



Staff Report

File #: 23-0505

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 06/07/2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: City Manager's Office

SUBJECT:

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THORN RUN PARTNERS, LLC FOR PROFESSIONAL FEDERAL LOBBYING SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to approve a Professional Services Agreement with Thorn Run Partners, LLC for professional lobbying services at the federal level. The services provided through this agreement are consistent with City's Strategic Plan strategy under the goal of High Performing Government: *Enhance state and federal advocacy efforts using contract lobbyists and dedicated staff support.*

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Approve the Professional Services Agreement with Thorn Run Partners, LLC for Professional Federal Lobbying Services, for a term of June 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, with an option to renew for one or more additional terms, in the amount of \$60,000 annually.
- b. Authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to execute the Professional Services Agreement with Thorn Run Partners, LLC in the amount of \$60,000, including any non-substantive extensions, change orders, purchase orders, and amendments up to the amount authorized by the Corona Municipal Code, which is equivalent to 10% or \$6,000.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

The City Manager's Office oversees the City's Legislative Affairs Program, which consists of monitoring federal and state government activities, developing a legislative platform and funding priorities, coordinating with other departments to advocate for the City's priorities, and serving as the

City's liaison to other local, regional, state, and federal governmental entities. This program is an important tool to help build relationships with our local representatives, secure funding for city projects and services, and ensure the City's voice is heard on important legislative issues.

One of the strategies in the City's Strategic Plan under the goal of High Performing Government is to *Enhance state and federal advocacy efforts using contract lobbyists and dedicated staff support*. In 2021, the City entered into a Professional Services Agreement for State Lobbying Services Renne Public Policy Group (RPPG) to help guide our advocacy efforts at the state level. RPPG has been a valuable resource for the City on legislative issues specific to the State of California; however, the City has limited representation at the federal level.

During the adoption of the 2022 legislative platform and financial priorities, Councilmember Speak requested a future agenda item to consider contracting with a federal lobbyist. On March 16, 2022, staff brought forward a report to the City Council requesting direction on whether to pursue federal lobbyist services and provided options of services for the Council to consider. Following discussion, the City Council directed staff to prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Professional Federal Lobbying Services.

ANALYSIS:

On November 21, 2022, the City posted RFP No. 23-014RH on PlanetBids for Professional Federal Lobbying Services. The RFP closed on December 23, 2022, and five proposals were received. The City Manager's Office reviewed the proposals based on completeness of response, qualifications of firm, qualifications of personnel, project understanding and approach, and value of services. Following the review of proposals, the top four lobbying firms were invited to participate in an oral interview panel with representatives from the City Manager's Office, Public Works, Utilities, and Police Departments. Based on the results of the interviews, Thorn Run Partners, LLC was selected as the most qualified firm to provide Professional Federal Lobbying Services for the City of Corona.

Thorn Run Partners was incorporated in 2010 in Washington D.C. and provides traditional lobbying services, policy depth, and strategic communications. Their team for Corona will be led by Greg Burns and Jim Davenport, who have over 40 years of combined experience representing government entities from across the country and have helped secure over \$3 billion for their clients. They have also delivered policy wins that in some cases dwarf the value of the funded projects.

The services provided by Thorn Run Partners will include:

- a. Develop a Federal Agenda
- b. Monitor existing and proposed laws and regulations
- c. Proactively recommend and develop legislative positions
- d. Advise and inform members of Congress of the City's priorities and objectives
- e. Arrange meetings for City elected officials and personnel with Congressional members, staff, and Federal agency officials
- f. Assist in the development and submission of Federal appropriations/authorization requests
- g. Monitor and advise on Federal grant opportunities
- h. Provide timely communication with the City

Staff is recommending that the City Council approve the Professional Services Agreement with Thorn Run Partners LLC for a one-year term with an option to renew for one or more additional terms in the amount of \$60,000 annually.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the recommended actions will result in a financial impact of \$60,000 annually. Funding is available in the City Manager's Office operating budget for Fiscal Year 2023 and has been included in the Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 budget. Future requests will be recommended through the annual budget process.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the action is not subject to CEQA. This action simply makes a recommendation for the approval of Professional Federal Lobbying Services, and there is no possibility that this action will have any effect on the environment. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

PREPARED BY: DONNA FINCH, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER

REVIEWED BY: JACOB ELLIS, CITY MANAGER

Attachments:

1. Exhibit 1 - Professional Services Agreement with Thorn Run Partners, LLC
2. Exhibit 2 - Thorn Run Partners Proposal for Professional Federal Lobbying Services