

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission
Operations Committee**

November 12, 2021

Agenda Item 4e

**Contract – North Bay Baylands Regional Conservation Investment Strategy:
Environmental Science Associates (\$380,000)**

Subject:

Contract with Environmental Science Associates to develop a landscape-scale conservation vision for the North Bay Baylands to identify conservation strategies and facilitate their implementation as compensatory and advanced mitigation for Resilient State Route 37 Corridor Program.

Background:

Since 2015, MTC has been collaborating with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA), Solano Transportation Authority, Napa Valley Transportation Authority, and Transportation Authority of Marin to deliver Resilient State Route 37 Corridor Program improvements. As approved by the State Route 37 Policy Committee, MTC has facilitated planning for project delivery that integrates transportation and ecology goals and actions that guide multi-modal mobility, wetland conservation, sea level rise adaptation, and social and economic equity.

In February 2021, MTC, in partnership with the San Francisco Estuary Partnership (SFEP), Caltrans, and SCTA, applied for funding from the State of California, Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) to prepare a Regional Conservation Investment Strategy (RCIS) for the North Bay to support the delivery of Resilient State Route 37 Corridor Program. In May 2021, this Committee authorized \$640,000 in grant funding from the WCB, matched by \$100,000 from the Bay Area Toll Authority, plus in-kind staff cost contributions from MTC, SFEP, and Caltrans to support the development of the RCIS by the project's core team and consultant(s).

The North Bay Baylands RCIS will build on the substantial available scientific data and planning processes within the North Bay and will be consistent with California Department of Fish and Wildlife guidelines, including identifying conservation areas and strategies to facilitate advance mitigation for Resilient State Route 37 Corridor Program impacts. The scope of the RCIS will include the development and implementation of a Public Engagement Plan, with a focus on

equity priority communities, and an existing condition report to include land use, land cover data, species habitat models, and existing natural and built environments. The consultant will then identify actions that would implement and advance the conservation of focal species in response to identified stressors, including protecting and enhancing ecological processes, natural communities, and habitat connectivity. The RCIS will also define a framework to promote the implementation of conservation strategies, including developing mitigation credit agreements that could provide advance mitigation for future Resilient State Route 37 Corridor Program project impacts that require compensatory mitigation. Attachment A includes a summary of Environmental Science Associates small business and disadvantaged business enterprise status.

Procurement Process:

In July 2021, MTC issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire a consultant to develop an RCIS for North Bay Baylands. In September, MTC received proposals from AECOM Technical Services, Inc. (AECOM) and Environmental Science Associates (ESA). A panel comprised of staff from MTC, SCTA, SFEP, and Caltrans reviewed the proposals and evaluated them based on each firm's understanding of the project, qualifications, cost-effectiveness, and presentation. The California State Coastal Conservancy and additional MTC staff also served as technical advisors. The evaluation panel and advisors found both firms to be highly qualified, so interviews were held on October 5, 2021. Based upon the evaluation and interviews, staff recommends the selection of ESA.

The ESA team outlined an approach that demonstrated their extensive experience with North Bay environmental planning and wetland restoration, understanding of the RCIS process and goals in relation to other Resilient State Route 37 Corridor Program processes, and how the strategies developed in the RCIS will be designed to build consensus and support implementable outcomes.

The table below provides the final ranking based upon the panel evaluations:

Ranking	Consultant
1	Environmental Science Associates
2	AECOM Technical Services, Inc.

Issues:

None identified.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Operations Committee authorize the Executive Director or designee to negotiate and enter into a contract with Environmental Science Associates in an amount not to exceed \$380,000 to develop a Regional Conservation Investment Strategy for the North Bay Baylands.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Small Business Enterprise Status



Andrew B. Fremier

Attachment A

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Small Business Enterprise Status

Prime Contractor

Firm Name	Role on Project	DBE* Yes / No	If DBE Yes, List #	SBE** Yes / No	If SBE Yes, List #
Environmental Science Associates	Prime	No		No	

*Denotes certification by the California Unified Certification Program (CUCP).

**Denotes certification by the State of California.

Request for Committee Approval

Summary of Proposed Contract

Work Item No.: 1120

Consultant: Environmental Science Associates
San Francisco, California

Work Project Title: North Bay Baylands Regional Conservation Investment Strategy

Purpose of Project: Develop a landscape-scale conservation vision for the North Bay Baylands and identify and promote the implementation of conservation strategies as compensatory and as advanced mitigation for Resilient State Route 37 Corridor Program improvements.

Brief Scope of Work: Conduct an RCIS that includes: engaging with environmental specialists, stakeholders, and the community; defining the regional setting; conducting a climate change/sea level rise analysis; developing conservation strategies; and preparing a Draft and Final RCIS.

Project Cost Not to Exceed: \$380,000

Funding Source: Wildlife Conservation Board Grant Funds (2408)

Fiscal Impact: WCB grant funds are included in the MTC FY 2021-22 Budget

Motion by Committee: That the Executive Director or designee is authorized to negotiate and enter into a contract with Environmental Science Associates to develop an RCIS described above and in the Operations Committee Summary Sheet dated November 12, 2021 and that the Chief Financial Officer is authorized to set aside \$380,000 for such contract.

Operations Committee:

Carol Dutra-Vernaci, Chair

Approved: November 12, 2021