

Cooperative Efforts and Interlocals

Public Safety, Criminal Justice, and Health & Human Services are three areas in which we have interlocals with the City of Austin and other municipalities. At the end of the year, the City of Austin and Travis County staff meet to determine if money is owed by each party.

The Central Booking Interlocal with the City of Austin has been in place since 1998 because it saves money for both entities. One, the County is statutorily responsible for the county jail and its operation. However, the City of Austin and other municipalities use the county jail so that they can save money by not operating their own jail that would have to meet the Jails Standards Commission's directives to run a constitutional jail.

StarFlight, 1985, is our greatest achievement in that it is the only aerial emergency medical service in Texas. It performed highly specialized emergency response services including emergency medical transport, still and swift-water rescue. It was enhanced in 1993 to include search and rescue, high angle rescue, fire suppression/aerial reconnaissance and law enforcement safety assistance.

StarFlight normally serves a 19 county area in Central Texas but gets requests from outside that area and those requests are approved on a case by case basis.

Another very important interlocal, in 1999 with the City of Austin involves **Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** to address the response time to Travis County/City of Austin residents on the ground. Work is performed cooperatively with the Fire Departments and the Emergency Services Districts' first responders in the County.

As of October 13, 2009, interlocals have been signed with all of the Emergency Services Districts and small cities in Travis County to ensure that training, credentials, and effective communications are in place to benefit all of the residents of the City of Austin/Travis County.

A long time **Health & Human Services Interlocal** has existed between the City of Austin/Travis County to promote public health issues, animal control, and health inspections and health permits, to name a few.

In 2009, during the rewriting of the County's Abatement Policy, I strongly recommended that the County sign an interlocal with the City of Austin's Small Business Development Program so that small businesses can be referred by the County for services provided that will strengthen the small business to create jobs for residents. That decision is pending.

I continue to support the interlocal between Travis County and Austin Travis County Mental Health and Mental Retardation which provides invaluable support to families. Two years ago, I supported a \$400,000 investment in a medical van that stabilizes people in need of meds wherever they are. This investment continues and I know we have saved lives.