



Legislation Details (With Text)

File #: 24-2283 **Version:** 1 **Name:**

Type: Investment Memo **Status:** Passed

File created: 4/10/2024 **In control:** Commissioners Court

On agenda: 4/23/2024 **Final action:** 4/23/2024

Title: Request for approval of the final Investment Memo for the PHS Wastewater Sampler Procurement project for an initial amount of \$1,763,000 and request for approval of initial commercial paper funding in the amount of \$1,550,000.

Sponsors:

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments:

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
4/23/2024	1	Commissioners Court		

Department: Public Health Services
Department Head: Barbie Robinson

Regular or Supplemental RCA: Regular RCA
Type of Request: Investment Memo
Investment Memo Type: Final Investment Memo

Project Name: PHS Wastewater Sampler Procurement
Project ID (if applicable):
Vendor Legal Name (if applicable): N/A

MWDBE Contracted Goal (if applicable): N/A
MWDBE Current Achievement (if applicable): N/A
Justification for 0% MWDBE Participation Goal: N/A - Goal not applicable to request

Managing Entity: Public Health
Incremental Authorization Requested: \$1,550,000
Total Estimated Project Cost: \$1,763,000

Request Summary:

Request for approval of the final Investment Memo for the PHS Wastewater Sampler Procurement project for an initial amount of \$1,763,000 and request for approval of initial commercial paper funding in the amount of \$1,550,000.

Project Description:

This is a pilot program that has been in operation since October 2023, and currently there are only 4 samplers for the 465 wastewater treatment plants in Harris County. The goal is to increase coverage to 150 plants which will provide HCPH the ability to conduct wastewater surveillance in a more adequate representation of the County.

Project Scope:

Developing a wastewater program in Harris County is especially challenging in comparison to other jurisdictions due to the large number of wastewater treatment plants, municipal utility districts (MUDs), and operating companies that serve their communities across Harris County; most programs have a single wastewater treatment system (such as in the City of Houston or Tempe, Arizona). In lieu of a single system, Harris County has over 465 active wastewater treatment plants, each requiring its own sampling agreement and equipment. HCPH has selected sites that consider several variables, including geographic location, population size, demographics, social vulnerability index, historical data (such as disease burden), and stakeholder engagement, striving for equitable representation of sampling across the county.

Aligning with CDC guidance, samples are collected from each site twice per week and tested by two laboratories, Houston Health Department Lab and Baylor College of Medicine Lab, monitoring for communicable and emerging diseases, testing for bacteria, viruses (i.e., poliomyelitis), fungal infections (i.e., *C. auris*). Current surveillance includes human adenovirus B, parainfluenza, norovirus, rotavirus, SARS-CoV-2, hepatitis A, influenza A, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), mpox, and enterovirus D68. For sample testing and result interpretation and communication, HCPH has been coordinating with TEPHI to design a wastewater surveillance dashboard and report. As seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, the public, elected officials, and public health leaders rely on accurate and clearly communicated data to make actionable decisions, whether for themselves, their loved ones, or the public they serve.

HCPH is committed to building the wastewater surveillance program in an equitable way, aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of residents across all of Harris County. As the wastewater surveillance program team expands partnerships across the county, MUDs are prioritized due to their geographic location, population size, demographics, social vulnerability index, and history of health inequities and disease burden. By expanding wastewater surveillance into communities facing health barriers, HCPH is able to target specific interventions to address historical inequities and improve the overall health of Harris County.

Justification:

The CDC Embrace HOPE grant has funded the initial build-out of this program, but the remaining funds on this grant are not sufficient to expand the program as needed. Additional samplers will allow for more wastewater treatment plants across the county to be included in the surveillance program, improving HCPH's ability to rapidly detect and monitor infectious diseases and, eventually, other public health concerns, including chemicals, medications, and novel pathogens. Fewer samplers would mean less coverage and reduce the ability to monitor and detect equitably across the county. Priority outcomes include reducing chronic disease burden, increasing life expectancy, and reducing the spread of COVID-19.

Alternatives and Engagement:

HCPH has been working closely with the Houston Health Department, UT Health Houston - School of Public Health, Texas Epidemic Public Health Institute (TEPHI), CDC National Wastewater Surveillance System (NWSS) Centers of Excellence, and other programs across the country, including New York, Arizona, Minnesota, Colorado, Wisconsin, and California. CDC NWSS has developed guidance for program development and implementation, much of which HCPH has incorporated into the program development to ensure best practices and consistency as surveillance findings are compared with other sites.

Anticipated Project Expenditures and Timeline:

The project includes total 150 wastewater samplers - AS850All Weather Sampler Bundle with 1 - 5.5 Gallon Bottle, 150 Vinyl Tubing, Intake, 3/8-inch, 500 ft, 50 dessicants, and 100 strainers along with freight and warranty costs. Samplers are approximately \$10,273 each. Tubing, dessicants and strainers total \$92k and warranty and freight is \$121k. Costs

were estimated based on an Independent Cost Estimate in conjunction with the Purchasing Office.

Scope of Work	Estimated Cost	Estimated Completion
Purchase of 150 wastewater samplers @ \$10,273 each.	1,550,000	9/2024
Vinyl Tubing, Intake, 3/8-inch, 500 ft. \$74,850 Material \$2,417 Strainers \$14,500 Estimated Freight \$8,360 WarrantyPlus Service Agreement \$112,350	\$213,000-	9/2024-
Total	1,763,000	9/2024

Alignment with Goal(s):

- Justice and Safety
- Economic Opportunity
- Housing
- Public Health
- Transportation
- Flooding
- Environment
- Governance and Customer Service

Previous Court Action:

Date	Agenda Item #	Action Taken

Address:

Precinct(s): Countywide

Fiscal and Personnel Summary				
Service Name	Current Fiscal Year Cost			Annual Fiscal Cost
	Labor	Non-Labor	Total	Recurring Expenses
Funding Sources				
Existing Budget				
Grant	\$	\$213,000	\$213,000	\$
Choose an item.	\$	\$	\$	\$

Choose an item.	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Current Budget	\$	\$	\$	\$
Additional Budget Request				
Other	\$	\$1,550,000	\$1,550,000	\$
Choose an item.	\$	\$	\$	\$
Choose an item.	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Additional Budget Request	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total Funding Request	\$	\$1,763,000	\$1,763,000	\$
Personnel (Fill out section only if requesting new PCNs)				
Current Position Count for Service	-	-	-	-
Additional Positions Request	-	-	-	-
Total Personnel	-	-	-	-

Anticipated Court Date: 4/23/2024

Anticipated Implementation Date (if different from Court date):

Legal funding compliance confirmed by: Paige Abernathy, Assistant County Attorney, 4/10/24

Department Approval by: Robert Brannon, HCPH CFO 4/15/2024

OMB CIP Team Approval by: Wanwei Tang, 4/15/2024

Commercial Paper Request (For OMB use only):

Receiving Department: Public Health Services

Project PeopleSoft ID: TBD

CP Series Description: : CP Series Description: Commercial Paper Series D-2 can be used for (1) construction of public works, (2) the purchase of automobiles, equipment and machinery, including computers, materials and supplies for the operation of the County’s precincts and departments (3) Professional services, including services provided by engineers, architects, attorneys, auditors, financial advisors, and fiscal agents, in connection with the contractual obligations described in (1) and (2).

Commercial Paper is being requested for the PHS Wastewater Sampler Procurement project and is expected to be repaid within the next three fiscal years either through bonds, budgetary means or pay-as-you-go sources.

OMB Financial Management contact: Amy Perez, Deputy Executive Director, Office of Management and Budget