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**Title:** Award a contract to VRPA Technologies, Inc. in the amount of \$437,735 for Fresno Area Express Fixed Route System Restructure Public Involvement Services as required by the Federal Transportation Administration

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**Attachments:** 1. RFQ Title VI 041217.pdf, 2. Scoring Summary.pdf, 3. VRPA Scope of Work 041217.pdf, 4. Standard Agmt VRPA 042517.pdf

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**REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

**May 11, 2017**

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**SUBJECT**

Award a contract to VRPA Technologies, Inc. in the amount of \$437,735 for Fresno Area Express Fixed Route System Restructure Public Involvement Services as required by the Federal Transportation Administration

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends Council authorize the award of a contract to VRPA Technologies, Inc. of Fresno, California, in the amount of \$437,735 to conduct Fixed Route Restructure Public Involvement Services as required by the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA).

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In June 2015, the Fresno Council of Governments (COG) conducted the Fresno Clovis Metropolitan Area Public Transportation Strategic Service Evaluation (Evaluation). The Evaluation included examination of metro travel patterns through extensive origin and destination studies, transit ride check and transfer studies, and public and stakeholder input with a goal of reducing transit travel times, and improving linkages to major trip generators. As a result of this planning effort, the Fresno Area Express (FAX) Preferred System Network was developed and identified a significant number of service improvements.

Therefore, on November 17, 2016, the Department of Transportation/FAX issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to conduct Fixed-Route System Restructure Public Involvement Services. This RFQ includes the FTA requirement to perform a Title VI Service Equity Analysis for service changes in order to analyze any adverse effects relating to possible disparate impacts on populations as determined by an analysis of race, color, or national origin, and/or disproportionate burden of low-income populations within the service area.

On February 7, 2017, proposals were received from Transportation Management & Design (TMD) of Carlsbad, CA; Jeffrey Scott Agency (JSA) of Fresno, CA; and VRPA Technologies, Inc. of Fresno, CA. A selection committee comprised of FAX, Fresno COG, and Clovis Transit selected VRPA Technologies, Inc., as the most qualified firm for this project. Sub-contractors of VRPA include Jarrett Walker and Associates and Mobility Planners.

## **BACKGROUND**

The purpose of the Evaluation was to examine metro travel patterns through extensive origin and destination studies; transit ride check and transfer studies; and public and stakeholder input with a goal of reducing transit travel times, increasing service reliability, and improving linkages to major trip generators. The improvement of transit travel time, reliability and responsiveness to community needs are critically important for making transit a viable alternative in contemporary urban environments.

The Evaluation identified a FAX Preferred System Network that included a Frequent Service Network consisting of Shaw, Cedar, Blackstone, and Ventura/Kings Canyon. The Frequent Service Network emphasizes 15-minute or more frequent service on key corridors serving the densest developments. This would be the foundation for multi-directional travel and have the most promise to increase productivity throughout the transit system. In order to implement these changes,

The Transportation sub-committee reviewed and discussed the Preferred System Network with modifications to the service restructuring as studied in 2015. At the September 1, 2016, City Council workshop on the Strategic Services Evaluation, City Manager Bruce Rudd indicated the FTA requires extensive public and community outreach/engagement before any system restructuring can occur. The next step was to hire a consultant for this outreach as well as the Title VI analysis.

The Department of Transportation is required by the FTA Circular 4702.1B to complete a Service Equity Analysis as part of its Title VI requirements. Title VI requires recipients of Federal funding to determine whether service changes will have a discriminatory impact based on race, color, or national origin (disparate impact). In addition, although not required, it is strongly recommended by the FTA to also evaluate whether service changes would have an impact on low-income individuals

(disproportionate burden). This analysis requires extensive outreach efforts to identify any disparate impacts or disproportionate burdens on minority or low income populations.

On November 17, 2016, the Department of Transportation/FAX issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to conduct Fixed-Route System Restructure Public Involvement Services. As part of the Title VI Analysis, the consultant will develop the threshold for what determines a major service change, as well as written policies, required for Title VI compliance, defining disparate impact and disproportionate burden unique to our population. Currently, service changes that result in more than 25% change in service miles or service hours trigger the equity analysis. In addition to determining the thresholds and whether FAX has impacted a protected class, the consultant will evaluate mitigation strategies, which could include additional route changes. These changes would also need to be evaluated under the Title VI requirement.

On February 7, 2017, proposals were received from Transportation Management & Design (TMD) of Carlsbad, CA; Jeffrey Scott Agency (JSA) of Fresno, CA; and VRPA Technologies, Inc. (VRPA) of Fresno, CA. A selection committee comprised of FAX, Fresno COG, and Clovis Transit staff selected VRPA, a registered Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), as the most qualified firm for this project. Sub-contractors of VRPA include Jarrett Walker and Associates and Mobility Planners.

Proposals were reviewed by a panel that included FAX staff, Fresno COG and Clovis Transit staff, who determined VRPA was best qualified to fulfill the RFQ requirements (scoring sheets are attached).

VRPA was selected for this project based on the overall strength of its team and the proposed implementation plan. VRPA has over 28 years of transportation planning and engineering experience and has demonstrated a wide range of technical and outreach skills that directly relate to this project. It has worked extensively in the Fresno area and has an excellent working knowledge of the area. Jarrett Walker & Associates has been retained as a sub-contractor on this project due to their involvement in the development of the FAX Preferred System Network. Jarrett Walker & Associates has extensive knowledge in the transit industry and has completed more than 200 public transit projects across North America, Australia, and New Zealand. The team is also supplemented by Mobility Planners (DBE), who project managed the 2014 California Association for Coordinated Transportation Title VI Technical Assistance Project.

VRPA's proposal includes public workshops in each of the seven districts, one briefing with the City Council Transportation Sub-Committee, and four management level briefings with FAX staff and representatives of the City Manager's Office. The deliverables are:

- **Policy Refinement:** A working paper on policy options will be developed first for review by the Transit Rates and Services Committee. The working paper will define the purpose and parameters of the threshold, disparate impact, and disproportionate burden policy, and how they are applied to the service equity analysis. Examples of policies from five peers to FAX will be provided in the working paper.
- **Service Equity Analysis:** The primary approach for conducting the service equity analysis is to utilize the Remix Title VI module to evaluate whether or not there is a disparate impact on minority populations or a disproportionate burden on low income population that result from the FAX Preferred Network Plan, which is being developed for this project.

It is estimated to take approximately six to eight months to complete the project from the award of the contract. Outcomes include:

- Connecting to other service work being done on transportation
- Delivery of proposed public policy plan
- Proposed rerouting changes from public process

## **ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS**

This program is not a project pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378.

## **LOCAL PREFERENCE**

Local preference was not considered due to requirements of federal funds for this project.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no impact to the General Fund from this action. This contract is federally funded by a Federal Transit Administration Planning grant.

Attachments:

Request for Qualifications

Scoring Summary

VRPA Scope of Work

Standard Agreement - VRPA