



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: February 28, 2012

Prepared By: Adele Noel Phone #: 854 7211

Division Director/Manager: Jon White/Tom Weber - NREQ

Carl B. Engel for
Department Head: Steven M. Manilla, P.E., County Executive-TNR

Sponsoring Court Member: County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE: Consider and take appropriate action on the use of FY2012 Local Initiative Projects (LIP) program grant funds to provide continued support for the Downtown Alliance Transportation Management Association (DATMA).

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The LIP grant program is intended to fund projects that improve air quality in Texas counties that participate in the Low Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit, and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP).

The current request is that Travis County's FY2012 LIP grant allotment of \$19,011 be passed-through to the Downtown Alliance Transportation Management Association (DATMA of Austin) to provide continued support for the development and implementation of strategies to address traffic congestion and mobility issues in downtown Austin.

Transportation management associations are an established, acceptable use for LIP funds. In FY2010, Travis County Commissioner's Court approved \$37,000 of the LIP funds for DATMA. The Court approved an additional \$22,224 in LIP funds for DATMA in FY2011. In each of these years the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) approved the use of LIP funds for the DATMA project and transferred funds to Travis County for that purpose. In FY12, Travis County Commissioner's Court entered into a contract with the DATMA that specifies the responsibility of the grant sub-recipient before receiving the LIP funds. To date, Travis County has paid \$10,434 to the DATMA.

If the proposed pass-through of funds is recommended by the Commissioners Court, TCEQ must approve the attached Project Summary which adds the supplementary funds to the existing project. After approval by TCEQ, the contract between Travis County and DATMA must be amended to incorporate the additional funding.

Funding will support the DATMA's efforts on "transportation management" strategies that will enable and encourage people to make commuting choices other than driving

to work alone over three years. Such strategies include a wide array of programs and policies designed to maximize the efficient utilization of existing transportation investments.

The proposed pass-through amount of \$19,011 represents the full allotment of LIP funds to Travis County for FY2012. This amount is substantially less than the amount available in past years. The budgets for both LIRAP and LIP were substantially reduced in the biennial budget.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

TNR recommends approval.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

In 2007, the 80th Texas Legislature, passed Senate Bill 12, amending the Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 382 to add Section 382.220 titled, Use of Funding for Local Initiative Projects. This section authorizes the spending of accumulated funds on clean air projects proposed by counties that participate in LIRAP.

The current National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ozone is 75 parts per billion. Addressing the quality of emissions from vehicles is one of the primary strategies for addressing ozone in Travis County, considering that 66% of nitrogen oxides (precursors to ozone formation) result from on-road mobile sources like passenger vehicles.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

There will be no impact on Travis County's budget. Travis County's contribution will be state funds from the LIP grant that Travis County would pass-through to DATMA.

ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS:

Project Summary Form

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Cynthia McDonald	Financial Manager	TNR	854-4239
Steve Manilla	County Executive	TNR	854-9429

CC:

Jon White	Division Director	TNR	854-7212
Diane Blankenship	Director	HR	854-9165
Tom Weber	Env. Prog. Mgr	TNR	854-4692
Michele Gable	Financial Auditor	Auditor	854-5883
Julie Joe	Attorney	Legal	854-9415

Adele Noel	Air Quality Prj. Mgr.	TNR	854-7211
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**FY 2012 Local Initiative Projects
Project Summary Form**



New Revised

County: Travis County	Fiscal Year: 2012 and 2013
Original Date: August 17, 2010	Revision Date: February 28, 2012
Contact Person and Phone Number: Adele Noel, 512/854-7211	

Brief Project Title: Operation Transportation Management Association	Total Grant Funding this Revision: \$19,011
Counties to be Served: Travis County	Total Grant Funding this Project: \$78,234.60
Project Dates: Start Date Date of NTP issued End Date August 31, 2013	Matching/In-Kind Services this Revision: \$19,011 (Downtown Austin Alliance)
If contracting with another entity, list name and contact person: Downtown Austin Alliance Contact: Glenn Gadbois – 294-7446	Matching/In-Kind Services this Project: \$158,211 (includes 3 entities, Capital Metro, City of Austin, and Downtown Austin Alliance)

Personnel / Salaries <i>List personnel, # of hours, salary charged to grant</i>	Total Grant Funding this revision \$19,011 At this time – Executive’s Director’s Salary will be paid using these funds and maybe one other officer personnel. The maximum number of hours to be charged to the grant for each person is 40 per week.	Total Matching this revision \$19,011
Fringe Benefits		
Travel <i>List & itemize detailed travel expenditures</i>		
Supplies *TBD, This item includes cost of paper, pens, staples,		

etc.		
Equipment <i>List & itemize equipment expenditures (must have a unit cost of \$5,000 or more)</i>		
Construction <i>List & itemize construction expenditures</i>		
Contractual <i>List & itemize contractual expenditures (other than construction)</i> Legal and Accounting		
Other—Training List & itemize other expenditures:		
Indirect Charges		
Total Funding	Total Grant Funding this revision \$19,011 Total Grant Funding this project \$78,234.60	Total Matching this revision \$19,011 Total Matching this project \$73,011 Salaries \$ 4,800 Fringe Benefits \$ 3,000 Travel \$ 4,000 Supplies \$ 4,000 Equipment \$ 4,000 Contractual <u>\$ 65,400 Other</u> \$158,211.00

Project Description:

Funding will support the Transportation Management Association’s (TMA) efforts to develop, coordinate, and implement “transportation management” strategies that would enable and encourage people to make commuting choices other than driving to work alone. Such strategies include a wide array of programs and policies designed to maximize the efficient utilization of existing transportation investments. Examples of strategies include:

- Encouraging and assisting employers, organizations, or venues that generate auto trips to develop transportation programs enhancing the travel choices available to the site (such as a shuttle from a work location to a transit hub).
- Parking management, including parking pricing and enforcement strategies in an area, implementing employer-specific improvements (such as revisions to policies to encourage alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles), and implementing parking cash-out programs that allow employees who choose not to use employer-paid parking to receive the cash value of the parking.
- Working with public transit providers to increase services by methods that may include discounted transit passes or route/schedule alterations to better serve an employer or area.

- Coordinating with state and local transportation agencies to improve traffic flow, including addressing traffic signal-timing and intersection improvements.
- Coordinating pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements and providing facilities such as secure bicycle parking.

Services that would be available because the preliminary studies have already shown a latent demand for them:

- One-stop shop for downtown employers and other TMA members to get commute-related information and to access commutes services (including existing commute services).
- Coordination with Capital Metro to secure a bulk rate discount on transit passes that would be made available to downtown employees.
- Parking brokerage services in coordination with managers of public and private parking facilities to identify opportunities for shared parking and to match up demand with supply.

Without participation by the County, the other funding partners might not generate enough money to establish the TMA. Traffic would continue to worsen without an organization dedicated to providing transportation alternatives and demand for parking would continue to increase.

Benefits of TMA:

According to a 2009 report by the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI), *Austin Commute Solutions: Review and Opportunity*, approximately 62,000 people travel into downtown to work each day, which does not include people working at the State Capitol complex. Of that number, 80%, or nearly 49,000 people drive to work alone. This enormous number of vehicles is already more than our roadway network is able to accommodate, yet downtown continues to grow. For instance, in the next 15 years, Travis County is expected to add almost 2000 employees to the 1900 already working downtown.

A TMA would advocate for additional transportation options into downtown Austin and would implement and manage programs to encourage the use of those options, resulting in practical and attractive choices being available to downtown employees and visitors. This would have significant impact on traffic congestion on the roadways leading to downtown. The TTI report found that implementation of a moderately sized TMA program could reduce peak period traffic into downtown by 2.3%. A more aggressive program could result in a 9.7% reduction.

Besides relieving congestion and demands on parking, decreasing the percentage of people coming downtown in single-occupant vehicles will also support clean air objectives. These objectives are of increasing importance as the Central Texas region will soon no longer be in compliance with the federal government's tightened clean air standards.

Authorized Signature:

Date: