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June 21, 2018

To: Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Chair
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From:  Scott Minnix
Internal Services Department

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**REPORT BACK ON PUBLICIZING COUNTY CONTRACT OPPORTUNITIES MOTION
ITEM 7, AGENDA OF APRIL 24, 2018)**

On April 24, 2018, your Board directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), in consultation with the Internal Services Department (ISD), County Counsel, and Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) to report back in writing within 30 days on the following:

1. The process that the County of Los Angeles (County) employs to select websites and print publications to advertise County contract opportunities, including the factors considered when deciding whether or not to post an advertisement;
2. The websites and print publications regularly used to advertise contract opportunities with the County;
3. The mechanism used to determine whether posted opportunities are effectively maximizing outreach to prospective vendors, and are intentionally including all segments of the population;
4. A recommended policy to ensure regular updates to the County's publicizing process to promote greater access and awareness of County contract opportunities; and
5. A plan to conduct direct outreach to businesses, firms and industry groups across Los Angeles County, particularly in underserved areas of the County and to local small business enterprises (LSBEs), small business

enterprises (SBEs), minority-owned businesses, women-owned enterprises, disadvantaged and disabled veteran business enterprises (DVBES).

Following the April 24, 2018, Board Meeting, ISD convened a workgroup consisting of members from the CEO, ISD, County Counsel, and DCBA to guide the workgroup's response to your Board's April 24, 2018 directive. On May 17, 2018, the workgroup requested a 30 day extension to properly address each item in the motion. This report includes the workgroup's response to the Board's request.

Advertising Processes in the County

A review of Board Policies and Ordinances was conducted to determine the various advertisement requirements for County contracts. Board Policy 5.020, Reporting Requirement for Bids/Contracts Over \$10,000, requires that all bids and solicitations expected to exceed \$10,000 are posted to the County's "Doing Business with Us" website to provide vendors with centralized information on County solicitations. Additionally, Chapter 2.121, Contracting with Private Businesses, Section 2.121.320, Competitive sealed bidding of the County code requires that solicitations that are expected to exceed \$25,000 are published in a newspaper of general circulation within the County of Los Angeles for a reasonable time prior to bid opening.

To obtain input from departments, ISD presented this motion to the County Contracting/Monitoring Managers Committee on May 8, 2018, and invited departments to participate in a survey to identify processes used to select publications and advertise County contract opportunities. The survey results indicated departments:

- Post solicitations on the County's Doing Business with Us Website as required by County policy and procedures and their department websites
- Advertise in the publications serving the geographical locations of the solicited services
- Utilize social media platforms to advertise opportunities (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)

Website and Print Publications

Currently there is no standard process that departments use to select which websites and publications they use to advertise their County contracting opportunities beyond the "Doing Business with Us" website. Based on the department survey, the following websites and print publications were regularly used to advertise contracting opportunities:

- Antelope Valley Press
- Argonaut
- Long Beach Press Telegram
- Los Angeles Daily Journal

- Compton Bulletin
- County Department Websites
- Daily Breeze
- Daily Journal Corporation
- Doing Business With Us Website
- Eastside Sun
- Hoy
- La Opinion
- Los Angeles Daily News
- Los Angeles Sentinel
- Los Angeles Times
- Metropolitan News Company
- Press Telegram
- San Gabriel Valley Tribune
- Whittier Daily News

The two most frequently used advertising methods included: 1). "Doing Business with Us" website and 2). Department websites

Mechanism used to Determine Advertising Effectiveness

Based on the survey results, there is not currently a mechanism established to determine whether posted opportunities are effectively maximizing outreach to prospective vendors, and are intentionally including all segments of the population. As such, the workgroup is researching IT solutions to capture metrics on the effectiveness of advertising. In the interim, procedures for proposer's conferences are being revised to solicit information from vendors as to how they became aware of the contracting opportunities.

Recommended Policy

The workgroup reviewed Board Policy 5.020, and determined that this policy will require revisions to ensure regular updates to the County's publicizing process to promote greater access and awareness of County opportunities. The workgroup will present the revised policy to the Audit Committee for consideration and notification of next steps.

Future Outreach

The workgroup conducted outreach to various publications and Chambers of Commerce, engaging Rick Schwartz (DTLA News), Rosa Berumen (La Opinion), Brandon Brooks (LA Sentinel), and Jessica Duboff (LA County Chamber of Commerce) to identify opportunities to partner together and increase outreach to the vendor community on County solicitations. A Town Hall meeting with the local publications and County departments is also being planned.

ISD, together with DCBA and other departments, will increase current outreach to businesses and industry groups across Los Angeles County, particularly in the underserved areas of the County and to local small business enterprises (LSBEs), small business enterprises (SBEs), minority-owned businesses, women-owned enterprises, disadvantaged and disabled veteran business enterprises (DVBES) as follows:

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- Continued participation in Possible LA, an Entrepreneur Summit attended by over 2,000 Small Businesses aimed to provide resources to grow their business. The next event is scheduled for June 23, 2018 at the Pasadena Convention Center.
- Participating in LA County's Chamber of Commerce Small Business Council events.
- ISD will begin hosting LA County's Chamber of Commerce "Doing Business with Us Series" to engage small businesses in the bidding process with the County.
- ISD is posting County solicitations on the LA County Chamber of Commerce website and a weekly email will be sent to all Chamber members.
- Advertising in electronic Trade Journals (i.e., Construction, Community and Government Relations Group).
- Utilizing targeted e-mails to contractors and sending weekly targeted emails to subscribers to department websites regarding contract opportunities.
- Partnering with small business advocates to conduct vendor training and workshops to enhance the pool of vendors.
- Utilizing the Preference Program Enterprise list as a method for advertising solicitations.
- Publicizing solicitations on Social media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram).

The work group would like to thank all the departments that provided staff and analysis to assist with this report.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (323) 267-2101 via email at SMinnix@ISD.lacounty.gov and Christie Carr at (323) 267-3101 or via email at CCarr@ISD.lacounty.gov.

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