Los Angeles County
Metropolitan Transportation
Authority
One Gateway Plaza
3rd Floor Board Room
Los Angeles, CA

File #: 2021-0596, **File Type:** Contract **Agenda Number:** 32.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
NOVEMBER 18, 2021

SUBJECT: COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES BENCH

ACTION: APPROVE CONTRACT MODIFICATION

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to execute Modification No. 5 to Bench Contract Nos. PS44432001 through PS44432010 to:

A. INCREASE the contract value by $3,000,000, increasing the contract value from $18,955,568 to $21,955,568; and

B. AWARD AND EXECUTE task orders for a not-to-exceed total authorized amount of $21,955,568.

ISSUE

In December 2017, the Metro Board of Directors approved the establishment of a Communication Support Services Bench contracts (Bench) for an amount not-to-exceed $9,505,568 for a 3-year base term, plus $5,393,760 for each of the two, two-year options, for a combined total amount not-to-exceed $20,293,088. The Bench provides Metro Communications Department with supplementary communications services in support of Metro projects, programs and initiatives such as public engagements, public information, and community outreach activities.

BACKGROUND

The Bench has been successfully utilized in providing professional communication support services to multiple and diverse Metro projects, programs and initiatives. The success of the Bench has nearly exhausted the not-to-exceed value. To date, a total of 40 task orders have been issued against the Bench, for a cumulative total contract value of $18,818,774 of the approved bench contract value of $18,955,568 during the initial 3-year base term, plus an additional one-year option that has been exercised. The unexpected increase in the Bench utilization was attributable to various task orders issued in support of Metro's projects, programs and initiatives. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has added additional community engagement activities that were not originally anticipated, such as virtual engagement platforms and increased digital initiatives to reach stakeholders.

To continue to meet the delivery of both current and approved planned construction projects, programs, and initiatives for FY 21/22, additional contract authority is being requested to the 4-year authorized contract term. Currently, Metro has numerous processes that require ongoing communications support such as the Bus Speed and Reliability Improvements, Vermont Transit Corridor, and several ExpressLanes projects. These efforts support the Agency's goals to increase ridership and enhance the customer experience.

Approval of Recommendation A will increase the contract authorization by $3,000,000. The recommendation will revise the total not-to-exceed Bench contract authority amount to $21,955,568. The approval will also provide sufficient time while Metro staff plans for issuance of a new On-Call Communications Bench Contract that will require subsequent Board Approval anticipated in early 2022.

DISCUSSION

With the passage of Measure M in November 2016, Metro's work effort has expanded greatly. To optimize the agency's existing communications workforce and to ensure adherence to Metro's External Communications Policy, this growing work effort will be accomplished through a combination of agency staff and contracted services through the Bench.

The Bench consists of 10 full-service, multi-disciplinary teams that serve on an on-call, task order-basis. Services provided by the Bench include:

1. Coordination with other project/program/initiative team members;
2. Project staffing;
3. Strategic communications;
4. Copywriting, copying, printing and mailing support;
5. Community meeting logistics, planning & facilitation;
6. Development of graphic design, photography, digital and video production;
7. Digital and social media;
8. Special event planning and outreach;
9. Door-to-door canvassing and literature distribution;
10. Multi-ethnic/multi-lingual interpretation and translation services;
11. Targeted outreach support;
12. Media relations support;
13. Interactive website development;
14. Innovative methods for reaching diverse community stakeholders;
15. Opinion research;
16. Media buyer; and
17. Documentation reports.

The Bench contracts include a 20% Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) participation goal for task orders awarded with federal funds and 17% Small Business Enterprise (SBE), and 3% Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) goal for task orders awarded with non-federal funds.

To date, the Bench has provided communication support services for the following projects and initiatives:

1. Active Transportation Strategic Plan
2. Antelope Valley Line Improvements
3. Arts District/6th Street Station
4. As-Needed Interpretation and Translation Services
5. As-Needed Writing Services
6. Bus Rapid Transit Vision and Principles Study
7. Bus Speed and Reliability Improvements
8. Centinela Grade Separation
9. Crenshaw Northern Extension - Alternatives Screening Study
10. Crenshaw Northern LRT Extension Environmental Outreach and Education
11. Crenshaw/LAX Opening Communications/Faith Community Outreach
12. Eastside Transit Corridor Phase 2 Environmental Outreach
13. Green Line Extension to Torrance Environmental Outreach and Education
14. Interstate10 ExpressLanes Extension Project
15. Interstate10 ExpressLanes HOV 5+ Pilot Program Environmental Outreach and Education
16. Interstate 110 ExpressLanes Adams Terminus Project
17. Interstate 405 Multi-Modal Corridor Plan
18. Interstate 405 Sepulveda Pass ExpressLanes Project
19. LA River Bike Gap Project
20. Lone Hill to White Project
21. Long Range Transportation and NextGen Bus Study Project Management
22. Long Range Transportation Plan Outreach and Education
23. Mailing Support Services
24. Measure M Lessons Learned and OEI Best Practices Reports
25. Metrolink Central Maintenance Facility Noise and Vibration Study
26. Next Gen Bus Study
27. NextGen Bus Study and Long Range Transportation Plan - Program management
28. North Hollywood to Pasadena Bus Rapid Transit Environmental Outreach and Education and North San Fernando Valley Bus Rapid Transit Project Environmental Outreach and Education
29. Public Opinion Research and Focus Groups
30. Public Relations - El Pasajero Writing and Editing
31. Public Relations Street Teams
32. Public Relations - Special Events and Communications Support
33. Public Relations - Writing Services
34. PSAC Public Opinion Survey
35. Rail to River - Segment B Project
36. Rio Hondo Confluence Station Feasibility Study
37. South Los Angeles Faith Leaders Group Facilitation
38. Vermont Transit Corridor Project and Vermont Transit Corridor - South Bay Extension Feasibility Study
39. West Santa Ana Branch Project Downtown Los Angeles Outreach and Education
40. Women and Girls Governing Council Strategic Communications

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Contractors may be required to conduct tasks on Metro property where construction may be taking place. All safety requirements will be met with requisite training and clearance as established by Metro Safety, Construction and Operation protocols.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The funding for the bench contract will parallel that of the benefiting projects charged which may include sales tax, grants, fares, and other funding sources within the agency. There is no single source that will unilaterally fund this contract. As specific work efforts arise, task orders will be issued and funded from the corresponding project budget upon approval by the responsible project manager, or by the relevant department.

Funding for FY 21/22 is included in the department, cost center budgets. Each task order awarded to a Contractor will be funded with the source of funds identified for that project. Since this is a multi-year contract, the departmental cost center managers will be responsible for budgeting costs in future years.

Impact to Budget
The funding for these task orders is dependent upon the specific project and could consist of federal, state or local funds.

EQUITY PLATFORM

Services under the bench have included tasks that specifically target historically marginalized and vulnerable populations.

Service 11 under the On-Call Communications Bench Contract specifically requests Contractors to "implement specialized outreach efforts to targeted community groups and stakeholders in the methods most effective for them to receive information. Such groups include but are not limited to older adults, students, multi-ethnic groups, persons with disabilities, faith leaders, low-income or marginalized individuals, and others."

Additionally, Service 14: Innovative Methods for Reaching Diverse Community Stakeholders specifically requests that Contractors propose "other recommended activities or tools that will assist Metro in reaching a broader audience of stakeholders and encouraging their active participation in the agency's projects, programs or initiatives."

Resources that have been specifically requested under the Bench Contract include: translation and interpretation; public opinion surveys and focus groups conducted in various languages; activities that allow for engagement with transit riders at stops, stations and on buses/trains. Additionally, innovative methods for reaching diverse community stakeholders on this bench, such as offering free WiFi/Hotspot connections at targeted locations for virtual community meetings.

To date, nearly all projects and initiatives serviced through this on-call bench have directly engaged with stakeholders from Equity Focus Communities (EFCs). Targeted outreach to EFCs will continue to be prioritized as part of all public engagement programs.

The On-Call Communications Bench Contract further provides business opportunities to minority, women owned and disadvantaged businesses. Each bench participant has met or exceeded the 17% SBE / 3% DVBE or 20% DBE goal for this project. The Communications Support Services Bench is subject to the Small Business (SB) prime (Set-Aside) program requirements. Nine of the 10 bench participants are SBE primes.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommended actions support the following goals:

Goal 1: Provide high-quality mobility options that enable people to spend less time traveling;
Goal 2: Deliver outstanding trip experiences for all users of the transportation system;
Goal 3: Enhance communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity;
Goal 5: Provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy governance within the Metro organization

The Communications Support Services Bench allows the agency to engage stakeholders in an authentic, meaningful, and responsive manner on all of the agency's project, programs, and initiatives.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

1. Pursue procurement processes and solicit proposals for each individual task when the requirement arises. This alternative is not recommended as it would place an undue burden on the small business community, requiring them to expend significant and costly resources to respond to multiple procurement processes each year. It also would require extensive staff time to develop a scope of work, internal estimate and proceed with a competitive procurement for each individual task. This would also delay the provision of services and prevent the opportunity to expedite services when needed. Additionally, procuring services on a per-assignment basis would impose significant additional burden on the Communications and Vendor/Contract Management departments.

2. Utilize existing Communications staff to provide the required support services. This alternative is also not feasible as Metro's current Communications staff is being fully utilized to support existing projects, programs and initiatives. Due to these commitments, it would be a major challenge for current staff to provide the necessary additional support required for future projects, programs and initiatives. If this alternative were exercised, Metro would need to hire additional staff with expertise in several disciplines to perform the desired work. Based on

staffing trends, it is unlikely the agency can support this effort in-house.

3. Direct departments to procure services for their own needs. This option puts an undue burden on the small business community, requiring them to expend significant and costly resources to respond to multiple procurement processes each year. It also is counter to Metro's External Communications Policy, which is designed to consolidate, optimize and strategically coordinate communications services across the agency.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, staff will execute Contract Modification No. 5 to the Communications Support Services Bench Contracts and continue to award individual task orders for communications support services.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Procurement Summary
Attachment B - Contract Modification/Change Order Log
Attachment C - Firms on Communications Support Services Bench
Attachment D - List of Task Orders and Values
Attachment E - DEOD Summary

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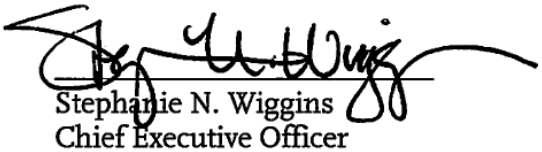

Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

PROCUREMENT SUMMARY

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES BENCH / PS44432001 through PS44432010

1.	**Contract Numbers**: PS44432001 through PS44432010			
2.	**Contractors**: Arellano Associates; Celtis Ventures; Communications Lab; Community Connections; Consensus; Dakota Communications; ETA Agency; Lee Andrews Group; MBI Media; The Robert Group			
3.	**Mod. Work Description**: Increase Contract Authority			
4.	**Contract Work Description** Provide communications support services to Metro's Communications Department.			
5.	**The following data is current as of**: 10/5/2021			
6.	**Contract Completion Status**		**Financial Status**	
	Contracts Awarded:	1/1/18	**Contracts Award Amount:**	$9,505,568
	Notice to Proceed (NTP):	N/A	**Total of Modifications Approved:**	$9,450,000
	Original Complete Date:	12/31/20	**Pending Modifications (including this action):**	$3,000,000
	Current Est. Complete Date:	12/31/22	**Current Contract Value (with this action):**	$21,955,568
7.	**Contract Administrator**: Antwaun Boykin		**Telephone Number**: (213) 922-1056	
8.	**Project Manager**: Lilian De Loza-Gutierrez		**Telephone Numbers**: (213) 922-7479	

A. Procurement Background

This Board Action is to approve Contract Modification No. 5 issued to increase the contract funding authority value for Communications Bench Contracts PS44432001 through PS44432010, to continue to provide communications support services, and extend the term of the bench contracts through December 31, 2022.

This Contract Modification and future Task Orders will be processed in accordance with Metro's Acquisition Policy.

Metro awarded a seven-year (three-year base term, with two, two-year options), task order-based bench contracts to the following firms: Arellano Associates, Celtis Ventures, Communications Lab, Community Connections, Consensus, Dakota

Communications, ETA Agency, Lee Andrews Group, MBI Media, and The Robert Group to provide communication support services.

Refer to Attachment B – Contract Modification/Change Order Log.

B. Cost/Price Analysis

The recommended price for all future task orders and modifications will be determined to be fair and reasonable in accordance with Metro's Acquisition Policy at the time of issuance and award.

CONTRACT MODIFICATION/CHANGE ORDER LOG

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES BENCH / PS44432001 through PS44432010

Mod. No.	Description	Status (approved or pending)	Date	Amount
1	Modify the SOW to delete printing support service	**Approved**	**10/15/18**	**$0**
2	Increase base contract value	**Approved**	**9/19/19**	**$9,000,000**
3	Extend contract period of performance	**Approved**	**12/11/20**	**$0**
4	Exercise Contract Modification Authority	**Approved**	**10/4/21**	**$450,000**
5	Increase contract value	**Pending**	**Pending**	**$3,000,000**
	Modification Total:			**$12,450,000**
	Original Contract:		**1/1/18**	**$9,505,568**
	Total:			**$21,955,568**

ATTACHMENT C

FIRMS ON COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES BENCH

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES BENCH / PS44432001 through PS44432010

	Contract No.	Company Name
1	PS44432001	Arellano Associates
2	PS44432002	Celtis Ventures
3	PS44432003	Communications Lab
4	PS44432004	Community Connections
5	PS44432005	Consensus
6	PS44432006	Dakota Communications
7	PS44432007	ETA Agency
8	PS44432008	Lee Andrews Group
9	PS44432009	MBI Media
10	PS44432010	The Robert Group

DBE/SBE Prime Awards				
Contract No.	**Company Name**	**Task Orders Awarded to Date**	**Task Order Award Amount**	**Amount Paid to Date**
PS44432001	Arellano Associates	12	$6,015,342.00	$4,011,868.24
PS44432003	Communications Lab	3	$1,124,077.00	$626,078.00
PS44432004	Community Connections	1	$1,413,358.00	$20,000.00
PS44432005	Consensus	2	$345,632.54	$345,632.54
PS44432006	Dakota Communications	1	$669,904.00	$191,751.11
PS44432007	ETA Agency	0	$0.00	$0.00
PS44432008	Lee Andrews Group	13	$4,310,624.00	$1,832,644.89
PS44432009	MBI	2	$677,010.84	$673,623.84
PS44432010	The Robert Group	4	$2,779,672.00	$1,479,883.00
Total Awarded Task Order Subtotal		38	$17,335,620.38	$9,181,481.62
Total Task Order Value				

Non DBE/SBE Prime Awards				
Contract No.	**Company Name**	**Task Orders Awarded to Date**	**Task Order Award Amount**	**Amount Paid to Date**
PS44432002	Celtis Ventures	1	$1,483,154.00	$1,483,154.00
Total Awarded Task Order Subtotal		1	$1,483,154.00	$1,483,154.00
Total Task Order Value				

Total Task Orders Awarded	14	Amont Awarded	Amount Paid to Date
DBE/SBE Task Order Value		$17,335,620.38	$9,181,481.62
Total Task Order Value		$18,818,774.38	$10,664,635.62

DEOD SUMMARY

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES BENCH / PS44432001 through PS44432010

A. Small Business Participation

Each bench participant committed to meet the 17% SBE/3% DVBE or 20% DBE goals for this contract. The Communications Support Services Bench is subject to the Small Business (SB) Prime (Set-Aside) Program requirements. Nine of the ten bench participants are SBE primes. The overall SBE/DVBE/DBE participation is based on the aggregate of all Task Orders (TO) awarded through the bench.

To date, thirty-seven (37) TOs have been awarded to nine (9) primes on the bench. Thirty-five (35) TOs were non-federally funded and fell within the set- aside threshold and awarded to self-performing SBE Primes. One TO was federally funded set-aside and awarded to an SB Prime that is also DBE certified. One TO was awarded with SBE/DVBE commitments. Based on payments to-date, the contract is 42.28% complete and the current level of participation is 83.83% SBE, 8.56% DBE and 0% DVBE. As such, the bench has exceeded SBE participation by 66.83% and has an 11.44% DBE and 3% DVBE shortfall. According to the Project Manager, due to potential conflicts with Metro's Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), all printing scopes of work were de-scoped from the bench. Primes impacted by this removal were required to submit an updated utilization plan to address the de-scope impact on DVBE commitments.

Metro Project Managers and Contract Administrators will work in conjunction with DEOD to monitor SBE/DVBE and DBE commitments via the web-based tracking system to ensure that they are met or exceeded.

Small Business Commitment	20% DBE 17% SBE 3% DVBE	Small Business Participation	8.56% DBE 83.83% SBE 0% DVBE

	DBE/SBE/DVBE Primes & Subcontractors	Current Participation		
		DBE	SBE	DVBE
1	Arellano Associates (DBE/SBE Prime)	-	89.22%	-
	AVS Consulting, Inc.	-	0.75%	-
	Jarrett Walker & Associates	-	0.48%	-
	Two Hundred, Inc.	-	0.85%	-
	VMA Communications	-	1.57%	-
	Young Communications Group	-	5.08%	-
	Total	-	97.95%	--
2	Celtis Ventures	-	-	-
	Arellano Associates, LLC	-	35.94%	-
	Flagship Marketing	-	-	0.00%
	Young Communications Group, Inc.	-	3.95%	-
	Total	-	39.89%	0.00%
3	Communications Lab (DBE/SBE Prime)	8.56%	13.91%	-
	Circle Point	-	39.11%	
	Total	8.56%	53.02%	-
4	Consensus (SBE Prime)	-	25.08%	-
	Total	-	25.08%	-
5	Dakota Communications (DBE/SBE Prime)	-	98.01%	-
	JKH Consulting, LLC	-	1.99%	-
	Total	-	100.00%	-
6	Lee Andrews Group (DBE/SBE Prime)	-	69.56%	-
	Effect Strategies, LLC	-	0.12%	-
	JKH Consulting, LLC	-	0.18%	-
	Maria Luisa Arredondo-Pagaza	-	18.30%	-
	Paragon Language Services, Inc.	-	0.03%	-
	Translating Services, Inc.	-	0.43%	-
	Total	-	88.62%	-
7	MBI Media (DBE/SBE Prime)	-	63.87%	-
	Alas Media, Inc.	-	0.94%	-
	Continental Interpreting Services, Inc.	-	0.15%	-
	Digital Services Enterprises, Inc.	-	6.44%	-
	House 47, LLC	-	8.25%	-
	North Star Alliances LLC	-	9.80%	-
	Young Communications Group	-	6.39%	-
	Total	-	95.84%	-

8	The Robert Group (DBE/SBE Prime)	-	100.00%	-
	Total	-	100.00%	-

B. Living Wage and Service Contract Worker Retention Policy Applicability

A review of the current service contract indicates that the Living Wage and Service Contract Worker Retention Policy (LW/SCWRP) was not applicable at the time of award. Therefore, the LW/SCWRP is not applicable to this modification.

C. Prevailing Wage Applicability

Prevailing wage is not applicable to this modification.

D. Project Labor Agreement/Construction Careers Policy

Project Labor Agreement/Construction Careers Policy is not applicable to this Contract. Project Labor Agreement/Construction Careers Policy is applicable only to construction contracts that have a construction contract value in excess of $2.5 million.