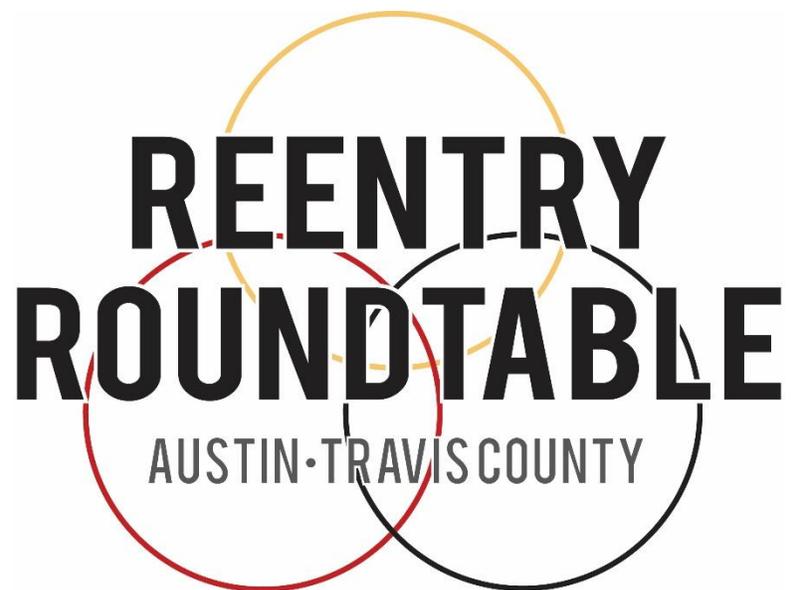


Selection of Consultant by the Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable

Request for Expressions of Interest



BACKGROUND

The Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable (A/TCRRT) is modeled after the National Reentry Roundtable convened by the Urban Institute, which is an ongoing forum for academics, practitioners, community leaders, policy makers, advocates, and formerly incarcerated individuals working to address the challenges to effective reentry and reintegration of persons with criminal histories. The A/TCRRT is a volunteer organization, and membership is open to organizations and individuals who confirm their interest in supporting its mission and work. Members include governmental agencies, faith-based and community organizations, and other nongovernmental entities and individuals.

In September 2003, the A/TCRRT's initial Planning Council was formed, comprised of multiple city and county stakeholders. The first forum, held in April 2004, kicked off the A/TCRRT with a plan to encourage reentry stakeholders to break down the "silos" they were operating in. The A/TCRRT facilitates collaborations within the community, advocates for better reentry policies, and educates the community about the role that reentry and reintegration plays in promoting public safety. The A/TCRRT was formed as a strategy and venue for leaders to come together for more effective reintegration for those returning to our community.

The A/TCRRT is governed by the Planning Council, which meets monthly. The Planning Council is a body of stakeholder representatives that provides general oversight of the collaborative and assures that the work of the A/TCRRT is consistent with the mission and vision. Government agencies with a designated seat on the Planning Council include: The City of Austin Downtown Community Court, the Austin Police Department, Austin Travis County Integral Care, Travis County Criminal Justice Planning, Travis County Sheriff's Office, Travis County Adult Probation, Travis County Criminal Courts, Travis County District Attorney, Texas Department of Criminal Justice – Parole and Travis State Jail, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Current membership also includes representatives from Austin Community College, Goodwill, Texas State University, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, the Travis County Department of Health & Human Services and Veterans Service, the University of Texas at Austin, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition, and those who have been impacted by incarceration. The main function of the Planning Council is to ensure the successful implementation of the A/TCRRT's strategic plan through direct participation in plan activities, the recruitment of stakeholders and volunteers to undertake plan activities, dedication of organizational resources, identification of funding resources, and oversight of A/TCRRT staff.

At the close of its first decade of existence, the A/TCRRT embarked on a strategic planning process to develop goals and objectives to start its second decade of work. An initial step in this process was reconsideration of the A/TCRRT's vision and mission. The identified strategic goals and objectives are designed to achieve the following vision and mission:

VISION: To be a community that values and supports the successful reentry and integration of formerly incarcerated persons and individuals with criminal histories.

MISSION: To be a robust collaborative that promotes public safety through effective reentry and integration of formerly incarcerated persons and individuals with criminal histories.

SCOPE OF WORK

The A/TCRRT seeks consulting services to help facilitate the implementation of the goals outlined in the strategic plan. Services are requested for one year.

Services include:

Coalition Coordination

- Coordinate with A/TCRRT Planning Council, Executive Committee, Issue Area Teams/Goal Leaders, and community stakeholders to implement collaborative, community-wide strategies that achieve the A/TCRRT's mission.
- Ensure that the results of strategic plan tasks are compiled and shared with the A/TCRRT partners and reentry stakeholders.
- Convene forums of A/TCRRT partners, community leaders, criminal justice professionals, health and human services providers, government agencies, and businesses to address emergent and chronic needs in the reentry community and raise awareness as directed by the Planning Council.
- Serve as liaison and point-person in advocating A/TCRRT's positions with elected and career officials at the local, state, and federal levels as directed by the Executive Committee.
- Facilitate work group meetings monthly or as needed; workgroup meetings will be aligned with goals outlined in strategic plan.
- Provide all administrative and logistical support for committee meetings including: room reservations, invitations, meeting materials, and committee notes.
- Provide Officers and Work Group Leaders with assistance developing agendas and facilitating meetings in accordance with A/TCRRT goals.

Public Relations

- Speak publicly on behalf of A/TCRRT to partner groups, community organizations, government agencies, and business groups.
- Oversee communication tasks related to activities, tasks, publications, and reentry updates through the website, e-mails, awareness presentations, and other communication strategies.

A/TCRRT Activities and Initiatives

- Provide coordination and staff support to Planning Council, Executive Committee, Roundtable Fellow and Work Group Teams/Committees in the development and implementation of the A/TCRRT activities and initiatives, including contracted deliverables.
- Support the selection process, onboarding, mentorship, and ongoing supervision of the Roundtable Fellow.
- Ensure that reports on A/TCRRT activities and initiatives are completed, approved by the Planning Council, and disseminated in the community, including quarterly newsletters and an annual report.
- Support the development and ongoing management of the Reentry Advocacy Program.
- Lead the strategic planning process in partnership with the Executive Committee.

Financial Management and Fund Development

- Assist in the creation of stronger financial management systems and processes in collaboration with the Executive Committee.
- Assist in the preparation of funding contracts, memorandums of understanding, and grant/foundation applications.
- Apply for a minimum of \$50,000 in grants or other funding to support A/TCRRT operations each year.

Outcomes include completion of Year 5 Goals in Strategic Plan, the development of a new five-year strategic plan, completion of current funder contract deliverables, and Final Report outlining activities of the A/TCRRT during the fiscal year.

See attached Strategic Plan, Progress Report, and County Contract Deliverables for detailed information on goals and timelines.

Please send a letter of interest to Don Tracy, Chair, Austin/Travis County Re-Entry Roundtable. Letter should include qualifications, experience doing similar work, interest in the mission, and estimated cost for services. Please send no more than a two-page letter of interest to dtracy@austincc.edu by 5pm on Monday, November 29th, 2021. Please use the subject line "RRT Consultant Letter of Interest."



FY2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2017

BACKGROUND

The Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable (Roundtable), modeled after the National Reentry Roundtable convened by the Urban Institute, is an ongoing forum for academics, practitioners, community leaders, policy makers, advocates, and formerly incarcerated individuals working to address the challenges to effective reentry and reintegration of persons with criminal histories. The Roundtable is a volunteer organization, and membership is open to organizations and individuals who confirm their interest in supporting its mission and work. Members include representatives from governmental agencies, academic institutions, community organizations and other nongovernmental entities, individuals with lived experience in the criminal justice system, and other community representatives.

In September 2003, the Roundtable's initial Planning Council was formed, comprised of multiple city and county stakeholders. The first forum, held in April 2004, kicked off the organization with a plan to encourage reentry stakeholders to break down the silos in which they were operating. The Roundtable was formed as a strategy and venue for leaders to come together for more effective reintegration for those returning to our community, and is governed by the Planning Council, which meets monthly. The Planning Council is a body of stakeholder representatives that provides general oversight of the collaborative and assures that the work of the Roundtable is consistent with its mission, vision, and core values.

The Roundtable has developed a number of planning documents since its inception. The most recent strategic plan was adopted in 2014 and served as a blueprint for critical growth and accomplishments over the past three years. The FY2018-2022 plan builds on the momentum of the prior plan but re-envisioned the strategic goals of the Roundtable to maximize participation from Planning Council members and other community members, as well as to continue the original goal of breaking down silos among reentry stakeholders. See Appendix A for a listing of Planning Council members on the date this strategic plan was adopted.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In 2017, the Roundtable hired Woollard Nichols & Associates to develop its FY2018-2022 Strategic Plan. The process began with brief phone interviews with planning council members focusing on current strengths, challenges, and opportunities facing the Roundtable. A summary of that information was compiled and presented at the May 8th Planning Council meeting. Also at the May 8th meeting, Planning Council members identified key accomplishments of the Roundtable in its 13-year history, including engaging the voices of persons with lived experience to leverage more effective advocacy efforts; advocating for local Ban the Box and Fair Chance Hiring initiatives; and the development of the Advocacy Fellowship to build the capacity of the Roundtable and support the leadership and career goals of persons with lived experience in the criminal justice system.

An introductory conversation focused on developing a theory of change occurred on Thursday, May 25th, and an all-day planning session was held on Saturday, June 3rd with the objectives of reviewing and affirming an organizational identity statement including the core purpose, vision and values of the organization as well as developing strategic goals to guide the Roundtable's activities for the next five years.

Portions of the Planning Council meetings on June 12th and July 10th were dedicated to strategic planning conversations with the intent to confirm the organization's core values, and increase planning council member engagement in the plan activities. In addition, a strategic planning committee met on June 22nd and June 29th to continue to hone the identity statement and identify potential strategies (see Appendix B for a list of the members of the committee). At the August 14th Planning Council meeting, the Planning Council discussed and finalized the strategic goals and work areas. The strategic plan was approved by the Planning Council on September 11th.

ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY STATEMENT

Our **vision** is a community that values and supports equity for formerly incarcerated persons and individuals with criminal histories.

Our **mission** is to be a robust collaborative promoting safe and healthy communities through effective reentry and reintegration of formerly incarcerated persons and individuals with criminal histories.

Our core values are:

- **Community Voice** – we listen to and engage people with lived experience in the criminal justice system and communities impacted by the criminal justice system.
- **Inclusion** – we include multiple perspectives on how to achieve safe and healthy communities through effective reentry and reintegration.
- **Respect** – we honor the basic dignity of every person and support relationship building as a means to overcome challenges.
- **Equity** – we focus on disparities and inequities in system delivery and we are not afraid to ask hard questions to facilitate system change.
- **Preventing Incarceration** – we champion strategies that offer alternatives to jail/incarceration whenever possible.

Our intended impacts:

- Policy and practice changes that lead to reductions in recidivism and revocations from community supervision with the ultimate aim of reducing the number of incarcerated persons in Travis County.
- Improved access to housing, job opportunities, and physical and behavioral health care for persons with criminal backgrounds in Travis County.

- Shifted public perception of people with criminal justice involvement so that every person in Travis County understands that people with criminal histories are contributing members of society.

We serve...

- Those impacted by the criminal justice system, including justice-involved individuals, victims, families and communities;
- Criminal justice institutions; and
- Private and public-sector entities engaged in providing services and/or advocating for issues that impact reentry.

In Travis County, Texas, and statewide on issues that impact reentry locally.

How we work:

- We engage diverse stakeholders impacted by reentry.
- We convene dialogue and critical conversations.
- We advocate to support institutional and public policy change.
- We partner to broaden our impact.

We are **sustainable** through:

- Local government contracts (City of Austin, Travis County, Integral Care)
- Foundations (Shield-Ayres)
- Corporate sponsorships and support

Our **competitive advantages** are:

- Over a decade of experience engaging multiple sectors impacted by reentry including persons with lived experience in the criminal justice system, decision makers from criminal justice systems, and providers of reentry services.
- Leadership from Advocacy Fellows and connection with the Reentry Advocacy Project.
- A network of over 1000 local stakeholders on e-newsletter and social media platforms.

5-YEAR GOALS AND STRATEGIES

GOAL	STRATEGIES	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
<p>(1) Engage the community to better understand the impacts of incarceration and successful reentry on Travis County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engage with other regional collaborative initiatives to pinpoint shared priorities ○ Conduct outreach in areas of Travis County disparately impacted by incarceration ○ Engage with representatives or organizations representing victims and families of incarcerated persons ○ Seek opportunities for partnerships with the faith community ○ Host events to educate and mobilize support for local solutions for reducing incarceration and recidivism ○ Seek opportunities to share the stories of persons with lived experience in the criminal justice system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnerships or co-hosted events with other collaborations ○ New Planning Council members representing priority outreach areas ○ Number of people engaged ○ New communities/ populations engaged ○ Number of media platforms engaged 	<p>Community Engagement work group; Advocacy Fellows; RRT Consultant; Reentry Advocacy Project (RAP)</p>
<p>(2) Promote solutions that assist individuals involved in the justice system to navigate their situation by limiting incarceration if possible and supporting their reentry if necessary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Study data and current trends impacting access to the reentry population ○ Convene dialogue and promote collaborations with relevant stakeholders to identify gaps and opportunities for action in specific issue areas such employment, education, physical and behavioral health care, and housing stability ○ Strengthen partnerships with regional and national researchers to promote evaluation of existing programs and implementation of best practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnerships or co-sponsored initiatives with other collaborations ○ Diversity of systems impacted ○ Number of system changes implemented ○ New funding 	<p>Diversion/ Navigation work group; Advocacy Fellows; RRT Consultant; Reentry Advocacy Project (RAP)</p>

GOAL	STRATEGIES	HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS	WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
(3) Eliminate unnecessary collateral consequences and social stigma that impede reintegration and increase the likelihood of recidivism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advocate for state and local policies that promote the full restoration of rights and status as close as possible to sentence completion ○ Support public and institutional policies that allow more people to participate in remedies to address collateral consequences and make remedies easier to access ○ Support clear and transparent standards for third-party decision makers such as employers, housing bodies, and educational institutions to help reduce barriers presented by criminal records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New policies and practices enacted ○ Diversity of systems and issue areas engaged ○ New partnerships 	Collateral Consequences work group; Advocacy Fellows; RRT Consultant; Reentry Advocacy Project (RAP)
(4) Strengthen organizational capacity to support the Roundtable's strategic goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Secure sustainable resources to fund Roundtable operations ○ Engage potential partners in discussions about joint funding opportunities ○ Strengthen leadership pipeline ○ Assess current committee structure ○ Update and streamline Roundtable communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New website and logo ○ Develop leadership pipeline ○ Fellowship program fully funded 	Executive Committee; Advocacy Fellows; RRT Consultant

APPENDIX 1: PLANNING COUNCIL MEMBERS AND SUPPORT

2017 Planning Council:

Helen Gaebler, JD, UT School of Law (Chair)

Kenneth Thompson, Texas Department of Family & Protective Services (Vice Chair/Nominating Committee Chair)

Sarah Pahl Worthington, MSSW, JD, Texas RioGrande Legal Aid (Immediate Past Chair)

Reggie Smith, Community Member (Executive Committee RAP Representative)

Michelle Collins, Integral Care

Sandra Eames, Ed.D., Austin Community College

Rebecca Farrell, Ph.D., Community Representative

Darla Gay, Travis County District Attorney's Office

Darwin Hamilton, Community Representative

Lisa Howard, Texas Department of Criminal Justice

Karen Keith, Community Representative

Mary Moran, Travis County Sheriff's Office

Rodolfo (Rudy) Pérez, Jr., Travis County Adult Probation

Kimberly Pierce, Travis County Justice Planning

Jaime Rodriguez, RAC, FBOP, U.S. Bureau of Prisons

Douglas Smith, MSSW, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition

Mia Sneed, Community Representative

Laura Sovine, LMSW-AP, Austin Recovery

DeWayne Street, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas

Louella Tate, Ph.D., Community Representative

Pete Valdez, City of Austin Downtown Community Court

Bree Williams, LMSW, Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO)

Advocacy Fellow: Annette Price

Backbone Consultants: Kelly Nichols & KiYa Moghaddam, Woollard Nichols & Associates

APPENDIX 2: STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Helen Gaebler, JD, UT School of Law (Chair)

Reggie Smith, Community Member (Executive Committee RAP Representative)

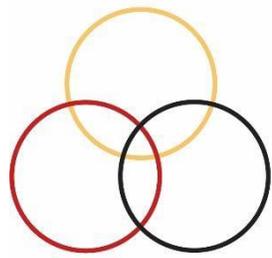
Michelle Collins, Integral Care

Rebecca Farrell, Ph.D., Community Representative

Annette Price, Advocacy Fellow

Mia Sneed, Community Representative

Abby Tatkow, Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO), Proxy Member



AUSTIN·TRAVIS COUNTY

REENTRY ROUNDTABLE

Reentry Progress Report & Recommendations

September 2020

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	3
Introduction & Background	4
Austin/Travis County Reentry FAQs	5
Reentry Population in Travis County.....	8
Typical Reentry Journeys	11
Reentry Planning at Area Criminal Justice Institutions.....	13
Recommendations & Project Plan.....	16
Work Group Recommendations.....	16
Project Plan	18
Appendix 1: Key Themes: Focus Groups with Individuals in Reentry & their Families.....	21
Appendix 2: Key Themes: Criminal Justice System Stakeholder Interviews.....	26
Appendix 3: Methodology/Data Collection Overview.....	28

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- Quentin Jackson
- David Johnson
- Marissa Latta
- Maggie Luna
- Zachary Mahon
- Lisa Matt
- Hank Perret
- Kelly Peterson
- Kaleigh Phelan
- Laurie Pherigo
- Jorge Renaud
- Matt Smith
- Jennifer Tucker
- Peter Valdez

Special thanks to Roundtable volunteer Lily Feldman, MPAff '20, University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs, who created a 2019 Travis County Reentry Demographic Profile upon which much of the data in this report is based.

Special thanks to Helen Gaebler, Past Chair of the Roundtable and Professor at the University of Texas School of Law, as well as to the students who participated in her fall 2019 *Topics in Reentry* course and assisted in conducting research for this project.

Special thanks to University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs Professor Charlie Garden and the students in her spring 2020 *Consulting for Social Impact* course: Becca Bice, Sam D’Arcangelo, Stephen Fox and Kelly Peterson for their support in piloting a virtual focus group and sharing insights for the rest of the process.

Special thanks to Matt Smith with Aunt Bertha for assisting with data analysis and GIS maps.

Introduction & Background

The Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable (Roundtable) is an ongoing forum for academics, practitioners, community leaders, policy makers, advocates, and formerly incarcerated individuals working to address the challenges to effective reentry and reintegration of persons with criminal histories. The Roundtable is a volunteer organization, and membership is open to organizations and individuals who confirm their interest in supporting its mission and work. Members include representatives from governmental agencies, academic institutions, community organizations and other nongovernmental entities, individuals with lived experience in the criminal justice system, and other community representatives.

This report is submitted to the City of Austin Downtown Community Court and Travis County Justice Planning as required documentation for financial support of the Roundtable. The City of Austin and Travis County contract with the Roundtable to improve outcomes for individuals reintegrating into the community from incarceration. This report meets the following FY19-20 contract deliverables:

City of Austin: Final report on practices and release data for jail and prison facilities that release individuals to the Austin/Travis County area. Summary report to include data analysis of research, copy of data obtained from jail and prison facilities, and recommendations based on that research which may include, but is not limited to state policies that could be considered by the legislature, local policies for service integration, and/or recommendations for social services.

Travis County: Design a project plan that could result in a robust strategy to provide resources to the reentry population in Travis County. This could take the form of a facilitated task force and/or an enhanced technological solution and/or any other ideas forwarded by the Reentry Roundtable.

To address the deliverables above, the working group developed learning objectives for their work:

- *What are the demographic characteristics of the reentry population in Travis County, and are there disparities, or over- or under-representation of any demographic characteristics of the reentry population in Travis County?*
- *Are there typical patterns of reentry pathways that we can identify to help us better understand the needs of persons returning to the Austin/Travis County community?*

These questions inform the structure of the report that follows.

Austin/Travis County Reentry FAQs

What is reentry?

Reentry is the transition of individuals from incarceration back into the community from incarceration. Incarceration includes both prisons and jails, although much of the current emphasis on reentry in the policy, practitioner, and academic communities focuses on prison reentry. For the purposes of this report, reentry includes all persons who have served at least some time in incarceration or on community supervision (probation).¹

From which institutions do people returning from jail or prison in Travis County exit?

While individuals living in Austin/Travis County who are exiting incarceration may be returning from federal, state and/or local correctional institutions across the country, the vast majority of persons reintegrating in Austin/Travis County exit from the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) system or the Travis County Jail and/or Travis County Correctional Complex (TCCC) operated by the Travis County Sheriff's Office (TCSO). Individuals returning from the TDCJ system have been convicted and are either released having completed their sentence or may be released on parole (an allowance to serve the remainder of a sentence in the community with supervision). Individuals returning from the Travis County Jail and/or TCCC may be released on pre-release bond and awaiting trial; may be released through participation in a jail diversion program; or may have completed their sentence.

Individuals serving time in the TDCJ system may be incarcerated in a state prison, a state jail, a Substance Abuse Felony Punishment Facility (SAFPF), or a transfer facility.² Those sentenced to state jail are incarcerated for a two-year period or less with no eligibility for parole.³ While most state jails and prisons are operated by TDCJ, some state jails and prisons are operated by private prison corporations.⁴

In addition, TDCJ and the Federal Bureau of Prisons contract with private entities to operate residential reentry centers (commonly known as halfway houses). Residential reentry centers are for individuals released on parole or mandatory supervision; there are two adjacent residential reentry centers in Travis County co-located on the TCCC campus, including the Austin Transitional Center which provides transitional housing for those released from TDCJ with upcoming parole dates and individuals enrolled in TDCJ's residential substance abuse treatment program; and the Austin Residential Reentry Center which houses mostly inmates transitioning from federal prison (both facilities are operated by CoreCivic, a private corrections corporation).

¹ In general, the Roundtable focuses its efforts on anyone who is system-involved (e.g. has a criminal history including those who have only an arrest record as well as those who have been convicted and are serving a sentence.² TDCJ Unit Directory. Online at www.tdcj.texas.gov/unit_directory/index.html.

³ The term state jail is a misnomer; Texas state jails are actually minimum-security prison facilities. Source: Texas Jail Project.

⁴ TDCJ Private Facility Contract Monitoring/Oversight Division. Online at www.tdcj.texas.gov/divisions/pf/index.html.

What are the correctional facilities in the Austin region?

Name	Capacity (Beds)	Privately Operated	Private Corporation	Gender Served
Austin Transitional Center	435	Yes	CoreCivic	mixed gender
Austin Residential Reentry Center	116	Yes	CoreCivic	mixed gender
Blackwell-Thurman Criminal Justice Center/Travis County Jail	286	No	n/a	mixed gender
Federal Correctional Institution - Bastrop	1238	No	n/a	men
Kyle Correctional Center	520	Yes	Management & Training Corporation (MTC)	men
Halbert Substance Abuse Facility	612	No	n/a	women
Lockhart Correctional Facility	1000	Yes	Management & Training Corporation (MTC)	women
Travis County Correctional Complex	3095	No	n/a	mixed gender
Travis County State Jail	1161	No	n/a	men

Sources: TDCJ, TCSO, Federal Bureau of Prisons

Note: while this list includes correctional facilities in the Austin area, there is no certainty that an individual sentenced in Travis County to TDCJ will serve a sentence in this geographic area, nor will individuals released from the TDCJ system to Austin/Travis County necessarily have resided in the Austin/Travis County area prior to their incarceration.

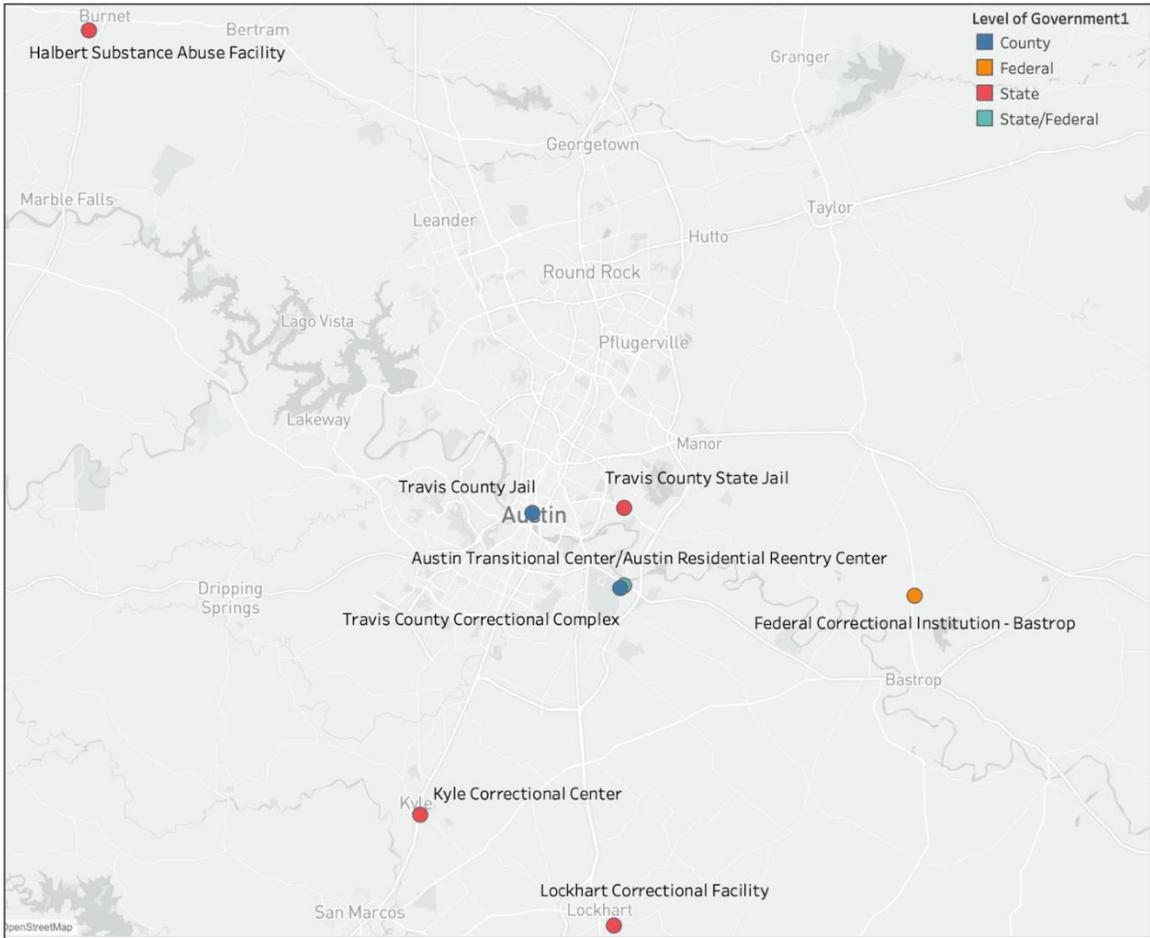


Figure 1: Correctional Facilities in the Austin MSA Region

Reentry Population in Travis County

How many persons are released from jail or prison to Austin/Travis County annually?⁵

- 2,642 individuals were released due to completion of sentence from state prison, state jail or SAFFP to Travis County in 2019 (this has remained relatively steady for the four preceding years; the 4-year average was 2,652);^{6,7}
- 958 individuals who were convicted in Travis County were released from state prison or SAFFP to parole supervision in 2018;^{8,9}
- 9,877 individuals were on community supervision (adult probation) in Travis County in 2018;¹⁰ and
- 37,767 releases from the Travis County Jail/TCCC occurred in 2019, 25,333 of which appear to be unique (unduplicated) individuals.¹¹
- It appears that less than fifty individuals are released from the federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) system to Travis County annually;¹² thus we can estimate that a very small proportion of the persons released to Austin/Travis County post-incarceration are exiting the federal system.

In any given year, we can estimate that nearly 40,000 individuals, or about 3% of the total population of Travis County, experience reentry from prison or jail, and/or are on some form of community supervision.

Where do individuals exiting incarceration live when they are released?

We can surmise that the geographic trends of individuals returning from jail or prison are likely to follow similar trends to other vulnerable populations in the Austin metro area; namely, the suburbanization of poverty to eastern Travis County, noted in the 2014 Roundtable Reentry Report Card:¹³

Rather than locating on the east side of Austin, parolees are increasingly residing in communities on the east side of Travis County outside of Austin. Just as the Austin metropolitan area has seen an extreme suburbanization of poverty over the past decade, we are potentially seeing that the geographic distribution of parole is following the same course. To the extent that returning prisoners are moving outside of the City of Austin, there are potentially major ramifications. For instance, with social services concentrated in central Austin, the migration of parolees to communities further away from the center of town

⁵ Note that the data in this section was received at different times from a number of sources cited below and represents an estimate of the annual reentry population based on information received over different time periods.

⁶ TDCJ Release Data 2019 (public information request 2020).

⁷ TDCJ Release Data 2016-18 (public information request 2019).

⁸ TDCJ Statistical Report: Fiscal Year 2018, p.51.

⁹ There are likely many more individuals released on parole who were convicted in other counties and released to Travis County, but this figure was not available at the time this report was published.

¹⁰ TDCJ Release Data 2016-18 (public information request 2019).

¹¹ Travis County Sheriff's Office Response to Public Information Request, February 24th, 2020.

¹²

¹³ 2014 Roundtable Reentry Report Card. Online at www.reentryroundtable.org/roundtable-publications/

Who experiences reentry in Austin/Travis County?

Based on 2018 data, we know the following demographic characteristics about the reentry population in Travis County:¹⁵

Releases from State Prison to Travis County:

- 78% male
- Approximately two-thirds are people of color
- Average age is late 30s
- About 30% are incarcerated for a violent offense
- Approximately 20% have High School diploma or GED

Releases from State Jail to Travis County:

- 83% male
- Approximately two-thirds are people of color
- Range in age from late 30s to early 40s
- Approximately 90% incarcerated for a Property or Drug Offense
- Approximately 7% of released individuals have their High School diploma or GED

Community Supervision (Adult Probation):

- Approximately 75% male
- Approximately two-thirds are people of color
- Age range in mid 30s
- Approximately 53% released with a misdemeanor
- Approximately 73% of released individuals either have their High School diploma or GED, or have some college or higher

¹⁵ TDCJ Release Data 2016-18 (public information request 2019).

Understanding Typical Reentry Journeys

Understanding the journeys of persons in reentry both during and after incarceration is critical to providing the appropriate resources and services to support their success and prevent a return to incarceration. Journey maps are a visual mechanism to better understand and depict the experiences that persons exiting jail or prison go through. The three journey maps below are based on focus groups conducted with reentering individuals in Travis County and their families. While there is no singular experience that defines an individual's journey from jail or prison, the journey maps are composite stories of a number of commonly cited thoughts, feelings and experiences during the reentry process, and hold a number of considerations for future planning and practices.



Figure 3: "Sally" Journey Map photo (source: Shutterstock)



Figure 4: "Ronald" Journey Map photo (source: Shutterstock)



Figure 5: "Marcos" Journey Map photo (source: Shutterstock)

*Our research showed that several dynamic risk factors - namely health, employment, housing, skill development, mentorship, social networks, and organization type - significantly affect the success of reentry. **Successful Reentry: A Community-Level Analysis, Harvard University Institute of Politics Criminal Justice Policy Group (December 2019)***

Sally's Journey: Facing the Collateral Consequences of Substance Abuse

Sally has a history of **trauma and abuse** which **contributed to many years of alcohol and drug misuse**. She was incarcerated three times for drug-related offenses, the last time for 18 months.

Sally **obtained her GED in prison** but was **unable to access other vocational programs** due to program requirements and transfers. She did attend religious services, parenting classes, and Narcotics Anonymous in prison.

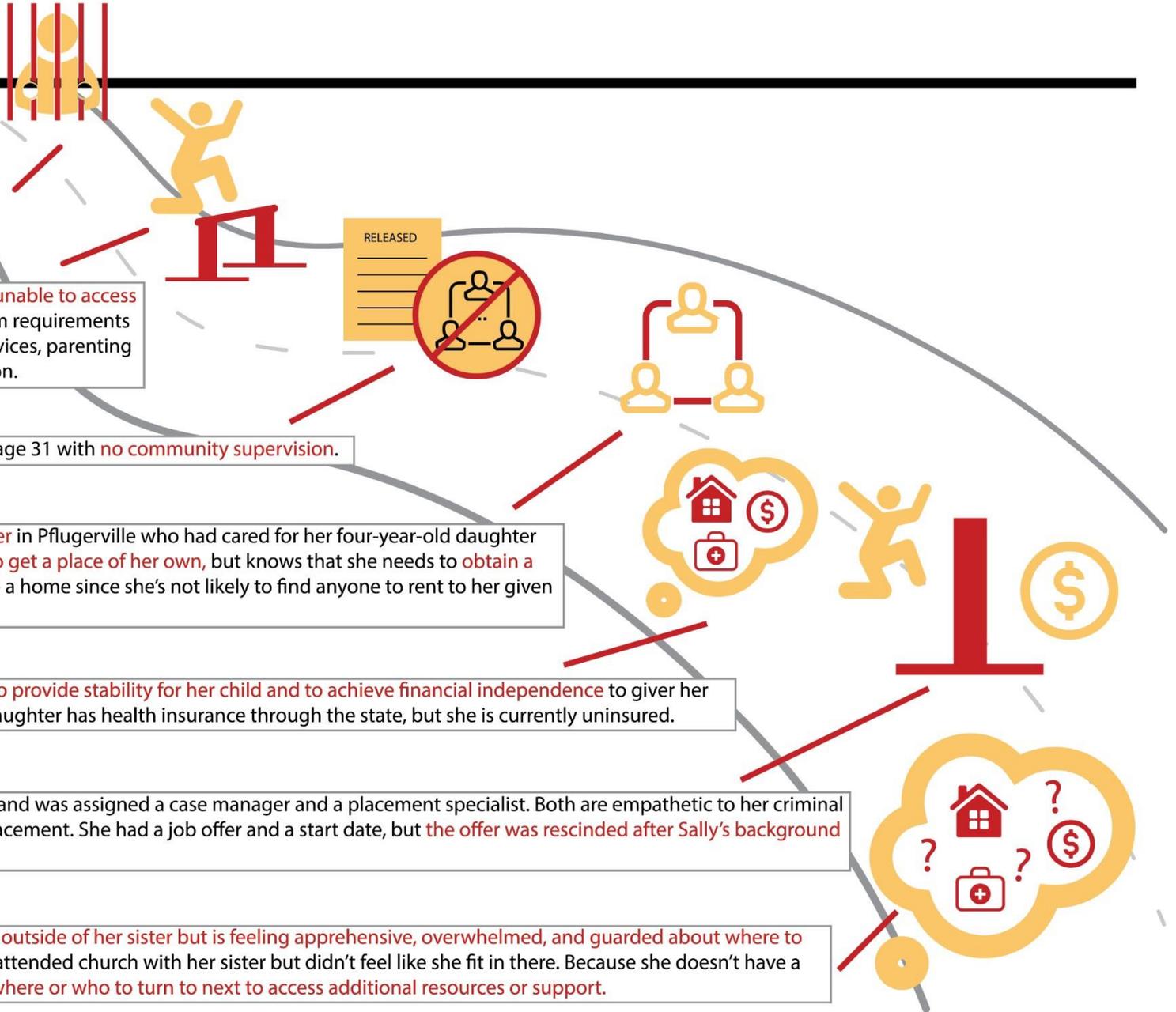
Sally was released from a state jail unit at age 31 with **no community supervision**.

Upon release, Sally **moved in with her sister** in Pflugerville who had cared for her four-year-old daughter during her incarceration. She would **like to get a place of her own**, but knows that she needs to **obtain a steady income first** to save up to purchase a home since she's not likely to find anyone to rent to her given her record.

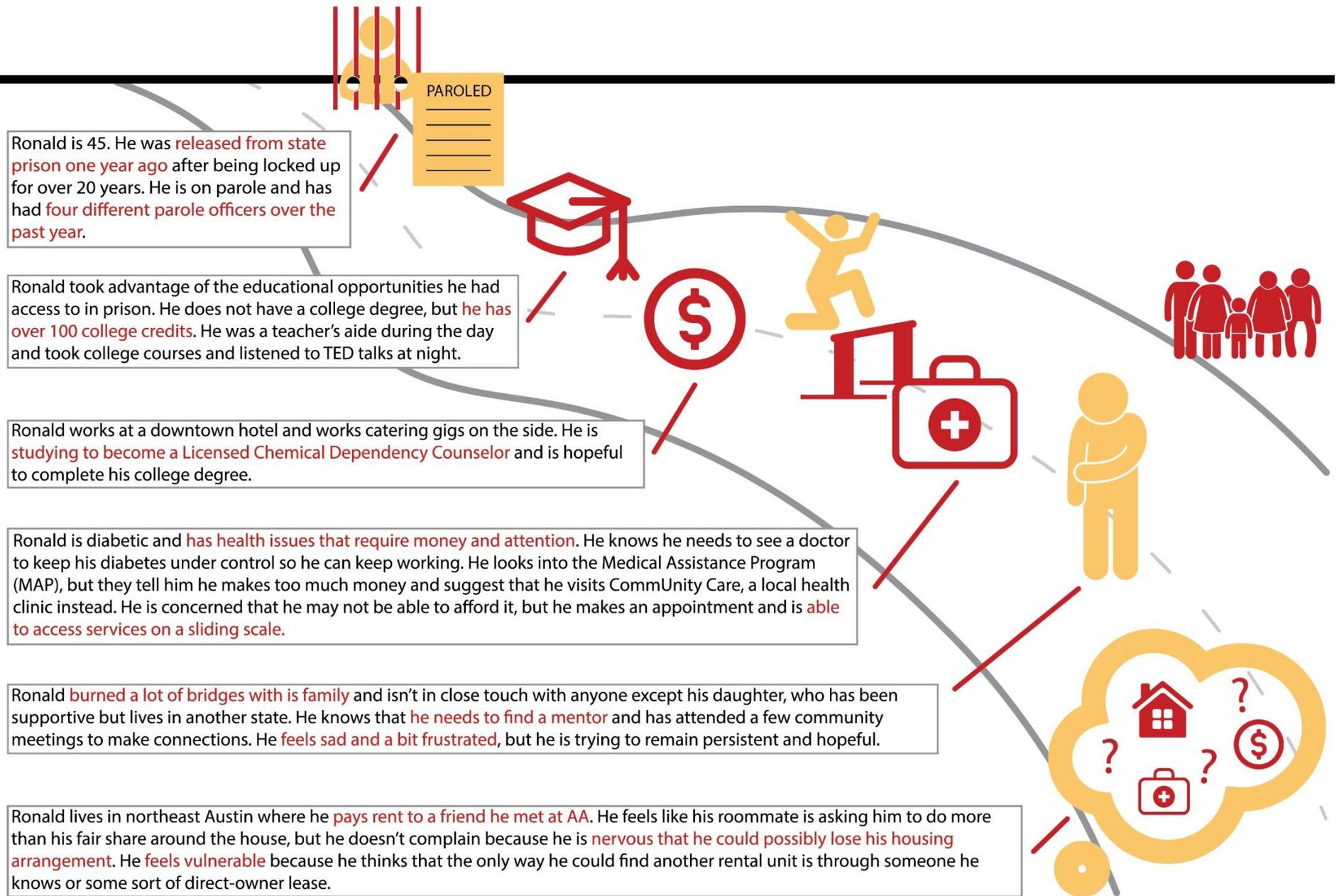
Sally's biggest **hopes upon release were to provide stability for her child and to achieve financial independence** to give her daughter a better life than she had. Her daughter has health insurance through the state, but she is currently uninsured.

Sally **sought assistance with finding a job** and was assigned a case manager and a placement specialist. Both are empathetic to her criminal background but say it will be a difficult placement. She had a job offer and a start date, but **the offer was rescinded after Sally's background check**.

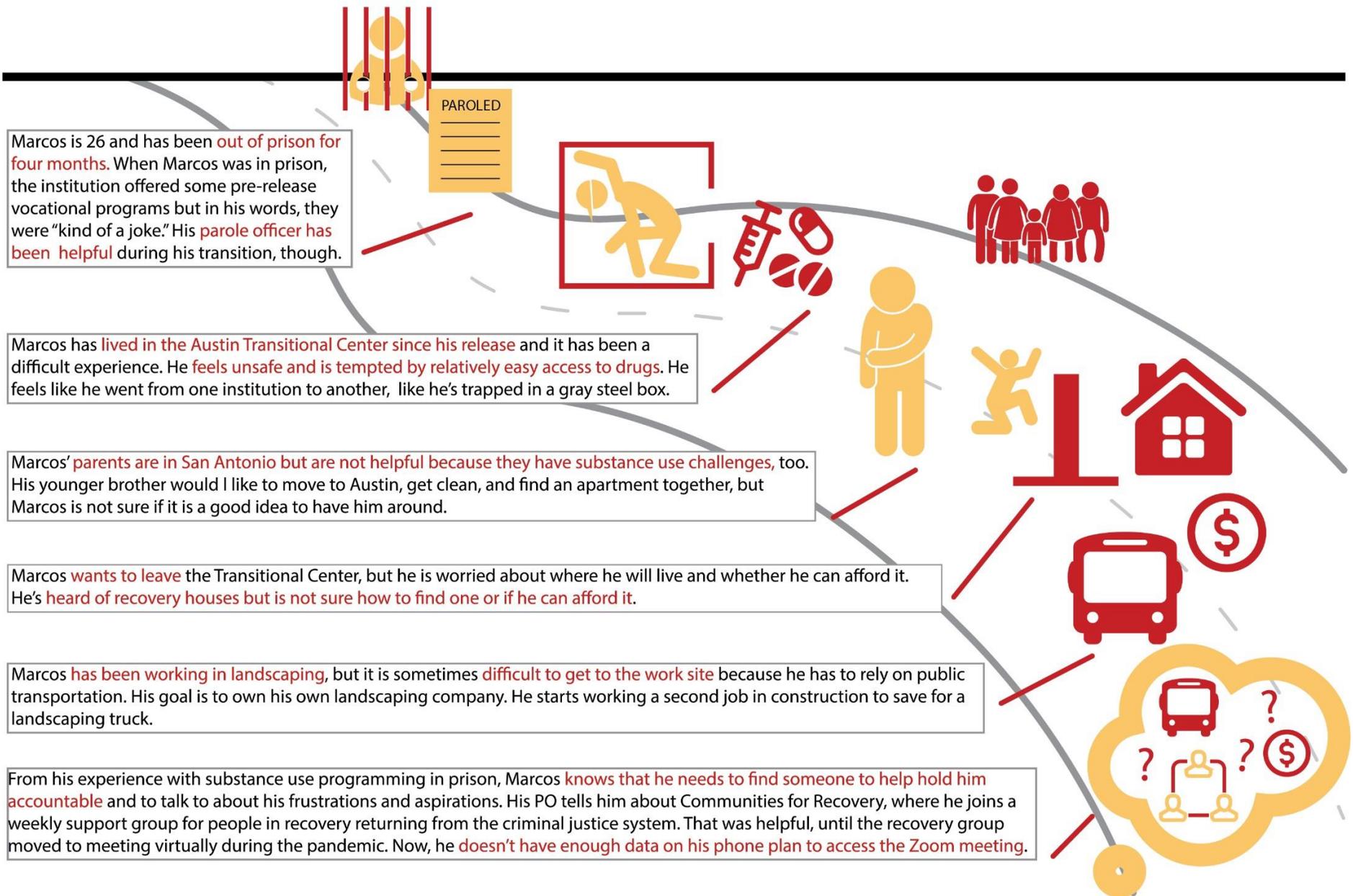
Sally would **like to find a support network outside of her sister** but is feeling **apprehensive, overwhelmed, and guarded** about where to **turn** due to her lack of success so far. She attended church with her sister but didn't feel like she fit in there. Because she doesn't have a parole or probation officer, she is **unsure where or who to turn to next to access additional resources or support**.



Ronald's Journey: Seeking Wellness & Purpose Without a Support Network



Marcos' Journey: Big Challenges & Big Dreams



Considerations for Future Planning

It is important to recognize that some things about the current reentry system are working, and that even against overwhelming challenges, many individuals channel their strengths into a positive path forward. Here are some quotes from focus group participants about the assets they utilized during their reentry process:

I just refused to be denied when I knew that people had resources.

[Recovery self-help programs] allowed me to see that I can overcome the obstacles that I am going through.

Educational opportunities and things of that nature are inconsistent within the system... You have to look for opportunities to do things for yourself.

[Self-advocated for a transfer to a unit with a CDL program] I bothered them until they finally sent me there.

I am proud of the jobs I had in TDC. I thought I did really well with them.

[My parole officer] is possibly one of the reasons I am talking to you today in the free world. He was encouraging. He was just a nice person. That made a world of difference.

This process also uncovered several considerations for system improvements, based on a review of institutional practices, interviews with institutional stakeholders as well as the voices of those who have been incarcerated and their allies:

- Some individuals have access to resources and planning, but it is inconsistent.
- Reentry services are typically not tailored to meet individual needs.
- Reentry planning typically does not happen until the final weeks of incarceration.
- Some individuals appear to be discharged on particularly fragile footing, lacking immediate basic needs, including shelter, transportation, medicine and/or access to personal identification documents.
- Families are not often engaged in the reentry process.
- Accessing resources is overwhelming, both for reentering individuals and their reentry counselors.
- Behavioral health challenges threaten successful reentry.
- Barriers to housing, employment and health care are real and must be addressed.

Recommendations & Project Plan

Most criminal justice practitioners, agencies, and community- and faith-based providers do not have the resources to provide every adult leaving prison or jail with the services they need to reduce their likelihood of reoffending. The process of reentry is hindered by a lack of treatment services available to offenders before release from incarceration. Additionally, for those programs offered in the corrections setting, most are not evaluated, thus making it difficult to observe “what works.”

National Institute of Justice

Safe Streets & Second Chances is a national organization created with the goal of expanding evidence-driven reentry services and policy reforms across the United States.¹⁶ The principles they have created for their work offer a helpful framework for reentry programming and planning:¹⁷

- *In-prison reentry programming must be crafted with incentives to enhance participation and guided by the **best available evidence**.*
- *Enhance existing risk and needs assessment tools and classification processes to **ensure everyone is given access to recidivism reduction programs** that meet their needs.*
- *Expand access and funding for voluntary prison work programs to allow for the acquisition of **real-world job skills and prepare for successful reentry and sustainable employment** upon release.*
- *Expand access and funding for **continuing education and skilled-trades programming** at all levels.*
- *Evaluate and facilitate **public and private partnerships that improve pre- and post-release employment opportunities**.*
- *Prioritize funding and support for programs that demonstrate **evidence-driven practices** proven by randomized controlled trial, to help reduce recidivism.*

A holistic approach to offender reentry—one that emphasizes the challenges faced by offenders as they return, and the impact of their return on families, victims, and communities—is critical to addressing public safety.

The National Institute of Justice

¹⁶ Safe Streets & Second Chances. Online at safestreetsandsecondchances.com.

¹⁷ Ibid.

RECOMMENDATIONS

DURING INCARCERATION

- Support early, person-centered, proactive release planning while the individual is incarcerated.
- Ensure that the correctional system workforce is trained in evidence-based and promising practices that facilitate recovery from trauma.
- Develop positive working relationships between service providers and criminal justice institutions including parole to create pre-release connections for a warm handoff.
- Include family and outside supports in reentry and parole planning.

ADDRESSING IMMEDIATE REENTRY NEEDS

- Support the provision of basic needs including food, shelter, medication, identification/legal documents, and physical and behavioral health care during immediate transition from incarceration.
- Develop a centralized local reentry resource repository that is updated on an ongoing basis.
- Design and invest in a community reentry center to provide navigation support and individualized referrals to local services and resources according to a client's risks and needs.

ADDRESSING LONG-TERM REENTRY NEEDS

- Invest in housing, physical and behavioral healthcare, and vocational training for returning individuals.
- Improve coordination between criminal justice entities and the local Homeless Continuum of Care to develop a coordinated and community-based housing plan for people leaving state prison.
- Help those returning develop a pro-social worldview through peer support and positive community relationships.
- Address collateral consequences of incarceration through policies to eliminate barriers in housing, employment, education, and access to services.
- Explore technology solutions to promote effective reentry (e.g. mobile apps and remote check-in capability).
- Bolster the regional reentry workforce by investing in more case managers, peer support specialists, workforce/education specialists focused specifically on addressing the needs of persons experiencing reentry from jail or prison.

PROJECT PLAN

Activity	Supports which recommendation	Who	Timeline
Conduct reentry services landscape to assess current reentry service provision.	Develop a centralized local reentry resource repository that is updated on an ongoing basis	Roundtable, Aunt Bertha	Oct 2020 - June 2021
Highlight gaps in reentry service landscape for community investment.	Develop a centralized local reentry resource repository that is updated on an ongoing basis	Roundtable, Aunt Bertha	Oct 2020 - June 2021
Develop web/mobile application to support improved resource navigation, both for reentering individuals and persons supporting their reentry.	Develop a centralized local reentry resource repository that is updated on an ongoing basis; Explore technology solutions to promote effective reentry (e.g. mobile apps and remote check-in capability).	Roundtable, Aunt Bertha	July - September 2021
Create an enterprise application geared at reentry workforce professionals to improve reentry resource navigation and case management	Develop a centralized local reentry resource repository that is updated on an ongoing basis; Explore technology solutions to promote effective reentry (e.g. mobile apps and remote check-in capability).	Aunt Bertha	TBD
In partnership with Community Coalition for Health, pursue Robert Wood Johnson Community Solutions for Health Equity grant to support improved physical and behavioral outcomes for the Travis County reentry population	Invest in housing, physical and behavioral healthcare, and vocational training for returning individuals; Bolster the regional reentry workforce by investing in more case managers, peer support specialists, workforce/education specialists focused specifically on addressing the needs of persons experiencing reentry from jail or prison.	Roundtable, Community Coalition for Health	Fall 2020

Activity	Supports which recommendation	Who	Timeline
Strengthen institutional partner engagement in Roundtable.	Support early, person-centered, proactive release planning while the individual is incarcerated; Ensure that the correctional system workforce is trained in evidence-based and promising practices that facilitate recovery from trauma; Develop positive working relationships between service providers and criminal justice institutions including parole in order to create pre-release connections for a warm handoff; Include family and outside supports in reentry and parole planning; Support the provision of basic needs including food, shelter, medication, identification/legal documents, and physical and behavioral health care during immediate transition from incarceration.	Roundtable, institutional partners	FY21
Create communications plan to inform and engage policymakers.	All recommendations	Roundtable	FY21
Continue to advocate for increased investment and continued policies to address collateral consequences of incarceration.	Design and invest in a community reentry center to provide navigation support and individualized referrals to local services and resources according to a client's risks and needs; Invest in housing, physical and behavioral healthcare, and vocational training for returning individuals; Address collateral consequences of incarceration through policies to eliminate barriers in housing, employment, education, and access to services; Bolster the regional reentry workforce by investing in more case managers, peer support specialists, workforce/education specialists focused specifically on addressing the needs of persons experiencing reentry from jail or prison.	Roundtable, Advocacy partners	ongoing
Conduct a scan of peer city reentry centers (Philadelphia, DC, Baton Rouge)	Design and invest in a community reentry center to provide navigation support and individualized referrals to local services and resources according to a client's risks and needs.	TBD	As resources allow

Activity	Supports which recommendation	Who	Timeline
Convene task force to develop vision for reentry center and to identify potential costs (staffing structure, annual budget, facility requirements), cost savings and key considerations for implementation	Design and invest in a community reentry center to provide navigation support and individualized referrals to local services and resources according to a client’s risks and needs.	TBD	As resources allow
Participate in conversations with key stakeholders regarding proposed policy changes to TCDJ transitional housing and reentry housing planning	Improve coordination between criminal justice entities and the local Homeless Continuum of Care to develop a coordinated and community-based housing plan for people leaving state prison.	Roundtable, TCJC, ECHO, TDCJ Reentry	FY21

Appendix 1: Key Themes from Focus Groups with Individuals in Reentry and their Families

Preparing for Release

FORMERLY INCARCERATED

When asked about what their respective institutions did to prepare them for release, participants shared stories of variable vocational and educational opportunities.

“Educational opportunities and things of that nature are inconsistent within the system... You have to look for opportunities to do things for yourself.”

There were success stories shared where workshops and classes set individuals up for successful employment; while others shared that their previous education, sentence length, or facility program availability left them with limited (and often low quality) options.

“I am proud of the jobs I had in TDC. I thought I did really well with them.”

“They always give you an option of things to do but it’s hard, it’s like trying to fight for a space in there.”

Congruent with well-known risk factors for recidivism, participants expressed that their greatest concerns before and after release had to do with the access and maintenance of **housing**, **employment**, and **sobriety** (the latter of which was recognized as requisite to successfully maintain the former). Several participants shared that their respective releasing institutions did “nothing” to prepare them to overcome challenges to accessing these basic needs.

“They did not do too much of anything to help get us ready for the free world at all. I don’t think so. It was pretty much learn as you go.”

FAMILY MEMBERS

Family members described the excitement they experienced in anticipation of their loved one’s release; however, this was tempered by their common concerns of how to link their loved ones to **appropriate resources**, how to support their loved ones who had **experienced trauma in prison**, and concern about how their loved ones’ criminal histories would create **barriers to a “second chance”** at housing and employment.

“When they come out, we don’t know anything.”

Families felt ill-prepared by the system in terms of what to expect when their loved ones were released. They were often met with the responsibility to fill in the gaps of housing, transportation, and employment with no available resources to support this effort. Yet, they were left out of any and all reentry planning.

After Release: Collateral Consequences & Experiences on Parole, Probation

FORMERLY INCARCERATED

When asked about their experiences on parole, participants most often cited a **supportive parole officer** as being instrumental to their success. Not all participants had this experience but those that did, recognized this as an essential factor in their success. Participants shared that finding **safe, supportive transitional housing** and **employment** were some of the greatest barriers to meeting the conditions of their supervision – challenges that have been exacerbated by the impact of COVID-19.

"It's a challenge every step of the way."

Participants shared a common **struggle to locate and access resources** outside of prison. The most commonly cited sources of information were others in sober living housing and parole officers. Others shared local, Austin-based providers that were instrumental to their access to resources: Goodwill, Texas Fair Defense Project, AIDS Services of Austin, Salvation Army, and recovery self-help support groups (i.e., Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous).

"How do I bounce back from this?"

EMPLOYMENT

Several participants revealed that they encountered **significant barriers** to locating employment opportunities because of their criminal history. Those that were able to find work quickly, did so through the support of Goodwill or their support system. There are significantly more barriers to accessing employment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"They paint you a pretty picture in prison and they tell you that Austin is a second chance for housing and a second chance for jobs and education and all that but it's really not."

HOUSING

Barriers to housing because of criminal history were common experiences among most participants that did not have family or other support persons to live with after release. Participants who were connected with alternative sober living options, such as Oxford Houses, shared that these living situations were vital to their success; while others told stories of inadequate, unsafe transitional housing that made it challenging to stay sober and find employment.

"Housing is such an incredible issue."

HEALTHCARE

Several participants also revealed that accessing healthcare was **particularly challenging** after release. Many shared that, while difficult to initiate, MAP healthcare assistance and other supplemental insurance programs (i.e., Ryan White Assistance; VA health insurance) have been paramount to their continued healthcare needs. Experiences with local, community-based providers were variable wherein some were able to establish efficient care teams and others were not able to get the support they needed to take care of their chronic medical issues.

Coping with Trauma: Previous, During, and After Incarceration

FORMERLY INCARCERATED

Many participants described their experiences in prison as traumas. Trauma was also cited as a source of feeling isolated upon leaving prison. The lack of adequate mental health resources before and after prison were recognized as essential to helping individuals cope with mental health issues that place them at higher risk for recidivism.

"I'm not sure that trauma ever goes away. It certainly evolves and changes and you are better equipped to deal with it but I'm not sure that trauma ever disappears... we just learn to cope with it as it comes."

"I went to prison without even fully acknowledging or knowing the trauma that I had survived. When I got to prison, there was a whole lot of trauma-fying things that I didn't even recognize. At the time it was just day to day life."

"There is trauma associated with the experience. It was a rough go. I try not to think about it too much. There are moments where I have issues communicating with people because of what I experienced in prison. There is a stigma, but I try not to let it bother me."

Access to Mental Health Care: During and After Incarceration

The need for improved mental health care was a resounding theme throughout the focus groups with both family members and formerly incarcerated individuals.

"The mental health aspect of it I think is the biggest thing"

FORMERLY INCARCERATED

Participants who had mental health needs in prison were provided medications while in prison, but rarely appropriate therapeutic services. Those that were referred to treatment programs in prison found these programs to be ineffective.

"All of the reasons that we send people to prison are not solved or made better by people going to prison. If you are a drug addict and go to prison it doesn't solve your addiction issues or offer you treatment most of the time."

FAMILY MEMBERS

Family members also expressed concern for their loved ones' mental health – both the underlying issues that lead to their incarceration and the trauma they experienced during their incarceration.

"We have to go back to the root of the problem. How did they end up there? What is the underlying problem?... How can we address it, what can we do?..."

Collateral Consequences for Family: Preparing & After Release of Loved Ones

Families of individuals currently and formerly incarcerated are often overlooked in broader discussions of system reform.

"When they come out, we don't know anything."

While many participants shared a common narrative of families wary to trust their returning loved ones, many also cited that these same family and friends were still supportive and instrumental to their success – providing housing and basic needs.

FAMILY MEMBERS

Families bear the brunt of system resource and service gaps, which is often more than a financial but an emotional and mental burden as well. Families expressed concern about how to support the mental health needs of their loved ones, particularly as it relates to the underlying conditions that led them to prison and the experiences of being incarcerated. In addition, families are often faced with finding ways to provide them housing, transportation, and financial support in the face of significant barriers to their loved ones becoming self-sufficient.

"It's like having another child that you have to handhold through everything and be that support. It's pretty much like having another child in the home. They have no license, no job, and no cell phone. They have to get everything again... Not only are they like children in the sense of the support you have to provide for them initially, but they are also like second class citizens because of the limitations on what they can do."

A Vision for System Reform

FORMERLY INCARCERATED

When asked about what changes they would like to see made to the current system, the most common answers were: giving people the resources they need to **address basic needs and underlying issues**; **improved mental health services** both during and after prison; and provision of **peer mentors and**

counselors with lived experience who can help reduce the isolation, social stigma, and hopelessness of having been incarcerated.

"We need more strong and solid projects surrounded by social workers and attorneys to make every step in the process able and capable"

FAMILY MEMBERS

Supporting the Formerly Incarcerated

Family members would like to see their loved ones connected to **sufficient resources to meet basic needs**, such as housing, employment placement, and mental health resources and support. Several family members mentioned the necessity of wrap around services including life skills classes and coaching. Others recognize the need for broader system reform that includes diversion of nonviolent offenders, treatment alternatives to prison, and strategic initiatives to reduce racial and ethnic disproportionalities that disadvantage Black and Brown individuals.

"Just to know where to go to find the resources that are needed, but also what resources are out there for families that have a formerly incarcerated man or woman coming out or that are already out and need some type of assistance. I would love to know."

Supporting the Families

Families would like to be **engaged in the reentry planning process** to better plan for and meet their loved ones' needs. Additionally, some members expressed a desire for support as primary custodians of their loved ones' basic needs, recognizing the financial burden that families incur when supporting their loved one in avoiding recidivism.

"What did I do wrong? It isolates you because people look down on you. It traumatizes the family, it really does. And there was no support... On a community basis, I wish there were more resources for the families."

*"It was galling how expensive it was ...Having that relationship with your inmate as they are incarcerated is a weird financial cost for families when they (the families) are not the ones in jail. **I don't understand why families are being penalized in the system.**"*

Appendix 2: Key Themes from Criminal Justice System Stakeholder Interviews

ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTHS & ASSETS

- Developing partnerships with criminal courts, other government agencies, and community-based organizations to augment available services;
- Employing a workforce with a holistic approach to supporting inmates; employees who respect and care about inmates as people
- Collaboration between different functional areas of the workforce (e.g. probation officers and counselors)
- Use of technology to support reentry – utilizing mobile apps that can be used for encouragement, reminders for individuals in reentry

CHALLENGES & ROADBLOCKS TO SUCCESSFUL REENTRY

- **Workforce/Staffing.** Staffing a reentry workforce instead of having to rely on volunteers, and better use of technology to ease staff stress level and caseload size which will allow them to spend more time with clients.
- **System Issues** including:
 - Uncertainty of not knowing how long a person is going to be in the facility (little communication between the client and the court system) impacts their ability to engage.
 - Differentiation between the shorter-term sentences and the longer-term sentences in the preparation for reentry.
 - It can also be a challenge when a judge orders a quick release because they have a short notice to arrange support in the community.
 - Redesigning the system so shorter-term facilities would look more like an educational facility than prisons.
- **Community perception** about the workforce – they are not law enforcement officers but helping people stay out of jail.
- Need for **improved service coordination/navigation** to connect clients to services/resources and develop a referral network for the entire county and/or regional
- Lack of **available and affordable housing**
- Lack of **family support.**

SUGGESTIONS TO PREVENT OR REDUCE RECIDIVISM

- Investment in prevention activities and earlier engagement of inmates
- Investment in alternatives to imprisonment
- Innovation - technology for job interviews, mentorships

- Addressing housing barriers for returning individual
- Addressing transportation challenges (e.g. offering a public transit pass good for 3 months)
- Creating community liaison positions for people reentering the community
- A centrally located community reentry center - not a "one-stop shop," but a fully staffed place with ongoing support where people can get support from social workers, reentry coaches and peer support
- Evidence-based trainings
- Training and professional development in trauma-informed approaches

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW THE ROUNDTABLE COULD BETTER SUPPORT CRIMINAL JUSTICE INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

- Strengthen relationships and engage more criminal justice system representatives, especially Parole
- Facilitate partnerships between criminal justice system and community-based organizations
- Help educate the community and local decisionmakers about the local, state and federal reentry process/system
- Address those exiting prison with unstable housing situations through the use of homeless outreach coordinators
- Support investment in more reentry coaches
- Addressing innovation in new practices, especially with current virtual dockets

Appendix 3: Methodology/Data Collection Overview

Focus Groups with Individuals in Reentry and their Families

The Roundtable sponsored a participatory process that began in January 2020 and ended in August 2020. Carl Hunter, the RAP Representative on the Roundtable Executive Committee, designed and facilitated the project which consistently engaged more than 20 people (not including survey or focus group participants) in a participatory planning process over the eight-month period. The group defined the purpose of their work together as follows: *The purpose of the RAP Focus Group and Community Forum Initiative is to identify the needs of justice-involved individuals by elevating the voices of those directly impacted.*

The problem/opportunity statement articulated by the group was as follows: *The Reentry Advocacy Project (RAP) is organizing virtual focus groups of formerly incarcerated persons and their family members. The results of these focus groups will be used to shape programs and policies to help people better thrive and succeed when reentering society after incarceration. We seek to facilitate focus groups of formerly incarcerated persons and their family members to understand the barriers they face reentering society. The goal of these focus groups is to better direct future policy and programmatic changes to alleviate these barriers to reentry.*

The group also developed a set of values to operate by throughout the co-design process:

- Honesty to self and team
- Respect for team and yourself
- Trust
- Accountability

The group conducted the work in three general phases:

- Phase 1: Preliminary Design and Pilot Focus Group
- Phase 2: Outreach & Pre-Focus Group Survey
- Phase 3: Focus Group Implementation

Initially, all of the engagement with persons with criminal backgrounds and their families/allies was planned to be done in person. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the group shifted to digital/virtual engagement. In addition, the group was initially planning to host a community forum to share the results of the focus groups which was also postponed due to the pandemic and will be incorporated with the Roundtable's planned activities for FY20-21.

Phase 1: Preliminary Design and Focus Group Pilot

The initial phase of the project was conducted in consultation with four students from Professor Charlee Garden's Consulting for Social Impact course at the University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs. The students engaged with the planning group to develop a set of questions and to recruit participants to participate in a virtual pilot focus group. The pilot focus group took place on April 2, 2020. It was 90 minutes and engaged 5 participants with lived experience in the justice system (4 male, 1 female). It was

facilitated by graduate students from the LBJ School of Public Affairs and occurred online using the platform Zoom.

Phase 2: Pre-Focus Group Survey & Outreach

The second phase of the project was to develop a pre-focus group questionnaire in order to screen participants to participate in focus groups, and to conduct outreach to potential focus group participants. The survey asked basic information about the location and length of incarceration, community supervision status, housing status, health insurance status, employment status, basic demographic information, and interest in participating in a virtual focus group. The survey also served as a mechanism to obtain consent to record the participant during the focus group (since all sessions were planned to be recorded, any participants not wishing to be recorded were not invited to participate in a focus group session). 54 individuals identifying as formerly incarcerated and 25 individuals identifying as a family member of a formerly incarcerated person completed the survey.

Phase 3: Focus Group Implementation

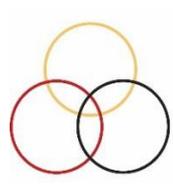
Five virtual focus groups were conducted via Zoom in July 2020. The focus groups included a total of 27 formerly incarcerated individuals (10 women, 27 men) and 9 family members (siblings, spouses, and parents). The schedule was as follows:

- Tuesday, July 14th (evening) – formerly incarcerated women (5 participants)
- Wednesday, July 15th (evening) – family members (9 participants)
- Thursday, July 16th (evening) – formerly incarcerated mixed gender (8 participants)
- Saturday, July 18th (morning) - formerly incarcerated mixed gender (8 participants)
- Saturday, July 18th (afternoon) - formerly incarcerated mixed gender (6 participants)

After the focus groups were completed, each session was transcribed using the recordings.

INSTITUTIONAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In addition, the Roundtable sought to inform the recommendations in this report by engaging the perspectives of persons working within the criminal justice system, including administrators, planners and those providing direct reentry support. Interviews were conducted in July 2020 with six criminal justice stakeholder entities: Management & Training Corporation (private prison corporation); TDCJ Reentry; TDCJ Parole; TCCC/TCSO; Travis County Adult Probation; and Core Civic (Austin Residential Reentry Center). In addition, a criminal justice stakeholder meeting was held on September 3rd, 2020 to share the results of the interviews with criminal justice stakeholders and to collect additional feedback on the interest of regional criminal justice partners in supporting successful reentry.



AUSTIN-TRAVIS COUNTY
**REENTRY
 ROUNDTABLE**

Executive Committee Update on Roundtable Work Plan Progress

April 2, 2021

	Activity	Strategic Plan Priority	Status	Deadline
Fellowship	Planning for Roundtable Fellowship	Organizational Capacity	Complete	Summer 2021
Contract Deliverables	Virtual Community Conversation on Jail & Prison Reentry	Community Engagement, Collateral Consequences	Complete	December 30, 2020
	Service Landscape Phase I (Survey/Data Collection)	Navigation & Diversion	Complete	March 31, 2021
	Service Landscape Phase II (Mapping/Analysis)	Navigation & Diversion	Underway	September 15, 2021
	Service Landscape Phase III (Website/Web Application)	Navigation & Diversion	Underway	September 15, 2021
Communications	2020 Annual Report	Community Engagement	Complete	January 2021
Miscellaneous	RWJF Health Equity Grant Application	Navigation & Diversion	Complete	February 1, 2021
	Best practice research on reentry centers	Navigation & Diversion	Complete	May 2021
	Relationship building with City Council and Travis County Commissioners	Community Engagement	Not started	Not Yet Set