



Legislation Text

File #: 21-154, Version: 1

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Jon Gjestvang - Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Services
REPORT BY: Shawn Smith - Supervising Staff Services Analyst - 707.259.8665
SUBJECT: Agreement with CBG Communications, Inc. for Broadband Consulting Services, and Budgetary Transfer

RECOMMENDATION

Chief Information Officer and Director of Library Services and Community Outreach request the following actions related to the implementation of broadband solutions:

1. Approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign a Professional Services Agreement with CBG Communications, Inc. for a maximum of \$98,150 for the term May 4, 2021 through June 30, 2022 to produce a road map, action plan, and seek to secure grant funding sources to use in the implementation of broadband solutions; and
2. Approval of Budget Transfer No. CEO023 increasing appropriations in the Central Services subdivision consulting services expense account by \$98,150 offset by use of appropriation for contingency.

(4/5 vote required)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 13, 2018, the Board approved a Professional Service Agreement with Magellan Advisors for a maximum of \$100,250 to complete an assessment and analysis of Napa County's communications infrastructure following the 2017 wildfires. The final report - Napa County Network Infrastructure Assessment: Opportunity Analysis and Recommendation - provides nine opportunities to increase service and make the County's network more resilient and also provides seven recommendations to achieve the Board's goals.

On September 22, 2020, County staff presented the infrastructure assessment report conducted by Magellan Advisors to the Board of Supervisors. The Board authorized a Request for Proposal (RFP) to contract with a consultant to develop an action plan based on the Assessment and apply for/seek grant funding to deploy broadband in priority areas and implement an action plan using future grant funding.

In November 2020, the County released an RFP to procure a consultant to prioritize the Magellan report's opportunities, develop a road map and action plan using the report's recommendations and opportunities, and seek and apply for grant

funding to implement the action plan. All proposals were due in December 2020. The proposals were evaluated and ranked on four main selection factors. Selection factors included grant writing experience and success, grant administration, approach to the scope of work, and price. After the County review period and negotiations, the intent to award notifications were sent in March 2021. Of the five vendors who submitted proposals, CBG Communications was selected as the top-rated proposal based on the selection factors.

Today's request is for approval of an agreement with CBG Communications, Inc. to produce a road map, action plan, and seek to secure grant funding sources to use in the implementation of broadband solutions. Today's action will also permit Budget Transfer No. CEO023 to increase appropriations in the Central Services subdivision consulting services expense account by \$98,150 offset by use of appropriation for contingency.

CBG Communications, Inc. is not a local vendor. The company's main office is in Paoli, Pennsylvania, with satellite offices in Boonton, New Jersey and St. Paul, Minnesota.

FISCAL & STRATEGIC PLAN IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	Yes
Is it currently budgeted?	No
Where is it budgeted?	General Fund
Is it Mandatory or Discretionary?	Discretionary
Discretionary Justification:	The agreement will produce a road map, action plan, and seek to secure grant funding sources to use in the implementation of broadband solutions.
Is the general fund affected?	Yes
Future fiscal impact:	Funds will be encumbered in Fund 1000, Central Services (subdivision 10520-00) within the current FY20-21 with a renewal for FY21-22.
Consequences if not approved:	If not approved, implementation of Napa County's broadband plan would be delayed, and additional funding sources for future work would likely not be identified in a timely manner.
County Strategic Plan pillar addressed:	Collaborative and Engaged Community; Effective and Open Government

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Access to internet and cell service in rural areas of Napa County continue to be challenging to address. Since 2014, the County has been working to increase service in these areas by working with the North Bay/North Coast Broadband Consortium (NBNCBC) to provide more accurate information to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) regarding unserved and underserved areas through real world service, ground-truth testing (to confirm or refute carrier provided information), with the ultimate goal to make more areas eligible for future grant funding and encourage provider expansion. Since 2017, wildfires and Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) heightened the need to have access to internet and cell service, so residents and visitors are able to receive critical, emergency information in a timely manner. Because of this new urgency, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to shift their work to not only increase service in unserved/underserved areas, but also look at making our entire communications network more resilient for future wildfires and PSPSs. In addition, COVID-19 has led to an increased reliance on the internet with more people teleworking and adjusting to the demands of distance learning. With this, there is an even greater need in rural Napa County

to deploy broadband and high speed cell service.

Napa County's Authority and Challenges deploying Broadband in rural areas

Due to State and Federal laws, the County of Napa has very limited authority over telecommunications and where service providers decide to build infrastructure. Service providers, like AT&T, Comcast, Verizon, and smaller providers, like Valley Internet, WebPerception, typically build infrastructure in areas that are more populated. State and Federal laws, with limited exceptions, preempt our ability to require telecommunications to build in areas where there is a need. A lot of these areas have terrain that makes it too costly, according to providers, to invest in these rural areas. One of the ways that Napa County could help build the needed infrastructure is by facilitating and seeking grant funding to encourage service providers, especially smaller ones, to build out their networks. The Magellan Advisors' report looks at both increasing service in these areas and the resiliency of the entire network as well as providing recommendations on how to close the digital divide in Napa County. Included in the Assessment is also a list of available funding sources that the County and/or a service provider and/or community groups (e.g. HOAs) could seek to build infrastructure or make current infrastructure more resilient.

Report Overview

On November 13, 2018, the Board approved a Professional Service Agreement (PSA) with Magellan Advisors for a maximum of \$100,250 to complete an assessment and analysis of Napa County's communications infrastructure following the 2017 wildfires. The final report, titled Napa County Network Infrastructure Assessment: Opportunity Analysis and Recommendation, provides nine opportunities to increase service in unserved/underserved areas and make countywide communications more resilient. Below is a high-level summary of the opportunities, the seven recommendations by Magellan Advisors, and Staff's recommendation for the Board's consideration at today's meeting.

Opportunities

	Project	Approx. Cost	Funding	Timeframe
1)	Build a Countywide "29 Corridor Network" Backbone	\$118M	Public/Private	Long
2)	Develop a Redundant "29 Corridor Trunk" Route	\$20.5M	Public/Private	Immediate to Medium
3)	Develop a Diverse "Vine Trunk" Route	\$5.7M	Public/Private	Long
4)	Connect Tower Sites via "Vine Arms" Fiber	\$9.5M	Public/Private	Short to Medium
5)	Develop Radio Sites in Under-Served Areas	\$150K-200K	Mostly Private, Some Public	Immediate
6)	Create a "Vine Branches" Radio Access Network (RAN)	\$5-10K	Public/Private	Short
7)	Harden Radio Tower Sites	\$190K per site	Private with public support	Short
8)	Acquire or Lease Access to Portable "Cell on Wheels"	\$75- 120K	Public	Short
9)	Create a "Vine Leaves" Community Wifi Network	Low	Private with Public Support	Immediate

Magellan Advisors Recommendations

1. Establish local network infrastructure governance, including lead agency. (Page 62)

2. Build an “industrial strength” emergency detection, notification, and response system. (Page 62)
3. Take an active, comprehensive, regional approach to network development. (Page 63)
4. Prioritize opportunities based on Napa County's strategic goals and issues. (Page 63)
5. Engage stakeholders in implementation. (Page 64)
6. Develop consistent broadband-friendly policies across jurisdictions. (Page 64)
7. Identify funding sources to fund projects and initiatives. (Page 65)

In September 2020, after receipt of the Assessment, your Board authorized a Request for Proposal (RFP) to procure a consultant to prioritize the Magellan report's opportunities, develop a road map and action plan using the report's recommendations and opportunities, and seek and apply for grant funding to implement the action plan. In November 2020, the County released this Request for Proposal (RFP). All proposals were due in December 2020. The proposals were evaluated and ranked on four main selection factors. Selection factors included grant writing experience and success, grant administration, approach to the scope of work, and price. After the County review period and negotiations, the intent to award notifications were sent in March 2021. Of the five vendors who submitted proposals, CBG Communications was selected as the top-rated proposal based on the selection factors.

Project Elements

1. Produce a written Road Map and Action Plan. (\$19,525)
2. Include in the Action Plan any additional opportunities/recommendations not identified in the Magellan report. (\$11,875)
3. Include in the Action Plan regional based opportunities as identified by the North Bay North Coast Broadband Consortium. (\$16,750)
4. Seek and secure sources of grant funding or other types of funding to use in the implementation of broadband solutions. (\$50,000)
5. Ensure reports and deliverables comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Staff Recommendation

Today's request is for approval of an agreement with CBG Communications, Inc. for a maximum of \$98,150 to produce a road map, action plan, and seek to secure grant funding sources to use in the implementation of broadband solutions. Staff anticipates using CPUC grant funding that was awarded to Napa County through the NBNBCB for 2020-2021 in the amount of \$30,000. If approved by the CPUC, the anticipated costs to the General Fund would be reduced by \$30,000.

Today's action will also permit Budget Transfer No. CEO023 to increase appropriations in the Central Services subdivision consulting services expense account by \$98,150 offset by use of appropriation for contingency.

Below is an overview of the 3-year work plan that was approved by the CPUC.

2019 - 2022 Work Plan

The approved work plan for 2019 - 2022 includes the following for Napa County:

Year 1 - 11/1/2019 - 11/1/2020 - Completion of the Assessment by Magellan - \$35,000 - **Completed**

Year 2 - 11/1/2020 - 11/1/2021 - Identify opportunities to expand or make service more resilient - \$30,000

- To be amended to request that the funds be utilized for a consultant, as described above

Year 3 - 11/1/2021 - 11/1/2022 - Work with a local or national service provider on building infrastructure - \$32,500

CBG Communications, Inc. is not a local vendor. The company was selected as the top-rated bid in the County's RFP process. The company's main office is in Paoli, Pennsylvania, with satellite offices in Boonton, New Jersey and St. Paul, Minnesota.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

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CEO Recommendation: Approve