

Metropolitan Transportation Commission Legislation Committee

December 13, 2019

Agenda Item 3a

Contract – Sacramento Legislative Representative: Carter, Wetch & Associates (\$618,243)

Subject: A request for approval of a contract for state legislative advocacy services with Carter, Wetch & Associates for four years at a cost not to exceed \$618,243 with an option to extend for another four years.

Background: MTC has been represented in Sacramento by Carter, Wetch & Associates since January 2006. The most recent contract, initiated in November 2013 and extended three times, was a competitive procurement and expired on November 17, 2019.

On November 1, MTC issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for state legislative advocacy services for an initial four-year contract with an option to extend for another four years. MTC budgeted for state advocacy services at a rate of \$150,000 for FY 2019-20; subsequent years include a 2 percent cost of living adjustment.

The RFQ was distributed through MTC's online procurement system. Recipients included more than 270 known lobbying firms in Sacramento and nearly 150 public agency partners who work on legislative issues in order to ensure wide distribution to potential proposers. Though there appeared to be initial interest from a number of candidates—363 firms opened the consultant contact email and 16 downloaded the RFQ—we ultimately only received one Statement of Qualification (SOQ) from Carter, Wetch & Associates, with Mercury Public Affairs as a subcontractor (the Carter, Wetch & Associates team).

This SOQ was reviewed by an evaluation panel of MTC staff based on the following factors:

1. Firm and team qualifications (50%)
2. Demonstrated knowledge of transportation policy and funding issues (20%)
3. Potential conflicts of interest representing MTC and other clients (20%)
4. Annual rates and cost to MTC (10%)

Based on the evaluation panel review, staff is confident that the Carter, Wetch & Associates team will provide the agency with top notch access to legislators and staff in the State Assembly and Senate as well as the Newsom Administration.

With respect to the first criterion—firm and team qualifications—the evaluation panel members gave the proposer very high rankings. The five proposed team members—Scott Wetch, Mike Monagan, and Allison Ramsey with Carter, Wetch & Associates and Dustin McFetridge and Paul Bauer with Mercury Public Affairs—collectively bring 128 years of experience to bear on behalf of MTC. Under MTC's current contract, Carter, Wetch & Associates along with Duncan McFetridge from Mercury Public Affairs has repeatedly demonstrated their ability to oppose adverse legislation as well as the ability to shepherd legislation sponsored or supported by MTC to the finish line. Key items of legislation

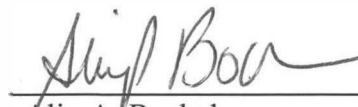
enacted since 2014 (the first year of the firm's most recent contract) include AB 516 (Mullin, 2016), establishing the new temporary license plate program; SB 1128 (Glazer, 2016), removing the sunset date on the Bay Area Commuter Benefit program; SB 595 (Beall, 2017), authorizing Regional Measure 3; and SB 1 (Beall, 2017), which raised significant new dedicated state funding for transportation. The Carter, Wetch & Associates team also helped secure passage of numerous MTC-supported housing bills in 2019.

The Carter Wetch & Associates team has experience in the specifics of transportation policy and funding and demonstrates an impressive track record with respect to political strategy as well as strong relationships in Sacramento among legislators and the Administration. The panel believes the firm is well positioned to continue to effectively implement MTC's legislative priorities.

Another major consideration of the panel was with respect to the conflict of interest criterion. The proposer has no other transportation-only clients, though Carter, Wetch & Associates do represent the Mayor's Office of the City & County of San Francisco.

With respect to the cost criteria, the team proposed funding at the level budgeted by MTC and indicated in the RFQ. Staff will negotiate with the firm on a final amount not to exceed \$618,241 over four years.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Committee authorize the Executive Director or designee to negotiate and enter into a contract with Carter, Wetch & Associates not to exceed \$618,241 for state legislative advocacy services, assuming the MTC Administration Committee approved this contract at its December 11, 2019 meeting, and subject to the agency's operating budget approval process, with an option to extend for another four years, subject to the parties' agreement on renewal terms.


Alix A. Bockelman

REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE APPROVAL

Summary of Proposed Contract

Work Item No.:	1132
Consultant:	Carter, Wetch & Associates Sacramento, CA
Work Project Title:	Sacramento Legislative Advocacy Services
Purpose of Project:	To provide lobbying services in Sacramento, California
Brief Scope of Work:	Represent MTC's interests at the state level before the California Legislature and Administration
Project Cost Not to Exceed:	\$618,241 \$150,000 for year 1 (calendar year 2020) \$153,000 for year 2 (calendar year 2021) \$156,060 for year 3 (calendar year 2022) \$159,181 for year 4 (calendar year 2023)
Funding Source:	TDA, STA
Fiscal Impact:	Funds for FY 2019-20 are programmed in FY 2019-20 adopted agency budget; future fiscal years are subject to the agency budget approval process.
Motion by Committee:	That the Executive Director or designee is authorized to negotiate and enter into a contract with Carter, Wetch & Associates for lobbying services as described in the Administration Committee Summary Sheet dated December 11, 2019 and the Chief Financial Officer is directed to set aside funds as specified above for such a contract, subject to necessary budget approvals.
Administration Committee:	<hr/> Federal D. Glover, Chair
Date Approved:	December 11, 2019
Legislation Committee:	<hr/> Jake Mackenzie, Chair
Date Approved:	December 13, 2019