




## Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

**Meeting Date:** September 4, 2012

**Prepared By:** Adele Noel **Phone #:** 854-7211

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

**Department Head:**  Steven M. Manilla, P.E., County Executive-TNR

**Sponsoring Court Member:** County Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

**AGENDA LANGUAGE:** Receive comments regarding replacement of vehicles that fail an emissions test using grant funds from the Low Income Vehicle Repair, Retrofit, and Replacement Assistance Program.

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

The Low Income Vehicle Repair, Retrofit, and Replacement Assistance Program (LIRAP), is a county administered program that provides grant funds to qualifying individuals who own vehicles registered in Travis County and that fail a mandatory emissions inspection. LIRAP grant funds may be used for emissions-related repairs performed by a Recognized Repair Facility or to purchase a newer vehicle. The program's goals are to reduce harmful air pollution emissions in the region and to comply with the Federal Clean Air Act by removing older polluting vehicles. The County program has been in operation since September, 2005.

Travis County ceased accepting applications for vehicle replacements due to a greatly reduced funding. The 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature reduced funding for the program by 85% percent for FY2012 and FY2013. In response, Travis County Commissioners Court voted to restrict the program to repairs only. After a year of issuing only repair vouchers and a recent budget review, TNR now projects to reopen the program to a limited number of replacement vouchers. A repair voucher is valued up to \$600 and a replacement voucher is valued at \$3,000 for a gasoline powered vehicle and \$3,500 for a hybrid.

At the time Travis County discontinued issuing replacement vouchers (August 31, 2011), the balance for LIRAP was \$1,486,137.65. As of May 31, 2012 the balance dedicated for vehicle replacements and repairs in the LIRAP fund was \$949,956.69.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

TNR staff recommends reopening the LIRAP grant program to include a limited number of replacement vouchers to the first 150 applicants. TNR recommends a date of September 24, 2012 to begin accepting vouchers.

**ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:**

The current National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ozone is 75 parts per billion and will likely continue to become more stringent. 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:**

None

**ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS:**

**REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:**

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

**CC:**

Jon White	Division Director	TNR	854-7212
Tom Weber	Env. Prog. Mgr	TNR	854-4692
Adele Noel	Air Quality Prj. Mgr.	TNR	854 7211
Sherry Flemming	Division Director	HHS	854-4100

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