City of Austin Municipal Court

Exceptional Customer Service

Effective and Impartial Administration of Justice

Organizational Health

2015 Annual Report

Striving to be the most effective, efficient and impartial municipal court in Texas

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Message

PRESIDING JUDGE
SHERRY STATMAN

The judiciary of the Austin Municipal Court strives to rigorously preserve, protect, and defend the constitution and laws of the United States, the State of Texas, and the City of Austin.

Our judges are some of the most experienced in the state and are often called upon for knowledge and advice by municipal judges from across Texas.

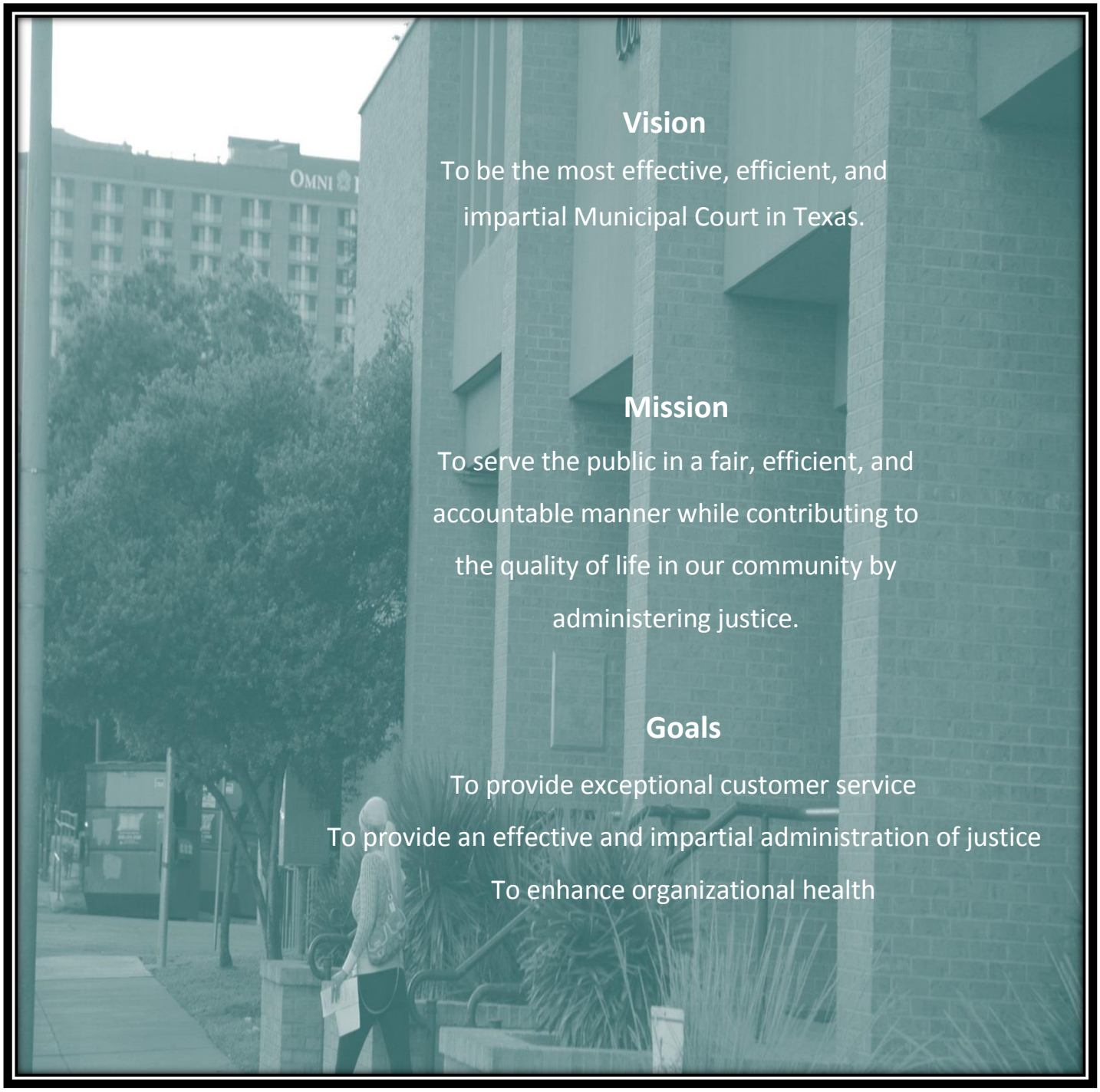
In FY 2015, the judiciary continued to honorably serve the community as magistrates, and many of our accomplishments are detailed in this annual report.

CLERK OF MUNICIPAL COURT
MARY JANE GRUBB

Municipal Court's vision is to be the most effective, efficient, and impartial municipal court in Texas. It, along with the City's aspiration to be the best managed city in the country, has created an environment of innovation and continuous improvement.

As the newly appointed Clerk of the Court, I look forward to working with our outstanding employees and will continue the tradition of exceptional service to our community. Many of our accomplishments, improvements, and innovations are detailed in this FY 2015 Annual Report. We are proud of our accomplishments and each other's contributions.

Vision, Mission and Goals



Vision

To be the most effective, efficient, and impartial Municipal Court in Texas.

Mission

To serve the public in a fair, efficient, and accountable manner while contributing to the quality of life in our community by administering justice.

Goals

To provide exceptional customer service

To provide an effective and impartial administration of justice

To enhance organizational health

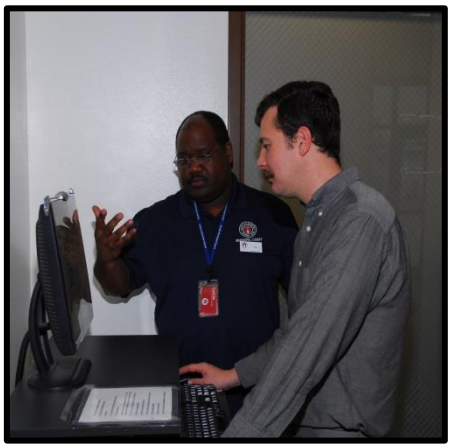
General Information

The main courthouse is located at 700 E. 7th Street in downtown Austin. There are two sub-stations:

North Substation: 12425 Lamplight Village Avenue in the APD Substation

South Substation: 5700 Manchaca Road in the Cherry Creek Shopping Center

The main courthouse is open to the public 71 hours per week, 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday and 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Friday. The Austin Municipal Court (AMC) also has two units working 24 hours per day, 7 days per week: the Warrant Processing unit operates out of the main courthouse and the Central Booking Support unit is located in the Travis County jail.



Main Courthouse

South Substation

North Substation

AMC is continually improving the ability for customers to handle cases online and submit documents through mail, email, or fax. The website is **www.austintexas.gov/court.** AMC also has four websites interfaced with its case management system:

Public: **www.austintexas.gov/public**
Defendants can see their entire case files (open and closed) including documents. There is also an online listing of all cases docketed to find the date, time, and courtroom.

Attorney: **www.austintexas.gov/attorney**
Attorneys, with passwords, can see their clients' full case files, their list of clients, and a schedule of docket dates.

City Officers: **www.austintexs.gov/officer**
City officers can access all of the cases (open and closed) they have filed in the court, case documents, and a schedule of the docket dates.

Non-City Officers: **www.austintexas.gov/other**
Non-city officers, such as AISD police and attendance officers, can access the cases they have filed in the court, case documents, and docket calendar.

Organizational Summary

AMC is the Judicial Branch of the municipal government and is organized into four divisions: the Judiciary, Court Operations, Downtown Austin Community Court, and Support Services. The judges and Clerk of the Court are appointed by the City Council.

The judiciary consists of the presiding judge, Sherry Statman, the judge of the Downtown Austin Community Court, Michael Coffey, seven associate judges, and 11 substitute judges. Each judge is independent in his or her application of the law. The presiding judge's duties include maintaining a central docket, distributing cases among the judges, assigning dockets to the judges, and performance of the duties required by Chapter 30 of the Texas Government Code.

AMC welcomed Mary Jane Grubb as the new Clerk of the Court in October. Mary Jane is an East Texas native and has worked in Texas municipal courts for 18 years with more than eight years of court administration and management experience. She has held the positions of Court Clerk and Deputy Court Clerk in the cities of Gladewater and Lancaster and of Court Administrator for the cities of Balch Springs and McKinney. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and is a Level III Certified Municipal Court Clerk. The Clerk of the Court's responsibilities include oversight and management of operations and support services.

There are a total of 178.75 employees in the four divisions. Each division is detailed later in this report.

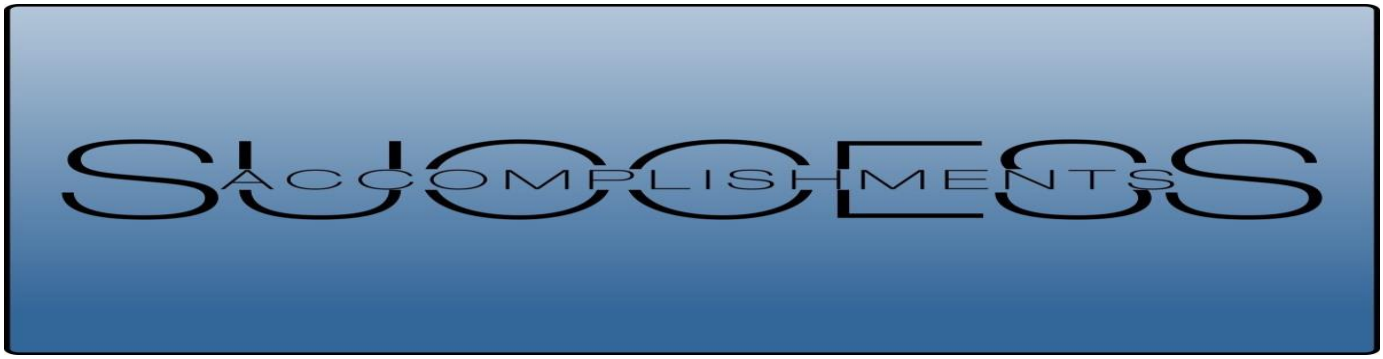
Judiciary
(11 Full Time Equivalents)
(Plus 12 substitute judges)

Court Operations
(123.75 Full Time Equivalents)
(10 Units)

Downtown Community Court
(24 Full Time Equivalents)

Support Services
(20 Full Time Equivalents)
(4 Units)

Organizational Accomplishments



Following is a summary of AMC's major work projects and accomplishments. Many accomplishments are listed on unit pages with additional context later in this document.

84th Legislative Session

The 84th Legislative Session passed several changes to law impacting municipal courts. The most significant was the change decriminalizing student truancy. Going forward, truancy matters not resolved at the school level will be filed as civil cases in the municipal or justice courts.

Court Case Management Computer System Design

Significant time and effort was spent over the past few years to develop requirements for a major upgrade to AMC's case management system (software). A few years ago, AMC was notified by its case management software vendor, CSDC, that support for the current version of the software (JEMS 6.5) will be discontinued. Since then, AMC has worked to define requirements for a new case management system. AMC continues to work with potential vendors to secure an efficient and reliable system and begin testing.

Moving DACC to JEMS

The Downtown Austin Community Court successfully transitioned from its former case management system to AMC's case management system called JEMS. This included mapping data between the two court systems to find and resolve issues where a direct one to one translation was not possible. This transition allowed both courts to gain efficiencies and streamline processes.

E-Citation Program

The APD's e-citation program was implemented in FY14. Parking tickets were added to the program this year. E-citations written by APD are filed with the court much faster than paper citations; this allows customers to handle their cases more quickly, especially if they choose to do so online.

Increased Courtroom Security

Several enhancements were made to improve security. Included was the installation of additional security cameras, acquisition of a fire proof safe, and the development of procedures for access to AMC's vault.

Organizational Accomplishments

Statewide Warrant Round-Up

AMC coordinated cities across Texas to serve outstanding arrest warrants in the 2015 Great Texas Warrant Round Up. Austin began its regional program in 2001 which has expanded throughout the state with more than 300 agencies participating annually. While warrants are regularly served by each jurisdiction, this combined effort provides greater opportunities for warrant service and is unique in the country. As a result of this special program, AMC collected $2,674,148 while cancelling 8,997 warrants and 5,904 parking and red light camera cases in FY15.

Pilot of VOIP Phone System

AMC began fielding and testing new Voice Over Internet Provider (VOIP) phones in select units throughout the court. Based on the initial success, the court will expand fielding of the VOIP phones. This will increase the reliability and quality of communications with customers.

Help Desk Ticket System

AMC created an online program for submission of support tickets to report issues with IT equipment. This system not only allows for more timely resolution of problems, it also helps the court identify and resolve systemic problems.

Probable Cause Affidavit Updates

A large number of templates in AMC's case management system were missing probable cause affidavit language. This required police officers to prepare the affidavits which delayed case processing. The correct language was added and the affidavit templates were updated. The backlog of cases on which warrants needed to be prepared was eliminated.

Warrant Confirmations via Email

AMC, with the support of APD, has transitioned warrant confirmations from being done by telephone to email. This has allowed AMC and APD to develop processes and procedures to track every confirmation.

Organizational Accomplishments

New IT Equipment

AMC's case management software server was more than eight years old and was hitting full 100% utilization which slowed down court processing to unacceptable levels. The system was updated on May 3rd by replacing the server; this significantly reduced problems and increased performance. A new credit card server was brought online to separate the external web functionality from AMC's case management system credit card payment processing. AMC started its roll out of miniature "green" PC's to replace dated equipment. AMC's online physical servers were migrated to a more reliable and easier to maintain virtual server.

Printer Consolidation

AMC transitioned 41 of its printers to new environmentally friendly versions; this reduced the number of printers which will save the court money over time.

Stand Up Desks

AMC continued to expand the effort to replace broken or worn desks by purchasing "stand up desks" which can be hydraulically raised and lowered. This change enhances employee health and morale.

City Training Achieved

100% compliance with the City's annual Ethics and Cyber Security training was achieved.

Skip Tracing Tool

AMC acquired a new skip-tracing tool to help locate people with delinquent cases. This will initially be utilized by the Collections unit to verify personal information and improve communications.

Office of Court Administration (OCA) Collection Improvement Program Audit

Per state law, AMC is required to comply with the components of the OCA Collection Improvement Program. The OCA audit department performs audits of mandatory collections programs implemented by jurisdictions under the authority granted in Article 103.0033, Code of Criminal Procedure. AMC achieved a score of 100% on this year's process audit and continues to be a model program for municipal courts in Texas.

Continuous Improvement

AMC continues to seek improvement and made numerous minor changes to forms, processes, procedures and the website in order to provide exceptional customer service and efficient administration of justice.

Key Performance Measures

AMC and City of Austin utilize performance measures to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and performance. The information below highlights the key performance measures.

Measure Name	FY 2013	FY14	FY15
Average age of terminated cases (days)	229	212	184
Percentage of cases terminated to filed	101.6%	103.3%	109.2%
Level of customer satisfaction as indicated by City of Austin citizen survey	85.0%	87.0%	87.0%
Number of cases set on scheduled dockets and appearing at walk-in dockets	115,545	116,025	109,628
Percentage of cases set on a docket within 60 days	98.0%	98.0%	97.0%
Percent of walk-in customers served within 10 minutes	90.0%	96.0%	92.5%
Total number of cases filed	364,930	368,684	351,757

Average Age of Terminated Cases (days)

This measure reveals the efficiency of AMC's processes and procedures by calculating the average length of time from initial filing to termination. The cases processed include: traffic, parking, state Class 'C' misdemeanors, red light camera violations, and city ordinance.

Assessment: The three-year trend shows that AMC is reducing the time it takes to terminate cases. This can partially be attributed to improvements in technology, training, and streamlining of processes and procedures.

Percentage of Cases Terminated to Filed

This measure shows how well AMC keeps up with its caseload by comparing the total number of cases terminated in a year to the total number of new cases filed.

Assessment: The three year trend shows that AMC has been successful terminating cases for many of the same reasons mentioned above.

Key Performance Measures

Level of Customer Satisfaction

This measure is taken from the annual City of Austin Community Survey. This survey is prepared and conducted by sources external to the City of Austin. It is a statistically-valid survey that represents the opinion of Austin's general population with a 95% confidence interval and +/- 3% margin of error. The 2015 results were relatively consistent with the percentages for the last three years.

Number of Cases Set on Scheduled Dockets and Appearing at Walk-in Dockets

This measure reflects AMC's criminal caseload that requires physical appearances before judges. It affects the amount of judicial resources needed by the court, as well as other court resources including clerical support, jurors, interpreters, and courtroom availability. It also indicates prosecutorial resources required of the City's law department.

Assessment: The decrease in cases set can mainly be attributed to the 4.9% decrease in case filings.

Percent of Cases Set on a Docket within 60 Days

This measure shows AMC's ability to place criminal cases on appearance or trial dockets in a timely manner. The goal is to docket cases at least three weeks from date of not guilty pleas, but no more than 60 days after. The initial wait of three weeks allows defendants time to prepare their defense.

Assessment: The three-year trend holds relatively steady with a 1% decrease this year.

Percent of Customers Served within 10 Minutes

This measure reflects the percentage of customers that are served within 10 minutes of arrival at the downtown customer service windows.

Assessment: The 3.5% decrease can mostly be attributed to a number of new employees in the Customer Service unit that were training as well as Customer Service employees assisting in other areas throughout the court.

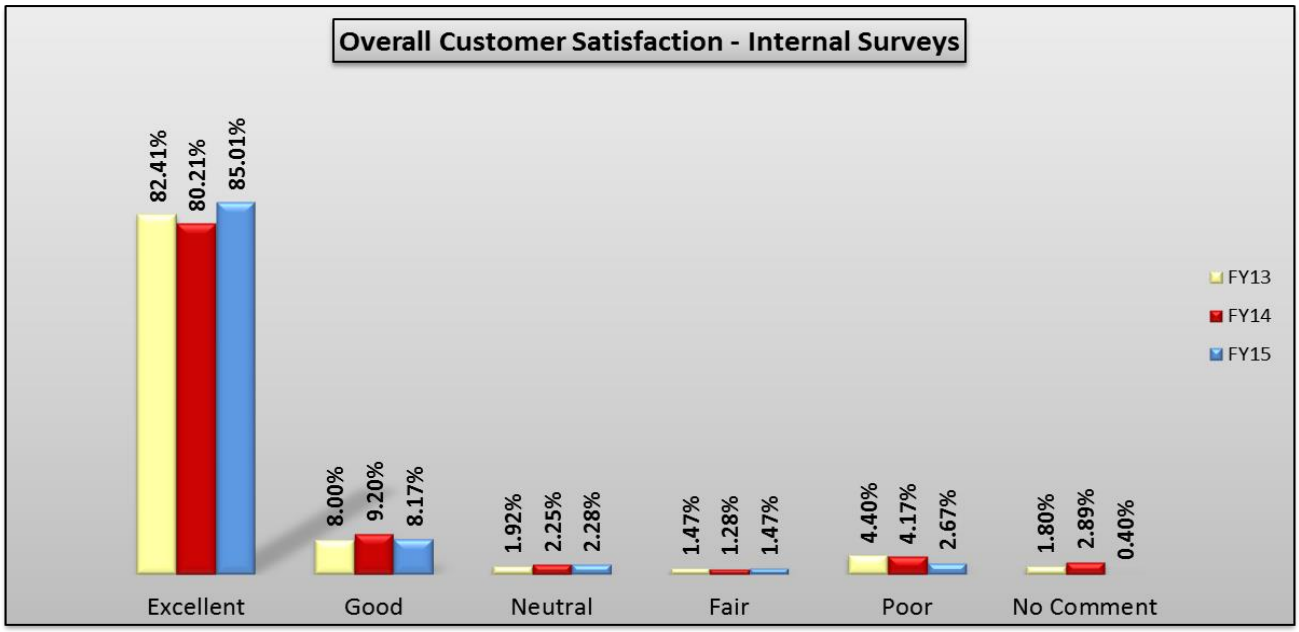
Total Number of Cases Filed

The number of cases filed is a direct result of the number of citations issued by the Austin Police Department (APD) and other departments/agencies that issue citations filed in AMC. This measure reflects the workload for AMC staff and allows the department to allocate resources efficiently. The types of cases filed include traffic, city ordinance, state Class "C" misdemeanors, parking, and red light camera violations.

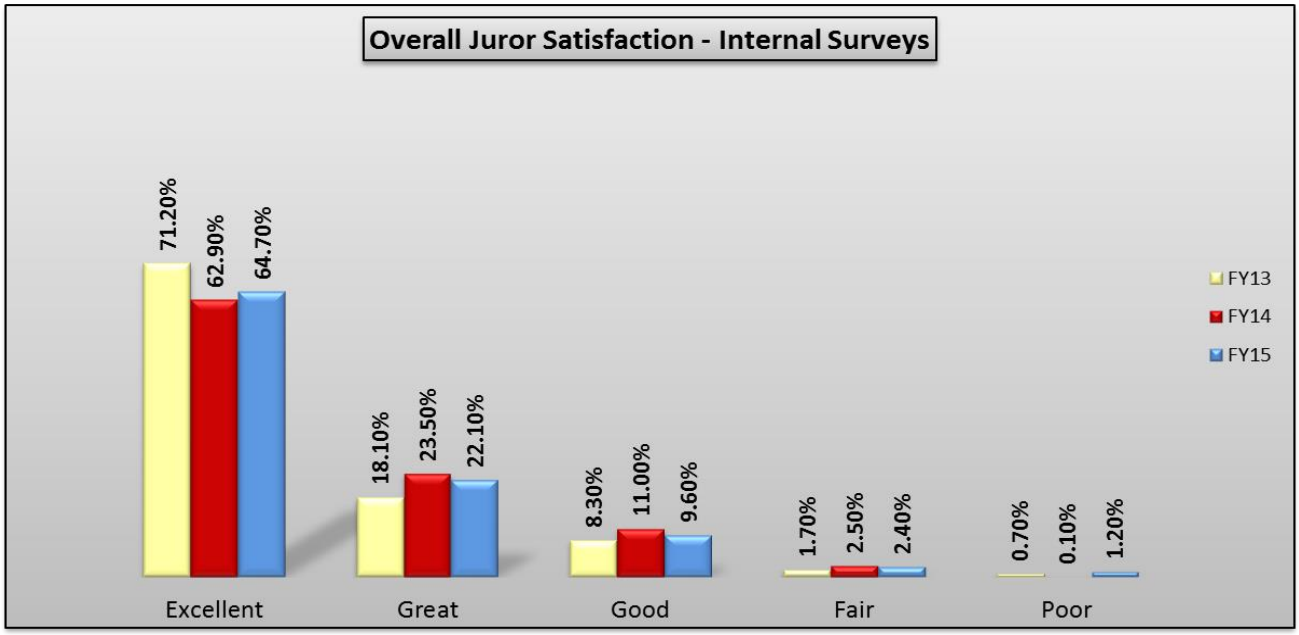
Assessment: The 4.9% decline in citations did not impact budget projections for FY15; however, may in FY16. The overall reduction in citations partially explains a reduction in production for some of the units which will be detailed on the unit pages.

Other Indicators:

Internal Customer Survey FY15



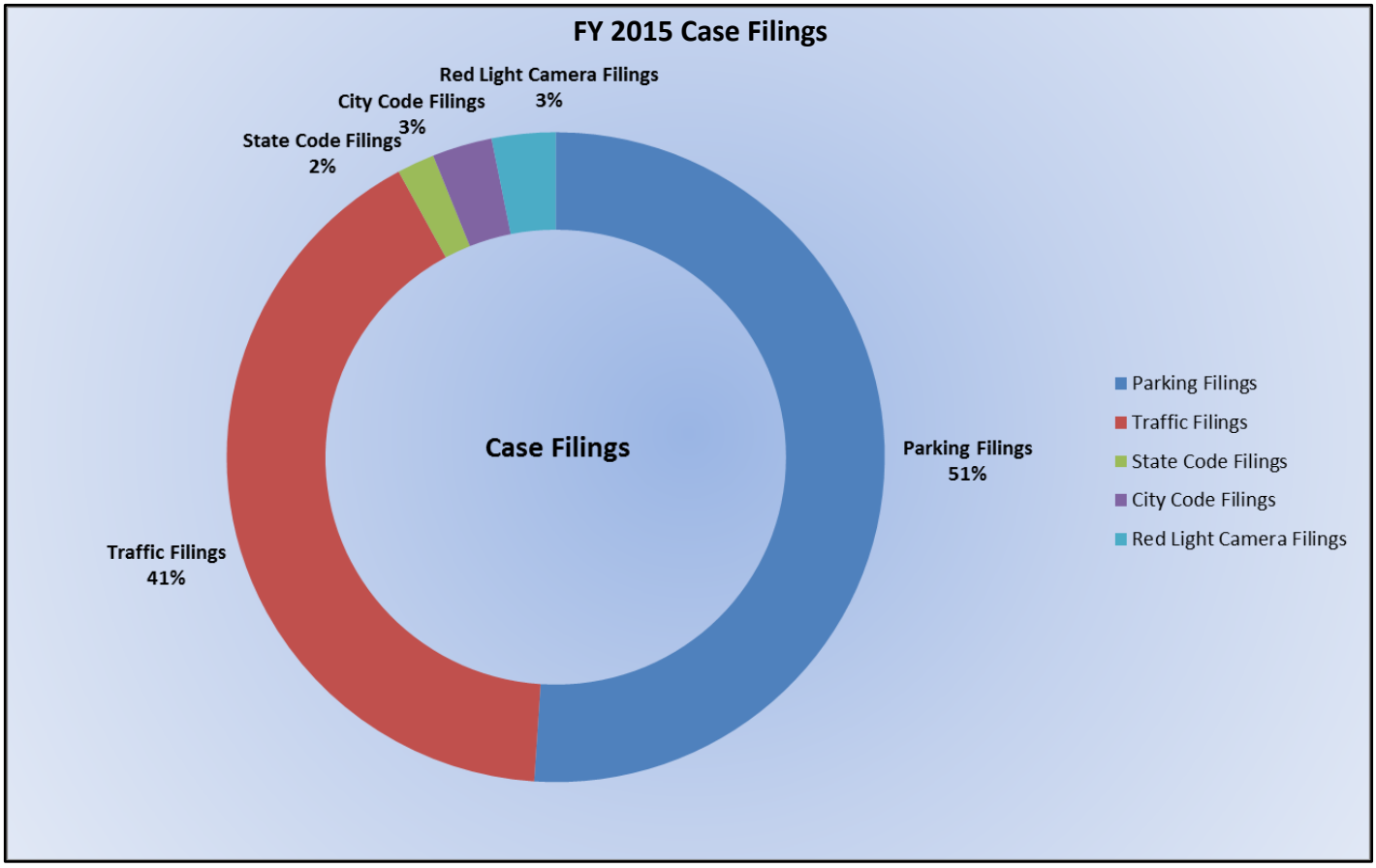
Internal Juror Survey FY15



Key Performance Measures

AMC had a 4.9% decline in total citations from the previous year. The decrease impacted unit operations to some extent which will be detailed on the unit pages of this report.

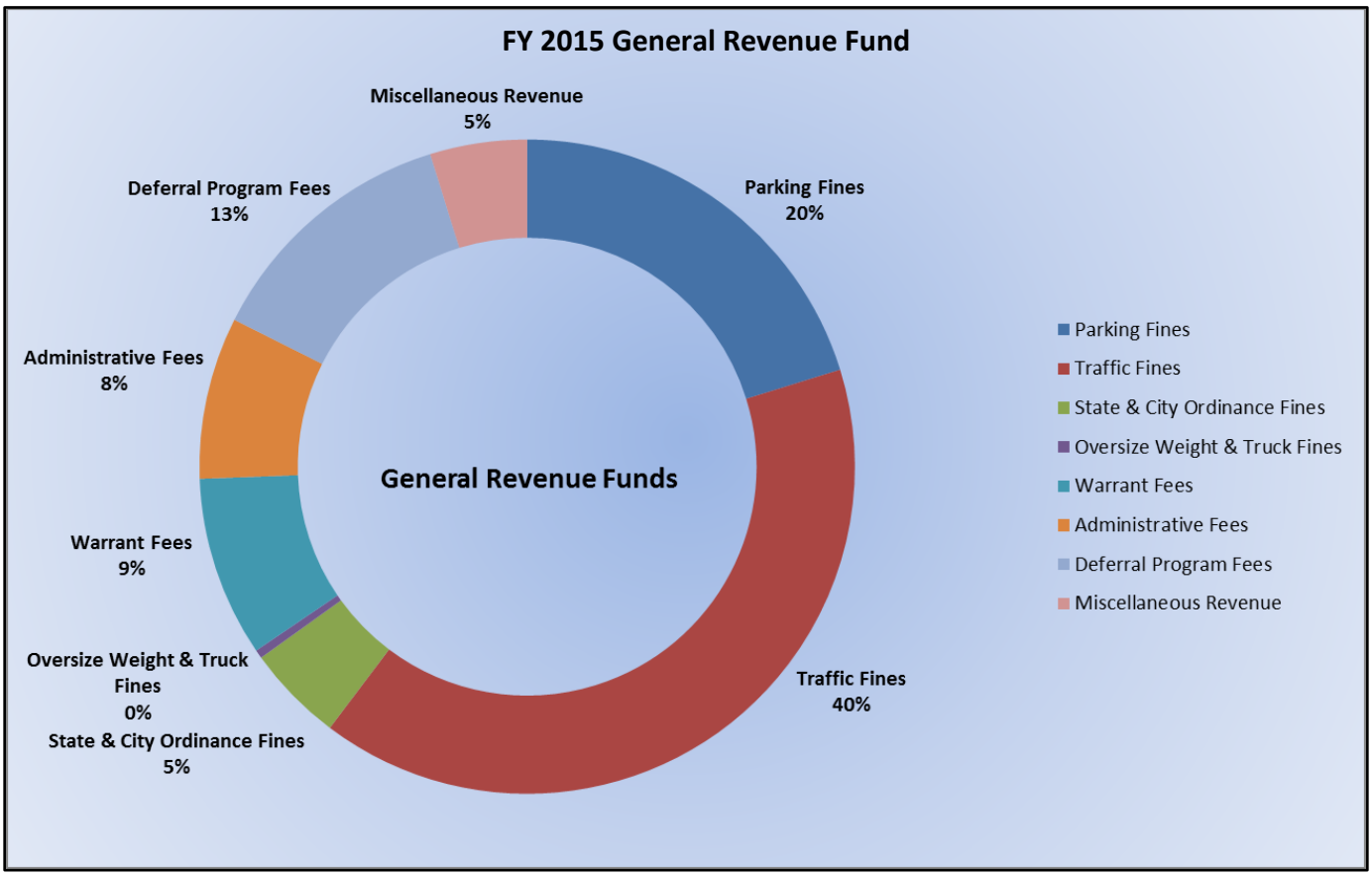
Case Filings	2013	2014	2015
Parking	167,648	172,462	179,551
Traffic	169,004	169,913	144,346
State Code	9,340	7,456	6,490
City Ordinance	9,738	7.563	10,377
Red Light Camera	8,718	12,512	10,993
Total	**364,448**	**369,906**	**351,757**



Key Performance Measures

AMC revenue collections were 2.3% higher than projected. The FY15 general fund revenue budget was $16,019,342; net general fund collections (unaudited) totaled $16,391,045. The higher number of cases filed in previous years and collected in FY15 had a positive effect on revenue.

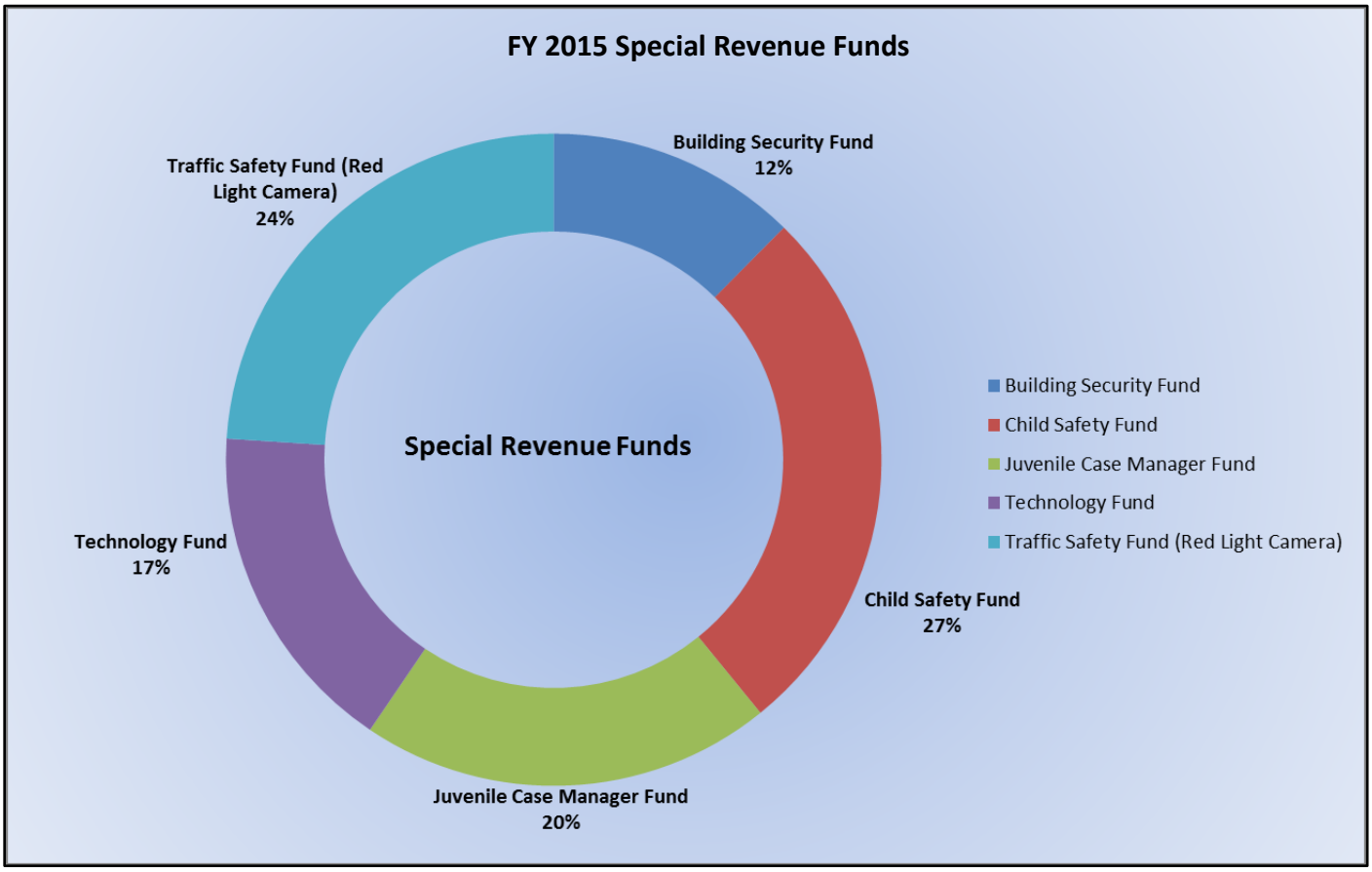
General Fund Revenue	2013	2014	2015
Parking Fines	$3,255,861	$3,343,485	$3,312,591
Traffic Fines	$6,763,641	$6,880,693	$6,568,800
State & City Ordinance Fines	$730,508	$574,326	$785,095
Oversize Weight & Truck Fines	$84,117	$80,805	$69,299
Warrant Fees	$1,223,094	$1,205,003	$1,460,533
Administrative Fees	$1,409,432	$1,426,327	$1,311,947
Deferral Program Fees	$1,963,960	$2,139,868	$2,099,445
Miscellaneous Revenue	$870,845	$883,089	$783,335
Total	**$16,301,458**	**$16,533,596**	**$16,391,045**



Key Performance Measures

AMC has multiple revenue streams. Revenue is derived from fines, court costs, and fees collected on cases filed in our court by several entities including the Austin Police Department, Code Enforcement, AISD, Alcoholic Beverage Commission, and several other city departments. The revenue is distributed into the general fund as well as special revenue funds such as the Building Security Fund, Court Technology Fund, Juvenile Case Manager Fund, Traffic Safety Fund, and Child Safety Fund.

Special Revenue Funds	2013	2014	2015
Building Security Fund	$381,725	$392,775	$369,100
Child Safety Fund	$779,779	$798,316	$796,752
Juvenile Case Manager Fund	$508,198	$596,590	$605,626
Technology Fund	$510,252	$524,469	$493,398
Traffic Safety Fund (Red Light Camera)	$586,332	$790,900	$713,838
Total	**$2,766,286**	**$3,103,050**	**$2,978,714**



Building Security Fund

The Municipal Court Building Security Fund is a special revenue fund created by the legislature and adopted by the City Council in 1995 to enhance courthouse security. Revenue is derived from a $3 security fee paid by each defendant receiving a deferred disposition or convicted of a criminal offense. The FY15 revenue collected for this fund totaled $369,100. The FY15 expenditures from this fund were $385,540 (unaudited). Use of the funds is limited by law and the majority of the expense was for security guards and APD court officers providing security at the downtown courthouse and south substation.

Child Safety Fund

Revenue is derived from a $5 child safety fee created by the legislature and paid by a defendant liable for parking citations and convictions of specific traffic violations committed in school zones. The FY15 Child Safety Fund revenue collected totaled $796,752. Use of the funds is limited by law and all of the funds are budgeted by Public Works for their school safety program, including school crossing guards.

Juvenile Case Manager Fund

The Municipal Court Juvenile Case Manager Fund is a special revenue fund created by the legislature and adopted by the City Council in FY 2005 to provide administration of juvenile cases and to assist with the provisions of alternative sentencing for youth. Revenue is derived from a $4 Juvenile Case Manager fee paid by each defendant convicted or receiving a deferred disposition for a criminal offense. In January 2014, an additional $1 from the new legislatively mandated Diversion Fee is also included in this fund. In FY15, a total of $605,626 was collected and expenses totaled $592,229 (unaudited). Use of the funds is limited by law, and the majority of the expenses were for the salaries, benefits, and supplies for juvenile case managers.

Technology Fund

The Municipal Court Technology Fund is a special revenue fund. Created by the legislature in FY 1999 and adopted by the City Council; the purpose of the fund is to enhance court technology. Revenue is derived from a $4 technology fee paid by each defendant convicted or receiving a deferred disposition for a criminal offense. In FY 2015, revenue collected for this fund totaled $493,398. Actual expenditures (unaudited) totaled $510,861. Use of the funds is limited by law to include the purchase and maintenance of technological enhancements for the court.

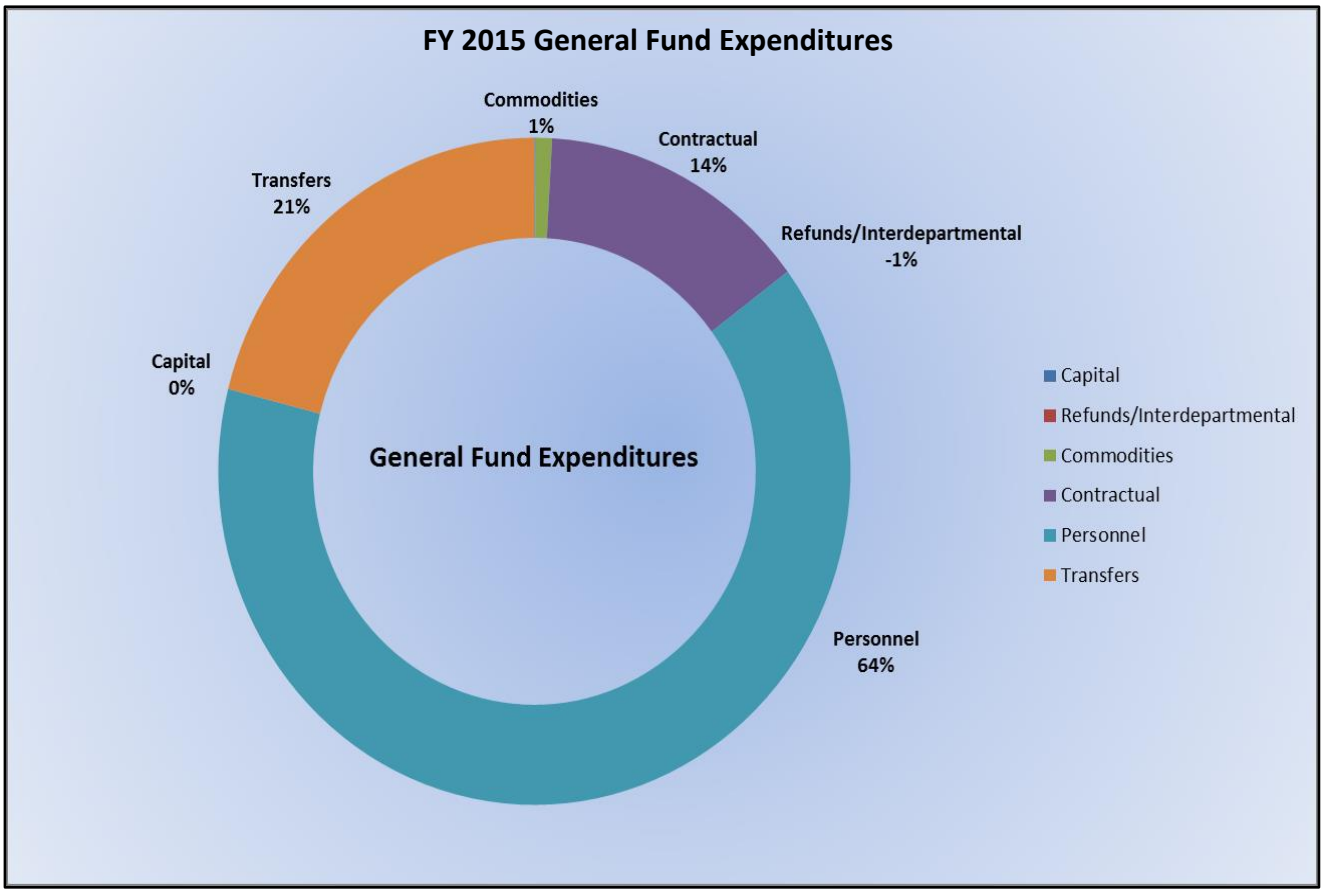
Traffic Safety Fund

The Municipal Court Traffic Safety Fund is a special revenue fund created in FY 2007 to provide traffic safety programs from fees paid from red light camera cases. The City's portion of the revenue from the $75 penalty for each violation (and a $25 late fee for cases not paid within 30 days) goes towards funding traffic safety programs. State law requires half of the net revenue to be sent to a state trauma care fund. In FY15, Traffic Safety Fund revenue collected totaled $713,838. Funding was included for the salaries and benefits of AMC staff and contractual services for the operation and maintenance of red light cameras.

Key Performance Measures

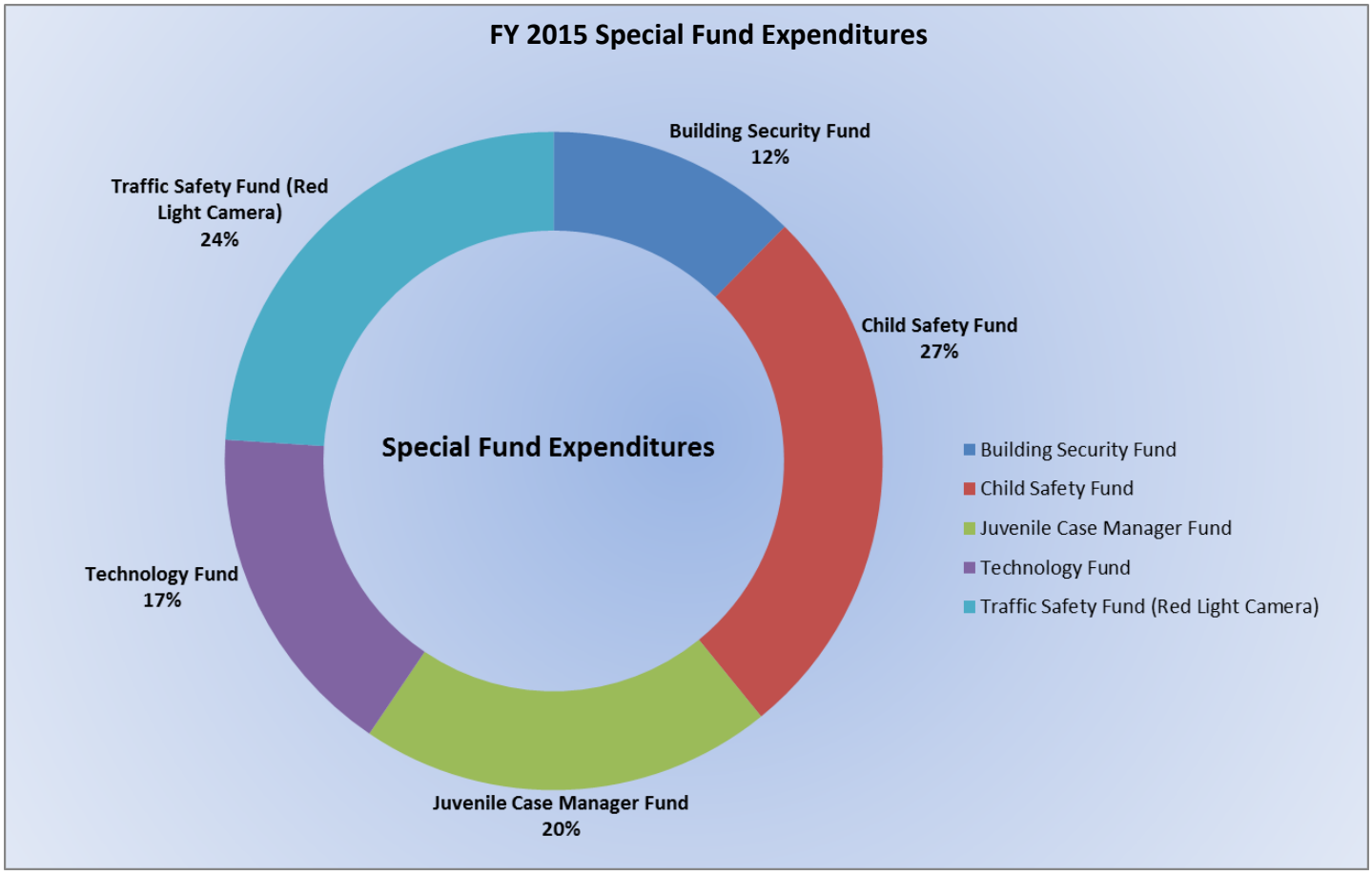
The FY15 General Fund expenditure budget totaled $19,676,847. Actual expenditures (unaudited) totaled $19,176,432 with an ending balance returned to the general fund of $500,415. The principal expenditure savings occurred in personnel through vacancy savings.

General Fund Expenditures	2015
Capital	$12,088
Refunds/Interdepartmental	$(203,781)
Commodities	$161,525
Contractual	$2,692,359
Personnel	$12,438,802
Transfers	$4,075,439
Total	**$19,176,432**



The FY15 Special Fund expenditure budget totaled $2,999,220. The slight decrease is in line with the decrease in overall fines for FY15.

Special Fund Expenditures	2013	2014	2015
Building Security Fund	$381,725	$392,775	$385,540
Child Safety Fund	$779,779	$798,316	$796,752
Juvenile Case Manager Fund	$508,198	$596,590	$592,229
Technology Fund	$510,252	$524,469	$510,861
Traffic Safety Fund (Red Light Camera)	$586,332	$790,900	$713,838
Total	**$2,766,286**	**$3,103,050**	**$2,999,220**



Judiciary

AMC has jurisdiction over Class "C" misdemeanors occurring within city limits of Austin, Texas. These offenses include state and city offenses such as traffic citations, public intoxication, theft, assault, and city code violations.

AMC has highly qualified and experienced judges, many of whom have served longer than 15 years. The judiciary consists of one presiding judge, eight full-time judges, and eleven substitute judges. The municipal court judges are appointed by the City Council for four-year terms. AMC's judges must be attorneys licensed in good standing by the State Bar of Texas and have practiced law in Austin for at least two years. Judges must also live within the Austin city limits at least two years prior to appointment.

The presiding judge is responsible for the creation and scheduling of courtroom dockets. AMC has multiple dockets Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. In addition, AMC provide a walk-in dockets Monday through Thursday. Dockets include environmental, juvenile, bench trials, jury trials, emergency protective order modification hearings, show-cause hearings, and administrative hearings.

AMC judges serve as magistrates and review the bulk of higher charge probable cause affidavits in Travis County. These offenses range from fine-only misdemeanors to capital murder. The primary function of magistrates is to advise arrestees of their rights as required by the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, Miranda v. Arizona, and Article 36 of the Vienna Convention of 1963. The judges provide Magistration 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, at the Travis County Central Booking Facility. In this role, judges are also called upon to determine if probable cause exists for the issuance of arrest warrants, search warrants, blood warrants, and emergency protective orders. AMC judges are also responsible for considering bond amounts and terms.

Judiciary

Presiding Judge

Sherry Statman

Associate Judges

Michael Coffey (Community Court)

Erik Cary

Barbara Garcia

Alfred D. Jenkins, III

Mitchell Solomon

John Vasquez (Retired)

Stephen Vigorito

One position is currently vacant

Substitute Judges

Ferdinand Clervi

Kelly Evans

Belinda Herrera (Juvenile)

Stanley Kerr

Beverly Landers

F. Witcher McCullough, III

Evelyn P. McKee (Presiding judge Emeritus)

Olivia Ruiz

Ronald Meyerson

George Thomas

Celeste Villarreal

Kenneth Vitucci

Downtown Austin Community Court

The Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC) was established in 1999. It was the eighth community court established in the United States and the first established in Texas.

The purpose of the DACC is to collaboratively address the quality of life issues of all residents in the downtown Austin community through the swift and creative sentencing of public order offenders.

The Community Court operates as a problem-solving and rehabilitative court and provides connection to supportive-services for offenders utilizing an intensive case management model. A majority of the offenses adjudicated through DACC are committed by defendants who are homeless. A disproportionate number of offenses are committed by a small number of defendants who cycle through the criminal justice system at a high cost to all publicly funded systems. DACC processes, on average, 13,000 new cases annually.

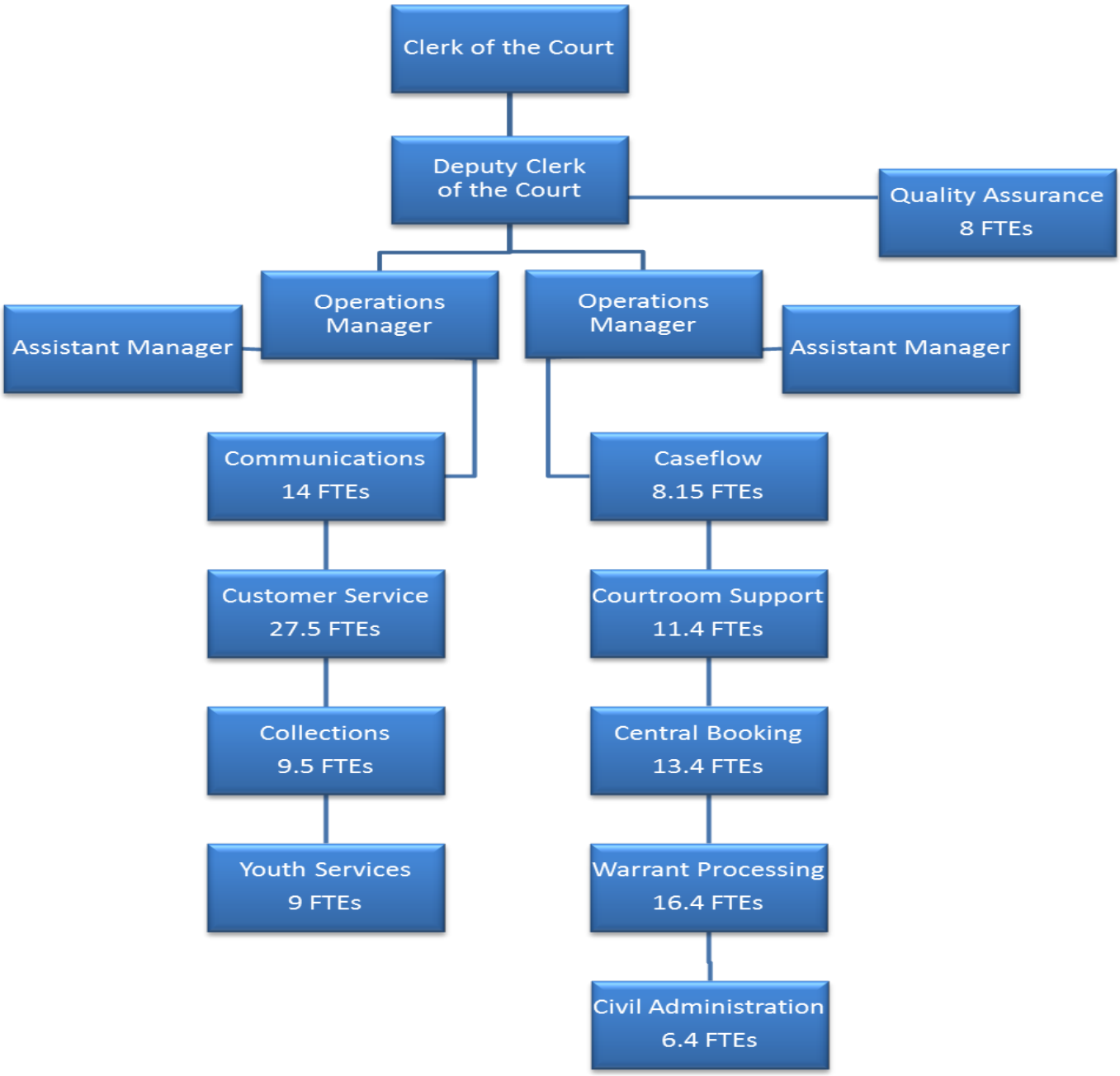
DACC initially focused on the downtown area but has since added a portion of East Austin and the University of Texas West Campus area to the Community Court's jurisdiction (Map of DACC Jurisdiction). Currently, 56% of all public order offenses committed in Austin occur within DACC's jurisdiction. More information is available at www.austintexas.gov/department/community-court.

ASSOCIATE MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE
MICHAEL COFFEY

COURT ADMINISTRATOR
PETER VALDEZ

Court Operations

AMC operations are comprised of nine activities or units that provide customer services and case management for the citizens of Austin. The purpose, major performance measures, and accomplishments for FY15 are in the following pages. The total number of full time equivalents (FTEs) is 123.75.

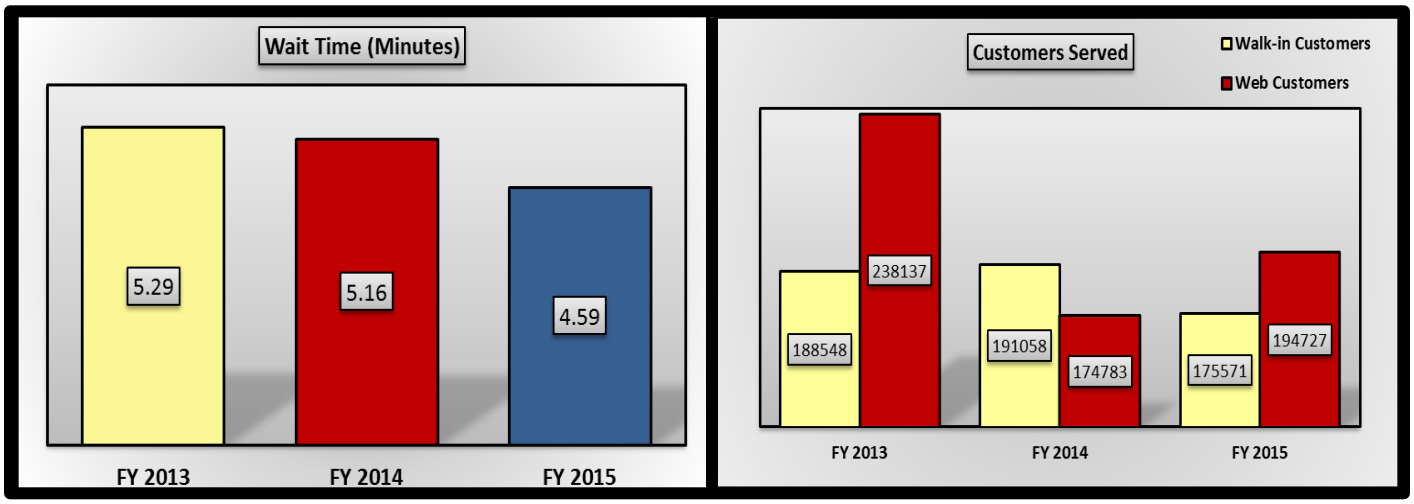


Customer Services

The purpose of Customer Service is to provide assistance for walk-in, on-line, and mail customers so that cases may be processed in an effective manner. The unit provides information to customers regarding options to handle citations and process cases appropriately. At the counters, citizens may sign up for driving safety courses and deferred dispositions, apply for extensions and payment plans, file motions and other documents, make payments, and schedule cases on dockets. This unit also processes mail and online payments.

Performance Highlights:

* The average wait time was 4.5 minutes – an 18% decrease from FY14. This is a result of more customers conducting their business via online methods.
* 175,571 walk-in customers were served compared to 191,058 in FY14. This decrease coincides with the increase in customers conducting business via the webpage and email (see Communications). 194,727 customers were served via the webpage compared to 174,783 in FY14.



In 2013, the number of web customers was calculated in a different manner

Accomplishments:

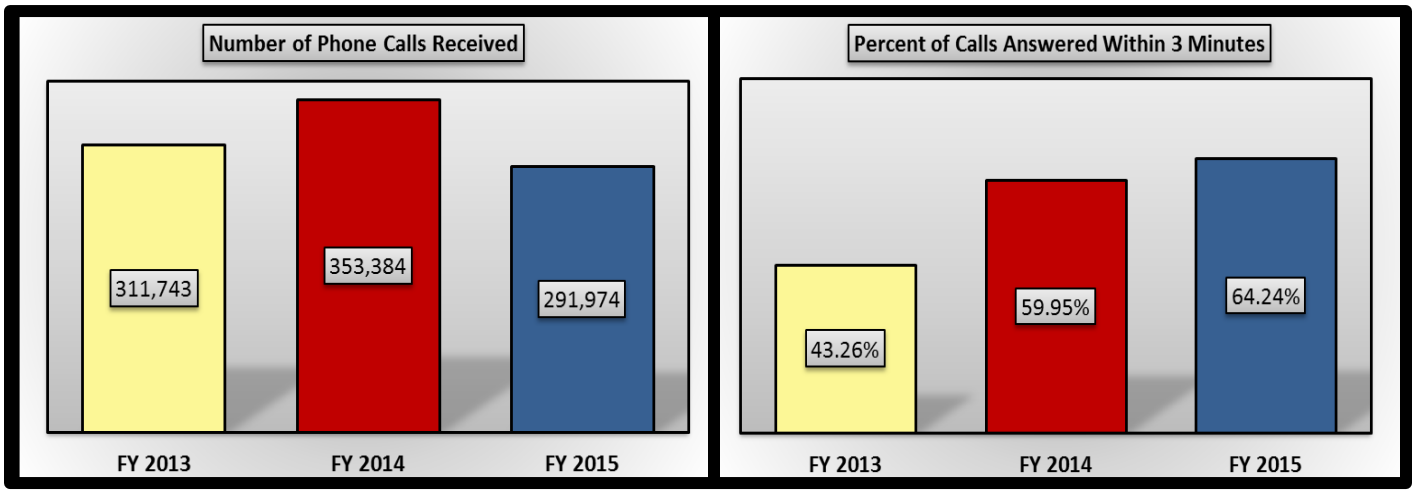
* Expanded returned mail process to recover all unused return envelopes and to increase fiscal responsibility.
* Improved the text on customer forms to reduce customer confusion and increase compliance with AMC's programs.

Communications

The purpose of Communications is to provide accurate and timely information by phone, internet, and email to the public so that cases are processed in a timely manner.

Performance Highlights:

* The Communications unit received 291,974 phone calls in FY 15. The decrease in calls can be attributed in large part to customers handling their citations through the internet and email.
* The Communications unit continues to improve its ability to efficiently answer customer calls reducing customer wait time and increasing customer service. This improvement can be attributed to the reduction in phone calls and clerk training.



Accomplishments:

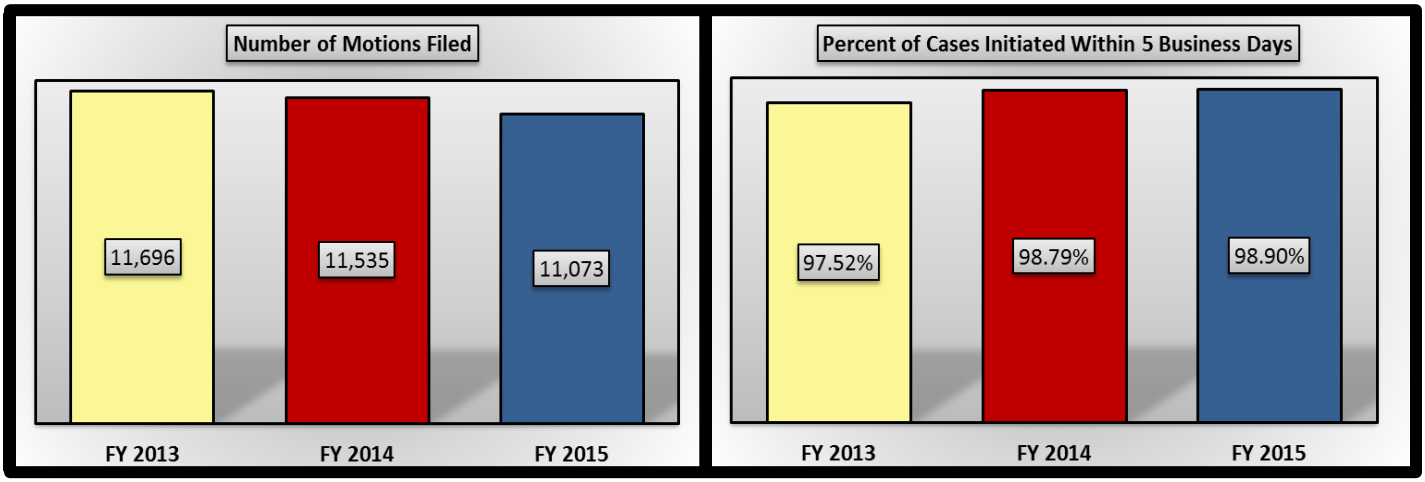
* Templates were created and implemented to respond to routine email requests. The templates ensure accurate and consistent responses to common inquiries.
* Communication through email increased over 50% from the previous year which was primarily due to improved customer ease of use. This increase in email communication contributes to the reduction in the number of phone calls received.

Caseflow Management

The purpose of Caseflow Management is to ensure cases are processed accurately and efficiently for staff and customers so that cases are up-to-date. The employees monitor deferred dispositions and driving safety courses for compliance. They prepare the documentation required for appeals of convictions to the county court and respond to requests for information for case documents. They review paper citations and provide the correct violation codes to increase data entry accuracy for other units who are performing the task of citation entry.

Performance Highlights:

* There was a decrease of 458 motions filed; this can largely be attributed to the efficiency of the trial docket schedule. Motions are submitted at the discretion of the defendants, defense attorneys, and prosecutors.
* The percentage of citations filed and initiated in the case management system within five business days of receipt remained high allowing for faster resolution of cases.



Accomplishments:

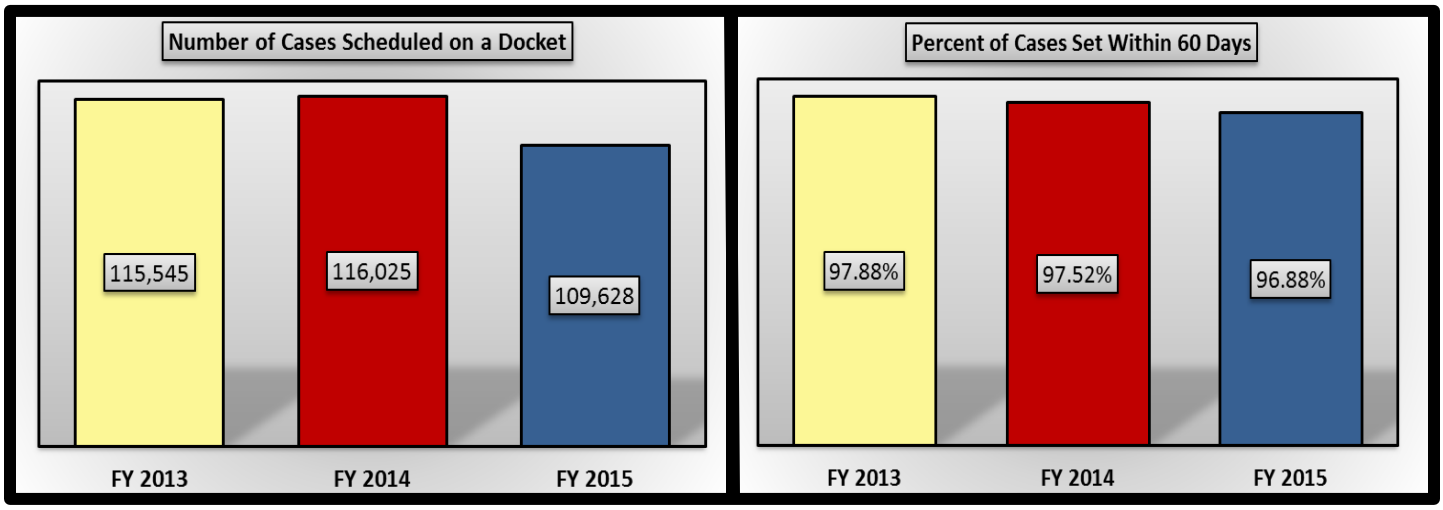
* Implemented new processes for answering information requests, granting credit for time served, and verifying community service hours.
* Adopted a new team schedule allowing for more flexibility in processing cases and timely preparation and dispersion of citations for entry into the case management system.
* Two members of the unit were cross-trained and sworn in as Associate Hearing Officers to assist Civil Administration when needed.
* Of the 13,761 cases scheduled for trial, only 13 cases were filed for appeal with the County court contesting the judge or jury's decision.

Courtroom Support

The purpose of Courtroom Support is to provide administrative support and maintain decorum in the courtroom so that court proceedings are efficient and case files complete. The unit sets cases on dockets according to the presiding judge's master docket schedule, scans documents, and updates case files. The unit also records trials and coordinates jurors.

Performance Highlights:

* 109,628 cases were set on scheduled and walk-in dockets this fiscal year compared to 116,025 last fiscal year; a 6% decrease. The reduction coincides with the reduction of citations for the year.
* 96.88% of cases were set on a docket within 60 days compared to 97.52% in FY14; a decrease of .64%, but still above the standard.



Accomplishments:

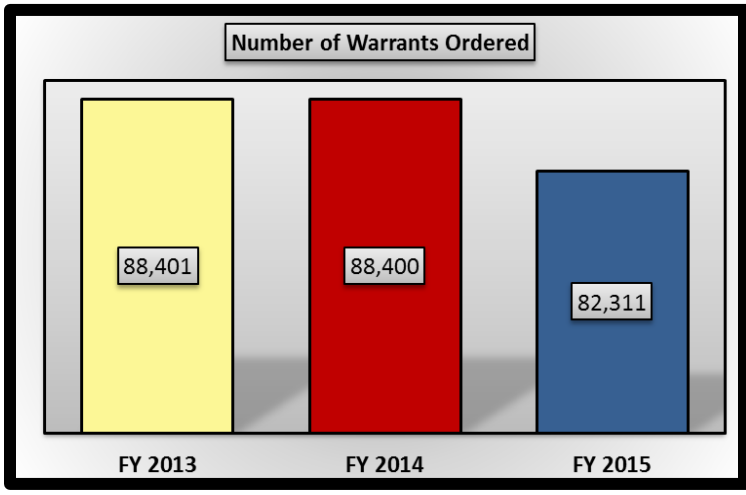
* A pilot program was established for defendants to meet with prosecutors prior to cases being set for docket. The "walk-in prosecutor" concept is intended to reduce caseloads and expedite the legal process for defendants.
* A docket was added this year with the sole purpose of simplifying the process for defendants to obtain information in preparation for their trial. A motion for discovery must be filed prior to the case being set on this discovery docket.
* The unit established an audit process that allows leads and the supervisor to identify performance trends and develop training as needed to maintain proficiency.

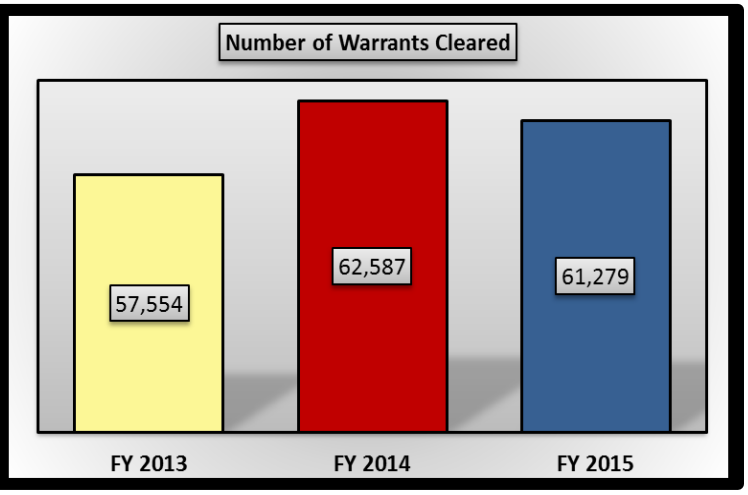
Warrant Processing

The purpose of Warrant Processing is to prepare warrant paperwork for judicial review and to confirm the existence of valid arrest warrants for peace officers. The unit is also responsible for creating complaints which are the legal charging instruments for court cases.

Performance Highlights:

* 82,311 warrants were produced in FY15 compared to 88,400 in FY14; a 7.4% decrease.
* 61,279 warrants were cleared compared to 62,587 in FY14; a slight decrease of 1.2%.





Accomplishments:

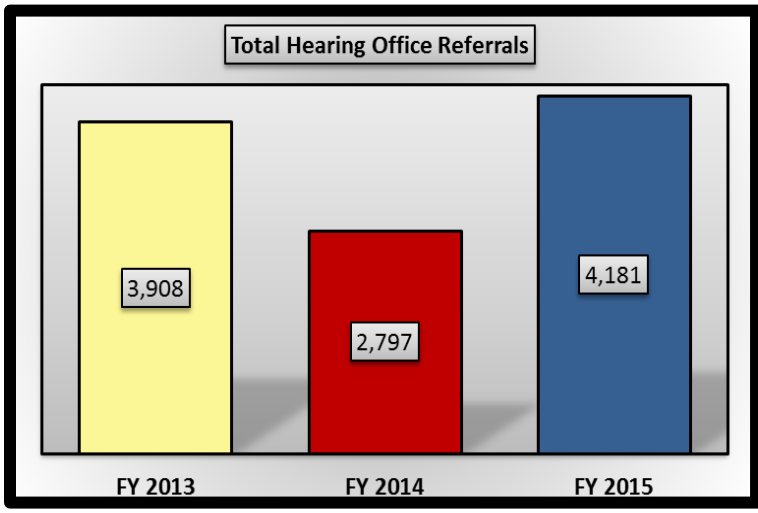
* Improved workflow and processes resulted in the reduction of cases eligible for warrant at the end of the year from 7,949 in FY14 to 1,020.
* The percentage of cases in warrant eligible queues that are less than 30 days old improved from 54.7% to 95% during FY15.
* Cases waiting on officers to complete probable cause affidavits (PCA) documents were cleared and reduced to zero. Electronic PCA documents are now available for nearly all charges.
* Unit began warrant confirmations using an entirely new process by confirming via email to the Austin Police Department rather than by telephone making the process more reliable and efficient.

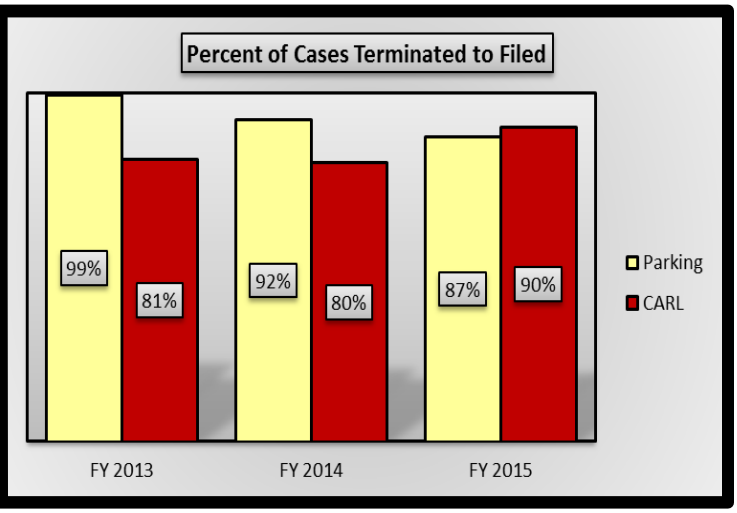
Civil Administration

The purpose of Civil Administration is to fairly and impartially administer justice for visitors and citizens of Austin who have received citations for parking or red light camera violations so that due process is achieved. All red light camera cases and most parking cases are handled as civil violations as opposed to criminal. Persons wishing to contest their cases may immediately appear before a hearing officer; appeals of the decisions are made to AMC judges.

Performance Highlights:

* More customers are taking advantage of the hearing offices than in the past. There were 4,181 referrals in FY15 compared to 2,797 the previous year; this can mostly be attributed to a 4% increase in parking citations.
* The 5% decrease in parking cases terminated to filed can mostly be attributed to new processes associated with automated ticket downloads as well as an increase in parking tickets. The Camera at Red Light (CARL) terminated to filed percentage rose 10% as more cases were terminated due to process improvements. The average time to terminate a CARL case has declined by an average of 18.5% over the past 3 years.





Accomplishments:

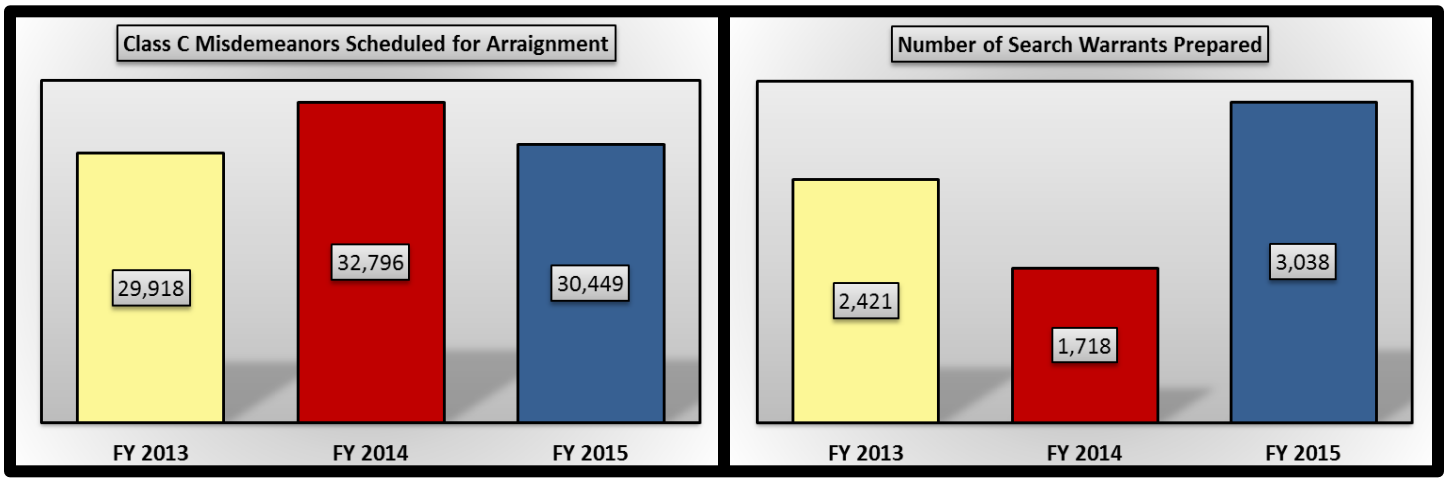
* Developed an automatic payment system for a local car rental company to expedite payment of parking fines.
* Developed new processes in our case management system to capture hearings conducted via mail and email.
* Cross-trained two additional back-up hearing officers to help keep pace with the caseload.
* Completed the initial drafts for standardizing all unit tasks. Once approved, they will serve as the foundation for a new unit training program.

Central Booking Support

The purpose of Central Booking Support is to prepare documents for judges, law enforcement officers, and the public so that magistration and arraignment are accomplished. Magistration consists of advising arrestees of the charges filed against them and the amount of bond. Arraignment is the acceptance of pleas on Class "C" misdemeanors. Those arrested and brought to the Travis County jail go through magistration within 24 hours. These services are provided twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Performance Highlights:

* Class "C" misdemeanors set for arraignment decreased 7.2% from the previous year primarily due to an overall reduction of violations and arrests.
* 62,316 higher charges (defined as other than Class "C" misdemeanors) were prepared for magistration compared to 63,948 the previous year; a decrease of 2.6%.



Accomplishments:

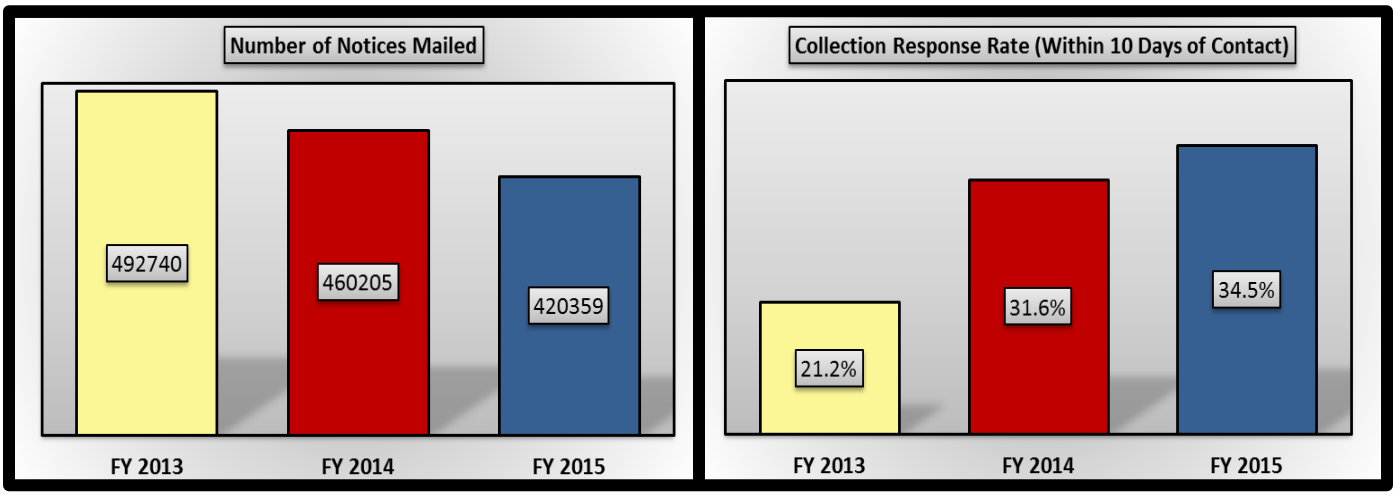
* New citizen complaint procedures were put in place to expedite processing and improve tracking.
* The workspace at the Travis County jail was upgraded to add a workstation and make more efficient use of the limited space.

Collection Services

The purpose of Collection Services is to ensure defendant compliance with court obligations is obtained in accordance with guidelines set by the State mandated program.

Performance Highlights:

* Average age of terminated cases has reduced from 215 days in FY14 to 194 days in FY15.
* 191,750 responses from 556,499 notices or calls were received within 10 days of all collection activity for FY15; an increase of 2.9%.



Accomplishments:

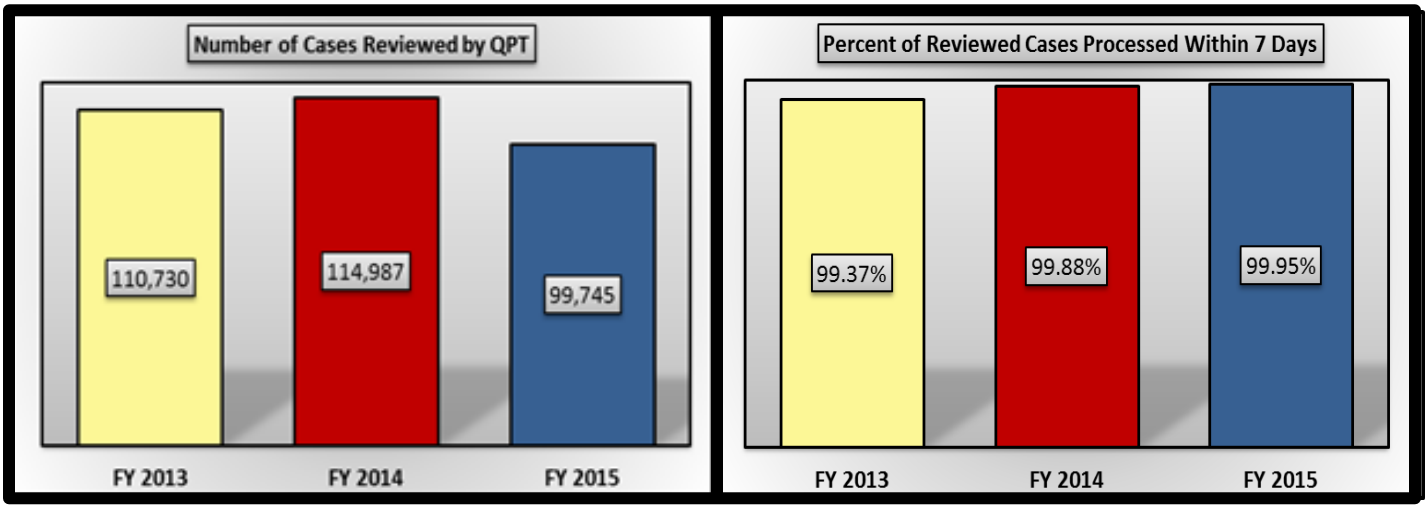
* The unit maintained an accuracy rating of over 95% on meeting the elements of the State mandated collections program.
* A new skip tracing tool was implemented to improve collection efforts.
* Received and processed over 26,000 financial affidavits for customers requesting assistance to comply with their obligations.
* $469,486 was collected from manual outbound collection calls compared to $263,273 in FY14; an increase of 78.3%.
* $538,362 was collected within 10 days of the unit's automated dialer calls compared to $491,503 in FY14; an increase of 9.5%

Quality Assurance

The purpose of Quality Assurance is to promote the accuracy and efficiency of court operations through case review, error correction, training, process analysis, and development of new procedures to improve the efficient administration of justice for staff and customers. Quality Assurance also manages reporting, information requests, and the operation of AMC's case management application.

Performance Highlights:

* Reviewed 99,745 cases with requests for deferred dispositions, driving safety courses, and dismissals prior to consideration by a judge; completed review within 7 days on 99.9% of cases.
* Resolved 83% of all complex operations and management systems inquiries upon receiving a call for assistance.



Accomplishments:

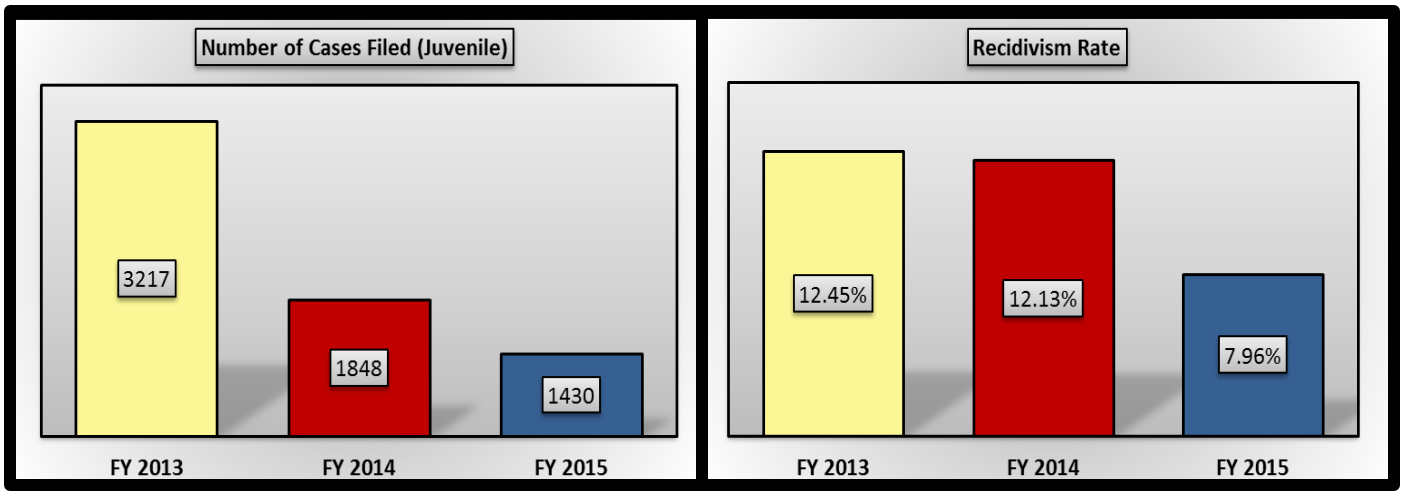
* The unit vetted multiple business intelligence tools for efficient data management.
* Quality Assurance also responded to over 300 public information requests.
* The following AMC data entry and retrieval improvements were made:
  - DACC data was transitioned to the Judicial Enforcement Management System (JEMS).
  - Complaint text information was organized for ease of use by management.
  - Cases were intricately reviewed and any significate inaccuracies in data entry were detected, reported, and corrected.
* The unit designed AMC open data plan and provided management with clear insights for decision making by performing statistical analysis on website usage, case processing trends, and public information requests.
* Modified or created 52 work processes.
* Office of Court Administration (OCA) reports were simplified and made more transparent by the use of advanced queries and technical summaries.

Youth Services

The purpose of Youth Services is to provide for the administration of juvenile cases so that youthful offenders are held accountable for their actions and do not re-offend.

Performance Highlights:

* Number of cases filed for juveniles has continued to decrease due to the Austin Youth Diversion Program. There were 1,848 juvenile cases filed during FY14, and only 1,430 during FY15.
* The recidivism rate significantly decreased from 12.13% in FY14 to 7.96% for FY15.

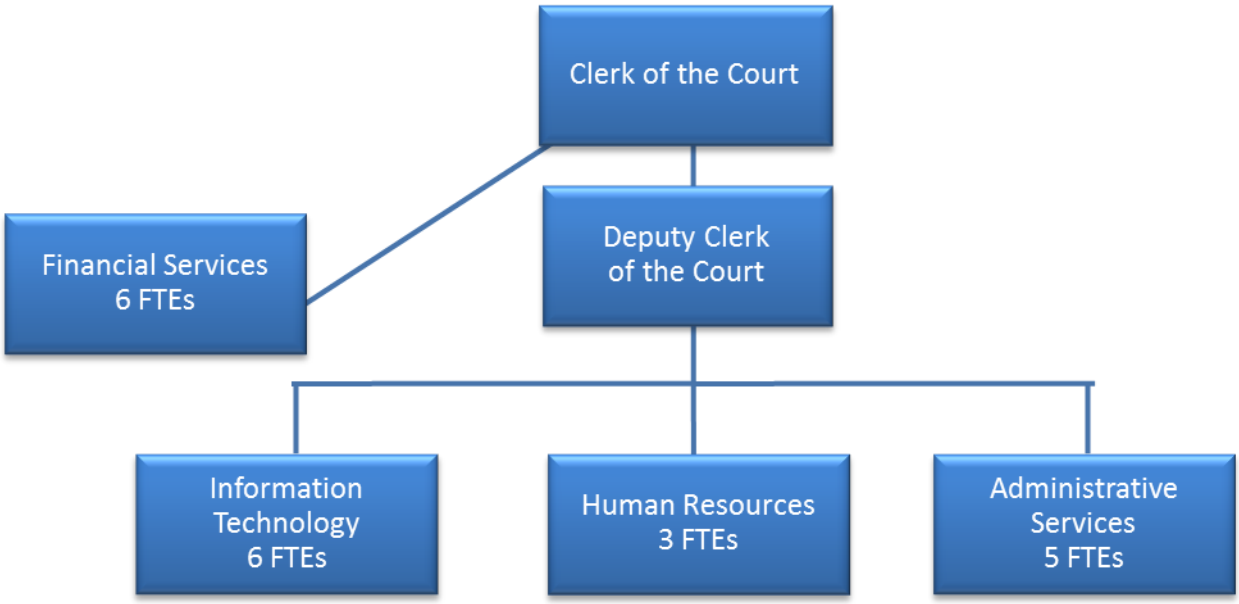


Accomplishments:

* In order to offer additional free resources to juveniles, Youth Services added three free classes, including two traffic classes (National Safety Council's Alive@25 class that targets drivers under 25 using media and interactive discussions and Traffic class that gives information regarding surcharges and consequences of distracted driving) and one Theft class which targets the reasons that youth steal.
* Due to the decrease of juvenile cases being filed in AMC, juvenile dockets were reduced, thereby increasing the efficiency of dockets and allowing more time for Juvenile Case Managers to meet with families.
* During the past fiscal year, 1,125 cases were diverted to the Austin Youth Diversion program. These are cases in which the youth and the family voluntarily participated in the program and met with a case manager to develop a Diversion Action Plan so that the case would not be filed criminally.

Support Services

Support Services is comprised of four units. The purpose, major performance measures, and accomplishments follow.

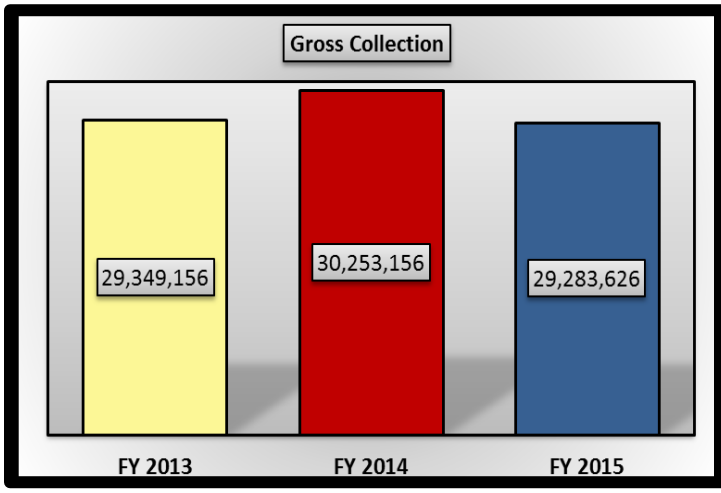


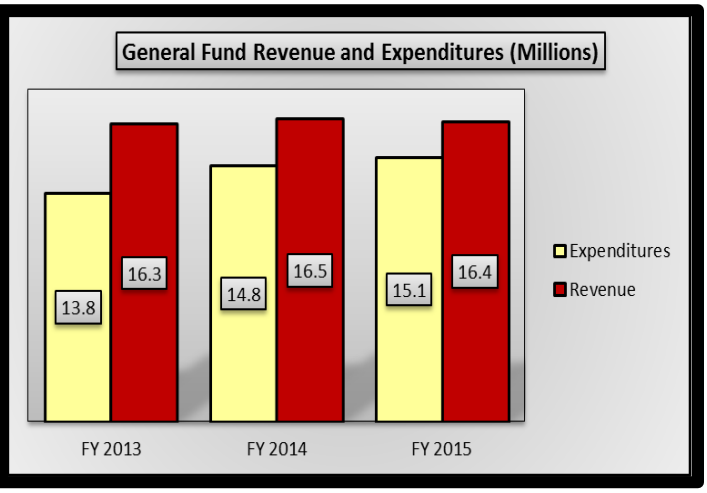
Financial Services

The purpose of Financial Services is to ensure funds are budgeted, expensed, and collected accurately and efficiently to safeguard the financial health of the organization so that the department's goals can be attained.

Performance Highlights:

* Gross collections totaled $29,283,626 in FY15 compared to $30,253,156 the prior fiscal year; a 3.2% decrease. $10,682,378 or 36.4% of gross collections was paid to the State and other agencies required by law.
* General fund revenue (non-GASB) totaled $16,391,045 which is 2.32% over the budgeted amount of $16,019,342.
* General fund expenditures totaled $15,100,993 in FY15 which was 3.3% below the budgeted amount of $15,601,408.





Accomplishments:

* Budget training was provided to AMC managers and supervisors.
* Negotiable instruments training document created and will be incorporated into AMC's cash handling policy.
* Reports were created to monitor refunds so that customers receive their checks in a timely manner.
* Streamlined processes were created to randomly conduct more internal cash audits.

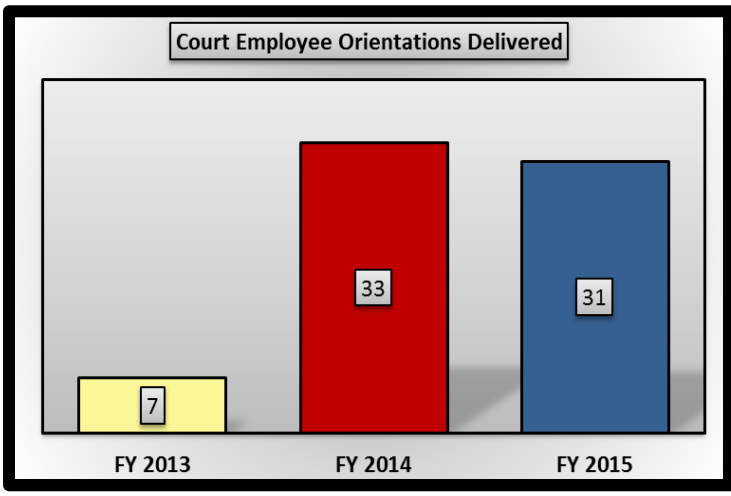
Note: Additional financial information was provided under Budget Revenue and Expense beginning on page 13.

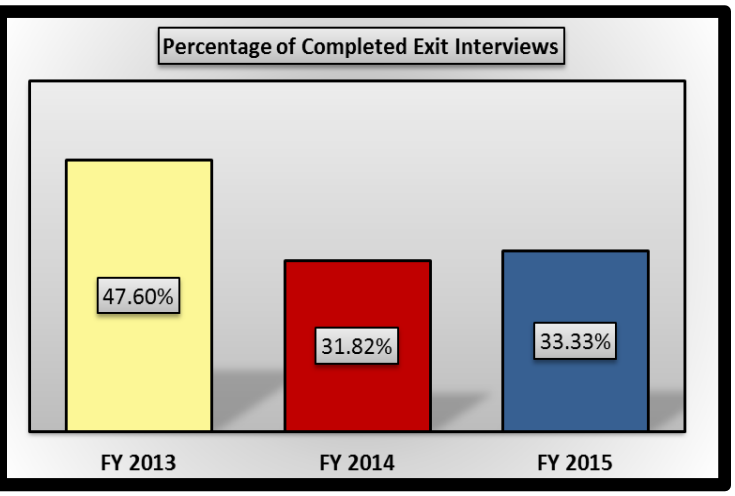
Human Resources

The purpose of Human Resources is to ensure compliance with federal and state laws as well as the policies of the City of Austin and AMC for consistent, accurate, and appropriate application in personnel actions. Provide timely management and administration of employee relations matters, employment, compensation, benefits, FMLA, Workers Compensation, ADA, timekeeping, and training for all municipal court employees.

Performance Highlights:

* Court employee orientations for new employees for FY15 fell slightly to 31 compared to 33 for FY14.
* 33.33% of separating employees completed the exit interview compared to 15.20% citywide.





Accomplishments:

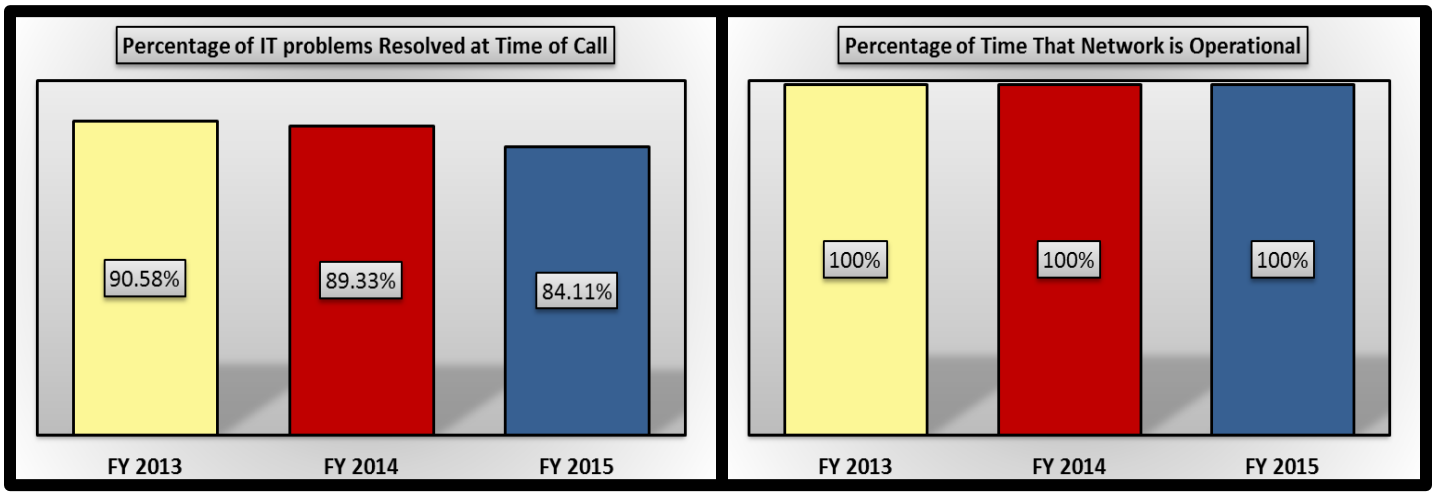
* Completed and implemented an IT Market-Study for IT positions.
* Revamped AMC's new employee orientation and reduced from 3½ days to 1½ days.
* 100% of court employees completed the City's required Ethics and Cyber training.
* 61% of employees leaving the court participated in an in-person exit interview with the Human Resources staff.
* Personnel grievance remains at zero for the third consecutive year.
* Number of employees receiving bilingual pay in FY15 has remained constant since last fiscal year.

Information Technology

The purpose of Information Technology (IT) services is to provide network interconnectivity, computer hardware/software support, and information technology planning for the department to produce and communicate effectively.

Performance Highlights:

* The percentage of IT problems resolved at the time of call decreased 5.22% from last fiscal year.
* The court's network remains operational at all times with the exception of planned maintenance and service interruptions.



Accomplishments:

* Developed the virtualization of server infrastructure.
* 175 queries/programs were created for FY15; the same as last fiscal year.
* Created an online help desk ticket system which reduced the number of calls received by the help desk by 34%.
* Payments taken on AMC's public website totaled $8.86M for FY15 and $7.88M for FY14; an increase of 12.4%.
* Implemented mobile workstations for managers.
* All Windows 2003 servers were upgraded to Windows 2008 or newer.
* Migrated off all servers that were out of warranty.

Giving Back to the Community

Youth Mentoring

AMC had 17 volunteers in the mentoring and tutoring program this year. This program allows City employees to spend up to 2 hours a week working with students at the local school campuses or libraries in the Austin area.

City of Austin Combined Charities (COACCC)

AMC employees donated time, effort, and money to the City of Austin Combined Charities Campaign. The AMC's coordinators were Joan Lee and Robin Campos. Over $4,500.00 was raised through a combination of event fund raisers and individual contributions.

Build-A-Backpack

AMC employees participated in the City's 8th annual Build-A-Backpack program and donated 26 backpacks packed full of school supplies for Austin public schools.

City Works/Austin Corp

AMC and DACC participated in the City's CityWorks and AustinCorps programs. CityWorks consists of a group of concerned citizens who attend a series of informational meetings to understand what departments do. AustinCorps is a similar series that engages Austin high school students. This year, engineering students had the opportunity to meet with the acting Court Clerk and members of the judiciary. Both sessions with AMC have been highly rated.

Employee Appreciation

Awards and Recognition

As part of its quarterly Awards and Recognition program, AMC gives awards for every five years of service to the City of Austin. During the year, there were 11 employees who were recognized for five years of service, seven employees for 10 years, three employees for 15 years, and four employees for 20 years. This is a grand total of 250 years of service to the Court and the City of Austin!

AMC also recognizes three Employees of the Quarter and a Friend of the Court quarterly. The Friend of the Court is someone from a different city department who has provided a great service to AMC. Also, a supervisor and a unit are recognized annually.

Additionally, an "In the Spotlight" section was added to the court's internal weekly newsletter where staff can highlight their activities and accomplishments outside of work. Staff is also encouraged to submit their own scenic photos for display at the court every month.

Lastly, all employees received an official "City of Austin Municipal Court" shirt as part of their holiday appreciation gift from the court.

Court Appreciation Week

The Texas Legislature declared November 2-6, 2015 as Municipal Court Appreciation Week. Communities throughout Texas issued proclamations and planned events in appreciation for the dedicated municipal court judges, clerks, and administrators. Mayor Adler declared AMC week at the November 6th City Council meeting in recognition of the 178 court staff members. AMC provided information and refreshments during the week.

Quarterly Retreats

The management team meets quarterly with supervisors and leads at various city sites to discuss current issues, assess projects, and provide training. During the last fiscal year:

- In October, the topic was business planning.
- In January, potential enhancements to customer service, employee morale, and the budget were discussed.
- In May, current court projects were reviewed and training provided on interviewing skills.
- In July, the roles of supervisors and leads, desired requirements for the new building, ADA training, and a critique of the first annual report were discussed.

Supervisor Academy Graduates

AMC's FY15 Supervisor Academy graduates were Debbie Cowan, Kenny Gore, Cecilia Harris, Lori Howser-Cruz, and Christy Torres. They were recognized at a graduation ceremony held on November 13, 2015. The Supervisor Academy is a program run by the city for new and aspiring supervisors.

Employee Engagement

Ethics Bowl

AMC *Team One* placed first in this year's Ethics Bowl competition! *Teams One* and *Two* did an outstanding job presenting and defending their arguments after rebuttal on current issues that were ethical in nature. Kimberly Chadwick, Court Operations Manager, served as the executive coach for both teams. Our first team was comprised of Brydan McNeely, Rachel Clarkson, Juli Morrison, and Louis (Sonny) Castillo. Donna Combs, Kenny Gore, Amy Schillerstrom, and Olivia Cosby represented as a second team. During the competition, representatives from eight city departments were asked to:

1- Understand the facts of the cases presented.
2- Articulate the ethical values involved in the cases.
3- Present an effective argument on how the case should be resolved.
4- Respond effectively to the challenges put forth by the opposing team as well as the panel of judges.

City of Austin Olympics

About ten court staff members formed a team for the annual City Olympics. They enjoyed the team building opportunity and had a lot of fun representing the department. Way to go VolleyBrawlers!

Celebrations

During the year, employees participate in creating events to recognize holidays and celebrations. Some events during the past year included: Halloween costumes and decorations; Thanksgiving luncheon; Holiday gifts and luncheon; Black History Month posters and luncheon; Valentine's Day cards and snacks; Easter egg hunt; and monthly birthday parties. Not only do these events help recognize and appreciate diversity, they also provide an opportunity for staff to collaborate with peers in other units throughout AMC.

Take Your Children to Work Day

AMC sponsored numerous events for "Take Our Children to Work Day" on Friday, June 26th. The day offered parents the opportunity to show their children what they do on the job and what other court jobs entail. The group of 28 children explored the police vehicles, went on a scavenger hunt, took pictures sitting behind the judge's bench, and participated in a mock trial. Judge Herrera, Prosecutor Melissa Vidal, Officer Settles, and Officer Mason joined in on the fun. AMC provided souvenir bags and lots of valuable educational information.

PE Class Participation

The City's worksite fitness initiative, the PE Program, continues to grow and improve—striving to meet the needs of employees to become a healthier work force. Over 30 employees from the court enrolled in at least one PE class offered by the City every quarter.

Future Initiatives

AMC has several projects which it will focus on in FY16 and future years.

- A new main courthouse was approved with the 2006 bond program to accommodate the needs of today's court as well as that of the future. Options are under consideration for the most appropriate use of space to meet City and departmental needs. Additional spending for this facility is planned in future years.
- A new case management system is approved for FY15-16 to provide the functionality needed. It will handle more than 350,000 new cases filed annually and facilitate online services. The new case management system is funded through the Communications and Technology Management (CTM) capital budget as a citywide IT initiative.
- New skip tracing tool will be expanded to select units throughout the court to help with verification of personal information to make communications with defendants and customers more reliable.
- Look into using methods of electronic notifications to supplement mailed or telephoned notices.
- Vet, select, and integrate new business intelligence tools to improve unit reporting with explanatory visuals, increase cross-functionality among units by providing integrated reporting, create more cohesive reporting for performance measures, and ensure visualizations to the public via open data.
- Continue open data improvement efforts by ensuring that data online is clear, useful, well formatted, and easily accessed.
- Plan and begin implementation for a new intranet service to improve internal communications and access to information.
- Continue to increase the transparency of data reported to the Office of Court Administration (OCA) by partially automating the process to improve reporting efficiency.
- Design and build a data warehouse that will allow for better organization of internal reports and information.
- Move the task of warrant confirmations to the Central Booking unit at the Travis County jail. This will allow the court to close the building during non-business hours and reduce the requirements for 24/7 staffing.
- All court processes and procedures will be documented to streamline operations throughout AMC and improve new employee training.