

## A G E N D A



## Recommendation for Council Action

Austin City Council	Item ID	26319	Agenda Number	26.
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Meeting Date:	12/12/25013	Department:	Municipal Court
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## Subject

Approve a resolution authorizing the City's Municipal Court to record proceedings before the court, as allowed by the Texas Government Code, instead of providing a court reporter.

## Amount and Source of Funding

There is sufficient funding in court's Technology Fund.

## Fiscal Note

No fiscal note is needed.

Purchasing Language:	
Prior Council Action:	
For More Information:	Court Director Rebecca Stark, 512-974-4690
Boards and Commission Action:	Recommended by the Judicial Committee on November 25, 2013.
MBE / WBE:	
Related Items:	

## Additional Backup Information

The Austin Municipal Court currently contracts for Court Reporters for certain proceedings including trials and some hearings. The Court is a court of record under Chapter 30 of the Texas Government Code which authorizes the governing body to provide that the proceedings may be recorded by a good quality electronic recording device instead of providing a court reporter (Sec. 30.00010(d)).

The Court purchased "For the Record" recording equipment several months ago as a pilot in one courtroom. The results have been positive. The contract with the current Court Reporters expired on September 30, 2013 and a 120 day holdover implemented. Court proposes to put recording equipment in the courtrooms at Municipal Court and the Downtown Austin Community Court (DACC). This will allow the court to record more proceedings at a reduced cost. Court Reporters would only be used to transcribe the recordings for appeals and for the one DACC trial monthly at City Hall.

The one-time cost to purchase and install the equipment and software is under \$50,000. Funding has been identified in the court's Technology Fund. Vendor(s) from the DIR list have been identified and the equipment and software

installed in about six weeks. There will be maintenance costs in future years and that cost is \$1,500 per courtroom at this time. Future costs for written, certified transcripts for cases appealed to the county and copies of the recordings will continue to be paid by the defendants.

The Approved Budget for Municipal Court for FY2014 includes \$128,542 in the General Fund for court reporting. Continued funding will be required for an actual Court Reporter for the one day per month that the DACC holds trials at City Hall, the cost of providing transcripts for appeals by indigent defendants, and the cost of maintenance. It is anticipated that there will be savings in the General Fund.