



Presentation to the City of Houston  
Budget and Fiscal Affairs Committee

**Centralized Grant Writing Study Results**

Tuesday, October 2, 2018

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# Budget Amendment

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On May 30, 2018, City Council approved Motion 2018-0281 “Central Grant Writing Office” which requires “Within 90 days the administration shall report to the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Committee an analysis of the creation of a central Grant Writing Office for all departments in the City of Houston. Many cities have centralized grant-writing functions to augment individual departments grant seeking efforts. This office can serve to increase grant revenue across all sectors of the City. The report should include a recommendation on the appropriate number of FTEs, ensuring that grant revenue generated exceeds expenditures at a rate commensurate with leading offices nationally.”

# Roles of FIN Grants Management/City Departments



- AP 4-1 – “Grant Acquisition, Management and Compliance” identifies respective roles/responsibilities:

FIN Grants Management	City Departments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides technical and management assistance to ensure federal compliance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepares, submits and applies for grants</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinates citywide Single Audit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies match (cash/inkind) requirements</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receives all grant applications for inclusion in the City’s financial system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes internal controls, processes to monitor program and fiscal compliance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracks and monitors key data elements for reporting purposes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complies with Ord. 97-776 to seek Council approval for grants over \$400k or requires a cash match</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides technical assistance to departments from research, application to closing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitors programmatic, fiscal, subrecipients for compliance</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepares policies and business processes to be in line with federal and state requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconciles expenditures and revenues for all grant activities</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains dashboards, grant revenue recovery and report preparation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures that grants are closed with the Funder and in SAP</li> </ul>

# Grant Opportunities – Primary Sources

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Pre-existing relationships with Funders – recurring grants

Formula Grants – CDBG; Homeland Security

Notices of Funding Availability – released through Office of Government Relations

eCivis – grant search engine for all federal, state and private funding sources; paid for by the General Fund, Finance Department



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# GRANTS DATA BY DEPARTMENT

# Grant Applications/Awards/Amounts Trend Analysis – FY 2016-2018



Department	2016 Applications*	2016 Awards	2016 Award Amounts	2017 Applications*	2017 Awards	2017 Award Amounts	2018 Applications*	2018 Awards	2018 Award Amounts
Administration and Regulatory Affairs	3	0	\$ 0	2	1	\$ 3,224,800	7	3	\$ 182,789
Department of Neighborhoods	3	5	44,350	6	3	93,641	5	3	123,282
Finance®	1	1	100,000	0	0	0	2	2	213,016,398
Fleet Management Department	1	0	0	1	1	2,250,000	1	0	0
Housing and Community Department®	6	5	45,407,815	8	8	108,686,452	11	11	493,361,857
Houston Airport System	7	7	54,855,223	9	4	26,785,756	8	3	25,737,937
Houston Fire Department	4	4	5,733,540	6	1	2,961,714	6	1	1,391,957
Houston Health Department	89	72	63,074,848	91	71	65,055,118	88	56	66,955,332
Houston Police Department	27	24	10,925,824	27	19	9,028,285	28	26	20,938,548
Houston Public Library	8	2	90,000	2	1	34,975	7	6	203,589
Mayor's Office	9	5	18,196,436	17	6	21,322,992	18	12	19,581,890
Houston Public Works & Engineering	4	4	24,200,213	4	4	38,129,330	3	3	14,976,348
Municipal Courts Department	5	1	66,120	1	0	0	1	1	200,011
Office of Business Opportunity	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
Office of Emergency Management	3	2	272,403	2	2	329,690	1	1	253,260
Parks & Recreation	17	15	12,112,785	22	19	9,562,628	14	13	3,908,047
Planning and Development	1	1	230,000	4	3	4,451,902	1	1	400,000
Solid Waste Department	1	0	0	0	1	64,303	2	0	0
<b>Total Award Amounts by Year</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>\$ 235,309,557</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>\$ 291,981,586</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>\$ 861,231,245</b>

\*Application data inclusive of prior year submissions.

®Increases due to Hurricane Harvey

Data Source: SAP Grants Module

# Grant Writing Staffing Summary By Department



Department	Total # of Positions	RESPONSIBLE FOR GRANT WRITING		
		FTE	% of FTE to Total Positions	Costs Allocated to Grants Writing
Administration & Regulatory Affairs	3	0.55	20%	\$81,452
City Controller's Office	0	0.00	0%	0
City Secretary	0	0.00	0%	0
Department of Neighborhoods	3	0.40	12%	46,611
Finance	0	0.00	0%	0
Fleet Management	1	0.10	10%	13,443
General Services Department	0	0.00	0%	0
Houston Airport System	4	0.35	8%	52,417
Housing & Community Development	4	2.50	64%	303,527
Houston Emergency Center	0	0.00	0%	0
Houston Fire Department	1	0.60	60%	64,310
Houston Health Department	62	24.00	39%	2,827,019
Houston Information Tech Services	0	0.00	0%	0
Houston Police Department	3	2.80	93%	244,713
Houston Public Works	9	7.30	93%	1,025,680
Legal	0	0.00	0%	0
Library	2	0.70	34%	24,594
Mayor - Economic Development	2	0.25	14%	37,104
Mayor - Homeland Security	2	0.40	20%	57,239
Mayor - Human Trafficking	2	0.40	20%	69,865
Municipal Court Department	1	0.10	10%	12,871
Office of Business Opportunity	1	0.20	20%	12,410
Parks & Recreation	3	1.50	46%	174,634
Planning & Development	0	0.00	0%	0
Solid Waste Management	2	0.15	7%	18,655
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>42.3</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>\$5,066,543</b>

Data Source: Department Survey



# Grant Writing Centralization – Pros/Cons



PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedicated staff identified to seek and apply for grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Subject Matter Experts for key Departments are critical for nomenclature and relationship building</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared knowledge, resources and technical writing expertise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experienced staff removed from departments would result in “brain drain” of department</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better organization and management for submission and compliance needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant management after receipt of award would be needed for smaller departments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smaller departments would benefit as long as flexibility for last minute submissions was available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centralization would reduce the strong relationships between funders and departments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistency in responses would ensure streamlined City strategic goal and community impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing staff provide more tasks for their departments than just writing the grant including project management, compliance monitoring, report submissions</li> </ul>

# Grant Writing Centralization – Pros/Cons (contd.)



PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Could streamline grant application process for departments that do not traditionally seek grants</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Centralization would be disruptive for departments that have an existing grant infrastructure in place</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Currently, smaller department out source grant writing services</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potentially result in discontinuation of funding</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Would still require collaboration with departments for technical knowledge, industry statistics, specific federal and state rules and regulations</li></ul>

# Centralized Grant Writing Comparison Study

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## San Antonio:

Does not have a Centralized Grant Writing Office; Grants are received by the City and issued to the various departments.

## Philadelphia:

Does not have a Centralized Grant Writing Office; However the Grants office is in more of consultative role and depending on the need, provide guidance to the departments.

## Austin:

Each department is responsible for writing their own grants.

## San Diego:

Each department has a grant liaison that is responsible for writing their grants; there is a Centralized Grant Coordinator (CGC) but this person does not write grants. The role of the CGC is to facilitate communication, coordination and collaboration across all City Departments.

# Centralized Grant Writing Comparison Study (contd.)

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## Dallas:

Operates with more of a hybrid model; most formula grants are handled by the individual departments. This includes grants like CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, WIC, etc.

All competitive grants should come through the Fund Development Office for review and submission.

Three departments (Library, Parks and Rec, Police) are the most grant-heavy and have a grant writer specific to their needs. Other departments don't have the same capacity and rely on the Fund Development Office to work with the subject matter experts to write and package applications.



# Recommendations

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Establish a hybrid system for grant writing functions:

- Maintain subject matter experts in departments receiving significant grant funding – HCD, HAS, HFD, HPD, MYR-Homeland Security, HPARD, HPW
  - ❑ Continue coordination with FIN Grants Management by submitting application opportunities through the Department Grant Opportunities link
- Dedicated staff for departments needing grant writing support due to resource limitations
  - ❑ Additional 2 FTEs, estimated costs up to \$230,000 dedicated to the following departments – ARA, DON, FMD, HPL, MYR- Human Trafficking, MCD, OBO, OEM, PD, SWD



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# QUESTIONS