

Committee Report



Committee Meeting Date: October 25, 2023

For the Metropolitan Council: November 8, 2023

Business Item: 2023-255

Information Technology Professional Services Staff Augmentation, Master Contracts 22P172A - EE

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute contracts 22P172A-EE for informational technology professional services staff augmentation for a 5-year term for a cumulative not to exceed amount of \$35,000,000 as follows:

Organization	Contract Number	Contract Amount
22nd Century Technologies Inc	22P172A	\$741,928
Abacus Service Corp	22P172B	\$741,928
AgreeYa Solutions Inc	22P172C	\$741,928
Beacon Systems	22P172D	\$741,928
California Creative Solutions Inc	22P172E	\$741,928
CDW-G	22P172F	\$741,928
Compunnel Software Group Inc	22P172G	\$741,928
DevCare Solutions Ltd	22P172H	\$741,928
Enclipse Corporation*	22P172I	\$1,200,000
Enterprise Solutions Inc	22P172J	\$741,928
ePATHUSA	22P172K	\$741,928
ERPA	22P172L	\$1,200,000
Evolvers Group	22P172M	\$1,200,000
HighCloud Solutions Inc*	22P172N	\$1,200,000
Honorvet Technologies	22P172O	\$741,928
Iceberg Technology Group	22P172P	\$741,928
ILM Professional Services Inc*	22P172Q	\$1,200,000
IPCS, Inc*	22P172R	\$1,200,000
IRA IT Solutions Inc*	22P172S	\$1,200,000
IT Audit Labs*	22P172T	\$1,200,000
KNZ Solutions Inc*	22P172U	\$1,200,000
Kortech Consulting Inc*	22P172V	\$741,928
Lancesoft Inc	22P172W	\$741,928
Paragon Development Systems	22P172X	\$741,928
Protiviti Government Services Inc	22P172Y	\$1,200,000
RBA Inc	22P172Z	\$741,928

Resource Logistics Inc	22P172AA	\$741,928
RK Consultancy Services Inc*	22P172BB	\$741,928
Sterling Computers	22P172CC	\$741,928
TechZavy Inc*	22P172DD	\$741,928
The Macro Group Inc*	22P172EE	\$741,928
* Metropolitan Council Underutilized Businesses		

Summary of Management Committee Discussion/Questions

Chief Information Officer Craig Bantz of the Information Services (IS) Department took the lead on presenting the item. He was accompanied by Ashanti Payne, Assistant Director of the Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity, and Jody Jacoby, Chief Procurement Officer. Together they provided background information on the IS Department need of the staff-augmentation project, goals of the project, and the process that was followed in creating the pilot program. They provided a detailed presentation explaining the unique aspects of the procurement program.

A focus on this master contract program is engaging Metropolitan Council Underutilized Businesses (MCUB) vendors. The partnership between the three departments is hopefully going to be an example of a creative and comprehensive approach to working with the MCUB vendor community. The IS Department has the goal of being fully staffed in 2024.

Committee members asked how many staff members are currently in the IS department? Mr. Bantz responded that currently there are about 13 vacancies with 140 full-time positions authorized.

They additionally asked if there is going to be an assessment loop put in place to ensure that project goals are being achieved? Mr. Bantz stated that there will be regular assessment of spend levels with MCUBs to ensure that program goals are being met. OEEO and IS-procurement will be in dialogue about program spend levels and how to improve processes.

Committee members responded with strong encouragement that this type of MCUB engagement program be expanded into other departments. Mr. Payne responded that this type of partnership with the procurement division is important.

Committee members also asked if there was a large up-front cost to implement this program? Mr. Bantz responded that although it was more effort up front for staff members, in the future it will reduce the burden for IS-personnel to secure contractors. To ensure best pricing with those vendors participating in the master contract program, a mini-request-for-proposal process will be utilized for specific vendor engagements and work assignments. In total, the presentation and follow-up discussion took approximately 40 minutes.

Motion by Lilligren, seconded by Pacheco; Motion carried

Business Item

Metropolitan Council



Committee Meeting Date: October 25, 2023

For the Metropolitan Council: November 8, 2023

Business Item: 2023-255

Information Technology Professional Services Staff Augmentation, Master Contracts 22P172A - EE

District(s), Member(s): All

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

Staff Prepared/Presented: Craig Bantz, Chief Information Officer, 651-602-1443

Division/Department: Regional Administration/Information Services

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute contracts 22P172A-EE for informational technology professional services staff augmentation for a 5-year term for a cumulative not to exceed amount of \$35,000,000 as follows:

Organization	Contract Number	Contract Amount
22nd Century Technologies Inc	22P172A	\$741,928
Abacus Service Corp	22P172B	\$741,928
AgreeYa Solutions Inc	22P172C	\$741,928
Beacon Systems	22P172D	\$741,928
California Creative Solutions Inc	22P172E	\$741,928
CDW-G	22P172F	\$741,928
Compunnel Software Group Inc	22P172G	\$741,928
DevCare Solutions Ltd	22P172H	\$741,928
Enclipse Corporation*	22P172I	\$1,200,000
Enterprise Solutions Inc	22P172J	\$741,928
ePATHUSA	22P172K	\$741,928
ERPA	22P172L	\$1,200,000
Evolvers Group	22P172M	\$1,200,000
HighCloud Solutions Inc*	22P172N	\$1,200,000
Honorvet Technologies	22P172O	\$741,928
Iceberg Technology Group	22P172P	\$741,928
ILM Professional Services Inc*	22P172Q	\$1,200,000
IPCS, Inc*	22P172R	\$1,200,000
IRA IT Solutions Inc*	22P172S	\$1,200,000

IT Audit Labs*	22P172T	\$1,200,000
KNZ Solutions Inc*	22P172U	\$1,200,000
Kortech Consulting Inc*	22P172V	\$741,928
Lancesoft Inc	22P172W	\$741,928
Paragon Development Systems	22P172X	\$741,928
Protiviti Government Services Inc	22P172Y	\$1,200,000
RBA Inc	22P172Z	\$741,928
Resource Logistics Inc	22P172AA	\$741,928
RK Consultancy Services Inc*	22P172BB	\$741,928
Sterling Computers	22P172CC	\$741,928
TechZavy Inc*	22P172DD	\$741,928
The Macro Group Inc*	22P172EE	\$741,928
* Metropolitan Council Underutilized Businesses		

Background

Information Services has been pursuing a 3-part strategic plan to enable IT success at the Council with professional services. This business item represents the final of the 3 steps and our longer-term approach for inclusively procuring IT professional services in a sustainable fashion. The first step was an emergency declaration (BI 2022-164) to address urgent near-term needs, followed by a bridge (BI 2022-249) use of cooperative purchasing ventures (CPV) contracts to create sufficient runway to finish the RFP addressed by this final business item and step in the plan.

It is a common information technology (IT) industry practice to use contracted services to supplement in-house staff on large projects, as well as to temporarily backfill for vacant positions as replacement staff are hired. The average state and local government IT budget is 11% allocated to professional services. Historically, the Information Services (IS) budget is three percent allocated to contracted services in 2023, with 2% in 2022 and 2021. Professional services have proven critical to IS's success since 2021. It has helped bridge staffing gaps after "the great resignation" and will be key to succeeding in major new initiatives, such as the Transit Rider Investment Program (TRIP) and Business Process Systems Integration (BPSI) ERP projects.

As critical as professional services are to the Council's success, our history of limited use means we have had limited preexisting master agreements for IT professional services. The lack of an optimized procurement for professional services has slowed our adoption and driven us to use contracts offered through CPVs. The vendors offered through CPVs are all large-nationwide companies. The emergency declaration issued in 2022 for IS staffing the first step in our 3-part strategic IT services sourcing plan allowed the Council to engage with a wider variety of vendors. IS especially focused on engaging Metropolitan Council Underutilized Businesses (MCUB) vendors driving nearly 50% of all dollars spent under the declaration to MCUBs. Through the partnerships built with the declaration, the exceptional value and quality of smaller firms became evident.

A Request for Proposals was issued on October 31, 2022. A pre-proposal meeting was hosted by Council staff that outlined the solicitation requirements, discussed project specifications and responded to plan holder inquiries. There were 188 registered plan holders and 125 of plan

holders identified as minority, woman, veteran, small or disadvantaged business enterprises. The Council received 111 proposals on December 21, 2022, to be evaluated for the consideration of award and used the quality of the proposal, qualifications/experience of the proposer, service delivery plan, key personnel, qualifications/experience of the sub-consultants(s), and pricing/costs, as the criteria for evaluation. The evaluation panel reached consensus that the proposals submitted by the referenced list of organizations are the most advantageous to the Council and recommend for award.

The Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity did not assign an MCUB goal to this project; however, the IS Department has committed to a 25% MCUB participation across the master contracts. Of the 31 vendors being recommended for award, 11 are MCUBs which are denoted by asterisks in the table above. These master contracts will be structured for an initial one-year term with an option to extend up to four additional one-year periods for a total of five years.

Rationale

The execution of professional service contracts exceeding \$500,000 require Council approval.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This contract will further advance the Thrive outcomes of Stewardship and Sustainability by ensuring reliability, resilience, security, and cost-effectiveness which is critical to the Council's daily efficient operation.

Funding

Funding is available and included in the Information Services operating budget using local funds.

Small Business Inclusion

The Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity (OEEO) did not establish a goal for this project. OEEO, along with IS and Procurement worked together to take a new and innovative approach to this contract. IS has committed to an overall MCUB Achievement of 25% on the total value of the master contracts. OEEO will meet regularly with IS to monitor the MCUB achievement and to ensure that the overall goal is met.

The Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity (OEEO) did not establish a goal for this project. OEEO, along with IS and Procurement worked together to take a new and innovative approach to this contract. IS has committed to an overall MCUB Achievement of 25% on the total value of the Master Contract. OEEO will meet regularly with IS to monitor the MCUB achievement and to ensure that the overall goal is met.