



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Department Name:** Public Works  
**Department No.:** 054  
**For Agenda Of:** May 2, 2023  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimated Tme:** N/A  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department Director: Scott D. McGolpin, Department of Public Works, 568-3010  
Contact Info: Chris Sneddon, Deputy Director, Transportation, 568-3064  
**SUBJECT:** **Competitive Bid Waiver for Purchase of Traffic Signal and Lighting Components, All Supervisorial Districts**

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:** Purchasing

As to form: Yes

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Recommended Actions:**

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Authorize the Purchasing Agent to waive competitive bidding to procure traffic device components, parts, supplies and services used in installation and repair of traffic devices, including traffic signal and lighting equipment, without competitive bids, on an as-needed basis, effective through June 30, 2028, with a maximum annual aggregate limit of \$1,000,000; and
- b) Determine that the proposed action is not a “project” under the California Environmental Quality Act pursuant to Section 14 CCR 15378, as it involves administrative and other general policy and procedure making activities that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

**Summary Text:**

This item is on the agenda to authorize the Purchasing Agent to waive competition for procuring traffic signal equipment, lighting equipment, traffic devices and services.

County Code Section 2-39 authorizes the Purchasing Agent to waive competition when there are limitations on the source of supply, necessary restrictions in specifications, or other valid reasons. Where the expenditure would or could exceed twenty-five thousand dollars, competition may be waived only after approval by the Board of Supervisors. Public Works recommends waiving competition for procuring traffic signal and lighting equipment and services.

Traffic signals and lighting are an integral part of the County’s public transportation system that must operate properly at all times for the safety of the traveling public. Timely response and repair of

components is critical. This waiver is necessary and valid, as it minimizes disruption of traffic signals and lighting.

The waiver of bids meets all three categories of the waiver test: limitations on the source of supply, necessary restriction in specifications, or other valid reasons.

Sources of signal and lighting equipment are limited due to the exact and specific requirements for signals, lighting, and traffic devices. All must be compliant with state and federal Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and are often further specified by what SCE and PG&E allow, as well as specific requirements of the geometries of a location. Due to these requirements, sources of these supplies are limited and subject to availability and long lead times. The Department purchases equipment from vendors in California and nationally. There are no local vendors of these products.

In addition, the County maintains a cohesive, unified traffic system. It is imperative that components of traffic devices are interchangeable for maintenance and emergency repairs. Bulbs, circuitry, controllers, fixtures, and traffic device components cannot be readily repaired and replaced from inventory if there are multiple, non-interchangeable components depending on the location of each need and when it was procured. Efficiency and reasonable response and repair times require the ability to switch out parts with compatible components that have been pre-ordered and are readily available. These factors apply to intersection, sidewalk, and bikeway lighting products as well. Using one source for lighting supplies throughout a given lighting zone is preferred, particularly bike paths and walkway segments. Not only does it enhance the area's aesthetics by maintaining uniformity and consistency, lighting maintenance is more cost effective and efficient, which reduces down time for repairs, and thereby increases public safety.

Also, many traffic signal components, such as poles and mast arms, are custom made and have production lead times as long as 3 to 6 months. To avoid construction delays, the Department orders these parts in advance of awarding construction contracts, thereby reducing the wait time for the contractor to begin construction.

Finally, there is a high demand for the limited number of contractors on call and available to repair and install projects when the scope exceeds the capacity of our in-house, two-person crew. In these instances, for example, when a signal has been knocked out at a major intersection and new systems must be installed within hours or days, waiting months to design-bid-build a contract and procure parts is not an option. Construction can be performed using the Caltrans Standard force account method to ensure costs are commensurate with the work performed.

This process has also helped the County realize considerable time and costs savings. In addition, when traffic signals or other devices are out of service, it is imperative to get them operational as soon as possible for public safety.

**Background:**

Your Board approved this waiver of bids request previously in 2001, 2004, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2017, and 2020. This blanket waiver of competition for procurement of traffic device components would allow the Purchasing Agent to proceed with the procurement of these components when the need arises, and without the delays in the procurement of materials that would allow the Public Works Department to respond to traffic operational safety concerns and operate more cost-effectively by reducing the lead-time on intersection improvements and emergency repairs. Public Works recommends your Board authorize the ability to expedite equipment purchases from all traffic signal vendors with an aggregate maximum limit of \$1,000,000 per year through June 30, 2028.

**Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:**

Budgeted: Yes

**Fiscal Analysis:**

There are no direct fiscal impacts as a result of this action. All work and related expenditures for traffic signals and lighting components have been budgeted in Department 054 as part of maintenance and repair activities, or as part of capital improvement projects.

**Special Instructions:**

Please forward a certified, stamped Minute Order approving this item to:

- 1) Public Works, Transportation Administration, 123 E. Anapamu Street Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
Attention: Yanette Luna, 568-3094
- 2) General Services, Purchasing Division, 260 N. San Antonio Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93110  
Attention: Phung Loman, 568-2697

**Authored by:**

Rod Baltazar, Accountant, Transportation Division, 568-3025