



**COMMISSIONERS COURT
COMMUNICATION**

COURT ORDER NUMBER 145094
PAGE 1 OF 4
DATE: 4/15/2025

**SUBJECT: OTHRAM, INC. - FORENSIC-GRADE GENOME SEQUENCING -
MEDICAL EXAMINER’S OFFICE**

***** CONSENT AGENDA *****

COMMISSIONERS COURT ACTION REQUESTED

It is requested that the Commissioners Court approve Othram, Inc. as sole source for Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing, for the Medical Examiner’s Office.

BACKGROUND

Othram, Inc. provided the Purchasing Agent documentation that they are the sole source of Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing.

For the Tarrant County Medical Examiner’s Office, Othram’s services are critical in cases where conventional forensic testing has been inconclusive. By leveraging forensic genealogy and advanced DNA reconstruction, Othram helps medical examiners identify victims, resolve long-standing cases, and bring closure to families. The ability to extract and analyze DNA from challenging samples significantly enhances investigative capabilities and aligns with the county’s commitment to justice and public safety.

Under the County Purchasing Act, exemptions to the competitive bidding requirements are allowed for certain types of purchases. The statutes require that the Purchasing Agent advise the Commissioners Court of the existence of only one (1) source, with such notice to be entered into the minutes of the Court.

Accordingly, the above item has been determined to be sole source under the County Purchasing Act 262.024(a)(7) as follows:

- “(7) an item can be obtained from only one (1) source, including:
 - (A) items for which competition is precluded because of the existence of patents, copyrights, secret processes, or monopolies;”

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

SUBMITTED BY	Purchasing	PREPARED BY:	Kehinde Olugbile
		APPROVED BY:	Christopher Lax, CPSM, CPSD, CPCP



Othram Inc.
2829 Technology Forest Blvd. Suite 100, The Woodlands, TX 77381

November 30, 2023

Prepared on behalf of and in support of:

Dr. Christian Crowder
Tarrant County Medical Examiner
200 Feliks Gwozdz Pl
Fort Worth, TX 76104
Phone: 817-920-57000
Email: cmcrowder@tarrantcounty.com

To Whom It May Concern:

Developed and only offered by Othram, Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® or FGGS® is used by local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies across the United States and internationally to break through previously impenetrable forensic DNA barriers and close previously unsolvable cases.

Othram is the only service provider that offers:

- 100% in-house DNA testing of forensic evidence to build a SNP profile with more than 100,000 markers from original evidence (DNA extraction through genealogy) using a whole genome shotgun sequencing method.
- FGGS® technology for all casework-related services. FGGS® service includes:
 - FGGS® Suitability Analysis through internal Quality Control (QC) testing to evaluate the likelihood of successfully building a SNP profile from evidence or a DNA extract, as well as the approach to determine the testing method to successfully develop the SNP profile.
 - Genomic Refinement, a proprietary process that enables human DNA burdened by bacterial and other non-human DNA sources to generate high-performing SNP profiles. Success using Genomic Refinement can be documented with publicly verifiable examples.
 - A proprietary process to ensure that damaged DNA, chemically or otherwise, can be successfully utilized. This includes DNA treated with formaldehyde or recovered from FFPE blocks. Success with this method can be documented with publicly verifiable examples.
 - A proprietary process for working from DNA evidence, even when degradation index (DI) exceeds 10,000. Success in such cases can be documented with publicly verifiable examples.
 - A proprietary process that generates profiles from mixtures of multiple contributors. Success of these cases can be documented with publicly verifiable examples.
- Proprietary KinSNP® testing for pairwise comparison between two samples. KinSNP® provides kinship comparisons of SNP profiles that do not require upload to public or online databases. The resulting output is a direct comparison forensic report (delivered in PDF format) between two samples that provides details of a genetic relationship, as well as an analysis of all potential relationships. Othram uniquely and exclusively offers completely offline & fully secure kinship and familial testing with SNP markers.
- A secure, 24/7 self-service electronic system for documenting and evaluating forensic genetic genealogy test requests. This allows for the submitting agency to document details, communicate with authorized points of contact, and access case information.
- In-house services with an exclusive focus on forensic DNA testing for forensic genetic genealogy purposes (no consumer, medical, or other testing).
- Experience testifying in front of a jury to all data generated in the development of an investigative lead using forensic genetic genealogy from in-house laboratory services.
- More than 200 publicly verifiable examples of solved cases using in-house forensic genetic genealogy technology.

In addition to being the sole provider of Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing®, Othram also offers the following capabilities. No other service provider can offer this combination of products and services.

Laboratory Capabilities

- DNA extraction of any evidentiary items, including forensic evidence or skeletal remains.
- Generation of a SNP profile that is universally compatible with genealogical databases and compatible with typical genealogical tools that leverage shared segments and centimorgan calculations (cM) to help identify and characterize genetic relationships.



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- Laboratory and staff performing the work within the United States.
- Key forensic workflow features such as chain of custody, unidirectional workflow, and other forensic best practices.
- Exclusive focus on forensic DNA testing (no consumer, medical, or other testing).
- Expedited service for building SNP profiles from original evidence within 7, 14, or 21 days, for use in contemporary or rush cases. Othram exclusively offers comprehensive SNP profiles in days instead of weeks or months.

DNA Database Upload and Records Research/ Genealogy

- Provide genealogical services to include upload of SNP profiles to GEDmatch and FamilyTree DNA and other databases that support law enforcement search.
- Utilization of in-house staff that are Board-Certified, to perform genealogical research. Volunteers or non-staff members are not used.
- Operation of a full research and development laboratory to exclusively develop SNP technology for forensic casework that runs parallel to our forensic lab.

We hope that this satisfies your sole source needs. Please let me know if I can provide more information.

Sincerely,

Andrew Singer
Chief Commercial Officer
Andrew@othram.com
(832) 963-7390



TAKINGS IMPACT ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Complete this form for any county action that involves the adoption of a regulation, policy, guideline, court resolution, or order.

Project/Regulation Name: Othram, Inc. - Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing - Medical Examiner's Office

County Department: PURCHASING

Contact Person: Melissa Lee, C.P.M., A.P.P.

Phone Number for Contact Person: (817) 884-3245

Type of TIA Performed: SHORT TIA or FULL TIA. Circle one after answering the questions in Sections II and III below.

I. Stated Purpose

Attach to this checklist an explanation of the purpose of the regulation, policy, guideline, court resolution, or order.

Note: The remainder of this Takings Impact Assessment Checklist should be completed in consultation with the Criminal District Attorney's Office.

II. Potential Effect on Private Real Property

1. Does the county action require a physical invasion, occupation, or dedication of real property?

Yes _____ No √

2. Does the county action limit or restrict a real property right, even partially, or temporarily?

Yes _____ No √

If you answered yes to either question, go to Section III. If you answered no to both, STOP HERE and circle SHORT TIA at the top of the form.
