



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 28

Agenda Date: April 11, 2024

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Municipal Courts

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Carla Obledo

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Ordinance approving a contract for the installment of security gates and fencing at the City of San Antonio's Frank Wing Municipal Courthouse.

SUMMARY:

Ordinance approving a contract with DCA Contractor LLC in the amount of \$297,200 for the installation of security gates and fencing at the Frank Wing Municipal Courthouse located at 401 S. Frio St. Funding in the amount of \$297,200 is available from General Fund FY 2024 Adopted Budget.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A 2015 assassination attempt against an Austin judge outside her home, disclosed the lack of courthouse security plans across Texas. The Texas Office of Court Administration ("OCA") administered a survey that revealed critical deficiencies in the state's security practices, mainly court security best practices, training, and funding. for improvements.

The OCA created a courthouse security assessment and a courthouse security policy assessment, which identified three categories of security issues: (1) Fundamental, (2) Critical, and (3) Essential.

Access of people into court building, judges' parking, and perimeter issues were listed in the (2) Critical category. Best practices identified include a fenced-in judge parking lot, ensuring in-custody defendants cannot view judges and court officials exiting and entering their vehicles, installation of passive and active security barriers to parking areas, use of an access card or other appropriate device, provision of a secure parking area, preferably covered, for court officials, and the prohibition of access to parking areas within "blast-proximity" of the court building, and establishing circulation zones that are separate, restricted, and secured, for judges and court staff and the public.

The Municipal Courthouse has a public parking lot at the front of the building located off S. Frio St., and two employee parking lots each located on the north and south sides of the building. The courthouse building includes the Magistrate's Office and City Detention Center. Arrested individuals are released from the detention center through a door located on the south side of the building. The same door and parking lot is used by Municipal Court Judges, District Attorney's Office staff, law enforcement agencies, courthouse administrative staff, and vendors as an entry into and exit from the facility.

Entry into the north and south parking lots do not have a security barrier and does not prohibit motor vehicles or the public from accessing the lot. Though there is a sign with notice that the lot is for authorized personnel only, there is no physical barrier to prohibit the public from parking or accessing the building from the south lot. This lot sits adjacent to the San Antonio Police Department's South Patrol Substation.

The installment of security gates and fencing at the Municipal Courthouse building would satisfy most components for securing judge and employee parking spaces, building perimeter, and access to the court building. These include dedicated employee and judge parking at the courthouse, safeguarding of the building from unauthorized vehicles and individuals during normal operating hours and after hours, and establishes a circulation zone to ensure arrested individuals being released from the detention center do not have access to those working in and doing business with the Courts.

The project will include reconfiguration of a curb located at the north side of the courthouse, the relocation of a light pole and installation of programmed gates at the north and south sides of the building.

This project was advertised on November 20, 2023, for construction bids in the San Antonio Hart Beat, the City's website, the Texas Electronic State Business Daily, on TVSA, and through the electronic bidding website CivCast. Bids were opened on December 19, 2023, and four bids were received. Of these, DCA Contractor LLC submitted the lowest responsive bid as indicated in the attached bid summary.

This contract will be awarded in compliance with the Small Business Economic Development Advocacy (SBEDA) Program. The Goal Setting Committee set a 22% SBE Subcontracting Program subcontracting goal. DCA Contractor LLC has committed to meeting the subcontractor participation goal.

This construction contract was developed utilizing the low qualified bid process; therefore, a Contracts Disclosure Form is not required.

This vendor has acknowledged to comply with the Heat Illness Prevention Ordinance, approved on August 31, 2023, through Ordinance #2023-08-31-0585.

ISSUE:

This ordinance authorizes a contract with DCA Contractor LLC in the amount of \$297,200 for the installation of security gates and fencing at the San Antonio Municipal Courthouse.

ALTERNATIVES:

Should this contract not be approved, the Court will continue to operate outside best practice recommendations for court security at the local, state, and national levels. The Court will continue to experience weekly occurrences of released individuals harassing staff in the parking lot as staff report to or leave from work. Staff and judges alike will continue to navigate the south parking lot to avoid unstable individuals.. Additionally, the judge's parking lot will continue to be unsecured and accessible to the public at all hours of the day and night. Without approval of the security gates and fencing, the Court will continue to expose its staff and judges to preventable security threats.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance approves a single contract award in the amount of \$297,200 payable to DCA Contractor LLC. Funding in the amount of \$297,200 is available from General Fund FY 2024 Adopted Budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of a single contract award to DCA Contractor LLC for the installation of security gates and fencing in the amount of \$297,200 at the Frank Wing San Antonio Municipal Courthouse.