

## **FY 2023-2024 BUDGET QUESTION**

### ***Response to Request for Information***

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**DEPARTMENT(S):** Management Services Department-HSEM

**CBQ NO.:** 002

**REQUESTED BY:** Alter (D10)

**DATE REQUESTED:** 05/23/2023

**DATE POSTED:** 07/27/2023

**REQUEST:** Provide additional detail on the funding and programming of HSEM, as well as any unmet HSEM needs for FY 2023-24.

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#### **RESPONSE:**

HSEM's mission is to plan and prepare for emergencies, educate the public about preparedness, manage grant funding to improve homeland security and public safety capabilities, coordinate emergency response and recovery, and work with public and partner organizations to protect our community when it needs us the most. The FY 2023-24 Proposed Budget contains \$5,652,552 in total funding for HSEM.

The Vision of HSEM is a "Disaster Ready Austin" where everyone participates in ensuring we are a prepared and resilient community.

To accomplish this mission and vision, HSEM:

- Manages the Austin/Travis County Emergency Operations Center (EOC);
- Serves as the central point for communication, coordination, and warning during major emergencies and disasters;
- Oversees the development of the City's emergency operations plans and procedures for all hazards;
- Conducts training, drills, and exercises;
- Provides leadership and support to regional planning and response initiatives;
- Educates the public on preparedness and conducts community preparedness and awareness initiatives;
- Manages emergency management and homeland security grant programs.

HSEM has been heavily engaged in pandemic emergency response since 2020. Its 15 staff members were supplemented by temporary staff to set up and run isolation facilities, set up and run an Alternate Care Site in partnership with the State of Texas, and support vaccine sites, testing operations, and protective lodging for at-risk individuals. In FY23 HSEM scaled down and deactivated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) COVID-19 response. HSEM manages cost recovery of COVID-19 costs through FEMA Public Assistance, and provides support for alternate COVID-19 funding mechanisms.

HSEM supports special events, such as Formula One, MotoGP at Circuit of the Americas (COTA), Nascar at COTA, Country Music Association Music Awards, SXSW, and Austin City Limits Festival. HSEM coordinated cold weather response and sheltering for the unhoused over the December holidays, Migrant Transportation Assistance with the City of San Antonio, and cooling centers

during the summer months. HSEM coordinated Emergency Operations Center response and recovery in Winter Storm Mara in early 2023. HSEM manages Public Assistance cost recovery efforts for Winter Storm Uri and Winter Storm Mara, as well as providing ongoing support for older disasters, such as the Halloween 2013 and 2015 floods, that have open repair work and reimbursements.

In FY24 HSEM will continue to utilize funding to accomplish its mission, and provide emergency response which supports our citizenry before, during and after a disaster. With the EOC deactivated from COVID, HSEM is refocusing on planning, preparedness, and outreach.

Please see question No. 9 for a list of unmet needs.