

2016-2017 BUDGET QUESTION

Response to Request for Information

DEPARTMENT: Office of Real Estate Services

REQUEST NO.: 169

REQUESTED BY: Tovo

DATE REQUESTED: 8/16/16

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REQUEST: Please provide more information about the increased workload that is prompting the hire of two new positions for the Office of Real Estate Services.

RESPONSE:

The Office of Real Estate Services (ORES) submitted two Initial Funding Requests (IFRs) for 1.0 Accountant Senior and 1.0 Records Analyst for FY 2017. With regard to workload increase and the request for an accounting position, the increase is directly attributed to the demand for real estate services and financial transactions associated with the items listed below:

- growth and development around the City;
- the number of Capital Improvement Program (CIP) bond projects being implemented by City departments requesting appraisal services and releases of right-of-way (ROW);
- the increased interest in the public leasing City properties for temporary use; and,
- ground leasing for construction sites such as the Seaholm, Green Water Treatment Plant, and Rainey Street development projects.

In addition to the workload demand mentioned above, the City's Strategic Facility Governance Team continues to explore and implement projects that create requests for fair market rent studies, appraisals for City and private property, environmental studies, and land plans. The department processes over 1,500 account payable and receivable transactions each fiscal year which are not only for ORES but for all of its customer departments such as Watershed Protection, Austin Water Utility, Public Works, Austin Transportation, etc. who depend on timely payment processing as they are directly related to CIP projects and their deadlines. The number of payments and deposits increased from 1,127 to 1,365 or by 21% from FY 2012 to FY 2015, respectively. With the increased demand for ORES services both internally and externally, the number of payments and deposits grew by 10% from FY 2014 to FY 2015 totaling 1,555 transactions. The number of ROW easement and releases recorded by ORES rose from 48 to 150 or 313% due to the Law Department discontinuing recording services for customer departments. Also, in May of 2013, ORES started to record cemetery deeds for the Parks and Recreation Department. We recorded over 400 deeds in FY 2014 and FY 2015. With each recording made with Travis County, a corresponding set of accounts payable transaction takes place.

The request for a Records Analyst is not directly related to workload increase but rather the need to have a dedicated position for the development and implementation of departmental records and information management programs. Since the creation of ORES as a stand-alone department, the duties of records management has been parceled out to multiple Real Estate

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Agents and administrative staff. The department has a temporary employee to assist with records management issues one of which requires acquisition files be scanned and electronically stored onto our internal database due to the lack of storage/filing space in the ORES library. A single point of contact is needed to establish a centralized file management system for the over 3,000 files that are retained in-house that are either stored in the 200 boxes or file cabinets for the acquisition, land management, and support services work groups. This position is also needed to review effectiveness and consistency of the file management system and record keeping practices; and maintain the ORES library. In addition, the position will monitor compliance with the new corporate Communications and Technology Management Administrative Bulletin 15-04 Personally Identifiable Information (PII) that requires departments to protect information from unlawful use or disclosure of any sensitive personal information collected or maintained by the City in the regular course of business and to maintain appropriate retention policies and destruction of records containing PII information on media, paper and electronically.