

Raising Travis County

Update to Travis County Commissioners Court:
Long-Term Implementation Plan

Tuesday, February 24, 2026



Agenda

- Review Strategic Priorities
- Updates by Strategy
 - Progress to date
 - Current status
 - Key decision points and considerations
 - Next steps
- Upcoming Timeline



Strategies

Strategy 1: Expand slots for infants & toddlers (ages 0-3) and for afterschool and summer programming (PreK-12th grade)

Strategy 2: Expand non-traditional hours care

Strategy 3: Build quality and capacity

Strategy 4: Build a Business/Government Alliance to leverage business contributions and matching public funds to reduce employee child care costs

Strategy One: Expand Access to Quality Care

Progress to Date

- Early Childhood Investments
 - 1,000 child care scholarships for children 0-3 and their siblings
 - Early Head Start expansion
 - PreK3 full-day care at Austin ISD
 - Emergency care for children experiencing homelessness (*pending*)
- Out of School Time (OST) Investments
 - PreK4 afterschool expansion in Del Valle ISD
 - K-12 afterschool expansion in Manor ISD
 - K-5 afterschool and summer expansion in Pflugerville ISD (*pending*)
 - Contract expansions for 4 OST nonprofit providers
 - Launched Request for Services in December 2025



Strategy One: Expand Access to Quality Care

Current Status – Planning for Contracted Slots

- What are contracted slots?
- Best practice research and peer city consultations have been completed
- Draft recommendations have been presented to child care providers for feedback
- Key decision points have been identified, including:
 - Proportion of contracted slots to traditional scholarships
 - Quality requirements for participating child care programs
 - Minimum wage requirements for teachers in participating programs
- Timeline: Potential pilot in Late 2027



Strategy Two: Nontraditional Hours Care

Progress to Date

- In 2023 Urban Institute conducted a Travis County study, including focus groups and interviews with key stakeholders, leading to a better understanding of local need.
- Urban Institute recommended “*piloting multiple strategies that include incentivizing child care centers to open earlier and remain open later, supporting home-based providers to extend their hours of operation, and increasing the supply of in-home caregivers for families who work late in the evening and overnight.*”
- A local pilot was conducted in 2023, identifying opportunities to support providers so they can expand into nontraditional hours.



Strategy Two: Nontraditional Hours Care

Next Steps

- Key decision points have been identified, including:
 - Funding parameters
 - Types of care to support
 - Which strategic approach to employ:
 - Expand hours at existing licensed and registered providers
 - Strengthen relative and in-home care for overnight needs
 - Innovation and collaboration grants
- Next steps: This strategy has been brought to the RTC Community Advisory Council for discussion and input. Additional community input is needed regarding decision points. RFS for an administrator will need to be released.



Strategy Three: Quality and Capacity

Progress to Date

- Early Childhood Investments (Contracts executed)
 - Gap funding
 - Early childhood educator professional development
- Early Childhood and OST Investments (Contracts pending)
 - Family-based child care network supports
 - Child care shared services alliance
 - PreK partnerships between child care providers and ISDs
 - Professional development & quality assessments for OST providers
 - Small business grants to providers



Strategy Three: Quality and Capacity

Next Steps

- Assess the impact of initial quality investments in growing capacity, particularly to serve children ages 0-3
- Understand child care and OST ecosystem needs, including service availability and workforce gaps, based on local landscape surveys
- Complete review of existing quality investments in the FY26 Quality Plan funded by TWC, City of Austin and Travis County
 - RTC will focus on gaps outside of the existing efforts funded
 - Opportunities to leverage philanthropic investments will be identified



Strategy Four: Business/Government Alliance

Progress to Date and Next Steps

- Best practice research and peer city consultations have been completed
- Additional opportunities to explore or leverage
 - Chapter 381 policy
 - Employer-provided child care tax credit (45F)
 - Child care reserve fund
- Community stakeholders have been identified, and initial planning meetings have been held
- Next Steps:
 - Partner with Austin Chamber and United Way for Greater Austin to form an Employer Work Group
 - Present potential models for feedback:
 - Cost sharing
 - Grant program



Upcoming Timeline

- Update to Commissioners Court – April
- Review of Draft Plan:
 - RTC Community Advisory Council – April
 - Child Care and Out of School Time Subcommittees – June
 - Commissioners Court – August



Thank You!

