

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action (Purchasing)

Austin City Council	Item ID:	52945	Agenda Number	39.
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Meeting Date:	January 28, 2016
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Department:	Purchasing
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Subject

Authorize negotiation and execution of a 12-month contract with CREATIVE CONSUMER RESEARCH INC., or one of the other qualified offerors to Request for Proposal RMJ0302, for marketing research service studies, in an amount not to exceed \$300,000, with four 12-month extension options in an amount not to exceed \$300,000 per extension option, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$1,500,000.

Amount and Source of Funding

Funding in the amount of \$225,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Operating Budget of Austin Energy. Funding for the remaining three months of the original contract period and extension options is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

Fiscal Note

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

Purchasing Language:	Best evaluated proposal.
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Prior Council Action:	
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For More Information:	Ray Moncada, Senior Buyer Specialist, 512-322-6594
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Boards and Commission Action:	November 16, 2015 – Approved by the Electric Utility Commission on a 9-1 vote, with Commissioner Norris voting against and Commissioner Heidebrecht off the dais. November 17, 2015 – Approved by the Resource Management Commission on a 10-0 vote, with Vice Chair Cregar absent.
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Related Items:	
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MBE / WBE:	This solicitation was reviewed for subcontracting opportunities in accordance with City Code Chapter 2-9C Minority Owned and Women Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program. For the goods and services required for this solicitation, there were insufficient subcontracting opportunities; therefore, no goals were established.
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Additional Backup Information

The contract is for marketing research study services for Austin Energy. The work provided through this contract will provide Austin Energy with a marketing research firm to conduct quantitative and qualitative customer service-related studies of its customers' needs, concerns, and opinions. The studies include the full range of data collection techniques such as telephone interviews, surveys, focus groups, and personal interviews.

Services will include monitoring attitudes and perceptions of residential and commercial customers regarding Austin Energy's service, and provide insight on the programs and services these customers value. Austin Energy will utilize results from the studies to assist in making sound business and marketing decisions. These ongoing studies will provide trend data to analyze the impact of program and service offerings and related events on the attitudes and opinions of customers.

This is a critical function as it assists several work groups to monitor customer satisfaction scores in relation to International Organization for Standardization (ISO) compliance. The market research also supports direction to staff included in Council Resolution No. 20140828-158 to conduct a statistically valid survey for customers participating in energy efficiency programs, including the low income weatherization program, to measure customer satisfaction. Finally, it assists the utility as a whole in tracking overall customer satisfaction and related antecedents.

An Austin Energy evaluation team with expertise in this area evaluated the proposals and rated this proposal as the best to provide these services. Evaluation criteria used to evaluate the proposals include solution, experience and personnel, project management structure, price, and local business presence.

This request allows for the development of a contract with a qualified offeror selected by Council. If the City is unsuccessful in negotiating a satisfactory contract with the selected offeror, negotiations will cease and staff will return to Council so another qualified offeror may be selected.

The current contract expires on December 28, 2015. Approval is requested in order to ensure an efficient transition to the new contract with no lapse in services.

MBE/WBE solicited: 29/31

MBE/WBE bid: 0/0

PRICE ANALYSIS

- a. Adequate competition.
- b. 559 notices were sent including 29 MBEs and 31 WBEs. Nine proposals were received with no response from the MBEs/WBEs. Multiple notices may be sent to the same vendor, e.g. one vendor may have multiple email addresses/fax numbers.

APPROVAL JUSTIFICATION

- a. Best evaluated proposal.
- b. The Purchasing Office recommends the contract award consistent with the evaluation committee.
- c. Advertised on the internet.