



## Recommendation for Action

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**File #:** 20-2933, **Agenda Item #:** 18.

9/3/2020

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### **Posting Language**

Authorize negotiation and execution of an interlocal agreement with the Capital Area Council of Governments to conduct air quality studies to evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on regional air quality, for a 12 month term in an amount not to exceed \$35,000.

### **Lead Department**

Office of Sustainability.

### **Fiscal Note**

Funding in the amount of \$35,000.00 is available in the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 operational budget for Austin Transportation Department.

### **For More Information:**

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### **Additional Backup Information:**

The Austin Transportation Department has \$35,000 available in its Fiscal Year 2019-2020 budget that were previously attributed to air quality education and marketing which were unusable given the Stay Home-Work Safe order's impact on vehicular use.

The increased percentage of telecommuting across the country and world presented a unique opportunity to evaluate the impact of significant decreases in single-occupancy vehicle traffic. As the global discussion on this topic developed, the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) and the City of Austin received various inquiries from the community and media regarding what the local impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic were on regional air quality.

In a memo released on April 24, 2020, CAPCOG noted that a 50% reduction in regional vehicle traffic in March showed a reduction in nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), oxides of nitrogen (NO+NO<sub>2</sub>), and ground-level ozone (O<sub>3</sub>). However, during the same period evaluated, local monitors showed higher concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO), nitric oxide (NO), and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)

### **Strategic Outcome(s):**

Health and Environment.