

# Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE April 23, 2021

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Fair Park Multimedia Center – Service Price Agreement for Broadcast Infrastructure**

For your consideration during the April 28, 2021 City Council Agenda Meeting is a \$3.86M capital expenditure for the acquisition of a turnkey broadcast production system to be used at Fair Park Multimedia Center (FPMC) and operated by the Office of Communications, Outreach and Marketing (COM). An update on the FPMC was briefed to the Quality of Life, Arts, & Culture Committee on February 23, 2021 and an initial briefing on capital needs at the August 17, 2020 meeting. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a brief overview of this upcoming action item.

## **Background and Purpose**

The FPMC is located at 1620 First Avenue in the previously renovated Science Place II Planetarium, adjacent to WRR. The facility as it stands today encompasses 17,000 ft.<sup>2</sup> which includes: 2 production-shooting stages; 7 post-production suites; 1 podcast recording studio; 1 voice over booth and audio control room; 3 collaborative-creative spaces; 2 conference rooms; and 2 multipurpose/public meeting rooms that function either separately or integrated as one.

The FPMC's functional purpose is to provide a state-of-the-art central location for video and audio production for the City's four government access cable channels for content from approximately four dozen departments. Approval of this item – which will have no financial impact on the General Fund – advances citywide brand consistency, digital marketing strategies, increased efficiency, technological redundancy and resilience, innovation, language access equity, and improved overall communication quality. Programs and multimedia content produced at the FPMC will all be distributed via the City's government access cable television channels and numerous online and digital platforms. This content includes, but is not limited to: public service announcements; news update programs; information about departmental resources for residents; podcasts; explanatory in-depth interviews; Council district updates; citizen board and commission meeting telecasts; creative marketing videos; and emergency communications.

This facility and the broadcast production infrastructure under consideration also support the City's Equity value of service by increasing language access for Dallas residents, particularly to Spanish-speaking and hearing-impaired populations.

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The FPMC comprises a key component of the Dallas Apprenticeship Program, included as one of the R.E.A.L. Action initiatives in the approved FY20/21 Budget to accomplish the City's Quality of Life, Arts & Culture big, hairy, audacious goal (BHAG) for Dallas to serve as a national model for youth development, outreach, and mentorship programs.

This infrastructure also deepens partnerships between the City and various community institutions serving our residents. Once fully operational, COM will build on successful interdepartmental pilot programs, allowing the facility's use by City departments with organizations that have established partnerships with the City.

Prior to this procurement item, the FPMC has already been used in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent need to promote social distancing. Utilizing functioning yet currently outdated reserve equipment, COM produced more than 20 programs this fiscal year in support of City services and informational needs such as:

- MLK Jr. Celebration Week Awards & Scholarship Gala
- Bilingual (Spanish) employee trainings
- *Conversations* miniseries with Office of Community Police Oversight
- *Stay on Guard* COVID-19 PSAs in English and Spanish
- Fire Safety messages from Dallas Fire-Rescue
- Virtual Dedication of Office of Arts & Culture's Kiest Park public art installation honoring Stevie Ray & Jimmie Vaughan
- Botham Jean Blvd. Street Renaming tribute video
- *Dallas Winds* utilization of the FPMC shooting stage for educational videos

Many of these programs can be found by visiting the City's YouTube channel: [www.YouTube.com/CityofDallasCityHall](http://www.YouTube.com/CityofDallasCityHall).

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### **Funding and the Agreement**

The FPMC project was funded using Public, Education, and Government (PEG) funds. On December 14, 2016, in addition to awarding the construction contract, the City Manager was authorized to increase appropriations in PEG funding to increase the project's original estimated cost of \$5,146,800 for construction to \$10,774,151.37 to also account for equipment and furniture. The construction phase totaled \$6,375,299.37 which included required change orders. The remaining project balance is estimated at \$4.3 million to outfit the building with the necessary state-of-the-art equipment and minimal office furnishings for staff.

**Just as a reminder, the PEG Fund is restricted in use to only capital expenses in support of a public-access, educational-access, or government-access cable channel.** The City of Dallas operates 4 government-access cable channels. PEG funds may not be used for operations costs, nor may they be used for non-PEG expenses. **If PEG funds were spent on ongoing operations instead of General Fund operating dollars, the remedy would be a reduction in franchise fees the City receives from Cable carriers.**

The renovation of the FPMC building has utilized PEG funds exclusively; therefore, infrastructure and all activities in the building must support the City's government access cable channels.

In collaboration with the City's Department of Information and Technology Services (ITS), COM evaluated a Request for Competitive Sealed Proposals (RFCSP) in early 2021 and determined Digital Resources Inc. (DRI) to be the most advantageous proposer. DRI is a local, WBE broadcast systems integrator with decades of experience working with local municipalities and corporate entities.

This contract leaves approximately \$430,000 of PEG funds appropriated by City Council for the FPMC project. Although signage and additional furniture needs are actively being pursued, COM anticipates to still complete the project's capital acquisitions below the \$10.77M total project appropriation. In accordance with federal PEG regulations, those funds will be redistributed to other restricted eligible capital expenses in support of the City's government access cable channels.

COM anticipates annual costs of \$75,800 for operations specific to the facility, which are included in the FY20/21 Operating Budget and will continue to follow budgeting guidelines and parameters in coming years.

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**Next Steps**

COM anticipates Fair Park Multimedia Center to be complete, open, and fully operational by September 30, 2021.

COM is actively developing a manual of operations to guide City departments on FPMC use, training, and reservation requirements; how eligible community partners sponsored by City departments may qualify to use the FPMC; and how the City may be able to license all programs created at the FPMC for broadcast on the City's cable television channels to be repurposed for other platforms.

The FPMC represents the most transformative investment to the City's multimedia communication, outreach, and marketing strategy in more than a decade. This innovative approach enhancing City communication, while providing a flexible space for city departments and community partner organizations to further the City's cultural and economic interests. We will continue to leverage existing resources and fully utilize the FPMC as the premier source to tell our stories in ways that highlight and explain residents' investment of tax dollars at work building One Dallas.

Please feel free to reach out to me or Catherine Cuellar, Director of Communications, Outreach and Marketing if you have any questions or should you require additional information at this time.



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Chief of Staff

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- Chris Caso, City Attorney
- Mark Swann, City Auditor
- Billierae Johnson, City Secretary
- Preston Robinson, Administrative Judge
- Majed A. Al-Ghafry, Assistant City Manager
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- Dr. Eric A. Johnson, Chief of Economic Development and Neighborhood Services
- M. Elizabeth Reich, Chief Financial Officer
- M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira, Chief of Equity and Inclusion
- Directors and Assistant Directors