Agenda Item: 2i

METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

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Memorandum

TO: Administration Committee

DATE: October 2, 2013

FR: Deputy Executive Director, Policy

W. I. 1132

RE: Contract Amendment: Legislative Representation for FY 2013-14 and FY 2014-15: Government Relations, Inc. ($526.200)

Staff requests approval of a new two-year contract with Government Relations, Inc. to provide legislative representation in Washington, D.C. on a sole source basis, from November 1, 2013 through October 31, 2015 at a rate of $263,100 per year, the same amount provided over the last 2½ years. Staff has compared this annual rate with the amount spent on federal lobbying by transportation agencies in the Bay Area and across California and found it to be competitive and on par with the amount those agencies are spending. The current contract will expire at the end of this month.

Background:
MTC has long been recognized as a leader in transportation policy at a national level and much of that success has resulted from the work done by its registered lobbyist, Tom Bulger (dba Government Relations, Inc.), who has served the Commission in Washington, D.C. since 1984. Mr. Bulger possesses extensive experience, having represented MTC during four federal transportation authorization cycles, most recently the passage of Moving Ahead for the 21st Century (MAP 21), the 2012 surface transportation act led by Senator Boxer. This experience has led to close relationships with key members of Congress, members of the Administration and federal agency staff that are invaluable in helping to resolve funding and policy issues, large and small. Mr. Bulger also has an in-depth understanding of the Bay Area, its many transportation players, and the unique roles each plays. Mr. Bulger has long served a complementary role to each of the many transportation agencies throughout the Bay Area by helping to make sure that federal policy and programs benefit the *entire* Bay Area, as opposed to focusing on funding for specific projects.

During Mr. Bulger's tenure, MTC has developed a reputation in Washington D.C. as one of the nation's most creative and effective metropolitan planning organizations. For example, MTC Executive Director Steve Heminger was appointed in 2006 by then Speaker Nancy Pelosi to serve on a blue-ribbon commission established by the SAFETEA transportation reauthorization bill to recommend ways to improve the funding mechanisms that support our nation's surface transportation system as well as the policy outcomes. MTC is also regularly asked to testify before Congressional Committees.

Time and again, Mr. Bulger has proven his effectiveness while serving as MTC's Washington liaison for numerous Full Funding Grant Agreements (FFGAs) for Bay Area New Starts candidates, including helping to coordinate funding requests for BART, VTA, S.F. MTA and many other agencies. With the regions two most recently signed FFGAs for BART to Silicon Valley and San Francisco Central Subway project, the Bay Area is looking to build on that success. Mr. Bulger's guidance through the process will no doubt be invaluable.

Mr. Bulger was also intimately involved in the legislative advocacy that led to the creation of the Surface Transportation Program/Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (STP/CMAQ) programs, as well as the ability to "flex" certain federal highway funding to transit projects that has served the region so well for the last two decades. He built on that effort in MAP 21 with a continued federal commitment to the nation's metro areas, while also seeking broader reforms to federal transportation policies.

Mr. Bulger has also met the Commission's growing and changing roles as required in his work in Washington such as working to secure the needed permissions for certain construction related matters on the New Eastern Span of the Bay Bridge, and working to secure a $5 million HUD grant for the Sustainable Communities Program.

Finally, it is important to emphasize the close relationships Mr. Bulger has developed with the Bay Area congressional delegation over his many years serving as MTC's face in Washington. Because many of these members of Congress have served for such a long time — Senator Boxer: 30 years, Senator Feinstein: 21 years, Congresswoman Pelosi: 25 years, Congressman Miller: 38 years, Congresswoman Eshoo: 21 years — they have become especially reliant upon Mr. Bulger as a trusted liaison to MTC. The region's newer members of Congress— Swalwell and Huffman—have also quickly come to count on Mr. Bulger for insight into Bay Area transportation issues.

In conclusion, Mr. Bulger's intimate knowledge of the substantive policy and political context of federal transportation policy will be critical over the next two years. He is the right person to represent MTC in Washington, D.C. during this highly unpredictable time.

Recommendation:
Staff recommends that the Committee authorize the Executive Director or his designee to enter into a new contract with Government Relations, Inc. for two additional years through October 13, 2015 at the same rate of compensation – an annualized amount of $263,100. Funding for the second year of the contract amendment would be subject to the adoption of the Commission's annual budget for FY 2014-15.

Ann Flemer

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REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Summary of Proposed Contract

Work Item No.:	1132
Vendor:	Government Relations, Inc. Washington, DC
Work Project Title:	Legislative Representation in Washington, D.C.
Purpose of Project:	Obtain services of a legislative advocate in Washington, D.C.
Brief Scope of Work:	Provide the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) with legislative consultant services in Washington, D.C. Act as legislative advisor; monitor all legislation affecting MTC; report to the Manager of Legislation and Public Affairs, Executive Director, the Legislation Committee, and the Commission as needed.
Project Cost Not to Exceed:	$175,400 (November 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014) $263,100 (July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015, subject to inclusion in the FY 2014-15 agency budget) $ 87,700 (July 1, 2015-October 31, 2016, subject to inclusion in the 2014-15 and FY 2015-16 agency budget) $526,200 Total
Funding Sources:	TDA, STA
Fiscal Impact:	$263,100 is included in the FY 2013-14 agency budget; remaining amounts to be included in future year agency budgets.
Motion by Committee:	That the Executive Director or his designee is authorized to negotiate and enter into a new contract with Government Relations, Inc. for the legislative consultant services of Thomas J. Bulger as described above and in the Deputy Executive Director's October 2, 2013 memorandum, and the Chief Financial Officer is directed to set aside funds in the amounts set forth above for such amendment, subject to approval of future agency budgets.

Administration Committee:

Adrienne J. Tissier, Chair

Approved: Date: October 9, 2013

Legislation Committee:

Scott Haggerty, Chair

Approved: Date: October 11, 2013