

CIP BUDGET FISCAL NOTE

DATE OF COUNCIL CONSIDERATION:
CONTACT DEPARTMENT(S):

6/28/12
Austin Police Department

SUBJECT: Approve an Ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Austin Police Department Capital Budget (Ordinance No. 20110912-006) to appropriate \$3,745,000 for the purchase of a helicopter.

CURRENT YEAR IMPACT:

Project Name:	APD Helicopter
Project Authorization:	2011-2012 Capital Budget
Funding Source:	Contractual Obligations
Fund/Dept/Unit:	8180-8707-0200

Current Budget	0
Unencumbered Balance	0
This Action	3,745,000
Estimated Available	<u>3,745,000</u>

ANALYSIS / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This ordinance is requested to purchase a new helicopter which will become the primary law enforcement aircraft used by the APD Air Operations unit. From the date an order is placed, it will take at least 15-18 months before the new aircraft can be placed into police service, taking us to mid FY 14. A letter of intent will be required in July 2012 in order to have a unit delivered within this timeframe.

The Austin Police Department Air Operations unit was organized in the fall of 2001. They provide aviation support to the Austin Police Department, Austin Fire Department, Austin-Travis County EMS as well as a variety of other emergency service providers within the Central Texas area. These missions include patrol support, searches for missing and wanted persons, aerial command and control of significant special events, homeland security and support, and real time situational intelligence to governmental agencies for natural and man-made disasters. During the wildfire season last year, the unit provided air surveillance of the fires in support of ground units. It was realized that there was a need in the City for a helicopter with increased capabilities to deliver water for aerial firefighting. Current firefighting assets belong to County, State and Federal agencies. Federal agency response times are long and the approval process through the State EOC can be cumbersome.

The proposed new helicopter, an American Eurocopter AS350 B3, is the primary choice for a multi-purpose emergency service aircraft in the single engine helicopter class due to performance, versatility, safety and low maintenance costs. The B3 can be configured and reconfigured based on different types of utility missions, including sling load operations, personnel insertions, firefighting, rescue-hoisting-extraction during flash floods or of lost or injured persons in wilderness and green belt areas, power line inspections and critical infrastructure surveillance. The proposal will include the ability to use the unit in fighting wildfires. Similar to San Diego, the helicopter will be equipped with buckets that may be filled from various water sources. This allows the helicopter crew to operate the bucket in remote locations without the need to return to a permanent operating base, reducing the time between successive drops.