



Board Report

File #: 2026-0272, File Type: Contract

Agenda Number: 31.

OPERATIONS, SAFETY AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE MAY 21, 2026

SUBJECT: RECRUITMENT SERVICES BENCH

ACTION: APPROVE RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to execute Modification No. 2 to the Recruitment Services Bench Contract Nos. PS95999000 with Partners in Diversity, Inc., PS95999001 with DeSanti, and PS95999002 with David Gomez Partners to continue supporting the identification and placement of qualified candidates for professional, management, and executive-level positions across the agency in an amount Not-To-Exceed (NTE) \$200,000, increasing the cumulative contract value from \$482,500 to \$682,500, and extending the period of performance from September 1, 2026 to August 31, 2027.

ISSUE

In September 2023, Metro established the Recruitment Services Bench (Bench) for an amount NTE \$482,500 for a three-year term (inclusive of a two-year base term and a one-year option). The Bench has successfully provided recruitment support services that complement Metro's internal hiring efforts, including high-volume recruitments needed to support Metro's core business functions and maintain service delivery. The Bench establishes a readily available pool of specialized executive search consultants who can be deployed as needed, ensuring continuity and responsiveness in addressing critical staffing needs. The current hiring demands across the agency for specialty and executive level positions have exceeded historical hiring trends, requiring Metro to adjust its Bench capacity and contract term. In parallel, Metro will issue a competitive request for proposals (RFP) to ensure consistent executive recruitment services.

BACKGROUND

Currently, Metro has 297 vacant non-contract positions, representing an overall 12% vacancy rate for these positions. Of these vacancies, 42 are executive-level roles (Deputy Executive Officers and above). The average time-to-hire for non-executive positions is approximately 8-10 weeks. This is in addition to the average 200 bus operators Metro hires per month (via the high-volume recruitment process), reflecting significant improvements over the past year driven by enhanced hiring processes, improved communication and partnerships, and prioritization of mission-critical roles across all cabinets. With the support of the Bench, the average time-to-hire for executive, specialized

and hard-to-fill roles, such as Information Technology and support of Department of Public Safety positions, is approximately 4-6 months, depending on overall complexity of the search.

By leveraging both internal recruiters and specialized recruitment bench services, Metro is able to maintain a coordinated and strategic approach to talent acquisition, ensuring that all recruitment efforts are prioritized, organized, and actively managed. This approach and recommended contract term extensions are critical to addressing vacancies as the agency expands and proactively supports key initiatives, including the D (Purple) Line extension, build-out of the Department of Public Safety (including sworn officers), and preparation for major regional events including the FIFA World Cup, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

DISCUSSION

Metro has made significant progress in attracting talent over the past two fiscal years by improving time-to-hire and reducing the agency's overall vacancy rate. Notably, the average time-to-hire for regular recruitments decreased from 12-31 weeks to 8-10 weeks. However, sustaining and building on these gains, particularly for highly specialized and complex, hard-to-fill positions, requires continued access to the Bench. These services provide targeted sourcing strategies, expanded candidate pipelines, and industry-specific outreach that cannot be consistently replicated through internal capacity alone, especially for senior-level and niche roles.

Maintaining this support enables Metro to continue strengthening a diverse, high-performing leadership and professional pipeline, while ensuring consistency in recruitment outcomes as the agency expands and takes on new priorities. Additionally, these efforts align with industry best practices and enhance Metro's ability to meet evolving workforce needs and service delivery demands. Metro will continue to measure success through sustained reduction of vacancy rates and time-to-hire for executive and professional roles, as well as through measurable improvements in candidate quality and retention outcomes.

Also, executive recruitment bench services enhance Metro's internal recruitment function by complementing and extending its hiring strategy. By augmenting internal capacity, this approach enables the agency to more effectively fill executive, highly specialized, and hard-to-fill roles that require targeted outreach, market expertise, and accelerated timelines. Consequently, this strengthens Metro's competitiveness in attracting top talent, reduces time-to-fill for critical positions, and supports organizational stability by minimizing prolonged vacancies across mission-critical functions. To sustain momentum and meet increased hiring demands for specialty and executive level positions, which have exceeded historical hiring trends, a contract modification is needed and in parallel Metro will initiate a competitive procurement to establish a new recruitment bench before this modification term ends, ensuring uninterrupted recruitment support services. In FY 26, Metro used this contract to fill 12 positions, up from 4 the previous fiscal year.

DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT

Approval of these contract modifications will allow Metro to continue working towards the effective recruitment of mission-critical positions and support retention strategies. This proactive approach ensures the safety of our employees, Metro customers, and the public at large.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This action will not have an impact on the FY26 budget as funding for the contract modifications are included under cost center 6240 Talent Acquisition, project 100001, task 01.01, General Overhead.

Impact to Budget

The source of funding will be administrative funds that are not eligible for bus/rail operating expenses.

The cost center manager and the Chief People Officer are accountable for budgeting costs for future fiscal years.

EQUITY PLATFORM

The services provided by the consultants will ensure Metro remains focused on the effective recruitment and retention of mission-critical positions and key agency initiatives, while advancing equity. This action enables Metro to sustain a proactive, strategic, and timely approach to talent acquisition while maintaining full compliance with regulatory, safety, and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements, and supporting the delivery of world-class transit service throughout Los Angeles County.

The Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department (DEOD) did not establish a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal when the original contract was solicited. Despite this, two of the three firms, Partners in Diversity and DeSanti, are certified Metro small businesses.

Through their work, the recruitment services bench firms have demonstrated a strong commitment to advancing equity at Metro by supporting inclusive recruitment practices for executive and professional roles, particularly for complex and hard-to-fill positions. Their approach emphasizes diversity, equity, and inclusion at every stage of the recruitment process, from targeted outreach and candidate engagement to equitable evaluation and compensation, and access to pension and benefit services during the employment lifecycle, helping to ensure that Metro attracts and retains a diverse, high-quality workforce aligned with its organizational values and service mission.

Metro's current workforce reflects a diverse ethnic composition as listed below:

- Latino: 47.7%
- African American: 25.3%
- Asian: 10.9%
- White: 8.4%
- No Disclosure: 4.5%
- Two or More: 2.1%
- Native Hawaiian: 0.6%
- Native American: 0.5%

Maintaining and strengthening this diversity requires continued, intentional recruitment strategies.

Metro remains committed to ensuring its hiring practices are fair, equitable, and reflective of the communities we serve. Leveraging specialized recruitment partners further supports this commitment by expanding outreach, mitigating bias in candidate evaluation, and enhancing access to diverse talent pools for leadership and critical roles.

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.

While this item does not directly encourage taking transit, sharing a ride, or using active transportation, it is a vital part of recruiting and retaining Metro's human capital which is critical to delivering transit services. By ensuring we continue to recruit for mission critical positions and retain internal talent, this action supports Metro's ability to provide a reliable, safe, and attractive alternative to driving. Because the Metro Board has adopted an agency-wide VMT Reduction Target, and this item supports the overall function of the agency, this item is consistent with the goals of reducing VMT.

*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

This Board action supports Strategic Goal 5: Provide responsive, accountable, and trustworthy governance within the Metro organization. This contract modification will ensure that Metro continues to utilize recruitment bench support services in advance of new initiatives, regional events and expansion efforts impacting Metro's workforce.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Board may choose not to approve the recommendation. An alternative would be to manage these recruitments entirely in-house. However, this approach is not recommended as Metro currently lacks the capacity to effectively manage executive, specialized, and hard-to-fill recruitment efforts while simultaneously sustaining existing workloads and the current average time-to-hire of 8 -10 weeks. This includes high-volume recruitments necessary to maintain adequate service levels. Furthermore, absorbing these responsibilities in-house would jeopardize the significant progress made over the past year, a time when the agency is preparing to host major regional and world events. Elevated vacancy levels could also adversely affect organizational productivity, service delivery for critical initiatives, and employee morale.

NEXT STEPS

Upon Board approval, staff will execute Modification No. 2 to the Recruitment Services Bench

Contract Nos. PS95999000 through PS95999002 to continue to provide recruitment bench services in support of the agency.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A - Procurement Summary
Attachment B - Contract Modification/Change Order Log
Attachment C - DEOD Summary

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Stephanie Wiggins
Chief Executive Officer

**PROCUREMENT SUMMARY
RECRUITMENT SERVICES BENCH / PS95999000 THROUGH PS95999002**

1.	Contract Number: PS95999000 through PS95999002		
2.	Contractor: Partners in Diversity, Inc., DeSanti and David Gomez Partners, Inc.		
3.	Mod. Work Description: Increase the Not-to-Exceed (NTE) cumulative bench contract value to continue supporting the identification and placement of qualified candidates for professional, management, and executive-level positions across the agency and extend the period of performance through 8/31/27.		
4.	Contract Work Description: Provide recruitment services for professional, management, and executive-level positions across the agency.		
5.	The following data is current as of: 04/14/26		
6.	Contract Completion Status		Financial Status
	Contract Awarded:	09/01/23	Bench Contract Award Amount: \$350,000
	Notice to Proceed (NTP):	N/A	Total of Modifications Approved: \$132,500
	Original Complete Date:	08/31/26	Pending Modifications (including this action): \$200,000
	Current Est. Complete Date:	08/31/27	Current Contract Value (with this action): \$682,500
7.	Contract Administrator: Annie Duong		Telephone Number: (213) 418-3048
8.	Project Manager: Nancy Saravia		Telephone Number: (213) 922-1217

A. Procurement Background

This Board Action is to approve Contract Modification No. 2 to the Recruitment Services Bench Contract Nos. PS95999000 through PS95999002 to increase the NTE cumulative bench contract value to continue supporting the identification and placement of qualified candidates for professional, management, and executive-level positions across the agency and extend the period of performance from 9/1/26 through 8/31/27.

These Contract Modifications will be processed in accordance with Metro’s Acquisition Policy and the contract type is a firm fixed unit rate.

In September 2023, Metro awarded three Contract Nos. PS95999000 through PS95999002 for recruitment services for professional, management, and executive-level positions across the agency. The period of performance is a two-year base term with one, one-year option.

One modification has been issued to date.

Refer to Attachment B – Contract Modification/Change Order Log.

B. Price Analysis

The recommended amount has been determined to be fair and reasonable based on the firms' fixed unit rates established and evaluated during the competitive award in September 2023. The Independent Cost Estimate (ICE) is based on the contracts' firm fixed unit rates, which remain unchanged and are lower than current market rates for similar services.

Proposal Amount	Metro ICE	Recommended Amount
\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000

ATTACHMENT B

CONTRACT MODIFICATION/CHANGE ORDER LOG

RECRUITMENT SERVICES BENCH / PS95999000 THROUGH PS95999002

Mod No.	Description	Status (approved or pending)	Date	\$ Amount
1	Exercise the one-year option term, extending the period of performance (POP) through 8/31/26.	Approved	9/1/25	\$132,500
2	Increase the not-to-exceed cumulative bench contract value to continue supporting the identification and placement of qualified candidates for professional, management, and executive-level positions across the agency and extend the POP through 8/31/27.	Pending	Pending	\$200,000
	Modification Total			\$332,500
	Original Contract:		09/01/23	\$350,000
	Total:			\$682,500

DEOD SUMMARY

RECRUITMENT SERVICES BENCH / PS95999000 THROUGH PS95999002

A. Small Business Participation

At the time of solicitation, the Diversity & Economic Opportunity Department (DEOD) did not establish a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal for this procurement due to the lack of subcontracting opportunities. Two of the three bench prime consultants, Partners In Diversity, Inc. and DeSanti, are certified small businesses. It is expected that each firm will continue performing the services of this contract with its own workforce.

B. Living Wage and Service Contract Worker Retention Policy Applicability

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

C. Prevailing Wage Applicability

Prevailing wage is not applicable to this modification.

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.

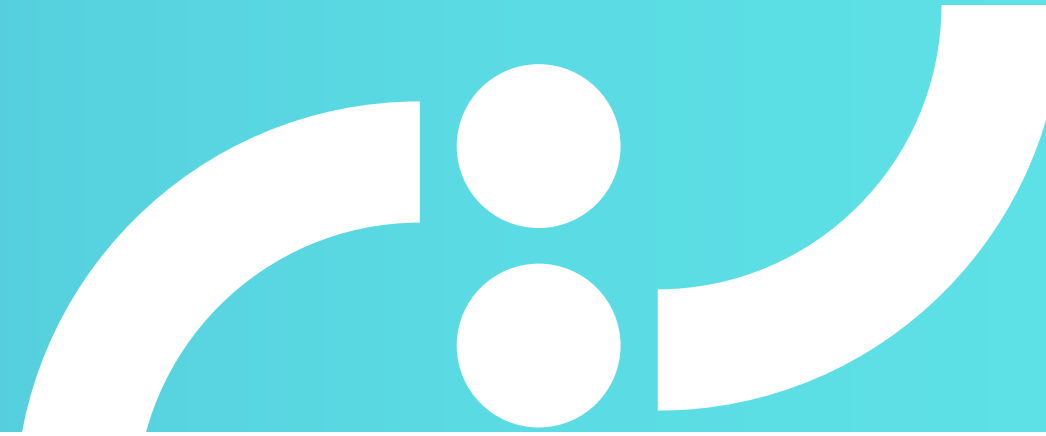
E. Manufacturing Careers Policy

The Manufacturing Careers Policy (MCP) does not apply to this contract. The MCP is required on Metro's Rolling Stock RFPs, with an Independent Cost Estimate of at least \$50 million.

Recruitment Services Bench Contract Modification



Background



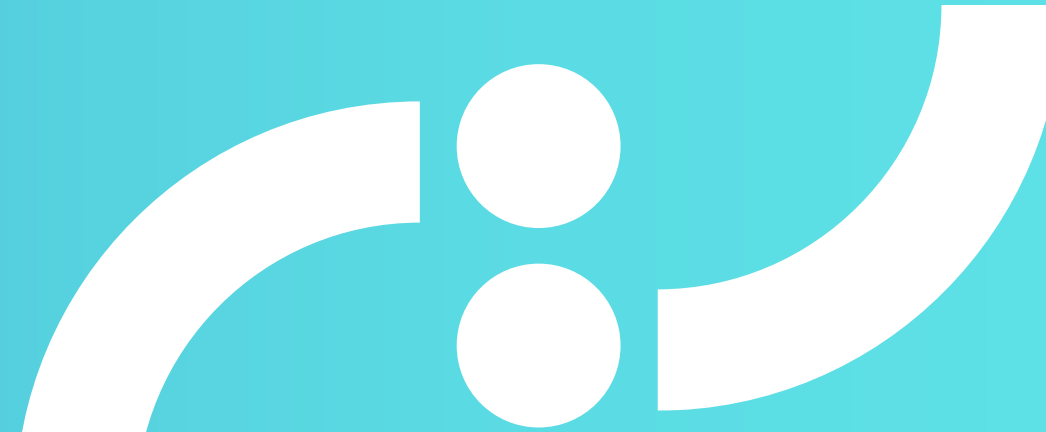
Metro's recruitment services bench:

- Provides critical recruitment support that augments internal capacity
- Complements Metro's hiring strategy to meet evolving workforce demands
- Accelerates hiring through targeted outreach and streamlined timelines
- Enhances competitiveness to attract and secure top-tier, diverse talent
- Minimizes vacancies in mission-critical, hard-to-fill, and executive roles
- Sustains improved time-to-hire and reduced agency vacancy rates
- Addresses increased demand for specialty and executive roles exceeding historical trends

Recommendation

AUTHORIZE the Chief Executive Officer to execute Modification No. 2 to the Recruitment Services Bench Contract Nos. PS95999000 with Partners in Diversity, Inc., PS95999001 with DeSanti, and PS95999002 with David Gomez Partners to continue supporting the identification and placement of qualified candidates for professional, management, and executive-level positions across the agency in an amount Not-To-Exceed (NTE) \$200,000, increasing the cumulative contract value from \$482,500 to \$682,500, and extending the period of performance from September 1, 2026 to August 31, 2027.

Next Steps



- Upon Board approval, staff will execute Modification No. 2 to Recruitment Services Bench Contract Nos. PS95999000 through PS95999002.
- Metro remains committed to:
 - ✓ Timely filling of executive, specialty, and other hard-to-recruit positions
 - ✓ Leveraging both internal recruiters and specialized recruitment bench services
 - ✓ Ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to talent acquisition
 - ✓ Continue to keep recruitment efforts prioritized, organized, and actively managed agencywide