



## Legislation Text

---

**File #:** 23-1941, **Version:** 1

---

Planning and Building Department, Planning Division, Current Planning Unit, recommending the Board approve and authorize the Chair to sign Amendment VI to Agreement 447 with Ascent Environmental, Inc., for the provision of as-needed environmental consulting services, increasing the compensation amount by \$600,000 for a not-to-exceed amount of \$2,200,000, with no changes to the scope of work or term of the Agreement.

**FUNDING:** Applicant Funded / Local Early Action Planning (LEAP) Grant (up to \$184,416).

### **DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and County CEQA Resolution 61-87 allow the County to hire consultants, funded by the applicant, to prepare complex and comprehensive CEQA documents such as Environmental Impact Reports (EIRs).

On October 6, 2016, the County's Purchasing Agent approved Agreement 447 with Ascent to assist the Planning and Building Department (Department) with providing on-call planning and environmental services for specific plan projects.

Ascent Environmental, Inc. (Ascent) continues to assist the Department with processing several major development projects, including Village of Marble Valley Specific Plan, Lime Rock Valley Specific Plan, and EDH 52 Commercial Center EIR. The proposed Amendment VI would increase the not-to-exceed amount by \$600,000 for a new not-to-exceed amount of \$2,200,000, to allow the Department to finalize these projects with Ascent's assistance. Further, the Department could rely on Ascent for additional planning and environmental services for other development projects on an as-needed basis as budget and time allows.

In addition to Ascent's continued assistance with major development projects, the Department has engaged Ascent for assistance with Phase 1 of the Tahoe El Dorado Area Plan (TED). The TED is a jurisdiction-wide area plan (expansion of the Meyers Area Plan) in the Tahoe Basin that will establish a better framework to advance affordable housing and economic development. Development of the TED will happen over the course of three (3) phases, with Phase 1 concluding in Fall of 2024. Under Phase 1, Ascent will provide outreach, engagement with the community, development and maintenance of a website, data analysis, and a draft TED outline. Phase 1 is integral to development of the TED as it establishes a foundation and frames the remainder of the project. Phase 1 of TED is expected to be fully funded using the Local Early Action Plan Grant (LEAP) from the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Along with the proposed increase in compensation, Amendment VI seeks to replace the current Rate Schedule with Amended Exhibit B-2, Amended Rate Schedule. No other changes to the Agreement are proposed.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

The Board may choose not to approve this proposed Amendment VI; however, this would require that

existing staff would have to absorb the additional work needed to complete the processing of projects currently in progress. Existing planning staff are currently fully-tasked and an increased staff workload would result in delays to current and future projects.

In addition, many planning staff do not have the environmental and technical expertise in processing these types of complex applications. Ascent's experience in processing a broad range of development applications helps to ensure that the public, staff, the Board, and other stakeholders have the information necessary to evaluate and make decisions regarding the projects.

#### **PRIOR BOARD ACTION:**

On April 25, 2017 (File No. 17-0213, Item No. 19), the Board approved Amendment I to Agreement 447, which increased the total amount of compensation from \$65,400 to \$300,000, and expanded the scope of work to include planning and environmental services for other development project applications.

On September 24, 2019, (File No. 19-1355, Item No. 13), the Board approved Amendment II to Agreement 447, which included extending the term of the contract by three (3) years to expire on October 5, 2022, and increasing the compensation amount by \$100,000 for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$400,000.

On June 30, 2020, (File No. 20-0507, Item No. 24), the Board approved Amendment III to Agreement 447, which included extending the term of the contract by six (6) months to expire on April 5, 2023 and increasing the total compensation by \$400,000 for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$800,000.

On December 7, 2021 (File No. 21-1258, Item No. 40), the Board approved Amendment IV to Agreement 447, which increased the compensation by \$800,000 for a total not-to-exceed amount of \$1,600,000, updated Exhibit B to reflect the consultant's current hourly rates, and other minor administrative changes determined necessary, with no changes to the scope or term of the Agreement.

On April 4, 2023 (File No. 23-0171, Item No. 29), the Board approved Amendment V to Agreement 447, which extended the term of the Agreement by three (3) years with a revised expiration date of April 15, 2026.

#### **OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

County Counsel and Risk Management have approved the proposed Amendment VI.

#### **CAO RECOMMENDATION**

Approve as recommended.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

There is no change to Net County Cost associated with this item as no costs are to be incurred by the County. All development projects are funded by the project applicants. This proposed Amendment VI will allow up to \$415,584 for developer funded projects.

Phase 1 of TED, in an amount up to \$184,416. is expected to be funded by a LEAP grant. Funding for these services has been included in the Department's Fiscal Year 2023-24 budget. Funding for these services beyond Fiscal Year 2023-24 will be included in subsequent budgets accordingly.

### **CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

- 1) The Clerk of the Board will obtain the Chair's signature on two (2) original copies of Amendment VI; and
- 2) The Clerk of the Board will forward one (1) fully-executed original of Amendment VI to the Chief Administration Office, Procurement and Contracts Division, for further processing.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT**

Good Governance: Evaluate requests and recommendations based on complete assessment of the best available information, with the goal of reaching well informed decisions.

### **CONTACT**

Robert Peters, Deputy Director of Planning  
Planning and Building Department