



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: November 26, 2013

Prepared By: Adele Noel, Environmental Project Manager

Phone #: (512) 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 on a request to provide \$22,100 to Capital Area Council of Government (CAPCOG) programs to support air quality modeling and other technical analysis to improve understanding of the sources and extent of regional air quality problems.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

CAPCOG's air quality program has been funded primarily by a grant provided by the State of Texas for air quality planning in near-nonattainment areas. The grant funds enable CAPCOG to provide technical work, including air quality modeling, monitoring, and conducting emissions research to assist the area with maintaining the federal standard for the ozone. In prior years through 2012, approximately \$410,000 per year was spent for air quality planning for Central Texas. The 83rd legislative session (2013) reduced funding for the grant to CAPCOG. The new contract provides \$350,000 for FY14, which covers current staff, monitor operations, and limited analysis, but does not allow for contractual support for emissions inventory research or modeling, both of which are important in ensuring that our air quality planning efforts continue to be based on sound science.

By funding this request Travis County will help insure that emission inventory development, photochemical modeling, and monitoring data interpretation of this work is completed. CAPCOG is the only organization that develops this type of analysis for our area. This work is essential for development and implementation of effective control measures in order to maintain compliance with air quality standards. Failure to develop effective control measures could be costly for businesses and government entities. TNR does not have the staff or resources to complete this type of technical work. Instead, TNR works with local jurisdictions and other entities to maintain compliance with air quality standards and to improve air quality for residents.

Travis County will be joining multiple entities to contributing funding to improve and better understand air quality in Central Texas. With this funding CAPCOG will select a qualified contractor to prepare emissions inventories for key emissions categories or perform photochemical modeling. The scope of these projects will be defined in a project plan subject to Travis County approval. For any emissions inventory project the project plan shall define the source categories, geographic scope, and time periods the performing party proposes to prepare emissions inventories for, as well as proposed techniques for preparing the inventories. For any modeling project, the project plan shall define the scenarios to be modeled and how the modeling data will be developed. Upon completion of any projects, CAPCOG shall submit a report (or multiple reports) documenting the development of the emissions inventories or modeling. The report will describe the steps taken, any approved deviations from the previously developed project plan, and any background CAPCOG feels is relevant to the project. CAPCOG will also submit documentation showing what portion of these projects Travis County and any other entities contributed towards completion.

All members of the Clean Air Coalition are being asked to contribute in proportion to their population. CAPCOG is requesting a total of \$60,200 from members. The Clean Air Coalition is comprised of elected officials from the existing 5 counties Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area who are representatives of the governmental agencies that are signatories to the Central Texas 8-hour O3 Flex Plan.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

TNR recommends approval.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

Without additional funding from either local governments or TCEQ, CAPCOG will need to eliminate almost all technical research and will only be able to provide a limited set of air quality services to Travis County and the other local governments that are participating in the regional air quality planning efforts. The goal of CAPCOG's air quality program is to provide regional leadership in air quality planning efforts based on sound science. Technical research efforts that would be cut back or eliminated for the region include operation of the regional ozone monitors, photochemical modeling, data analysis, and more complex emissions inventory work that requires outside professional services. This ongoing technical research is essential to understanding and tracking ozone and emissions trends in the region, and to assessing the costs and benefits of different emission reduction strategies. Without it CAPCOG would still be able to provide some level of services to the local government in facilitating discussions and planning efforts but those efforts would be hampered for lack of up-to-date data.

For the 2013 ozone season, the Austin area experienced 4 days when the ozone level exceeded the levels EPA considers healthy 75 parts per billion (ppb). In 2012, the region was only 2 ppb away from being out of compliance with the 3 year average EPA uses to determine if areas are in attainment (the design value). With the EPA now considering tightening the standard (range of 60-70 ppb), additional efforts will be needed to ensure continued compliance.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

TNR originally requested this funding be included in the FY14 budget: however, it was rejected and received a low priority by PBO. Therefore, TNR requests that Allocated Reserve be the appropriate source of funding.

ATTACHMENTS/EXHIBITS:

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Cynthia McDonald	Financial Manager	TNR	(512) 854-4239
Steven M. Manilla	County Executive	TNR	(512) 854-9429

CC:

Jon White	Division Director	TNR	(512) 854-7212
Thomas Weber	Environmental Program Manager	TNR	(512) 854-4629
Alan Miller	Budget Analyst	PBO	(512) 854-9726
Adele Noel	Environmental Project Manager	TNR	(512) 854-7211

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0801 - NREQ - CAPCOG**

Draft Updated Funding Request (11/14/13)

Dear Clean Air Coalition Members and Clean Air Coalition Advisory Committee Members:

This spring, CAPCOG's Air Quality Program asked local CAC jurisdictions to consider helping make up an anticipated \$150,000 shortfall in grant funding from TCEQ that would be needed to sustain all staff and most of our contractual activities. We now know the gap to maintain the key components of our program will be \$60,000. Therefore, we respectfully request each of the jurisdictions to consider the proportionately reduced share outlined on the table below.

Jurisdiction	2010 Population	% of Combined Population	Original Funding Request	Updated Funding Request
Bastrop County	74,171	2.67%	\$4,000	\$1,600
Caldwell County	38,066	1.37%	\$2,000	\$800
Hays County	157,107	5.65%	\$8,500	\$3,400
Travis County	1,024,266	36.83%	\$55,250	\$22,100
Williamson County	422,679	15.20%	\$22,750	\$9,100
City of Austin	790,390	28.42%	\$42,500	\$17,100
City of Bastrop	7,218	0.26%	\$500	\$200
City of Cedar Park	48,937	1.76%	\$2,600	\$1,100
City of Elgin	8,135	0.29%	\$500	\$200
City of Georgetown	47,400	1.70%	\$2,500	\$1,000
City of Lockhart	12,698	1.37%	\$750	\$300
City of Luling	5,411	0.19%	\$250	\$100
City of Round Rock	99,887	3.59%	\$5,500	\$2,200
City of San Marcos	44,894	1.61%	\$2,250	\$1,000
TOTAL COMBINED	2,781,259	100%	\$149,850	\$60,200

In prior years through 2012, approximately \$410,000 per year was spent for our full range of program activities. Our new contract provides \$350,000 for FY 2014, which covers current staff, monitor operations, and very limited analysis, but does not allow for contractual support for emissions inventory research or modeling, both of which are important in ensuring that our air quality planning efforts continue to be based on sound science. If your jurisdiction is willing to provide the requested funding, please let us know by the end of January so that we can properly plan our activities for next year.

Thank you,

Andrew Hoekzema, CAPCOG Air Quality Program Manager