



SACOG Board of Directors

August 8, 2013

Approve Contract for Federal Policy Services

Issue: Should SACOG enter into an agreement with Transportation for America for federal policy services?

Recommendation: The Government Relations & Public Affairs Committee unanimously recommends that the Board approve a contract with Transportation for America for federal policy services to assist SACOG in advancing its Federal Advocacy Principles.

Committee Action/Discussion: In March, the Board approved the release of a Request for Proposals for federal advocacy services, after being represented by The Ferguson Group for over a decade. SACOG staff received seven proposals, and interviewed four candidate firms: Mannatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP; The Ferguson Group; Transportation for America; and Van Scoyoc Associates, Inc. The interview panel included: SACOG staff and local partners (Mark Prestwich, City of Sacramento; Dirk Braziel, Yolo County, and Stacey McKinley, The McKinley Group).

The panel unanimously recommended Transportation for America because of its policy area expertise, national perspective in urban and rural communities, bipartisan approach, success in securing grants, and unique access to key officials in Congress and the Administration. Staff believes this organization is best qualified to assist SACOG in pursuing its federal advocacy objectives.

By working with a non-traditional advocate, SACOG can benefit from the combination of Transportation for America's strengths with those of SACOG staff. In the proposed contract, Transportation for America will not serve as a lobbyist. SACOG staff, as employees of a public agency, are permitted to interact directly with federal officials without registering to lobby.

Staff recognizes that this is a new approach for the agency and divergent from our historic use of a lobbying firm. Therefore, staff recommends that the contract be awarded through the end of the 2013-14 fiscal year, with option to renew annually for up to three additional years. Staff would bring the contract back to the Board for consideration before renewing it. This provision would allow for committee and Board review of the effectiveness of this approach in meeting the Board's priorities as represented in the Federal Advocacy Principles.

The contract is included in the adopted 2013-14 Board and Advocacy Budget. Staff is seeking Board approval of a contract in the amount of \$39,950 for federal policy services from August 15, 2013 to August 14, 2014. The proposed scope of work is attached.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Chief Executive Officer

MM:EJ:RS:ef
Attachment

Key Staff: Erik Johnson, Government & Media Affairs Coordinator, (916) 340-6247
Rebecca Sloan, Director of External Affairs and Member Services, (916) 340-6224

Transportation for America Draft Scope of Work

General:

Contractor will provide federal policy services to assist SACOG in advancing its Federal Advocacy Principles, actively pursue opportunities that may unexpectedly arise, and generally educate elected officials, SACOG and local agency staff.

Tasks:

General tasks to be completed include, but are not limited to:

- 1) At least one annual scoping meeting with SACOG staff;
- 2) Assist in developing SACOG's Federal Policy Agenda;
- 3) Provide Legislative Analysis;
- 4) Provide Hearing Summaries;
- 5) Provide a schedule of meetings for SACOG;
- 6) Establish and maintain working relationships with key committee staff and executive branch officials;
- 7) Analyze and provide recommendations for responding to proposed regulations;
- 8) Prepare SACOG for seeking appropriations;
- 9) Provide meeting materials;
- 10) Provide reports, at least monthly, to SACOG staff, Board of Directors and Board Committee(s);
- 11) Provide End of Year Summary; and
- 12) Meet with and report to SACOG staff as needed.

Schedule:

SACOG and Contractor will agree to a project schedule by September 30, 2013. Changes to project schedule shall be made as needed, subject to approval of SACOG.

Budget:

The total cost for this project shall not exceed Thirty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty dollars (\$39,950).

Project Management:

James Corless will serve as Project Manager for Contractor. He will be supported by a project staff from Transportation for America and Transportation for America's two parent organizations, Reconnecting America and Smart Growth America. There shall be no change in the Contractor's Project Manager or other key staff without advance approval by SACOG.

Project Staff

- Nick Donohue, Policy Director, Transportation for America
- Sarah Kline, Policy Director, Reconnecting America
- Catherine Hartnett, Director of Government Affairs and Outreach, Smart Growth America
- Kevin DeGood, Deputy Policy Director, Transportation for America