Policy Regarding the Use and Promotion of Local Contractors and Local Workforce on Construction Projects  
September 18, 2012

The County of Sonoma recognizes that strategies that promote the use of local vendors and service providers help create a sustainable economy and preserve local businesses. The use of local businesses helps retain local dollars within the community and strengthen employment. Using a local workforce can also mean a reduction in transportation, aiding the County’s efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. ¹

The County periodically awards construction contracts, which employ significant numbers of employees in various trades and many County residents possess the skills required of such construction efforts and are in need of employment. The County of Sonoma encourages, within the constraints of current state and federal law, the employment of local contractors and local workforce on County construction projects.

In order to support the use of local hiring and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the County has previously adopted the Local Preference Policy for Goods and Services, the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy, and the Job Order Contracting Program.

To further encourage the hiring of local contractors and workforce, and consistent with existing state and federal law and the interests of the public, the County will negotiate project labor agreements (PLAs) for significant new construction projects budgeted at over $25 million to achieve the following:

- Develop a local, skilled workforce through use of state-approved union and non-union apprenticeship programs and internship programs
- Maximize the use of local workforce by encouraging all contractors and subcontractors to bid for and be awarded work on County projects

1 Consistent with existing County policies, “local” means any of the following:
   - For vendors/service providers/contractors: Vendor/service provider/contractor has a physical address located in Sonoma County and performs business on an on-going basis at that address, and, if located in a city within Sonoma County, holds a valid business license of that city, if required to do so by that city; or contractor employs a workforce in which greater than 50% of the workers live in Sonoma County.
   - For workers: A person who is Sonoma County resident or hired through a Sonoma County-based hiring hall.
without regard to whether they are otherwise parties to collective bargaining agreements

- Contractors and subcontracts may use their own core workforce (defined as persons on the contractor’s or subcontractor’s payroll for 60 of the preceding 100 days)
- Contractors and subcontractors agree to use union hiring halls for any new hires beyond their own core workforce
- No worker will be required to join a union as a condition of employment, but may be required to pay union representation fees

- Encourage a diverse workforce through outreach to underrepresented businesses and groups, including women, minorities, and veterans
- Ensure that in hiring and dispatching workers for the project, no discrimination based on race, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or membership in a union or labor organization
- Ensure that no increase in project costs be incurred by the County related to implementing a PLA or similar agreement
- Ensure health, welfare, and retirement benefits are provided for workers
- Guarantee no work stoppages or delays due to labor relations disputes, including union-to-union jurisdictional disputes, and provide for expedited dispute resolution with no obligation for the County to intervene in the proceedings to resolve the dispute or grievance
- If a PLA or similar project stabilization agreement is pursued, only one agreement per project and all unions must be signatories to the agreement

In negotiating a PLA or similar agreement, staff will take into account the elements listed above as well as the level of risk of labor strife that would negatively impact the project, the project’s budget, schedule, scope and complexity, the number of trades required, and whether use of a PLA or other

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2 Any such agreement must also meet the requirements of Public Contract Code section 2500.
mechanism would negatively impact the number or quality of bidders. In all instances, the County must meet all competitive bidding and contracting requirements applicable to public works projects.