



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 26-2687, **Agenda Item #:** 28.

10/22/2026

Posting Language

Authorize a contract for a comparison microscope, used to compare markings on bullets, cartridge cases, and toolmarks, for Austin Forensic Science with Thomas Scientific LLC d/b/a Thomas Scientific, in an amount not to exceed \$109,733. Funding: \$101,202 is available from the State of Texas, Office of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division, Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grant, Crime Lab Enhancement Project. \$8,531 is available in the Operating Budget of Austin Forensic Science.

Lead Department

Austin Financial Services.

Client Department(s)

Austin Forensic Science.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$101,202 is available from the State of Texas, Office of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division, Paul Coverdell Forensic Science Improvement Grant, Crime Lab Enhancement Project. Funding in the amount of \$8,531 is available in the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Operating Budget of Austin Forensic Science.

Procurement Language:

Multiple cooperative purchase programs were reviewed for these goods. Austin Financial Services and Austin Forensic Science have determined this contractor best meets the needs of the department to provide the goods required for the City.

MBE/WBE:

Cooperative Agreement contracts are exempt from the City Code Chapter 2-9B (Minority-Owned and Women-Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program); therefore, no subcontracting goals were established.

For More Information:

Direct questions regarding this Recommendation for Council Action to Austin Financial Services - Central Procurement at: FSDCentralProcurementRCAs@austintexas.gov or 512-974-2500.

Additional Backup Information:

The contract is for the purchase of a comparison microscope for the Austin Forensic Science Firearm and Toolmark Section. This specialized instrument is used to compare microscopic markings on bullets, cartridge cases, and toolmarks to determine whether they originated from the same source. The unit is currently equipped with instrumentation for four firearm and toolmark examiners. The additional equipment will ensure each forensic scientist in the section has a dedicated light microscope system, allowing for more efficient processing of firearm-related cases and aligning with standard laboratory practice.

This is a one-time purchase. The requested authorization amount was determined by cooperative comparison and the recommended contractor's offer.

The General Services Administration is a cooperative purchasing association recognized under Texas procurement statutes. Cooperative associations, themselves or using a lead government, competitively solicit and award contracts that are eligible for use by other qualified state and local governments. Due to their substantial volumes, larger than any one government could achieve independently, cooperative contracts routinely include superior terms, conditions, and pricing. Use of cooperative contracts also results in lower administrative costs and time savings.

If the City is unable to secure a contract, firearm forensic scientists may lose the ability to produce timely, evidence-based investigative reports for gun-related crimes in Austin.