



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: January 22, 2013

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: Consider and take appropriate action for Travis County to participate as an official partner in the "Work-From-Home" pilot day on February 8, 2013.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Social Good Summit Austin has planned a pilot "Work-From-Home" (WFH) day for February 8, 2013. The overall goal Austin's first Work from Home Day is to have 10,000 cars off Austin-area roads for a day to foster lower ozone and traffic related emissions while educating the work force about tools to make working remotely simple and manageable.

Social Good Summit Austin is the local chapter of a world-wide organization of community leaders, community activists and socially-conscious entrepreneurs formed to bring intense focus on the use of innovative thinking and technology to solve the world's great challenges and to translate these ideas into specific actions. In September 2012, the Austin chapter decided to focus on fostering clean air in Austin in an effort to counter EPA reports of increasing air pollution in the city. A resolution adopted by the Social Good Summit supports the creation of a citywide "Work-From-Home" initiative that includes all businesses and citizens who are able to participate, without inhibiting the city's daily operations, and is supported by the City of Austin. The participants agree that in this way, we can all effectively contribute to reducing traffic related emissions, as these emissions are the leading source of Austin's air pollution.

Participants on board with the WFH include the City of Austin, Dell and AMD. Not all employees can WFH that day, but a percentage can. Benefits to air quality on the pilot day will be presented during the Social Good Summit Austin during South By Southwest on March 10, 2013 at City Hall, and shared with the community at-large on the Social Good Summit website. The impact will be calculated from the amount of miles saved on fuel, the number of surveys signed, and the reduction percentage

of carbon and ozone emissions to see how continued efforts will contribute to an improved air quality.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

TNR recommends this partnership.

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. The current design value for ozone in the Austin-Round Rock region is 74 ppb. Austin stands on the cusp of non-attainment. 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. By participating in a WFH and encouraging applicable employees to WFH, Travis County will effectively contribute to reducing traffic related emissions and foster clean air.

Travis County has employed teleworking as an ozone reduction strategy on Ozone Action Days since 2009. The WFH pilot project provides an opportunity to re-engage county staff in ozone-reduction efforts prior to the start of the ozone season and to leverage these efforts by combining them with similar efforts of other major employers in the region.

The Commissioners Court has adopted policy which governs telecommuting, including on ozone action days; participation is at the discretion of program managers, must be arranged in advance and must not adversely affect service delivery or operating budgets.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

None

ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS:

None

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

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