

## **Transportation Committee**

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 27, 2021

**Subject:** Marketing Research Services, Contract 21P137

### **Proposed Action**

The Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contract 21P137 with RSG for the purpose of conducting market research in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000.

### **Summary of Committee Discussion/Questions**

Metro Transit Market Development Manager Maria Cone and Analytics and Research Manager Eric Lind presented this item. Chamblis and Chair Barber expressed their appreciation for staff looking at this differently and breaking it into two separate contracts to allow for more opportunities for vendors. Chamblis asked how the contractor's ideas or experiences allows them to be more knowledgeable and able to help us with the local market. Lind responded that the vendor has worked with the Council on the Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI) program, both in terms of household inventory and as a subcontractor for the transit onboard survey. Lind added that the vendor has worked with similar transit customers in other systems around the country and have a good handle on how to reach customers of all types.

Motion by Zeran, seconded by Cummings. Motion carried.

## Transportation Committee

Meeting date: October 11, 2021

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of October 27, 2021

**Subject:** Marketing Research Services, Contract 21P137

**District(s), Member(s):** All

**Policy/Legal Reference:** FM 14-2 Expenditures for the Procurement of Goods and Services

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Wes Kooistra, General Manager  
Lesley Kandaras, Chief of Staff  
Bruce Howard, Director of Marketing and Transit Information  
Maria Cone, Manager of Market Development

**Division/Department:** Metro Transit, Marketing and Transit Information

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to negotiate and execute contract 21P137 with Resource Systems Group (RSG) for the purpose of conducting market research in an amount not to exceed \$1,500,000.

### Background

Metro Transit utilizes a marketing research service to assist the development of annual marketing initiatives. Research is used to seek feedback from riders, potential riders, specific fare tool users, brand awareness, customer satisfaction and assist in long term strategic planning. Previously this contract encompassed an advertising agency that assisted with media planning, creative development, and marketing research. That contract expires October 31, 2021. Due to the change in needs and the specialized services, Metro Transit will split the media planning, buying and the marketing research services into two contracts.

A Request for Proposals was issued on July 20, 2021. A pre-proposal meeting was hosted by Council staff that outlined the solicitation requirements, discussed project specifications and responded to plan holder inquires. There were twelve registered plan holders, ten consultants, two plan rooms and seven plan holders identified as minority, woman, small or disadvantaged business enterprises. The Council received five proposals to be evaluated for the consideration of award and the following criteria was used in the evaluation of proposals; quality, qualifications, experience, price and the ability to meet current and future needs.

Staff recommend RSG as the most advantageous proposer to Metro Transit and the Council. RSG have extensive experience doing market research in the transit industry and specific experience implementing an on-board Travel Behavior Inventory (TBI) survey and the Covid travel survey. RSG has a deep knowledge of surveys for riders and non-riders, mobile ticket app, segmented audience, and long-term strategic research planning.

### Office of Equal Opportunity

The Office of Equal Opportunity set a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal of fifteen percent (15%). To be found responsive, a proposer must

meet the DBE requirements of the contract by either meeting the DBE goal or making adequate good faith efforts to meet the goal.

### **Rationale**

The execution of professional/technical contract in excess of \$500,000 requires Council approval.

### **Thrive Lens Analysis**

This action will advance the Thrive outcomes of Prosperity and Equity by connecting more residents to jobs and housing opportunities and by making the region more economically competitive. It will also advance the Thrive outcome of Livability through long term research initiatives to help rebuild transit ridership. By growing transit ridership, the Council offers more travel options while helping accommodate the expected population growth by supporting transit-friendly development.

### **Funding**

Funding is available in Metro Transit's annual operating budget and the procurement process will allow both local and federal dollars to be used.

### **Known Support / Opposition**

There is no known opposition to the proposed action.