

**Quality and Productivity Commission
34th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
"Leading with Excellence"**

2021 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12-point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: GOING ONCE, TWICE, SOLD ONLINE TO HIGHEST BIDDER!

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: APRIL 7, 2020

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2020)

CHECK HERE IF THIS PROJECT IS BEING SUBMITTED FOR THE COVID-19 IMPACT AWARD ONLY. (Projects must be implemented on or before December 31, 2020. **Note:** Projects implemented less than one year ago will not be eligible for any other PQA awards. In addition, once a project is submitted, you cannot submit the same project for awards consideration in subsequent years).

PROJECT STATUS: XX Ongoing ___ One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? ___ Yes XX No

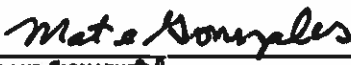

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 The Treasurer and Tax Collector's Public Administrator (PA) staff administers estates of
2 the deceased. For over 30 years, the PA hosted in-person auctions to sell personal
3 property from estates to satisfy estate debts and distribute to lawful heirs. In March
4 2020, when the Governor issued an executive order (EO) restricting large gatherings,
5 the PA was immediately faced with the challenge of balancing its fiduciary
6 responsibilities with mandates imposed in the EO. Within three short weeks, the PA
7 moved to an online only format, and achieved immediate success! In the first month,
8 584 online bidders participated, almost triple the in-person average. More importantly,
9 gross sales increased. After the change, our online auctions generated over \$2.3
10 million in gross sales, a 156% increase over the previous 12-month period. In addition,
11 we reduced costs associated with conducting in-person auctions, including facility
12 preparation, security, and overtime, saving the Department \$30,000 annually. Online
13 auctions resulted in an increase in gross proceeds for the estates and a decrease in
14 departmental costs, a win-win for the estates and the County.
15

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$	\$30,000	\$	\$ 30,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Treasurer and Tax Collector 500 West Temple Street, Suite 437, Los Angeles, CA 90012		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 974-2130
PROGRAM MANAGER'S NAME Lisa Proft EMAIL lproft@ttc.lacounty.gov		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 974-0418
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-6322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME) Matthew Gonzales 		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 974-2130 EMAIL mgonzales@ttc.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE Keith Knox 		TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 974-2101

"ELECTRONIC, WET, OR SCANNED SIGNATURES ARE ACCEPTABLE"

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1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project to the County. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success and **specify assessment time frame**. Use Arial 12 point font.

The Public Administrator acts as the administrator of estates for people who have died in the County and who have no known or available family or friends to serve as administrator. The duties of an administrator include searching for family, relatives, or friends; arranging for proper burial; protecting the decedent’s assets and property; overseeing the sale of property; and distributing the estate’s assets to the persons entitled to them.

THE CHALLENGE: The Public Administrator hosted in-person live auctions to sell estate personal property. Each auction attracted large crowds with hundreds of people in our warehouse pouring over bric-a-brac, standing shoulder to shoulder, previewing and bidding on items, including furniture, jewelry, automobiles, and collectibles. Proceeds from these auctions are used to satisfy estate debts and are later distributed to lawful heirs.

On March 19, 2020, when the Governor issued an executive order restricting large gatherings, the Public Administrator was immediately faced with the challenge of balancing fiduciary responsibilities to liquidate assets in compliance with the mandates in the executive order. We have a legal duty to always act in the best interest of the estate and exercise the highest level of care and due diligence. If we are unable to sell estate personal property, the Public Administrator cannot satisfy the estates’ financial obligations or close cases. The entire auction operation was at a stand-still and we had to find a viable alternative to in-person auctions.

THE SOLUTION: Within just three weeks, with input from staff and our vendor, the Public Administrator overturned its 30-year practice of in-person auctions and moved to an online only format.

Historically, we held onto the concept of in-person auctions because we thought people would want to see the items in person to gauge their value and that in-person bidding would drive prices to a more competitive level. Strategizing with our vendor, we developed marketing plans and produced detail-oriented photographs to effectively advertise property for sale. We broadened our customer base with international bidders, and developed new processes for accepting payments online, invoicing, and shipping items internationally. We had a first-time buyer who purchased over \$8,000 in property from Florida and even had a participant from Italy! Our personal property sales are no longer locally focused, but targeted to a

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global audience. We also increased our capacity to host more online auctions than we did previously. Now, people can purchase estate property such as silverware, gold coins, cars, or loveseats from the comfort of their living room.

THE BENEFITS: Our results were remarkable. In the past, the Public Administrator typically hosted five, in-person property auctions per year, with annual average gross sales just under \$600,000. After we moved to the online only format in April 2020, the Public Administrator hosted 23 auctions generating over \$2.3 million in gross sales over 12-months, a 156% increase over the previous 12-month period. In addition, we reduced costs associated with conducting in-person auctions, including preparing the facility for crowds, security, and overtime, saving the Department \$30,000 annually.

The online only format for Public Administrator auctions is easily replicated and given the large success of the program, will most likely be the future of auctions moving forward. Other counties can replicate this practice by investing in appropriate photography and product descriptions, engaging a reputable vendor to conduct the auction, and committing to the process.

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Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only. Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12-point font.

These online self-service and customer service process improvements support **County Strategic Plan Goal III – Realize Tomorrow's Government Today**, particularly, **County Strategic Plan Goal III.2.3 – Prioritize and Implement Technology Initiatives That Enhance Service Delivery and Increase Efficiency**, and **County Strategic Plan Goal III.4 – Engage and Share Information with Our Customers, Communities and Partners.**

The TTC utilized an online auction platform to modernize and improve personal property auction sales. Online auctions increased gross proceeds for the estates and decreased departmental costs.

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12-point font

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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\$	\$30,000	\$	\$ 30,000	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL= 12 MONTHS ONLY

Description	Estimated Cost Savings per Auction	Estimated Annual Cost Savings
Warehouse Auctions Security Services	2,000	10,000
Overtime*	4,000	20,000
Total Savings to the County	6,000	30,000

*Typically, ten employees worked overtime for an in-person auction

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FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY

(For single department submissions, do not include this page)

DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 6 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____
DEPARTMENT NO. 7 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE
EMAIL: _____	EMAIL: _____