

Association of Bay Area Governments

Executive Board

November 18, 2021

Agenda Item 6.e.

Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN)

Subject:

Authorization to enter into a contract amendment with Grounded Research and Consulting, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$250,000 for services for the Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) through December 31, 2022.

Background:

Since 2013, the Bay Area Regional Energy Network (BayREN) has implemented a portfolio of energy efficiency programs across the region. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) serves as the program administrator and lead agency for a 10-member unincorporated association of local government entities.

On May 31, 2018, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) issued Decision 18-05-041¹ which among other things, authorized funding for BayREN through 2025, allowed for modifications to the existing portfolio, and increased the portfolio's total and annualized budget. PG&E – as directed by the CPUC – is the fiscal agent for BayREN. The CPUC has also allowed PG&E and BayREN to negotiate contract terms independent of the CPUC. ABAG and PG&E have a contract for funding through December 2022 or FY 2022-23. The overall BayREN budget is developed each calendar year and the contracts have historically been amended on an annual basis or as needed.

All energy efficiency program administrators – including BayREN – have been directed by the CPUC in D.21-05-021 to file a new Business Plan for activities in 2024 through 2032. The CPUC is also placing a greater emphasis on equity programs particularly for the Regional Energy Networks.

In 2017, ABAG issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to establish qualified consultants to perform evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) services for BayREN. Grounded Research and Consulting, LLC, a women-owned small business, responded to the RFQ and sufficiently demonstrated experience conducting EM&V studies of relevant program areas and of local government programs. Grounded Research and Consulting, LLC has completed several studies for BayREN that have provided significant benefit to BayREN programs and operations. Grounded has also represented BayREN in several CPUC mandated working groups formed to develop metrics for new equity and market support programs that will be part of the BayREN Business Plan.

The funding associated with this amendment will permit Grounded to assist with the development of the Business Plan relating to program and portfolio metrics and outcomes.

¹ <http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M215/K706/215706139.PDF>

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Grounded has unique knowledge of these issues and the continuation of their services is critical at this juncture.

In 2022, ABAG will issue a new RFQ for EMV services commencing in 2023.

Issues:

None.

Recommended Action:

The Executive Board is requested to authorize the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Transportation commission, or her designee, on behalf of the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Bay Area Regional Energy Network, to enter into a contract amendment with Grounded Research and Consulting, LLC in an amount not to exceed \$250,000, for a total amount of \$1,103,080, to provide services for BayREN implementation through December 31, 2022.

Attachments:

Summary Approval Grounded Research and Consulting, LLC

Reviewed:



Therese W. McMillan