



November 19, 2020

To: Legislative and Communications Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Performance Evaluation of Sacramento Legislative Advocate, Platinum Advisors, LLC

Overview

The firm Platinum Advisors, LLC provides state legislative advocacy services for the Orange County Transportation Authority in Sacramento. A staff evaluation of the services provided this session is presented to the Board of Directors' for consideration and further comment.

Recommendation

Receive and file the staff evaluation as an information item and provide any additional comments.

Background

On June 23, 2014, the OCTA Board of Directors (Board) awarded an agreement for state legislative advocacy services to Platinum Advisors, LLC (Platinum). As part of the contract, the services of Topp Strategies, LLC (Topp Strategies) as a subcontractor were included, with Moira Topp serving as the lead legislative advocate for OCTA. Since 2007, Moira Topp served as OCTA's primary legislative advocate through her former employment with Sloat Higgins Jensen and Associates, and as a subcontractor on the current contract with Platinum.

The initial term of the agreement with Platinum began on August 1, 2014 and extended to July 31, 2016. The agreement also included two, two-year option terms, at the discretion of the Board, to exercise at a future date. On June 25, 2018, the OCTA Board exercised the second of these options. With that term set to expire on December 31, 2020, on October 26, 2020, the Board awarded a new contract to Topp Strategies, with Platinum as a subcontractor. The new agreement will take effect on January 1, 2021, and be for two years,

with two, two-year option terms. Moira Topp will continue to serve in her role as lead legislative advocate for OCTA.

Discussion

Annually, OCTA staff evaluates the services provided by the Sacramento legislative advocate with respect to major issues addressed and general services provided. Staff's evaluation of the services provided by Platinum is included in Attachment A. The major issues and general services provided by Platinum have been evaluated based on effort and outcome using a rating of excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor.

Staff has rated Platinum's efforts overall as "very good" based on responsiveness, advancing OCTA's positions and policies, and assisting in building cooperative relationships with legislators and members of various state departments, boards, and commissions. Staff has rated Platinum's outcomes overall as "very good" based on the outcomes of the issues discussed.

Next year, as the new contract begins with Topp Strategies, the priority focus will continue to be funding and policy flexibility for transportation agencies to respond and recover from the coronavirus pandemic. In addition, priorities for Topp Strategies will include advancement of OCTA's positions on legislation and policy goals contained in the Board adopted 2021-22 OCTA State Legislative Platform; actively participating in state budget discussions; providing input on discussions about Transportation Development Act reforms; engaging in legislation and policy discussions related to implementation of the Governor's Executive Orders related to greenhouse gas emission reductions and expanded use of zero-emission vehicle technology, including proposals on how to prioritize transportation funding expenditures and competitive grant awards; and seeking clarification on interoperability standards for toll agencies.

To assist the Board in fully evaluating Platinum, the legislative advocate's current scope of work is included as Attachment B.

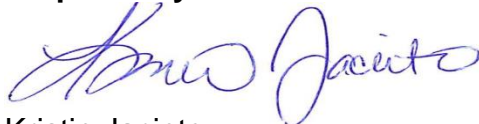
Summary

An evaluation of state legislative advocacy services performed by Platinum is presented to the Board for information and further comment.

Attachments

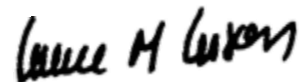
- A. Staff Evaluation of Services Provided by Platinum Advisors, LLC for 2020
- B. Sacramento Legislative Advocacy and Consulting Services Scope of Work

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