



## Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

**Meeting Date:** August 28, 2012

**Prepared By/Phone Number:** Belinda Powell, Strategic Planning Manager  
(512) 854-9506

**Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head:** Leslie Browder, County Executive, PBO, (512) 854-9106

**Commissioners Court Sponsor:** County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

### **AGENDA LANGUAGE:**

Authorize the Strategic Planning Manager in the Planning & Budget Office and one Civil Judge to travel to Toronto to be guest speakers at the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Academy of Architecture for Justice (AAJ) conference in October of 2012.

### **BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:**

At the urging of the coordinators for the Annual AAJ conference, a submission was prepared to present the Travis County Needs Assessment and Master Plan at the 2012 conference. County staff is honored that Travis County's Master Planning efforts have been selected for discussion out of 38 submissions for only 7 presentation slots. This annual AAJ conference brings together industry leaders in justice architecture and owner representatives to discuss lessons learned, new practices, practical application of best practices and learn about future projects.

This conference has been attended by county staff the past several years and is a resource for learning about the latest developments in justice projects around the world. The conference offers educational tracks in court projects; corrections/detention projects, covering both adult and juvenile projects and law enforcement projects.

The Travis County Central Campus Needs Assessment and Master Plan is of interest for the AIA's AAJ conference as an example of completed master planning efforts that identify the expansion and development of

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multiple types of justice facilities to be developed and renovated in a connected urban/central business district area.

The following is an excerpt from the submission prepared for the discussion and panel presentation selected for one of the conference sessions.

“This model project, completed over a three year period, calls for almost two million square feet of courts. Four major new buildings will be built and four existing ones will be renovated or repurposed. New public open spaces and urban design elements will create a cohesive urban campus, complementing the City’s own urban and transportation planning initiatives.

Even if you have never visited Austin, the Master Plan is an instructive case study with universal applicability, as it delved deeply into all aspects of the courts planning and conceptual design process with profound impacts on a major urban center. The plan provides a long-range vision for development that accommodates functional and operational requirements, urban design guidelines, and sustainability goals in addition to satisfying space and operational needs. Exploring several different physical growth scenarios resulted in the recommendation to preserve the historic existing Courthouse, significantly expand the criminal courts, replace the downtown jail with a new central booking and 72-hour holding center, and build a new building for the civil and family courts. A 31-step phasing plan was developed to implement the project over 25 years. Project cost estimates were created and connected to the phasing plan, factoring in the County’s debt financing policy.”

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommends approval of the expenditure of county funds to attend the AAJ annual conference. This conference has been attended in the past on several occasions and is considered an annual training for professional development units. Unlike previous years, this year the conference happens to be located outside of the United States in Toronto, Ontario Canada.

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:**

This is an opportunity for county staff to provide information to industry leaders on the practical uses and application of master planning for county facilities; how Travis County actually prepared for this planning initiative;

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and how we can use the information developed to make informed decisions as needs and opportunities change; and to raise the profile with industry practitioners of future county justice projects.

**FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

The Planning & Budget Office and the Civil Courts both have sufficient annual travel and training funds remaining in FY 12 to cover the costs for each to send a representative to the conference in Toronto. The estimated cost for attendance is similar to other conferences of this nature at \$2,552 per person for all travel and expenses.

**REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:**

N/A

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Please see the attached report prepared by members of the Recommendation Committee.

Copies to:

The Honorable Eric Shepperd, County Court at Law #2

Peg Liedtke, Civil Court Administrator

Leslie Browder, County Executive Planning & Budget

Jessica Rio, Budget Director

Belinda Powell, Strategic Planning Manager

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