



ITEM ID: 2026-321-0

TRANSMITTAL DATE: October 16, 2026

MEETING DATE: October 23, 2026

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

SUBJECT: Contract No. L181-27 - Federal Legislative Representation Services - Recommendation to Award - Blank Rome, Kadesh & Associates, Potomac Partners DC

Issue

The Authority requires federal legislative advocacy services to maintain strategic relations and achieve policy priorities with the Administration, Congress, federal agencies and regulatory bodies. These services are necessary to meet long-term service and funding goals of the Authority.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board authorize the Chief Executive Officer to:

1. Award Contract No. L181-27, Federal Legislative Representation Services, subject to resolution of any protest timely filed, to a bench of qualified firms as listed below:

- L181A-27 Blank Rome
- L181B-27 Kadesh & Associates
- L181C-27 Potomac Partners DC; and

2. Approve a not-to-exceed contract funding authorization amount not-to-exceed \$2,160,000 for the Bench, comprised of \$720,000 for the two-year base period and \$1,440,000 for two two-year options that may be exercised at the sole discretion of the Authority.

Strategic Commitment

This report aligns with the Strategic Business Plan commitments of:

- **Connecting and Leveraging Partnerships:** We will forge new and enhanced relationships with our public and private partners to integrate and coordinate connecting services, providing residents throughout Southern California with better, seamless, sustainable alternatives to driving. This commitment is met by sharing news, information and the Authority's legislative priorities with elected officials.
- **Advancing Key Regional Goals:** We will grow the role of regional rail in addressing climate change, air quality, and other pressing issues by advancing toward zero emissions, making rail a compelling alternative to single-occupant automobiles and advancing equity-focused opportunities for all communities throughout Southern California. This commitment is met by encouraging federal, state and local support for Authority priorities.

Background

Legislative, regulatory, and funding decisions made in Washington directly impact the Authority. These decisions occur within a dynamic political and regulatory environment, making effective legislative representation and regulatory support essential to the Authority's ability to secure its fair share of federal funding, advance its interests, and address legislative or regulatory directions that could adversely affect its operations.

The Authority's advocacy team must have the capacity to help us establish and maintain effective relationships with the offices of the Authority's congressional delegation, congressional leadership, and relevant federal regulatory agencies. These relationships are critical to ensuring that the Authority's priorities and interests are effectively represented before federal policymakers and regulators.

The Authority currently contracts for federal legislative representation and regulatory services under Contract No. L175A-20 with Blank Rome; Contract No. L175B-20 with Kadesh & Associates, LLC; and Contract No. L175C-20 with Potomac Partners DC. These contracts are scheduled to expire on December 31, 2026.

Discussion

On May 18, 2026, the Authority released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Federal Legislative Representation services for a contract term of two years with two two-year options. The solicitation was published in the five member counties, as well as posted on the Authority's online procurement module. Notices were also emailed to firms registered on the Authority's online procurement module. Twenty-two firms downloaded the solicitation. On May 27, 2026 the Pre-Proposal Conference was held with five in attendance, representing four firms. Five questions were asked and answered during the Q&A period.

Five proposals were received by the due date of June 26, 2026.

Proposals were independently reviewed by two Senior Contract & Compliance Administrators to determine responsiveness. All firms were found responsive and moved on to the evaluation phase.

Proposals were evaluated in accordance with the Board-approved Contract Administration and Procurement Policies and Procedures, Proposal Evaluation. The evaluation committee consisted of two Authority staff members and one staff member from OCTA. Proposals were scored and three firms met the minimum qualifications with a technical score of 56 or greater. These three firms proceeded to the interview phase. Technical scores were subject to an adjustment based on information learned from the interview. Final scores are as follows:

FIRM	TECHNICAL SCORE	PRICE SCORE	TOTAL SCORE
	(OUT OF 80)	(OUT OF 20)	
1 Potomac Partners DC	72.00	19.60	91.60
2 Kadesh & Associates	70.33	19.60	89.93
3 Blank Rome Government Relations	67.33	19.60	86.93

All three firms are incumbents and none proposed an increase to their rate.

Budget Impact

The amounts for which contract authority is requested, are included in, and are contingent upon the adoption of the Proposed FY26-27 Operating Budget (\$180,000). Funding for subsequent years will be requested through the annual budget or an equivalent process.

There is no financial commitment with respect to subsequent years and work will be authorized only if funding is approved.

Next Steps

Upon Board approval, the contracts will be executed with an effective date of January 1, 2027, to Potomac Partners DC, Kadesh & Associates, and Blank Rome Government Relations to provide Federal Legislative Representation services.

Prepared by: Anna Denecke, Sr. Manager, Government Relations
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Approved by: Paul Hubler, Chief Strategy Officer

Attachment(s)

Presentation - Contract No. L181-27 - Federal Legislative Representation Services