

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	45368	Agenda Number	41.
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Meeting Date:	6/4/2015	Department:	Watershed Protection
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Subject

Authorize negotiation and execution of joint funding agreement with the United States Department of the Interior, Geological Survey for water resource investigation projects for Fiscal Year 2015-2016, in the amount of \$621,752 with six 12 month extension options; each option in an amount not to exceed the amount of the previous 12 month authorized limit plus up to 7% for potential increases in the cost of service and gauge stations added to the scope of work, for a total contact amount not to exceed \$5,380,655.

Amount and Source of Funding

Funding in the amount of \$621,752 for the initial contract term is contingent upon availability of funding in the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Proposed Operating and CIP Budgets of the Watershed Protection Department. Funding for future fiscal years is dependent on the approved future budgets.

Fiscal Note

There is no unanticipated fiscal impact. A fiscal note is not required.

Purchasing Language:	
Prior Council Action:	July 24, 2008 - Council approved the negotiation and execution of a Joint Funding Agreement with the United States Department of the Interior Geological survey.
For More Information:	Susan Janek 512-974-3327; Roger Glick 512-974-2096
Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:	
MBE / WBE:	
Related Items:	

Additional Backup Information

Beginning in 1974, the City of Austin and the United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey (USGS) joined efforts to study and monitor the quantity and quality of water in local streams, lakes, and the Edwards Aquifer. Since the initial study date, the USGS and the City have continued our partnership. The purpose of the monitoring study is to provide a more complete database for urban hydrological studies in order to protect and improve the water quality and quantity conditions in the Austin Area. USGS uses the information generated by the joint study to provide the public with reliable water resource information that can be used in a variety of applications. The City uses the information to improve its ability to protect the public from flood hazards and improve water quality. Other major City projects that have and would continue to benefit from the information are the Watershed Protection

Department's Master Plan, the Barton Creek and Edwards Aquifer monitoring program, and the quality and quantity impact studies of other Austin creeks, Lake Lady Bird, and Lake Austin.

The USGS performs the following services:

- *Gauge maintenance and support:* The USGS currently has 29 stream gauges throughout the City. These gauges automatically measure the height of the water in the creeks and determine flow rates.
- *Water sampling and analysis:* The USGS collects samples at thirteen wells/springs in the northern and southern segments of the Edwards Aquifer, Barton Springs, and in eleven area creeks during storms. Based on available funding from the City, we may request that USGS install new stream gauges in order to expand our network of stream data over the life of the contract based on need for monitoring in future annexed areas.

The City uses the information and data provided by the USGS for the following purposes:

- To provide publicly available real-time measurements for flood warning.
- To provide information on water quality of urban streams and the Edwards Aquifer. This is tracked over time to obtain a complete understanding of the effects of urbanization on Austin's storm water and urban watersheds and aquifer. In addition, this data is used by the City for compliance with various state and Federal permits, and is used to determine the effectiveness of different regulations.
- To provide information on water quality and quantity to estimate the amount of water recharged into the Edwards Aquifer. This information is used to verify adherence to the Federal permit which allows citizens to continue to use Barton Springs Pool.
- To provide an estimate of recirculating water used in the Waller Creek Tunnel for invoicing purposes to the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA).

During each year of the study, the City monitors the progress of the projects. At the end of each year, both agencies jointly evaluate the results to determine if program goals have been completed, and to set data collection plans for the next year. While USGS performs the services, the cost is shared between the City and USGS. During the first year of the proposed agreement, the USGS will contribute \$178,410 and the City will contribute \$621,752. The 7% annual increase allows for an increase in service charges from USGS and additional services requested by the City. During the seven years of the previous agreement, we experienced an overall increase of 4.25%. Because the City is more rapidly growing in territory, density, and population, staff is proposing a slightly larger increase.

This overall cooperative arrangement between the USGS and the City of Austin has successfully produced an ongoing compilation and analysis of data collected each year since its inception. The City does not have in-house resources to perform USGS current services and relies on the data collected for the critical purposes noted above.