



November 18, 2021

To: Legislative and Communications Committee

From: Darrell E. Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Performance Evaluation of Federal Legislative Advocate,
Potomac Partners, DC

Overview

The firm Potomac Partners, DC provides federal legislative advocacy services for the Orange County Transportation Authority in Washington, DC. A staff evaluation of the services provided this legislative session is presented to the Board of Directors for consideration and further comment.

Recommendation

Receive and file the staff evaluation of the federal advocacy services of Potomac Partners, DC as an information item and provide any additional comments.

Background

Since 2003, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) has contracted with Potomac Partners, DC (PPDC) for federal legislative advocacy services. Most recently, on October 22, 2018, the OCTA Board of Directors (Board) approved a contract with PPDC to provide federal advocacy and consulting services for an initial term of two years through December 31, 2020, with two, two-year option terms. On June 22, 2020, the Board exercised the first two-year option term, which will expire on December 31, 2022. The federal legislative advocacy and consulting services provided by PPDC are led by Richard Alcalde and Daniel Feliz.

Discussion

The evaluation of federal legislative advocacy services covers major issues addressed and general services provided by PPDC, mirroring the process also used for state legislative advocacy services. Staff's evaluation of the services provided by PPDC is included in Attachment A. The major issues and general

services provided by PPDC have been evaluated based on effort and outcome using a rating of excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor.

Staff has rated PPDC's efforts overall as "very good" based on responsiveness, advancing OCTA's positions and policies, and assisting in building cooperative bipartisan relationships with members of Congress and the Administration. Staff has rated PPDC's outcomes overall as "excellent" based on the outcomes of the issues discussed.

Priorities for PPDC for next year will largely focus on implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, in addition to any action on a potential reconciliation package. PPDC activities will largely focus on ensuring appropriations are consistent with the reauthorization bill, while maximizing funding for OCTA projects and programs. As part of this effort, if Congress continues to authorize member designated projects and community project funding requests in future appropriations bills, PPDC will also be focused on seeking opportunities to fund specific OCTA projects, consistent with Board priorities. In addition, PPDC will seek to advance OCTA's policy positions outlined in the 2021-22 OCTA Federal Legislative Platform, including informing any proposals that may impact formula funding or which may delay OCTA federal grants, efforts to attract increased transit ridership, including incentives to promote free or reduced fares, potential incentives for conversion to zero-emission transit, and streamlining and expansion of federal financing

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

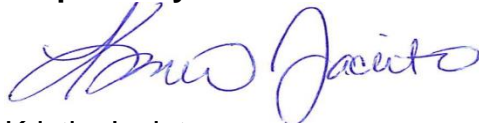
Summary

An evaluation of federal legislative advocacy services performed by Potomac Partners, DC is presented to the Board of Directors for information and further comment.

Attachments

- A. Staff Evaluation of Services Provided by Potomac Partners, DC for 2021
- B. Scope of Work Federal Legislative Advocates

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