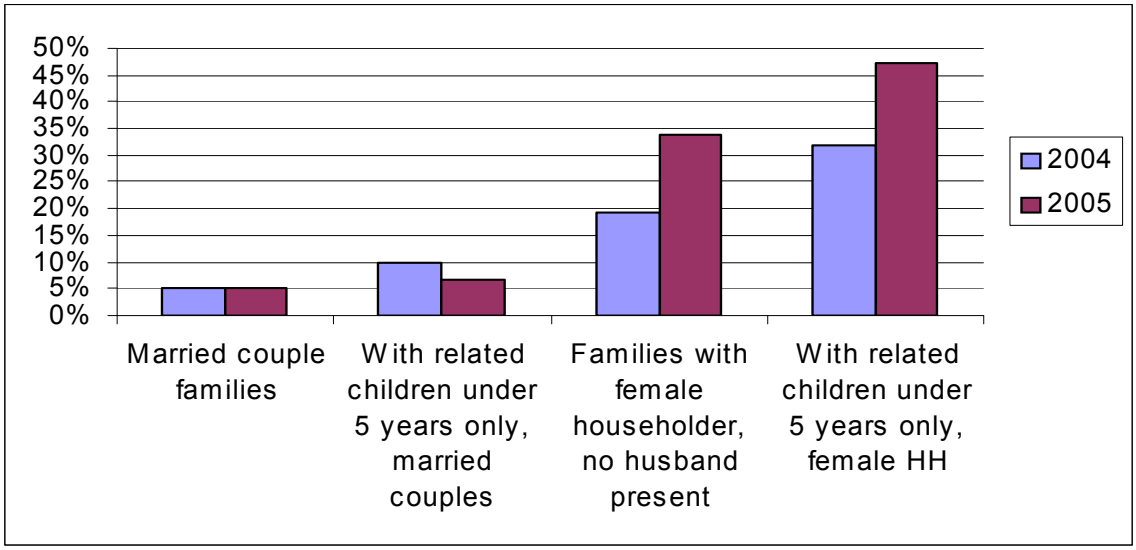
Chart 6: Travis County Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch Programs



- According to Texas Education Agency data, between 2002 and 2005, enrollment in Travis County school districts increased 6.9% from 114,205 students to 122,173. In that same period, the number of economically disadvantaged students in all Travis County school districts increased 26% from 49,492 to 62,439. Additionally, the number of students eligible for free or reduced lunch increased in every school district between 2002 and 2005.
- Latinos continue to have the highest number of people living in poverty followed by Whites, Blacks and Asians. This trend remained consistent from 2002 to 2005 regardless of sampling size.
- ACS indicates a significant increase from 2004 to 2005 in the number of Asian and Black people (3832 and 9078, respectively) living in poverty.

[6] Economically disadvantaged students are defined as those who are eligible for free or reduced lunch through the National School Lunch Program. In order to meet eligibility criteria for the National School Lunch Program, the student's combined family income must be at or below 185% of the federal poverty line. TEA data used in this report includes only students enrolled in the school districts identified in Chart 8 above and may not be representative of all Travis County children.

Chart 7: Comparison of Married Couple and Female Head of Household Families Living Below Poverty



2004 marked the first year of reporting married couple families in poverty. The addition of this measure allows for a contrast to the data collected related to female head of household families. Care should be taken in reading trends from just two years of data.

While two years does not demonstrate a trend, the two samples available (2004 and 2005) are consistent in showing a higher risk of poverty for female headed households and an even greater risk of poverty for female headed households with children under five.

- The **number of married couple families below poverty remained** stable in 2004 and 2005 at 5.2%.
- The number **of families living below the poverty level with female heads of households increased** from 19.4% in 2004 to 33.7% in 2005 (an estimated 31,702 households are living in poverty in the past 12 months.)
- In 2005 **Children under the age of 5 years who live in female headed households are seven-times more likely to live in poverty** (47.4 %) compared to those who live in a married couple family (6.8%).
- ACS surveys found the percentage of married couple families with children under the age of 5 decreased from 9.7% in 2004 to 6.8% in 2005. In contrast, the percentage of female head of households with children under the age of 5 increased from 31.7% in 2004 to 47.7% in 2005.

HOUSING

Housing Affordability

ACS confirms local findings that affordable housing is a growing problem in Travis County.

- Of those residents who rent their homes, 46.4% spent more than 30% of their annual income on housing costs during 2005.[7] These estimates are in line with both the Texas (45.3%) and national (45.7%) estimates for renters facing housing affordability challenges.
- Almost one third (32.8%) of Travis County residents who live in housing with a mortgage spent more than 30% of their annual income on housing (see Chart 8); also in line with state (32.4%) and national (34.5%) estimates.

Chart 8: Travis County Households spending more than 30% on Housing

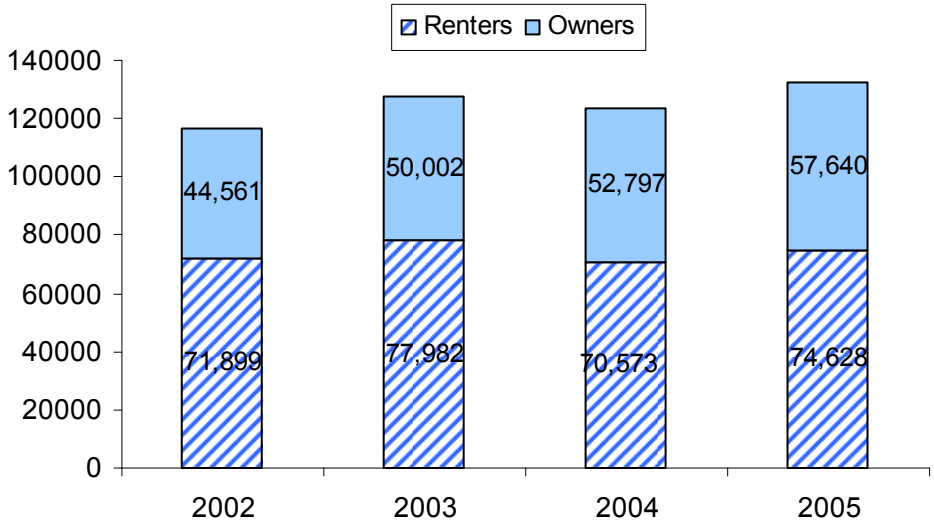


Table 5: Housing Comparison of Variables for Travis County

Housing Variables	U.S.	Texas	Travis Co.
Median Gross Rent	$728	$671	$743
Median household income in the past 12 months (in 2005 inflation-adjusted dollars)	$46,242	$42,139	$48,026
Median Home Value (owner occupied)	$167,500	$106,000	$171,100

- Housing cost and value in Travis County are slightly above national averages, but significantly higher than state levels (see Table 5 above).
- While the median household income in Travis County is only 14% greater than Texas, the median home value is 60% greater than Texas.

[7] The definition of affordability according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is that a household pays no more than 30% of its annual income on housing (www.hud.gov).

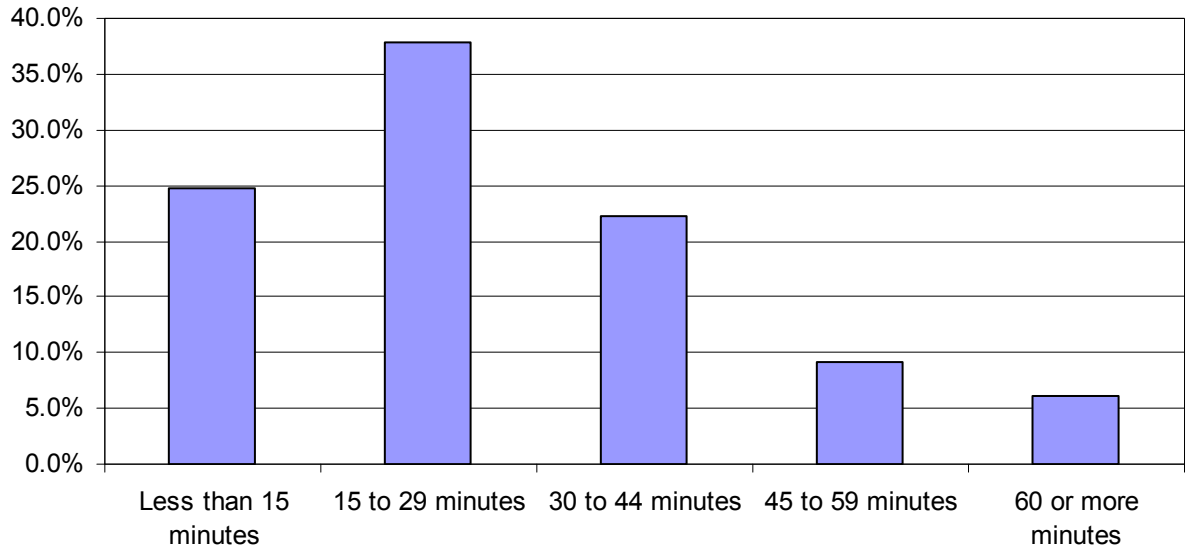
- In 2005 there were a total of 391,425 housing units in Travis County. Of these units, 50% (195,744) were owner occupied and 41% (160,701) were renter occupied.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation issues are new to our analysis of the ACS. 2005 ACS data will serve as a baseline for future analysis.

- 2005 survey finds the largest portion (38%) of residents have commutes to work (one-way) of 15-29 minutes;
- 25% of County residents take less than 15 minutes to get to work, while 15% take 45 minutes or more to get to work.

CHART 9: Austin-Round Rock Residents Number of Minutes to Get to Work (One-Way) (16 Years and Older)



The majority of workers (86%) rely on private vehicles for transportation to work. Of those, 75% are driving alone and 11% are carpooling (the rest are taking public transportation, walking or taking a taxi, a bicycle or other means to get to work).

SURVEY DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY

All statistics found in this report are based on the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Surveys from 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005 unless otherwise noted. According to the U.S. Census, the American Community Survey is:

> "…a nationwide survey designed to provide communities a fresh look at how they are changing. It is a critical element in the Census Bureau's reengineered 2010 Census and a way to provide the data communities need every year instead of one in ten years. It is an ongoing

survey that the Census Bureau plans will replace the long form in the 2010 Census. Data are collected from a sample by mail, phone, and personal interview." (www.census.gov).[8]

Data are collected from about one-twelfth of the sample households each month, and are then extrapolated to provide estimates for community-wide demographic, housing, social, and economic characteristics. While the Census Bureau provides calculations of statistical significance for multi-year profile data on the state and metropolitan statistical area levels as well as for the largest counties and test sites, it does not provide calculations of statistical significance for the Travis County multi-year profile data. This methodology does not reflect the impact of relatively isolated, time-limited events like the hurricanes of 2005.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Research & Planning Division:

*Blanca Leahy, Director
*Ana Almaguel
*Marisa Churchin
Rachel Coff
*Korey Darling
*Lorel Donaghey
*Lawrence Lyman
*Christie Moffett
Meg Poag
Brook Son
Sandra Valenzuela
*ACS Workgroup

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[8] There are ongoing discussions regarding the pros and cons of permanently replacing the long form of the decennial census with the American Community Survey.