



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: April 15, 2014

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Water Resources Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: Contract For An Advanced Metering Infrastructure Analysis

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorize the Public Works Director to execute a City Professional Services contract with Westin Engineering, Inc., in the amount of \$69,832 to perform an Advanced Metering Analysis; and approve change order authority in the amount of \$6,983 for any additional unforeseen work that may be required of Westin Engineering, Inc.

DISCUSSION:

Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) is the technology of automatically collecting consumption, diagnostic, and status data from water meters, and transferring the data over a secure network to a central database. The collected data is used for analyzing trends, troubleshooting problems, billing customers, and providing customers with current information about their consumption rates and use patterns. This timely information, coupled with analysis, can help both the water utility and its customers better manage the use and consumption of domestic water supplies.

The AMI technology would significantly change the City's meter reading practices. The City's 27,000 water meters are currently read monthly by four meter readers. AMI would create efficiencies with meter reading accuracy and timeliness, potentially reduce the need to have meter readers in the field, including lower vehicle costs and fuel consumption related to meter reading. AMI would greatly assist with managing the City's water system with regard to leak detection, consumption patterns, and troubleshooting the water system. AMI would also enable the City to provide customers with current data about their water consumption and individual use patterns to help them conserve water. However, AMI has significant initial and ongoing costs. While there would be a reduced need for meter readers, there would be an increased need to employ individuals skilled in the field of information technology and database management. Plus, while some customers might embrace AMI, others might have difficulty accepting the new technology.

Staff conducted a competitive Request for Proposal process, and is recommending that Council authorize the Public Works Director to execute a contract with Westin Engineering, Inc. (Westin) in the amount of \$69,832 to perform the proposed work and approve change order authority in the amount of \$6,983 for any additional unforeseen work that may be required by Westin.

Westin's scope of work includes considering the feasibility of implementing an AMI system in the City's water service area. Their analysis will consider the benefits and risks, along with consideration of the financial commitment necessary to successfully transfer to an AMI system and the calculated return on investment. Westin's findings will be submitted in a final report.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

There are sufficient appropriated funds in the Water Fund for these proposed services.

The Water Commission voted 4-0-0 in favor of the AMI Analysis.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

AMI is a proven water conservation tool. By providing information on daily water consumption and use patterns, customers can better manage their water use and are more likely to conserve water. Additionally, AMI data can help staff better manage the water system by quickly finding leaks, identifying water waste, and easily determining if customers are conserving water.

PREPARED BY: Catherine Taylor, Water System Manager/mh

SUBMITTED BY: Rebecca J. Bjork, Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office