

**Board Report**

File #: 2024-1084, **File Type:** Contract**Agenda Number:** 5.

**PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE
APRIL 16, 2025****SUBJECT: TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
PILOT INVESTMENT FUND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR****ACTION: APPROVE CONTRACT AWARD****RECOMMENDATION**

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to award a firm fixed price Contract No. PS122552000 to Vermont Slauson - LDC, Inc. for the administration of the Transit Oriented Communities Economic Development Program (EDP) Pilot Investment Fund (Fund) in the amount of \$1,370,495 for the three-year base term, \$310,740 for the first option year, and \$253,745 for the second option year, for a total combined contract amount of \$1,934,980, effective May 1, 2025, subject to the resolution of any properly submitted protest(s), if any.

ISSUE

The Transit Oriented Communities Economic Development Program (EDP) Pilot Investment Fund (Fund) was developed to build upon Metro's construction mitigation programs to prevent displacement and to support the long-term sustainability of small businesses in Equity Focus Communities (EFC) near the K Line and Little Tokyo segment of the A/E Line. To help in structuring, launching, and administering the Fund, Metro solicited proposals from Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), which are mission-driven lenders focused on helping communities that are underserved by traditional financial institutions to become participants in the economic mainstream. Metro must select a CDFI to serve as the Fund Program Administrator to help finalize the program guidelines prior to returning to the Board and implementing the Fund.

BACKGROUND

The Board approved the EDP and \$5 million for the implementation of the Fund on December 1, 2022, contingent upon Board approval of the Fund Guidelines. The Board approved pilot program Fund Service Area (FSA) includes a half-mile radius of the K Line (formerly Crenshaw/LAX Line) and the Little Tokyo segment of the A/E Line.

As part of the Board-approved pilot program, the County Department of Economic Opportunity will transfer up to \$853,000 in repayment proceeds from the COVID-19 Recovery Loan Program to fund program administrative costs. To leverage Metro's \$5 million loan seed funding, Metro is working with the California Pollution Control Financing Authority (CPCFA) to secure \$15 million in set-aside for

business enterprises owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDI) and access to State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) programs and resources.

DISCUSSION

The Fund targets communities that typically have barriers to capital. It will provide: 1) technical assistance and access to capital with favorable terms, 2) access to private equity financing to fund startups, early-stage, and emerging companies, and 3) a pipeline to sustainability and growth for small businesses and nonprofits with a social enterprise. A social enterprise is an organization or venture (within an organization) that advances a social mission through market-based strategies.

The EDP Fund Program Administrator contract is structured to include a three-year base contract with two, one-year options to be exercised at Metro's discretion. The base contract includes internal and external stakeholder engagement, Fund set-up, program administration, and close-out. The program administrator is responsible for meeting the five tasks described below.

Task 1 - Program Administration: meet resource requirements, including personnel and the infrastructure to administer the Fund. Deliverables include the Personnel Plan, Infrastructure Framework, Fund Administrative Guidelines, Disbursement Agreement, and the Review and Dispute Process.

Task 2 - Fund Implementation and Tracking: process business eligibility by developing a timeline for evaluation, underwriting loan applications, ongoing monitoring, and loan payment guidance. Deliverables include administering the Fund account, providing match requirements, developing standard operating procedures, and completing the End of the Loan Origination Period Report.

Task 3 - Technical Assistance and Marketing Plan: provide in-house technical assistance to eligible small businesses and nonprofit organizations to secure Fund resources and offer referral services to businesses denied or approved, including but not limited to service providers CPCFA, IBANK, Go Biz, Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), Financial Development Corporations, L.A. County Department of Economic Opportunity, the economic development departments of local jurisdictions, discounted utility services, and marketing resources. Deliverables include a Marketing Plan and Technical Assistance Services Summary and Execution Plan.

Task 4 - Fund Reporting and Auditing: provide progress reports commensurate with the Loan Approval Committee frequency, summary reports, quarterly reports, and an annual report to Metro's Project Manager. Respond to annual and Office of the Inspector General audits that may occur from time to time.

Task 5 - Fund Close-Out Plan: develop a Fund Close-Out Plan that identifies the processes for closing out the Fund when all loan repayments have been received and illustrate longevity to service loans throughout extended terms required for real estate acquisition loans.

The proposed team includes VSLDC, a certified CDFI, located in South Los Angeles only 1.5 miles east of the K Line. VSLDC's current service area includes most of the K Line portion of the FSA except for a small southwest portion. To meet contract requirements, this area and Little Tokyo will be incorporated for all program activities. VSLDC is also partnering with a Minority Depository Institution (MDI), to perform commercial real estate loans in the FSA.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

There is no direct safety impact associated with the recommended action.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Since this is a multi-year contract, the Cost Center Manager and Project Manager will be responsible for allocating budget for the overall expenditure across subsequent years until project completion, including any options exercised. Up to \$853,000 in repayment proceeds from the COVID-19 Recovery Loan Program is also designated for program administration.

Impact to Budget

To initiate program administration, funds for this contract in the amount of \$1,000,000 have been requested in the FY26 budget (Cost Center 4530, Project 610026, Economic Development, Account 50316). Future funding obligations will be included in annual budget preparation by TOC staff.

The funding for this contract is General Funds. These funds are eligible for Metro bus and rail capital and operating expenditures.

EQUITY PLATFORM

The Fund has the potential to positively impact over 200 small, legacy and locally owned businesses, nonprofit organizations with social enterprises, the surrounding community, and transit riders located within 1/2 mile of the K Line and the Little Tokyo segment of the A/E Line. These lines traverse through EFCs in South Los Angeles and Little Tokyo. Business ownership is diverse and reflective of the local community. This action will ensure funds are available to secure a certified CDFI to administer and market the Fund.

The Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department did not recommend a Small Business/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (SBE/DVBE) participation goal for this procurement due to the lack of certified firms that perform these services (Attachment B). A total of 101 downloads of the RFP were included in the planholders list. A virtual pre-proposal conference was held on April 22, 2024, and was attended by four participants representing four firms (Attachment A).

VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED OUTCOME

VMT and VMT per capita in Los Angeles County are lower than national averages, the lowest in the SCAG region, and on the lower end of VMT per capita statewide, with these declining VMT trends due in part to Metro's significant investment in rail and bus transit.* Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets align with California's statewide climate goals, including achieving carbon neutrality

by 2045. To ensure continued progress, all Board items are assessed for their potential impact on VMT.

As part of these ongoing efforts, this item is expected to contribute to further reductions in VMT. This item supports Metro's systemwide strategy to reduce VMT through investment activities that will benefit transit oriented communities and further encourage transit ridership, ridesharing, and active transportation. This fund will support businesses that are located within walking distance of the A/E and K Lines and will provide Metro's riders and local residents with opportunities to access goods and services without using a car. Metro's Board-adopted VMT reduction targets were designed to build on the success of existing investments, and this item aligns with those objectives.

*Based on population estimates from the United States Census and VMT estimates from Caltrans' Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data between 2001-2019.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

These recommendations support Vision 2028 Strategic Plan Goals 3 and 4. The EDP and the Fund are grounded in enhancing communities and lives through mobility and access to opportunity (Strategic Goal 3) by working with economic development stakeholders to leverage the public transportation system to create a safe and pleasant environment to access transit and increase transit ridership by facilitating commercial revitalization, stimulating private investment, and supporting the preservation and growth of small businesses near transit. Additionally, the need for transforming LA County through regional collaboration and national leadership (Strategic Goal 4) is greater than ever with the anticipation of the World Cup and Olympics. Metro is well-positioned to partner with LA County jurisdictions to create a national model for supporting small businesses in underrepresented communities by leveraging transportation assets to spur revitalization, enhance the ridership experience, and address safety concerns.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board could choose not to approve the Program Administrator for the EDP Fund. Staff does not recommend this action. This recommendation helps carry out a Board-approved program in furtherance of Metro's Equity Platform and Strategic Goals. With rising inflation, increasing rents, and the lack of access to capital, the consequences of non-action include the potential displacement of small, BIPOC, legacy businesses renting along the proposed corridors, and disinvestment in the communities surrounding Metro's multibillion-dollar transit investment.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, staff will execute Contract No. PS122552000 with Vermont Slauson - LDC, Inc. for the Transit Oriented Communities Economic Development Program Pilot Investment Fund Program Administrator and return to the Board with program guidelines later this calendar year, marketing and launching the program in 2026.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Procurement Summary

Attachment B - DEOD Summary

Prepared by: Michelle Banks-Ordone, Senior Director, (213) 547-4375

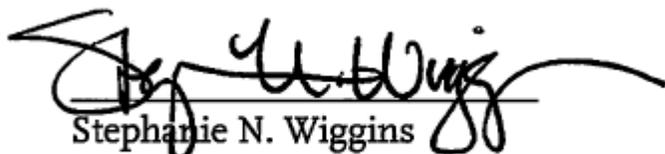
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Stephanie N. Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

PROCUREMENT SUMMARY

TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
PILOT INVESTMENT FUND PROGRAM ADMINISTATOR / PS122552000

1.	Contract Number: PS122552000	
2.	Recommended Vendor: Vermont Slauson – LDC, Inc.	
3.	Type of Procurement (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> IFB <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RFP <input type="checkbox"/> RFP–A&E <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Competitive <input type="checkbox"/> Modification <input type="checkbox"/> Task Order	
4.	Procurement Dates:	
	A. Issued: April 4, 2024	
	B. Advertised/Publicized: April 4, 2024	
	C. Pre-Proposal Conference: April 22, 2024	
	D. Proposals Due: August 5, 2024	
	E. Pre-Qualification Completed: March 12, 2025	
	F. Ethics Declaration Forms submitted to Ethics: October 9, 2024	
	G. Protest Period End Date: April 22, 2025	
5.	Solicitations Downloaded: 101	Bids/Proposals Received: 3
6.	Contract Administrator: Marc Margoni	Telephone Number: (213) 922-1304
7.	Project Manager: Michelle Banks-Ordone	Telephone Number: (213) 547-4375

A. Procurement Background

This Board Action is to approve Contract No. PS122552000 to provide administration of the Transit Oriented Communities Economic Development Program (EDP) Pilot Investment Fund. The Board approved Pilot Program Fund Service Area (FSA) includes a half-mile radius of the K Line (formerly Crenshaw/LAX Line) and the Little Tokyo segment of the A/E Line. Board approval of contract awards is subject to the resolution of any properly submitted protest(s), if any.

Request for Proposal (RFP) No. PS122552 was issued in accordance with Metro’s Acquisition Policy and the contract type is a firm fixed price. The Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department did not recommend a Small Business/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (SBE/DVBE) participation goal for this procurement due to the lack of certified firms that perform these services.

Five (5) amendments were issued during the solicitation phase of this RFP:

- Amendment No. 1, issued on April 9, 2024, updated the time for the virtual pre-proposal conference.
- Amendment No. 2, issued on May 30, 2024, extended the proposal due date from June 4, 2024 to July 8, 2024.

- Amendment No. 3, issued on June 24, 2024, added a supplemental Q&A session on July 1, 2024, and extended the proposal due date from July 8, 2024 to July 22, 2024.
- Amendment No. 4, issued on June 26, 2024, extended the time for the virtual Q&A session.
- Amendment No. 5, issued on July 22, 2024, extended the proposal due date from July 22, 2024 to August 5, 2024.

A total of 101 downloads of the RFP were included in the planholders list. A virtual pre-proposal conference was held on April 22, 2024, and was attended by four participants representing four firms. There were 25 questions received for this RFP and responses were provided prior to the proposal due date.

A total of three proposals were received on August 5, 2024, and are listed below in alphabetical order.

1. Business Consortium Fund, Inc. (BCF)
2. PACE Finance Corporation (PFC)
3. Vermont Slauson – LDC, Inc.

B. Evaluation of Proposals

A Proposal Evaluation Team (PET) consisting of staff from the Office of Equity and Race, Countywide Planning and Development, and Treasury, was convened and conducted a comprehensive technical evaluation of the proposals received.

The proposals were evaluated based on the following evaluation criteria:

Phase I – Minimum Requirements and Preferences Checklist: This is a pass/fail criteria. To be responsive, the proposer must meet the following:

- Provide evidence that the proposing firm is a Certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI).
- Acknowledge that Board approval of the program guidelines is a condition precedent to disbursing funds for the EDP Pilot Investment Fund.
- Provide a narrative describing CDFI knowledge and level of participation as a financial institution in the CPCFA California Capital Access Program (CalCAP) and the Collateral Support program.
- Provide a narrative of familiarity with IBANK Financial Development Corporations (FDCs) to provide loan guarantees through the California Small Business Credit Initiative.
- Provide a narrative that describes the CDFI's ability to guarantee that all lending and technical assistance under this award is within the Fund Service Area only.
- Provide a narrative that the CDFI is committed to transparency and audit activities.

All three proposers met the Minimum Requirements and Preferences Checklist review and were further evaluated based on the following Phase II – Criteria for Evaluation:

- Professional Experience 25%
- Personnel Qualifications and Management Plan 15%
- Approach and Methodology 30%
- Cost 25%
- Optional Matching Funds 5%

Several factors were considered when developing these weights, giving the greatest importance to approach and methodology.

From October 16, 2024, through January 6, 2025, the PET independently evaluated and scored the technical proposals. The evaluation period was delayed due to an unforeseen leave of absence. At the conclusion of the evaluation, the PET determined Vermont Slauson – LDC, Inc. to be the top ranked firm.

Qualifications Summary of Firms:

Vermont Slauson – LDC, Inc.

Vermont Slauson LDC, Inc.'s (VSLDC) parent organization, Vermont Slauson Economic Development Corporation (VSEDC), a nonprofit 501(c)(4) corporation, was founded in 1981 as a citizen advisory committee by Marva Smith-Bey and former City of Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley. VSEDC's primary mission is to facilitate community development and the revitalization of South Los Angeles and neighboring communities. VSEDC created VSLDC as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 1983 to manage grants and contracts, with VSLDC achieving CDFI certification as a loan fund in 2018.

VSLDC's experience and program methodology demonstrated a strong understanding of the objective of Metro's Transit Oriented Communities Economic Development Program (EDP) Pilot Investment Fund (Fund) and an ability to establish and administer the Fund. VSLDC will partner with a Minority Depository Institution to administer the Fund. Collectively since 2020, they have originated 29 loans totaling \$28.3 million to small businesses and real estate projects either within the K Line and Little Tokyo FSAs or within zip codes that contain portions of the FSAs. VSLDC is headquartered along the Slauson Avenue corridor in the heart of South Los Angeles, only 1.5 miles east of the K Line FSA.

PACE Finance Corporation (PFC)

PACE Finance Corporation (PFC), a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), fosters community development by supporting low-income, social and economically disadvantaged, Black, Indigenous and other people of color-owned small businesses in Los Angeles County. Both PACE (Parent organization) and PFC

are approved as CalCap lenders for the Small Business Program. Since 2013, PACE/PFC has provided 86 loans in total of nearly \$3 million. PFC's principal place of business is Los Angeles, California.

PFC's proposal, although well-written, presented descriptions as general narratives. Short and concise information areas did not provide the nexus to the scope of services needed to understand the vision for administering the Pilot Investment Fund.

Business Consortium Fund, Inc.

Business Consortium Fund, Inc. (BCF) was established in 1987 in partnership with the National Minority Supplier Development Council to provide technical assistance and capital to minority business enterprises (MBEs). The disadvantaged businesses serviced by BCF face the same challenges of opportunity and capital faced by businesses located in the FSA. Currently, BCF has 56 active loans totaling \$4.1 million to MBEs that had limited access to capital. BCF's principal place of business is New York City, New York.

BCF demonstrated experience and a track record for developing investment funds and leading programs; however, BCF has not conducted outreach or provided loans in the FSA. They are out-of-state and did not demonstrate first-hand knowledge of the FSA.

The following is a summary of the PET scores:

1	Firm	Average Score	Factor Weight	Weighted Average Score	Rank
2	Vermont Slauson – LDC, Inc.				
3	Professional Experience	93.32	25.00%	23.33	
4	Personnel Qualifications and Management Plan	90.00	15.00%	13.50	
5	Approach and Methodology	90.00	30.00%	27.00	
6	Cost	100.00	25.00%	25.00	
7	Optional Matching Funds	100.00	5.00%	5.00	
8	Total		100.00%	93.83	1
9	PACE Finance Corporation				
10	Professional Experience	86.00	25.00%	21.50	
11	Personnel Qualifications and Management Plan	75.33	15.00%	11.30	
12	Approach and Methodology	83.33	30.00%	25.00	
13	Cost	60.00	25.00%	15.00	
14	Optional Matching Funds	100.00	5.00%	5.00	

15	Total		100.00%	77.80	2
16	Business Consortium Fund, Inc.				
17	Professional Experience	88.67	25.00%	22.17	
18	Personnel Qualifications and Management Plan	84.00	15.00%	12.60	
19	Approach and Methodology	86.67	30.00%	26.00	
20	Cost	39.40	25.00%	9.85	
21	Optional Matching Funds	100.00	5.00%	5.00	
22	Total		100.00%	75.62	3

C. Price Analysis

The recommended price has been determined to be fair and reasonable based upon adequate price competition, an Independent Cost Estimate (ICE), price analysis, technical analysis, and negotiations. Staff successfully negotiated cost savings of \$64,745.

	Proposer Name	Proposal Amount	Metro ICE	Negotiated Amount
1.	Vermont Slauson – LDC, Inc.	\$1,999,725	\$1,818,467	\$1,934,980
2.	PACE Finance Corporation	\$3,333,320		
3.	Business Consortium Fund, Inc.	\$5,075,381		

D. Background on Recommended Contractor

Vermont Slauson - LDC, Inc., located in Los Angeles, CA has been in business since 1983 and has been providing comprehensive technical assistance to women, minority, and other underserved, low-to-medium income small business owners in South Los Angeles, including the Crenshaw Metro rail corridor and Little Tokyo Metro rail station's surrounding corridor. Under contract with both the City and County of Los Angeles, Vermont Slauson - LDC, Inc. has established a robust suite of programs and counseling to support the establishment and growth of small businesses with the goal of fostering economic development through entrepreneurship and the creation of generational wealth.

DEOD SUMMARY

TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITIES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
PILOT INVESTMENT FUND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR / PS122552000

A. Small Business Participation

The Diversity and Economic Opportunity Department (DEOD) did not recommend a Small Business Enterprise (SBE)/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) participation goal for this procurement due to the lack of availability of certified firms that perform this service. Vermont Slauson – LDC, Inc. listed three non-certified firms to perform the services of this contract.

B. Living Wage and Service Contract Worker Retention Policy Applicability

The Living Wage and Service Contract Worker Retention Policy is not applicable to this contract.

C. Prevailing Wage Applicability

Prevailing Wage is not applicable to this contract.

D. Project Labor Agreement/Construction Careers Policy

Project Labor Agreement/Construction Careers Policy is not applicable to this Contract. PLA/CCP is applicable only to construction contracts that have a construction related value in excess of \$2.5 million.



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TRANSIT ORIENTED COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PILOT INVESTMENT FUND

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

APRIL 16, 2025



Approve Recommendation

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to award a firm fixed price Contract No. PS122552000 to Vermont Slauson-LDC, Inc. for the administration of the Transit Oriented Communities Economic Development Program (EDP) Pilot Investment Fund (Fund) in the amount of \$1,370,495 for the three-year base term, and \$310,740 for the first option year, and \$253,745 for the second option year, for a total combined contract amount of \$1,934,980, effective May 1, 2025, subject to the resolution of any properly submitted protest(s), if any.



Pilot Investment Fund Administration Contract

Responsibilities

The Fund Administrator is responsible for setting up the Fund, developing program guidelines for Metro's review, creating a close-out plan, and the day-to-day administration of the Fund, including, but not limited to:

- > marketing and outreach to eligible small businesses and nonprofit organizations;
- > determining participant eligibility;
- > processing applications, awarding funds, program tracking;
- > providing technical assistance.

Fund Service Area

The Fund Service Area is a half-mile radius around the K-Line and Little Tokyo segment of the A/E Line to maximize business preservation after construction of new rail lines.



Procurement Evaluation

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Vermont Slauson LDC, Inc.	PACE Finance Corporation	Business Consortium Fund, Inc.
Professional Experience	25.00	23.33	21.50	22.17
Personnel Qualifications and Management Plan	15.00	13.50	11.30	12.60
Approach and Methodology	30.00	27.00	25.00	26.00
Cost	25.00	25.00	15.00	9.85
Optional Matching Funds	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Total Score	100.00	93.83	77.80	75.62



Next Steps

1

Mid 2025

Execute MOU with California Pollution Control Financing Authority (CPCFA) to memorialize State contribution to the Fund

2

Late 2025

Board consideration of Final Program Guidelines

3

Early 2026

Launch Program