



Purchasing Quarterly

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New Offices for Travis County?

By Jerome T. Guerrero

On January 26, 2010, the Commissioners Court voted unanimously to start the due diligence phase for Travis County to determine if the office building located at 700 Lavaca Street will be the future offices for the Commissioners Court and general government staff.

Built in 1979, with over 315,000 sq. feet, the 15-story building occupies one city block and includes a 675-vehicle parking garage. According to an analysis by Facilities Management personnel, the 700 Lavaca Building would have a service life for an additional 50 years. Additionally, there is first floor space with high ceilings to accommodate a potential Commissioners Court room. The public can have access to address their issues, and have enough space to present themselves to the Court.

After the due diligence, a further analysis of the structural, mechanical, electrical and many other important building features will be presented to the Commissioners Court. Based on Phase One findings from the Central Campus Study by the consultant, Broaddus and Associates, there is about a 31% deficiency in space currently. That deficiency is projected to grow to 53% by 2015. Purchasing this building would be a step in relieving the current space deficiency with a growing population.

The Purchasing Office issued a competitive proposal for a commercial real estate broker to represent the County for this process. According to Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., Purchasing Agent, "We currently have various contracts in place to facilitate a quick turnaround on most of the needed procurements. However, quick decisions and multiple tasks must be performed to ensure the most effective and efficient procurement strategies and methodologies are accomplished. Some of the priority areas of interest relate to the need for Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing (MEP) designs and bidding documents, as well



as Architectural design solutions." The Purchasing Office has been an active participant in assisting in the prospective purchase of the 700 Lavaca Building.

The purchase of this building would not be an expansion of services but would help the County to administer and service the growing population as dictated by State law. A financial analysis done by the County Auditor's office stated that "interest rates are good and the County is in good financial shape to purchase an existing building." This purchase could be the largest acquisition that Travis County has made in recent years.

On April 20, 2010, the Commissioners Court unanimously voted to purchase the 700 Lavaca Building and to solicit bids and proposals for infrastructure improvements and renovations. The County plans to close on the building and adjacent parking garage sometime in June 2010. Renovations could begin in Fiscal Year 2010 after an analysis of the most efficient way to contract services is determined. Updates on the status of this purchase can be found in the Commissioners Court agenda on the County web site.



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Travis County

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

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Pct. 2 Commissioner Sarah Eckhardt
Pct. 3 Commissioner Karen Huber
Pct. 4 Commissioner Margaret Gómez

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261st District Ct. Judge Lora Livingston
250th District Ct. Judge John K. Deitz
County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe
Pct. 3 Cnty Commissioner Karen Huber

Purchasing Quarterly

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Weatherization Assistance Program

Staff Contribution

Travis County received notification of a \$4.5 million grant award from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) to provide weatherization assistance to low-income residents of Travis County, in the amount of a partial award of \$2.3 million, funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA). The funding allows Travis County to assist qualified residents to reduce their utility bills, and improve the home, health and safety for the elderly, persons with disabilities, and families with young children, through installation of energy efficient measures such as attic insulation, solar shading, and replacement of qualifying appliances such as Heating Ventilation Air-Conditioning (HVAC), window air conditioners and refrigerators in eligible homes.

Priority will be given to those households with one or more persons age 60 or above and/or persons with a disability. Additionally, priority will be given to households with young children under the age of six, and to those with the lowest incomes that pay the highest proportion of their incomes for home energy.

Travis County Housing Services Program (HSP) under the Community Services Program has a respected track record of providing a variety of home improvement and weatherization services to eligible County residents.

The Purchasing Office, in a joint procurement effort with the City of Austin (COA) combined their efforts to provide cost savings and efficiencies by eliminating mul-



iple government solicitations, as well as reducing administrative and overhead costs for both governmental entities. This collaboration was through an interlocal agreement approved on January 19, 2010, relating to weatherization services under ARRA. The infusion of these additional financial resources through ARRA will allow the HSP to determine eligibility and monitor the work of a pool of private sector firms to perform the services to homes in Travis County. Selecting multiple contractors from a pool of pre-qualified vendors established by the City of Austin's Austin Energy (AE) and approved by the Travis County Purchasing Office is in keeping with ARRA's goal to create and keep private sector jobs.

On March 1, 2010, a pre-bid conference hosted by the COA and the Travis County Purchasing Office, allowed potential prime contractors and sub-contractors to get more information about the procurement process and allowed primes and subs to network.

For more information about eligibility requirements, contact the Travis County Housing Services Program at 854-7250.



Exemptions to the Competitive Procurement Process

Excerpted from the Purchasing Policy and Procedures Manual

Some goods and services can be exempted from the competitive procurement process if the Commissioners Court orders the purchase exempt. Section 262.024 of the Texas Local Government Code lists all the circumstances when exemptions are available for purchases made out of current funds, bond funds, or through time warrants.

Examples of circumstances are goods and services necessary to preserve or protect the public health or safety of the residents of the County in a case of public calamity, personal or professional services, and goods and services that can only be obtained from one source (sole source). For a complete list, go to Chapter 16 of the *Purchasing Policy and Procedures Manual* by viewing on the Purchasing Office web site or requesting a copy from the Office.

Exemption orders must be

processed through the Purchasing Agent. For purchases exceeding \$50,000, the Purchasing Agent requests the exemption order from Commissioners Court in all cases except the acquisition of interests in land for County purposes.

When requesting an exemption, the Official or Executive Manager submits a memo to the Purchasing Agent requesting an exemption to the competitive procurement process and identifying the basis for the exemption (e.g. emergency, sole source). The memo must state specific details and explain why an exemption from the competitive procurement process should be requested and granted. When possible, it should also contain the name of the vendor, goods or services covered by the order and the expected maximum cost and other relevant programmatic information justifying the exemption.

For more information about exemptions or any other purchasing policies and procedures, contact the Purchasing Office at 854-9700. ✨

Welcome...

The Purchasing Office welcomes two new hires, Elizabeth Corey and John Peña.

John is a Purchasing Agent Assistant IV. He earned his Bachelors of Science in Business Management and Administration from St. Edwards University and has a Certified Texas Procurement Manager certification (CTPM) from the Comptroller of Public Accounts. He has knowledge and experience in heavy-highway construction, project management, procurement and equal employment opportunity. He was

recently with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as a Contract Manager.

Elizabeth Corey is a Purchasing Agent Assistant III, supporting Health and Human Services and Veterans Services. She has held a variety of purchasing roles in banking, government, higher education, and public utilities. She is a Certified Purchasing Manager (C.P.M.) and has a Six Sigma Green Belt certification. She graduated from the University of Pittsburgh, and has lived in Austin since 1998. ✨

Economic Opportunity Forums

June 24, 2010 - Austin
2010 Procurement Connection Seminar and EXPO -

Learn, Market, Grow
Information: Learn about the resources available to minority- and woman-owned businesses. Market your goods and services to state agencies and universities. Grow your network and increase your opportunities. Contact: For more information about time and location and to register visit Texas4HUBs.org Email: Texas4HUBs@cpa.state.tx.us (800) 531-5441, ext 3-6958

Announcement...

The State of Texas released *A Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Disparity Study of State Contracting 2009* to State and higher education officials. The report examines the effect of remedial race- and gender-based efforts by Texas to redress ongoing influences of past discrimination in the marketplace. The findings will be the basis for any rule revisions required by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts by Chapter 2161, Government Code. The report is available online at www.window.state.tx.us/procurement/prog/hub/disparity

Central Campus Study Enters Phase Two

Staff Contribution

On March 9, 2010, Stephen Coulston, Vice-President of Broadus and Associates, the consulting firm contracted by the County to complete the Central Campus Study, presented to the Commissioners Court a kick-off briefing for Phase Two of the Study. Phase Two is to “establish a strategic facilities master plan to develop the necessary facilities supporting the civil and criminal justice system, and certain general government functions.”

Community outreach will solicit a variety of public and stakeholder views about the Downtown County Campus. Focus groups will include individual meetings, and community workshops to gather and listen to the various viewpoints from multiple stakeholders. Stakeholders include the historical community, neighborhood associations, Woolridge Park interests, transportation interests and many other groups. Additional community input meetings called charrettes will be held, which are collaborative sessions to develop a solution to a design problem in which the

aptitudes and interests of a diverse group of people is incorporated into the solution.

A physical analysis is planned for the existing systems and infrastructure of County-owned structures downtown. The analysis will evaluate the useful life, feasibility of renovation or adaptive reuse of County facilities, including the Heman Sweatt Historic Courthouse. Other factors will be considered as the County’s space needs change in the coming benchmark years 2015, 2025 and 2035.

The consultant will develop multiple scenarios for the downtown campus. In this usage, a scenario is defined as “integrated and cohesive conceptual development program for new, renovated and existing facilities.” Each scenario will involve an evaluation of pros and cons and a scoring system. A community outreach meeting will provide input on the choices. After



Travis County Courthouse under construction in 1930
Photo Courtesy Austin History Center, Austin Public Library, Photo # C05145

the key stakeholders and the community submit their input, a preferred scenario or preferred concept plan will be recommended to the Commissioners Court. Afterwards, a master plan will be developed to address in detail the multiple issues of zoning, parking, security, and potential new construction.

By the end of the first quarter 2011, a master plan should be presented to the Commissioners Court. For updated and contact information visit the web site at http://www.co.travis.tx.us/facilities/central_campus_study/default.asp ✨

HUB Program Expands Outreach to Beyond Certification

By Jerome T. Guerrero

Another busy quarter for the HUB Team! On February 17, the City of Austin invited the team along with Berdell Collins, Business Program Services & Outreach Coordinator with Texas Department of Transportation, Aida Douglas, Business Development Manager/DBE Officer with Capital Metro and Karen Box, Supplier Diversity Coordinator with Seton Family of Hospitals,



to discuss what vendors can do after certification and registration.

Sylvia Lopez and Jerome Guerrero, HUB Program Staff, answered questions about the benefits of certification and explained the procedures of doing business with the County and governmental entities in general.

To learn more, contact HUB Staff at 854-9700. ✨

Special Information

Purchasing Quarterly

Supplement to the Spring 2010 Issue

Travis County Complete Count Committee

By Veronica Chidester,

Intergovernmental Relations Administrative Assistant

The Austin/Travis County Complete County Committee has been working diligently to ensure that Travis County is counted in the 2010 Census. Committee Co-Chairs Judge Eric Shepperd and Bruce Elfant have worked tirelessly to reach out to hard to count communities.

If you have not yet filled out your form, please do so. Filling out your form ensures that our community gets funding for roads, schools, hospitals and more.

Please cooperate with the Census Taker when he/she visits your residence. All Census Takers will carry official government badges marked with just their name. The Census Taker will never, under any circumstances, ask to enter

United States[®] Census 2010

your home.

Census Takers visit local homes several times to capture resident information for the 2010 Census. If you prefer, you can schedule a visit with your Census Taker. Should the Census Taker come when you are away from your home, they will leave a contact number. If a Census Taker has not visited your home or you have a question about your participation with the census, call your local Census Office at 369-1208.

There is help for non-English speaking respondents. Census Takers will have a flashcard containing a sentence about the 2010

Census written in approximately 50 languages. If a resident doesn't speak English, the Census Taker shows the flashcard to the resident, and the resident points to the language he/she speaks. A Census Crew Leader will then reassign the case to a person who speaks that language. ✨



Austin/Travis County Complete Count Committee: from left to Right: Gabriel Perales, Census Bureau Liaison, Ryan Robinson, City of Austin Demographer; Judge Eric Shepperd, County Court at Law #2; Constable Bruce Elfant, Constable 5; Veronica Chidester, Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) Admin. Assistant; Deece Eckstein, Travis County IGR Coordinator