



Travis County Commissioners Court Work Session Agenda Request

Meeting Date: July 26, 2016

Agenda Language: Discuss budget hearing procedures

Prepared By/Phone Number: Jessica Rio / (512) 854-9106

Elected/Appointed Official or Department Head: Jessica Rio, County Executive,
Planning and Budget

Commissioners Court Sponsor(s): Sarah Eckhardt, County Judge

Background/Summary of Request and Attachments: The FY 2017 Preliminary Budget will be available by Monday, July 25th. Given the direction from the Commissioners Court regarding tax rate assumptions underlying the development of the Preliminary Budget, the majority of budget requests submitted as a part of the FY 2017 budget process remain unfunded.

The Commissioners Court requested that budget hearings be kept to one three hour session on August 18th with the possibility of a second session on August 19th. PBO emailed offices and departments to identify any unfunded budget requests that they believed were so critical in nature that they warranted a request for a budget hearing by the Commissioners Court. PBO noted in this communication that Commissioners Court has requested that offices and departments not use these budget hearings to brief the Court on departmental programs not related to a specific budget request. Such programmatic updates are generally scheduled during work sessions with the Court after October 1st. In addition, departments have been asked to be prepared to discuss how funding that PBO recommended in the Preliminary Budget could be re-directed towards any remaining unfunded budget requests based on the updated prioritization of requests.

Responses were gathered and have been shared with the Commissioners Court through the public online message board at www.traviscountytx.gov/forum/planning-budget. These items are also attached as backup. Only those items self-identified by departments as budget hearing priorities are listed here. Please note that a full list of all budget requests received in the FY 2017 budget process will be published as part of the Preliminary Budget.

Commissioners Court members are asked to prioritize any budget requests that they would like to further discuss in the very limited time available for this purpose. PBO requests that each member select up to six requests for discussion and prioritize these items as one (1) through six (6). This prioritization could result in up to 30 budget hearing

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topics. These priority items should either be uploaded to the online message board or submitted directly to the County Judge's Office by August 3rd for scheduling purposes.

Budget hearing requests will be considered for times on Thursday, August 18th (starting at 1:30) and possibly Friday, August 19th (starting at 1:30). Once budget hearings are scheduled, complete backup materials will be due to PBO on August 8th. This is ten days prior to the scheduled hearing and allows for PBO to include the related PBO analysis and send complete packages to Commissioners Court one week before the hearing.

Staff Recommendations:

PBO recommends that the Commissioners Court prioritize items to discuss on August 18th and potentially August 19th.

Issues and Opportunities: Budget hearings allow offices, departments and/or external agencies the opportunity to discuss unfunded requests and the driving factors that they believe need to be communicated in a formal setting.

Fiscal Impact and Source of Funding: There are ten departments with thirty different topics requested to be discussed. These requested hearing topics total \$9.6 million in the General Fund and Other Funds and \$56.5 million in capital funds.

The FY 2017 Preliminary Budget was formulated with direction received from the Commissioners Court during the approval of the guidelines and totals \$976 million for all funds, and includes \$692 million in the General Fund as well as a proposed FY 2017 issuance of \$32 million.

The budget is balanced at a tax rate of 38.38 cents per \$100 of taxable value. This is comprised of a maintenance and operations tax rate of 32.22 cents per \$100 taxable valuation and a debt service tax rate of 6.16 cents per \$100 taxable valuation. The property tax rate used to formulate the Preliminary Budget is 2.43% over the effective tax rate and 2.87% above the effective maintenance and operations tax rate (plus debt service requirements) and represents a 7.94% decrease from the current tax rate of 41.69 cents. At this tax rate, the owner of an average taxable valued homestead would pay essentially the same property taxes for the County's portion of their tax bill, or \$1,094 as in FY 2016.

Required Authorizations:

Joe Hon, County Judge's Office, (512) 854-9555

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Requests for FY 2017 Budget Hearings

Ref #	Department Name	Request name	Request Description	Additional Dpt Notes/Comments	Verified Budget Amount			Preliminary Budget Amount			CC Priority
					Req Amount	Capital	FTE	Req Amount	Capital	FTE	
1	Criminal Courts Legally Mandated Fees (194)	Indigent Attorney Fee Increase	In June 2015, the Commissioners Court requested that Court Administration and Justice Planning assemble a committee to study the current attorney fee structure and make recommendations where appropriate. The committee hopes to have a proposal to present to both the Commissioners Court for a budget increase as well as to the judges to set the fees. At this time, the committee has tentatively adopted a proposal that includes an approximate 10% increase to the overall budget (\$800,000).	Request for budget hearing to be presented by Indigent Defense Attorney Fees Work Group	\$ 800,000	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
Criminal Courts (124) Total					\$ 800,000	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
2	District Attorney (123)	Retain Existing Employees (PIU/Morton)	The District Attorney is requesting funding to retain eight (8) employees that are at risk of loss. The employees at risk are: A) two FTEs (a paralegal and a forensic accountant) from the Special Prosecutions Division (SPD) that are currently funded with forfeited property account funds; B) five discovery paralegals from the Trial Division that are currently funded as project employees, and C) one accountant in the Administration Division that is funded with forfeited property account funds. This is not a request to add new employees but is, instead, seeking to retain existing Travis County employees that are crucial to the District Attorney's ability to conduct business.	No Comments	\$ 568,555	\$ -	8.00	\$ 331,394	\$ -	5.00	
District Attorney (123) Total					\$ 568,555	\$ -	8.00	\$ 331,394	\$ -	5.00	
3	Emergency Services (147) & Emergency Medical Services (159)	Replacement Aircraft	*Emergency Medical Services (159)* STAR Flight recommends that the Commissioner's Court consider the option of replacing the current EC145 aircraft. This recommendation is based upon substantial pending maintenance as well as increased mission performance, technology and safety improvements available with new aircraft.	No Comments	\$ -	\$ 30,000,000	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
4	Emergency Services (147) & Emergency Medical Services (159)	STAR Flight 2 24 Hour Staffing	*Emergency Medical Services (159)* This request is for additional staffing to allow STAR Flight 2 to be available 24/7. Request lowered to 6 FTE	No Comments	\$ 855,418	\$ -	6.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
5	Emergency Services (147) & Emergency Medical Services (159)	Air Communication Specialist	*Emergency Medical Services (159)* Travis County currently contracts with Austin-Travis County EMS through the EMS Inter-local for STAR Flight Communications dispatch services. Aviation communications dispatch needs have been problematic for many years and was identified in 2006 and later in our CAMTS accreditation site surveys.	No Comments	\$ 309,032	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
6	Emergency Services (147) & Emergency Medical Services (159)	Low Level IFR and GPS Approaches	*Emergency Medical Services (159)* This funding would be used to establish a low level Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) route structure with Global Positioning (GPS) approaches/departures to Central Texas hospitals. This will allow patients to be transported in weather conditions that are not currently allowed. This capability has been developed in the last 10 years and is now being implemented in some areas of the country.	No Comments	\$ -	\$ 460,000	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	

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7	Emergency Services (147) & Emergency Medical Services (159)	Additional HIPPA Program FTE	*Emergency Services (147)* Approximately 1200 Travis County employees in 11 departments access information that requires compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. An additional FTE is requested to assist in implementing a mature, proactive compliance program to reduce risks associated with breaches of this protected information and to assist with the growing program workload.	No Comments	\$ 84,353	\$ 6,605	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
Emergency Services (147) & Emergency Medical Services (159) Total					\$ 1,248,803	\$ 30,466,605	7.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
8	Information Technology Services (112)	New ITS FTE	This budget request is for an additional 15 FTE for Information Technology Services (ITS) in the Program Management, Network, Security, Server Administration, Service Desk, Finance and Training areas. Travis County has grown from 4,289 FTE in 2012 to 5,108 FTE in 2016 (19%) with ITS remaining flat in FTE count going from 107 to 108 (1%). ITS is at its service capacity limit.	No Comments	\$ 1,280,892	\$ 77,302	15.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
Information Technology Services (112) Total					\$ 1,280,892	\$ 77,302	15.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
9	Justice of Peace - Precinct 2 (127)	Increased Funding for Accounting Positions	Salary increase for an accounting position that is shared between all JPs.	No Comments	\$ 8,610	\$ -	-	\$ 1,296	\$ -	-	
Justice of Peace - Precinct 2 (127) Total					\$ 8,610	\$ -	-	\$ 1,296	\$ -	-	
10	Justice Planning (155)	Social Services Program Specialist- Workforce Development	Research in the field of criminal justice has determined that stable employment is critical to a successful transition from prison to community and further reduces an ex-offender's likelihood of returning to prison. However, a criminal record and lack of work experience can make it difficult to find a job. The Workforce Development Services (WDS) program helps individuals with a criminal background prepare for and locate gainful employment, acquire employment training and job readiness skills as needed. The program also actively recruits and advocates to local employers to hire the ex-offender population. Providing employment for individuals with a criminal record has the potential to reduce short-term recidivism, positively impact public safety, reduce dependence on social services programs and reduce the overall tax burden for the citizens of Travis County.	No Comments	\$ 59,732	\$ 4,266	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
Justice Planning (155) Total					\$ 59,732	\$ 4,266	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
11	Pretrial Services (142)	Court Officer Initiative	Pretrial Services requests two FTE Pretrial Officer III positions to serve as Court Officers and work closely with a total of sixteen Criminal Courts. The officers will respond to requests from the Judges, prosecutors, and other officers of the Courts to provide information regarding defendants on pretrial release.	No Comments	\$ 135,568	\$ 12,760	2.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
Pretrial Services (142) Total					\$ 135,568	\$ 12,760	2.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	

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12	Sheriff (137)	Law Enforcement Staffing	<p>Add the following positions to the Law Enforcement bureau to address the current and future service needs of a growing County population:</p> <p>(A)Emergency Communications Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Seven (7) Telecomm 911 Specialists •One (1) Telecomm 911 Specialist Supervisor <p>(B)Patrol and Investigative Staffing</p> <p>Phase 1 of 5 to reach a 1.7 officer per 1,000 citizen ratio:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Two (2) Law Enforcement Lieutenants •Two (2) Law Enforcement Sergeants •Four (4) Law Enforcement Detectives •Seventeen (17) Law Enforcement Deputies <p>(C)School Resource Officers (SRO) Staffing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Three (3) Law Enforcement Deputies (2 at Leander ISD, 1 at Del Valle ISD) •One (1) Law Enforcement Sergeant at Leander ISD 	4 Telecomm 911 Specialist positions and 25 various patrol and investigative positions	\$ 3,268,301	\$ 2,149,779	37.00	\$ 350,342	\$ 301,315	8.00	
Sheriff (137) Total					\$ 3,268,301	\$ 2,149,779	37.00	\$ 350,342	\$ 301,315	8.00	
13	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	New GIS Analyst Community Wildfire Protection (1 FTE)	<p>TNR's GIS Coordinator requests an additional FTE to meet current and future needs in support of TNR's business of hazard planning and mitigation including wildfire and flooding. Hazard mitigation is sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and their property from hazards.</p> <p>This position would primarily provide GIS support for the Wildfire Protection Specialist (Submission Priority #33) so that communities have the geospatial information to create CWPPs to mitigate the risks associated with living in the wildland urban interface areas. This position would also design, create, maintain and integrate databases by operating and maintaining GIS and other computer programs. Primarily working with Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) staff on above processes as relates to their business function.</p>	Need to take item jointly with #33 below.	\$ 76,943	\$ 8,471	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
14	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Community Wildfire Protection Specialist (1 FTE)	<p>Creation of a staff position in TNR responsible for implementation of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). The Wildfire Protection Specialist will work with a GIS analyst in TNR Planning & Development Services (Submission Priority #32) to utilize the CWPP's wildfire risk model, analyze wildfire risk, produce reports, and provide expertise in best management practices for wildfire risk reduction. The position will assist land management staff in Natural Resources and Parks with fuels reduction projects, provide information to Planning & Development Services on wildfire risk, and help Travis County Emergency Services Department and the Emergency Service Districts to develop local-level Community Wildfire Protection Plans for neighborhoods, small cities, ESDs, and County facilities.</p>	Need to take item jointly with #32 above.	\$ 80,827	\$ 8,790	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	

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15	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Park Land Management (4 FTE)	<p>This request is for \$780,318 that will provide the necessary resources to improve the effectiveness of the Park Land Management Program whose primary responsibilities are the management of flood buy-out and greenway properties, and support for land management activities in Travis County Parks, including wildland fire management.</p> <p>This request is intended to provide four FTEs, capital items, materials and equipment, and contract services to support the departmental goals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provide a sustainable system of signature parks and nature preserves; •Protect the quality of the natural environment; and •Maintain flood buy-out properties. 	Request is to fund FY17 & FY18 expenses	\$ 458,423	\$ 325,696	4.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
16	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Park Forestry	Travis County Parks is requesting \$152,400 for the removal and pruning of hazardous trees in park high-use areas, for tree planting in park high-use areas, and to initiate forest restoration on identified parkland.	Discuss additional \$52,400 needed	\$ 152,400	\$ -	-	\$ 100,000	\$ -	-	
17	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	MCE Parks Operations and Maintenance	TNR states that Travis County Parks has struggled recently to maintain its parks system with an operating budget that remains the same even though the cost to maintain the parks has grown. In addition to the effects of inflation over the years, TNR is experiencing expenditure increases for field maintenance and general maintenance supplies related to special event visitation. The budget is exhausted on a yearly basis and needs to be increased to meet these added demands. The Parks Division further notes than an increase in the yearly budget will allow TNR to continue providing safe and enjoyable parks to the general public at the current service levels. The requested amount for this purpose is \$95,730 in ongoing operating funds.	No Comments	\$ 95,730	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
18	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	DOL_FSA Compensation - General Fund	Due to federally mandated changes to the (FLSA) salary test, TNR requests funding in FY17 to minimize compression among those positions within the same classification affected.	Need to be taken jointly with item below.	\$ 5,764	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
19	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	DOL_FSA Compensation - R&B Fund	*Road & Bridge Fund (0145)* - Due to federally mandated changes to the (FLSA) salary test, TNR requests funding in FY 2017 to minimize compression among those positions within the same classification affected.	Need to be taken jointly with item above.	\$ 14,477	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
20	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	County Transportation Draft Plan Development and Phase II Public Engagement	Funding to hire professional consultants or enter into interlocal agreements with other jurisdictions to develop draft county transportation plan following FY16 Public Engagement program and present draft plan to county residents and stakeholders for feedback/revisions before final adoption in mid-FY18.	No Comments	\$ 125,000	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
21	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Compliance with Universal Waste Regulations	TNR requests ongoing annual funds to implement a centralized system operated from the Environmental Quality Program (EQP) to serve all county departments generating a significant quantity of universal waste and greatly increasing compliance with State and Federal hazardous waste requirements. The funding will be used for purchasing of specialized shipping containers and contracted services to properly dispose of Universal Waste and diversion of the items from the landfill.	No Comments	\$ 46,709	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	

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22	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Hodde Ln and Cele Road Safety Improvements	Safety improvements to Hodde Lane and Cele Road including straightening an "S" curve, reconfiguring the intersection, adding paved shoulders, and mitigating floods.	Design already under way.	\$ -	\$ 3,000,000	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
23	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Southwest Sportsplex, Phase I	This request is to fund the design and construction of a Southwest Sportsplex in Precinct 3, which will have several soccer and baseball fields that will serve youth sports.	\$4M for Master Plan and Phase 1 design and construction	\$ -	\$ 14,175,000	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
24	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Thaxton Road Improvements	Widening Thaxton Road from existing 2-lane road to a 4-lane arterial between McKinney Falls Pkwy and Slaughter Lane Extension. This will form a continuous 4-lane arterial loop in the southeastern part of County in Precinct Four. This project is included in approved 2040 CAMPO plan.	No Comments	\$ -	\$ 4,500,000	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
25	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Wells Branch Pkwy @ Loop 1 and Howard Lane Intersections Improvements	This request is for Wells Branch Pkwy @ Loop 1 and Howard Lane Intersections Improvements.	No Comments	\$ -	\$ 450,000	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
26	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Bullick Hollow @ FM 2769 Intersection Improvements	Intersection improvements at Bullick Hollow Road and FM 2769 to relieve congestion. FM 2769 is a state highway and TxDOT may participate in signal installation.	No Comments	\$ -	\$ 800,000	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
27	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Circle Drive @ Thomas Springs Left Turn Lane	Intersection improvements at Circle Drive and Thomas Springs Road. Construction of a left turn lane on east bound Circle Drive to prevent rear end collisions.	No Comments	\$ -	\$ 500,000	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
28	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	BCP Road Improvements (Year 1 of 5)	*BCP Fund (0115)* - The Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) has 51 miles of dirt/rock roads which provide staff access to conduct required management activities. These roads have not been improved or repaired and many are becoming difficult to traverse or impassable. Drainage and erosion issues are serious operational and environmental concerns. This multi-year budget package is to fund improvements to these roads, requesting \$1,000,000 annually for 5 years.	Will request \$491,000 for paved roads only	\$ 1,000,000	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	-	
29	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Active Transportation Program (1 FTE)	Creation of an Active Transportation Program to coordinate bicycle and pedestrian planning, secure funding and implement bicycle and pedestrian projects in the unincorporated area of Travis County. The program would provide for coordination of the future Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee, liaison with stakeholder groups and would provide technical assistance on the planning and construction of bicycle and pedestrian projects implemented by TNR.	No Comments	\$ 81,679	\$ 8,471	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
30	Transportation & Natural Resources (149)	Additional Development Services Engineer (1 FTE)	TNR's Development Services Director requests an FTE for an additional development review engineer to review subdivision, construction and site plans within the unincorporated areas of the county to ensure that development is done in compliance with county, state and federal regulations and standards.	No Comments	\$ 97,729	\$ 8,471	1.00	\$ -	\$ -	-	
Transportation & Natural Resources (149) Total					\$ 2,235,681	\$ 23,784,899	8.00	\$ 100,000	\$ -	-	
Grand Total					\$ 9,606,142	\$ 56,495,611	78.00	\$ 783,032	\$ 301,315	13.00	