

# *Keep Wilco Moving*

2000 – 2015



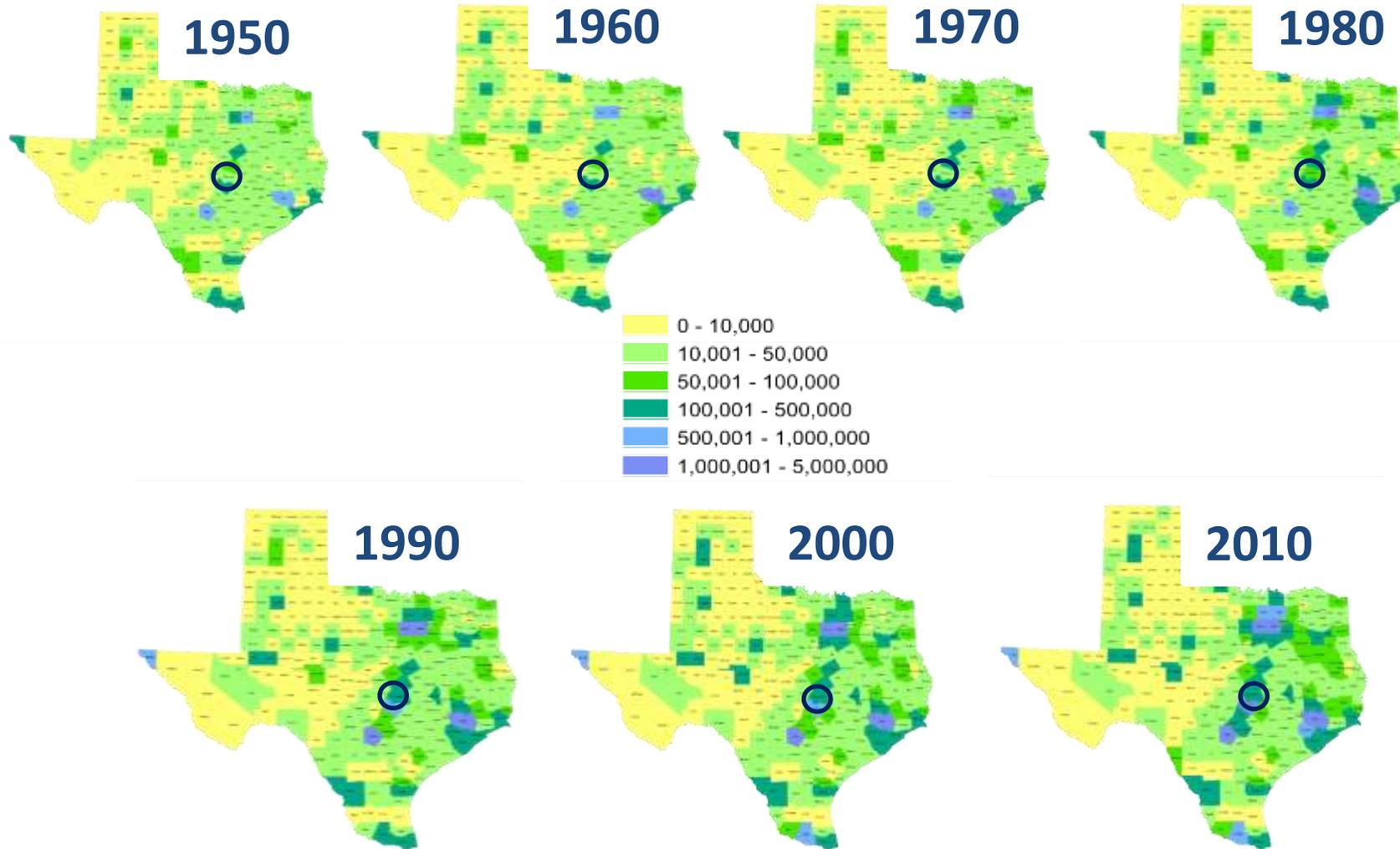
Presented by

**Cynthia Long**

**County Commissioner, Williamson County, Texas**

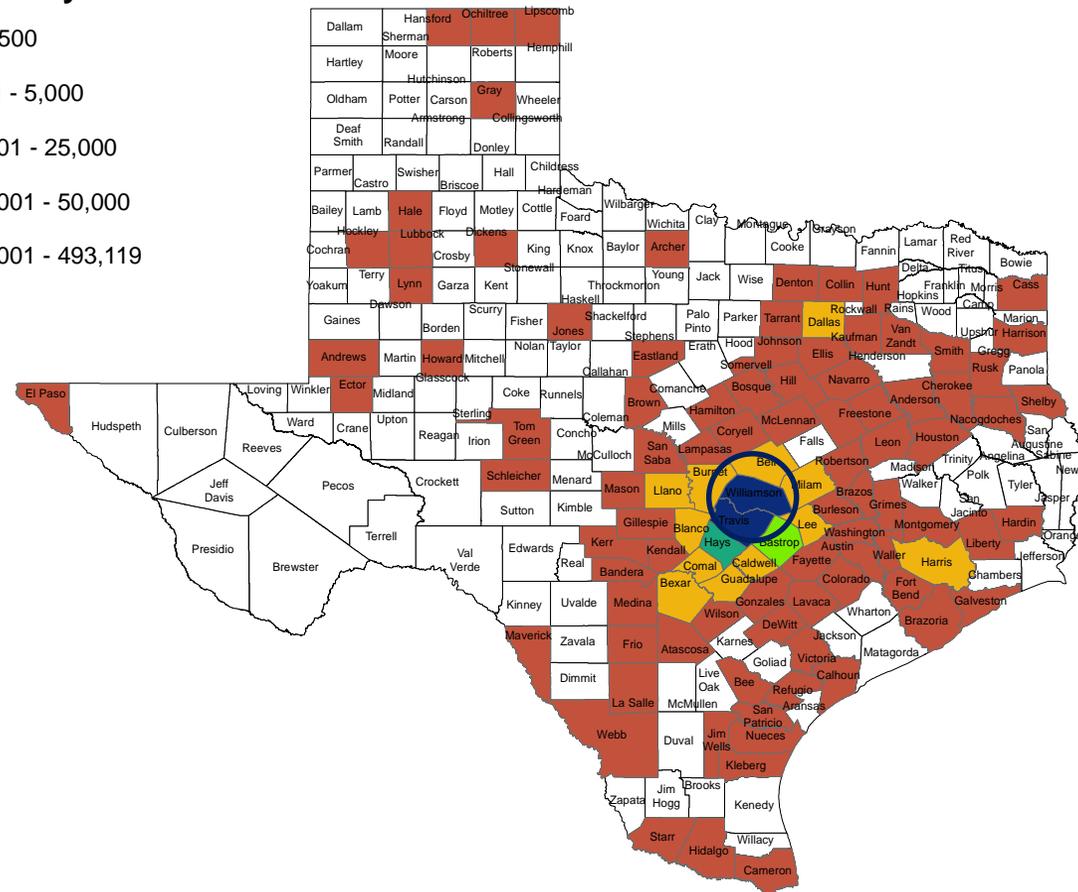
**September 21, 2015**

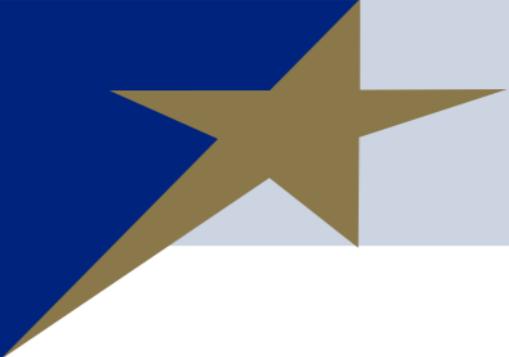
# Historic County Population, Texas



# Commuters to Travis County from Texas counties, 2003-2013

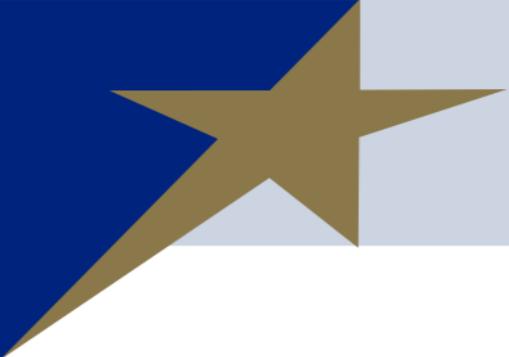
## Travis County





# Catalyst for Change

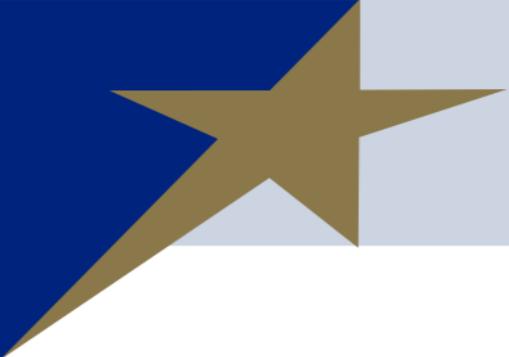
- Austin (your Nashville) and Travis County (your Davidson) had taken the ostrich approach to transportation planning
- Population growth starting to hit double digits
- More commuters
- Congestion was increasing
- Money from the State DOT was drying up
- Unhealthy dependence on rooftops vs. business for tax base



# What Did We Do?

## Two Key Focus Areas

- Aggressive Transportation Improvement Program
  - Partnering with cities
  - Leveraging local dollars on state roadways
  - Participated in toll road development
- Economic Development
  - County participating with cities on ED deals
  - Reduced, then eliminated, certain taxes on manufacturing businesses

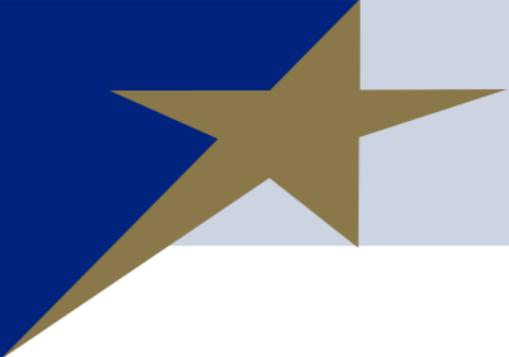


# Transportation Program

- Developed 1<sup>st</sup> County Transportation Plan
- Voters approved bonds for roadway construction & improvement projects

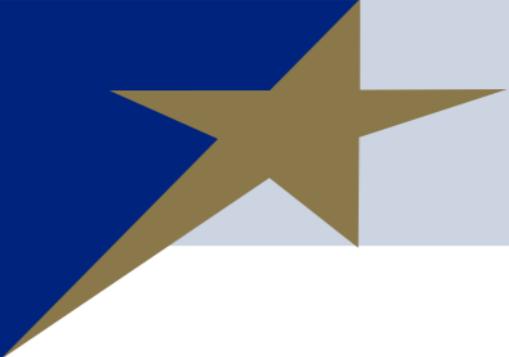
**Totaling \$828 Million**

- Aggressively implementing plan
- Partnering – cities, state, MPO, Regional Mobility Authority



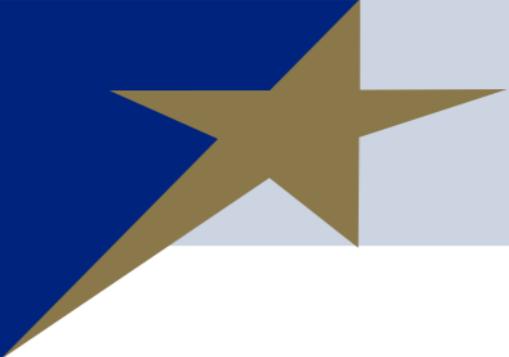
# Economic Development

- Teaming with cities to attract businesses/employers to county
- Lower than market rate fees on new development
- Reduced, then eliminated, Freeport tax on manufacturing businesses – worked with school district to do same
- Low government regulation reputation



# Other

- Lobbied legislature to streamline processes at state DOT
- Changed composition/membership of MPO
- Worked with state DOT to get NEPA process delegated to state



# Return on Investment

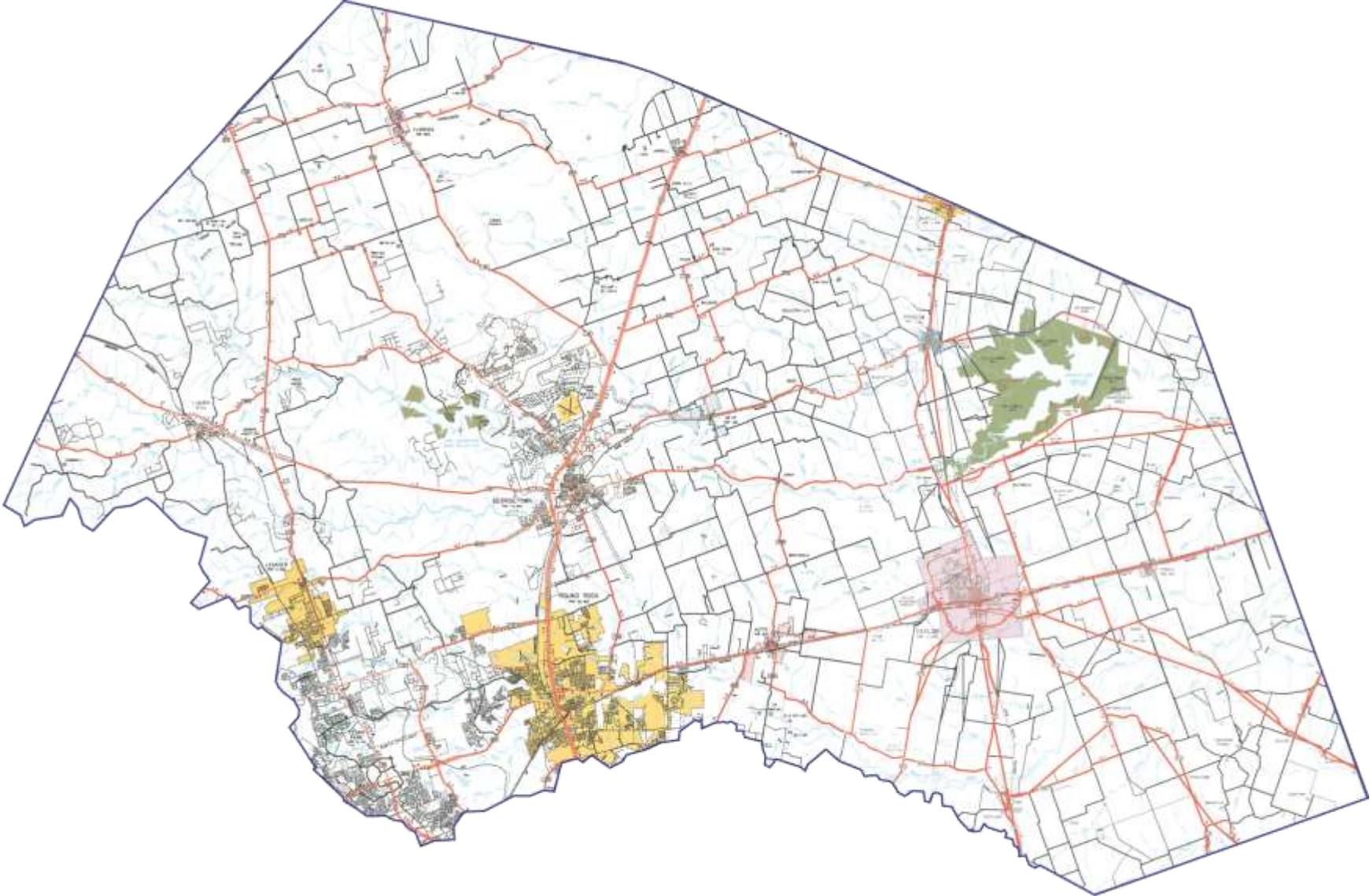
- 298 new lane miles of roadway constructed
- Leveraged \$160 Million in local dollars to build \$2 Billion in toll roads
- Wilco home of 3 of top 10 fastest growing cities with 50,000 + population in Texas since 2010
- Growing by about 16,000 people/year; 30 net movers per day
- **Population more than doubled YET the average commute time stayed the same**



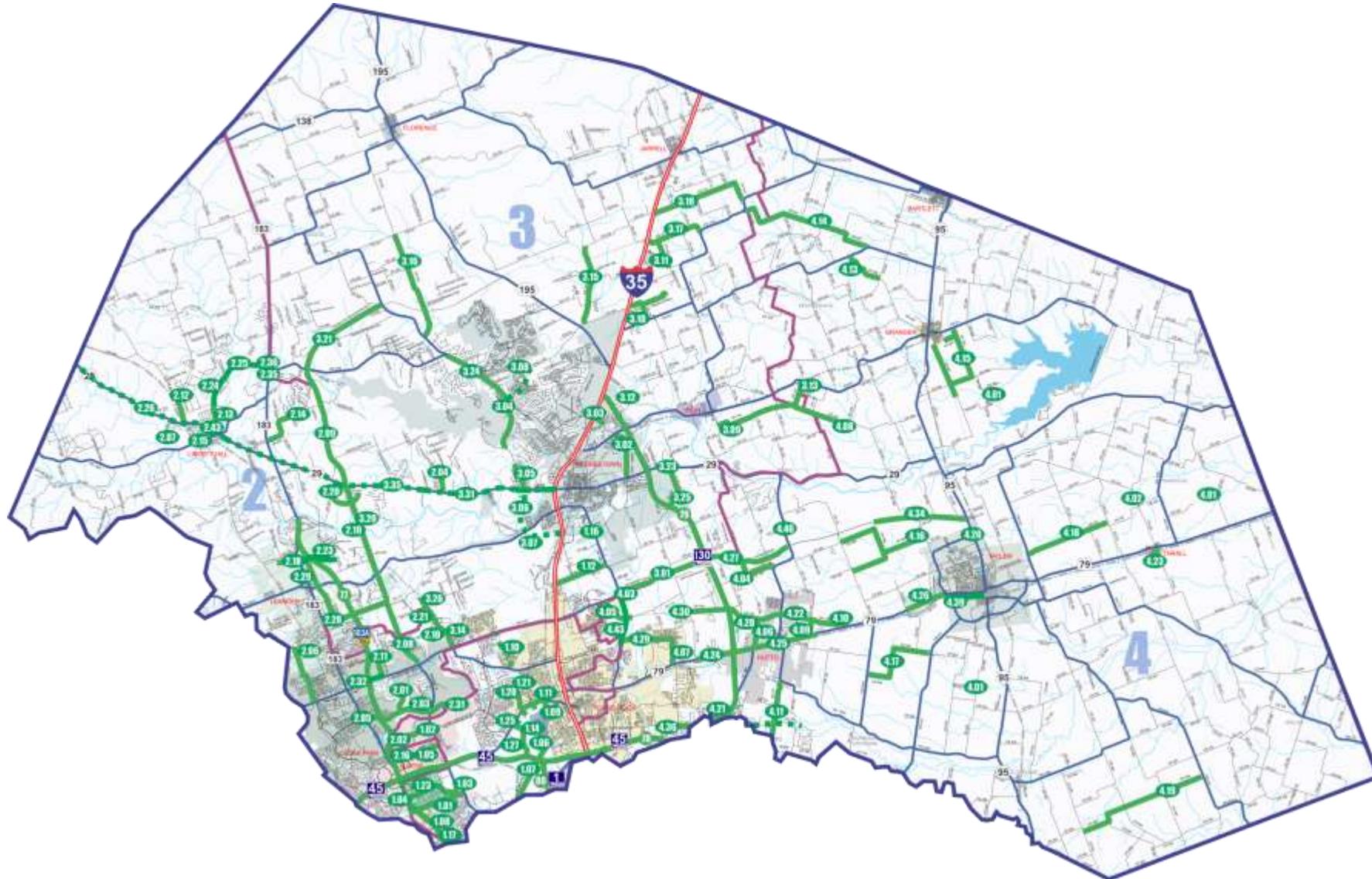
# Return on Investment (cont'd)

- At height of recent national recession
  - Manufacturing businesses increased in assessed value by \$80 M
  - Round Rock & Cedar Park (2 biggest cities)
    - Added over 6,000 new jobs
    - Retained over 2,000 direct jobs
    - Added 3,600 indirect/induced jobs
- 10 year job growth in Austin metro 2.14% compared to 10% in 2 biggest cities
- Housing units up 85% since 2000 (34% in Travis County)
- Assessed property value in Wilco more than tripled  
**\$14 Billion in 2000 to \$50 Billion in 2015**

# Williamson County, TX 2000

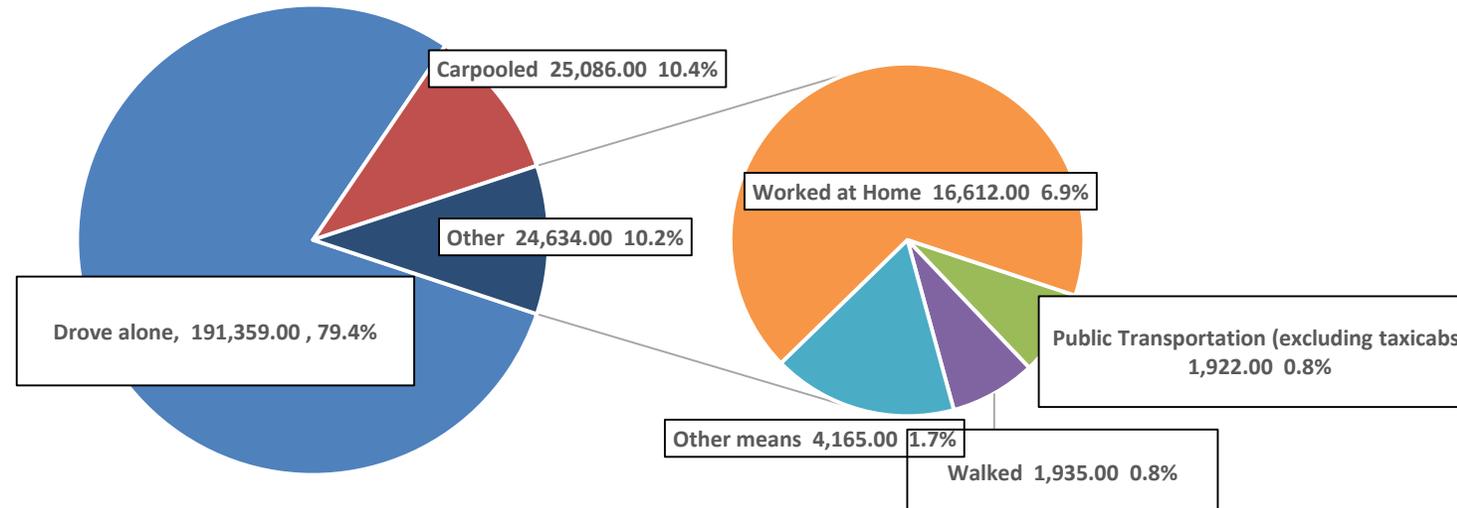


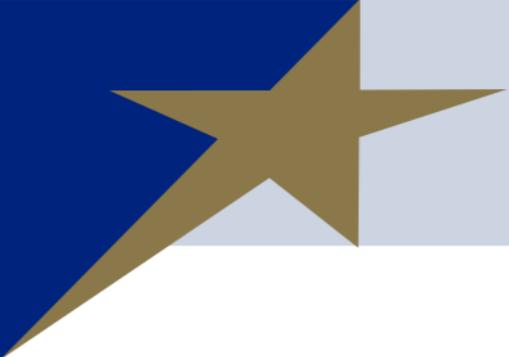
# Williamson County, TX - 2014



# Can't Build Enough Roads

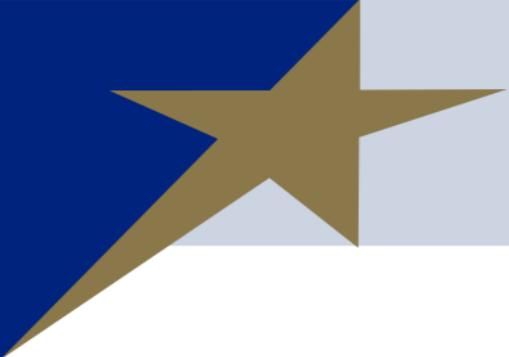
## 2014 Transportation to Employment





# Williamson County, TX – The Future

- Updating transportation plan
  - What will we look like at build-out?
  - What modes do we need to include?
  - How do we plan for what we don't know?
  - Action plan to get there
- Accelerate Economic Development efforts
- Keep pressing forward



# Lessons Learned

- Partner
- Educate – Public, Business, Elected Officials
- Consistency, Commitment
- Plan, Do, Check, Act