



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** COUNTY MANAGER: OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

**File #:** 20-805

Board Meeting Date: 10/20/2020

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors  
**From:** Carolyn Bloede, Director, Office of Sustainability  
**Subject:** Amendment to Agreement with Ecology Action for Green Business Program Coordination, Recruitment, and Certification Services

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a resolution authorizing a fifth amendment to the agreement with Ecology Action for consulting services related to the San Mateo County Green Business Program, increasing the amount by \$210,000 for a new not to exceed amount of \$733,091.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Green Business Program provides extensive free consulting and support to small and medium businesses, bringing them through a comprehensive process to reduce the environmental impact of their operations. The program also addresses the need to assist small and medium businesses, which typically have no other or very limited support to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Businesses in the program complete the following actions, many of which save money:

- Reduce energy and water use,
- Reduce packaging and waste, including a waste sorting audit and improvements,
- Adopt products and practices that are safer for workers, the public, and the environment; dispose of hazardous waste correctly,
- Promote commute alternatives.

The program raises the visibility of certified businesses through social media advertising, a searchable database and Shop Green app, and branded collateral. It also documents metrics such as greenhouse gas emissions reductions, waste diversion and water savings.

In 2017, the Office of Sustainability (OOS) conducted a competitive bidding process and contracted with Ecology Action (EA) for \$60,000 to provide support to OOS staff working on the San Mateo County Green Business Program, including marketing services, and support with certifying complex

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businesses. In August 2018, the OOS amended the agreement increasing the amount by \$39,433 for additional marketing services. In February 2019, OOS reorganized the program to be led by contract staff to benefit from the expertise and technical knowledge of EA. The Board of Supervisors amended the agreement by increasing it by \$226,200 for a new not to exceed amount of \$325,633 and extended the term of the agreement to October 31, 2020. In June 2019, the Board of Supervisors increased the amount by \$197,458, amended the not to exceed amount to \$523,091 and eliminated the fee previously charged to businesses to participate. In March 2020, OOS amended the contract to reallocate funding between scopes with no changes to term or amount.

In 2019, the Green Business Program certified 31 new businesses, recertified 15 businesses and consulted with 54 additional businesses to improve their sustainability. During 2019, participants reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 667,110 pounds. In March 2020, the Green Business Program adapted swiftly to COVID-19, converting all services to virtual, increasing efforts to support businesses with the cost-saving Efficiency Level Certification, and providing updates about COVID-19 business resources. The Green Business Program also launched the SMC Open for Business campaign, highlighting local Green Businesses to the community as a “shop local” promotion. Since the COVID-19 emergency began in March, the program has certified 12 businesses and increased demographic diversity in its pipeline.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

The OOS is proposing to amend the agreement with EA to provide continued Green Business recruitment, certification, and recognition services, and additional outreach and marketing support, in both English and Spanish. In addition, EA will provide businesses with applicable rebates and incentives and will partner with several community-based organizations to increase the number of certified businesses in socially vulnerable areas of the County. This amendment will assist the OOS and the County to grow the Green Business Program and will help reduce the environmental impact that small and medium size businesses have in the County.

OOS received approval from the Purchasing Department to extend the EA contract for a fourth year due to COVID-19 and staffing limitations. During this time, OOS plans to complete a competitive bidding process to select a contractor for Green Business Program implementation.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the amended agreement and resolution as to form.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This amendment extends the term of the agreement to October 31, 2021 and increases the contract amount by \$210,000 for a new not to exceed total of \$733,091. The Green Business Program is funded with 75% Green Business Program General Funds and 25% AB 939 funds. The funds for the October 20, 2020 through June 30, 2021 portion of this agreement are included in the OOS FY 2020-21 Adopted Budget. The funds for the July 1 to October 31, 2021 portion of the agreement are expected to be included in the FY 2021-2022 Recommended Budget.