



Winter 2003
Volume 3, Issue 1

Inside This Issue

- 1** In the Spotlight
- 1** Recycling Saves
- 2** Buyer Insight
- 3** FAQ's
- 3** Special Events
- 4** Centralized Procurement
- 4** Noteworthy

Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M.
Purchasing Agent

**TRAVIS COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS COURT**

- County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe
- Pct. 1 Commissioner Ron Davis
- Pct. 2 Commissioner Karen Sonleitner
- Pct. 3 Commissioner Gerald Daugherty
- Pct. 4 Commissioner Margaret Gomez

**TRAVIS COUNTY
PURCHASING BOARD**

- Pct. 4 County Commissioner
Margaret Gomez, Chairperson
- Pct. 3 County Commissioner Gerald Daugherty
- 353rd District Ct. Judge Lora Livingston
- 201st District Ct. Judge Suzanne Covington
- 331st District Ct. Judge Bob Perkins

**TRAVIS COUNTY
PURCHASING QUARTERLY**

Sylvia Lopez, Contributing Editor
Jorge Talavera, Designer/Writer

Travis County Purchasing Office
314 West 11th Street, Suite 400
Austin, Texas 78701
(512) 854-9700

Travis County Purchasing Quarterly

In the Spotlight Sylvia Lopez

By Jorge Talavera

If laughter is nature's medicine, Sylvia Lopez may be on the verge of an overdose. It does not take much to make the county's Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program Coordinator laugh because she is serious about living life cheerfully.

"Happier people live longer, attract more positives than negatives, and age gracefully," says Sylvia.

Sylvia directs the HUB Office, which aims to award 30 percent of all "eligible" procurement dollars to certified HUBs: small, minority and woman-owned businesses. This is achieved through the administration of HUB program policies and procedures and a variety of "in-reach" and "outreach" initiatives.

As HUB Coordinator, a positive attitude is especially important because of the

frequency of contact with individuals ranging from elected officials to aspiring entrepreneurs.



Sylvia credits her bubbly attitude to a late mentor by the name of Jack, whom she holds very dear, who shared gems of knowledge with her that she lives by to this day.

"Focus on attitude because everything else you can learn," and "No matter where you are...shine," are two she often remembers.

The gems come in handy because remaining upbeat can be a difficult task at times, considering the immense responsibility that falls upon the HUB Office. Vendors expect accountability and County staff expect results.

Because Sylvia prides herself on "raising the bar" in all aspects of her life and takes pride in winning, the challenge of the HUB Office suits her. "Someone recently told me you hate to

See Spotlight on Page 4

Recycling County Property Saves Taxpayers an Estimated \$745,000

By Jorge Talavera

"I never knew you could do this!" is many county employees' first reaction when Ron Dube, Fixed Assets Manager, invites employees to come browse previously used furniture and other items at the Travis County Purchasing Warehouse before buying new.

When in need of a chair, desk or file cabinet, employees often assume it is time to shop new furniture.

A visit to the county's Purchasing warehouse might, however, be a better option if furniture that is "new to you" is satisfactory, worth saving some taxpayer money, or the purchase of an item is not in the budget.

Since 1999, the savings that has been realized by recycling "used but useable" county property is conservatively estimated

at \$744,950. Ron manages the storage, accounting and auctioning of County surplus property, and Dan Rollie, Warehouse Supervisor, oversees daily operations and handles most inquiries with considerable assistance from Matt Phillips, Fixed Assets Associate.

Dan always recommends that employees visit the warehouse to browse the selection in person because it is more practical than asking questions over the phone. "What I consider okay somebody else may think is not, so it's always a good idea to see for yourself," says Dan.

Why not recycle? Most are not aware of the option, and others naturally prefer a new desk or chair because no one wants furniture with scuffs and stains.

But unsightly, worn furniture is not

See Recycling on Page 2

Buyer INSIGHT By Donald Rollack

In the daily grind of the County's everyday business is a component that seems overlooked. The fact of the matter is it is not overlooked just taken for granted.

The procurement cycle revolves around major buys such as construction, high-dollar commodities, and professional services. That would be a fair analysis of the buying fraternity, but it would be a flawed conclusion.

Welcome to the world of small dollar purchases. "When they made one...they made two," is a good way of looking at small dollar procurement. There is always someone out there with an equal or better product at less cost and it is up to us to find it. And we do.

The number of new vendors entered

into HTE shows the commitment of Travis County to HUBs, small, and large businesses.

The County revolves around small dollar purchases. In fact, we survive on it. The consumables, parts, tools, publications, etc. are truly what keep county services functioning.

What is a small dollar purchase? There are varied answers based upon the circumstances, but invariably it falls into the "less than C note" category, or under \$100.

Travis County does a great job on small dollar procurement items. The marketplace contains a host of vendors with items that fall within the majority of purchases made by the County.

To maximize buying power in dealing

with new vendors there are three housekeeping rules to observe:

1. **Have the vendor contact the Purchasing Office to register with the County. Although we enter new vendors into the HTE system at requisition processing, vendor Commodity/Sub-commodity information for future purchases may not be available at that time.**
2. **Determine their HUB status so they may register as a HUB with Purchasing.**
3. **Explain the payment process to all new vendors.**

Together, we can do an even better job in providing qualified small dollar vendors. Remember, for need of a mouse a promotion may not get processed. ☐

Link up...to helpful purchasing information on the Web.

www.county.org/market/pdf/guide_purch.pdf - provides a basic understanding of procurement activities, the County Purchasing Act, and the role of the county purchasing agent

www.gsc.state.tx.us/cmb/cmbhub.html - search for vendors registered to do business with the State of Texas

www.napm.org - education and development resources for those in the purchasing and supply management professions

www.gsc.state.tx.us/cat_page/ - purchases that may be made off automated state contracts which have met competitive bidding requirements

Recycling · Continued from Page 1

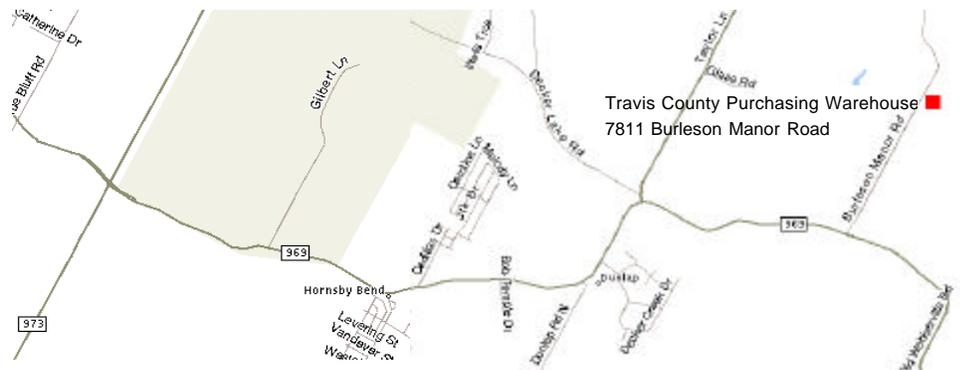
necessarily what to expect. Once the determination is made that an item is recyclable, any minor necessary repairs are completed and the item awaits its' new home.

In addition to enabling departments to acquire free "new" chairs or file cabinets when the purchase is not in the budget, items are also delivered by Facilities Management.

Getting a recycled item is easy. The first step is to call Dan at extension 46459 to ask if the item being sought is available. No appointment is necessary to visit the warehouse during warehouse hours of 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Once a visit during workday hours is approved, take the scenic drive to the warehouse at 7811 Burlson Manor Road to browse the selection. (See map.)

Recycled furniture is not available individually for personal purchase but can be purchased in groups through the auction process held periodically, in which items grouped by category are sold to the highest bidder. ☐

CALENDAR YEAR	DESKS @ \$600.00	CHAIRS @ \$400.00	CABINETS @ \$150.00	BOOKCASES @ \$200.00	TABLES @ \$300.00
2002	72=\$43,200.00	404=\$161,600.00	85=\$12,750.00	51=\$10,200.00	94=\$28,200.00
2001	71=\$42,600.00	259=\$103,600.00	85=\$12,750.00	30=\$6,000.00	58=\$17,400.00
2000	41=\$24,600.00	255=\$102,000.00	39=\$5,850.00	15=\$3,000.00	31=\$9,300.00
1999	68=\$40,800.00	261=\$104,400.00	48=\$7,200.00	10=\$2,000.00	25=\$7,500.00
TOTAL	252	1179	257	106	208
TOTAL \$	\$151,200.00	\$471,600.00	\$38,550.00	\$21,200.00	\$62,400.00
GRAND TOTALS	\$744,950.00				



From IH-35: Go east on Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. MLK, Jr. Blvd. becomes FM 969. Continue eastward past the intersection with FM 973 for about 5 miles. Take a left on Burlson Manor Rd. The warehouse will be about 1 mile down on the right.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What should I do if I encounter a vendor in the HTE database with a wrong phone or fax number, or other outdated information?

A: What you should *not* do is ignore a vendor file with erroneous information. Contact your purchasing representative or the HUB office so that the item may be corrected. Simply email the vendor number and a description of the wrong information. If the data is overlooked, another buyer, purchasing liaison or other HTE user will surely encounter the flawed file again.

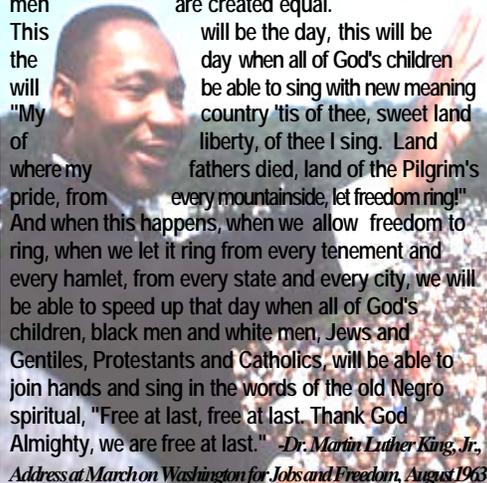
Purchasing is currently in the process of performing a mass update of all vendor contact information in HTE, which should greatly reduce the number of vendors with erroneous information.

Q: What is the easiest way for a vendor to become registered to do business with the county?

A: All vendors must submit a Bidder's Application to the Purchasing Office in order to get on the county's vendor list. Although the Bidder's Application is not currently downloadable online, it can be emailed upon request by e-mailing jorge.talavera@co.travis.tx.us.

"Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed - we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.

This will be the day, this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!" And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every tenement and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last." -Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Address at March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, August 1963



Q: Why does Travis County have a Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program?

A: In May 1994, the Travis County Commissioners Court unanimously passed a resolution creating the HUB Program within Travis County. The primary objective of the program is to ensure that historically underutilized and socially disadvantaged businesses receive a fair and equal opportunity to participate in the county's procurement process.

The HUB Office assures that a good faith effort is made to award 30% of all procurement dollars spent in the areas of commodities, services (professional and non-professional), and construction to certified HUBs.

This helps to ensure that tax dollars are spent in a way that promotes local economic growth by aiding in the success of the small and socially disadvantaged business community, which provides employment and needed products/services to Travis County residents.

Purchasing Staff Phone List

Main Number (512) 854-9700

Purchasing Agent	Cyd Grimes	854-9761
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Frank Holder	854-9451
Asst. Purchasing Agent	Bonnie Floyd	854-4173
Business Sys. Consultant	Scott Worthington	854-4851
HUB Coordinator	Sylvia Lopez	854-4561
HUB Specialist	Jorge Talavera	854-9914
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lolly Jones	854-4204
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lori Clyde	854-4205
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Rose Garcia	854-9763
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Loren Breland	854-4854
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Steve Parks	854-9764
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Richard Villareal	854-4881
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Lou Britt	854-4852
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Jason Walker	854-4562
Purchasing Agent Asst. III	Eric Francois	854-9853
Purchasing Agent Asst. II	Ella Hill	854-4853
Purchasing Agent Asst. I	Donald Rollack	854-9760
P.A.'s Executive Assistant	Lana Boling	854-9766
Purchasing Clerk IV	Melissa Hanson	854-9915
Purchasing Clerk III	Juan Gonzalez	854-9916
Purchasing Clerk III	Elsa Uresti	854-9917
Purchasing Clerk II	Betty Chapa	854-9918
Fixed Asset Manager	Ron Dube	854-6458
Warehouse Supervisor	Dan Rollie	854-6459
Fixed Asset Associate	Matt Phillips	854-6459
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Marvin Brice	854-9765
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Sylvia Gonzalez	854-5860
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	David Moreno	854-4850
Purchasing Agent Asst. IV	Jerry Raisch	854-9724

Quarterly Quote

"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress, Working together is success."
-Anonymous

Special Events Calendar

**Austin
01/22/03**

Annual Vendor Orientation/
HUB Forum

Hosted by:

Texas Lottery Commission (TLC)

Location & Time:

TLC Auditorium
8:30 a.m. – 12 noon

For more information contact:
peter.strouthes@lottery.state.tx.us

**Austin
02/06/03**

Spot Bid Fair

Sponsored by:

Texas Legislative Black Caucus

Location & Time:

Frank Erwin Center
1701 Red River

For more information contact:
Annette Smith at (512) 471-2850 or
annettesmith@mail.utexas.edu

**Austin
02/12/03**

Third Annual Purchasing and HUB
Connection

Sponsored by:

Texas Workforce Commission and
Teacher Retirement System of Texas

Location & Time:

1117 Trinity Street, Room 304T
1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

For more information contact:
ardra.gibson@twc.state.tx.us,
debbie.pina@trs.state.tx.us

**Austin
02/20/03**

HUB Forum

Sponsored by:

The Office of the Attorney General

Location & Time:

300 West 15th Street

For more information contact:
Mindy Sue Cohen at (512) 475-4411 or
mindy.cohen@oag.state.tx.us

Why Centralized Procurement?

Printed with the Permission of the Texas Association of Counties www.county.org

Although not readily evident in the County Purchasing Act, there is the suggestion of a centralized purchasing operation for county governments.

Most private and public sector operations recognize and support the centralization of the procurement function. Most procurement techniques are fundamentally the same, however, the significant difference is that public expenditures are made with taxpayer dollars, and therefore, subject to tighter regulations, more intensive scrutiny and a greater degree of accountability than the private sector.

The major advantage of centralized procurement is that it provides the greatest control over taxpayers dollars. It also

provides cost savings by consolidating purchases for volume discounts. With the utilization of a professional purchasing staff, the county should benefit from a streamlined administrative function, including the establishment of term (annual requirements) contracts, the use of standardized specifications, and standard contract terms and conditions.

Centralized control improves relations with the business community, by providing a single source of information for businesses. A single source of contact for the public reduces their frustration and confusion regarding public procurement procedures. Also, central procurement control helps to ensure the fair and equitable treatment of all vendors.

Spotlight · Continued from Page 1

lose,” Sylvia says, ““but even more, you hate to see other people lose...””

Administering the HUB program involves various intangible efforts that statistics do not capture, including maintaining business relationships with vendors/contractors, buyers and other county staff, not to mention representing Travis County at conferences and other engagements. The HUB office also reviews bid documentation to ensure HUB utilization, maintains vendor files and statistical information, creates and implements strategic plans, and brainstorms new approaches to increasing HUB utilization.

Sylvia thinks that “the ability to see the big picture” and her long-time involvement with the HUB program are what allow her to carry out her job successfully. Introduced to the HUB program 12 years ago, when former governor Ann Richards mandated the HUB program to state agencies, Sylvia was working for the Texas Department of Public Safety at the time and was promoted to HUB Coordinator in 1997.

She realized the profound effect the program would have on public purchasing and the challenge that lied ahead of wrapping her arms around such an important program.

“You can’t do things haphazardly, you have to have a plan...I drive the HUB train and if I don’t know where I’m going, we might derail,” says Sylvia, “and that affects a lot of folks.”

A native Austinite and youngest child in a family of 7 (5 boys, 2 girls), Sylvia has lived in North Austin all her life with most of her family members not straying too far. She smiles when she thinks about her father, Isidoro, and how much she is like him. Retired after over 30 years as a mail carrier, he runs a talent agency, deejays at a local radio station, and always finds time to watch a boxing match or otherwise enjoy the “retired life.”

Sylvia may be more like her father than she knows, as a thank you card thanking her for her support shows. It ends with “just thinking about you makes me smile.”

Sylvia acknowledges, “That’s how I want people to remember me.” ◊



When visiting the Purchasing Office, to ensure that you are serviced efficiently, please stop at the front desk. All documents will be logged in, date stamped and distributed appropriately. If you need to speak with a staff member, someone in the Purchasing Office will be happy to assist you.

NOTEWORTHY...

In November 2002, the Travis County Commissioners Court welcomed Gerald Daugherty as the new Precinct 3 Commissioner. The Purchasing Office would like to extend congratulations and best of luck to Commissioner Daugherty in his newly elected office, and welcome him as the newest member of the Travis County Purchasing Board.



Formal county procurements are now advertised on the Texas Marketplace at www.marketplace.state.tx.us. The Texas Marketplace is a free online tool that the state of Texas uses to facilitate electronic commerce, including government procurement and private sector trade opportunities. Procurements are advertised in the “local government” area.



A very special thanks goes out to all county department personnel who supported the HUB program by requesting listings of HUBs to include in the procurement process. John Carr, Robert Duke, Joseph Kertz, Shawn Malone, Raymond Martinez, Mary Mayes, Leslie Stricklan, and all others who continue to support the HUB program are truly appreciated for helping make the program a success.



Various successful vendor outreach forums that were held last quarter provided the Travis County HUB Office the opportunity to connect with the business community. These included the Community Mentor Protégé Initiative’s (CMPI’s) Celebration of Success Event (10/9), Senator Gonzalo Barriento’s Forum and Spot Bid Fair (10/23), the Austin Technology Council Expo (10/29), and the City of San Antonio/Bexar County Annual Expo (12/11).



The Travis County Purchasing Quarterly is a work in progress that will continue to grow and improve.

We are always open to your suggestions so please feel free to email your ideas to jorge.talavera@co.travis.tx.us.

We at the Travis County Purchasing Office are striving to improve our service to you. Please let us know how we can better serve you.