

ALAMO REGION

ALAMO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



Alamo Area Council
of Governments

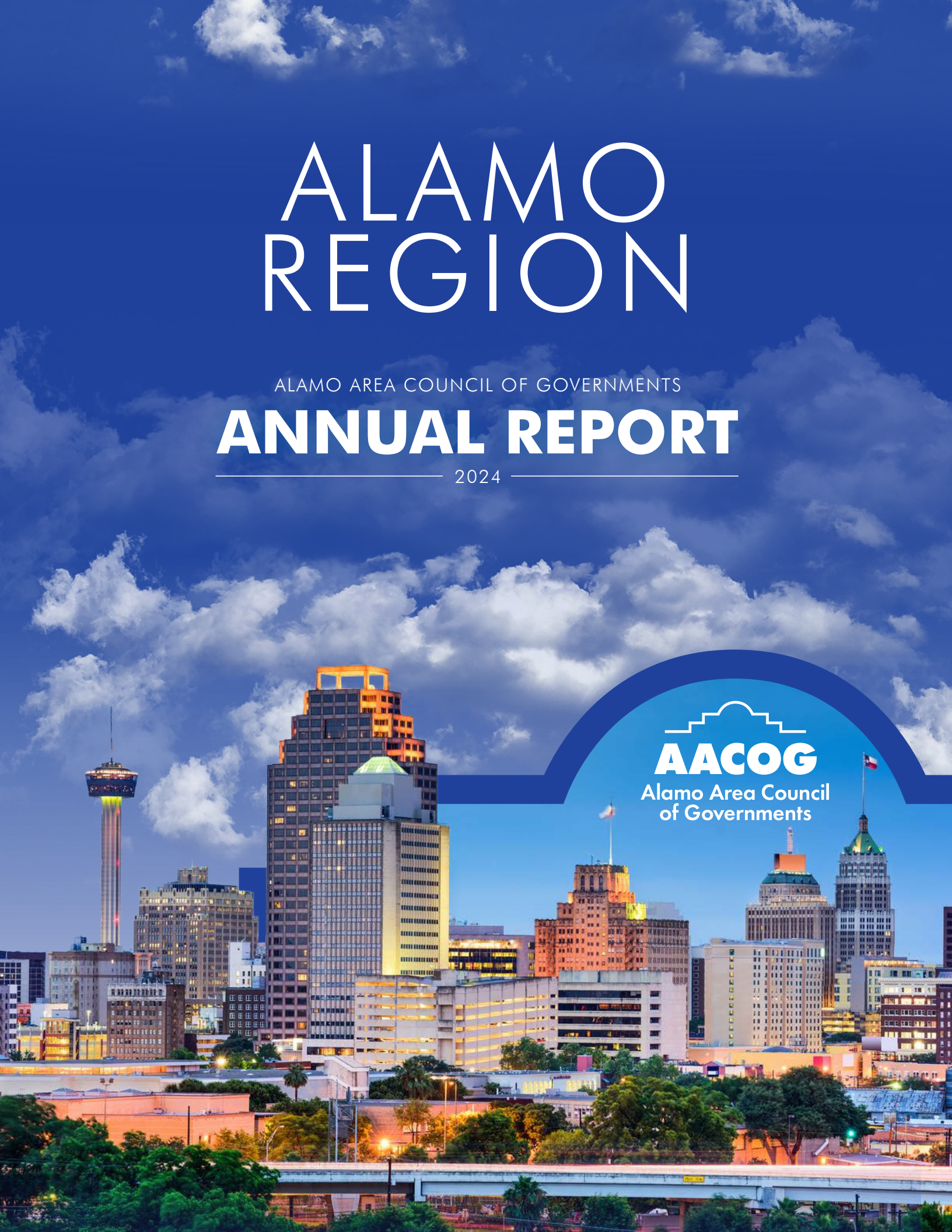


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**Alamo Area Council
of Governments**

Dear AACOG Members and Residents of the Alamo Region:

This year it was my honor to serve as the chairman of the AACOG Board of Directors. The last few months of 2023 were challenging but the implementation of a new organizational structure in 2024 has reaped benefits. The amendment of the bylaws to require the appointment of two Executive Committee members to meet quarterly with the Human Resources Department was paramount. This increased oversight provides the board with the opportunity to address significant employee related issues.

I have served on this board since 2019 and, despite any challenges, the resiliency of the AACOG leadership and staff never ceases to amaze me. Although employee retention will always remain a struggle, the difficulty will be far less with the adoption of employee incentives to include increased pension benefits, a new hybrid work schedule along with a PTO sell back option and the recognition of Juneteenth as an additional employee holiday.

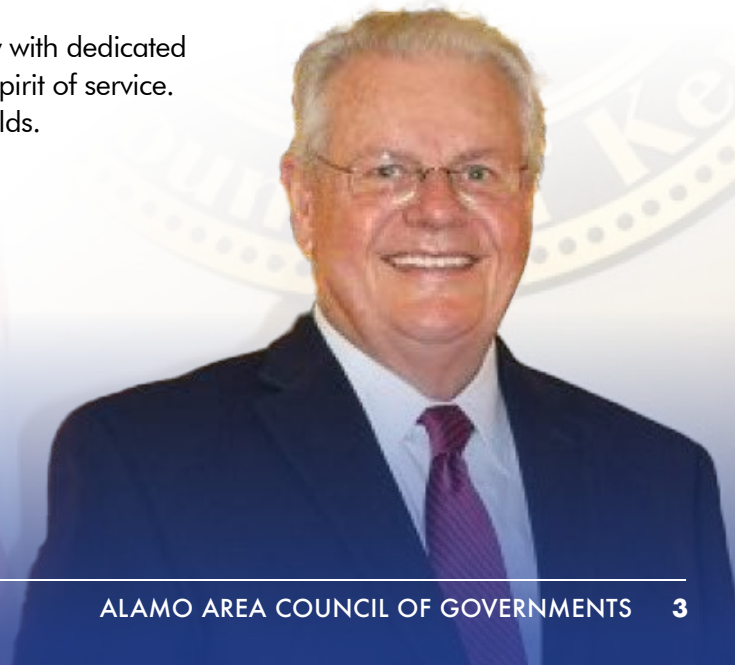
AACOG programs continue to perform exceptionally by meeting or exceeding their goals. The region continues to grow and program staff work diligently to serve the needs of the rising populations. For example, the Alamo Regional Transit program expanded services by launching a fixed route in Wilson County and began offering micro-transit service in the City of Seguin. Additionally, AACOG's Regional Services program has actively promoted its grant writing and administration capabilities to enhance its economic development services to the region. I am pleased that the agency was retained by three member governments to provide grant writing, administration, fiscal and compliance services. Likewise, AACOG has committed to hiring two additional grant writing personnel to assist member governments in obtaining and administering grants for their respective communities.

AACOG is an extraordinary agency with dedicated employees who exemplify the true spirit of service. I look forward to what the future holds.

Yours in service,



Rob Kelly
County Judge, Kerr County
2024 AACOG Board of
Directors Chairman



MANAGEMENT TEAM



Clifford C Herberg Jr
Executive Director



Deedra Johnson
Deputy Executive Director



Jacob Ulczynski
Deputy Executive Director



Julio Elizondo
Chief Financial Officer



Virginia Charles
Senior Director



William McKnight
Senior Director



Sean Scott
Senior Director



Joaquin Torres
Controller



Lucinda Elizondo
Director



Duane Evans
Director



Alicia Avila Penalver
Director



Debbie Ugarte
Director

2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Rob Kelly • Chairman

County Judge, Kerr County, Representing
Kerr County

Mary Dennis • Vice Chairwoman

Mayor, City of Live Oak, Representing Suburban
Cities (GBCCC)

Tommy Calvert • Commissioner

Bexar County Precinct 4, Representing Bexar County

Rochelle Camacho • County Judge

Frio County, Representing Frio County

Michael Carpenter • Commissioner

Guadalupe County, Representing
Guadalupe County

Rebeca Clay-Flores • Commissioner

Bexar County Precinct 1, Representing Bexar County

Weldon Cude • County Judge

Atascosa County, Representing Atascosa County

Donna Dodgen • Mayor

City of Seguin, Representing Area Cities, Group B

Richard A. Evans • County Judge

Bandera County, Representing Bandera County

Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia • Councilwoman

City of San Antonio, District 4, Representing
City of San Antonio

Marina Alderete Gavito • Councilwoman

City of San Antonio, District 7, Representing
City of San Antonio

James C. Hasslocher • Chair

University Health System, Representing Hospital/
Health Districts

Wade Hedtke • County Judge

Karnes County, Representing Karnes County

Joe Herring • Mayor

City of Kerrville, Representing Area Cities, Group C

Daniel Jones • County Judge

Gillespie County, Representing Gillespie County

Sherman Krause • County Judge

Comal County, Representing Comal County

Lisa Lewis • Chief Administrative Officer

CPS Energy, Representing Public Utilities

Keith Lutz • County Judge

Medina County, Representing Medina County

José Menéndez • Senator

Texas Senate, District 26, Representing Urban
and Rural State Senators

Grant Moody • Commissioner

Bexar County Precinct 3, Representing Bexar County

Andrew Murr • Representative

Texas House of Representatives, Representing Urban
and Rural State Representatives

Manny Pelaez • Councilman

City of San Antonio, District 8, Representing
City of San Antonio

Chris Riley • Mayor

City of Leon Valley, Representing Suburban
Cities (GBCCC)

Darrin Schroeder • Mayor

City of Castroville, Representing Area Cities, Group A

Lawrence Spradley • Councilman

City of New Braunfels, Representing Urbanized Cities

Shane Stolarczyk • County Judge

Kendall County, Representing Kendall County

Alfred Suarez • Mayor

City of Converse, Representing Suburban
Cities (GBCCC)

James E. Teal • County Judge

McMullen County, Representing McMullen County

Enrique Valdivia • Chair

Edwards Aquifer Authority Board of Directors,
Representing Special Districts

Sylvester Vasquez Jr. • President

Southwest ISD, Representing School Districts

Hank Whitman • County Judge

Wilson County, Representing Wilson County

Suzanne de Leon • Mayor, fmr

City of Balcones Heights, Former AACOG
Board of Directors Chair, Ex Officio Member

Ryan Guillen • Representative

State of Texas District 31, Ex Officio Member

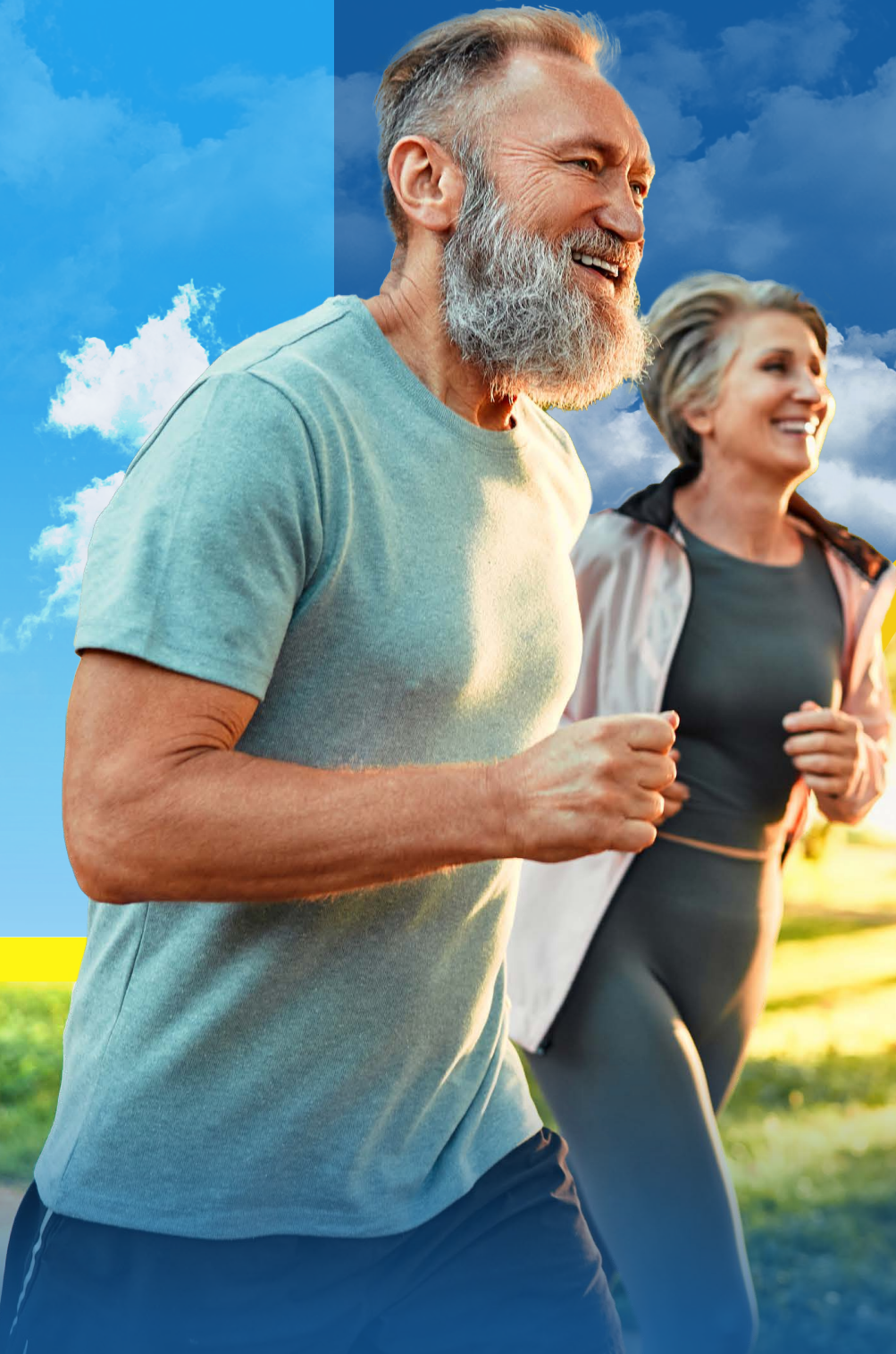
Brian Hoffman • Vice Director

502d Air Base Wing, Joint Base San Antonio,
Representing Ex Officio Member JBSA

Judith Zaffirini • Senator

State of Texas, District 21, Ex Officio Member

AGING SERVICES



AREA AGENCIES
ON AGING

AACOG

Aging, Disability and Veterans Resource Center Alamo Service Connection

The newly designated Aging, Disability and Veterans Resource Center (ADVRC) also known as the Alamo Service Connection is the center where information and referrals are provided to older adults, people with disabilities, veterans, and their families in the Alamo Area.

The ADVRC operates as the primary resource center for individuals seeking guidance and support in navigating the myriad of long term services offered by government agencies, non-profits, and other providers.

Ombudsman Program

The Long-Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman program is dedicated to developing both new and current Ombudsmen to ensure that long term care residents receive the quality of care they deserve. The recruitment and retention of volunteers are critical to the program's continued success. In 2024, program staff alongside 65 committed Ombudsman volunteers who contributed over 2,500 hours of service visited more than 1,460 nursing homes and 1,600 assisted living communities. Their efforts are truly vital in safeguarding the quality of care for individuals residing in these facilities across the region.

The program ensures that residents have direct access to their LTC Ombudsman, are fully informed of their rights as community residents, and receive mediation assistance to resolve any concerns they may have with their long term care community.

The LTC Ombudsman Program provided information through over 60 public education events and delivered over 2,450 instances of information and assistance to individuals and long term care staff on topics including the Ombudsman Program, Resident Rights, and Resident Care across the AACOG region.

CALLS RECEIVED:

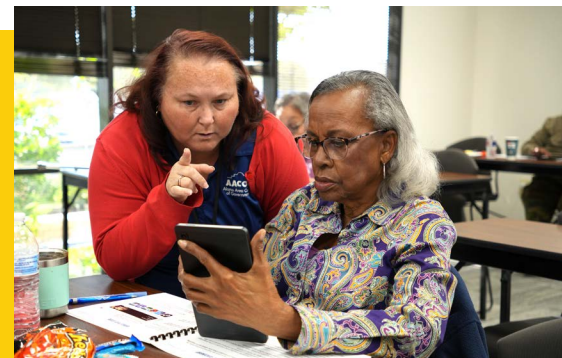
34,710

BEXAR: 31,933
ALAMO: 2,777

Senior Companion Program

The Senior Companion Program addresses social isolation among veterans and older adults by fostering companionship and providing general assistance. Participants are paired with Senior Corps companions, aged 55 or older, who assist with tasks such as checking the mail, light housekeeping, running errands, providing snacks, and accompanying clients to medical appointments.

Companions also offer respite services to family caregivers helping to prevent burnout. The success of the program relies on the recruitment and retention of volunteers. **In 2024, 32 dedicated Senior Companion volunteers contributed 37,702 service hours, significantly reducing social isolation among older adults in the Alamo Area.**



BENEFITS COUSELING

The Benefits Counseling program, also known as the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), provides comprehensive information, counseling, direct enrollment assistance, and advocacy to Medicare beneficiaries of all ages. Adopting a proactive approach, counselors travel to key community locations like food distribution centers and senior centers, ensuring direct outreach. In 2024, counselors supported over 3,088 beneficiaries and participated in more than 160 community events, often collaborating with other government agencies to coordinate specialized benefits counseling. In partnership with local attorneys, the program offers free legal services for clients aged 60 and older, assisting with simple wills, advanced directives, Transfer of Death Deed (TODD), probate alternatives, and adult guardianship.

TOTAL CLIENTS:

3,088

TOTAL OUTREACH: 160

CARE COORDINATION SUPPORT SERVICES

The National Family Caregiver Support Program, in collaboration with the Care Coordination Program, provides a comprehensive range of services, support, and training. The services include homemaking, basic personal assistance, respite care, income support, residential repair, health maintenance, emergency response, chore maintenance, mental health services, and social reassurance support.

In partnership with the Gonzaba Foundation and United Healthcare the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) distributed over 600 box fans through the "Kool Neighbor Program" and over 200 space heaters through the "Warm Hearts Warm Home Program" to assist aging adults.

In 2024, through a partnership with Enable Dental and the University of Texas Health San Antonio School of Dentistry, the AAA provided dental related care to 74 older adults totaling \$44,000 in services. This partnership earned accolades at the state level and was featured at the Aging in Texas Conference in August 2024.

CARE COORDINATION TOTALS:

3,881

BEXAR: 3,248 | ALAMO: 633



NUTRITION

AACOG and its partner nutrition providers have realigned regional operations to prioritize healthy meals and nutritional education. The reopening of larger public dining facilities in 2024 caused a decline in the demand for home-delivered meals while congregate meal services at distribution centers, especially in rural areas, increased. The congregate meals provide nutritious food and help reduce social isolation while fostering community engagement. AACOG's adaptive nutrition services demonstrate its commitment to meeting the evolving needs of residents.

NUTRITION FOR CALENDAR 2024:

BEXAR: \$6,890,587
Units: 1,445,163

ALAMO: \$2,213,192
Units: 438,195

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

In 2024, the Evidence-Based Intervention class curriculum designed to enhance independence, increase mobility, foster socialization, promote healthy living, and improve the overall quality of life for older adults, continued offering courses both in person and virtually. The program engaged 760 participants in various essential areas including fall prevention techniques, nutrition planning, and enhanced mobility skills.

Recognizing the significant impact of falls on the aging population, the Health & Wellness program established a strategic partnership with the South Texas Regional Advisory Council, a network of fire, EMS, and trauma agencies, to offer additional training classes focused on physical balance, known as "A Matter of Balance." These courses were prioritized for facilities with frequent 9-1-1 calls related to falls. During the National Council on Aging's National Falls Prevention Week, the Health & Wellness program distributed over 2,500 educational packets, including AACOG services and other community resources.

CAREGIVER TOTALS:

760

BEXAR: 615
ALAMO: 145



ALAMO REGIONAL TRANSIT



ALAMO
REGIONAL TRANSIT

AACOG



DEMAND RESPONSE

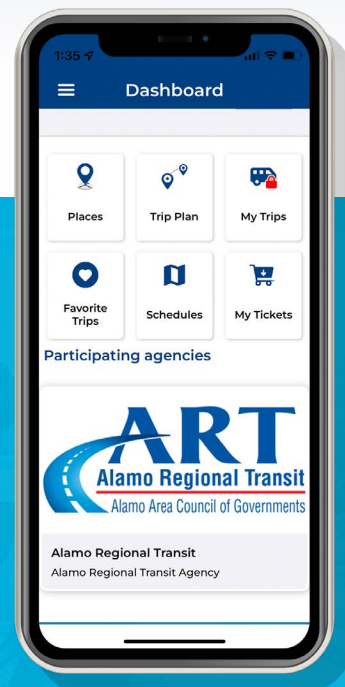
The Alamo Regional Transit (ART) program provides “curb-to-curb” transportation Monday through Friday, from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, across the 12 rural counties in the Alamo Area. The fixed fare service offers residents in those communities an affordable option for travel to medical appointments, work, school, and grocery shopping.

157,967

DEMAND RESPONSE TRIPS IN 2024

ECOLANE MOBILE APP

The Ecolane mobile app, launched in 2021 offers users the opportunity to schedule, adjust, and check the status of their ride from their smartphone or computer.



IN 2024 19,000 TRIPS WERE SCHEDULED THROUGH THE ECOLANE APP.

CONNECT SEGUIN

The Connect Seguin fixed route affords residents in the City of Seguin regular stops at destinations throughout the city. The major destinations include the local H-E-B grocery store, the public library, the post office, the Texas Workforce Commission office, and multiple apartment complexes. In 2024, 23,832 riders took advantage of the local transportation route.



ATASCOSA COWBOY CONNECT

Established in October 2020, Atascosa Cowboy Connect, is a fixed route operating in collaboration with Atascosa County and the Cities of Jourdanton, Pleasanton, and Poteet. The route provides quality service for residents who commute to different cities throughout the county for work, college, and leisure. Major stops in the county include the Atascosa County Courthouse, H-E-B, Wal-Mart and the public library.

IN 2024 **14,816**

TRIPS ON COWBOY BRANDED BUSES WERE RECORDED.



YOUTH TRIPS PROGRAM

ART's Youth Trips program offers transportation to school aged children whose home is not serviced by the local school district's transit system. Children typically impacted by this are those who live within a two mile radius of their school campus and those enrolled in after school care. In 2024, 416 schoolchildren took 17,931 trips to travel to and from school for the following Independent School Districts: Fredericksburg ISD, Boerne ISD, Floresville ISD, and the Atascosa-McMullen Cooperative.

IN 2024, 416
SCHOOLCHILDREN TOOK

17,931

TRIPS TO GET TO AND FROM
SCHOOL IN OUR RURAL
COMMUNITIES

EXPANSION SERVICES

After several focus groups beginning in May 2024 along with buy in from city and county officials, ART launched a fixed route in Wilson County on October 1st. The route which operates in Floresville, La Vernia, Stockdale, and Pandora offers transportation

between the cities in the county at multiple locations to include H-E-B, Wal-Mart, the local post office, Connally Memorial Medical Center, and the Wilson County Expo Center (Senior Center).

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION



ENVIRONMENTAL
CONSERVATION

AACOG

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

2024 marked the first year of the biennium and a total of **\$299,980** in pass-through grants from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality were awarded to six projects in the Alamo Area.

CITY OF JOURDANTON

\$10,000

was awarded to purchase outreach materials for the city's National Night Out event to promote Jourdanton's recycling enforcement and community recycling efforts

CITY OF KERRVILLE

\$15,000

was awarded for clean-up activity associated with the solar eclipse in April 2024, which was later amended to purchase outreach materials.

CITY OF NEW BRAUNFELS

\$6,000

was awarded to purchase cart hangers to support a strategic and empathetic marketing campaign to increase participation in the city's recycling programs; more specifically, reduce the contamination in the city's curbside recycling program.

CITY OF PEARSALL

\$41,446

was awarded to purchase an air curtain incinerator. The funding of an air chipper allows the city to collect and properly dispose of brush, debris, and domestic waste.

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

\$57,334

was awarded to establish waste management services in two underserved rural communities within the county.

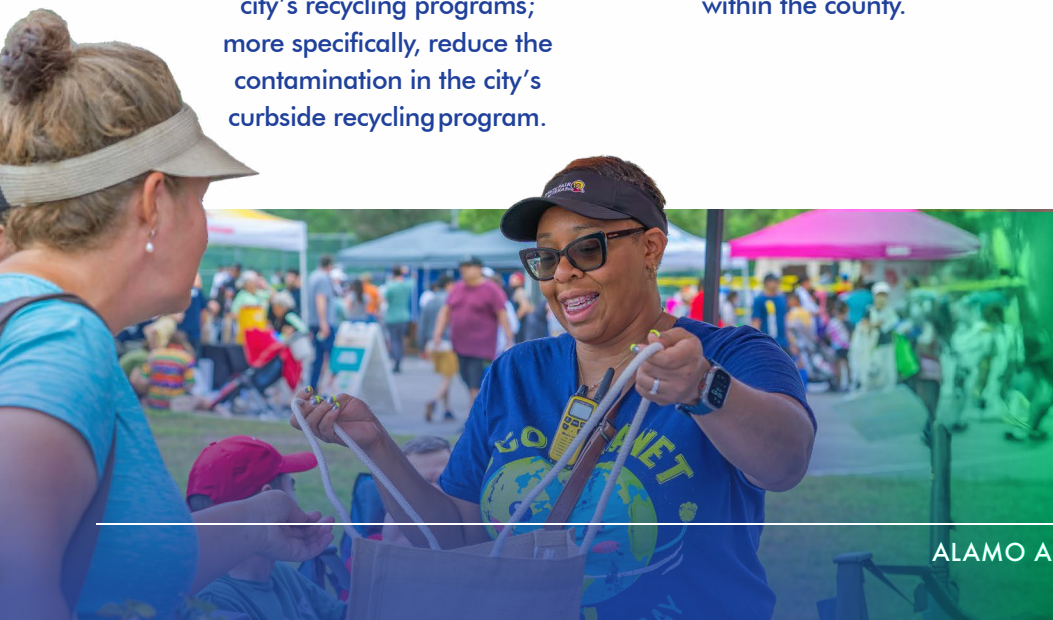
FRIO COUNTY

\$20,200

was awarded to establish waste management services in two underserved rural communities within the county.

ILLEGAL DUMPING TRAINING

On August 16, AACOG's Environmental Conservation program, in partnership with Denton, Navarro, Rodriguez, Bernal, Santee, & Zech, P.C. and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, hosted a one day training on Illegal Dumping at the South Texas Regional Training Center in Hondo, Texas. The class examined the various ways local governments can use state criminal laws, local ordinances, and Texas civil suits to control illegal dumping that threatens local resources and public health. The class also addressed the various barriers that local officials face when implementing these laws.



INTELLECTUAL & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY SERVICES



INTELLECTUAL AND
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITY SERVICES

AACOG

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

Any individual on the State Intellectual & Developmental Disability (IDD) interest list receives eligibility determination. The determination consists of an assessment to determine if the person has an intellectual disability or is a member of the Health and Human Services Commission priority population for IDD before becoming eligible to receive services. The assessment utilizes standardized tests to determine an individual's IQ and Adaptive Behavior Level and typically includes a diagnostic interview with the individual and their legally authorized representative. As of 2024, there are over 12,411 individuals on the IDD Medicaid waiver interest list in Bexar County.



SERVICE COORDINATION

Service coordinators, also known as case managers, help people access medical, social, educational, and other appropriate services to achieve an acceptable quality of life and community participation. Service coordinators also assist with explaining the array of community living options for individuals with IDD and their families. In 2024, 169,482 case coordination services were delivered.

SERVICE COORDINATION/CASE
MANAGEMENT CONTACTS IN 2024:

169,482

DIRECT SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

IDD Services provides direct service and support to eligible individuals residing in nursing facilities or enrolled in community-based services. Direct services are also intended to help individuals achieve an acceptable quality of life and increase community participation. Direct services provided in 2024 include attendant and habilitation services, day habilitation, respite, employment services, and specialized therapies.



CRISIS SERVICES

A major obstacle individuals with IDD and their supportive family members encounter is access to adequate behavioral crisis respite support and training opportunities. The IDD crisis services program provides up to 72 hours of in home crisis respite or up to 14 days of out of home crisis respite. The program's role is to provide therapeutic support and assist with stabilizing the situation. Therapeutic support entails a flexible array of services to include behavior support to holistically address the stressors which impact the challenging behaviors. The IDD Services crisis program served 576 clients with 4,939 crisis intervention service activities throughout the year. In addition, the crisis intervention team provided 182 specialized trainings to the community.

TRANSITION SUPPORT TEAM

The goal of the Transition Support Team is successful inclusion in the community by providing medical, psychiatric, and behavioral services targeting at-risk factors that can lead to institutionalization. The program provides support to Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authorities, Home and Community-Based Services providers, Texas Home Living providers, Community Living Assistance Support Services, Deaf and Blind with Multiple Disabilities providers, and Local Mental Health Authority/Local Behavioral Health Authority providers serving people at risk of admission or readmission to an institutional setting. The designated service area where support is provided is the AACOG, Camino Real, Gulf Bend, and Hill Country regions.

In 2024, the program coordinated **66** educational events to include training **147** law enforcement officers in IDD Recognition and Response, **70** technical assistance activities, and **28** case reviews.

SUPPORT AND EMPOWERMENT

The Support & Empowerment program aims to educate older adults with IDD and their caregivers in health and wellness. The program offers both in person and virtual classes that are available to individuals across the state. In 2024, videos were produced and made available by visiting the AACOG website. The videos highlight various topics that include health, finance, spirituality, caregiver care, nutrition, and physical fitness. The program aims to supply older adults with IDD and their caregivers with the resources they need to assist them in making healthy life choices and properly plan for their future.



ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SUPPORTING AGING FAMILY MEMBERS

The Adults with Developmental Disabilities Supporting Aging Family Members program aims to provide skills for persons with developmental disabilities to develop a plan for themselves and their caregiver's future. Through participation in classes offered throughout AACOG's 13 county region, participants are able to gain skills in finance, health and nutrition, and emergency planning they can implement for current circumstances and in the future. The classes are available to participants in group classes or one-on-one sessions.

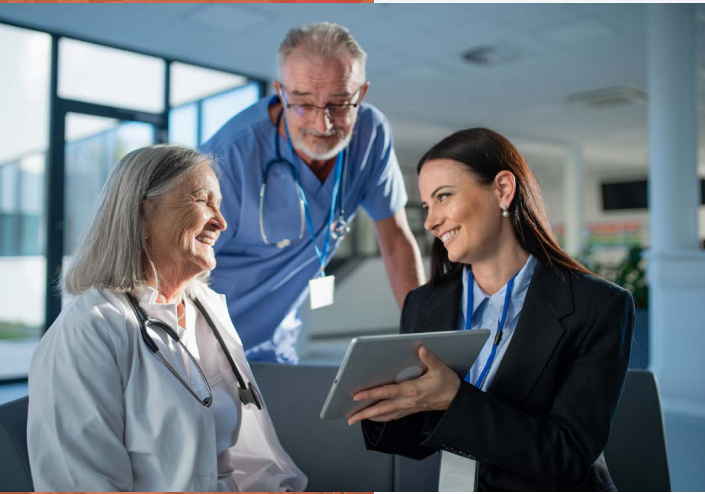
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The IDD Employment Services program adheres to the Employment First philosophy that all people, despite a disability, have the ability to work. The program provides opportunities to educate consumers on the skills necessary to assist individuals with a disability to transition into competitive integrated employment. Through the Vocational Apprenticeship Program, consumers work on soft skills such as workplace behaviors and conversations, interview preparation, and money management skills in a classroom environment. Apprentices are placed in host businesses within the community to afford them the opportunity to gain transferable hard skills that will aid them as they work toward achieving their employment goals. In 2024, the program hosted two cohorts consisting of 24 participants. In 2025, Employment Services will introduce a pilot of the Employment Navigator program. The program will connect consumers to agencies and services in the San Antonio area that will assist them in transitioning into employment.



INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

IDD Services works diligently toward increasing the level of interagency coordination to support the IDD population in Bexar County. The program has continued to actively participate in the Southwest Texas Crisis Collaborative, an effort of Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council, designated by the Texas Department of State Health Services to develop, implement, and maintain the regional trauma and emergency healthcare system for Trauma Service Area.



IDD Services continues to partner with the local health information exchange, HASA, and receives daily alerts when individuals currently receiving services from our programs have presented at a local hospital. This near real-time information source allows for timelier follow-up and discharge planning for urgent and emergent healthcare needs.

In coordination with University Health System (UHS), IDD Services has developed a hospital liaison program. IDD Services co-locates a member of the IDD Crisis team at UHS to aid in the identification, care coordination, behavior intervention, and care transitions of persons with intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities, and related conditions.

In 2024, IDD Services developed programs for individuals with intellectual disabilities who have encounters with the criminal justice system in coordination with Bexar County. IDD Services receives daily alerts when a person suspected of having an intellectual disability is booked in an adult detention center. This collaboration with the state and county allows IDD Services to support the person and jail staff while developing a plan to divert the person to the community, when possible. IDD Services continues to work diligently toward increasing the level of interagency coordination surrounding and expanding the availability of crucial IDD services through staff liaisons co-located at UHS, Bexar County Adult Detention Center, and Morgan's Wonderland Multi-Assistance Center.



IDD Services works diligently toward increasing the level of interagency coordination to support the IDD population in Bexar County.

MILITARY & VETERAN AFFAIRS



MILITARY AFFAIRS

AACOG

THE MILITARY VETERANS AFFAIRS SUPPORT COUNCIL

In 2024, the Military and Veterans Affairs (MVA) team formed The Military Veterans Affairs Support Council. The Military Veterans Affairs Support Council was established to address the evolving needs of veterans and their families across AACOG's 13 county region. The primary goal of the council is to foster collaboration among key stakeholders such as Veterans Service Officers, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and local nonprofits. By streamlining resources and sharing best practices, the council aims to eliminate barriers, improve service delivery, and create a more efficient network for veterans to access critical benefits.



CAMP BULLIS SENTINEL LANDSCAPE

In 2021, the Military & Veterans Affairs program, in collaboration with the Hill Country Alliance, formed a consortium of 45 organizations to establish a Sentinel Landscape in Texas to protect the training missions at JBSA-Camp Bullis. This initiative was officially designated as the Camp Bullis Sentinel Landscape (CBSL) by the Federal Coordinating Committee in February 2022.

Since its inception, the consortium has grown significantly, now including 57 partner organizations. The CBSL partnership focuses on supporting and sustaining land and wildlife conservation efforts to enhance military readiness and resilience. It also promotes compatible land use off base to mitigate encroachment and address issues such as light and noise pollution that impact military training. AACOG continues to play a pivotal role in coordinating, outreach, and messaging of CBSL initiatives.



VETERAN DIRECTED CARE SERVICES

The Veteran Directed Care (VDC) program, in partnership with the Veterans Administration (VA), is the largest of its kind in the nation. The VDC program empowers veterans to manage their own care from home offering an alternative to long term care facilities. Veterans enrolled in the program are provided critical case management and coordination services to ensure their needs are met. Serving VA referred veterans within a 120-mile radius of San Antonio, the VDC program has experienced significant growth since 2023, now supporting over 600 veterans. The VDC service expansion now includes Travis, Uvalde, Val Verde, and Kinney counties.



MILITARY INSTALLATION RESILIENCE REVIEW

**AACOG SECURED A
\$1.2 MILLION MILITARY
INSTALLATION RESILIENCE
REVIEW (MIRR) GRANT FROM
THE OFFICE OF LOCAL
DEFENSE COMMUNITY
COOPERATION.**

The study, launched in September 2023 and concluding in January 2025, focuses on analyzing energy and wastewater infrastructure resilience in communities surrounding JBSA - Lackland, JBSA - Fort Sam Houston, and Port San Antonio. In collaboration with JBSA, Port San Antonio, CPS Energy, and San Antonio Water System, the study will identify key infrastructure resilience needs and provide recommendations to support JBSA's mission beyond its boundaries. The findings will guide local utilities and governments in future partnerships and inform feasible enhancements, priorities, and investments to strengthen infrastructure resilience. The MIRR study will also establish a foundation for pursuing future funding opportunities to address identified resilience challenges.



ALAMO VETERANS NETWORK

Beginning this year, after the end of grant funding, AACOG has committed to fully funding the Alamo Veterans Network (AVN) program for the 13 county Alamo Area, ensuring the program's continued operation. AVN remains dedicated to managing inquiries from military service members, veterans, and their dependents. The program has developed strong partnerships with over 250 veteran serving organizations, addressing more than 70 distinct areas of need for veterans and their families.

AACOG received a \$300,000 transportation grant from the Texas Veterans Commission to provide free transit services to veterans and their families across its 13 county service area. The program, Rides 4 TX Heroes, offers safe and reliable transportation to medical appointments, senior centers, job interviews, school, grocery shopping, and other essential needs. In 2024, the program provided over 5,000 rides to veterans, surviving spouses, and family members.

DEFENSE ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANT GRANT

IN 2024 AACOG ASSISTED
MCMULLEN COUNTY IN
SECURING A **\$465,000**

DEFENSE ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANT GRANT (DEAAG)

to improve an undeveloped road providing access to the Relocatable Over-The-Horizon Radar Texas site, a critical asset for the U.S. Army Southern Command in detecting and monitoring illicit trafficking. The road, currently hazardous and impassable during bad weather, causes significant vehicle damage. The project will fund the design and initial improvements to create a properly surfaced and drained road, enhancing mission effectiveness, safety, and reducing travel delays and vehicle wear.



**ROAD
WORK
AHEAD**

NATURAL RESOURCES



NATURAL RESOURCES

AACOG



TOTAL NUMBER OF GRANTS
APPLIED FOR IN 2024

OVER \$140 MILLION

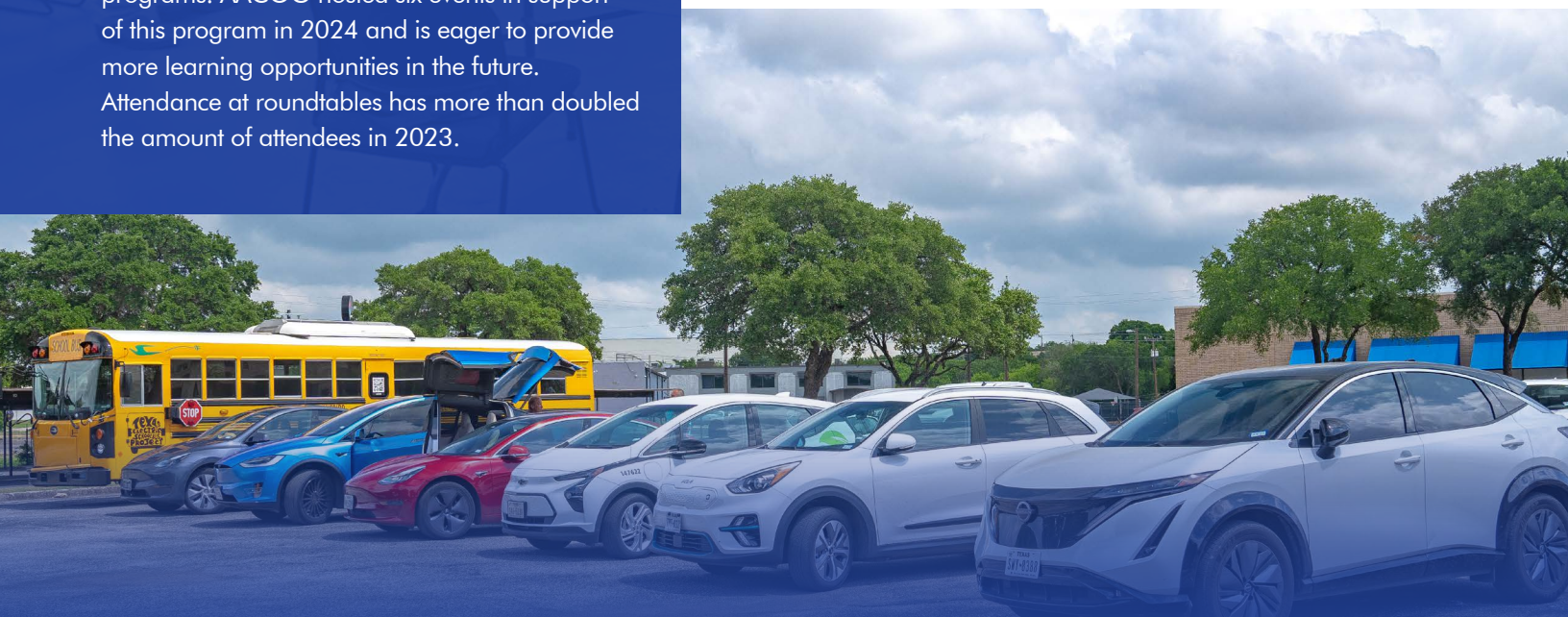
REGIONAL ENERGY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

In 2024, AACOG continued working with local governments to help them better comprehend energy management and implement practices to reduce energy consumption. Through a grant from the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO), AACOG is engaging local governments to educate them about energy efficiency, energy resiliency, and incentives to implement those programs. AACOG hosted six events in support of this program in 2024 and is eager to provide more learning opportunities in the future. Attendance at roundtables has more than doubled the amount of attendees in 2023.

ALAMO AREA CLEAN CITIES COALITION

The Alamo Area Clean Cities Coalition is part of a Department of Energy funded partnership with 80 other coalitions across the country. The coalition advances American energy independence, environmental sustainability, and economic development by promoting regional adoption of alternative fuels in the transportation sector. The Alamo Area Clean Cities Coalition is a network of public and private stakeholders working to advance affordable domestic transportation fuels, encourage energy efficient mobility systems, and promote adoption of other fuel-saving technologies and practices. As part of a massive federal investment, the coalition applied for two Federal Highway Administration grants that propose advancing alternative fuel corridor infrastructure development in the region and across the state.

With support from GTI Energy, the coalition has also been engaged in hydrogen fueling infrastructure planning by convening a Hydrogen Project Advisory Committee. The committee discusses how to implement hydrogen vehicle technology equitably and safely across the AACOG region. A set of guidelines for deploying hydrogen fuel infrastructure will be generated that will also address workforce considerations.



TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

Under the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Rider 7 Air Quality Planning Program, AACOG continued monitoring ozone, meteorology, and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) during the 2024 ozone season at Bulverde Elementary, City of Garden Ridge, New Braunfels Airport, and Seguin Outdoor Learning Center. An automated gas chromatograph (Auto-GC) in Garden Ridge has also been in operation during 2024 and is providing volatile organic compound (VOC) data. Since Garden Ridge measures ozone and both of its precursors, NO_x and VOC, the data is extremely valuable in helping us understand the behavior of ozone.

A Truck Idling Emission Inventory was also completed this year. This project involved visiting rest areas, truck stops, and other identified locations within Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Kendall, and Medina counties where heavy duty truck idling occurs. Staff completed over 380 visits to calculate the number of parking spaces, trucks present, and trucks idling. The information gathered was used to estimate emissions from heavy duty truck idling.



NUMBER OF VISITS MADE
TO CALCULATE AMOUNT OF
TRUCKS IDLING:

OVER 380 VISITS

PROPERTY ASSESSED CLEAN ENERGY

AACOG has administered the regional Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) program since 2019. PACE is a private low-cost, long-term financing tool for commercial, industrial, and large multi-family property owners to fund eligible energy efficiency and water conservation retrofit projects. In 2024, the AACOG PACE program saw several major expansions. The City of Converse established their PACE program

in August, becoming the 15th local government in the AACOG region to do so. In September, a new PACE project closed in Universal City, making it the first in the Alamo Area outside of San Antonio and Castroville. Later that month, Wilson County became the fourth county in the AACOG region to establish a PACE program.

PUBLIC SAFETY



PUBLIC SAFETY

AACOG

ALAMO AREA REGIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY

The Alamo Area Regional Law Enforcement Academy (AARLEA) trains individuals for peace officer and corrections officer licensure in the State of Texas. In 2024, the AARLEA experienced an increase of 75% in cadet sponsorships per class. Sponsored cadets are recruited, interviewed, and hired by jurisdictions contingent on the cadet graduating from the AARLEA and passing the state licensure exam. The candidate begins to earn a paycheck on the first day of their AARLEA training and is guaranteed a job when they obtain their license. Securing a sponsorship serves as an appealing recruitment incentive for local law enforcement agencies while also benefitting the individual attending the Academy as it allows them to focus on their training. In addition to the Basic Peace Officers Course, AARLEA provides continuing education courses for all eligible Texas peace officers through multiple in-person classes. Over 4,100 online classes are also available ranging from legislative updates to de-escalation techniques. In 2024, AARLEA fully implemented the School Marshal program, which helps prepare civilian school personnel for initial response in the case of an active shooter event. AACOG is one of only three entities in Texas designated to offer this training. Additionally, the program works with Independent School District Police Departments and School Resource Officers to offer active shooter training.

Number of law enforcement professionals trained in 2024:

8,756

Number of Texas counties serviced:

143

Number of training hours completed in 2024:

101,286

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PLANNING

The Criminal Justice program conducts grant workshops related to local, state, and federal funding opportunities and offers technical grant application assistance to area law enforcement agencies. In 2024, the Criminal Justice program continued to offer grant writing and grant management courses and received 86 applications for funding from Alamo Area agencies. The Criminal Justice Advisory Committee scored the applications and submitted a recommendation to the Office of the Governor to fund projects for a total of \$12,647,478. The breakdown of each grant and funding amount are featured below:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM	\$992,502
JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAM	\$267,310
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN JUSTICE AND TRAINING PROGRAM	\$374,445
GENERAL VICTIM ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM	\$9,861,274
TRUANCY PREVENTION PROGRAM	\$1,151,947

HOMELAND SECURITY

The Homeland Security (HLS) program offers emergency preparedness planning relating to terrorist activities. The HLS program administers both state and federal Homeland Security grants to law enforcement agencies in the Alamo Area. The HLS program also collaborates with jurisdictions to identify regional gaps in security and creates risk analyses of terroristic and other hazardous threats. With the support of Congressman Tony Gonzales (R-Texas), HLS submitted a funding request to the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and received an award of \$4.5 million. The project will continue to support the Regional Communication Infrastructure Enhancement efforts utilizing the Texas Department of Transportation and the Greater Austin-Travis County Regional Radio System. Additionally, the project will continue to leverage existing communications towers, coverage areas, and partnerships to expand interoperable communications capabilities throughout the Alamo Area.

Total funding secured for
interoperable communications
capabilities to combat
terroristic threats:
\$5.9 MILLION

The HLS program also implemented the Domestic Violent Extremism (DVE) Project with funding through the Office of the Governor, Homeland Security Grants Division. The project ranked number one in the State and funds a team of consultants to focus on combating local terroristic threats in rural counties within the Alamo Area by teaching them how and when to report incidents to the Southwest Texas

Fusion Center. The DVE project also evolved to meet the needs of the region by partnering with the Department of Homeland Security to provide both the Basic Threat Evaluation and Reporting - Pathway to Violence Course and the National Threat and Evaluation Reporting Course to school personnel, school resource officers, and law enforcement. In 2024, the program conducted 135 meetings with 573 participating agencies, trained 828 individuals, and distributed over 4,660 intelligence curriculum and information. The program ran through August 31, 2024 and is conditionally funded for 2025. HLS also offered various courses throughout the year to bolster the region's defenses against terrorist attacks, including the highly regarded Active Shooter Incident Management Advanced Course and facilitated Mass Casualty Incident exercises.



9-1-1

The 9-1-1 program maintains emergency call center databases and essential dispatch equipment at each of the emergency call centers inside Atascosa, Bandera, Frio, Gillespie, Karnes, Kendall, McMullen, and Wilson counties. The program operates to provide a regionalized 9-1-1 database and Public Safety Answering Point. The primary function of the program is to ensure that all 9-1-1 calls are routed, answered, and located on Geographic Information System (GIS) maps for proper handling of the current emergency. In 2024, the 9-1-1 program and all eight counties participated in the Regional Resiliency Assessment (RRA) Program in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security - Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. The purpose of the RRA program was to holistically assess the physical and cybersecurity plans, procedures, and vulnerabilities of the most significant infrastructure systems within the Alamo Area and San Antonio metropolitan 9-1-1 ecosystem and provide recommendations for building resiliency. The assessment is the first of its kind and has already identified needs and national resources.

In 2025, the 9-1-1 program will evaluate floor plan GIS mapping for schools in the Alamo Area to help first responders.



REGIONAL SERVICES



REGIONAL SERVICES

AACOG

REGIONAL SERVICES

As the Economic Development District (EDD) designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), AACOG assists the member governments and residents of the AACOG Region to create a better economy, strong viable communities, and informed and trained public officials through annual workshops. Regional Services provides the assistance and support in addition to coordinating the program's annual workshops which in 2024 included:

Planning & Zoning – fundamentals of zoning, zoning issues, master plans, group homes, cell towers, and signs.

Elected Officials – the basics of municipal finance, ethical issues, and Public Information Act and Open Meetings Act training.

Texas Community Development Block Grant program (TxCDBG) Affordable Housing – provided information on programs and services that help residents (including older adults and veterans) access housing within their means/income.



TOTAL OF WORKSHOP ATTENDEES:

OVER **120**

PEOPLE ATTENDED THE WORKSHOPS

Grant Writing Assistance and Administration

In 2024, Regional Services provided support to AACOG programs with grant writing assistance. In addition, Regional Services continued work on the Alamo Regional Broadband Project. Staff anticipates providing support to our member governments to pursue funding under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) to aid in the development of plans and infrastructure for broadband projects.

During the year, AACOG established a fee schedule for grant writing and administration services. The agency was secured by three member governments to provide grant writing, administration, fiscal and compliance services. In 2025, Regional Services will continue to promote grant writing and administration services to member governments as well as other agencies and groups in the region.

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE



WEATHERIZATION
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

AACOG

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE

The Weatherization Assistance (WX) program’s purpose is to increase the energy efficiency of establishments owned or occupied by low-income individuals, reduce their residential energy expenditures, and improve their health and safety, especially for those of vulnerable populations to include older adults, the disabled, and children.

Professionally trained weatherization crews conduct onsite energy audits using advanced equipment to identify drafts and assess the efficiency of heating and cooling systems. The personnel install insulation, seal air leaks, modify or replace heating systems, and perform minor repairs to ensure safety. These energy saving measures assist in the reduction of heating and cooling costs that last for years to come.

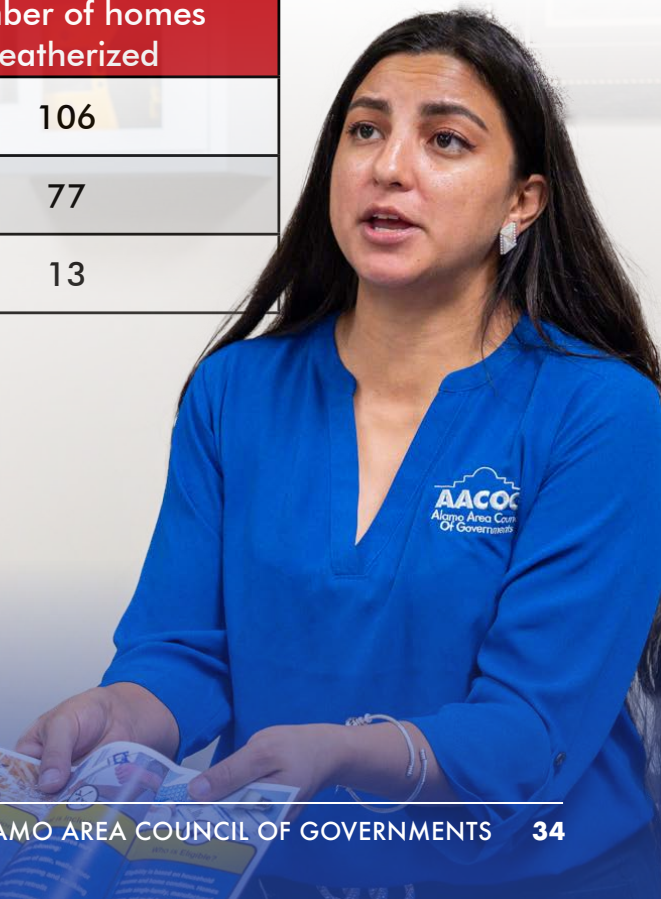


The weatherization program is funded by three federal grants: Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Department of Energy (DOE), and the DOE Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). These programs offer energy efficiency upgrades to low-income households, improving the thermal boundary of homes to maintain comfort in both cold and warm months. The improvements increase disposable income and enhance the quality of life for families.

2024 Grants	Funding Amount	Number of homes weatherized
LIHEAP	\$1,339,464	106
DOE	\$860,081	77
DOE BIL	\$223,847	13

HOUSING FOR TEXAS HEROES

The Housing for Texas Heroes (H4TXH) program supports veterans and their families by providing essential home modifications, repairs, and weatherization. In 2024, the \$500,000 budget assisted 20 low-income veterans and surviving spouses improve their homes with necessary repairs, enhanced accessibility and energy efficiency, improving their overall comfort and quality of life.



2024-2025 BUDGETS



Alamo Area Council of Governments 2024 & 2025 Annual Budget

	Program	Admin. Indirect	General Fund	Titan Complex	2025 Budget*	2024 Budget**
REVENUES						
Federal	\$34,801,764		699,864		35,501,628	\$29,575,526
State	12,284,616				12,284,616	13,159,096
Local/Other/Medicaid	36,956,913		56,000		37,012,913	35,824,110
Delegate Agency—Cash Match	6,575,346				6,575,346	4,526,236
Program Income/Interest	664,684		54,000		718,684	723,075
Member Dues/Match	227,353		373,890		601,243	682,829
Real Estate Revenues				1,997,309	1,997,309	1,830,559
Total Revenues	91,510,676		1,183,754	1,997,309	94,691,739	86,321,431
EXPENDITURES						
Alamo Area Agency on Aging	6,272,529				6,272,529	7,140,816
Alamo Regional Transit	12,766,476				12,766,476	7,156,326
Bexar Area Agency on Aging	16,291,019				16,291,019	15,330,697
Environmental Conservation	404,463				404,463	416,466
IDD Services	16,338,391				16,338,391	15,884,730
Military & Veterans Affairs	25,881,597				25,881,597	26,636,817
Natural Resources	846,499				846,499	643,766
Public Safety	7,292,998				7,292,998	4,115,289
Regional Services	130,138				130,138	129,898
Weatherization	3,710,324				3,710,324	3,297,387
General Fund & Unrestricted			1,303,898		1,303,898	1,231,444
Admin Budgets		5,684,360			5,684,360	5,396,161
Real Estate Expenditures				2,215,415	2,215,415	2,208,321
Total Expenditures & Indirect	\$89,934,433	5,684,360	1,303,898	2,215,415	99,138,106	\$89,588,118

*2025 Budget as presented during the October 2024 BOD meeting.

**This represents the 2024 Modified Budget.

***The Administrative budget excludes program cost recoveries.