

# Estimating the Cost to Process Vehicle Registration and Title Transactions in Texas Counties

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Technical Report

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## 1.0 Executive Summary

This report provides an evaluation of the costs associated with processing and handling vehicle registration and title transactions by Texas county tax assessor-collectors and their deputies. The study was requested by the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV).

In 2013, the 83rd Legislature, through House Bill 2202, authorized the TxDMV to set a processing and handling fee for vehicle registration transactions. The legislation also authorized the TxDMV to set fees for registration and title transactions performed by deputies. After a competitive bidding process, the TxDMV contracted with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) to conduct research to serve as the basis for establishing a fee structure at an amount sufficient to cover transaction expenses. Currently, Texas counties retain \$1.90 per registration transaction (including permits, exchanges, etc.) and \$5.00 per title transaction; limited-service deputies receive \$1. Counties receive an additional \$1.00 fee for registration transactions processed by mail and online to cover the cost of returning the registration sticker or license plate by mail. The research team interviewed county officials in ten Texas counties, observed and gathered transaction time data where appropriate, and met with and observed limited and full-service deputies to determine the current costs associated with processing registration and title transactions. Results of the analysis show the following estimated transaction costs using the average transaction time for counties, full-service and limited-service deputies:

- (1) the current amount retained by counties for processing vehicle registration and title transactions is not sufficient to cover the costs associated with walk in transactions.
- (2) full-service deputy operations are based on a different business/operations model that includes profit whereas as the county model does not;
- (3) the estimated cost to process vehicle registration and title transactions using the average transaction time are as follows:

### **County Tax Assessor-Collector (TAC):**

#### **The cost per:**

- walk-in vehicle registration transactions: \$2.59.
- online vehicle registration transactions: \$1.36.
- mail-in vehicle registration transactions: \$1.97.
- vehicle title or registration purposes only transactions: \$8.20.

### **Full-Service Deputies:**

#### **The cost per:**

- walk-in vehicle registration transactions: \$4.06.
- vehicle title or registration purposes only transactions: \$12.88.

**Limited-Service Deputies:**

**The cost per:**

- vehicle registration transactions: \$1.11.

## 2.0 Introduction

HB 2202, 83<sup>rd</sup> Regular Legislative Session, authorized the TxDMV to establish a processing and handling fee for vehicle registration transactions.<sup>1</sup> This bill allows the processing and handling fee to be set by rule in an amount sufficient to cover expenses associated with collecting vehicle registration fees, “by the department; a county tax assessor-collector; a private entity with which a county tax assessor-collector contracts under Section 502.197; or a deputy assessor-collector that is deputized in accordance with board rule under Section 520.0071.”<sup>2</sup> The processing and handling fee will be collected from walk-in, mail-in, and online registration transactions performed by a county tax assessor-collector directly, as well as for registration transactions performed by those private entities and deputies mentioned above.<sup>3</sup>

HB 2202 also required the TxDMV board to adopt rules which prescribe classification types, duties and obligations of deputies, along with the allowable types and amounts of required bonds, and the fees they may charge for the services they provide.<sup>4</sup>

TxDmv contracted with Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) to determine an estimate of the costs associated with processing vehicle registration and title transactions by counties and deputies. As background information, the TTI research team was furnished with historical and current fee information as well as a previous study relative to the cost of processing transactions. With this information, the team began to identify potential cost elements. Data regarding transactions and commissions retained by counties for processing registration and title transactions was based on information supplied to the research team from the TxDMV. The team then conducted on-site interviews with TxDMV officials in Austin, county tax assessor-collector staff in ten counties, three full-service deputies, and two limited-service deputies. Once all data was compiled from TxDMV and in-person interviews were completed, TTI conducted an analysis of actual expenditures and costs associated with registration and title transactions in each of the selected counties for the purpose of determining average transaction cost.

In an attempt to establish a representative sample, counties included in the case studies were chosen based on the number of registered vehicles in the county and geographical location around the state. Those counties included in the study were Brewster, Dallas, El Paso, Harris<sup>5</sup>, Hidalgo, Howard, Jasper, Refugio, Wheeler, and Williamson counties. Bexar, El Paso, Hidalgo

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<sup>1</sup> House Research Organization Bill Analysis, HB 2202. Accessed June 25, 2014 at <http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/79R/billtext/pdf/HB02202F.pdf#navpanes=0>

<sup>2</sup> Codified at Texas Transportation Code §502.1911.

<sup>3</sup> Deputized by the county, full-service deputies (private entity) and subcontractors are authorized to complete registration renewals and/or title transactions for the county. The fees and laws associated are discussed in Section 5.

<sup>4</sup> Codified at Texas Transportation Code §520.0071.

<sup>5</sup> Harris County was added to the study in September of 2014 by TxDMV.

and Travis counties also provided data for full-service deputies<sup>6</sup>. (In total, 12 counties participated in the study in some form or another. The research team made site visits to the 10 counties mentioned above, plus collected data from full-service deputy facilities in Bexar and Travis Counties.) A list of questions was developed for use as a guide for each county visit and to facilitate the gathering of consistent data.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The goal of this study was to develop an estimate of the transaction cost of each of the various transactions covered in the study. As such, the actual transaction cost for any one county may be different from the statewide average reported here. There can be many reasons for this possible variation including county size, economies of scale, varying degrees of automation across counties, wage rate differentials, and sample error, among others. Nonetheless, weighted averages reported here are believed to represent a reasonable estimate of the transaction costs for the transactions types covered in the study.

The research team visited various full-service deputy locations in El Paso, Bexar, and Travis counties as well as requested information via e-mail from Hidalgo County. El Paso and Hidalgo County full-service deputies did not provide comparable expenditure data for fiscal year 2014.

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<sup>6</sup> Selected full-service deputies from Bexar and Travis Counties were included in the study. TAC operations in these counties were not included.

### **3.0 State Registration and Title Fees and Fees Retained by Counties**

#### **Current State Registration and Title Fees**

The prior state registration fee structure varied depending on vehicle class, weight, and other factors; however, legislative changes simplified those fees.

The statute governing state registration fees was amended with the enactment of HB 2553 in 2009.<sup>7</sup> Among other provisions, HB 2553 standardized registration fees for vehicles by weight in lieu of a structure based on model year and weight. Heavy weight classification registration fees were reduced from over 1,600 possible weight/fee combinations to seven different fee levels based on weight classification. Other items included in HB 2553 were the elimination of the reflectorization fee<sup>8</sup> and the extension of the \$1.00 automation fee to all counties that did not previously collect such a fee.<sup>9</sup> Table 1 illustrates the registration fees and weight classification changes as a result of HB 2553.

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<sup>7</sup> Texas House Bill 2553. 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative Session (2009). Accessed on August 15, 2014 at <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/Search/DocViewer.aspx?ID=81RHB025535B&QueryText=%22HB+2553%22&DocType=B>

<sup>8</sup> The annual thirty cent reflectorization fee was used to purchase reflective license plate sheeting. This fee was included in all registration renewals and license plate transfers.

<sup>9</sup> Texas Department of Motor Vehicles. News. "New simplification vehicle registration fee structure starts in September." July 2011. Accessed August 15, 2014.



**Table 1: State Registration Fee Schedule Before and After HB 2553 (81<sup>st</sup> Legislature)**

<b>Fee Description</b>	<b>Fees Before 09/01/2011</b>	<b>Effective 09/01/2011 HB 2553-New Fees (Current)</b>
<b>Registration Fees</b> (previously more than 79 fees simplified to 4)		
Motorcycles and Mopeds	\$30.00	\$30.00
Trailers (6,000 lbs. and less)	\$26.00-\$45.00	\$45.00
Passenger Vehicles	\$40.80, \$50.80, \$58.80	\$50.75
Light Trucks (6,000 lbs. and less)	Avg. \$54.54	\$50.75
<b>Heavy Weight Classification Registration Fees</b> (previously more than 1,600 different fees simplified to 7)		
6,001-10,000 lbs.	\$45.00-\$86.00	\$54.00
10,001-18,000 lbs.	\$86.00-\$164.00	\$110.00
18,001-25,999 lbs.	\$134.00-\$254.00	\$205.00
26,000-40,000 lbs.	\$182.00-\$421.00	\$340.00
40,001-54,999 lbs.	\$266.00-\$566.00	\$535.00
55,000-70,000 lbs.	\$354.00-\$740.00	\$740.00
70,001-80,000 lbs.	\$446.00-\$840.00	\$840.00
<b>Miscellaneous Fees</b> (standardized automated fee across all counties and eliminated separate reflectorization fee)		
Automated System Fee	\$1.00 (certain counties)	\$1.00 (all counties)
Reflectorization Fee	\$0.30	\$0

Source: Chart adapted from TxDMV<sup>10</sup>

Other state and county fees currently in place include optional county fees as well as fees for online and mail-in vehicle registrations. Also included is the Department of Public Safety (DPS) fee which goes to the Financial Responsibility Verification Program (TexasSure).<sup>11</sup> Table 2 summarizes the current state and local fee structure.

<sup>10</sup> Texas Department of Motor Vehicles. Joint Public Hearing. 2010. *Vehicle Sales, Registration and Titling Fee Information*. Accessed August 15, 2014 at <http://www.senate.state.tx.us/75r/senate/commit/c640/wtpdf/20100201-TexasDMV.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Financial Responsibility Verification Program (TexasSure) is a combined effort by the Texas Departments of Insurance, Public Safety, Motor Vehicles, and Information Resources which connects registered vehicles in Texas by its license plate, vehicle identification number, and insurance policy. Information is accessible by law enforcement and tax assessor-collectors to verify if a vehicle is insured. TexasSure. Accessed December 11, 2014. <http://www.texasure.com/Insuranceverification.html>.

**Table 2: Optional County and Miscellaneous Current Registration Fees**

Type	Amount	Notes
DPS/Insurance Fee	\$1.00	State fee. Financial Responsibility Verification Program (TexasSure). Transportation Code 502.357
Optional County Fee-Road & Bridge	\$0-\$10.00	Optional county fee, set and retained by county. Transportation Code 502.401
Optional County Fee for Child Safety	\$0-\$1.50	Optional county fee, set and retained by county. Transportation Code 502.403
Optional Regional Mobility Fee	\$0-\$20.00	Optional county fee, set and retained by county. Certain counties only (some may set up to \$20 with voter approval). Transportation Code 502.402
Online Fee	\$2.00	Transaction fee paid to credit card vendor. Transportation Code 502.191 (The mail in fee is also charged for online transactions)
Mail-In Fee	\$1.00	Transaction fee. Retained by county. Transportation Code 502.197 and 43 TAC 217.29d
Limited-Service Deputy	\$1.00	Transaction fee. Retained by deputy (Ex: grocery store). 43 TAC 217.161
Full-Service Deputy	\$5.00	Transaction fee. Retained by deputy. 43 TAC 217.161

Source: Chart adapted from TxDMV<sup>12</sup>

Table 3 presents the various title fees. The fee for a title application in Texas is \$33 for those living in ozone non-attainment and affected counties and \$28 for all other counties. A non-attainment area is defined by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Clean Air Act, Part A, Section 107d as “any area that does not meet (or that contributes to ambient air quality in a nearby area that does not meet) the national primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for the pollutant.” For the purposes of this study, non-attainment case study counties include Dallas, El Paso, and Harris.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, an attainment area is “any area (other than an area identified in the above clause) that meets the national primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for the pollutant.”<sup>14</sup> Additional fees include salvage fees, bonded title application fee, and others collected by TxDMV.

<sup>12</sup> TxDMV. *The Make-Up of a Vehicle Registration Fee*. April 2014.

<sup>13</sup> EPA. Current Nonattainment Counties for All Criteria Pollutants as of July 2014. Accessed November 21, 2014, <http://www.epa.gov/oaqps001/greenbk/ancl.html>

<sup>14</sup> EPA. Clean Air Act: Title I: Air Pollution Prevention and Control. *Part A- Air Quality and Emission Limitations*. Accessed October 6, 2014 at <http://epa.gov/air/caa/title1.html>

**Table 3: Title Fee Chart**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Title Application	\$33.00 (non-attainment county) \$28.00 (other, attainment county)	\$5 Retained by county, remainder goes to state. Transportation Code 501.138
Rebuilt Salvage	\$65.00	Performed by county and remitted to state.
Salvage Vehicle Title (TxDMV only)	\$8.00	Transportation Code 501.100 & 501.097
Nonrepairable Vehicle Title (TxDMV only)	\$8.00	
Certified Copy of Texas Certificate of Title (TxDMV only)	\$2.00 (mailed in) \$5.45 (in person)	See above. Transportation Code 501.134 & Tex. Admin. Code
Certified Copy of Texas Salvage Vehicle Title (TxDMV only)	\$2.00 (mail in is the only option)	See above
Certified Copy of Texas Nonrepairable Vehicle Title (TxDMV only)	\$2.00 (mail in is the only option)	See above
Bonded Title Application Fee (TxDMV only)	\$15.00	See above
Mechanic's Lien Foreclosure Notification Fee	\$25.00	Performed by county which retains all fees

Source: Chart adapted from TxDMV<sup>15</sup>

### **County Retained Fees and Commissions**

Retained fees associated with processing registration and title transactions, and commissions at the county are divided into two different parts: (1) fees retained by counties, and (2) commissions paid to the counties for registration and title transactions.

State law allows the county to retain a portion of the registration fees collected. The remaining amounts collected will be remitted to the state.<sup>16</sup> Specifically, Section 502.1911(c) reads in part , the county tax assessor-collector, a private entity with which a county tax assessor-collector contracts under Section 502.197, or a deputy assessor-collector that is deputized under 520.0071

<sup>15</sup> TxDMV. *Motor Vehicle Title Manual*. July 2014. Accessed September 8, 2014 at <http://www.txdmv.gov/motorists/buying-or-selling-a-vehicle>

<sup>16</sup> H.B. 2202, 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature, Regular Session, established a new Texas Department of Motor Vehicles Fund, a fund inside the State Treasury but outside of the General Revenue Fund, and requires revenue from certain fees collected by or on behalf of the TxDMV that were previously deposited to the State Highway Fund to be deposited to the new fund beginning in fiscal year 2014. However, due to the enactment of H.B. 6, 83 Legislature, Regular Session, the funds consolidation bill, the new fund was abolished and all revenues dedicated to that fund are instead deposited to the General Revenue Fund.

may retain a portion of the fee collected, as provided by board rule. Ultimately, these legislative changes allow counties and their deputies, upon authorization by board rule, the ability to keep a portion of the processing and handling fee that is collected. Table 4 shows what the county currently retains for processing vehicle registration and title transactions.

**Table 4: Fees Retained by Counties**

<b>Transaction by Type</b>	<b>Retained Fee</b>
<b>Registration</b>	<b>\$1.90</b>
<b>Title application</b>	<b>\$5.00</b>
Special plate	\$0.50
Replacement registration insignia	\$2.50
Registration transfer	\$1.25
Mail-in registrations	\$1.00
Duplicate registration receipt	\$2.00
Mechanic's lien foreclosure notification	\$25.00

Source: Chart adapted from TxDMV<sup>17</sup>

Fees retained by counties are based on a four tier formula detailed in Section 502.198 of the Transportation Code. According to TxDMV, “The first tier allows the county to retain the first \$60,000 of registration fees collected. The next tier allows the county to retain \$350 for each mile of road maintained by the county up to a maximum of 500 miles. The third tier allows 5 percent of motor vehicle sales taxes and penalties collected during the previous calendar year in the county to be retained.<sup>18</sup> Once the above amounts have been retained, the final tier allows the county to retain half of the registration fees collected until the amount retained by the county equals \$125,000. After the county retains that last \$125,000, 100 percent of the registration fees are remitted to the state.”<sup>19</sup> Table 5 is an example of the county registration-related fees formula and the maximum amount that can be retained by the county.

<sup>17</sup> TxDMV. *County Share of Registration and Title Related Fees*.

<sup>18</sup> 5 % sales tax collected under 502.1981.

<sup>19</sup> Kuntz, Jeremiah. TxDMV. *The TxDMVs Role in Transportation Funding*. Testimony before the House Select Committee on Transportation Funding, Expenditures & Finance. May 2014.

<http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/83R/handouts/C4762014050609001/bdaaa8e6-944f-44cd-9df6-cfa3371ddc7b.PDF>.

**Table 5: County Share of Registration Related Fees Example**

\$60,000	Registration fees retained for county road and bridge fund
+ \$175,000	\$350 for each mile of road maintained by county (If 500 road miles max is maintained: \$350 X 500 = \$175,000)
+ \$200,000	The portion of the 5% motor vehicle sales tax commission retained from registration fees
+ \$125,000	Half of the registration fees collected and retained by the county after above amounts are met up to \$125,000
\$560,000	Maximum total retained by example county for the year

Source: Chart adapted from TxDMV<sup>19</sup>

Furthermore, several changes occurred in 2013 during the 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislative Session which altered the current fee structure. Specifically, HB 2202 granted TxDMV the authority to collect a processing and handling fee that will cover all the necessary expenses. According to Transportation Code, Section 502.1911(a), “the [Texas Department of Motor Vehicles] may collect a fee, in addition to other registration fees for the issuance of a license plate, a set of license plates, or another device used as the registration insignia, to cover the expenses of collecting those registration fees, including a service charge for registration by mail.” Section 502.1911(b) further stipulates that the TxDMV board<sup>20</sup> is authorized to adopt a fee that . . . is sufficient to cover the expenses associated with collecting registration fees by: (A) the department; (B) a county tax assessor-collector; (C) a private entity with which a county tax assessor-collector contracts under Section 502.197; or (D) a deputy assessor-collector that is deputized in accordance with board rule under Section 520.0071. Transportation Code Section 501.138 sets the amount retained by the county for title applications at \$5.00.<sup>21</sup>

## Historical Cost and Revenue Studies

Studies have been conducted that reviewed various cost elements associated with some of the legislative changes. Two studies were completed, in 2007 and 2008, by Cambridge Systematics on behalf of the Texas Department of Transportation’s (TxDOT), Vehicle Title and Registration (VTR) Division. These studies, “Vehicle Titles and Registration Fee Study: Alternative Revenue Distribution Formula” and “Vehicle Titles and Registration Fee Study: A Rationale for Changes to VTR Fees,” compiled information from the VTR Division and identified several issues and related recommendations. Among them were the following:

<sup>20</sup> The TxDMV nine-member board is appointed by the governor. “By law, board members must include 1 county tax assessor-collector, 2 franchised auto dealers, 1 independent auto dealer, 1 representative from the vehicle manufacturing or distribution industry, 1 representative from the motor carrier industry, 1 county or city law enforcement representative, and 2 customer (public) representatives.” TxDMV. Accessed December 12, 2014 at <http://www.txdmv.gov/about-us>

<sup>21</sup> Texas Transportation Code Section 501.138

- Simplification and uniformity of Texas registration fee structure (more in depth fee structures will be reviewed in the Section 5.0 of this report).
- Fee structure changes made outside of the legislative process to allow for prompter modification of fees.
- Update of registration fees (last updated 1985) to keep track with inflation.

Both studies were reviewed in preparation for this study.

## 4.0 Selection of Counties

To select the case study counties, Texas' 254 counties were ranked by number of registered vehicles in fiscal year 2014 based on county statistics compiled by TxDMV. The list of 254 counties was divided into thirds (as a means of selecting large, medium, and small counties). The research team then selected three counties from each third for inclusion in the study with the intent of achieving a representative population and geographic distribution. To achieve geographic distribution, five large counties, two medium counties, and three small counties were selected. The five large counties selected to achieve the best possible geographic distribution included Dallas in the north, El Paso in the west, Hidalgo in the south, Harris in the southeast, and Williamson in central Texas. Next, the research team reviewed counties in the middle third (i.e., counties ranked 85<sup>th</sup> – 169<sup>th</sup> in terms of the number of registered vehicles) and selected Jasper in the east and Howard in the west. Finally, three small counties (i.e., counties ranked 170<sup>th</sup> – 254<sup>th</sup> in terms of total registered vehicles per county) were selected: Wheeler in the north, Refugio in the south, and Brewster in the west. Table 6 below summarizes the county tax assessor-collector offices selected as case studies for analysis.

**Table 6: Registration Transactions (Fiscal Year 2014)  
for Selected Case Study Counties**

County	Category Size	Number of Registration Transactions <sup>22</sup>
Harris	Large	3,693,867
Dallas	Large	2,205,473
El Paso	Large	950,099
Hidalgo	Large	600,698
Williamson	Large	415,695
Jasper	Medium	41,649
Howard	Medium	31,389
Brewster	Small	10,460
Wheeler	Small	9,133
Refugio	Small	8,270

Source: Chart adapted from TxDMV<sup>23</sup>

In Bexar and Travis counties, a total of eight full-service deputies were interviewed regarding their operations, costs, and fees collected. With the addition of meeting with two full-service deputies in El Paso County, a total of ten full-service deputies were interviewed for this study.<sup>24</sup> Table 7 shows the selected full-service deputies.

<sup>22</sup> The number of registration transactions includes full-service and limited-service deputy transactions.

<sup>23</sup> TxDMV. Vehicle Registration and License Fees by County fiscal year September 2013 to August 31, 2014.

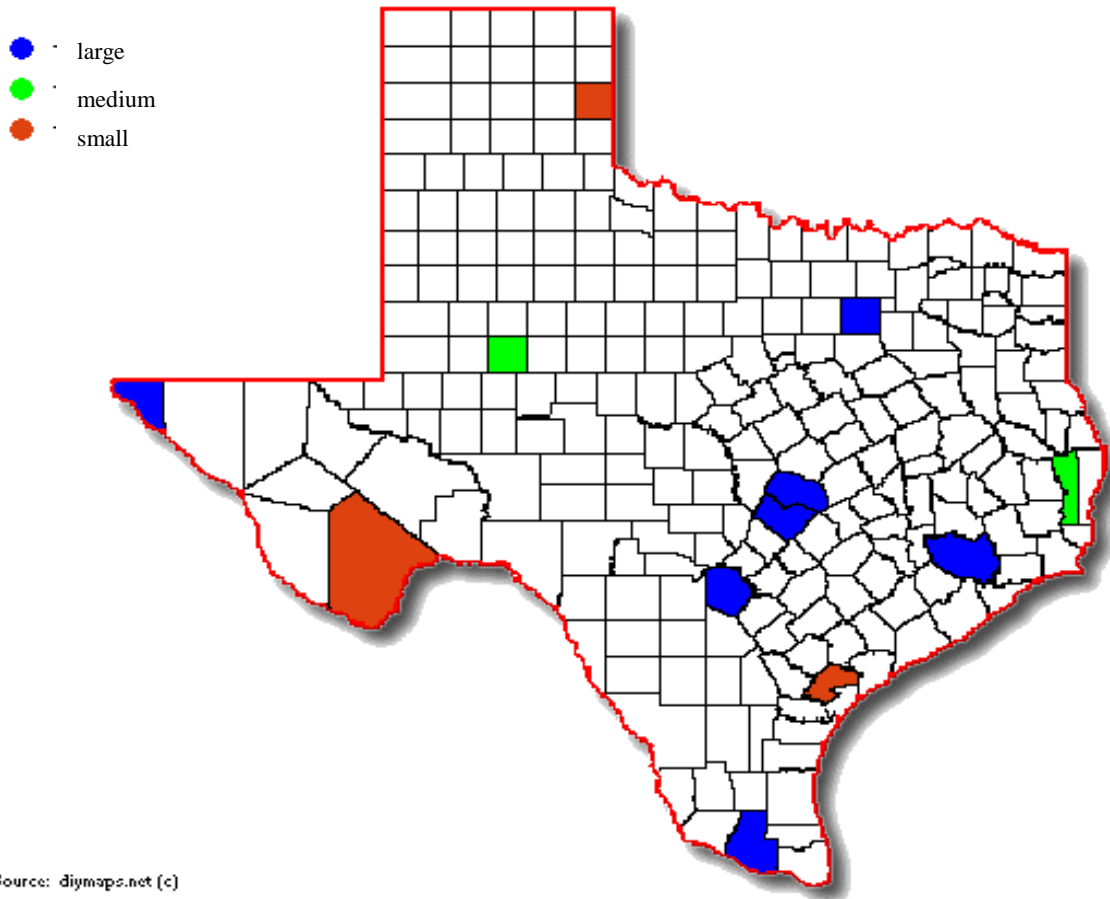
<sup>24</sup> See pages 18 and 19 of this report for a description of full-service deputies.

**Table 7: Registration Transactions (Fiscal Year 2014)  
for Selected Case Study Counties with Full-Service Deputies<sup>25</sup>**

County	Category Size	Number of Registration Transactions
Bexar	Large	1,538,790
Travis	Large	1,011,620
El Paso	Large	950,099
Hidalgo	Large	600,698

Source: Chart adapted from TxDMV

Figure 1 shows the selected Texas counties represented by three different colors. Small counties, Brewster, Refugio, and Wheeler are shown in orange; medium counties, Howard and Jasper are shown in green; and large counties Bexar, Dallas, El Paso, Harris, Hidalgo, Travis and Williamson are shown below in blue.



Source: diymaps.net (c)

**Figure 1: Map of Selected Texas Counties<sup>26</sup>**

<sup>25</sup> Includes TAC, full-service deputy and limited-service deputy registration transactions.

<sup>26</sup> Texas DIY Mapping Utility. Accessed July 28, 2014 at <http://diymaps.net/tx.htm>.



## Total Registrations by Case Study County

Table 8 shows the total number of registration and title transactions in fiscal year 2014. Data originated from TxDMV RTS summary reports in fiscal year 2014.<sup>27</sup> The table is ordered from most to least registration transactions completed by the case study counties.

**Table 8: Registration and Title Transactions  
(Total Fiscal Year 2014)<sup>28</sup>**

<b>County</b>	<b>Registration Transactions</b>	<b>Title Transactions</b>
Harris	3,693,867	997,667
Dallas	2,205,473	609,381
El Paso	950,099	271,350
Hidalgo	600,698	163,538
Williamson	415,695	101,608
Jasper	41,649	5,940
Howard	31,389	5,575
Brewster	10,460	1,329
Wheeler	9,133	1,613
Refugio	8,270	895
<b>STATE TOTAL</b>	<b>24,375,551</b>	<b>5,719,951</b>
<b>Percentage of State Total</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>38%</b>

Source: Chart adapted from TxDMV data<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> TxDMV summary reports 9353 and 9362.

<sup>28</sup> Title transactions do not include titles processed by TxDMV.

<sup>29</sup> County Registration and Title Summary Reports 9353 and 9362 provided by TxDMV fiscal year 2014.

## 5.0 Background Information

### State

The research team conducted in-person interviews with TxDMV subject matter staff in addition to reviewing current registration fees, title fees, and fees retained by county tax assessor-collectors. These subject matter experts were interviewed because they had first-hand knowledge of the costs associated with collecting and processing registration and title transactions. Provided in this section are summarized interviews with TxDMV staff and major themes that arose from the meetings. Based on these interviews, several key points emerged.

- **Purpose of this Study.** TxDMV staff noted the purpose for this project is primarily to address new changes as a result of HB 2202, enacted into law in 2013.
- **Equipment provided by TxDMV.** TxDMV provides equipment to county tax assessor-collectors, including printers, toner, routers, computers, sticker paper, and other necessary items for the Registration and Title System (RTS) transaction process.
- **Historical Cost Studies.** Two historical cost studies, conducted by Cambridge Systematics in 2007 and 2008, provided a review of historical cost information. TxDMV provided these studies to the research team.
- **Limited-Service Deputies.** Also known as subcontractors, limited-service deputies only process registration renewal transactions. Section 520.0071 of the Texas Transportation Code states, “A county assessor-collector, with the approval of the commissioners court of the county, may deputize an individual or business entity to perform titling and registration services in accordance with rules adopted under Subsection (a).” The county retains \$1.90 of the base registration fee.
- **Full-Service Deputies.** A full-service deputy “may accept any application for registration, registration renewal, or title transfer that the county assessor-collector may accept.” For registration or title transactions performed by a full-service deputy, the county retains \$5.00 of the title application fee and \$1.90 of the base registration fee. Full-service deputies may charge and retain \$5.00 in addition to a registration fee.
- **Dealer Title Application (DTA).** TxDMV staff noted that county authorized dealers may load transactions on a flash drive for submission to the county. Counties may also authorize dealers to issue license plates, registration stickers, and receipts for each registered vehicle. Dealers then have 30 days to take the transaction to the county where it is entered into RTS and then submitted to the TxDMV. DTA is expected to be fully replaced by webDEALER.

- **webDEALER.** webDEALER, an online portal, provides dealers with the ability to electronically process registration and title transactions on new and used vehicles rather than using mail, DTA, or waiting in line at county tax assessor-collector's offices. This program also allows for electronic title records (known as eTitles) to be created, stored, and transferred electronically.

## County

The research team developed a questionnaire to be used as a guide when meeting with county tax assessor-collectors, full-service deputies, and limited-service deputies. All questions were supplied in advance to tax assessor-collector officials in each county. The list of questions asked of each county tax assessor-collector and appropriate staff members as well as the interview questions asked of full-service deputies and limited-service deputies are included in Appendix A.

Members of the research team traveled to each county to meet in person with the tax assessor-collectors and their staff. Depending on the size of the county, these meetings typically lasted a half-day to two-days at the main county tax office and branch offices where appropriate. The meeting agenda for the day included an in-depth discussion of the vehicle registration renewal and title transaction processes specific to the case study county, a tour of the office space, and a discussion of state and county purchased equipment used in the office.

Processing time studies were conducted in Dallas, Harris, and Williamson counties. Research team members timed registration and title transactions, and those times were used in calculating an average cost per transaction at the county level. Transaction times were taken at the main office and at selected branch offices in each county.

Based on interviews with tax assessor-collector officials, the following major issues emerged:

- **Mailing License Plates and Postage Needs.** One of the larger costs incurred by county tax assessor-collectors are costs associated with mailing license plates to customers. Often, this can be a relatively labor-intensive process that can incur high shipping costs. The county retains \$1.00 from the customer for mail-in registration renewals.
- **Average Transaction Times.** Based on the time study completed as a part of this research effort, the average transaction time for processing a registration transaction is approximately 2 minutes and 51 seconds. The average transaction time per title averaged 9 minutes and 2 seconds.
- **County Process for Determining Vehicle Title and Registration Needs.** Tax assessor-collector officials expressed concern that the compensation process for vehicle title and registration does not match increases in transaction volume. This is especially true in high-growth counties. In the event county retained fees are increased, some tax assessor-collector officials were concerned that they would not see an increase in their budgets

because this increase in fee revenue would go to county general treasury accounts. This was viewed by the research team as a local issue and not germane to the study.

- **County Employee Shortage.** Several tax assessor-collector officials noted there is more vehicle registration and title work than available employees. Many property tax employees are often cross-trained in vehicle transactions to fill in when needed. This was viewed by the research team as a local issue and not germane to the study.
- **Scofflaw Verification.** Section 502.010 of the Texas Transportation Code states that “a county assessor-collector or the department may refuse to register a motor vehicle if the assessor-collector or the department receives information the owner of the vehicle: (1) owes the county money for a fine, fee, or tax that is past due; or (2) failed to appear in connection with a complaint, citation, information, or indictment in a court in the county in which a criminal proceeding is pending against the owner.”<sup>30</sup> For the county to verify scofflaw violations, additional time is required to process the transaction. If the customer is found to be a scofflaw violator, a hold is placed on the record and the customer is required to satisfy the outstanding violation and then return to the tax office to complete the vehicle transaction. The process in turn creates additional work for the county as well as a longer transaction times. Similar to issues associated with staffing levels and county fund allocations, this issue is viewed as a local matter, not under the control of the TxDMV.
- **Full-Service Deputies.** In 2014, TxDMV proposed an administrative rule stating that full-service deputies could not charge or retain an additional fee exceeding \$5 for each vehicle title transaction processed as well as an additional fee not exceeding \$1 for other transactions or services related to vehicle title and registration.<sup>31</sup> TxDMV received public comments on the rule expressing concern from the deputies and the public they serve, “that the proposed additional fees that deputies could charge for providing title and registration services were too low, so that many deputies would be put out of business or refuse to continue to provide title and registration services as deputies.”<sup>32</sup> The concern discussed was specific to “increased financial and workflow burdens on the county tax assessor-collectors...inconvenience those customers who prefer the convenience, additional services, and improved efficiency that a deputy may offer.”<sup>33</sup> Subsequently, adoption of the proposed rule was withdrawn until this study could be conducted. There

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<sup>30</sup> Texas Transportation Code. Section 502.010

<sup>31</sup> TxDMV board. Adoption Publication of 43 TAC Chapter 217, New Subchapter H, Deputies, Section 217.111, Deputies.

[http://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/TXDMV/2014/09/30/file\\_attachments/328683/Final%2BAadopt%2B217%2BNew%2BH.pdf](http://content.govdelivery.com/attachments/TXDMV/2014/09/30/file_attachments/328683/Final%2BAadopt%2B217%2BNew%2BH.pdf)

<sup>32</sup> Id.

<sup>33</sup> Id.

remains a concern on the part of full-service deputies that they will not be allowed to charge a rate sufficient to maintain a profitable business. In addition, concern was expressed by some tax assessor-collectors that, if full-service deputies are not allowed to remain in business, the clientele they have been serving will now have to be served by the county who, in turn, does not have the resource with which to serve them.

While each of these issues does not apply to all counties included in the study, the list above represents the primary issues raised relating to the registration and title process.

## **Limited and Full-Service Deputies**

This section describes the business models of limited and full-service deputies utilized by counties. Transportation Code Section 520.0071 (b) states, “a county assessor-collector, with the approval of the commissioners court of the county, may deputize an individual or business entity to perform title and registration services in accordance with rules adopted under Subsection (a),” which describes that, “the board by rule shall prescribe: (1) the classification types of deputies performing title and registration duties; (2) the duties and obligations of deputies; (3) the type and amount of any bonds that may be required by a county assessor-collector for a deputy to performing title and registration duties; and (4) the fees that may be charged or retained by deputies.”

### **Limited-Service Deputy**

A limited-service deputy, also referred to as subcontractor, only provides registration renewal services. Limited-service deputies are utilized by counties of all sizes for the convenience of their customers. The county continues to retain \$1.90 of the base registration fee per registration transaction performed by a limited-service deputy. Grocery stores are the most common limited-service deputy. An additional fee of \$1.00 is added to the registration fee at the time of payment and is retained by the deputy as their compensation for performing the registration renewal.

Prior to 2013, limited-service deputies were provided leased equipment from TxDMV via the county. The equipment, known as Remote Sticker Printing System (RSPS), included standard items such as a laptop, bar code reader, printer, software, support, and two flash drives.<sup>34</sup> All RSPS units were replaced with WebAgent-Subcontractor (WebSub) by December 31, 2012. WebSub “is a web-enabled application that provides real-time registration functions to agents (subcontractors) of the TACs.”<sup>35</sup> As a part of the web-enabled application, subcontractors provide their own equipment, including computers and printers. The county, in which the

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<sup>34</sup> TxDMV. Exhibit “A” to Amendment One, State of Texas.

<sup>35</sup> TxDMV. *WebAgent: WebSub Information Sheet*. 2012. <http://www.txdmv.gov/contractors-vendors>

subcontractor is located, continues to provide registration sticker paper to the deputy free of charge.

### Full-Service Deputy

As a private, for-profit company, full-service deputies strive to achieve a sufficient return on investment for providing registration and titling services. As a result, there are additional fees charged by these entities in exchange for providing the service that are not otherwise charged by the county. (Note: As mentioned earlier, limited-service deputies provide vehicle registration renewal services only. Full-service deputies provide both title and registration services. They may also provide services related to mechanic liens, bonded titles and other transactions.) In return for the higher fees, customers may be provided with extended service hours, shorter lines, and additional locations. The county continues to retain \$1.90 per registration transaction and \$5.00 per title transaction for each transaction performed by a full-service deputy.

Table 9 shows the amount charged per registration and title transaction by a county tax assessor-collector, limited-service deputy, and full-service deputy. Important items to note concerning the fees shown below: 1) the registration fee listed below is based on a passenger vehicle or light truck of 6,000 pounds or less and excludes other state fees and optional county fees; the title fee is based on the processing county; 2) fee for vehicle registration at a limited-service deputy includes the additional fee of \$1; 3) fees listed for the full-service deputy include the additional fees charged and retained by the full-service deputy. As shown in Table 9, full-service deputies charge a minimum of \$5 and a maximum of \$15 extra for processing a vehicle registration and an extra fee ranging from \$15 to \$40 for processing vehicle title applications.

**Table 9: Comparison of Fees**

	<b>TAC</b>	<b>Limited-Service Deputy</b>	<b>Full-Service Deputy</b>
<b>Registration</b>	\$50.75	\$51.75	\$55.75-\$65.75
<b>Title</b>	\$28-\$33	n/a	\$43-\$73

Six counties utilize full-service deputies: Bexar, Cameron, El Paso, Hidalgo, Travis, and Wilson counties. The research team visited various full-service deputy locations in El Paso, Bexar, and Travis counties as well as requested information via e-mail from Hidalgo County. El Paso and Hidalgo County full-service deputies did not provide comparable expenditure data for fiscal year 2014. The expenditure data for Bexar and Travis County full-service deputies were used for the purposes of calculating the cost per transaction. Table 10 reports annual registration and title transaction data for all full-service deputies located in the four counties from which the research team received data.

**Table 10: Full-Service Deputy Annual Registration and Title Data (Fiscal Year 2014)**

Full-Service Deputy	Registration	Title
<b>Bexar County</b>		
Alamo and Snow Title Service	73,346	15,654
San Antonio Title Service	93,073	43,946
Sanco Title Service	6,010	4,400
River City Auto Title	24,221	21,383
Other	212,935	94,614
County Total	409,585	179,997
Sample Size of County	48.0%	47.4%
<b>Travis County</b>		
Fry Auto Title Service	23,123	12,362
Auto Title Service of Oak Hill	41,637	33,419
Auto Title Service of Austin	34,354	18,890
Universal Auto Title Service	58,128	33,281
Other	0	0
County Total	157,242	97,952
Sample Size of County	100.0%	100.0%
<b>El Paso County</b>		
Tri Star Auto Title	32,768	17,224
El Paso Auto IV	41,913	13,990
Other	243,340	84,279
County Total	318,021	115,493
Sample Size of County	23.5%	27.0%
<b>Hidalgo County</b>		
Bridgepoint	33,234	15,147
Other	0	0
County Total	33,234	15,147
Sample Size of County	100.0%	100.0%

Table 11 shows a comparison of fee schedules in place at each full-service deputy location included in the study. The fee for registration refers to the additional fee charged for public walk-ins. Likewise, the title fees shown refer to the fee charged for public walk-ins and dealership walk-ins/pick-up.

**Table 11: Full-Service Deputy Convenience Fees**

Full-Service Deputy	Registration Fee	Title Fees	
		Public	Dealer
<b>Bexar County</b>			
Alamo and Snows Title Service	\$10	\$30	\$5-15
San Antonio Title Service	\$12	\$25-30	\$5
Sanco Title Service	\$10	\$25	\$5-10
River City Auto Title	\$10	\$20	\$10
<b>Travis County</b>			
Fry Auto Title Service	\$10	\$40	\$6-14
Auto Title Service of Oak Hill	\$7	\$21	\$6
Auto Title Service of Austin	\$5	\$20	\$5-20
Universal Auto Title Service	\$6	\$20	\$8
<b>El Paso County</b>			
El Paso Auto IV	\$8	\$15	\$15
Tri Star Auto Title	\$8	\$15	\$15
<b>Hidalgo County</b>			
Bridgepoint	N/A	N/A	N/A

Full-service deputies rely on a sufficient rate-of-return on provided services as all facility, overhead, operation, and personnel costs are part of the business model. As a result, these businesses will often offer a wide variety of services such as notary, insurance, title pick-up and delivery to and from dealerships, surety bonds, and other services/products to ensure a sufficient volume of business to generate an adequate return on investment.

Full-service deputies lease RTS equipment from the TxDMV via the county to perform services. The lease per RTS workstation is \$1,500 annually. Section 520.0093 of the Texas Transportation Code states, “the department may lease equipment and provide related services to a: ... (a) deputy appointed under Section 520.0071... (b) ... the department may enter into an agreement under which the department leases equipment to the deputy for the use of the deputy in operating the automated registration and title system. The department may require the deputy to post a bond in an amount equal to the value of the equipment... (e) All money collected under the lease shall be deposited to the credit of the TxDMV fund.” Currently the TxDMV does not require a bond for the leased equipment.



The following section analyzes the actual cost to process vehicle registration renewals and title transfers at the county level and by full-service deputies as mentioned above.

## 6.0 Service Delivery Methods

The following subsections describe the methods of processing registration and title transactions. The service delivery methods in which a transaction can be processed through the county tax assessor-collector include customer walk-in, mail-in, and online transactions. In addition to service delivery methods provided directly by the county, customers may also have the option to visit a limited-service deputy for registration renewals or a full-service deputy for registration and title transactions. Each of the service delivery methods are summarized below.

### **Service Delivery Method: Tax Assessor-Collector Walk-In**

A walk-in transaction at the tax assessor-collector's office for vehicle registration or title transactions may have a wait time which can vary by the time of day, day of the week, day of the month, and month of the year. Once at the service counter, the customer will hand any necessary documentation to the tax assessor-collector representative. The representative will verify the documentation and enter it into the state-provided RTS workstation. The customer will pay the fee associated with the type of service received, and RTS prints the registration receipt with a sticker and/or title receipt. If the customer completes a title application and there are no issues with the transaction, the title is issued seven calendar days after processing. It then takes roughly two to five days for the customer to receive the title in the mail once it is issued. On average, approximately 79% of registration renewal transactions at the tax assessor-collector's office are walk-in transactions.<sup>36</sup>

### **Service Delivery Method: Mail-In**

Mail-in transactions are an additional delivery method option for registration renewals and title applications.<sup>37</sup> A \$1.00 mail-in fee is added to the registration renewal fee for transactions done by mail. Specifically, Section 502.197, Transportation Code, reads in part, "a county assessor-collector may collect a service charge of \$1 from each applicant registering a vehicle by mail. The mail-in fee shall be used to pay the costs of handling and postage to mail the registration receipt and insignia to the applicant."<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> TxDMV; In the past 12 months (April 2014-March 2015), there were a total of 18,532,134 registration renewals. There were 782,764 mail-in renewals and 2,981,636 internet renewals.

18,532,134 minus 782,764 minus 2,981,636 = 14,767,734 walk-in renewals.

14,767,734 divided by 18,532,134 = 79.69% walk-in registration renewals.

<sup>37</sup> Texas titles can be mailed to county tax assessor-collectors if the transaction does not involve a gift. Refer to TxDMV Motor Vehicle Title Manual.

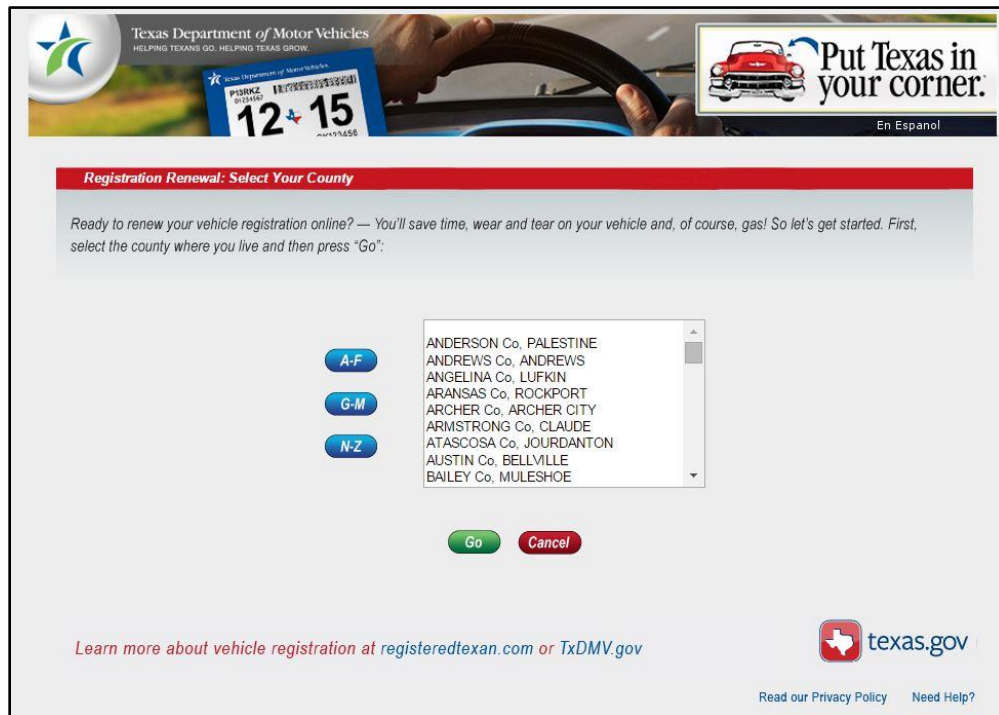
<sup>38</sup> Texas Transportation Code, Section 502.197. <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/TN/htm/TN.502.htm>. Note that this section is effective until the TxDMV Board adopts rules pursuant to Texas Transportation Code §502.1911.

Upon receipt of the required documents by the tax assessor-collector’s office, the renewal is processed through RTS, license plates are issued if needed, and the payment is processed. The new registration sticker is then sealed in a county envelope and mailed to the customer.

### Service Delivery Method: Online

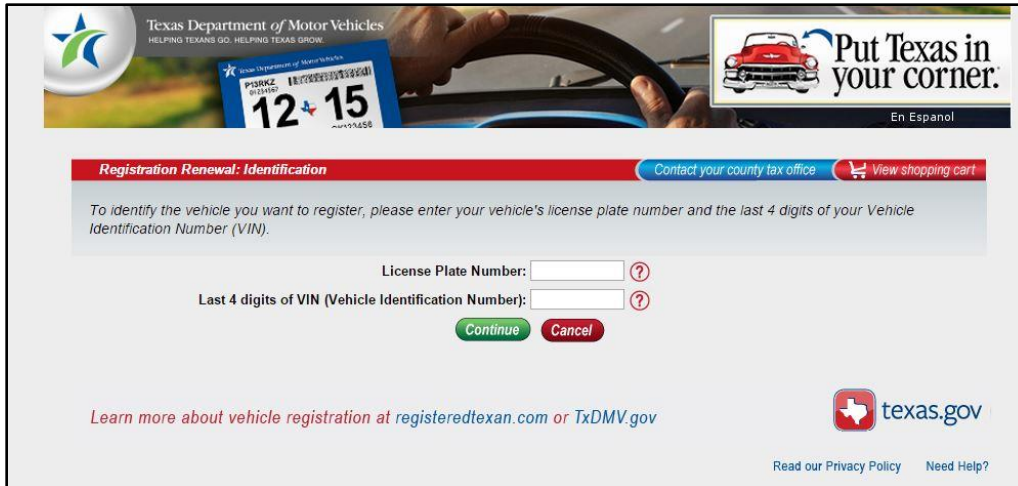
Online registration renewal is another option provided by the state for registration renewals. The customer pays a \$2.00 Electronic Processing Fee (paid to Texas.gov) and the \$1.00 mail fee. The specific controlling statute is Texas Transportation Code 520.005(d) and specifically states, “Each county assessor-collector shall process a registration renewal through an online system designated by the department.”

To renew registration online, the customer visits <http://www.txdmv.gov/>, clicks on the “Registration Renewal” icon, chooses their county of residence, and enters a license plate number, the last four digits of the vehicle identification number (VIN), and insurance information if it cannot be verified (as shown in Figures 2 and 3 below) otherwise. Once the customer submits a payment for renewal, the county will receive a listing the next business day of all customers who paid for a renewal on the previous business day from the TxDMV. The county then processes the renewal and prepares for mail-out to the customer.



**Figure 2: Vehicle Registration Online Renewal Portal**

Source: TxDMV



**Figure 3: Vehicle Registration Identification Online Renewal Portal**

Source: TxDMV

### Service Delivery Efficiencies Observed During the Study

In the course of this study, the research team was able to identify several “best practices” for a tax assessor-collector’s motor vehicle department to consider. It should be noted, many of these practices were employed in the larger case study counties due to typically longer wait times resulting from larger volumes of walk-in customers.

For example, many larger counties have purchased equipment which helps to increase customer convenience, maximize efficiency, or minimize wait times. Several counties employ a queuing system along with television monitors in the front lobby to avoid long lines and allow customers to wait while seated. Other counties employ a toggle switch on monitors to allow quick transitions back and forth between the state and county computer on a single monitor. Several counties in the study have an ATM machine on premises to allow the customer to obtain cash on-site if needed. Another way to potentially increase efficiency includes installation of remittance machine which opens mail, scans and processes both checks and registration renewal forms, and prepares funds reports for balancing.

Finally, three counties, Harris, Dallas, and Williamson, maintain a “call center” that offers an additional avenue to answer questions and provide the needed education for customer questions prior to visiting a tax assessor-collector’s office. Additionally, Williamson County has the ability to take payments over the phone for registration renewals and other services the county provides. While the call center is an additional cost for the counties, it also provides a means to avert potential delays for walk-in customers by resolving problems over the phone.

Williamson County also offers a drive-thru window to provide fast and convenient service to a customer renewing the registration of a vehicle.

## 7.0 Cost Analysis

The final phase of this research effort is to perform an analysis of the cost to process vehicle registration and title transactions at the county level as well as for full and limited-service deputies. The following subsections provide detailed information on equipment costs as well as the methodology used to calculate the specific transaction cost.

### RTS Network Equipment and Consumables

A RTS workstation installation includes the following baseline equipment provided by the TxDMV at no cost to the county tax assessor-collector. TxDMV costs are shown in parenthesis.

- Monitor: ViewSonic VA2246M-LED 22" LED LCD (\$131.90)
- Computer tower, keyboard, and mouse: HP Elite Desk 800 F1 SFF (\$614.00)
- **Base total: (\$745.90)**

Most RTS workstations also come with printers and/or cash drawers which are provided at no additional costs to counties. These items are listed below with TxDMV costs shown in parenthesis.

- Printer: HP LJ P3015x (\$769.64)
- Cash Drawer: APG 4000 Series (\$258.97)
- Base total plus printer: (\$1,515.54)
- Base total plus cash drawer: (\$1,004.87)
- **Base total plus printer and cash drawer: (\$1,774.51)**

Some RTS workstations, especially for new sites, will also come with requests for a router or a switch, along with the installation of a dedicated T1 data circuit. TxDMV provides four models based on need, at no additional cost to the counties. These items are listed below with TxDMV costs shown in parenthesis.

- Router: Cisco 1941 router without 9-port card (\$1,200.00) or Cisco 1941 router with 9-port card (\$1,347.75), or
- Switch- Cisco 2960 24-port switch (\$625.00) or Cisco 2960 48-port switch (\$1,145.00)
- T1 Data Circuit (\$374-\$456/mo, plus one-time installation fee of \$397)

A cash drawer, printer, and router or switch are optional components for the county. Some county tax assessor-collector offices use a single network printer, or have RTS workstations that do not handle cash.

To install a new RTS workstation and an Ethernet cable drop for internet and network access, TxDMV contracts with Insight, LLC. Insight charges TxDMV \$399 for RTS workstation setup and \$239 for the cable drop. These are provided at no cost to the county. The RTS software is

updated periodically to fix bugs, upgrades, and compliance with law and rules. The RTS Help Desk service for leased equipment is provided as part of the annual \$1,500 fee per workstation.

The number of workstations allocated to each county is based on the previous calendar year’s transaction volume. If the office has more than ten RTS workstations, they will also have a Cisco switch connected to their router, which accommodates an additional 24 to 48 workstations. Large county sites may have more than one Cisco switch connected to their router.

Any additional RTS workstations or equipment must be leased by the county from TxDMV. The Texas Transportation Code, Section 520.0093 states, “the department may lease equipment and provide related services to a: (1) county for the operation of the automated registration and title system in addition to the equipment provided by the department at no cost to the county under a formula prescribed by the department; and (2) deputy appointed under Section 520.0071...”<sup>39</sup> Table 12 shows the current RTS lease agreement and the items available to the county.

**Table 12: Sample of County Equipment Annual Leasing Costs**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Individual Item Cost</b>
Basic RTS Workstation	\$1,500
Printer Laser, HP 4015 (high capacity)	\$1,100
Additional Printer	\$250
Bar Code Reader	\$550
New Site cost (one-time fee)	\$2,500

Source: TxDMV<sup>40</sup>

If additional RTS workstations are needed beyond those provided by the formula, they are invoiced on an annual basis and prorated as installations occur throughout the year. According to the TxDMV 2014 inventory, only 37 HP Laser Jet P4015 printers are at county locations<sup>41</sup> and none were installed with leased equipment. Bar code readers, formerly used by limited-service deputies before WebSub, are rarely requested but still available. The new site cost fee referenced in Table 12 is charged when counties open new locations that require wiring and setup for RTS.

As of the beginning of Fiscal Year 2015, TxDMV managed 2,606 RTS workstations at no charge to counties. In addition, 210 leased RTS workstations were also in place, representing 8% of the total number of workstations managed by TxDMV.

<sup>39</sup> Texas Transportation Code, Section 520. <http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/Docs/TN/htm/TN.520.htm>.

<sup>40</sup> RTS-DTA lease agreement

<sup>41</sup> Primarily in Dallas, Travis, Tarrant, Harris and Bexar counties, with a few in Montgomery, Hidalgo, Collin, Fort Bend, Williamson, Collin, and El Paso counties.

## Methodology and Results: County Tax Assessor-Collector Transactions

For the calculation of registration and title costs per transaction, data was gathered from documents supplied by TxDMV and by counties selected for inclusion in the study. The same data categories were collected from full-service and limited-service deputies. Those categories include:

- County **salaries and benefits** within the tax assessor-collector's office and the percentage of time spent on vehicle related work to calculate the portion of the salary and benefits dedicated to vehicle matters. (Note: In most tax assessor-collector's offices, county personnel perform property tax collection and vehicle registration and title activities in the same location. County tax assessor-collector personnel provided salary and benefits cost for personnel who performed vehicle registration and title duties and the percentage of time spent on those duties versus other activities that were not a part of this study.)
- Necessary county-purchased equipment and supplies for motor vehicle operations. These include postage, envelopes, etc. Optional county equipment purchased for the purposes of increasing flow and efficiency of processing such as queue systems, call centers, and remittance machines. Other county overhead expenses are included as well. These are considered as the **operating cost**. (For the purposes of this report, overhead expenses include rent for office space, utilities, general-use equipment, and consumables.)
- The amount of **time** to complete a walk-in registration renewal transaction or title transfer transaction. This data was gathered by conducting time studies in Dallas, Harris, and Williamson counties. A total of 256 timed transactions were recorded.
- **The number of registration and title transactions completed annually** in each county (as shown in Table 8).
- **The annual cost of rent and utilities for the tax assessor-collector's facility space within each county office complex (where applicable).**
- State equipment utilized at each county location and number of units (not used in calculation of cost per transaction as it is not a cost to the county).

A model was developed that utilized the collected data to calculate the estimated cost per registration and title transaction. In the process listed below, "transaction" refers to both registration and title transactions as the same steps were taken to determine a cost per transaction for each category. In brief, the methodology used was as follows:

1. The number of transactions per type (walk-in registration, mail-in registration, online registration, and title) was obtained for each county.
2. During site visits in three counties, transactions were timed and the type of transaction noted.

3. Salary and operation costs were obtained for each county. Where specific costs were directly and solely attributable to vehicle title and registration activities, the entire cost was included. Where costs were shared with other functions (property tax collection, for example) an estimated percentage of costs attributable to vehicle title and registration activities was obtained.
4. Distribution of salary costs was weighted across total processing time by type of transaction.
5. In the case of online and mail-in transactions, postage cost must also be calculated. These costs were determined based on presorted first class postal rates for those transactions that required mailing registration renewal stickers and parcel rates for those transactions that required the mailing of a new license plate. Data was obtained from the TxDMV relative to the number of new license plates in each county. The number of new license plates issued was then distributed proportionally across walk-in, mail-in and online transactions.
6. To calculate the estimated average transaction cost by type, the total county cost allocated to each type of transaction was divided by the total number of seconds by transaction and multiplied by the average time for that transaction.
7. The total average cost per transaction for mail-in, walk-in, and online transactions was calculated for each individual county as well as cumulatively for all counties surveyed.
8. To determine one rate for each type of transaction, the rates for each county were then weighted based on the individual county's proportion of the transaction total (i.e., a weighted average).

Table 13 shows the total weighted average cost per vehicle registration and title transaction using the average transaction time as well as each county's contribution to the total weighted average. As might be expected, the research team found that larger counties generally had a less expensive cost per transaction because of the economies of scale found in the larger volume of transactions processed. Smaller counties had a more expensive cost per transaction due to a smaller number of transactions over which to amortize fixed costs.

The weighted average cost (the last line of Table 13) represents the population weighted average total transaction cost for the various types of transactions and is the rate most indicative of the actual cost of processing vehicle registration and titling transactions across all counties.



**Table 13: County Contribution to Total Weighted Average Cost per Transaction Using Average Transaction Times (figures rounded two decimal points)**

<b>Weighted by County Population</b>					
<b>County</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Registrations</b>			<b>Title</b>
		<b>Walk-In</b>	<b>Mail-In</b>	<b>Online</b>	
Brewster	Small	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.04
Dallas	Large	\$0.66	\$0.52	\$0.35	\$2.08
El Paso	Large	\$0.28	\$0.21	\$0.15	\$0.89
Harris	Large	\$1.16	\$0.89	\$0.60	\$3.67
Hidalgo	Large	\$0.21	\$0.16	\$0.12	\$0.65
Howard	Medium	\$0.02	\$0.02	\$0.02	\$0.08
Jasper	Medium	\$0.04	\$0.03	\$0.03	\$0.14
Refugio	Small	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.03
Wheeler	Small	\$0.02	\$0.01	\$0.01	\$0.07
Williamson	Large	\$0.17	\$0.13	\$0.08	\$0.55
<b>Total Weighted Average</b>		<b>\$2.59</b>	<b>\$1.97</b>	<b>\$1.36</b>	<b>\$8.20</b>

### **Methodology and Results: Full-Service Deputy Transactions**

The estimates of processing costs for full-service deputy transactions are presented in Table 15. Full-service deputies were able to provide data on the number of transactions and fees in El Paso County (see Tables 10 and 11), but were unable to furnish other information needed to determine costs; however, estimated transaction costs were calculated from data provided by Bexar and Travis County full-service deputies.

To determine estimated costs per transaction, the research team examined financial statements provided by the full-service deputies. To expand on the information provided in the financial statements, interviews were conducted on-site at four different locations. Additionally, the research team hoped to collect transaction times as was done at county facilities. However, an insufficient number of transactions occurred during the time research team members were present so as to provide a sufficient sample. In lieu of transaction times for these particular facilities, the county transaction time for registration and title transactions of 171 and 542 seconds respectively were substituted. Total transactions by transaction type were obtained either as a part of the written financial information or through interviews and verified by

information provided by the TxDMV. In addition, through examination of financial statements or interviews with the business owners, estimates of the cost attributable to each type of transaction and the number of transactions by type, an estimate of transaction cost by type was obtained. To determine the cost per transaction, total transaction by type is multiplied by the average transaction time to arrive at a total number of seconds to perform both of the transaction type. Total seconds is divided by the sum of the total costs reported by each entity to determine a cost per second rate. That rate is then multiplied by the average transaction time for both registration and title transactions to determine a weighted average transaction rate. The results of those calculations are shown in Table 14.

**Table 14: Full-Service Deputy Cost per Transaction Using Average Transaction Time<sup>42</sup>**

	Transactions		Time per Transaction (in seconds)		Transaction Time (total seconds)	Total Expense	Cost Per Second	Cost Per Transaction	
	Reg.	Title	Regs.	Title				Regs.	Title
Bexar	177,442	85,385	171	542	76,621,252	\$1,976,656	\$0.0258	\$4.41	\$13.98
Travis	140,199	97,952	171	542	77,064,013	\$1,676,656	\$0.0218	\$3.72	\$11.79
Total	317,641	183,337	171	542	153,685,265	\$3,653,312	\$0.0238	\$4.06	\$12.88

### Methodology and Results: Limited-Service Deputy Transactions

Limited-service deputies, almost exclusively found in grocery stores, perform vehicle registration renewals only – and only if the customer has the necessary renewal form. In addition, they also provide a host of other customer services including accepting utility payments, selling event tickets, and check cashing. Two limited service deputies were contacted as a part of this research. These two limited-service deputies account for a total of 1.27 million transactions or approximately 48 percent of all vehicle registration transactions processed by limited-service deputies and 5 percent of all vehicle registration transactions statewide. The research team recorded an average processing time of 79 seconds per transaction at one of the limited-service deputies. The other limited-service deputy provided an average processing time of 60 seconds per transaction for those observed transactions. However, they also report that other factors increase the average processing time to 143 seconds per transaction. Some of those factors include:

- Some counties require a Texas driver license or identification card number to be written on the renewal
- Customer locates identification, provides to cashier, some counties require identification to match registered owner, etc.
- System prompts for insurance verification:

<sup>42</sup> El Paso and Hidalgo County full-service deputies were unable to provide comparable expenditure data for fiscal year 2014. The expenditure data for Bexar and Travis County full-service deputies were used for the purposes of calculating the cost per transaction.

- Customer searches their purse/wallet or goes out to their car or, tries to locate their insurance information on their cell phone.
- Insurance provided is for wrong vehicle, not registered owner (required in some counties), resulting in additional conversation.
- System prompts for inspection verification:
  - Cashier reviews the Vehicle Inspection Report, searches for Pass/Fail, the date of inspection and inspection type.
  - Cashier keys in the information and selects inspection type from a drop-down menu.
  - Finally some counties do not currently allow manual verification of inspection reports, so customers are referred to the county tax office.
- Some counties require every sticker sold to be logged onto a spreadsheet. This adds additional time above and beyond the steps listed above.

Both limited-service deputies provided estimates of the total cost to process vehicle registration renewals. As shown in Table 15 below, incorporating the times observed and provided as well as the cost data provided by the limited-service deputies, the average transaction cost weighted by transactions is estimated to be \$1.11.

**Table 15: Limited-Service Deputy Cost per Transaction Using Average Transaction Time**

	Percent Distribution Transactions	Estimated Total Cost	Mean Time (in seconds) per Transaction	Estimated Average Transaction Cost
	747,159	\$875,820	143	\$1.17
	523,774	\$529,012	79	\$1.01
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,270,933</b>	<b>\$1,404,832</b>		
<b>Weighted Average</b>			<b>117</b>	<b>\$1.11</b>

## 8.0 Conclusion

Currently, Texas counties retain \$1.90 per registration transaction and \$5.00 per title transaction. To determine the current costs associated with processing registration and title transactions, the research team interviewed county officials in ten Texas counties,<sup>43</sup> observed and gathered transaction time data where appropriate, and obtained financial reports from the counties and selected full-service deputies in three counties.<sup>44</sup> Results of the data analysis show that:

- (1) the current amount retained by counties for processing vehicle registration and title transactions is not sufficient to cover the costs associated with walk in transactions.
- (2) full-service deputy operations are based on a different business/operations model that includes profit whereas as the county model does not;
- (3) the estimated cost to process vehicle registration and title transactions using the average transaction time are as follows:

### County Tax Assessor-Collector:

#### The cost per:

- walk-in vehicle registration transactions: \$2.59.
- online vehicle registration transactions: \$1.36.
- mail-in vehicle registration transactions: \$1.97.
- vehicle title or registration purposes only transactions: \$8.20.

### Full-Service Deputies:

#### The cost per:

- walk-in vehicle registration transactions: \$4.06.
- vehicle title or registration purposes only transactions: \$12.88.

### Limited-Service Deputies:

#### The cost per:

- vehicle registration transactions: \$1.11.

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<sup>43</sup> Brewster, Dallas, El Paso, Harris, Hidalgo, Howard, Jasper, Travis, Wheeler, and Williamson counties

<sup>44</sup> Bexar, El Paso, and Travis counties

## 9.0 Appendix

### County Tax Assessor – Collector Interview Questions (for use as a guide)

1. Could you please walk us through your process of collecting, processing, submitting vehicle registration and title transactions by walk-in, mail-in, online, and by a deputy?
2. What are some challenges faced with completing registration and title transactions via:
  - a. Mail-in?
  - b. Walk-in?
  - c. Online? (Do you process online transactions directly or is that sent to TxDMV?)
  - d. Deputies (Dealerships, Retailers, Full-Service)?
    - i. How many do you employ?
3. What businesses or organizations are subcontractors in your county?
4. What are the average costs/components and fees associated with each mail-in transaction? Walk-in transaction? Online transaction? Deputies?
5. What is the amount of time it takes to complete the transaction process from start to finish?
6. On average, how many transactions do you process in a month?
7. Average percentage of returns on mail-in?
8. Do you have financial information readily available you would be willing to supply us?
  - a. Prevailing wage levels
    - i. What is the percentage distribution of salaries between registration fee and title processing?
  - b. Associated expenditures and costs paid by you (not TxDMV)?
9. What is the number and classification of personnel involved in the process?
10. How many registration purpose only (RPO's) do you handle as a percent of your registration and title transactions (RPO's being transactions where the title is held by a lien holder and only registration is issued)?
11. What has been your experience with WebAgent? (For reference, web-agent is a web-enabled application that provides electronic registration and title functions to approved agents of the county TACs). Has it resulted in any additional cost to for you?
  - a. Only applies (webDEALER) to Williamson, El Paso and Dallas
12. Does your county use the dealer title application (DTA) system?
13. What kind of equipment has been provided to you by TxDMV that is involved in the transaction processes?
  - a. What are the acquisition costs?
  - b. Does your county lease any additional equipment and what is the cost to the county?
  - c. What are the maintenance costs?
14. What kind of consumables are used during the transaction process?

15. Any other issues or concerns that affect costs associated with registering and title vehicles that you would like to mention?
16. Does the county currently use an automated mailing system?
  - a. What are the costs associated? Does this save the county money?
  - b. What is the process?
17. Are there any other registration or title services that you provide that we have not covered?
18. Are there any external economic factors to consider in your region?

## **Full-Service and Limited-Service Deputy Interview Questions (for use as a guide)**

1. Could you walk us through your process of collecting, processing, submitting, etc. vehicle registration and title transactions?
2. What are the average costs/components and fees associated with each transaction?
3. What is the amount of time it takes to complete a registration renewal and title transfer transaction process from start to finish?
4. On average, how many transactions do you process in a month? A year?
5. Do you have the following financial information readily available?
  - a. Prevailing wage levels
  - b. Associated expenditures and costs paid to the county
  - c. Rent
  - d. Overhead
  - e. Equipment costs
6. What is the number and classification of personnel involved in the process? Full-time or part-time employees?
7. What kind of equipment has been provided to you by the county that is involved in the transaction processes?
  - a. What are the acquisition/lease costs?
  - b. What are the maintenance costs?
8. What kinds of consumables are used during the transaction process?
  - a. Are any consumables provided by the county (sticker paper, toner, etc.)?
  - b. Do you pay the county for any consumables and if so, how much?
9. What other services does your company provide along with registration renewals and title transfers?
10. What are normal working hours for your operation?
11. Are there any other registration or title services that you provide that we have not covered?

## Case Study County Interview Summaries

The following is a list of counties that were visited during the timeframe of June - October 2014 and a brief description of what occurred during each visit. During each county visit, TTI met with the TAC, motor vehicle director, and various other staff as necessary. The focus in Bexar and Travis counties was the full-service deputies, not the county operation; however, TTI still met with the necessary county staff.

<b>County</b>	<b>Date of 2014 Visit</b>	<b>Meeting Location</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Williamson	June 20	Tax office -Round Rock substation	TTI met with Williamson County TAC and Director of Motor Vehicles to discuss the procedure for processing registration and title transactions. These discussions took approximately an hour and a half. County staff conducted an office tour for the research team to further understand the complete transaction process. TTI then conducted a time study, timing vehicle transactions at the main office location and two substations.
Refugio	June 26	Tax office	TTI met with Refugio County TAC to walk through the transaction processes for mail-in, walk-in, and online transactions. The county tax office has a total of four employees, including the TAC, which are responsible for handling both county property tax as well as motor vehicles.
Jasper	July 1	Tax office	TTI met with Jasper County TAC, Director of Motor Vehicles, as well as Director of Property Tax for approximately two hours. All needed information, including the office budget, salary information, and monthly productivity reports were provided to TTI.
Howard	July 9	Tax office	TTI met with Howard County TAC as well as the Chief Deputy. During this time TTI was given an office tour and was provided with salary information and productivity reports. The county budget was provided online.
Hidalgo	July 16	Tax office	TTI met with Hidalgo County TAC and Motor Vehicle Registration Manager for half of a day. County officials were able to provide thorough information including the office budget, salary information,



County	Date of 2014 Visit	Meeting Location	Notes
			and annual productivity reports. TTI was then given a tour of the facility to further understand equipment use and the duties of the employees behind the transaction processes. TTI has since followed up with Hidalgo county concerning detailed salary information as well as questions concerning the full-service deputy in the county.
Dallas	July 30-31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Tax office</li> <li>-Grand Prairie substation</li> <li>-North Dallas substation</li> <li>-Fiesta Mart- Limited-Service deputy</li> </ul>	<p>On day one of the site visit, TTI met with the Director of Motor Vehicles as well as the Motor Vehicle Quality Control Specialist and substation Oak Cliff Branch Manager at the county tax office. County officials discussed the transaction processes and financial data. Data had been prepared by county officials prior to the meeting to allow for an in-depth discussion regarding the information. The research team was then given a tour of the downtown facility (main branch) and were also given the opportunity to meet with the county TAC to discuss TTI's methodology regarding the cost study.</p> <p>In the afternoon, TTI visited the Grand Prairie branch office with county officials. The Branch Manager and her assistant met with TTI to discuss the transaction process at the branch. Researchers then conducted a time study of vehicle transactions.</p> <p>Day two was spent at the North Dallas branch office where TTI again conducted a time study. During the afternoon, the team visited the Manager of Booth Operations at Fiesta Mart, a limited-service deputy (subcontractor) in Dallas County and discussed the role and functions of a limited-service deputy as well conducted a time study of registration renewals.</p>
Wheeler	August 6	Tax office	<p>TTI met with Wheeler County TAC and Chief Deputy. County officials were able to provide thorough information including office budget, salary information, and annual productivity reports which were necessary for the cost-benefit analysis.</p> <p>TTI was then given a tour of the facility to further understand equipment use and the duties of employees behind the transaction processes. The meeting between TTI and Wheeler County tax staff was completed in</p>

County	Date of 2014 Visit	Meeting Location	Notes
			half of a day.
El Paso	August 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Tax office</li> <li>-Ysleta substation</li> <li>-El Paso Auto Registration and Title</li> <li>-Tri Star Auto Title Service</li> </ul>	<p>TTI met with the El Paso County TAC, Chief Deputy TAC, as well as the Director of Motor Vehicles. The discussion was centered on the business model El Paso County uses for registration and title transactions. Currently the county has 11 full-service deputies and four county offices. County officials understand that without full-service deputies the county would take on an increase in administrative costs as well as customer “foot traffic” in county motor vehicle offices. The in-depth conversation regarding full-service deputies and the El Paso County business model allowed for TTI researchers to increase their knowledge of the operation while understanding the pros and cons of this type of model. County officials then led a tour of the office. This included understanding scofflaw verification, inventory, title verification, and online transactions.</p> <p>In the afternoon, research team members visited the Ysleta branch office with county officials where they were given a tour of the facility and discussed operating procedures. After the Ysleta tour, team members were taken to two full-service deputies in the area, El Paso Auto IV and Tri Star. El Paso Auto has five locations around the county which serve as a private operation that completes registration and title as well as other services. Tri Star, established over twenty years ago, has one location. The full-service deputies in El Paso County are approved by the Commissioners Court to charge a \$10.00 fee for renewals and a \$15.00 fee for title transfers; however, currently the full-service deputies charge an \$8.00 fee for renewals and \$15.00 for title transfers.</p> <p>The discussion with the TAC, tour of facilities, and visits to two full-service deputies completed the day with the county. The overall visit was in-depth to cover key parts of the study as well as to collect detailed financial data.</p>
Brewster	August 21	Tax office	TTI representatives met with Brewster County TAC and two motor vehicle office deputies. As Brewster is one of the smallest counties

County	Date of 2014 Visit	Meeting Location	Notes
			<p>included in the study, the business model is not as expansive as larger counties. The meeting lasted for most of the morning with discussion including the details of the transaction processes, as well as gathering data such as number of supplies that are ordered.</p> <p>Following the discussion, TTI was then given a tour of the facility to further understand the equipment use behind the transaction processes.</p>
Harris	September 22-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Tax office</li> <li>-Mickey Leland substation</li> <li>-Distribution warehouse</li> </ul>	<p>The research team met with the Auto Division Director and Manager of Automotive Services. During the visit, which lasted a day and a half, the team visited the downtown Harris County Tax office to discuss in detail the registration and title process specific to Harris County, the role of branch offices and number of registrations and titles that are processed at each, and financials with the tax office bookkeeper. Team members were then shown the automotive division operation in the downtown office as well as the warehouse where county records and supplies are stored to learn about the ordering and distribution process for the motor vehicle department.</p> <p>The following day, team members conducted a time study at the Mickey Leland substation.</p>
Bexar	October 20-21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sanco Title Service</li> <li>-River City Auto Title</li> <li>-San Antonio Title Service</li> <li>-Alamo/Snow Title Service</li> </ul>	<p>TTI representatives met with four full-service deputies at their place of business, which included Snow Title Service, San Antonio Title Service, Sanco Title Service, and River City Auto Title. Project researchers also met with Bexar County TAC, Chief Deputy of Operations, as well as Motor Vehicle Registration Director. Each day of the visit, the team met with two deputies, as well as members of the county tax office, to collect financial data and learn about the business model of each private title company.</p>
Travis	October 28-30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Fry Auto Title Service</li> <li>-Auto Title Service of Oak Hill</li> <li>-Auto Title Service</li> <li>-Universal Auto Title Service</li> </ul>	<p>TTI met with four full-service deputies at their place of business, which included Fry Auto Title Service, Auto Title Service, Universal Auto Title Service, and Auto Title Services of Oak Hill. Project researchers also met with Travis County TAC, Associate Deputy, Motor Vehicle Supervisor, as well as the attorney representing the four full-service</p>

<b>County</b>	<b>Date of 2014 Visit</b>	<b>Meeting Location</b>	<b>Notes</b>
			deputies. Each day of the visit, researchers met with two deputies, as well as members of the county tax office, to collect financial data and learn about the business model of each private title company.

## House Bill 2202

House Bill 2202, enacted during the 83rd Legislative Session, authorized the TxDMV to collect a registration processing and handling fee:

SECTION 19. Subchapter E, Chapter 502, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 502.1911 to read as follows:

Sec. 502.1911. REGISTRATION PROCESSING AND HANDLING FEE. (a) The department may collect a fee, in addition to other registration fees for the issuance of a license plate, a set of license plates, or another device used as the registration insignia, to cover the expenses of collecting those registration fees, including a service charge for registration by mail.

(b) The board by rule shall set the fee in an amount that:

(1) includes the fee established under Section 502.356(a); and

(2) is sufficient to cover the expenses associated with collecting registration fees

by:

(A) the department;

(B) a county tax assessor-collector;

(C) a private entity with which a county tax assessor-collector contracts under Section 502.197; or

(D) a deputy assessor-collector that is deputized in accordance with board rule under Section 520.0071.

(c) The county tax assessor-collector, a private entity with which a county tax assessor-collector contracts under Section 502.197, or a deputy assessor-collector may retain a portion of the fee collected under Subsection (b) as provided by board rule. Remaining amounts collected under this section shall be deposited to the credit of the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles fund.

SECTION 44. Subchapter A, Chapter 520, Transportation Code, is amended by adding Section 520.0071 to read as follows:

Sec. 520.0071. DEPUTIES. (a) The board by rule shall prescribe:

(1) the classification types of deputies performing titling and registration duties;

(2) the duties and obligations of deputies;

(3) the type and amount of any bonds that may be required by a county assessor-collector for a deputy to perform titling and registration duties; and

(4) the fees that may be charged or retained by deputies.

(b) A county assessor-collector, with the approval of the commissioners court of the county, may deputize an individual or business entity to perform titling and registration services in accordance with rules adopted under Subsection (a).

**BREWSTER COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	
<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		
<b>Brewster County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	8,979		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	991		
County Online Registration	490		
County Walk-In Title	1,329		
Limited Service Deputies	0		
Full Service Deputy Registration	0		
Full Service Deputy Title	0		
Other (Compensated)	424		
Total County Transactions	11,789		
Transaction Weight Value	0.1%		
<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$108,919		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$1,299		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$13,922		
Total Cost	\$124,140		
<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$77,356		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$5,021		
County Online Registration	\$1,895		
County Walk-In Title	\$36,215		
Other (Compensated)	\$3,653		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$124,140		
<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		
<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$8.62		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$5.07		
Online Registration	\$3.87		
Walk-In Title	\$27.25		
<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$0.01		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.01		
Online Registration	\$0.01		
Walk-In Title	\$0.04		

**DALLAS COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	

<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		

<b>Dallas County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	1,298,163		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	169,959		
County Online Registration	296,018		
County Walk-In Title	609,381		
Limited Service Deputies	441,333		
Full Service Deputy Registration	0		
Full Service Deputy Title	0		
Other (Compensated)	104,169		
Total County Transactions	2,919,023		

Transaction Weight Value 29.1% Calculated Value

<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$7,534,265		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$272,561		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$392,089		
Total Cost	\$8,198,915		

<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$2,936,990		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$306,533		
County Online Registration	\$359,040		
County Walk-In Title	\$4,360,679		
Other (Compensated)	\$235,674		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$8,198,915		

<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		

<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$2.26		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$1.80		
Online Registration	\$1.21		
Walk-In Title	\$7.16		

<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$0.66		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.52		
Online Registration	\$0.35		
Walk-In Title	\$2.08		



**EL PASO COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	
<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		
<b>El Paso County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	529,601		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	53,559		
County Online Registration	79,165		
County Walk-In Title	155,857		
Limited Service Deputies	0		
Full Service Deputy Registration	287,774		
Full Service Deputy Title	115,493		
Other (Compensated)	25,069		
Total County Transactions	1,246,518		
Transaction Weight Value	10.0%		Calculated Value
<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$2,998,526		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$84,016		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$92,961		
Total Cost	\$3,175,503		
<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$1,490,774		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$111,798		
County Online Registration	\$114,710		
County Walk-In Title	\$1,387,654		
Other (Compensated)	\$70,567		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$3,175,503		
<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		
<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$2.81		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$2.09		
Online Registration	\$1.45		
Walk-In Title	\$8.90		
<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$0.28		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.21		
Online Registration	\$0.15		
Walk-In Title	\$0.89		

**HARRIS COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	
<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		
<b>Harris County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	1,923,106		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	271,562		
County Online Registration	525,421		
County Walk-In Title	997,667		
Limited Service Deputies	973,778		
Full Service Deputy Registration	0		
Full Service Deputy Title	0		
Other (Compensated)	139,752		
Total County Transactions	3,857,508		
Transaction Weight Value	45.5%		
<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$12,102,729		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$471,498		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$1,929,254		
Total Cost	\$14,503,481		
<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$4,896,309		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$529,348		
County Online Registration	\$687,801		
County Walk-In Title	\$8,034,209		
Other (Compensated)	\$355,814		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$14,503,481		
<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		
<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$2.55		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$1.95		
Online Registration	\$1.31		
Walk-In Title	\$8.05		
<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$1.16		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.89		
Online Registration	\$0.60		
Walk-In Title	\$3.67		

**HIDALGO COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	
<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		
<b>Hidalgo County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	435,172		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	31,543		
County Online Registration	41,261		
County Walk-In Title	148,391		
Limited Service Deputies	62,574		
Full Service Deputy Registration	30,148		
Full Service Deputy Title	15,147		
Other (Compensated)	20,556		
Total County Transactions	676,923		
Transaction Weight Value	8.0%		Calculated Value
<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$2,282,260		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$52,443		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$164,688		
Total Cost	\$2,499,391		
<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$1,116,974		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$61,821		
County Online Registration	\$63,126		
County Walk-In Title	\$1,204,708		
Other (Compensated)	\$52,762		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$2,499,391		
<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		
<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$2.57		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$1.96		
Online Registration	\$1.53		
Walk-In Title	\$8.12		
<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$0.21		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.16		
Online Registration	\$0.12		
Walk-In Title	\$0.65		

**HOWARD COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	
<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		
<b>Howard County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	28,945		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	1,624		
County Online Registration	820		
County Walk-In Title	5,575		
Limited Service Deputies	0		
Full Service Deputy Registration	0		
Full Service Deputy Title	0		
Other (Compensated)	1,997		
Total County Transactions	38,961		
Transaction Weight Value	0.5%		Calculated Value
<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$175,262		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$2,493		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$96,850		
Total Cost	\$274,605		
<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$158,639		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$5,614		
County Online Registration	\$2,763		
County Walk-In Title	\$96,644		
Other (Compensated)	\$10,945		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$274,605		
<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		
<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$5.48		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$3.46		
Online Registration	\$3.37		
Walk-In Title	\$17.34		
<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$0.02		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.02		
Online Registration	\$0.02		
Walk-In Title	\$0.08		

**JASPER COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	
<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		
<b>Jasper County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	38,829		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	2,114		
County Online Registration	706		
County Walk-In Title	5,940		
Limited Service Deputies	0		
Full Service Deputy Registration	0		
Full Service Deputy Title	0		
Other (Compensated)	1,774		
Total County Transactions	49,363		
Transaction Weight Value	0.6%		
<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$306,510		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$3,402		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$148,281		
Total Cost	\$458,193		
<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$291,005		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$9,495		
County Online Registration	\$3,591		
County Walk-In Title	\$140,807		
Other (Compensated)	\$13,295		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$458,193		
<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		
<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$7.49		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$4.49		
Online Registration	\$5.09		
Walk-In Title	\$23.70		
<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$0.04		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.03		
Online Registration	\$0.03		
Walk-In Title	\$0.14		

**REFUGIO COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	
<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		
<b>Refugio County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	7,232		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	890		
County Online Registration	148		
County Walk-In Title	895		
Limited Service Deputies	0		
Full Service Deputy Registration	0		
Full Service Deputy Title	0		
Other (Compensated)	390		
Total County Transactions	9,555		
Transaction Weight Value	0.1%		Calculated Value
<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$81,808		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$1,009		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$10,115		
Total Cost	\$92,932		
<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$60,693		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$4,408		
County Online Registration	\$801		
County Walk-In Title	\$23,757		
Other (Compensated)	\$3,273		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$92,932		
<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		
<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$8.39		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$4.95		
Online Registration	\$5.41		
Walk-In Title	\$26.54		
<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$0.01		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.01		
Online Registration	\$0.01		
Walk-In Title	\$0.03		

**WHEELER COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	
<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		
<b>Wheeler County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	8,549		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	433		
County Online Registration	151		
County Walk-In Title	1,613		
Limited Service Deputies	0		
Full Service Deputy Registration	0		
Full Service Deputy Title	0		
Other (Compensated)	457		
Total County Transactions	11,203		
Transaction Weight Value	0.1%		
<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$180,736		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$618		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$47,249		
Total Cost	\$228,603		
<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$135,592		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$3,806		
County Online Registration	\$1,039		
County Walk-In Title	\$80,918		
Other (Compensated)	\$7,248		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$228,603		
<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		
<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$15.86		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$8.79		
Online Registration	\$6.88		
Walk-In Title	\$50.17		
<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$0.02		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.01		
Online Registration	\$0.01		
Walk-In Title	\$0.07		

**WILLIAMSON COUNTY**

	County Transactions	Percent of Sample Transactions	
<b>Sample County Transactions (excludes deputies and Other)</b>			
Brewster	11,789	0.1%	Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
Dallas	2,373,521	29.1%	
El Paso	818,182	10.0%	
Harris	3,717,756	45.5%	
Hidalgo	656,367	8.0%	
Howard	36,964	0.5%	
Jasper	47,589	0.6%	
Refugio	9,165	0.1%	
Wheeler	10,746	0.1%	
Williamson	482,553	5.9%	
Sample County Total	8,164,632	100.0%	
<b>Total Sample County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	4,528,505		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	584,595		
County Online Registration	1,023,276		
County Walk-In Title	2,028,256		
Limited Service Deputies	1,512,435		
Full Service Deputy Registration	317,922		
Full Service Deputy Title	130,640		
Other (Compensated)	304,076		
Total Sample Transactions	10,429,705		
<b>Williamson County Transactions</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	249,929		Source: Texas Department of Motor Vehicles
County Mail-In Registration	51,920		
County Online Registration	79,096		
County Walk-In Title	101,608		
Limited Service Deputies	34,750		
Full Service Deputy Registration	0		
Full Service Deputy Title	0		
Other (Compensated)	9,488		
Total County Transactions	492,041		
Transaction Weight Value	5.9%		Calculated Value
<b>Costs</b>			
Salaries and Benefits	\$1,692,972		Source: County TAC's and TTI
Postage and Envelopes	\$75,382		
Facilities/Utilities/Other Overhead Costs	\$167,318		
Total Cost	\$1,935,672		
<b>Cost Allocation</b>			
County Walk-In Registration	\$737,349		Source: Calculated Values from Survey Data and County-Provided Data
County Mail-In Registration	\$111,987		
County Online Registration	\$110,195		
County Walk-In Title	\$948,149		
Other (Compensated)	\$27,992		
Total Allocated by Activity	\$1,935,672		
<b>Mean Processing Time (in seconds)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	171		Source: Transaction Time Data Gathered by TTI
Mail-In Registration	88		
Online Registration	50		
Walk-In Title	542		
<b>Cost Per Transaction</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$2.95		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$2.16		
Online Registration	\$1.39		
Walk-In Title	\$9.33		
<b>Cost Per Transaction (weighted by population)</b>			
Walk-In Registration	\$0.17		Calculated Value
Mail-In Registration	\$0.13		
Online Registration	\$0.08		
Walk-In Title	\$0.55		