

AGENDA



Recommendation for Council Action

AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting: March 22, 2018

Item Number: **021**

Public Health

Authorize negotiation and execution of an agreement with American Gateways for immigration legal services in an amount not to exceed \$135,000 for the 12-month period beginning April 1, 2018, with up to four 12-month extension options not to exceed \$60,000 per extension option, for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$375,000.

Lead Department	Austin Public Health.
Fiscal Note	Funding in the amount of \$135,000 is included in the Austin Public Health Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Operating Budget.
Prior Council Action	On September 13, 2017, Council approved Ordinance No. 20170913-001 adopting the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Operating Budget.
For More Information	Stephanie Hayden, Interim Director, 512-972-5010; Adrienne Sturup, Acting Assistant Director, 512-972-5167; Vella Karman, Social Services Policy Manager, 512-972-5064; Estella Kirscht, Agenda Coordinator, 512-972-5039.

Additional Backup Information:

Approval of this item will authorize Austin Public Health to negotiate and execute an agreement with American Gateways for immigration legal services.

Council declared Austin a Welcoming City through Resolution 20140320-049 to “celebrate contributions of the immigrant community and demonstrate that the City strives to include immigrants in all aspects of our City.” Through multiple Council actions, the City has invested in immigration legal services and other inclusive services specifically for the immigrant community. During the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 budget process, Council increased the City’s investment for immigration legal services.

On January 5, 2018, Austin Public Health issued a competitive solicitation for the purpose of establishing an agreement with a qualified nonprofit or governmental entity for immigration legal services to include, but not be limited to services for removal defense clients, Deferred Action Against Childhood Arrivals (DACA) clients, asylum seekers, Violence Against Women Act petitions, U-Visa seekers, T-Visa seekers, and/or clients pursuing permanent residency. Successful applicants aspire to use a “universal representation” model serving any immigrant in need of legal representation that meets income and geographic eligibility requirements. The deadline for applications was February 5, 2018. Two applications were received and the applicant receiving the highest score was American Gateways.

American Gateways was founded in 1987 as the Political Asylum Project of Austin to help refugees fleeing war in Central America. They have offices in Austin, San Antonio, and Waco, serving 20 Texas counties and four detention centers located in Hutto, Pearsall, Karnes, and Dilley. They provide culturally sensitive, trauma-informed legal representation and education to low-income immigrants. Last year, American Gateways assisted over 20,000 detained and non-detained immigrants from nearly 70 countries by providing life-changing legal representation, advocacy, and education. Agency-staff are supplemented by a bank of pro bono attorneys, broadening their impact much like that of a much larger agency. Attorneys serve detained and non-detained immigrants, and have worked in Texas detention centers since 2000, and have served women detained at Hutto since 2006.

Performance Measures:

Performance measures and contract exhibits will be negotiated with American Gateways staff.

Related Departmental Goal:

Provision: Social Services - Promote and foster increased self-sufficiency, healthy behaviors, and lifestyle among targeted populations.