

**BUILDING STRONG
HILL COUNTRY COMMUNITIES:
A REAL COUNTY CASE STUDY**

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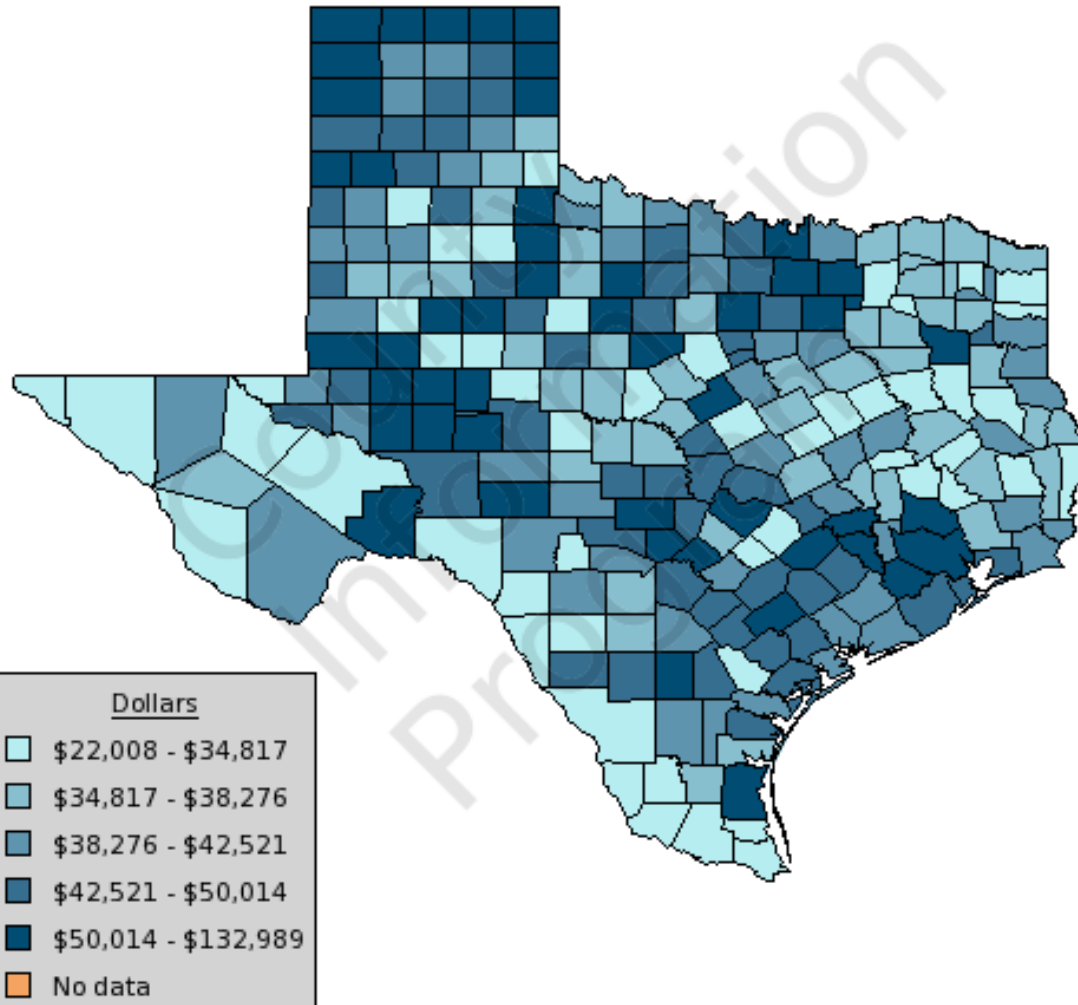
Real County 2025

- **Real, Real or Real**
- **You Can't Start From Here**
- **How Will We Ever Get This Done?**
- **Write A Plan To Implement**

Real County By The Numbers

2015 Population	3,608
Change from 2010	2.4%
Size	699 sq. mi.
Average Rainfall	27.38 in.
2015 Per Capita Income	\$32,344
2015 State PCI	\$28,210

Per Capita Income 2015



County Information Program, Texas Association of Counties 2017







Leakey

CITY LIMIT

POP. 425

Real County 2025

You Can't Start From Here

The Core Team

- Garry Merritt, County Judge
- Harry Schneeman, Leakey Mayor
- Jesus Chavez, Camp Wood Mayor
- Charlie Reagor, Leakey ISD School Board
- Joel Pigg, RECRD Director
- Dana Williams, HE Butt Family Foundation
- Carl Esser, Esser & Company
- Cliff Kaplan, Hill Country Alliance
- Britin Bostick, Stewardship Strategies

Common Vision

- *What do we have?*
 - ABCD
- *What do we want?*
- *How do we get there?*

Common Vision

Our common vision is for a healthy, vibrant community that offers access to some of the best natural resources in Texas while maintaining the small-town charm and values that make us strong and resilient.

How Will We Ever Get This Done?

- **Get community input**
- **Develop goals**
- **Develop strategies to meet goals**
- **Build leadership teams**

Community Input: Town Hall Meetings

- **Economic Development**
- **Hotel Occupancy Tax**
- **Airport**
- **Emergency Management District**
- **Emergency Services**
- **Streets and Roads**
- **Water, Wastewater, Storm Water**

Community Input: Surveys

- **Basic demographic info**
- **2 best things about Real County**
- **2 things that need most improvement**
- **In 10 years, I'd like to see Real County have _____.**

Community Input: Surveys

- **Importance of issues on 5 point scale**
- **Youth survey questions: Will you return to Real County? Why or why not?**
- **462 survey responses (SurveyMonkey!)**

Community Input: Surveys

- **Best things about Real County: small town feel and natural environment**
- **Top issues: streets and roads, emergency services, youth opportunities, more and better jobs**

Goals and Strategies

Improve city streets and county roads

- **Strategy: Use grant opportunities to pave and repair existing city streets**
- **Strategy: Interlocal agreements between County and Cities to share employees and equipment**
- **Strategy: Encourage rehabilitation of Highway 55 in Camp Wood**

Goals and Strategies

Economic development

- **Strategy: Create community economic development plans**
- **Strategy: Construct multi-use meeting space in each community**
- **Strategy: Implement Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) and create a county-wide tourism council**

Other Goals

- **Protect natural resources**
- **Support local EMS & VFDs**
- **Youth programs**
- **Community programs**
- **More access to physical & mental health programs**
- **Strengthen city government**
- **Improve infrastructure**

Write a Plan That Can Be Implemented

Systematic Local Leadership Development

- Strategy: Annual nonprofit leadership training program**
- Strategy: Periodic Texas Rural Leadership Program training**
- Strategy: Create Leadership Real County program**
- Strategy: Create youth leadership programs in schools**

