



# Purchasing Quarterly

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## Purchasing Office Starts the Year with Major Projects and Procedures



By Jerome T. Guerrero

The end of the year Purchasing Office staff meeting allowed everyone to reflect on the past accomplishments and challenges. The first quarter's momentum prepared staff for the multitude of projects and changes Travis County is facing.

Several projects will begin to change the face of Travis County. The Central Campus Study Phase I is completed with a preliminary report submitted to the Commissioners Court. Phase II will begin sometime in February 2010. A web site with the latest information is at [http://www.co.travis.tx.us/facilities/central\\_campus\\_study/default.asp](http://www.co.travis.tx.us/facilities/central_campus_study/default.asp)

The Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program has multiple projects going. One of the biggest changes is the paperless initiative. In the past, HUB Staff distributed thousands of information packets about the HUB Program and other business opportunities with Travis County and

other governmental entities. Within a few months, the HUB packets will be slowly replaced with compact disks (CD) allowing more information and videos to be distributed while reducing paper usage. The information will be timely and updated as it changes. Also, the HUB Program is producing Public Service Announcements (PSA) to supplement the information and "business coaching" the Program offers to all HUB and non-HUB vendors.

Another major project is the purchase of a new Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP) for Travis County. Evaluation and implementation of the new financial system is planned to occur in 18 - 24 months. This is part of the Better Enterprise Financial Information for Travis County (BEFIT) initiative.

In the coming months, the Purchasing Office web site will be under going a design change for easier navigation and increased information. Contact the Purchasing Office at (512)854-9700 to learn more about our current projects.

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Purchasing Agent

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County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe  
Pct. 3 Cnty Commissioner Karen Huber

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# How to Get In and Stay in the Game

By Jerome Guerrero

Every December, the Travis County HUB Staff attends the Bexar County Small, Minority, Woman and Veterans Business Owners' Conference "How to Get in and Stay in the Game."

Each year, hundreds of vendors, and various government and community organizations meet in San Antonio to explore business

opportunities. The start-up businesses can learn about the benefits of certification and the opportunities it can bring. The established businesses can work to increase their influence by exploring Mentor-Protege partnerships and meeting with other governmental representatives.

The Travis County HUB Staff distributed over 150 packets to attendees and answered many

questions which ranged from general start-up and opportunities with the County to what makes the County different from other government bodies. A common

thread to all the questions was, "What can I sell to Travis County?"

The HUB Staff in conjunction with the Purchasing Office Staff can assist vendors to learn about the opportunities not only with Travis County

but with the many governmental organizations with whom Travis County partners. Partnering is beneficial to the vendors, small businesses and the HUB Program overall by sharing the resources, information and networks of people who meet at this and other conferences. The ultimate goal of these events is to bring vendors and buyers together for a successful business transaction. Ω



Jerome Guerrero, HUB Program Specialist, explains how to do business with Travis County

## What is the HUB Program?

By Jerome Guerrero

In May 1994, the Travis County Commissioners Court unanimously passed a resolution creating the Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Program within Travis County. The primary objective of the program is to ensure that minority and woman-owned businesses receive a fair and

equal opportunity to participate in the County's procurement process. At that time, Travis County became the first County in Texas to have a HUB Program. The other programs are Harris, Bexar and Tarrant Counties.

Instituting policies and procedures borrowed from other

See "What is the HUB Program?" continued on page 4

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# “Green Procurement” - Travis County Accepting Electronic Construction Bids

By Jorge Talavera, CPPB

This past autumn, Travis County became one of a few Texas counties to begin accepting electronic bids for construction projects by implementing its “Green Procurement” procedures for the electronic posting, solicitation, and receipt of bids via BidSync (www.bidsync.com), the County’s third-party electronic procurement (e-procurement) provider.

Preparing and submitting a construction bid is typically a labor-intensive process that involves ample paper, duplication and transportation costs for the owner and contractor community. In an effort to minimize these costs to both contractors and the County, the e-procurement process, which the County uses for many other types of purchases, streamlines bids by allowing bidders to view and print project manuals, plans and specifications; ask and receive answers to questions; receive notifications of and view any associated addenda; and submit bids online.

All County bidders are encouraged to register (if not already) with BidSync as a Travis County vendor at www.bidsync.com. Registration is free and there is never a charge to do business with Travis County through the

e-procurement system. (Some other entities for which contractors will receive information and bid notifications may charge a small fee.) Vendors already registered simply need to login and begin the process.

The electronic bidding process for construction bids involves the review of all pertinent bid documents, completion of several required web forms, submission of pricing online, the uploading of a five-percent (5%) bid security (electronic or scanned), and (if applicable) submission of a Bid Proposal Worksheet.

Although bidders are highly encouraged to view and submit bids electronically, paper copies of project manuals, plans and specifications may still be obtained in the Travis County Purchasing Office for a refundable deposit.

As with any new technology, there are intricacies to be worked through, but over time this initiative should better serve the community, taxpayers and environment. Bidders who encounter difficulties may contact the Purchasing Office at (512)854-9700 or BidSync customer support at 1-800-990-9339 and someone will be happy to assist you.

The Purchasing Office thanks you for your support of our “Green Procurement” efforts. Ω



## Economic Opportunity Forums

03/02/10 - Austin  
Construction HUB Forum  
Address: AT & T Executive Education Conference Center  
3rd Floor Salon C 1900  
University Avenue Austin TX  
Information: University of Texas at Austin Project Management and Construction Services This event is free to all.  
Contact: Muriel Kruse at (512) 475-6856; [muriel.kruse@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:muriel.kruse@austin.utexas.edu)

03/10/10 - Austin, Texas  
Save the Date! TCEQ Annual HUB Economic Opportunity Forum and Spot Bid Fair  
Address: 12100 Park 35 Circle, Bldg A Austin, TX 78753  
Information: Texas Commission of Environmental Quality (TCEQ)  
Contact: (512) 239-1273

03/29/10 - Austin  
Marketing To State Entities  
Address: Central Service Building (CSB), Commission Room 402, 1711 San Jacinto, Austin TX 78701  
This seminar will be held from 12-1pm. Parking is available on the top level of Garage R (entrance is on San Jacinto directly across from the CSB)  
Contact: To RSVP and/or to request additional information contact Rachel Snell at [rachel.snell@cpa.state.tx.us](mailto:rachel.snell@cpa.state.tx.us)

# Purchasing Policy and Procedures Manual Updated

By Jerome Guerrero

On November 24, 2009 the Travis County Commissioners Court unanimously approved the updated Purchasing Policy and Procedures Manual. These updates are a result of changes in legislation and operational efficiencies.

Some changes, along with updates and modifications proposed back in July 2009, increases the threshold for purchase of goods and services up to \$50,000. The purchasing agent can now approve without the approval of the Commissioners Court. Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., Purchasing Agent stated, "... the last time we made changes to the manual, it decreased the amount of paperwork brought to court and it really helped in

## Travis County Purchasing Office



Purchasing Policy and Procedures Manual  
November 2009

staff work loads. I appreciate the support and the confidence you all (Commissioners Court) have in the Purchasing Office."

Other changes include removal of references to providing procurement services to the Travis

County Healthcare District, revised HUB goals for Construction, Commodities, Professional Services, and non-professional Services, new sections on Disadvantaged Business Enterprises and Vendor Tracking System, updated Recycling Policy language and removal of references to Catalog Information Systems Vendor (CISV) purchases.

The manual has a distinctive collage of the Historic Heman Sweat Courthouse and Texas Flag and has spiral binding for use as a working manual.

For your convenience, the manual is posted on the Purchasing Office web site and Travis County intranet. If you would like a hard copy, contact the Purchasing Office at 854-9700

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*"What is the HUB Program?" continued from page 2*

established minority and woman owned business programs such as the State of Texas and the City of Austin, Travis County has created a hybrid program that offers a more personalized approach to doing business with the County.

The first thing to know about the HUB Program and most types of minority/woman-owned business programs is they are not "set-aside" programs. Typically, the federal programs will have "set asides" which designate minimum amounts to be spent on minority owned businesses. Check the web site, [www.fedbiz.org](http://www.fedbiz.org) for more information.

The County, when possible, encourages and assists prime contractors/consultants to use certified HUB sub-contractors/

sub-consultants. The County HUB Program tries not to duplicate technical services offered by the State of Texas and City of Austin, instead referring businesses to available financial assistance or business classes. We offer basic one-on-one assistance with the procurement process not only with Travis County but with other governmental entities. Travis County Staff has experience with and knowledge of the processes and purchasing procedures with the State of Texas and City of Austin.

County Staff partners with other HUB and Minority Program Staff to share leads, information and other tips to assist vendors in the procurement process. Contact the HUB Program Team at (512)854-9700.

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## Springtime

When springtime comes and flowers bloom  
It washes away the gray and gloom  
A spray of brilliant colors to satisfy the eye  
This bounteous flora that before us lie  
We relish the sun and the bright blue sky  
The open roads that bid us to give them a try  
The lakes that gleam with a golden light  
Bursting with sun rays that makes it right  
Yes, spring is upon us with things to do  
For in this time our lives we do renew

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February 2010

# Special Information

Supplement to the Winter 2010 Issue

 *Purchasing Quarterly*

## Travis County Correctional Complex Building 12 Completed

By Ken Gaede, A.I.A.

Building 12 is Travis County's first Design-Build project and largest single project to date.

This project involved a close working relationship over the past 4-1/2 years between the Facilities Management Department (FMD), the Sheriff's Office, and the Design-Build Consultant, HOK. In addition, other County departments who worked closely with FMD and contributed to the ultimate success of the project are the Purchasing Office, County Attorney's Office, Information and Telecommunications Systems (ITS), Planning and Budget Office (PBO), and Human Resources Risk Management in producing a Design-Build procurement process.

This project replaces over 800 temporary variance beds scattered throughout the Travis County Correctional System with permanent beds in Building 12. Additionally, it allows for the closing of some of the older temporary housing buildings at the Travis County Correctional Complex (TCCC).

Building 12 is designed and constructed as a safe, secure facility with multiple security barriers between the secure housing units and the exterior of the building. There are separate fire zones allowing for emergency evacuations of inmates within the building without the need to evacuate outside. Two hundred digital cameras are located throughout the facility providing extensive coverage of all inmate occupied

areas, and mechanical/plumbing chases are located behind all housing units allowing

general separation of Sheriff's maintenance staff from inmates.

Direct supervision inmate management enhancements include Corrections Officers working inside the inmate housing units with greater mobility to move around the units for observation and supervision. Each cell block unit has its own internal recreation yard allowing easier management and increased security.

Video visitation stations inside the cell block units allow inmates to have visitation without leaving the unit. Two-hour rated fire separation walls divide Building

12 into 8 separate buildings, or fire zones. This construction allows inmates to be evacuated from one fire zone into a separate fire zone without the need to evacuate them to the exterior of the building. Double pre-action dry-pipe fire sprinkler system requires two events to activate the system: breaking of a sprinkler head and activation of a fire alarm device (smoke detector, pull station, etc.).

Building 12 is the latest in state-of-the-art detention and correctional facility for Travis County as it expands to serve the growing population.

