



# **Citywide translation & interpretation**

## **Administrative Bulletin Recommendations**

Doug Matthews,  
Chief Communications Director



# Background

- **Council Resolution 20131017-038:**  
“The City Manager is directed to develop a plan for a universal city-wide translation service protocol and bring back options for Council consideration no later than December 12, 2013.”
- **CPIO tasked as lead for development of recommendations.**
- **Here to review options and get feedback prior to formalizing administrative bulletin.**



# Background

- Evaluated existing practices from other cities, including Corpus Christi, Dallas, Fort Worth, Minneapolis, San Antonio and Seattle.
- Of those, only Seattle and Minneapolis have formal policies for translation/interpretation.
- Coordinated with PIO Net, HRD, Purchasing, 311 and City Demographer in development.





# Key components

- **Certification options**
- **Prequalified vendors list**
- **Online translation bank**
- **Emergency notifications**



# Key components

- **Longer-term policy goals**
  - Alignment of bilingual stipend program with translation/interpretation goals
  - Definition of key “triggers” for required translation



# Certification options

- **American Translators Association**
  - Is the largest recognized certification program in the U.S.
  - **Does** ensure a baseline competency in the language.
  - **Does not** include Korean, Vietnamese or Hindi.
  - **Does not** ensure cultural competency to the form of Spanish predominant in Central Texas.
  - Current translation contractors do not have ATA certification, but have proven local cultural competency.





# Certification options

- **Local testing & prequalification**
  - Could partner with communities of interest (HQOL/AQOL) to develop locally-relevant testing.
  - Process used by AE to select a translation vendor previously, using testing developed by an independent third party.
  - Allows for extension to Asian languages prevalent in Central Texas that are not included in ATA certification program.



# **Prequalified vendor list**

- **CPIO will maintain a list of approved translation/interpretation contracts.**
- **CPIO will work with Purchasing to maintain a list of tested, prequalified vendors available to all departments.**





# Online Translation Bank

- **CPIO will maintain an intranet resource of translated documents, as well as translations of commonly-used terms and terminology.**
  - Resource can be updated by departments as new terms and documents are available.



# Emergency Notifications

- **Any reverse-911 notification should include an option to receive the message in Spanish.**
  - This option is supported by recently purchased system through CAMPO.
- **Critical documents and messages distributed during emergency response will be provided in both English and Spanish.**



# Moving forward

- **Finalize administrative bulletin.**
- **Continue compilation of existing contracts for translation & interpretation.**
- **Work with Purchasing on options for a prequalification process for translation contractors.**





# Moving forward

- **Continue evaluation of longer-term policy goals regarding bilingual stipends and mandatory translation triggers.**
  - Provide recommendations on long-term goals by end of year.

A wide-angle photograph of the Austin skyline across a body of water. On the left, a modern, multi-story building with a glass facade and a flat roof is reflected in the water. The background shows a dense line of green trees, followed by a city skyline with several tall skyscrapers under a sky with soft, white clouds. The water in the foreground is calm, creating a clear reflection of the buildings and sky.

# Thank you.

Doug Matthews,  
Chief Communications Director