



Board Report

File #: 2025-0052, File Type: Contract

Agenda Number: 10.

PLANNING & PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE MARCH 19, 2025

SUBJECT: MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECT GRANTWRITING

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to award a firm fixed unit rate Contract No. PS125381000 to Capitol Government Contract Specialists for Major Capital Project grantwriting services to support Board priorities, in an amount Not-to-Exceed (NTE) \$6,332,734 for a two-year base period, with one, two-year option in the amount of \$6,287,602, for a total NTE amount of \$12,620,336, effective April 7, 2025, subject to resolution of any properly submitted protest(s), if any.

ISSUE

Staff requires grant writing services to secure funding for Board priority projects such as those included in the Measure M Expenditure Plan and the 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan. The current contract has been in effect for four years and is set to expire on March 31, 2025.

BACKGROUND

The current grant writing contract was executed on December 23, 2019, and is set to expire on March 31, 2025. Under this contract valuing \$6.4 million, 167 task orders have been issued, resulting in grant awards totaling \$1.77 billion. 2020 Metro Long Range Transportation Plan aims to add over 100 miles of transit infrastructure over the next 30 years, making it the most ambitious transit expansion plan in the nation. In addition to transit improvements, Metro will invest in multimodal projects designed to improve safety and reduce congestion, such as the I-605 Hotspot Program. There will also be efforts to enhance alternative transportation modes through bicycle and pedestrian projects. Furthermore, Metro is committed to transitioning its entire bus fleet to zero-emission operations. Through these investments, Metro plans to improve regional mobility, support economic recovery, and promote sustainability with green construction practices.

Metro's Countywide Planning & Development Department is seeking a consultant to provide grant writing and related services to secure state and federal discretionary funding for these and other vital projects. The selected consultant will also be responsible for identifying, developing, and securing Capital Investment Grants and other federal funding opportunities, which are new tasks in the Major Investment Project scope. Additionally, the consultant will support Metro's applications and major

investment campaigns through special tasks. To accommodate the expanded scope, the contract capacity will be greater than that of the current contract.

DISCUSSION

In 2014, staff began contracting for grant writing services to help local jurisdictions replace funding lost due to the termination of a federal program with funds from the new state Active Transportation Program (ATP). This grant assistance program proved successful, with 44 percent of awards in Los Angeles County going to projects that utilized grant writing services. As a result, Metro decided to continue this program, which has benefited 24 local agencies, including 22 cities, the County of Los Angeles, and the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG). Seven of the cities were designated as low resource cities, based on income and population. Metro then began using some of the consultant capacity to support its efforts to advance Board priorities. To date, in addition to Metro, the following have benefited from the current contract for grant writing assistance:

Arcadia	Artesia	Baldwin Park
Bell	Compton	Covina
Diamond Bar	Duarte	Glendora
Huntington Park	La Puente	La Verne
Lancaster	Long Beach	Los Angeles City
Los Angeles County	Lynwood	Montebello
Palmdale	Pasadena	Pico Rivera
San Gabriel Valley COG	Santa Monica	South Gate

The Measure M Expenditure Plans assumed that \$20 billion in local, state, and federal funds would be available to leverage Metro's local sales tax revenues, enabling the implementation of a larger capital program valued at \$41 billion over 51 years. The technical assistance to be provided under the recommended grant writing contract is needed to help realize these assumptions. The current contract has delivered \$1.1 billion for projects to deliver the Measure M Expenditure Plan. Some of the major awards have been \$600 million in state Transit Intercity Capital Rail Program (TIRCP) funds for the East San Fernando Valley Transit Corridor, \$150 million in Senate Bill 1 Solutions for Congested Corridor funds for the I-105 Express Lanes project, and \$104 in federal Low and No Emission (LoNo) funds for LA Metro Zero Emission Bus and Infrastructure Deployment.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Approving this item will not jeopardize the safety of Metro’s customers or employees. On the contrary, granting this approval will enhance safety, as many of the grants that the grant writers will help staff develop will provide funding to expand and improve the Metro bus and rail fleet and infrastructure. Examples of past grant awards that have contributed to safety include the G Line Bus Rapid Transit improvements and the Huntington Park Safe Routes for Students and Seniors Project.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The FY 2025 budget included \$1,950,000 in Cost Center 4420 (Federal/State Policy & Programming), Project 405510, Task 05.05.01. Since this is a multiyear contract, the Cost Center Manager and Chief Planning Officer will be responsible for budgeting in future years for the balance

of the remaining Contract budget.

Impact to Budget

Awarding the Major Capital Project Contract is anticipated to have a positive financial impact by obtaining billions of dollars for the agency. The source of funds for this contract are Administration funds from Proposition A, Proposition C, Measure R, Measure M and TDA, which are not eligible for bus & rail operations and capital projects.

EQUITY PLATFORM

Staff identifies potential projects for grant applications from two primary sources. The first source is the Active Transportation Program Grant Assistance Program. Under this program, Metro allows local jurisdictions and other ATP-eligible agencies to request grant assistance by submitting a Letter of Interest (LOI). The LOIs include information about whether the proposed project aims to benefit disadvantaged communities, such as Metro Equity Focus Communities (EFCs), which staff considers during its decision-making process, as published each cycle.

The second source for identifying projects is the Evaluative Criteria Framework (ECF). This process enables staff to consider projects from the Measure M Major Project Expenditure Plan, the Long-Range Transportation Plan, and other priorities set by the Board. The ECF consists of the following six steps:

1. Sustain Measure M and other Pre-Measure M/LRTP Priorities and Schedules
2. Align Project Competitiveness with New/Expanded Program Criteria
3. Evaluate Certainty (Formula) versus Risk (Competitive/Discretionary)
4. Ensure Consistency with Board Policies and Directives
5. Confirm Consistency with the Metro Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)
6. Assess Transportation Equity and Geographic Balance

To address the Metro Equity Platform as a Board directive in Step 4 and transportation equity as a parameter in Step 6, staff assesses the transportation equity impacts of the projects under consideration, prioritizing projects that benefit people in disadvantaged communities and prioritizing outside assistance to lower-resource agencies.

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro's significant investment in rail and bus transit.* Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets align with California's statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

As part of these ongoing efforts, this item is expected to contribute to further reductions in VMT. Over the previous two fiscal years, FY 2023 and FY 2024, approximately 87% of the awards Metro received under competitive programs, and with the support of grantwriting consultant services, were for active transportation and transit projects. This item supports Metro's systemwide strategy to reduce VMT through planning and administrative activities that will benefit and further encourage transit ridership, ridesharing, and active transportation. Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets were designed to build on the success of existing investments, and this item aligns with those objectives.

*Based on population estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans' Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

The recommended action supports Strategic Plan Goal #2: Providing outstanding trip experiences for everyone. Metro's grant writers help staff develop applications for projects across all transportation modes. Our grant awards enhance mobility throughout Los Angeles County for pedestrians, cyclists, users of Metro Bus and Rail, Metro Express Lanes, highway travelers, and even for goods transportation.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board has the option to forgo entering into a contract for grant writing assistance and rely solely on staff to prepare grant applications. However, the current staffing levels lack both the capacity and expertise needed to submit the number and quality of applications that could be prepared with the assistance of a grantwriting contractor.

NEXT STEPS

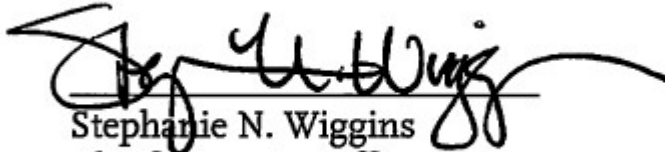
Upon approval, staff will execute Contract No. PS125381000 with Capitol Government Contract Specialists for Major Capital Project Grantwriting services effective April 7, 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Procurement Summary
Attachment B - DEOD Summary

Prepared by: Patricia Chen, Senior Director, (213) 922-3041
Mark Yamarone, Executive Officer, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 418-3452
Laurie Lombardi, Senior Executive Officer, Countywide Planning & Development, (213) 418-3251
Carolina Coppolo, Deputy Chief Vendor/Contract Management Officer, (213) 922-4471

Reviewed by: Ray Sosa, Chief Planning Officer, (213) 547-4274



Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

PROCUREMENT SUMMARY

MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECT GRANTWRITING/PS125381000

1.	Contract Number: PS125381000	
2.	Recommended Vendor: Capitol Government Contract Specialists	
3.	Type of Procurement (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> IFB <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RFP <input type="checkbox"/> RFP-A&E <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Competitive <input type="checkbox"/> Modification <input type="checkbox"/> Task Order	
4.	Procurement Dates:	
	A. Issued: July 16, 2024	
	B. Advertised/Publicized: July 16, 2024	
	C. Pre-Proposal Conference: July 24, 2024	
	D. Proposals Due: August 20, 2024	
	E. Pre-Qualification Completed: January 23, 2025	
	F. Ethics Declaration Forms Submitted to Ethics: August 20, 2024	
	G. Protest Period End Date: March 25, 2025	
5.	Solicitations Downloaded: 77	Bids/Proposals Received: 3
6.	Contract Administrator: Yamil Ramirez Roman	Telephone Number: (213) 922-1064
7.	Project Manager: Patricia Chen	Telephone Number: (213) 922-3041

A. Procurement Background

This Board Action is to approve Contract No. PS125381000 issued in support of grant writing services for Metro’s major capital projects. Board approval of contract awards are subject to resolution of any properly submitted protest(s), if any.

Request for Proposals (RFP) No. PS125381 was issued in accordance with Metro’s Acquisition Policy and the contract type is firm fixed unit rate. The RFP was issued under the Medium-Size Business Enterprise Program 1 (MSZ-1). The Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department recommended a Small Business Enterprise (SBE) goal of 28% and a Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) goal of 3%. It was also subject to the Local Small Business Enterprise Preference program, which awards a bonus of 5 preference points for the utilization of local small business firms.

Two amendments were issued during the solicitation phase of this RFP:

- Amendment No. 1, issued on July 17, 2024, included Exhibit A, Scope of Services, which was inadvertently left out of the solicitation package;
- Amendment No. 2, issued on August 12, 2024, extended the proposal due date.

A total of 77 downloads of the RFP were included in the planholders list. A virtual pre-proposal conference was held on July 24, 2024, and was attended by 27

participants representing 18 firms. There were 16 questions received, and responses were provided prior to the proposal due date.

A total of three proposals were received on August 20, 2024, and are listed below in alphabetical order:

1. Advanced Avant-Garde Corporation
2. Capitol Government Contract Specialists
3. Ross Infrastructure Development, LLC

B. Evaluation of Proposals

A Proposal Evaluation Team (PET) consisting of staff from Metro’s State Analysis and Discretionary Grants department, Federal/State Policy & Programming department, and Multimodal Integrated Corridor & System Planning department was convened and conducted a comprehensive technical evaluation of the proposals received.

The proposals were evaluated based on the following evaluation criteria and weights:

- Quality of Consultant Proposal 45 percent
- Project Experience and Staff Available 40 percent
- Cost Proposal 15 percent
- Local Small Business Enterprise (LSBE) Preference Program 5 percent

Several factors were considered when developing these weights, giving the greatest importance to the quality of consultant’s proposal.

During the period of September 5, 2024 to September 17, 2024, the PET independently evaluated and scored the technical proposals. Ross Infrastructure Development, LLC was determined to be outside the competitive range and was not included for further consideration. The remaining two firms were determined to be in the competitive range and were invited for oral presentations on September 30, 2024. The firms had the opportunity to present their qualifications, and respond to questions from the PET. Following the oral presentations, the PET finalized their scores and Capitol Government Contract Specialists was determined to be the highest ranked proposer. Staff conducted negotiations and clarifications with the firm during October through January.

Qualifications Summary of Firms within the Competitive Range:

Capitol Government Contract Specialists

Capitol Government Contract Specialists' (Capitol) proposal demonstrated grant development experience, and the task discussions showed a thorough understanding of the scope of services. Capitol's team includes experienced grant writers and the proposal demonstrated the team's schedule and availability to perform tasks as needed to successfully deliver on-time and visually compelling grant applications.

Capitol's proposal demonstrated a thorough quality control process with a dedicated team to review applications and ensure documents submitted to Metro are accurate and reduce redundancy of multiple drafts for grant applications. During the oral presentations, Capitol's team provided examples of previous experience successfully delivering applications within limited timeframes, specifically one grant delivered in two week's notice.

Capitol's proposal included a team with various areas of expertise such as greenhouse gas emissions analysis, Capital Investment Grants (CIG) analysis and successful grant writing experience in the public sector. The proposal included key staff with grant award experience and a history of positive application-to-award ratios.

Advanced Avant-Garde Corporation

Advanced Avant-Garde Corporation's (Avant-Garde) proposal demonstrated an understanding of the scope of services, the policies and guidelines required to perform the work. The proposal provided a thorough schedule demonstrating the timeline and expectations for each task required in the grant application process.

Avant-Garde's proposal demonstrated previous experience working with various public sector agencies and cities in the greater Los Angeles area. The proposal provided a detailed organizational chart that clearly assigned staff to their respective areas of expertise and application types.

However, Avant-Garde's proposal did not demonstrate thorough experience with non-motorized transit, highway projects, and greenhouse gas analysis, particularly work related to CIG analysis tasks.

A summary of the PET scores is provided below:

1	Firm	Average Score	Factor Weight	Weighted Average Score	Rank
2	Capitol Government Contract Specialists				
3	Quality of Consultant Proposal	88.89	45.00%	40.00	
4	Project Experience and Staff Available	86.68	40.00%	34.67	
5	Cost Proposal	73.60	15.00%	11.04	
6	Local Small Business Enterprise (LSBE) Preference Program (Bonus 5%)	0.00	5.00%	0.00	
7	Total		105.00%	85.71	1
8	Advanced Avant-Garde Corporation				
9	Quality of Consultant Proposal	80.00	45.00%	36.00	
10	Project Experience and Staff Available	65.83	40.00%	26.33	
11	Cost Proposal	100.00	15.00%	15.00	
12	Local Small Business Enterprise (LSBE) Preference Program (Bonus 5%)	100.00	5.00%	5.00	
13	Total		105.00%	82.33	2

C. Cost Analysis

The recommended price has been determined to be fair and reasonable based upon technical evaluation, cost analysis, and negotiations. Metro staff successfully negotiated cost savings of \$1,623,766. The variance between the Independent Cost Estimate (ICE) and the negotiated amount is attributed to the ICE underestimating the level of effort required to produce compelling narrative as well as high quality supporting graphics and analysis for the grant applications.

	Proposer Name	Proposal Amount	Metro ICE	NTE amount
1.	Capitol Government Contract Specialists	\$14,244,101	\$10,193,488	\$12,620,335
2.	Advanced Avant-Garde Corporation	\$10,480,494		

During negotiations, the proposer agreed to a moderate amount of reasonable and logical streamlining of the work. The contractor's negotiated level of effort was determined to be fair and reasonable to deliver the required services.

D. Background on Recommended Contractor

The recommended firm, Capitol Government Contract Specialists (Capitol), located in Irvine, CA, has been in business for 13 years and provides program management for rolling stock acquisition, transit operations and oversight consulting services for other public agencies such as Eagle Valley Transportation Authority, Colorado, and the City of Turlock, CA.

The proposed team includes ten subcontractors, five of which are Metro certified SBEs and one DVBE. The team's clients include Metrolink, City of Culver City, City of Lancaster, Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District, Riverside County Transportation Commission, and Washington State Department of Transportation. Capitol's project manager has 35 years of experience working in the aerospace and public transportation sectors.

Capitol has provided project control support, technical consulting and program management services to Metro and performance has been satisfactory. Capitol is a Metro-certified SBE firm.

DEOD SUMMARY

MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECT GRANTWRITING/PS125381000

A. Small Business Participation

The Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department (DEOD) established a 28% Small Business Enterprise (SBE) and 3% Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) goal for this Medium Size Business Enterprise (MSZ-I) solicitation. Capitol Government Contract Specialists, an SBE firm, exceeded the goal by making a 37.01% SBE and 3.17% DVBE commitment.

Small Business Goal	28% SBE 3% DVBE	Small Business Commitment	37.01% SBE 3.17% DVBE
----------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------------	----------------------------------

	SBE Subcontractors	% Committed	LSBE	Non-LSBE
1.	Capitol Government Contract Specialists (SBE Prime)	30.15%		X
2.	Redman Consulting LLC	2.23%		X
3.	Evan Brooks Associates	1.11%	X	
4.	Deborah Murphy Urban Design + Planning	1.66%	X	
5.	Lemmon Planning	0.93%		X
6.	System Metrics Group	0.93%		X
	Total SBE Commitment	37.01%		

	DVBE Subcontractors	% Committed	LSBE	Non-LSBE
1.	OhanaVets, Inc.	3.17%		X
	Total DVBE Commitment	3.17%		

B. Medium Size Business Enterprise Program I (MSZ-I)

As a certified firm, Capitol Government Contract Specialists, is an eligible MSZ-I.

C. Local Small Business Enterprise (LSBE) Preference

Capitol Government Contract Specialists, a non-LSBE prime, did not subcontract at least 30% of its contract value with eligible LSBE firms and was ineligible for the preference.

D. Living Wage and Service Contract Worker Retention Policy Applicability

The Living Wage and Service Contract Worker Retention Policy is not applicable to this contract.

E. Prevailing Wage Applicability

Prevailing wage is not applicable to this contract.

F. Project Labor Agreement/Construction Careers Policy

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

PS125381000, MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECT GRANTWRITING, CAPITOL GOVERNMENT CONTRACT SPECIALISTS

Planning and Programming Committee

March 19, 2025



Metro

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to award a firm fixed unit rate Contract No. PS125381000 to Capitol Government Contract Specialists for Major Capital Project Grantwriting services to support Board priorities, in an amount Not-to-Exceed (NTE) \$6,332,734 for a two-year base period, with one, two-year option in the amount of \$6,287,602, for a total NTE amount of \$12,620,336, effective April 7, 2025, subject to resolution of any properly submitted protest(s).

ISSUE AND DISCUSSION

ISSUE

- Staff requires grant writing services to secure funding for Board priority projects such as: Measure M Expenditure Plan and 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan projects
- Current contract has run for five years, obtaining \$1.77 billion in awards

DISCUSSION

- The Measure M Expenditure Plans assumed \$20 billion in local, state, and federal funds.
- The grantwriting to be provided under the proposed contract is needed to help realize these assumptions and advance other Board priorities.

PROCUREMENT EVALUATION

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Capitol Government Contract Specialists	Advanced Avant-Garde Corporation
Quality of Consultant Proposal	45.00	40.00	36.00
Project Experience and Staff Available	40.00	34.67	26.33
Cost Proposal	15.00	11.04	15.00
Local SBE Preference Program (Bonus 5 points)	5.00	0.00	5.00
Total Score	105	85.71	82.33

DEOD Goal: 28% SBE; 3% DVBE

CGC Commitment: 37.01% SBE; 3.17% DVBE



NEXT STEPS

Upon approval, staff will execute Contract No. PS125381000 for Major Capital Project Grantwriting services

- The Contract will be with Capitol Government Contract Specialists
- The effective date will be April 7, 2025