



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:19-1940

Agenda Item Number: 8.

Agenda Date: 3/7/2019

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Finance

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Troy Elliott

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Viridis Pilot Project Extension

SUMMARY:

An Ordinance approving an agreement with Viridis Learning, Inc. for a period of up to six months from March 30, 2019 to September 30, 2019 in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.00 to continue a pilot program started in FY 2018. The purpose of the pilot program was to develop a process and technology scope to facilitate the connection of participants receiving service from one delegate agency and providing employment opportunities and access to the continuum of services provided by other contracted delegate agencies. This focus on creating a continuum of services through multiple agencies while connecting service recipients to skill-appropriate employment is called the Upskill Partners Network (UPN). Funding in the amount of \$50,000.00 is available from the Workforce Development portion of the Economic Development Incentive Fund FY 2019 Adopted Budget.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Economic Development Department (EDD) contracts with various delegate agencies to provide workforce development services to San Antonio residents. Over the last year, EDD has worked to improve service delivery to residents by focusing on co-enrollment of participants between agencies to ensure that each participant receives support to reach the next level of service needed to prepare them to fill a middle skill job.

In past years, the City contracted with delegate agencies for independent performance measures such as literacy or high school equivalency training. In the last delegate agency Request for Proposal (RFP) process, EDD required participation of contracted delegate agencies use of a workforce-development information system. The intent of the platform is to support our agencies to provide their service then handoff participants to other

delegate agencies who would assist the participants with additional services along a pathway of milestones. These milestones include literacy, GED or High School Equivalency, Work Experience, and Targeted Industry Certification. This focus on creating a continuum of services through multiple agencies while connecting service recipients to skill-appropriate employment is called the Upskill Partners Network (UPN) and aligned with best practices and recommendations from the SA2020 Talent Pipeline Report.

To accomplish this, EDD proposed and received endorsement by the Economic and Workforce Development Committee in FY 2018 to enter into a contract with Viridis Learning, Inc. in the amount of \$40,000.00 for a pilot program that customized their web-based platform to track the skill attainment and handoffs of participants as they received services from multiple agencies. During the pilot, EDD staff worked with the agencies to develop common definitions of services, as well as common data sets uploaded to the system developed between the agencies, and Viridis Learning, Inc. successfully customized their platform to track participants from each agency. Agencies have begun uploading participant information to the platform giving the City a high-level view of all participants served by the agencies.

The extension of the pilot program for a period of up to six months will focus on validating the Viridis platform's solution to ensure value to business and resident in regard to skills-based job matching. The intent of the UPN is twofold: to provide a strong value proposition to business in terms of well-matched ready-to-work job candidates and to provide residents an automated job-feed that matches with resident skill-sets as they are acquired without the need for a proactive job search.

Additionally, the UPN is a core element supporting the Inclusive Growth policy update to the Tax Abatement Policy Guidelines that introduced Upskill Projects. Upskill projects are a new type of Tax Abatement project that would seek to collaborate with qualifying employers for hiring of targeted populations and on-going training provided through the non-profit delegate agency partners. The policy update intent is to help targeted populations connect with low-barrier-to-entry employment while providing supported pathways through attainment of the educational milestones provided by delegate agencies.

ISSUE:

Staff seeks approval of an agreement with Viridis Learning, Inc. for up to six months and up to \$50,000.00 to extend a program pilot started in FY 2018. The purpose of the pilot is development of a processes and technology scope to facilitate the connection of delegate agency participants to employment opportunities and access to the continuum of services provided by contracted delegate agencies.

ALTERNATIVES:

Should this extension not be approved, the current pilot with Viridis Learning, Inc. will come to an end. Ending the pilot at this time would not provide adequate information to determine the best way to move forward in connecting the services of the delegate agencies and connecting residents to jobs.

FISCAL IMPACT:

An Ordinance approving an agreement with Viridis Learning, Inc. for a period of up to six months from March 30, 2019 to September 30, 2019 in an amount not to exceed \$50,000.00 to continue a pilot program started in FY 2018. Funding in the amount of \$50,000.00 is available from the Workforce Development portion of the Economic Development Incentive Fund FY 2019 Adopted Budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this agreement for up to \$50,000.00 with Viridis Learning, Inc.

This contract was procured on the basis of sole source and a Contracts Disclosure Form is not required.