



Purchasing Quarterly

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County Purchases Downtown Property

By Jerome T. Guerrero

On December 28, 2010, the Travis County Commissioners Courts closed on a downtown block located South of Republic Square. The property is between 3rd and 4th Streets and Guadalupe and San Antonio Streets. Currently, the property is a contract/paid parking lot that also leases space to the Austin Farmers Market on Saturdays.

This purchase will help address the anticipated increase in population in the next 10 - 25 years, based on the Central Campus Study (CCS). The County will need to double staff and offices to maintain services for a population in Travis County that is already over 1,000,000 and growing.

The County chose the property because it is a complete block, vacant and is not in the Capitol View Corridor height restrictions. County records show the



Future site of the new Travis County Courthouse?

first County Courthouse, built in 1855 was at that location.

The current Courthouse, built in 1931 is cramped because the County has outgrown its useful life, and is unable to expand due to historical designation. Judges in the courthouse have been urging the Commissioners Court to search for other sites to expand or build an updated court facility.

The County is working on a bond election for possibly this November 2011 to fund construction of a civil and family courthouse.

This is the second purchase of downtown property the County has made within the year to accommodate growth. The purchase of the 700 Lavaca Building closed in June 2010. The County anticipates moving its administrative staff in Summer 2011.

Contact the Purchasing Office at (512)854-9700 to learn more about Travis County's current projects. Ω

Formula 1™ Racing Comes to Travis County

By Jerome T. Guerrero

In late Spring 2010, Austin Mayor Lee Leffenwell announced that Formula 1™ (F1) Racing was coming to Austin. By August 2010, details were released to reveal that the race track would be in the Elroy area in Southeastern Travis County. Representatives from F1 presented to the Commissioners Court in September 2010 with more presentations in December 2010.



An outreach event was hosted by F1 representatives on December 14, 2010 to discuss potential subcontracting opportunities for construction of utilities. The City of Austin is going to build water/waterwater lines to supplement the anticipated needs for a facility that could have up to 120,000 visitors

over 3 days of race events. The construction of the utilities would follow City of Austin Minority/Woman Business Enterprise (M/WBE) business ordinance.

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Travis County

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Pct. 4 Commissioner Margaret Gómez

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County Awards New Financial System

By Donna Scarbrough

After being a reliable workhorse for 20 years, the County is replacing its old system with a new integrated financial system that will have the functionality to meet the County's



growing financial reporting and operational needs. A collaborative effort between the Auditor's Office, Purchasing, Treasurer, Planning and Budget Office (PBO), Human Resources (HRMD), Information and Telecommunication Systems (ITS) and other offices to define business requirements was launched more than two years ago. The project was named Better Enterprise Financial Information for Travis County (BEFIT).

In July 2009, Purchasing issued a comprehensive solicitation to acquire both the financial system software and the services to implement it. An evaluation

committee from multiple offices evaluated the proposals from October 2009 to November 2010.

On December 7, 2010, the Commissioners Court approved the award of a contract to the highest scoring vendor

team (LSI/SAP). "We (BEFIT team) have put together the most well planned and well researched procurement that we have ever done," said Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M., Purchasing Agent.

BEFIT will offer more user friendly functions for purchasing liaisons and Travis County vendors. Requisitioning will be simplified for liaisons. A vendor self service will allow current and new vendors to register online with Travis County and keep their contact and product information updated. The HUB Team is excited that this feature will help better inform the County about their products and services. Ω

e-Agenda: Transparency & Access for Travis County

By Nyralin Kline, ITS

Travis County has recently implemented a new process to provide an Electronic Agenda/Minutes and Audio/Video Streaming solution for Commissioners Court Agenda/Minutes and supporting documentation.

E-Agenda allows the electronic creation and management of the Agenda and Minutes with supporting documentation. The process has the ability to receive

line level audio/video signals as provided by Travis County Media Services of Commissioners Court sessions and allows for indexing of Agenda, Minutes and supporting documentation to the respective video.

The e-Agenda solution provides a highly functional and informative means of accessing recorded video/audio and supporting documentation of Commissioners

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2011 Strategic Plan for Purchasing Office

By Cyd V. Grimes, C.P.M.

The Purchasing Office is committed to supporting the mission of all Travis County Officials. We strive to provide exceptional customer service and an ethical, cost effective and efficient procurement system based on integrity and sound business practices.

The mission of the Office is to ensure compliance with the County Purchasing Act as well as other state and federal laws applying to Travis County procurements. The Office also provides an ethical, fair and transparent procurement process with equal access to all vendors participating through competitive acquisition of goods and services, providing a quality, ongoing supply of goods and services to all County offices. Finally, the Office

also accounts for and disposes of all County assets by effective fixed asset system management and protects the interests of Travis County taxpayers without regard to undue influence or political pressures.

In order to accomplish its mission the Purchasing Office works to improve communication between other Travis County departments, vendors and the business community. The Office strives to streamline and improve essential functions, increase underutilized/disadvantaged business participation in the County procurement process by developing staff skills and providing an ethical, team oriented work environment.

Some of the strategies to improve the purchasing processes are to standardize procurement and

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F1 has hired a local M/WBE construction consulting firm to assist with outreach to the local minority business community. Richard Suttle, attorney with Full Throttle Productions, an F1 representative, said at the September 21, 2010 Commissioners Court session, "... because it's privately funded, it doesn't necessarily fit into a process for outreach for local or minority owned businesses, but we're going to make it that way and we are working on proposals now to get out into the local community so that as this project gets going, it will have an opportunity for local hiring and hopefully expand the opportunities for lots of folks to get to work on this."

Other opportunities may arise because of potential road improvements to accommodate the large influx of traffic and people. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has planned to improve FM 812. There is a possibility to improve Elroy Road. Both projects would involve widening the road to accommodate the increase in traffic and a proposal to construct a new road connecting Elroy to Pearce Lane. All of these road projects may not be ready when the race track is opened.

F1 is hoping to have the race track completed by June 2012. Check the Commissioners Court Agenda to learn more and for future updates. Ω

Economic Opportunity Forums

03/04/11 - Austin

T F C / D P S / H H S H U B
Outreach & Educational Expo
Address: Brown Heatly
Building, 4900 North Lamar
Blvd., Austin, TX 78751.

Information: At this event co-sponsored by the TX Facilities Commission, Dept. of Public Safety, and Health & Human Services System's HUB Programs, HUB vendors will have the opportunity to learn about the State procurement process and network with State purchasers and end users. Time: 8:00AM -1:00PM Contact: Attendees & Exhibitors can register online at <https://portal.tfc.state.tx.us/hubexpo/>.

03/10/11 - Austin

From a Purchaser's View - HUB Vendor Training

Address: William B. Travis
Building Room 1-111 1701
Congress Ave Austin, TX 78701

This workshop is designed to provide HUB vendors with general information about the procurement processes state purchasers typically use when buying their goods and services, and Business2Business. Time: 9-11AM and 11-11:45AM will be the networking session. Contact: For additional information contact Rachel Snell at 512-463-6958 or texas4hubs@cpa.state.tx.us

Central Campus Study Update- Scenario 2A

By Jerome Guerrero

In late 2010, two scenarios were presented to the Commissioners Court, internal stakeholders and the general public for consideration and discussion by the Central Campus Study consultant. Travis County staff also met with other associations and individuals who requested more information about the scenarios.



Based on the feedback, a modified scenario 2 was presented to the Commissioners Court on November 23, 2010. The following refinements have been suggested for further review and development during the next phases of work on the Master Plan: creating tunnel

connections between the proposed Office/Central Booking building and the Criminal Justice Center expansion; locate the County Attorney's Offices in the Criminal Justice Center; expand and build new office space with the new Central Booking facility for other courts-related functions; build additional shell space for the Criminal Courts making this a 20 story building (the same as depicted in Scenario 1); develop general population housing with the central booking 72 hour assessment housing; and finally, consider the option of creating ground floor retail on the first level of the 700 Lavaca Parking Garage as the motor bank lease expires.

It is hoped that the recommended scenario will create an active and pedestrian-friendly



County campus as a distinctive urban place that has the potential to improve the diversity of business/store fronts in the immediate area.

With the potential retail areas and cultural points of interest in the county buildings, specifically those that frame Wooldridge Square Park, this could help keep this area of the Central Business District alive with activity after 5:00 p.m. and on the weekends.

As the County continues to expand in the area, it will be sensitive to its impact so that a dense "County Campus" is seen as a good neighbor by the residents of the area. Ω

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Court sessions. Using a comprehensive search capabilities, the system finds respective topics of interest in a more reliable manner. Online viewing of past and current court sessions along with supporting documentation is available.

By implementing the new technology, the public benefits by greater access and disclosure of Commissioner's Court sessions. County Departments benefit by use of an automated efficient agenda and minutes creation and management process. Ω

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contract forms, automate document production and transmission. The Office will use technology to monitor turn around times and to facilitate effective contract management, by creating annual term contracts and pre-qualified pools for professional services. These processes will decrease procurement time.

The HUB staff will continue to network with other governmental agencies to increase the HUB contractor pool, advocate for positive HUB legislation with the State of Texas, share resources

and outreach to HUB community. HUB staff will continue to track payments using the Vendor Tracking System (VTS) and work with local contractors to support HUB participation. The Purchasing Office will increase advertising in local minority newspapers and attend more HUB workshops, trade shows, and economic forums to increase visibility of Travis County opportunities.

HUB Staff will continue to provide assistance to HUBs and other firms needing technical guidance and assistance about doing business with the County. Ω

Special Information

 Purchasing Quarterly

Supplement to the Winter 2011 Issue

Celebrate Black History Month: Heman Marion Sweatt

Reprinted from The Heman Marion Sweatt Travis County Courthouse, Austin, Texas: A Historical Perspective (Austin, Texas, 2008).

On February 26, 1946, Heman Marion Sweatt, an American of African descent, was denied admission to the University of Texas School of Law, as state law required segregation by race. The Court of Civil Appeals would later write that “he possessed every essential qualification for admission, except that of race, upon which ground alone his application was denied.”



Mr. Sweatt filed a lawsuit in Travis County against UT President T.S. Painter on May 16, 1946. Judge Roy C. Archer of the 126th District Court, recognizing that the State had no “separate but equal” facility for a law school, gave the State of Texas six months to “establish a law school for Negroes substantially equivalent” to the University of Texas School of Law, and officials of the University of Texas complied. Judge Archer concluded that the new school offered the petitioner “privileges, advantages, and opportunities for the study of law substantially equivalent at the University of Texas.”

Mr. Sweatt’s legal team appealed the decision, and ultimately, in 1950, the Supreme Court of the United States disagreed with the lower court.

While not yet denouncing “separate but equal” as the constitutional policy of the United States, the Court wisely saw beyond the bricks and books that make a school and concluded that separate professional schools were inherently unequal. Sweatt laid the groundwork for the Court’s decision in 1954’s *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. In *Brown*, the Court finally

concluded that, although the physical facilities may be equal, segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race deprives the children of equal education opportunities. Sweatt gave the court the logic that enabled it to strike down segregation as the law of the land by providing an interim step in the process of legal analysis. It is not an overstatement to say that *Sweatt v. Painter* began the process of desegregating America’s schools. [1]

[1] The Heman Marion Sweatt Travis County Courthouse, Austin, Texas: A Historical Perspective (Austin, Texas, 2008). A copy of this brochure can be obtained at the Travis County Courthouse.